

Working Paper No. 51

**PLANNING WITH WOMEN FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
1985 PARTICIPANTS' REPORTS**

1986

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## **Acknowledgements**

The publication of the Gender and Planning Working Paper series has been made possible by a grant from the Ford Foundation, New York. These papers have been developed as resource materials for the Development Planning Unit's Short Course on 'Planning with Women for Urban Development'. The course has been running annually since 1984.

These working papers could not have been completed without the co-operation of a number of people - Caroline Moser, Course Director; Caren Levy, Associate Course Director; Linda Peake, Editing Consultant; and Jane Wisner, who typed the papers.

The views expressed in these papers are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Development Planning Unit.



## **Introduction**

### **1985 'Planning with Women for Urban Development' Development Planning Unit's Short Course**

#### **Participants' Reports**

The thirteen enclosed reports are from participants of the 1985 DPU Short Course on Planning with Women for Urban Development held at the Development Planning Unit, London, April - July 1985. Rather than providing a comprehensive coverage of the debates and issues covered in the course, each paper reflects the participants' particular interests and experience. The evaluations cover projects, programmes and policies in Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, the Sudan, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Jamaica and the Philippines.

The papers reflect a diversity of issues but nevertheless have a number of interconnecting themes. Two of the most important are as follows: firstly, a concern with low income women and the gendered roles they play out in society - as producers, reproducers and urban managers. The focus is on the survival strategies adopted by low income women, particularly those who head households, in balancing their roles as paid workers, as childbearers and rearers providing the daily necessities of life for their families, and as managers, organising to ensure the provision of basic facilities and services within their local communities.

Secondly, there is a concern to illustrate the way in which planners, community organisers, other professionals and women themselves can meet both the practical and strategic gender needs which arise from these triple roles. The papers examine the extent to which, both in bottom up or top down initiatives, it is possible to meet not only the practical gender needs of women for housing, education, childcare, food provision, income generating opportunities, etc., but also for their more strategic gender needs for tenure rights, an abolition of the sexual division of labour, freedom from male violence and other concerns which will work towards ending the subordinate position women hold in society. Given the wide ranging nature of the solutions proposed in these papers they have been organised solely on the basis of world regions: Africa, South East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The first seven papers are written by African participants. The first three, by Jane Bosire, Paula Nimpuno and Mishi Karisa, explore the issues involved in incorporating gender awareness into the design and implementation of two top down low income housing projects in Dandora and Mombassa, in Kenya. The following two papers by Eunice Kitomari and Margaret Erinle examine projects specifically designed for low income women. The former is a proposed bottom up project for women in Tanzania based on agricultural production and street food trades; whilst the latter provides an evaluation of a top down women's project in Nigeria, also based on agricultural production for food sales. The remaining two African papers are from Sudanese women, Nefissah Abdurahman, Roghia Osman and Norma Fodul, who give evaluations of both a top down Small Scale Enterprise Project in Port Sudan and a top down women's project in Juba.

There are two papers from the Philippines. Amelia Sayo investigates the extent to which gender needs in urban and regional planning and policy in the Philippines are recognised and puts forward a framework for the institutional arrangements necessary to implement the various recommendations she makes. Ruth Ruiz's paper gives an evaluation of women's activities in a programme level intervention, aimed at reaching children of the urban poor.

The final four papers are from Latin America and Caribbean women. Frances Madden evaluates previous top down interventions to provide income generating opportunities for a small Jamaican community and puts forward a proposal for an urban farming scheme. The following two papers by Joan Bent and Mary Bushey concentrate on identifying women's needs in Nicaragua and makes recommendations to improve their standard of living, whilst the final paper by Alexa Jengich provides a proposal for a battered women's refuge in Costa Rica.

Linda Peake

# **I. Gender Awareness as a Necessary Component in the Operation of Self Help Building Groups in Site and Service Projects: The Case of Dandora, Kenya**

Jane Bosire

## **Introduction**

It is notoriously difficult to account for or find reliable data on the extent to which women participate in the implementation of low income housing projects. The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to highlight the importance of recognising the participation of women in low income housing in order for them to accommodate their needs.

Generally, in Kenya female literacy is lower than that of their male counterparts. Until recently, families gave educational priority to male children in a case where a choice had to be made between a male and female child (regardless of age). The male child was looked at as the future breadwinner, thus emphasising his role as a producer, while the female child was looked at as a future mother, emphasising her role as a reproducer. The male child, due to the education given to him, has opportunities for training leading to the gaining of skills. This qualified him to secure a wage paying job. The female child, however, was orientated to domestic work such as childcare, cooking, working on the family land, i.e. the type of work that identifies her as a mother. The time input, the quality and the quantity of her services are not, however, accounted for. This placed her in a situation where hers was an invisible economy. Her production role (work done on the family land) and managerial role (home managing and caring for children, cooking meals etc.) were ignored so that she was only seen as a reproducer.

This same trend is evident in the housing field. In the site and service schemes which are meant for those on low incomes, the woman applicants were seen only in their role as reproducers. Indeed, the eligibility criteria pushed women firmly back into their role as reproducers and a state of dependency on the man.

## **Background to the Dandora Scheme**

In the National Development Plan 1984-1988, the Kenya government explored strategies to enable production of low cost urban housing for the benefit of low income households. Site and service and settlement upgrading approaches were regarded as best for solving the housing problem. The government charged the local authorities with the task of implementing housing projects.

Meanwhile, local authorities, and especially the Nairobi City Council, were experiencing problems in housing their residents. In response to this inadequacy within the Nairobi city boundaries, squatter settlements mushroomed. These were put up by the low income households in a bid to solve their own housing problems. Such areas were characterised by simple structures of a very low construction quality. These unauthorised settlements reflected growth at a higher rate than that planned by the city council. It has been estimated that such areas comprised 38% of the city's housing. Although in the past the Nairobi City Council had enjoyed a relatively good record as regards housing, like many other cities in developing countries it is currently faced by a serious housing shortage. For a long time the council had been involved in direct construction of houses as well as encouraging the private sector to provide housing to employees. This approach was based on traditional lines with an emphasis on completed units using building standards that were relatively high. During those early days the approach used was able to cope



with demand as the rate of population growth was relatively low. This factor enabled the people who resided in the city to be provided with housing of a moderately high standard. However, with the ever increasing demand for housing, the council's housing policy and approach have had to undergo a complete change in an attempt to respond to the growing population. The council had to relax its policy of constructing conventional low cost houses for rent. (These were normally dwellings of at least two rooms, a kitchen and sanitary facilities constructed of permanent materials and moderately high standards.) This turning point was a result of lack of adequate resources to meet the council's housing policy. The council could not build enough units in a given time to meet demand, and on completion the low income households could no longer afford the rent of such houses, so they were rented by the higher income households.

In the wake of the 1970s the city council realised its policy for housing was futile, and a solution had to be found. To toe the government's line the site and service approach was accepted as a major step towards solving the housing problem faced by the low income population. The idea of site and services was a comeback to an approach which had been used in Kenya as early as 1923 (see Chana 1979) when the first site and service experience was used for the old Pumwani project in Nairobi. In 1929, 349 sites in the old Pumwani project were allocated. Other areas like Makadara, Eastleigh, phases I and II Kariobangi and Mathare Valley projects followed between 1956 and 1972.

After negotiations between the Kenya government and the World Bank, in 1971 a study group comprising the City Council and the University of Nairobi in conjunction with the World Bank reached a conclusion. Dandora was chosen as a suitable area for the site and service housing project. Having been identified in 1971, serious planning started towards the end of 1972. In 1975 the loan agreements between the Kenyan government and the World Bank were signed. The objective of the project was to provide 6,000 units for Nairobi city's low income households. The project, 'Dandora Community Development Scheme', was termed 'the World Bank's first urban project' in Kenya.

### **The Dandora Site and Services Project**

The project is situated 10 kilometres east of Nairobi city centre on the Komorock road which links Nairobi with Kangundo and Machakos towns. It covers 350 hectares. It was chosen mainly because it was the only large sized and uncommitted parcel of land owned by both the government and the Nairobi city council. Furthermore, the site was adjacent to already existing housing areas and could easily be extended to trunk mains. It was also within easy reach of the city centre and industrial areas - are one kilometre away and therefore within walking distance.

During appraisal of the Dandora project it was found out that the council's administrative arrangement for housing could not cope with the idea of the project being integrated into its existing housing department. An alternative was to be found and after the definition of the tasks involved in the implementation, Dandora project became a turning point in the city council's housing policy by being made a new department within the city council. The new department, the Housing Development Department, is composed of four divisions with the Director being in charge of the department overall, assisted by a deputy director. The divisions are:

1. Administration: deals with all administrative matters and is headed by the chief principal administrative assistant. Administration here includes timing and budgeting; overall supervision of consultants/contractors to the council and its financiers to enable annual budgets and projects funding; liaising with other council departments, government ministries and other authorities on

matters relating to the implementation of the projects. It also responsible for programming, overseas and local staff training and staff recruitment.

2.Finance: deals with all monetary matters affecting the project.

3.Technical: deals with all technical matters affecting the construction of plots.

4.Community development: deals with the human and social aspects of the projects.

There is also a legal support unit which is headed by the principal counsel and works in liaison with the Town Clerk's Department. The unit reports directly to the director and advises on the legal implications in all areas of operation to the Housing Development Committee.

The Housing Development Department was charged with the following responsibilities:

a.To prepare and service 6,000 residential plots.

b.To impose a relaxation on normal building standards to achieve cost savings.

c.To confine itself to the provision of infrastructural services and sanitary facilities on the plot, leaving construction of houses to the allottees.

d.To operate and administer a materials loan for the construction of the initial two rooms as well as extending technical guidance and supervision during the time of development.

e.To adhere to the eligibility criteria, i.e.:

- i)income bracket of KSh280-650 (US\$37-87) per month;
- ii)heads of households living in Nairobi with their families;
- iii)applicants residing in Nairobi for at least 2 years or more;
- iv)applicants owing no other property in Nairobi.

f.Allottees were not required to pay deposits (downpayments) in order to accommodate those without accumulated capital.

These criteria all discriminated against women applicants:

i.Income

This denied women the chance of qualifying for plots as they had no wage earning jobs. Women who engaged in informal sector work had no documentary evidence as to what their income

ii.Being the head of a household

In Kenya this naturally meant a man, from the traditional viewpoint. Thus again women could not be allocated plots as heads of families as long as they were attached

iii.A time period of two years or more of living in the city

This was another way to deny the right of plot allocation. Women only came to stay with their husbands seasonally and went back to the rural areas to continue working on the family land manage the home. Therefore, they could not live in town for two consecutive years.

iv. Those women who did qualify for plot allocation had to be heads of their families through divorce, widowhood, separation or being unmarried with children.

## **Project Implementation**

The project's target group was low income households. In this project division of responsibilities between the project authorities and the beneficiaries in order to execute the scheme was inevitable. The department prepared the site by providing infrastructure and services, whereas the beneficiaries carried out construction of their houses. On the allocation of their plots the beneficiaries were obliged to build their houses (at least two rooms) within limits set by the project. The department gave financial assistance in the form of a materials loan, and technical guidance and supervision of construction for the beneficiaries. However, constant financing of plot development, and repayment of loans and service charges, were the allottees' responsibility. The Community Development division staff encouraged households to cooperate in order to construct their units, in order to reduce the cost of construction. Dandora which took off as a community of strangers in terms of people coming from different ethnic groups, speaking different languages, having different cultures and customs, called for the department's community division to help beneficiaries see the circumstances which brought them together.

With the division having to deal with both the human and social aspects of the project, they operated as follows: The assistant director coordinated the division's operations. She was assisted by the senior community development officer, whose work was mainly supervision. The community officers were in charge of different areas as the project was divided into areas of approximately 1,000 plots. Under their supervision were the community development assistants who were seen as 'the project's backbone'. They were attached to the low income households from the time of buying application forms, checking the information on the forms and commenting on them, then forwarding them for computerisation. They also gave information concerning the computer results as to whether the applicant qualified for a plot or not. Later on they helped in the orientation of the beneficiaries and processing their allocation documents. The beneficiaries were registered by the community development assistants for later formation of building groups.

The community development division, because of the nature of its work, attracted participation from non-governmental organisations such as:

- a. The National Christian Council of Kenya which until early 1983 was running the Dandora multi-purpose community centre which provides meeting facilities, a library, the nursery school, a self-help primary school and weaving project. The Presbyterian Church of East Africa has now taken over these functions.
- b. UNICEF, which provides materials (and moral support) for the demonstration garden, the children's clubs, and the Dandora Home Management and Tailoring project among others.
- c. Church organisations, specifically the Holy Cross Fathers, the Verona Fathers, and the Benedictine Fathers. These run a rotating welfare fund to assist the allottees with their plot development in addition to the council's materials loan. The Holy Cross Fathers have also put up a multi-purpose community centre in Dandora phases II. They run, too, a small community centre which provides recreational facilities, a nursery school and a children's project.
- d. The Ford Foundation also works with the project on the same footing with the church organisations, mainly the Holy Cross Fathers.

## **Modes of Implementation**

The implementation of the project was characterised by three modes of building:

- a. The allottee built form: This was a kind of self-help whereby the allottee carried out the construction work on their own using the materials loan. This form was undertaken by allottees who either had building skills themselves or had support from relatives with such skills.
- b. Sub-contracting built form: This type of self-help, in which women commonly featured, carried with it the need to hire and pay for professional labourers. In most cases the allottees were not in a position to hire or pay for this type of service, but could not find any viable alternative. The allottees in this type were defeated by complexity of management tasks, unfamiliarity with construction work and the time factor. This dictated a situation whereby the allottee and relatives or friends did the simpler less skilled work, while they hired a skilled labourer or small contractors to do the difficult and more skilled work. Due to the inability of allottees to negotiate a reasonable fee for the high skilled labour, work was delayed and allottees remained indebted to the skilled labourers.
- c. Building groups: This mode was undertaken in teams of families. In most cases these groups were formed by the community development division as a strategy to enable the poorer allottees to pool their limited resources of materials, labour and money in order to construct houses for each other in an agreed sequence. (This idea was initiated purely as a result of the community development division staff efforts.) Soon after the allocation of plots, it was discovered that the poorer allottees could not manage to construct the basic units. There were two types of basic units, A and B. In the type A case there was only provision of a wetcore. The residents had to build a kitchen and one other room within 18 months. The type B plots in addition to the provision of wetcore also had a kitchen. These residents, therefore, only had to build one room. Moreover there was a continued upsurge in costs with time. The worth of forming building groups was in the capacity to generate finance from the group members to start off the construction of plots. The community development staff also aimed at achieving maximum community participation by forming groups in a situation where allottees were strangers to each other from the point of view of ethnic groups, language, culture and values. The groups were to be a source of moral support to guard against falls in morale, thus checking against the selling of plots to wealthier people (which was expected to happen). This kind of achievement would be possible only if groups were provided with a forum to meet and discuss issues, an atmosphere which in itself would create a community spirit. The pooling of resources, labour skills and money was viewed as a creation of both group dynamics and cohesion. The community staff assumed that the group members had construction skills and so would construct their plots quite quickly.

## **Organisation of Building Groups**

These were organised by the community development staff. There were a total of 24 community trained staff of whom 13 were women. These were allocated to groups of allottees of between 5 and 15. Phase 11 of the Dandora project had a total number of 14 groups. Half of these groups were organised by the female staff of the community development.

Group formation involved a series of stages, all designed to work harmoniously. First, the community staff invited allottees to an orientation seminar and explained how and why groups were important. The

groups were reminded of the need to pool resources together if they were to accomplish their task of constructing the basic units within the set period of 18 months. After a thorough talk on the group dynamics, the allottees were invited to enrol as group members. Those who enrolled were invited through respective addresses and home visits to the first group meeting. This was done after the enrolment list was sectionalised into groups of 5 to 15 members. This sectionalisation was carried out by the community staff ignoring such factors as the ethnic group or sex of the applicant, or whether they had come from the same residential area prior to getting plots in Dandora.

The allottees who opted to form building groups were usually attached to one community staff person with whom they held their first meeting. The discussions usually took place in the national language, Kiswahili, so that there was no question of language barriers. It was then that the community development staff member guiding the given newly formed group outlined policy matters and defined all implications pertaining to an allottee who had decided to become a group member. The community leader then went on to encourage dialogue among members before they elected the group leaders from among themselves. These elections usually took place during the second or third meeting. Members had the right to choose whom they liked by a show of hands, but in most cases if there were men in the groups they tended to get the position of executive leaders of chairman, secretary and treasurer. This happened because in Kenya, like any other Third World country, women are less well educated and lacked the confidence of holding such positions, even though in the building groups women outnumbered men. After electing their own group leader they were at liberty to meet as many times as they could to discuss group issues without the community development staff.

Building groups were legal entities and as such they had to be registered at the Office of the Attorney General under the Societies Act. Here again the community development staff in charge of the group helped the chairman, secretary and treasurer to go through the registration procedures at the Attorney General's Office until such a time that the group would start contributing the amount of money agreed upon by the group members to enable them to open their account after registration of the group. The money from the group's savings bank was officially signed for by the chairman, secretary, and the treasurer. There were also three elected committee members who worked hand in hand with the executive leaders.

Apart from going through these formalities, the community development staff also helped the groups to make their internal constitution after registration. They were also to assist the group members to budget for their plots economically in order to minimise building costs and to arrange for materials loan reimbursement. In addition, community staff were involved in keeping a record of the group finances and other matters; motivating the group to work hard- helping leaders to develop leadership skills, and to keep group meeting records; and also in giving advice to individuals and settling any conflicts.

The group was usually dissolved after meeting its main objective of constructing basic units for every group member.

### **Group Composition**

Although individuals were drawn together to form groups by the common factor of poverty, building groups were found to contain more women than men. This was not surprising as, although the Dandora project had an equal percentage of men and women, the women were more disadvantaged than the men. Men took advantage of the construction situation by holding the executive positions in the group leadership. The men could also work comfortably in the construction work such as stone dressing, carpentry, brick or stone laying. Women, however, were pushed back to their female-ascribed roles of carrying building materials, cooking meals, looking after children, and managing their homes. As this work was not accounted for, the men assumed that women had a lot of spare time.

Building groups also attracted predominantly elderly allottees, which meant that the groups had inactive members who could not contribute towards group participation.

### **Group Leadership**

The duties of the group committee members included such tasks as organising group meetings and presiding over them, ensuring that all members adhered to the group constitution, and that they contributed the amount of money approved by the group and also took an active part in participating in the construction of their plots. Financial matters such as purchasing materials, paying skilled labourers etc. were another part of their responsibility.

In actuality the group leaders fell short of the duties described above. There were cases when the agreed contributions of individual group members were set too high for some allottees; leaders relaxed in seeing that group money was used properly; they relaxed in maintaining group records both for finance and group meetings; and they failed to settle conflicts. However, leadership in such groups was not easy. It was difficult to maintain the cohesion of the groups because of the lack of trust amongst the members, whose only common interest was the construction of plots.

### **Problems Encountered**

#### **i. Lack of skills**

It was expected by both leaders and group members that there would be 'free labour', i.e. unpaid labour from among the group members. They would then build their units with the department's materials loan in addition to their own group contributions. However, as the groups discovered that they had no construction skills they had to pay a qualified construction labourer from their group money.

#### **ii. Timing**

Both the group members and the community development staff expected the group members' plot construction to take a shorter time because of group efforts. This proved to be false because of the lack of skilled labour. The 'fundis' usually took on work from more than one person so that they could not fully concentrate on any one plot. Lack of income brought construction work to a standstill. The group members had expected to rent out rooms in their completed units and to use the income from this to put up more group units. The group members whose plots had been constructed and who had rented out rooms to help more construction work became bitter as the rents from their plots were being taken for a long time. They felt they were losing out, because the construction work took much longer than expected and during this time they gained no income from renting.

#### **iii. Arrears**

Although the members expected to repay material loans and pay their monthly plot rents with the money from their completed units, they could not, as they received no rents for their completed units. The result of this was that many group members, particularly women, were in arrears, a situation that exposed their plots to the danger of repossession by the city commission authorities. As most of the women in the building group did not earn any wages to repay loans and rents, the community division had to intervene for them to the authorities. Most of the building group women members were heads of their households usually with a large number of children. The woman building group members, if employed, tended to be in work such as

domestic service, and if they were self-employed they were restricted to the bottom level of the informal sector as a result of lack of capital as well as being involved in their role as reproducers.

With all these factors combined, the women concerned themselves first with feeding, clothing and educating their children, leaving the plot payments to last, i.e. they cared about their immediate needs.

### **Shortcomings of the Community Development Division**

The community development division was charged with the responsibility of dealing with the human and social aspects of the project. Although the community staff did a lot for the building groups, they also fell short of the expected achievements in some ways, e.g.:

- i. Allottees were denied the choice of who should belong to their group. If allottees had been allowed to form their groups, people would have been less of strangers to each other.
- ii. Building groups were arranged without taking into consideration their plot localities, i.e. plots were not in the same locality. Living in the same locality would have enabled the group members to reach each other within the shortest time in case of an urgent matter to be looked into. Group meetings would also benefit in terms of attendance levels. The group would also have found it easier to supervise the skilled labourers who worked in their plots. Group participation would have been maximised with the advantage of easy reach of the plots under construction.
- iii. In choosing leaders the staff should have been aware of gender bias. Men were assumed to be good leaders and were given the executive positions on the committee, which mainly sprang from the traditional beliefs that a woman could not be a leader of a group which contains men.
- iv. Leadership should have been on a rotating basis. Fixed leadership often makes members anxious and causes loss of confidence. On the leaders' side, they develop defence mechanisms to protect themselves from group attacks on their personalities.
- v. The group leaders were not trained in leadership skills. This contributed to the exit of members from the group to try to find an alternative way of constructing their plots.
- vi. The women in the groups were assumed to have spare time to spend on the group work, such as carrying building materials to the skilled labourers, digging foundation trenches, cooking meals for skilled labourers. In contrast to this situation was the fact that whenever men were able to work on the plot, they worked hand in hand with the skilled labourers, which exposed them to learning skills in building construction leading to possibilities of employment opportunities elsewhere.

### **Recommendations**

i. It is true that the community division staff helped the group members to be psychologically satisfied by sharing their individual problems and where possible solving them. However, groups would have been better if allottees were orientated on group matters and given time to decide which group to belong to. This would have sorted out the problem of members being strangers to each other. In future, housing projects could group allottees according to the following factors:

- a. Allottees having been residents of the same place prior to being allocated a plot in a housing

project.

- b. Allottees should be of equal poverty so that nobody is left behind in group contribution and community division staff would be able to give equal assistance to all group members. This would make participation more effective.
- c. If there are people working for the same employer they should be allowed to form their own groups. The employer could then assist the employees by giving them loans for plot development to be deducted from their salaries or wages. This would also promote group cohesiveness, creating an easier atmosphere for the leaders and the group at large. This would also give members confidence in their leaders, as they would have known each other well.
- ii. The community worker should in future investigate the source of the group members' income before deciding on how much money should be paid as a contribution to the group's funds.
- iii. The community division staff should look into the question of rotating leaders so that leaders do not run for too long and get used to each other to the extent of conspiring to misappropriate group funds. The office should treat the community division staff in charge in the same way to avoid corruption.
- iv. The finance division should be held responsible for keeping the groups' money and also devise a system whereby clear records are maintained.
- v. Building group members should be taught a skill during the time they are in the group to enable them to get employment after dissolving the group.
- vi. The groups should be organised in such a way that they can always pay their members who put in extra work. This would cater for the females in the group and also help those group members who are not in waged employment.
- vii. If it is possible, groups should be encouraged to continue to carry out maintenance tasks on their plots. Groups could arrange themselves such that they could jointly clean their compounds and carry the refuse away.



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## **II. Gender Issues in Project Planning and Implementation: The Case of Dandora Site and Services Project, Kenya**

Paula Nimpuno

### **Introduction**

The situation of low income urban women is such that they belong to the poorest of the low income groups. They are less well educated and less trained and have fewer employment opportunities compared to those of their male counterparts. These discrepancies are even more exaggerated in the case of female household heads.

The proportion of women who head households in the urban areas is increasing in the Third World. These women tend to be the only person responsible for reproduction and production activities in their households, thus they find themselves in a particularly disadvantaged position. On one hand they have lower incomes than male heads of household and on the other hand they have greater economic responsibilities than the rest of the population. Overall they tend to have more dependants and fewer adults to contribute to their household income. Furthermore, this type of household has less access to housing projects, land, credit, training and other productive resources.

It is important to mention that in Kenya women play an important role in the provision of social services through community and self-help efforts. Such community efforts (Harambee schemes) constitute a significant part of the health and education facilities in the country: women provide 80% of the labour in these projects (CBS/UNICEF 1984, 95) because of their role as managers of their communities and yet female heads of household have low levels of access to low income housing projects. Recognising the triple role of the women - as producers, reproducers and managers - and the importance of their labour in the implementation of housing projects, it is important to analyse the potential difficulties and opportunities that female heads of household face when applying for participation in low income housing projects.

### **The Dandora Site and Service Project**

The Dandora site and service project is one of the large scale attempts by the Nairobi City Commission, assisted by the government of Kenya and the World Bank, to programme, plan and implement low cost housing solutions for low income households. The project is expected to provide 6,000 sites and service plots, being the pioneer in a series of urban projects in Nairobi and other urban centres in the country.

Female heads of household constituted the majority of the women applicants in the Dandora project. In a 10% sample survey in Dandora (phase 1), 89% of the women allottees are heads of household and have an average of 5 dependants (their own children or relatives). There are no other income earners in their households. They come from different areas in Nairobi where most lived in rented rooms or shacks before moving into the scheme. They originally came as migrants from the rural areas, looking for jobs in the city, following their husbands or escaping failed marriages. Although economic survival is their priority in the city, their housing conditions were often very bad, aggravated by the instability or the illegality of their housing, resulting in frequent shifts from place to place. The housing insecurity and their job insecurity tended to reinforce each other.

Dandora appeared therefore to offer a way out through security of tenure. It promised legality, better

housing conditions, and even title to the land. This was in practice a great change from the traditional situation whereby women could not inherit land. It is not therefore strange that the project has attracted many women who constitute as much as 44% of the registered allottees - most of them are also the heads of households and the main providers (see Table 1). What are the main opportunities and difficulties that these women had, and still have to face in project design and implementation? To be able to review some of these issues it is useful to assess the selection criteria and the assumptions made by planners during the implementation process.

**Table 1**  
**Sex of Allottee by Plot Type**  
**100% Sample, December 1976**

Sex	Plot Type A		Plot Type B		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	46	44.2	35	85.4	81	55.9
Female	58	55.8	6	14.6	64	44.1
TOTAL	104	100	41	100	145	100

Source: Baseline survey (1977).

The data presented in this paper results from selected sources of project data and information collected in a current research project, carried out by the author, of female heads of households and women allottees in the Dandora project. Although the research data was not strictly collected for evaluation purposes, some assumptions may prove valid given the spectrum of information collected both from secondary and primary sources.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

The selection criteria in urban housing projects aim to ensure that the project benefits low income groups who, because of their low earnings capacity, cannot afford to obtain conventional housing. Cost recovery is one of the main concerns in order to allow replicability of projects. On the other hand, charges should not take a disproportionate amount of the allottee's household income. The cost of the plots in the Dandora scheme was based on this assumption (Chana 1979). Thus, a minimum of 20-25% of the allottee's income was to be allocated for housing expenditures (Development Plan 1979- 1983, p. 172). The minimum and maximum monthly income requirements were between Kshs.280-560.

In addition to the income, the applicants were to:

- i. Be heads of household;
- ii. Not own other property in Nairobi;
- iii. Have supporting documents and complete application forms;
- iv. Have lived for more than two years in Nairobi.

### **Income requirements**

Applicants are asked to provide information about their income in the form of a cash flow statement if they worked in either the formal or informal sector. A baseline survey (1977) reported that 63% of the applicants worked in the informal sector and therefore earned irregular incomes. The women in particular could barely reach the minimum income required. The table below shows the work status of the women and their income (figures are based on a sample survey).

**Table 2**  
**Employment Status and Average Income of a 10% Sample of Women Applicants**

Occupation	No.	%	Average (Ksh.)
Self employed	21	48.8	970
Formal sector	8	18.6	1,235
No occupation	14	32.6	695
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,900</b>

Only 18.6% of the women allottees work in the formal sector, mostly as cleaners and messengers in the public sector. The majority work in the informal sector followed by 32.6% with no other source of income but subletting of rooms. The women who have no occupation at present are either too old to work or have lost their work opportunity when moving to the scheme. However, many of the female heads of households did not have a cash income to report when applying since they relied on income transfers from relatives and their existing social network. This illustrates the need for project staff to consider income transfers to facilitate the inclusion of women in the project. It also reveals that the assumption that 20-25% of the household income will be spent on housing is quite unrealistic because of the irregularity of income earning of the informal sector workers and the impossibility of setting a fixed amount in cash for housing expenditures for female headed households who live from income transfers in the form of gifts and payment in kind. It is, however, important to note that although income requirements posed as crucial selection criteria there is evidence of a certain relaxation from the project staff given the number of female heads of households who were selected as potential allottees.

The down payment requirement of Ksh.600 introduced for water connection and the disbursement of the material loans proved to be too high for the women applicants. Several women reported having to ask for loans from informal lenders and relatives to be able to pay for the down payment. As they had no savings on their own they had to incur extra debts. Furthermore, the women were charged high interest rates by the lenders, a feature which has been found to be common in other areas (Undugu Informal Sector Programme 1985).

The baseline survey showed that in 1979 the combined household incomes of allottees and their household members from all sources were between Ksh.250 and Ksh.499 per month. As the majority of female headed households have only one breadwinner, one can speculate that their incomes fell into the bottom of this range, thus making it impossible for them to raise the down payment from their household budget.

Equally, monthly payment requirements based on costs of services, material loans and interest rates proved to be high for women heads of households. A survey carried out in December 1984 of a 10%

sample of women allottees in phase 1 shows that 41 out of 43 women were in rent arrears for a period of 2-12 months. Whilst it may be inappropriate to generalise the findings of a small sample survey, when the question of affordability was mentioned, all of the women stated their first priority as food and school fees for their children, with housing as second priority.

### Household composition

By definition, heads of households are those who are the main economic providers of the household. Planners, however, have a western perception of the ideal family, the dominant feature of which is the male headed nuclear family. This is despite the fact that in Kenya de facto female heads of households constitute a high percentage of the urban poor. Thus, in their own right they constitute a great majority of the applicants for low income housing projects.

In Dandora women had to prove they were separated, widowed or single with children in order to be considered as potential applicants. Single women with no children were not considered, and married women were not considered on the basis that they were not heads of households. Given the local cultural context, within which women's legal status is still defined by their marital status, women feel in an ambiguous position due to de facto separation. The following table indicates the marital status of a 10% sample of the women allottees:

**Table 3**  
**Marital Status of 10% Sample of Women Allottees**

Married		Separated	Widowed	Single	TOTAL
Husband living:					
On Plot	Off Plot				
5	6	9	4	19	43

Source: Author's fieldnotes.

As shown in the above table, 11 women from the sample reported married but in fact only 5 of them lived with their husbands on the plot. The other 6 were part of polygamous households, two of whom had not seen their husbands for ten years but still reported themselves as married. Thus the requirement to be head of household is partly detrimental for women who do not see themselves as such. At the same time, western ideological assumptions that women cannot be the main providers is used to exclude women applicants even when they were the main earners in the family.

Other selection criteria could have also contributed to the exclusion of women who belonged to polygamous households. In Kenyan society, polygamy is still common in urban areas. Although these women have their own households and are the sole breadwinners, they were excluded on the basis of being married and thus not being heads of their household. Similarly, if their husband owned other property in Nairobi, these women would again be excluded.

The length of residence in Nairobi is another requirement that is difficult for women to testify. If women came with their husbands to Nairobi, only the husband and 'his family' are registered as residents. If he

leaves 'his family', they will still be seen in terms of being his family as far as legal documents (identity cards) are concerned. Married women also have an insecure base in the urban areas, as they often spend time in their rural homes for harvesting or other economic purposes. Consequently, they are often unable to decide about their length of residence in the urban areas.

### **Having supporting documents and complete and legible application forms**

This selection criterion assumes that project applicants have regular employers and a regular job. A baseline survey (1977) reported that 63% of the applicants worked in the informal sector, or in small family enterprises or were self employed. Women constitute the majority of these applicants. This requirement of proof of income from the employer excluded women from the project. Alternatively, for the proof of income a hawker's licence was required. (This is a licence for the informal sector vendors issued by the City Commission.) This alternative, although showing a positive attitude towards the informal sector applicants, could not be complied with by the majority of the women working in this sector, who were not officially registered.

The filling in of application forms is another procedure which has to be given special attention by the project staff as far as illiterate applicants are concerned. In phase 1, 33% of applicants were illiterate. Although many of the illiterate applicants got access to the project, others may not have applied due to the time consuming process of filling in forms which also meant a loss of money for those working as self employed. The project staff needed to check and help applicants who either did not know how or did not feel confident to fill in forms. The honesty of the staff plays an important role here because this practice often gives rise to opportunities for corruption, e.g. payment asked of project applicants to ensure that the correct names are on the forms. Needless to say, women constituted a high proportion of the illiterate applicants.

### **Conclusions**

The Dandora project was very successful in reaching the lowest income groups - 48% of applicants being female heads of households. However, the different requirements in the selection criteria show that the planners and designers of the project had nuclear families and male heads of households in mind for applicants. The inclusion of women applicants appears to be the result of an attempt at gender aware planning at the level of the implementing agency. Selection criteria and affordability for the female heads of households are very important for the replicability of the project. The concern of planners should therefore be to set up criteria which enable the inclusion of the needs of women as well as ensuring cost recovery. Indeed female heads of households are the most stable in the community, contributing to the successful implementation of the project. Female heads of households in Dandora are less likely than male heads to sell their plots, for three reasons:

- a. because the project gave women the opportunity to own a plot in the urban area, which was not possible before;
- b. although both women and men tend to consider the house as an economic asset, women also see the house and plot in relation to their families and therefore emphasise the social value of house and plot; and
- c. the possibility of subletting rooms is very important for women as for some of them it constitutes the main source of income. It is on this basis that planners and project staff should positively discriminate towards women in the selection criteria.

## **Project Implementation**

### **Construction Process**

The process of house construction in the site and services scheme is mainly the responsibility of the allottees. Women play a very important role in house construction depending on their available time, resources and household composition. The participation of the women in this phase is seen as crucial for the viability of the project but generally the lack of skills, credit, as well as discriminatory practices in relation to training women, prevents them from taking a more active role. Ideological and cultural assumptions relating to women as builders are stronger for women from nuclear families than for female household heads; however, all women were involved in the unskilled work and supportive work for the labourers.

In the Dandora project, allottees were to build their houses using self-help methods. Evidence shows, however, that the allottees did not understand what was expected from them in relation to the plot, the house plans, and the construction methods. In particular, women misunderstood the meaning of self-help and their role in the implementation process. According to Soni (1980, 54):

"Allottees expected to get completed dwellings and to have no role in construction. They did not distinguish between 'wet core' unit as the only provision on the plot and the remaining plot, which had to be utilised by employing self-help methods".

Other rules such as conforming to the planning and building standards set by the project authorities (e.g. the limited use of the temporary shelter during construction phase) required detailed information and an effort from the project staff to reach all the allottees.

### **Forms of self-help**

During the building process allottees used three forms of self-help:

- i. Allottee-built form of self-help;
- ii. Subcontracted form of self-help;
- iii. Building groups.

Building groups required organisation of the residents, primarily to pull together financial resources, which is then followed by the self-help or subcontracted form of building. Given shortage of space only the former two methods will be considered here.

#### **i. Allottee-built form of self-help**

This is a form of self-help whereby the allottee is the main decision maker in planning, construction and in managing the building process. The organisation of these activities depends on the allottee's own available time. The materials used are of a cheap and temporary nature in order to maximise savings and the labour (unskilled) is not paid for in cash. The project design assumed the use of the allottee's own labour, but in the case of female household heads who worked in the service sector or were self employed this assumption conflicted with their roles as producers and reproducers.

The use of self-help construction also conflicted with the ability of the allottee to use his/her own construction skills, given the need to conform with building standards. The only possibility allottees had to use this form of self-help was during the erection of the temporary shelter during the

construction phase. This could be used as a residence or as a storage for building materials and had to be demolished after eighteen months (i.e the time given for the construction of one or two rooms). The following case study illustrates the plight of an allottee:

"Wanjiku is a single mother of five children; she was allocated a type A plot (wet core only). She was given eighteen months to build two rooms. She lacked skills in construction and she did not have another adult member of her household. During the construction phase she earned Ksh.450 monthly by selling vegetables. This income was basically enough for her family survival. As she could not build a temporary shelter because of lack of time and skills, she had to live in her previous residence and visit the site daily to supervise the contractor. (Case study from author's fieldwork)"

Wanjiku's case is similar to many women who were allocated plots in the project. The need to earn an income plus responsibility for the family made self-help construction infeasible. On the other hand, the lack of skills both for the building of the temporary shelter and permanent rooms resulted in an increase in construction costs as well as constraints on their household budget.

## **ii. Contractor-built form of self-help**

This form of self-help consists of the hiring of skilled or semi-skilled labour for activities which the allottee cannot perform. The division of labour here is quite distinct. While the skilled labour performs more complicated tasks, e.g. advice on technical issues such as quality of building materials, and organisation of the construction team, the allottee's role is to perform the unskilled work, endorse the decisions by the contractor, supervise the construction team and ensure financial matters.

As a consequence of this division of labour, the role of the allottee is related to the unskilled work, resulting in the loss of decision making over his/her own plot development. In the case of women heads of households, their participation in house building is important because it reduces labour costs; on the other hand, while giving time to the construction work they have to neglect their productive activities. This puts further economic pressure on them as they need to have available cash to pay for labour and building material costs and they also need to meet the basic needs of the family.

## **Performance in Plot Development**

In the Dandora project all women contributed to the construction work; there was, however, a division of tasks when husbands or other male relatives were present in the household. Women who belong to nuclear families did not participate in construction work but were merely responsible for the cleaning and supportive work. Female household heads, however, participated fully in the construction and management work (procurement; buying of building materials; paying labourers; supervision) and the supportive work. Their performance in plot development depended on their household size and composition (number of adults and children). As the majority of the women work in the informal sector, the time for income earning competes with the time demanded for construction work. Thus their choice is almost non-existent since they have to be on site to supervise and do the unskilled work to save on costs.

Technical assistance for the project was provided and, although it was effective for many allottees, women in particular experienced more mistakes made by the contractors because they had no skills to



assess the contractors' work. The building supervisors in some cases demolished work instead of giving advisory assistance. This increased construction costs.

Women also experienced the fact that it was not easy to deal with contractors. They took advantage of the women's lack of knowledge and skills, cheating them by stealing building materials and by not following building bylaws. The result was that women in most cases used more than one contractor during the construction phase. The formal lack of contractual arrangements between the contractors and the women also contributed to the high turnover of labourers.

## **Conclusions**

The participation of female head of household in house building, although very important for the success and consolidation of the project, was considered marginal and unimportant because it was seen as unproductive and as an extension of their domestic work. The problems women faced during construction are evidence of the lack of awareness of women's triple role as producers, reproducers and managers. Project planning was devised with very little understanding of the sexual division of labour in low income households. It was not always possible to use family labour due to lack of time, skills and training, and the high standards and deadlines for completion of rooms. Thus self-help did not mean self build for many of the women allottees. They had to hire skilled and semi-skilled labour and had to meet those costs on their own. (A material loan was available for all allottees but labour costs were not included in the loan.) Furthermore, the absence of training in construction and management and regular advisory assistance from project supervisors were detrimental to women since it increased their building costs. It is therefore not surprising that many of the female heads of households reported a deterioration in their living standards during the construction phase, with noticeable effects on their nutrition patterns.

To conclude one may argue that the inclusion of women in the project design does not necessarily mean a successful implementation and vice versa. The inclusion of women as project beneficiaries met a practical gender need by giving them the tenure of the plot, but it did not necessarily reach a strategic gender need. The latter can only be achieved when the women allottees succeed in consolidating their plots, having extra credit and training and therefore more control over their resources and lives.

## **Recommendations**

Sites and services schemes have become to some extent the new low income housing strategy; there are, however, several steps necessary to ensure women's access to these housing programmes. There are many issues which should be addressed in the design and implementation of these projects in order to improve the access of female beneficiaries to low income housing.

i. Information about the projects and the distribution of application forms can be made by local organisations which have contact with low income women, e.g. women's organisation. In the Dandora project, the location of the offices and departments in charge of publicising the project was on the same site as the project. Applicants could walk to the offices any time during working hours for consultations with the community development and technical staff (UNCHS-Habitat 1983). These two approaches should both be used in the future in order to reach women since most of them lack time and money to travel to far-off offices. As much verbal information as possible should be given as most applicants are illiterate. The work schedules should also be arranged in order to allow staff to visit women working in the formal and informal sectors. If project staff visit the potential applicants, the type of work and income can be assessed and

therefore there will be no need for formal proof of employment. The same can be done when assessing the lengths of residence. Neighbours, shopkeepers and others will be able to give the information required to the fieldworkers.

- ii. The income criteria should not only include cash flow but also income in kind and gifts, as these constitute a large amount of the household budgets of female headed households. In this way affordability criteria should be based on the individual's cash and non-cash flow patterns. Down payments and monthly payments should be less rigid to allow allottees to pay according to their individual cash flow. Women allottees, for example, who have farms in Dandora reported paying their debts (plot fees and loans) once or twice a year after harvesting (fieldwork notes). Affordability is not enough to evaluate the capacity of the allottee to pay for housing. The willingness to pay for their houses and plots appears on top of the list of priorities for eligibility according to the women in Dandora.
- iii. The requirement to be the head of household is obsolete and instead any member of the household who wants to apply should be applicable. Married women should not be discriminated against on the basis of being from a nuclear family. From the 10% sample survey in Dandora phase 1, 11 women reported being married and not heads of household; however, only one of them had a husband with a permanent job, 6 husbands were unemployed, and 4 were casual labourers. All women had a source of income either from small scale business or from subletting. Therefore this requirement has to be broadened to include married women from nuclear families, from polygamous households and women from extended families.
- iv. When there is a self help component in the project, it should be accompanied by loans to pay for hiring labour and purchasing of building materials so that female heads of households do not incur extra costs hiring skilled and semi- skilled labour. Although expensive, women in several circumstances prefer to pay for a complete house instead of building gradually through self help labour. This is because of lack of time, skills, and extra costs experienced by the women. In addition, the need to think in terms of training the women allottees in basic management and construction skills, as a long term economic investment for the woman, her family and for the viability of the project, is of crucial importance. A preferential finance mechanism for female heads of households should be considered in order to improve their options as project beneficiaries, thus they should be allowed to use the plot as collateral in order to obtain additional loans during the construction phase.
- v. The success of self-help also depends on the availability of technical advice from the project staff.
- vi. There is a need to consider all the different stages of project design and implementation if gender aware planning is to be incorporated in human settlements. However, as gender aware planning is still a new concept compared to other planning theories, the need to lobby at the level of central government and with international AID agencies is crucial. The importance and contribution that women make to the national economy as well as the need to achieve more equality between men and women requires positive discrimination for women as potential participants of the housing projects. Hence, programmes where women's needs are identified may lead to the formulation of gender aware planning and policy.

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### **III. Incorporating Women in Low Income Housing Programmes: A Review of the Mombasa Urban II Project, Kenya**

Mishi M. Karisa

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the extent to which women have been incorporated into housing projects in Kenya with specific reference to the Mombasa Low Cost Housing Project.

The paper has been structured into eight sections which cover the following points. The project background is first outlined to give brief background information on the causes of rural/urban migration in Kenya and the characteristics of the immigrants with special reference to the Momba low income community. The second section highlights the need for gender aware planning, and this is followed by the project objectives, eligibility criteria and the housing construction phase. There is then a discussion about the assumptions made by the project authorities on the community. Finally there is a list of recommendations both for the authorities and for the community which are aimed at suggesting ways in which the project planners could improve similar future projects and for the project implementers to work on in order to improve the on-going project.

#### **Project Background**

##### **Rural/urban Migration in Kenya**

Urbanisation is often regarded as an indicator of development and of modernisation signifying the movement of people both geographically and in their attitude from traditional rural settings to modern urban settings. The city itself is not a new phenomenon; what is new is its size. It has been conservatively estimated that in the year 2000 half of the world's population, about 3 billion people, will live in urban settlements and 66% of this number will live in the Third World cities. Huge urban areas are now developing in the Third World in the name of industrialisation and the living conditions of these cities are often extremely low: millions live in crowded and unsanitary slums. The spectrum of social problems, pollution to poverty, crime and isolation is growing every day. There is truly an 'international urban crisis' developing.

Kenya is no exception among the countries faced with this problem. Its population is now 17 million with an annual growth rate of 4.2% (the global average is 2.5%). About 20% of its population live in urban areas, most of them living on either government land or privately owned land where they reside illegally as squatters.

Kenya's major towns are Nairobi city with a population of 1.1 million, Mombasa - the major seaport - with a population of 650,000, and Kisumu, a lake port linking Kenya with Tanzania and Uganda, with a population of 300,000.

There are about 300,000 squatters in these three major towns. The Kenya government's need to provide services to its people, the need to settle the urban squatters and the need to provide legal low cost housing led to the introduction of low cost urban programmes. Urban I was introduced in Nairobi in early 1972, Urban 11 for Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa in 1975, and Urban 111 is already in the offing,

with several smaller towns already identified<sup>1</sup>.

The independence and post-independence period of between 1961 and 1963 witnessed the beginning of a high percentage of rural/urban migration. This transformation was as a result of the following points:

- i. The introduction of modern technology in rural farming rendered many farm workers and herdsmen jobless.
- ii. The traditional division of labour between sexes in rural agricultural areas has made periodic urban employment possible. Men do the clearing and ploughing while women tend the land and harvest crops. This frees men for a good portion of each growing season when they could go out seeking other employment.
- iii. Poor yields have discouraged young men and women from participating in farming. Instead they tend to look for employment in urban centres.

## **Characteristics of Women Migrants in the Mombasa Low Cost Housing Project**

### **i. Low level of formal education**

Most ethnic groups in Kenya have tended to subordinate the female child; as a result of lack of resources in the family, the female child will have to drop out of school to give the limited opportunities to the male child. An analysis of the sex composition of enrolment in schools has indicated that the proportion of females declines at each succeeding class year (Women in Kenya -Kenya Bureau of Statistics 1978).

Even though this traditional practice has improved in the past 20 years of independence, there still have been higher rates of female wastage within each particular stage of schooling and there are also higher rates of female drop-outs between levels of schooling. This process has contributed towards most of the women migrants in towns having a very low level of formal education. The women, therefore, come in as unskilled labourers, domestic labourers, involved in informal employment sectors or as self employed workers.

It is estimated that 75% of the female Kenyan population of 17 years and above is economically active (the highest rate in the world), but only 16% of the workers in the waged labour force are females. Most of the women in the Mombasa project fall into this group.<sup>2</sup>

### **ii. Age**

Most of the female urban migrants are young, between the ages of 20 and 24 years. Most of them are unmarried with children, though some are either divorced or widowed but with dependants. It is estimated that 30% of Kenyan urban households are headed by women. The Mombasa project percentage is around 20%. The coastal area of Kenya appears to have a higher percentage of female

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<sup>1</sup>See the papers in this volume by Jane Bosire and Paula Nimpuno for evaluations of the Urban I project in Dandora.

<sup>2</sup>The minimum wage is about 680/= per month, but most of those in the informal sector earn about 200-300/= a month.

headed households, but most of these women did not apply for the plots in the project area (reasons for this will be discussed in the next section).

### **iii.Social-cultural characteristics**

Traditionally a woman in the coastal ethnic groups is recognised in her ascribed role as a mother and wife, and the man as the breadwinner or producer. This sexual division of labour is ideologically reinforced in various ways. There are, for example, some polygamous families in the project in which the wives are made to feel that the husband is still the provider for the family even though the women live in separate homes and are quite independent economically. This tradition forces them to lose their independence.

### **Why Gender Planning is Necessary in Urban Housing Projects**

Why women and housing? There are two main reasons why women have to be considered in planning housing projects:

- i. Women are the maintainers of the household. Although women are crucial to household survival and to the development of their locality, their special role has not been effectively integrated into the planning of urban communities. The planning community has actually been 'gender blind' to the fact that a woman has the burden of balancing three roles:
  - a. The woman as a reproducer: childbearing and rearing responsibilities.
  - b. The woman's managerial role of the household and the community. As an extension of domestic work, the woman is involved in managing the local community where she takes on the responsibilities of providing or trying to allocate limited basic resources. Women as mothers struggle to manage their neighbourhoods.
  - c. Women as producers. Large numbers of urban low income women are also primary income earners, with a particularly acute struggle for survival. The woman has to generate some income, and therefore she has to go out to work in order to survive.

It is essential for the planning community to realise that women are constrained by the burden of simultaneously balancing these three roles and ignoring this factor could mean constraints towards achieving any project objectives.

### **Project Description**

#### **The Project Planning Cycle**

The Mombasa low cost housing project was formulated in 1975 and is being financed by the Kenyan government, the World Bank and the Mombasa municipal council. The project is both a site and service and upgrading scheme based on two sites - Chaani and Mikindani.

The land had originally partly belonged to the Kenyan government and some private landlords. Those already squatting on the land were allocated plots for upgrading and new allottees were invited to apply for plots on the site and service programme.

**Table 1**  
**Number of Plots on Each Site**

Site	Existing Houses - to be upgraded	New Plots - site and service scheme
Chaani	1,088	148
Mikindani	538	765

The project has also provided roads, a sewerage system, street lighting, primary schools, health centres, social centres and markets. There is also provision for workshop plots, secondary school plots and special purpose plots (the latter are allocated to non- governmental officers to provide for other community services such as village polytechnics, maternity homes, nursery schools and various training facilities).

Originally the project was to provide wet core and kitchens on 70% of the total number of plots. Project delays, however, made the construction of infrastructure too high and the project content was reduced. None of the plots will now be provided with wet core and kitchen but 70% of the new allottees will receive material loans of 24,000/= and 50% of the upgrading allottees will receive material loans of 8,000/=. There will be a grace period of 18 months for new allottees and of 3 years for upgrading allottees (from the time of plot allocation) before the loan recovery phase starts. The loan is to be recovered within a period of 30 years.

### **Project Objectives**

The following are the Mombasa low income housing project objectives:

- i.To increase the housing stock for the low income urban population.
- ii.To improve the supply of basic and essential services to the urban poor.
- iii.To increase the available income earning opportunities with an overall goal of raising the standard of living.

These objectives are to be achieved through appropriate combinations of providing site and services plots, upgrading of the existing squatter settlements by the community, construction of basic and essential services, and the provision of commercial and industrial plots for development.

### **Project Planning Cycle**

(showing the stages of intervention by different ministries) (see also Appendix B)

The project planning cycle (below) shows the different planning phases and the stages at which relevant ministries and organisations were involved. It should be noted that the implementing department, the Mombasa Housing Development Department, was formed after project appraisal.

### **Project Planning Cycle**

Development



		Constraints Project Ideas	
HDD ministry officials, World Bank		IDENTIFICATION	Ministry officials, senior government officials, the World Bank
EVALUATION before/after or with/without control group			DESIGN AND SUBMISSION
Housing Development Department, ministry officials, World Bank			Ministry officials, senior, local authority officials, World Bank
IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING			SCREENING 1) at operational level 2) at centre (instant appraisal/ranking)
		APPRAISAL	
		General	Senior local authority officials, ministry officials, World Bank
Output	Market		
Inputs	Technical		
Costs	Financial		
	Economic		
	Management		

### **Evaluation of the Objectives in Relation to Gender Aware Planning**

- i. Provision of low cost housing. Women, being amongst the poorest groups, could not afford the expensive housing provided by the private sector. Therefore the provision of low cost housing enabled women to own a house and meet a practical need: every woman needs shelter.
- ii. The allocation of plots to women helped women cross the traditional barrier that women cannot own land. This gives women a higher status in the community and therefore meets a strategic need.
- iii. Marketing opportunity. The provision of roads, markets and other services opens the area to an outside market and, therefore, makes it possible for small businesses to expand. This provides an opportunity to the women to develop economically.
- iv. The provision of basic services, e.g. water, health centres, schools and nursery schools relieves women from the burden of spending time trying to organise for these facilities. This gives women an opportunity to make a breakthrough in other areas, including the traditional restricted role of women. They also have more opportunity to attend community activities.

## **An Evaluation of the Eligibility Criteria of the Mombasa Project**

The eligibility criteria were as follows:

- i. All applicants must have a monthly income of not less than 400-1,000/= Kenyan shillings.
- ii. Applicants must be heads of household.
- iii. Applicants must have lived in Mombasa for a period of not less than 2 years.
- iv. Applicants must not own any other property in the urban area.
- v. Applicants must be Kenyan citizens.

These conditions applied mainly to the site and services plot applicants. The upgrading applicants filled in application forms but the above criteria were not used because it would have meant acquiring some of the structures for reallocation. There was no money for this type of compensation and, in any case, these people also needed houses.

How far did the eligibility criteria take into consideration a gender aware planning approach?

### **Income criteria**

Even though the amount stated is low enough and many women would be able to raise this amount per month, it still presented a problem because many had no proof of their income. Having a low level of formal education and no skills many were employed in the informal sector and therefore could not produce proof that they earned that much each month. In fact for some they relied very much on support networks, i.e. help from relatives who were ready to help them with the house construction cost as this would later be regarded as a family investment.

The project staff did help those who showed some interest by advising them to get letters from their local chiefs as proof that they had some type of income generation capable of raising the 400/= per month. But the majority of the women shied away from this suggestion as they felt they still had no proof of income from an employer.

### **Head of household**

As already discussed, the social-cultural characteristics of the coastal ethnic groups tend to make women dependent on men. Even though many women are very active economically, they still feel they are not producers and therefore do not see themselves as household heads. This led to many women failing to apply for plots.

Again here the project staff tried to explain and encourage women to apply, but only a small percentage did apply and now many have realised that they could qualify as household heads but it is too late for them to benefit from this project - all plots have been allocated.

### **Housing Construction Phase**

The Mombasa low cost housing project is in the housing construction phase and the allottees have up to

July 1985 before the cost recovery phase starts.

The project was planned with an aim of making it low cost (or affordable), and therefore the allottees are expected, with the help of the project staff, to put a lot of effort into community participation. The project implementing department is expected to organise and coordinate community activities aimed at achieving cheaper solutions to housing construction. In this way the project is made affordable to the target group.

The role of the Project Implementing Department (PID): its functions include:

- i. Preparation of building plans;
- ii. Advising and helping the allottees in building plan selection;
- iii. Helping the allottees to map out the plan on their plots;
- iv. Advising the allottees on the use of correct building materials;
- v. Supervising housing construction, and making sure houses are standards;
- vi. Organising the community in participation activities by forming income generating activities;
- vii. Allocating material loans to those who qualify for them.

### **The role of the community**

The community's functions included:

- i. Selecting building plans;
- ii. Buying building materials;
- iii. Contributing cash and labour towards housing construction;
- iv. Participating in all other community activities.

### **Assumptions made about Women and Community Participation in the Mombasa Housing Project**

The self-help spirit, 'harambee', popularised as a political slogan during the time of Kenya's independence, has helped the nation achieve a lot in terms of national development. Self-help contributes to about 10% of total development expenditure. With this in mind the project planners assumed that to cut down on project cost and make the project affordable a great deal of community participation would be expected. The community would contribute the unskilled labour, they would be able to organise income generating activities and raise the necessary amounts to cover construction cost. These assumptions will now be evaluated.

### **Free time**

It was assumed that the women would have free time to participate effectively in community activities. It was also assumed that the women had the time to attend all the public meetings where all crucial project issues were discussed. It was likewise assumed that the women would attend to all the village committee meetings when invited. It was further assumed that the women would have time to participate in group income generating activities. These assumptions have been seen to be false, although the men at times translated women's absence as lack of interest. The main problem of women's burden of trying to balance their three roles had been overlooked. While services for childcare from the age of 4 years has been provided for, there are no childcare services for children under 4 years old, thus tying the women to the

house. Many of the women, also, had to work in the neighbouring factories and industries, often as the sole breadwinner of the family. They could obviously not afford to miss a day's pay to attend a public meeting.

### **Income**

It was assumed that women, after being involved in community participation activities, i.e. building groups, would be able to raise the monthly contribution expected of a group member. This, however, has not been easy at all. Many women make very little money per day and this makes it difficult to have extra for other purposes apart from food.

The total cost of one complete unit has been estimated at about 150,000/=, but the materials loan given is only for the wet core (24,500/=). Even if the woman provides for the unskilled labour during house construction, this would not help much. There will still be the total amount to raise to complete the construction. As the women had no security to help secure another loan from the bank nor any other credit institutional arrangement it was often impossible to finish the construction.

### **Building plans**

The building plans do not make provision for business operations taking place within a residential house except on a few corner plots. If anyone was interested in running a small business they could rent a market stall at the main market in the project area or apply for a workshop plot. This assumed that a woman would be able to do all her house chores, settle her younger children in the house (maybe pay for a helper), in order to go and sell vegetables at the market. Instead, many women started to organise 'illegal' income generating activities at home in order to incorporate or coordinate all other activities. Also, many women cannot apply for the workshop plot because this would mean getting another loan and extra funds to build the workshop. Already the recovery costs for the materials loan is too high for many of them. (The total cost recovery for the development costs; materials loan; 50% of administration cost and plot charges add up to about 400- 700/= per month for 30 years at an interest rate of 8 1/2 %)

### **Recommendations**

There now follow recommendations for the project authorities, for the implementing agency, and for the community. These recommendations cover both pre-project implementation and during project implementation.

#### **Recommendations to Project Authorities**

These recommendations are necessary because in all the low cost housing projects under this programme the project objectives and eligibility criteria have tended to be similar. These recommendations are intended to help the planners avoid repeating issues that have tended to reduce project success.

#### **Project planning**

There is a need to involve the target group at this stage so that their needs, priorities and social-cultural characteristics are identified and incorporated into the project package. This would help the planning community decide on issues such as community participation and involvement and the extent this could

be relied upon in terms of the total project success. Other issues which need guidance are the eligibility criteria. Unless these are spelt out in relation to a particular given community, many people tend to be unconsciously discriminated against.

### **Implementing Department**

This is a very crucial body for the project implementation and management. It should, therefore, be formed much earlier than the implementation phase. There should be enough time to allow for the recruitment of staff, for staff orientation, and for staff to familiarise themselves with the target group. This would make other phases such as publicity, application and selection far more successful in that the methods used would be suitable to the given community's needs and therefore would give equal opportunity for all interested in applying and being considered for the project.

### **Credit facilities for income generating activities**

The projects being aimed at the urban poor, it is of the utmost importance to realise that many have no formal employment and their main problem is that of income. Many would be interested in either starting income generating activities or boosting their existing ones in order to raise extra income which would help them with housing construction costs, but the main problem is that of initial capital. As already stated, women have no access to credit. No money lending institutions would agree to lend money without security. There is a need, therefore, for the project to provide funds for loaning purposes in order to help the beneficiaries initiate income generating activities. This money would be needed during the housing construction phase.

### **Training**

Funds should be made available for training the beneficiaries in skilled technical fields relevant to housing construction, e.g. masonry and carpentry. The skills could be useful during house construction as the allottees would not have to hire skilled labour. Also the women would have gained a skill to provide them with employment, fulfilling both a strategic and practical gender need.

### **Serviced plots**

The project should at all times provide some serviced plots (with wet core and kitchen). These would benefit the most needy women who may find it difficult to move on to their plots because of lack of extra funds needed for the construction of a temporary structure. In any case the wet core is the most complex part of the house construction and the most expensive. It would therefore help if this was provided.

### **Building standards**

If the projects are meant for the low income urban community, there is an obvious need to make them affordable. This can be achieved by reducing building standards and using other cheaper but equally strong local materials. Most of the expected building standards are too high, and unaffordable even to middle income communities.

## **Recommendations for the Implementing Department**

### **Data collection and gender awareness**

At no section in this PaPer have I provided concrete figures stating the number of female headed households in the Mombasa project. This is because these figures have not been considered worth collecting. There is a record of all allottees but nothing separating women's issues from those of men. There is a need for this information, if the women have to be helped in achieving the project objectives. A survey could be conducted to provide this information (a sample survey form is given in Appendix-A).

### **Workshop for project staff**

There would be a need to organise a staff training workshop to introduce and discuss gender aware planning concepts, i.e. making it clear how women are crucial to household survival and the development of the locality, and also why their different roles have not been incorporated within the project planning or implementation and how this situation can be rectified. Solutions to these problems should come out of the workshop. This would, maybe, make the technical staff more flexible in their approach to technical issues.

### **Income generating activities**

Even though the department has already organised and helped the women form income generating activities, these are still on a small scale. There is a need to involve other ministries in Mombasa that could help in advising on suitable income generating activities for the area, and on market availability and access to credit to boost the projects.

### **Plot title deed**

There is a need to release the plot title deeds early. These could be used as security and help the allottees acquire loans to cover housing construction costs.

### **Community Level Recommendations**

Women cannot be expected to participate actively if their major problems and responsibilities are not looked into and solved. There is a need to organise childcare services for the younger children below four years old who cannot be taken to the existing nursery schools. This could be organised within the community (by women) and by approaching funding agencies like UNICEF who have special interest in children and mothers' affairs. The existing social centre could be utilised for this purpose.

### **Conclusions**

The project objectives, if applied without constraints, would help the women in the low income urban community in Mombasa to achieve their practical gender needs of acquiring a house. They would also achieve their strategic gender needs by owning a plot and by being involved in organised groups to improve their self confidence at getting involved in village committee meetings and initiating income

generating activities.

The project staff tried from the beginning of the implementation phase to help all weaker groups, especially women. In the publicity phase extra time was organised to make announcements within the project areas using a public announcement system. This was meant to benefit the women who could not attend public meetings. The only problem was that the time allocated to publicity was too short and the women were slow in accepting the programme. During the application and interview phase centres were opened within the project areas to make it easier for women to attend interviews. In terms of community participation, village committees have been formed which coordinate community activities at village level and act as a bridge between the project implementing department and the community. There are active women members in these committees who see to it that women's issues are always taken care of.

Many women have joined building groups which have been helped by the project staff and have opened bank accounts. These accounts are expected to help the women gain access to credit. Also several income generating activities have been started and training workshops have been organised and attended by the local village leaders who include women. There has been training in leadership skills, group formation and management, community participation and how to identify community needs. A gender aware planning and implementation approach would therefore strengthen and further help what is already functioning in the project areas.

**Appendix A**  
**A Sample Survey Form (to be in Swahili)**

TO THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD - (WOMAN) PLOT OR STRUCTURE OWNER

House/plot no.....

Area Chaani/Mikindani .....

1.How long have you been living here?

Years/Months/Days

2. Where were you living before? (exact address)

.....

.....

.....

3. Did you go to school?

Yes/No

4. What grade did you attain?

Lower primary .....

State period attended.

Secondary

Higher

Others

5. Marital status: (state length of time)

Married

Single

Divorced

Separated

6. What training do you have?

B.1.How many people do you feel responsible for?



.....

2. What do they call you?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....
- 8.....
- 9.....
- 10.....

3. Do they all sleep in this building with you?  
Yes/No

4. If no, where do the others sleep/live?

5. What are your responsibilities towards them?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

1. Do you work for pay?  
No.....

Yes.....

2. If yes, as what?

3. Do you go out to work?  
Home  
Market  
Others

4. How much do you earn?

- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily
- Other

5. Does anybody help you discharge your responsibilities towards those people stated above?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

6. If yes, state nature of help on each.

1. Who takes care of your children when you participate in other community activities?

2. What source of help do you feel you couldn't do without?

3. Do you get together in this project to do anything?

a) Yes

What?

b) No

Why not?

4. Is there anything particularly nice about living in this project area?

5. Is there anything particularly distressing about living in this project area?

6. What are your future plans?

a) To live here permanently?

b) To go back to the rural area?

Where?

This particular survey would be conducted by the Housing Development Department staff especially the community development workers who have worked closely with the community.

## **Appendix B**

### **Institutional Framework, Showing the Mombasa Municipal Council in Relation to the Policy Making Body**

#### **CABINET**

Different ministries, including local government ministry, housing and economic planning and finance ministry

Local authorities: this includes Mombasa Municipal Council

Mombasa Municipal Council with departments of health, education, treasury, administration, social services and housing development

Housing Development Department with its several divisions, i.e. technical, finance, legal, administration, community development division

Community development division. This has the responsibility of coordinating all community development issues in the project area. There is supposed to be one community development worker for every 250 allottees.

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#### IV. Female Labour in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania: A Proposed Project for Income Generation

Eunice Kitomari

##### Introduction

##### Economic background

Tanzania is a developing nation with an estimated population of about 20 million. It is a sovereign state, having been independent for 24 years, but it remains highly dependent because of its low level of economic development.

The economy of Tanzania depends upon agriculture, and this contributes about 40% of the nation's GDP, while 70% of the total export value is from the sale of its primary products. Virtually all crops known to agriculturalists will grow in one or more of the areas in Tanzania, e.g. wheat, coffee, tea, potatoes, maize, beans and pyrethrum grow in the cool mountains. On the inland plateau people grow maize, rice, sorghum (a variety of millet), cotton, tobacco and sisal (a cactus from which string and sisal ropes are made and which was until recently the country's most valuable export). Coconuts, cashew nuts, rubber, cloves and a wide variety of spices grow on the coastal strip or in Zanzibar and Pemba.

Up to the time of independence Tanzania was completely exportorientated, while its industries were at a rudimentary stage. The Arusha Declaration, which was adopted in 1967, spelt out the country's overall strategy which emphasised a policy of industrialisation. This industrialisation policy led to the nationalisation of most of the privately owned firms. The outlook was not bad at that time. For example, manufacturing output from 1964-1973 had almost doubled, but it was hampered again after 1973 because of the worldwide increase in oil prices. This led to a fall in production in several important industries. Events after 1973, coupled with a decline in Tanzania's foreign reserves, led to a sharp deterioration in the balance of trade. This was mainly due to the unprecedented imports of food rather than increased imports of capital goods.

Statistical evidence reveals the problems of production when we compare data for the 1970s and the 1960s. During 1961-1971 the rate of inflation averaged 2.1% per annum, but between 1971 and 1977 the rate of inflation was at an average of 22.5%.

Table 1 below shows the balance of trade between 1971 and 1977 in millions of shillings.

**Table 1**  
**Balance of Trade in Tanzania from 1971 to 1977**

Year	Export	Import	Trade Balance
1971	1,777	2,678	- 901
1972	2,025	2,806	- 781
1973	2,302	3,410	- 1,108
1974	2,719	5,137	- 2,417

1975	2,434	5,424	- 2,990
1976	4,108	5,355	- 1,247
1977	4,482	6,160	- 1,712

Source: IBRD (1977, Table 3:1) and Bank of Tanzania Economic and Operations Report, June 1978, Table 20.

### **Women's Migration to Dar es Salaam**

Dar es Salaam is the capital city of Tanzania, with a population of about 1 million. It has most of the country's industries, and naturally most of the formal employment. Most of these industries have been faced with low productivity. This is due to the under-utilisation of the factories' production capacities. Most of the industries in Tanzania depend on imported raw materials whose prices are dictated by the suppliers. The shortage of raw materials, spare parts, lack of trained manpower to run the very expensive machines, and power interruptions due to lack of spare parts, have been among the factors contributing to the low productivity in the factories and of the workers at large.

Dar es Salaam, like any other urban area, is full of migrant labour. The migrants comprise both married men and women and single men and women. Both men's and women's migration to Dar es Salaam, together with the new economic and social conditions they face in the rural areas may be viewed by many as a potential source of rural change and a reflection of the conditions in the area of their migration. We can therefore say that the migration of women and men can be taken as an index of socio-economic change and symptomatic of problems in the rural areas.

Women, like men, in the rural areas felt that their subordination stems from the lack of job opportunities. This feeling gives them an urge to come to the city to look for employment. They feel a town to be a place where they could be exposed to new developing ideas and new social customs. They view the city as a place which has new markets and new economic ideas. Many women, therefore, find themselves in Dar es Salaam due to a number of reasons:

- i. Some of the unemployed women are local women born in Dar es Salaam, whose parents have been Dar es Salaam residents.
- ii. Some are wives of immigrants who decided to follow their husbands to Dar es Salaam in order to secure improved conditions and permanent jobs for their husbands.
- iii. Single women came with the specific purpose of finding employment or seeking further education.
- iv. Married women who are either divorced or widowed also come to Dar es Salaam to look for employment.

### **Opportunities for Employment for Low Income Women**

In Tanzania there is a women's organisation known as 'Umoja wa Wanawake Tanzania' (UWT). This started in 1958 as a women's section of TANU. After independence it changed to UWT. In 1977, with the formation of CCM, the UWT was made a party organ. Its main duties are to fight for and defend

women's rights. Among other activities, the UWT has been involved in different income generating activities such as cooperative shops, hair salons, and also in activities such as teaching sewing, cookery and domestic science, child health and the running of nursery schools. Since the UWT has been so active and concerned with women's affairs, the proposals which are put forward in this paper (on how to help women generate income) will be channelled through the UWT.

Low income women's employment can be divided into two sectors:

### **The Formal Sector**

This consists of the women who are employed either by the government, private firms or institutions, and are on the payroll. The formal sector can be subdivided into two sections:

#### **Skilled labour**

This comprises women who are employed in jobs such as typists, clerical assistants, sales clerks, accounts assistants, nursing assistants etc. Most of these jobs are held by women who have attained secondary school education, i.e. class twelve level.

#### **Unskilled labour**

This comprises those women who lack education, training or job experience. They may have gone to school up to standard seven level (the minimum primary school education level in Tanzania), or some may not have gone to school at all. They are mainly employed in the service sectors in jobs such as cleaners, messengers, or could be employed in, for example, a textile factory as packers or in a cashew nut factory where the majority of women are given a job of shelling the nuts and packing them in bags.

Both the skilled and unskilled women, despite being on the pay roll, have to engage themselves in some income generating activities to substitute their official income. Most of the women have backyard garden plots where they grow vegetables for eating and selling. Most of these activities are carried by women because of their traditional responsibility or role of engaging themselves in agricultural activities. Some women involve themselves in baking buns and leave relatives or children to sell them when they go to work. Apart from their individual activities, these women form saving groups among themselves. The saving groups are very useful because the women have the liberty of doing what they want with the money they receive from the others. Most of them invest their money into small businesses which keeps them surviving.

### **The Informal Sector**

This consists of women who are not employed by anybody. They are therefore self employed. These are either married to low income men or are single mothers who have families to take care of. Most of these have a very low level of education, or none at all. These women have a harder time of securing an income. In urban centres more than 20% of economically active women engage themselves in some form of agricultural activity, either near their residence or outside the city in the valleys. Apart from the agricultural activities, women engage themselves in small businesses such as cooking food and snacks for selling outside their houses or sometimes they move with their food to the industrial areas or construction sites to cook and sell to the workers. Those who do not cook engage themselves in activities

such as hair plaiting which is very popular in Dar es Salaam now. They may form a group of three or four women and sit where there is shelter and plait women's hair.

The self employed women are a very important sector in Dar es Salaam society. In 1971, for example, 41% of the urban labour force was engaged in the informal sector, and out of these 34% were women. It is therefore very important that we discuss ways and means by which these women could be helped to reduce the many responsibilities they face at home as producers, reproducers and managers. It is through helping these women that we can help improve child health, nutrition, and other community problems as well as decision making in the household.

### **Constraints on self employed women.**

Self employed women are faced with many problems because of the social division of labour, and their triple role as producers, reproducers and managers; their productivity becomes very low. As a result they tend to do all their business near or outside home. The constraints they face are outlined below:

#### **Organisation**

Many of the women would like to have an organised activity which will be continuous. They fail to achieve this because they often lack confidence in whatever they do and they lack skills in business management.

#### **Financing**

To start a worthwhile activity women need more capital than the amount they normally start with. In most cases, lack of sufficient capital makes them carry out their activities in intervals, i.e. making money and using it for more pressing needs and then starting again. Because of their unorganised activities women make very little profit. Sometimes they only just break even, resulting in a failure to purchase raw materials for their use.

#### **Harassment**

For those selling food and vegetables on the street, they are constantly harassed by the city authorities. They not only feel insecure but make losses by being forced to move from one place to another.

#### **Transport**

This is scarce and only available in plenty during the peak hours when people are going to the office and children are going to school. Women with their loads of vegetables or food to cook are denied the chance of boarding the buses and the privately owned buses are too expensive for these women.

#### **Lack of benefits**

Self employed women do not have the benefits usually enjoyed by employed women. Upon delivery of their children employed women are given a three months' paid maternity leave. The self employed women on the other hand have to stop their business, stay home and look after their newborn. The



opportunity cost for staying home is very high; they are therefore forced by circumstances to start working after one or two months of rest. They have to move from one place to another with their children on their backs. This exposes the children to problems such as infection.

### **Lack of pension**

Employed women have a pension system whereby they pay a certain amount of their salary to the National Provident Fund every month. This money is paid back in a lump sum when they retire or stop working. It is a very good way of saving money for these women.

### **Lack of childcare**

Unlike many employed women, the self employed women cannot afford to get helpers to take care of their children while they are working. They are not exposed to things like childcare facilities whereby they could leave their children and go to work. They therefore have to take their children to the working places. The children are in turn exposed to unhealthy conditions in market places or construction sites. Sometimes they are forced to leave their children under the care of immature sisters or old grandmothers.

It is within this context that it is felt that something has to be done to help women in their income generating activities. They need income to buy food for their families; they also need to clothe and educate their children. Single mothers also need money to build themselves houses.

### **Proposal**

#### **Group Organisation**

Based on the problems I outlined in the previous section, the best way to help low income women appears to be through organising them into small groups. Organisation in small groups is preferred as small groups are easier to manage. Also, providing childcare facilities is easier when the group is small.

The group could be composed of about thirty or thirty-five women. Organisation will be achieved through the help of the UWT and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. Group members should come from the same area and should be people who know each other. The selected groups could meet with the UWT or the Social Welfare officers and try to identify issues which can best be served by collective action, by assessing and using all the different skills in the group. The group itself should discuss the time commitment on members in the group and ensure flexibility in scheduling meetings to ensure maximum participation.

#### **Services for the Group**

Services to be provided to the group should be the responsibility of the UWT in collaboration with the Ministry. The group should try as much as possible to work on a self-help scheme. Members could contribute some money as initial capital but this should be supplemented because it is unlikely to be sufficient. Other sources of resources can be explored such as approaching private organisations, e.g. the Rotary Club, the Lions Club, or the Tanzania Round Table. There is also the possibility of getting

commercial services to help, such as the Cooperative and Rural Development Bank who have been issuing loans to some income generating activities. Once expanded and well established, the group could seek help from the United Nations organisations such as UNICEF.

## **Recommendations**

A number of income generating activities will be proposed below. These are activities which can easily be carried out in Dar es Salaam and which will not only benefit women but the whole community.

## **Choice of a project**

In choosing a project several points have to be borne in mind. The group has to bear in mind the time and level of commitment available. Also the project should be, ideally, small and achievable - possibly with the idea of expanding later into a larger project. For example, a group could start with a vegetable garden with the idea of expanding it into food production for a restaurant etc.

## **Timing**

This is very important so as to avoid conflicts with activities in the peak agricultural season. The pace OF the project should also be controlled so that the women's ability to manage is not outstripped.

## **Services and support**

Before starting the project, childcare services for the women should be arranged. This should, however, be first discussed among the women. One suggestion could be for the women to agree among themselves that one or two of them would look after all the members' children, and for them to be counted as having participated in the project. This arrangement could be on a rotational basis. This would be facilitated if the group consisted of women living near each other within the community.

## **Types of Income Generating Activities**

The most successful income generating activities are those based on a traditional skill but taught by introducing new methods and technologies which can increase both productivity and the marketability of goods. Based on women's skills in agricultural work and their experience in

domestic production, the proposed projects will be divided into two sections, mainly agricultural activities and food processing.

### **Agricultural activities**

These include the following:

- a. The growing of vegetables such as tomatoes, aubergines, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, green peppers etc. These have the advantage of having a market throughout the year, and during the dry season they can easily be grown with irrigation.

Marketing for vegetables could be done through normal channels, i.e. through the markets, supermarkets, schools, hotels and various other institutions.

- b. Maize. Maize does well in Dar es Salaam but it has to be grown during the rainy season.
- c. Poultry, i.e. chicken and ducks. Experience has shown that the market is constant, and the business is profitable.

### **Food processing**

This can be done in a number of different ways:

- a. Cooking chapatti, doughnuts, rice fritters and other types of buns, to sell to kiosks, schools, supermarkets, hotels, construction sites, industrial areas and in residential areas.
- b. Cooking food such as rice with beans or meat, maize flour meal (ugali) with beans or meat, cassava (could be boiled or roasted). All these are sometimes served with, for example, spinach (greens) and are very popular.
- c. Grinding mill. It could be a costly project to begin with because the group has to purchase the milling machine. The Rural Development Bank for the purchase of the flour mill. The project should be very profitable, however, as there are always people going to the mills to have their maize, wheat, rice and finger millet prepared.

### **Advantages of the projects**

The above mentioned projects will be of a great advantage to the community. Outputs from one project can be used as the inputs of another project. Community development, however, is not only about economic earning but also about the provision of healthy people, improved nutrition and childcare, and these aspects could be realised from these projects:

- a. Vegetable gardening and maize- growing are very important projects because they increase nutritional values not only to customers but also to the families of the women who grow the food.
- b. Chicken and ducks also provide nutritional value to the community, especially to children who need eggs and meat for a balanced proper diet, and at the same time manure from chicken and ducks is very good for vegetable growing.
- c. Some of the projects may not be directly concerned with income generating activities but if they save time and improve people's health then they contribute to the economic value of the community. For example, in providing for childcare facilities women become more mobile and get more time to work on their projects, thus they are able to produce more. Also, provision of nutritional food reduces disease, producing a more healthy population and a drop in the mortality rate.

### **Proposed Project**

Food preparation or street food selling has been given little attention in national planning, as it has

always been considered undesirable by many city authorities. As a result, as mentioned earlier, the street food vendors have been under constant harassment by the city authorities. Some think that the activities are not hygienic enough, but if an organised group is formed it will be done so under various regulations whereby cleanliness and all hygienic conditions are improved.

- i. Choice of a project: It appears that a joint project of vegetable gardening along with food preparation is most feasible, as the two projects integrate with each other; one being a source of material and the other being a market. The vegetables will be sold not only to the markets, hotels and individuals but will also provide raw materials for the food preparation project. The food preparation will involve foods such as rice with beans or meat, 'ugali' with beans or meat or sometimes with vegetables.

Together with the sale of the food, the group should sell fruits and snacks for those who feel they cannot afford a meal.

- ii. Organisation of the group: It is proposed that the group should come from a village in Msasani Area, known as Mikoroshoni. Mikoroshoni is a squatter area where such activities are very popular. It has a substantial number of bachelors living in rented rooms without cooking facilities. They require tea and buns for lunch or dinner. There are also some families who depend very much on street food because they are incapable of organising the food themselves to be prepared in their houses - this could be because of financial problems.

Mikoroshoni is near Oyster Bay and Mikocheni areas, where for the time being there is much construction taking place. As these areas have no hotels or restaurants nearby, the construction and industrial sectors depend on women who go there and cook for them.

It is proposed that a group of between fifteen and twenty women be organised. The most important thing is for women to be organised for an economic activity which will later lead to the formation of more groups. This should raise no objections, because it will be seen as an extension of the traditional domestic production role of women into the public domain. Organisation should start with a meeting of the women in the group. The head of the group who will be chosen by the members should be responsible, together with two other women, i.e. one in charge of finance and another in charge of purchasing, in seeing that the women have enough food to cook with and other cooking facilities.

The group could divide themselves in such a way that while some are cooking others are working in the vegetable gardens while others are selling fruits and buns in the nearby industries or in the community. Two or three women should be in charge of the children left behind. The responsibilities for taking care of the children and these other jobs should be rotational so as to give each one an opportunity of experiencing what the other is doing.

- iii. Role of UWT The project will need proper supervision. It is suggested that the UWT, being a women's organisation, negotiate with the government to get an expert person who should once in a while supervise the project and consider the following points:

- a. Monitoring and evaluation of the project. To look at the strengths and weaknesses of the project in areas such as skills, and relevant training for women.

- b. Market survey. The group has to be careful with marketing of its products especially in the choice of product to sell to the purchasers. For example, vegetables should be planted according to the quality in demand at that particular time. One example is when people prefer

- buying 'money maker' tomatoes, or people preferring rounded aubergines to long ones.
- c. Financing. The financial position of the project should be as bright as possible. There should be a constant check up of prevailing prices, so as to price products in such a way that production is not affected. The group should also compare itself to other producers in terms of the quality of the products produced.
  - d. Women should be trained in management and long term decision making. This will enable them to discuss matters such as what to do with, for example, generated income; should the money realised be retained or divided amongst the members? If so, how should it be divided and how much money should be left for reinvestment? Reinvestment has to be stressed because the project has to be self financing.

### **Advantages of the Project**

These include the following:

- i. There is no doubt that the food processing will succeed because of the increasing number of people (consumers) who move into the Mikoroshoni area.
- ii. The project is not a new one; women have traditionally been engaged in those activities so they have acquired skills and most of the equipment needed for cooking is available in most households. The important thing is to now introduce better and more hygienic ways of cooking.
- iii. The food which is sold near home sells very quickly. The prices are cheaper than food sold in restaurants so the turnover is very high, making the business very lucrative. For example, one of the women who cooks rice and beans or ugali and beans said that there are times that she nets between 1,000-1,200/= Tanzanian shillings per month. This is a lot of money compared to the official minimum pay of 810/= per month.
- iv. Food preparation will help curb, to some extent, the malnutrition problem in Tanzania. Food sold by women will be of a nutritional value which many of the families could not afford individually. For example, there is a scarcity of items such as cooking oil, but most of the food sold will be cooked in oil. This is because the women buy as a group and can therefore afford to buy in bulk at a cheaper price.
- v. There has always been a great emphasis by the government on increasing the production of traditional small farmers. Encouragement and incentives to these farmers will greatly improve the informal and formal distributive infrastructures. The proposed project can contribute to this policy because it will depend mainly on the small farmers as a source of raw materials for their produce; and the small farmers will find a more reliable market for their produce.
- vi. The urban consumers in Dar es Salaam normally prefer imported grains to the locally produced grains such as sorghum, millet, cassava etc. This is because most of them are not experts in preparing it and at the same time it takes time to prepare it. If the women's group is well organised and prepares the domestically grown grains and then sells them to people they will be eaten without any problem. Experience has shown that people are more responsive to domestically grown grains when they can be obtained cooked. If we could encourage consumption of domestically grown grains, there will be an improvement in the balance of trade because the government will then spend less on importing grains.

- vii. The group, if it succeeds, could serve as an example to other women's groups. Also, the project will meet women's practical needs of earning an income and access to credit. This in turn will lead to their strategic needs of economic independence being met. Due to the money they earn, they also become more able to make decisions in the house. For single mothers, it could lead to a situation where they could save enough money to enable them to build houses for themselves and their family.

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## V. Evaluation of a Government Income Generating Project for Women in Kwara, Nigeria

Margaret Tinwke Erinle

### Background to the Project

In the early 1960s the Kwara State Government formed a Women's Programme Unit as an organ of the Community Development Department in the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development. The objectives of the women's programme unit are as follows:

- i. To identify and create income generating activities for unemployed women throughout the state.
- ii. To form policies for women's activities throughout the state.
- iii. To form and organise clubs for the women in the state.
- iv. To organise or coordinate committees on women and development.

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate one of these objectives, that is to identify and create income generating activities for the unemployed women. The project is an anti-poverty programme for low income women in that it aims at increasing the standard of living of low income women by providing them with basic skills to raise the level of their productivity. It is also a welfare type of programme because the tools and materials needed for the immediate practical skills are provided by the ministry.

This objective involved forming a women's centre for unemployed women (invited through their village heads) in order to teach them how to make various articles for sale, such as clothing, food and handicrafts, and also to teach them skills in cookery, nutrition, home management, childcare, health and sanitation.

The ministry officials visit the centre once or twice per week depending on the choice of women trainees. The training continues for nine to twelve months at the end of which time the women will graduate and certificates are awarded to the successful candidates. Some of the graduates are employed by the state ministry or local government, whereas some set up a small business for local trade making use of their training. The training has been given free as the government realises that the women will not be able to pay for their training. Also, the materials used during the training are supplied by the ministry and by UNICEF aid.

The publicity for the women's programme comes through the mass media, village heads, house-to-house visits, and also through exhibitions during the graduation period of the trained women. A lot of women have benefited from the programme and the attendance has been very encouraging. Apart from the monetary benefits the women derived from this programme, there are health and sanitation lessons to help them in their day-to-day lives. The programme also improves the social life of these women in that it creates a forum to meet with other women and share their problems and life experiences.

Recently, a number of industries have been springing up and the level of imported materials has increased. These new developments affect the market of the articles produced by the women because the industries are at an advantage in terms of the quality and quantity of articles they can manufacture. Due to the low marketability of their products, a number of women are gradually losing interest in the

programme and are looking for better alternatives of making money, especially in processing. This is much more lucrative than the programme the ministry is embarking upon with these women.

Gari processing involves growing cassava to obtain root tubers. The skin is peeled off, and grated. This is then left in a covered basket for about two or three days to ferment. The fermented cassava will be sieved finely and roasted in large pots over an open fire, making it ready for sale. Gari selling is very lucrative because it is a staple food in Nigeria and very cheap to buy. It is also very easy to prepare or cook. Because of the profit attraction from gari processing, a number of women in the centre prefer to engage in the trade. As a result the attendance in each class at the women's centre is falling daily.

### **Evaluation of the Project**

Evaluation will be based on the following points: the extent to which the programme recognised women's roles as reproducers, producers and community managers; recognised the needs of female headed households and of women from different social classes; and, finally, recognition of women's practical and strategic gender needs.

- i. The classes are held at the centre around ten to eleven o'clock when these women's husbands were out at work and some of their children in school, giving women the time to attend the classes. In this sense the project organisers recognised women's role as reproducers. In addition women with pre-school children were allowed to bring their children into the centre, where there were kitchen attendants to look after them.
- ii. Only the women without work were admitted into the women's centre because the objective of the project was to generate money for unemployed women, which reveals that the programme also took the production role of women into consideration.
- iii. Occasionally the whole community was expected to carry out environmental sanitation, that is sweeping the surroundings and cleaning. Other types of community work such as road repairs or working on a construction site, that will be of benefit to the whole community, are commonly carried out by both women and men. This type of community work is not paid for. The ministry officials recognise the importance of such communal participation, and therefore no women's centre classes are held at the same time as the community development work is taking place. In view of this, it appears that the programme also recognised women's role as community managers.
- iv. Women headed households were not very common in the rural areas, where the centres were located, and therefore the ministry did not have separate programmes for women headed households as opposed to the nuclear or polygamous households. Thus the project did not appear to recognise the household setting.
- v. The programme did recognise, however, the different socio-economic classes of women; soldiers' wives, for example, have their centre run differently from that of farmers' wives. This is so because soldiers' wives may be less busy in the morning whereas farmers' wives will then be on the farm fetching food for the family. The ministry therefore planned classes for women of the same socio-economic class to suit their time schedules.
- vi. Initially the project met the practical gender needs of the group of women because a number of them were able to generate income on their own and to a certain extent the degree of dependence on their husbands was reduced. However, the programme is now failing to meet the women's

practical gender needs because of the low profit realised from their products. The major constraint on the success of the project is that these women are a very poor set of women and what interests them most is how to improve their economic status. The ministry on its part, instead of finding other lucrative projects for these women to arouse their interest in the programme, are still bent on running the rejected project. As a result the attendance of these women in classes is very low. Since the women's earning power is still very low compared to that of their male counterparts, they still have to depend on their husbands to raise money for their family and therefore the project has not met the strategic gender needs of these low income women.

## **Intervention**

The major problem is making the ministry see the need to create a marketable project for the trainees in order to arouse their interest in the women's programme. This problem can be tackled by observing the new areas that are attracting these women such as making.

Gari making appears to be the most sensible area in which to concentrate an income generating project for women. The ministry may be against such an agriculture orientated programme, since people in the women's programme are not professional in this area. However, ministry field workers could work in cooperation with experienced agriextension workers. The women could be encouraged to grow cassava on their own and not depend only on the products bought from men, so that the project can yield them high profit. The problem of land for cassava cultivation will not arise because Kwaran society allows people to use land for cultivation freely (only buildings are not allowed on another's land).

The present women's centre could be converted into a childcare centre. Since the women will now be working in the field, they will not be able to carry their children, working in the hot sun. The women can rotate the task of caring for the children with the help of the kitchen attendants.

If these recommendations are not accepted, there are various ways of improving the present project:

- i. The women can be advised to contribute a small amount of money - monthly or weekly. This money, when it reaches a reasonable amount, can be used to buy machines so that they can produce a better quality and quantity of products.
- ii. The ministry can arrange a contact with the ministry of education to give school uniforms to the women at the centre to sew. In this way they will be assured of a good market. In addition, the ministry of health can give their bedding to the women to sew.
- iii. UNICEF assistants can be called in to supply the women with modern equipment.
- iv. The project can be reviewed from time to time following the trends of change in the community itself.
- v. Finally, the programme can be converted into a series of bottom up type of project. If the trainees are allowed to choose the projects which interest them, then the response to such projects will be greater than that of the top down type of project. The ministry on their part can choose what they consider to be the most lucrative project out of those suggested by the trainees.

## **VI. Evaluation of a Government Project for Low Income Women in Juba, Sudan**

Norma Fodul

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the methodology, design and implementation of a programme project for women's groups in low income communities in the Equatorial Region of Juba in Southern Sudan.

### **Programme Background**

The support unit (SU) for the project is a unit within the Department of Community Development under the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Cooperatives and Rural Development. It was designed to organise and assist the following:

- i. Genuine self-help projects in rural as well as in urban areas of the Juba region;
- ii. Research and information gathering;
- iii. Training of local leaders and community development officers.

In 1983 the SU set up a women's programme to organise and assist women's groups in low income generating activities. The SU received its initial funding from Euro Action Accord. However, the responsibility for upgrading the project depends on the group members, and thus the programme combines top down and bottom up approaches.

The objectives of the project were to:

- i. Increase women's productivity;
- ii. Improve women's income and encourage women to be self work on a self-help basis;
- iii. Help to improve family life especially the lives of children;
- iv. Improve the standard of living conditions of the community.

### **Project Background**

The Maridi Bimongo Women's Group (which translates as Daylight) is in one of the biggest towns in Juba; Maridi is about 189 miles from Juba in the western part of the region.

The group was organised and formed in July 1983 by local community development officers. The target group comprised housewives and female headed households, and the total number in the group is 36. Committee members comprise a chairperson, secretary and treasurer and their deputies; these were elected through a voting procedure. The chairperson was elected because she had experience in

community development group work, whereas the secretary was well educated and she could help in keeping the records and files. The treasurer was elected as she was a lawyer and an influential woman in the group. About 75% of the group members came from low income communities, and the majority were illiterate. The members meet monthly to discuss issues related to their project and to identify their practical needs such as access to income generating activity and access to education such as adult literacy evening classes. These two activities of production and education take place four times a week.

- i. **Training** Adult literacy evening classes are very necessary as 75% of the group members are illiterate. They therefore need to learn how to read and write. In addition they have also been taught in the following subjects: cooperative agriculture; community development; nutrition and cookery; home improvement and childcare; and health and sanitation. The languages of instruction are simple Arabic and English. The teachers are community development officers and sometimes they receive help from local primary school teachers. Problems occur in the form of rain and wind during the rainy season. Then lessons cannot be held out of doors and instead take place in the church. There is also a shortage of visual aids, books and teachers.
- ii. **Productive work** The group is involved in productive activities for income generation such as sewing and dying cloth and children's dressmaking, knitting and embroidery; cooking food; and vegetable gardening for nutrition demonstration. Problems resulted from lack of participation by the women, lack of a market to sell goods at, and lack of a centre at which to carry out project work.

## **Evaluation and Recommendations**

### **Evaluation**

Criteria for evaluation of the success or failure of any project were not standardised; they differed according to who was doing the evaluation. Other problems include the following:

#### **Lack of market**

Lack of marketing outlets prevented the group from developing new products and designs. This highlights the fact that it is imperative to make thorough marketing studies before any commercial activities are started. It is also necessary to identify the practical needs of women and not to assume that the women are already aware of them; sometimes they may not know their needs or fail to identify them. It is also important to test a market with samples of new products before taking up large scale production. If possible the study should be carried out by someone with experience and skills in that particular activity or product being pursued.

#### **Low participation rates**

Poor participation levels become a problem due to the lack of recognition of the triple role of women. Solutions to this problem include making childcare provision available to the women. This can be done through self help cooperation since women traditionally have cooperation amongst themselves, e.g. one or two persons have to be assigned to take care of the children on a rotating basis. Alternatively, a neighbourhood centre must be designed for the residential area or in work places. Secondly, the timing of activities must be considered. Evening hours are not appropriate to the women's project work, due to the demands of domestic work. It is much better for activities to take place in the afternoon for the rural

based women, but for the urban working class women evenings may be better. Thirdly, project activities are not interesting or appropriate to the women in terms of what is being produced, as activities only involve using skills which are already known to them, e.g. sewing, handicrafts, etc. Therefore, training in other skills is necessary, e.g. poultry raising, masonry or carpentry.

### **Lack of a centre**

Lack of a centre also contributed to the low level of women's participation in the project work. By training them in the above mentioned skills, however, it can be possible for them to build their own centre by themselves. This will be relatively cheap and increase women's income levels.

### **Recommendations**

- i. Training opportunities must be available to all the women's group members which in turn will allow them greater access to education and employment, and also assist in encouraging group participation in project work.
- ii. An integrated working relationship with the international and national agencies must be encouraged within women's organisation in order to increase access to material assistance and training opportunities.
- iii. Mobilisation of working women for joint economic and social action can be brought about by exerting group pressure to demand social and political rights for women. Democracy (freedom) for women to decide for themselves must be achieved.
- iv. Before undertaking any income generating projects, identification of the products which are needed by the community should take place, taking into account the market price, design etc.
- v. Groups should exchange ideas with other groups, both in the country and outside the country.

### **Conclusion**

In this paper I have described briefly my previous and recent experience in developing new training, activity and income generating programmes for low income women. I would like to finish by leaving you with the song of the Maridi Bimongo's women's group. The song is as follows:

We are Equatorial Women  
We are the Equatorial Women's Group  
We are Equatorial Women  
We have come to develop  
    Open the door, Support Unit  
    Open the door, Community Development Department

We are fighting for our progress  
We are the Equatorial Women's Group  
We are Equatorial Women  
It is time for women to develop  
    Open the door, Support Unit

Open the door, Community Development Department

Let us show our leadership

We are the Equatorial Women's Group

We are Equatorial Women

We need equality with men

Open the door, Support Unit

Open the door, Community Development Department

Let God give us power to develop

our Sudan

Let God give us power to develop

our group

We are the Equatorial Women's Group

## **VII. Evaluation of a Small Scale Enterprise Project in Port Sudan, Sudan**

Nefissah Abdurahman and Roghia Osman

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to describe and evaluate the small scale enterprise project which is being run by Euro Action Accord in Port Sudan, Sudan.

Sudan is situated in north east Africa. It is Africa's largest country and the two rivers, the White and Blue Niles, meet in the capital city of Khartoum. It has a population of 21 million.

### **Socio-economic Background**

#### **Port Sudan**

This is the second biggest town in Sudan and it is the only port. After independence (1965) Port Sudan had a population of 50,000 and today has an estimated population of 500,000. The yearly growth of its population fluctuates between 8% and 9%, while the natural growth rate is estimated to be 2- 3%. Thus immigration accounts for more than 6% yearly growth. This is mainly because of the following points:

- i. The continuous armed struggle in bordering Eritrea (Ethiopia). The armed struggle not only implies heavy losses on the men but also ties a considerably higher number of men to the field. Hence most of the people coming to Port Sudan as refugees are women and children.
- ii. Studies on family migration have revealed a very clear pattern of ordinary female immigration into Port Sudan.

Fluctuating labour demand, the high cost of living, totally inadequate public services, adverse climatic conditions, shortage of water and generally poor living conditions in themselves make Port Sudan a place where few people stay voluntarily. Thus Port Sudan is not only a national turntable of goods but also of people. (They come to raid the town for cash.) Refugees can choose to settle in one of the camps, but for those with an urban background this town represents a stepping stone to real and imaginary new careers abroad in North America, Western Europe, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, and it provides an opportunity for illegal immigration.

Almost 90% of the town's inhabitants live in squatter areas or in so called fourth class residential areas. In these areas plots are originally standardised in size (16 x 111 m), and organised in rectangular blocks. Communal taps are situated at every 110- 150 houses. Transport and educational facilities though not adequate are in general better than in squats. The same decline in rainfall which has pushed nomads and farmers into town has affected water supply, while the demand has increased from 7,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day in 1965 to 40,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day. (The daily supply of water is 16,000 m<sup>3</sup> on average.)

#### **Ethnic segregation**



Class differentiation and ethnic segregation are the major forms of socio-economic distinction. Immigrants appear to reinforce the ethnic differences amongst themselves in residential areas. Whole blocks and sometimes up to half a quarter form tribal clusters. Ethnic segregation overrules socio-economic differences. The Beja group, being the owners of land, look down on the Beni Amer and Habab groups. At the same time the Northerners claim superiority over the three nomadic tribes, who in turn despise the Muba, Fellata and Southerners, whom they associate with dirty jobs and illegal brewing. The female Christian refugees from Eritrea, Tigray and other parts of Ethiopia are (rightly or wrongly) associated with prostitution. All these various ethnic, cultural and religious groups including small Coptic, Indian and Jewish minorities are identifiable. Social interaction between the main categories is severely restricted and intermarriage almost non-existent.

## **Employment and Production**

After squatters started settling in the south and south west, industries and industrial infrastructure followed. Industrial development has today taken the lead and appears to anticipate further town expansion. A refinery, a third spinning mill and a heavy industrial area have been located 2 km south of the town centre connecting the old industrial centre and port facilities in the north.

Labour Department sources state that of those employed in the formal public and private sectors 86% work in commercial and services establishment, 12% in industries and 2% in other areas. A mere 1.3% of the total number of these establishments employ as many as 73% of the working force in commerce and services. Fifteen families are said to own 80% of the real estate of Port Sudan and to dominate private commerce and industries.

When the drought had decimated the herds and most Beja sections began to settle in urban centres or moved elsewhere, some people resorted to cutting firewood and charcoal burning as a means of living in the mountains and providing Port Sudan with scarce fuel. These resources are virtually exhausted today and a new wave of migration from the mountains has begun. Port Sudan attracts these people who expect labour because they see its industries and factories.

## **Women's Work**

An estimated 12,000 women make a considerable cash contribution to their respective family budget. Out of all existing options, self employment appears to be the most gratifying form of income generation, economically and socio- culturally. Approximately 4,000 women have already taken to self employment and approximately 2,000 of these are the breadwinners in their families. Almost half of the female breadwinners are refugee women, although refugees constitute no more than 12% of the total population of Port Sudan.

Approximately 30% of the 13,000 firms operative in the informal sector in the squatter area are run by women. These activities can be divided into basically five categories, each comprising a number of different specialisations or industries:

- i. Processing of raw materials: This is a minor subsector involving a few Fellata women in hand grinding of grains and hand pressing of oil seeds, and some Beja women in tanning hides.
- ii. Rush plaiting (mats, fans, baskets and broom making) are also urban survivals of typical rural industries. Due to the cost of importing the raw materials from far-off places and the high cost of living in Port Sudan, they are not profitable and therefore they are not a fulltime

occupation. In addition they have to compete with the ready-made product, from these areas which are made by rural women in slack periods.

- iii. Production of textiles: This comprises tailoring, knitting, embroidery, crochet and dying with natural dying materials. The total number of women depending on these as their main source of income in the six squatter areas are not more than 50.
- iv. Processing of perishable food stuffs and catering: This is the biggest subsector in terms of number and variety of jobs. It provides approximately 2,700 jobs in the squatting areas of which Kisra/Ingera Malting is the most important (2,500 jobs). The second industry within this subsector is general catering for truck drivers in the lorry parks. The remainder is almost equally divided into spaghetti making, groundnut paste, cake, the production of sweets, ice cream and traditional medicines and perfumes.
- v. The fifth subsector apart from Mobile Laundry Services consists of Beauty Services such as hair plaiting and dressing, henna decorations, removal of body hair and preparation of brides. All these activities do not involve middle class women.

Altogether there are 20 different industries in which women are engaged. The total number of different income generating activities in the informal sectors is between 60 and 70. Only in five of these industries do women compete with men (i.e. in pastry, sweets and spaghetti making, in the production of paper bags and rush plaiting).

There are women who are desperate and motivated enough to enter certain industries, but who, because it is culturally unacceptable for these groups to be operating in these industries, cannot take them up so they are forced to expand domestic activities within their homes.

## **Project Description and Evaluation**

The main aim of the programme is to improve the general living conditions of the poor through their skills by allocating loans to individuals and also to provide them with management advice regarding general business administration. It also aims to assist small business operators to overcome some of their business constraints such as marketing and skills.

## **Project Design**

Port Sudan small scale enterprises programme has three major elements on which the programme design was based. These are:

### **Management advisory teams (MATs)**

Their main functions are:

- i. Providing necessary assistance to poor business owners; regular general advice for individual firms on request; coordinating seminars on simple book keeping; and general business administration. The MATs also have to assist in the preparation of the viability studies on new business ideas. On the other hand the marketing coordination (which is apart from the MATs) is responsible for marketing and raw materials.

- ii. Technical services Their main function is to provide technical services at a quarter level and to allow equal access to various means of transport (water tank, donkey cart, transport of goods) and also to make available tools and machinery which normally are not available in the informal sector. This department is also responsible for helping to alleviate constraints and assist in maintenance and repairs problems faced by petty commodity producers.
- iii. Industrial consultancy and development centres (ICDCs). The main function of the proposed ICDCs is to serve the programme components and various services. These centres are envisaged as low cost buildings and consist of office, storage and workshop facilities with independent power and water supply. The ICDCs are supposed to accommodate the marketing, procurement and the leasing departments.

## **Project Implementation**

Implementation of Small Scale Enterprises began in February 1984.

In May 1984 the sub-offices were opened in the five largest quarters which are the areas in Port Sudan most affected by Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees. The programme received altogether 525 applicants, made 400 initial home visits, 292 initial business analyses and accepted and processed 100 applicants. In late June 1984, the first applicant received financial assistance. The percentage of the female assisted is 40% of the total (as per April 1985). It is less than the number of males assisted because most of the women's businesses are home based and it was often difficult for the fieldworker to find them. This low number may also be due to the fact that women are playing an active role in informal borrowing from relatives and friends. This idea is widely acknowledged within the low income community. 9096 of these women are female heads of household, i.e. 'main breadwinner', with more than 300 direct dependants.

Euro Action Accord is giving special attention to women, and female headed households in particular. During 1984 there was a shortage of sorghum and this of course affected the poor women clients who were engaging in *kisra* and *ingera* making (the local staple food, which is like pancake). This shortage forced them to stop their business, so the programme bought 250 bags of sorghum which cost £\$23,350 and sold them on credit to its clients in groups of three.

## **Characteristics of the Female Target Groups**

The starting point of Euro Action Accord Port Sudan Small Scale Enterprise Programme, as mentioned earlier, has been to assist in increasing and stabilising incomes, facilitating entrance into self employment, removing and/or easing some of the constraints on entrance into, and survival in, business, particularly for those poor and uneducated women who bear the main responsibility for a family or household.

In the programme, the average age of the female heads is 34 years and the average size of their household is 3.8 persons. 63.2% of the total number of the female households had no education, 8.6% had completed primary school, but none had gone beyond primary level. In addition, 88.1% had no training at all; 21.9% had some sort of training such as short term sewing or dressmaking courses. The educational level of self employed female heads of household is the lowest of all groups: 77.0% had no education at all, while only 1.8% completed primary school. None of the self employed women claimed to have had some sort of training. Their occupation is all home-based and extensions of domestic activities which they do not regard to be something which could be taught or learnt.

Study of average housing conditions for self employed female household heads revealed that 14.2% lived in rented houses and 58.8% in houses of their own.

Their initial capital was almost £50.00 and the turnover per month is £200-250; the average level of spending is £230, which is just on the borderline of absolute poverty. About 68% of the female headed households received their main income from self employment, 11% from remittance, 7% from domestic service, 5% from prostitution and 8% from wage labour.

## **Evaluation**

Since implementation a major problem has been expansion of the businesses, businesses run by women and those producing particular products.

## **Women**

Most of the businesses run by women use traditional skills and usually expand from their domestic activities such as food processing, sweet making and dressmaking, as they lack the skills to go into other, maybe more profitable, businesses. These women also face the problem of lack of security and police harassment. Sometimes the police pick on them, considering their activities as illegal ones, particularly for those market based activities. This harassment prevents the business from growing. In addition, these women are isolated and this can be a major constraint to expansion. Some of them lack the confidence in themselves and some feel that it is not necessary to cooperate as business owners (for example, in terms of being partners in business) or even speaking with one voice in order to increase their control over their businesses.

## **Products**

The major problem facing the product is raw materials and marketing. One of Euro Action Accord's major aims is to reduce the selling price of the items produced by the informal sector, by assisting existing firms and encouraging new firms to be established. However, due to the marketing problem the programme could not affect the level of high competition so as to lower the selling prices of any items. This happened because the marketing and supply coordination in the programme is not working. People were merely given loans, and they looked for marketing possibilities themselves. Half of the clients were producing the same items so the market was flooded.

In addition, some of the raw materials are not available in the market place and their supply is either dominated by dealers and hoarders who only sell in bulk or it is dominated by the government distributors. The poor clients lack sufficient capital to buy in bulk and they may also lack storage facilities. Sometimes, however, they are forced to buy raw materials from the black market and this of course increases the selling price of the product and may cause them to lose

many of their customers. All these constraints mitigate against business expansion of the informal sector.

## **Recommendations**

The programme design is obviously gender blind; all the programme objectives are designed as if males and females have the same needs and responsibilities in their daily lives, forgetting that the participation

of women in the labour force is constrained by their triple role commitment as producer, reproducer and urban manager.

The programme merely considered women as producers, expecting that every single penny lent to them would lead to growth within their business, i.e. the emphasis was on expanding their business rather than any daily requirements of their household. With regard to urban planning, building and setting up their businesses is only one among several goals for female heads of households; others include taking care of their children, furthering their education, meeting other obligations imposed by social-cultural standards, and facing the problem of daily expenses for the household needs given the high rate of inflation.

To save time for women and to alleviate the burden of child responsibility for them the programme needs to consider childcare facilities. Although the extended family still plays an important role in Sudan, in the long run childcare will be a real problem. Even now there are a few cases where some women are considering child responsibilities as one of the major constraints which forces them to limit their productivity.

Regarding skill as a constraint most of the businesses run by women use traditional skills, which are merely an expansion of domestic responsibilities. Thus in order not to have marketing problems it is necessary to ensure that there is a demand for the new product, for the making of which women are going to be trained in new skills.

Apart from their business women have other needs, such as household needs (feeding children, clothing etc.) so they often do not have enough money to buy raw materials in bulk. However, this can be done by Euro Action Accord by building a centre to house raw materials or by developing a good relationship with the wholesalers, in order to reduce the cost price of raw materials. With regard to marketing it is necessary to consider two things: price and product. To resolve these two major aspects we need to have a marketing survey in order to know which item has a high demand; who buys it and at what price. Secondly, information is needed on the activities of all clients. Depending on the results of this information, clients can be advised about the most profitable options open to them .

## **Conclusion**

Referring to issues of gender aware intervention, the programme needs to focus on women's groups as a means for women to share the risks and benefits of borrowing. Also, together women may overcome obstacles which they cannot face as individuals. More effective techniques and additional forms of assistance need to be proposed in order to reach the women within the target group and include those who are excluded from present assistance. Finally, in order to assess the interaction between projects and women, it is very important to know what women do and how they categorise their activities, particularly how they reconcile their triple roles. These components provide a sufficient basis for designing and implementing a programme which can best benefit (and be benefited by) women's participation.

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to thank the entire DPU staff, particularly Caroline Moser, Course Coordinator, Caren Levy, Assistant Course Coordinator, and Sylvia Chant, Course Assistant, who have made my experience in this course truly meaningful and worthwhile. Likewise, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all the course participants who have in their own particular ways enriched my knowledge, awareness and experience and for sharing themselves in a most profound and congenial manner.

I also thank my sponsoring agency, the UN Habitat, particularly Mr Hildebrand who has made my course participation possible. Finally, I wish to acknowledge Ms Mafe Apacible-Kretz for introducing the course to me and to all the MMC officials and staff who have given me all the required support throughout the course.



## **VIII. Gender Awareness in Regional Planning in Metropolitan Manila, The Philippines**

Amelia Sayo

### **Introduction**

This report attempts to evaluate the extent of gender awareness in the regional planning activities within the Metropolitan Manila Area in light of the assumptions and criteria given in the short source on Planning with Women for Urban Development. It provides initial policy recommendations covering certain sectoral issues of concern in which gender planning could well be incorporated, i.e. in order to further the interests and welfare of low income women in Metropolitan Manila at the policy, programme and project levels. Finally, it provides a framework for institutional arrangements and activities necessary in order to implement the recommendations put forward.

Due to data constraints, this report does not allow an in- depth analysis of all sectoral planning issues in terms of gender awareness. Rather, it tackles only the sector of income and employment and transport on a broad policy perspective as supported by available planning information. These sectors are considered as priority areas in which policies could further be reviewed or examined as to the extent to which the actual gender needs of the constituents have been recognised and addressed.

### **Women and Planning in Metropolitan Manila**

In the Metropolitan Manila Area, women comprise 52.1% of the population and 53.3% of its labour force. Considering their large representation, Metropolitan Manila's female population can be truly recognised as a most potent force for the region's physical, social and economic development. Hence, it cannot simply be overlooked nor ignored in any development planning effort. A study conducted by the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (created in response to the UN Decade for Women) indicates, however, that there is still much to be desired in terms of planning for women. It cites that over the past decade Metropolitan Manila's women have increased their active participation in the region's economy for various reasons, such as the need to work to ensure their own as well as their family's survival, the need to obtain self fulfilment, to gain independence or other aspirations. In most cases, the economic need has been the most critical consideration and data reveal that a great number of women, in various sectors of employment, have in fact been the primary income earners of the household. Most women, however, have been constrained by the burden of simultaneously balancing their triple roles, i.e. working in income generating activities, managing the household and performing their childbearing and rearing responsibilities. The study suggests that while women have indeed become crucial to the household's survival, their triple commitment has not been largely recognised nor supported and integrated in the planning of the urban environment, i.e. their needs arising from the performance of the triple roles have not been fully considered and effectively incorporated into the plans of urban services. Likewise, their full capacity as producers and urban managers coupled with being reproducers has been undervalued and discriminated against.

The study further cites the fact that while Philippine laws provide for equal access to opportunities and eliminates discrimination against women, there are constraints existing in real practice brought about by the stereotyping of roles and division of labour of Filipino men and women in a protective and paternalistic society. It notes the problems encountered by women, particularly in employment, brought about by unwritten policies and traditional practices that stand to discriminate against women. It



concludes that there is a gap to bridge between laws and their interpretation and between plans and their implementation, where women are concerned. Likewise, perceptions and attitudes of both men and women have to be reviewed in the light of how much they bear on or challenge women's role. A further breakdown on planning information into set categories is seen as urgent if only to derive a more conclusive assessment of gender needs, i.e. men's vis-a-vis women's requirements in the urban environment. Only then could planning in Metropolitan Manila ensure a more egalitarian approach for its constituents and hopefully harness the potential of its womenfolk to the fullest.

### **Gender Awareness in the Metropolitan Manila Commission's Planning Activities**

The Metropolitan Manila Commission was created in 1975 to serve as a management type of government for the contiguous areas of the four cities and thirteen municipalities now known as the Metropolitan Manila Area. Its main function is to rationalise urban growth in the area by coordinating, unifying and integrating the planning and delivery of common and essential public services while optimally utilising the area's potentials and resources.

A review of the commission's functions as practised in the regional policies, programmes and projects indicate that there is a lack of gender awareness in the planning process. At the policy level, analysis of the physical and socio-economic characteristics of the Metropolis are undertaken without thoroughly disaggregating information on the characteristics and needs of women vis-a-vis men. Regional goals for development are addressed to the common and pressing problems brought about by urbanisation such as poverty, lack of housing and other social amenities and infrastructure etc. Solutions are then based on the overall household or population needs. The Regional Development Framework Plan provides for policy directives guiding the growth of the region in order to relieve the area of its problems, all in the context of total household or population requirements. For example, population as a factor influencing urban growth is analysed in terms of distribution, growth rate, age and sex structure, migration patterns, densities and incomes. However, there is no reference to women's particular needs or their roles in development alongside men's.

At the regional programme and project levels, the same analysis holds. Statements of objectives and targets reflect assumed male headed households as beneficiaries. Examples of this assumption can be seen in the livelihood or income generating programme and the employment and infrastructure projects. In some sectors such as health, the children, adults and youth are the target beneficiaries while no particular reference to women is made even if in fact they may play a major role in project implementation. The different household compositions are likewise not explicitly recognised, e.g. male headed versus de facto female headed. Hence, an assessment of programme/project impact on women cannot be accurately made.

On the level of projects undertaken directly by the Commission, there is likewise no sign of gender awareness. One reason for this is that most of the priority projects are infrastructure related, such as those concerning road maintenance, engineering works, improvement of environmental sanitation and coordination of traffic management and control, whose beneficiaries are the people in general. The health related projects include the provision of additional health facilities, equipment and personnel for the benefit of communities. While some health projects involve women in implementation, such as in primary health care, they are not explicitly considered as main target groups. The Barangay Affairs related activities have adopted the basic needs approach which takes into account the gaps in the various low income community services but there is no deliberate attempt to focus on the benefits of public services for women's practical and strategic needs. Women's participation in community projects has likewise been relegated to the stereotyped roles of fund raising, 'beautification' and income generation in traditionally accepted areas of concern for women.

## **Sectoral Gender Aware Issues and Policy Recommendations**

Following the premise that policies, programmes and projects in Manila have neither recognised the specific needs of women in relation to men nor positively discriminated at meeting them, an analysis of certain sectoral issues and policies is in order if only to further illustrate the point. Thereafter, sectoral policy recommendations or guidelines are devised that may well serve as possible entry points for incorporating gender awareness in the planning process.

### **Income and Employment**

As embodied in the Manila Regional Development Framework Plan, the following issues and potentials highlight the income and employment sector which have served as the basis for policy formulation:

- i. Worldwide recession, unemployment and poverty are the essential economic problems found in Manila.
- ii. A heavy influx of migrants, a higher labour participation and unavailability of jobs have resulted in a higher unemployment rate than the national average. Overseas employment for skilled and technical personnel have provided a vent for this problem.
- iii. The area has an extremely skewed pattern of income distribution, i.e. 72% of the households are below the average income class.
- iv. The regional economy is characterised by the presence of a huge, unorganised and informal sector vis-a-vis a systematically organised formal sector. Most of these employed (73%) work in the informal sector.
- v. The region has the best opportunity for development in terms of land available for commerce and industry and skilled or trainable labour.

While these are the general issues of the sector, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (based on research undertaken in Manila) has raised the following issues affecting women:

- i. The major portion of the unemployed in Manila are women, and of those classified as persons not in the labour force, housewives form a large portion (together with persons not working and not looking for work).
- ii. Women generally perceive the treatment of men and women at work as equal. However, in areas of training opportunities, promotions and lay-offs there are indications of discrimination towards women.
- iii. Whilst the majority of employed women contribute equally or are the principal source of the family income, they are generally considered as secondary earners. This perception has influenced policies on recruitment, training opportunities, promotions and lay-offs.
- iv. Stereotyping of male-female jobs influences employment policies and practices; for example women occupy the lower income jobs.

In reviewing these two sets of issues and taking cognisance of women's potentials, the following

conclusions and recommendations are put forth for consideration:

- i. Given that there is a higher proportion of women than men in the labour force and that a major portion of them are unemployed, more efforts should be made to provide for an increase in women's jobs in both the formal and informal sectors. Such an attempt would harness their contribution to alleviating the problems of poverty, unemployment and inequitable income distribution.
- ii. Assuming that there is a greater percentage of women in the informal sector (as in the experience of other Third World cities) and that a huge informal sector exists that could be further encourage~ to assist the regional economy, women's increased access to small scale industries through supportive financial schemes, credit programmes and other mechanisms for viable activities should be pursued.
- iii. In order to support women's productive role, in both formal and informal sectors, training programmes should be pursued in areas which are required or which match the available jobs. Childcare facilities should be provided alongside in order to enable women to avail themselves of this opportunity. Training should likewise be provided in new technologies in order to make sure that women get equal access to new jobs, or male dominated jobs.
- iv. Skills required for overseas employment of women should be developed since recent developments show that women are also taking overseas employment. Further research on women's current participation should be undertaken in order to provide more employment opportunities and consequently allow women to contribute positively to the selection of economic problems.
- v. The treatment of women as secondary earners and the stereotyping of male-female jobs influences employment policies and practices. Hence, a strict monitoring system to check on implementation practices of labour laws should be set up. Laws should further be reviewed and amended as to their discriminatory provisions on women, e.g. inequality of employment policies, low status of women's work, etc. in order for them to be able to provide better working conditions and increase their supportive economic role to the households and the general economy.
- vi. To further support the triple roles of women, particularly in their productive role, private and public employers should be encouraged, or given incentives, to provide necessary infrastructure facilities, such as nurseries and daycare centres. There is a need, however, to first assess the existing practices and actual needs to draw up more specific recommendations.

## **Transport**

The transport sector, which is one of the major sectors of the infrastructure services and utilities, is likewise beset by problems accompanying urbanisation. It is felt, however, that this is an area which could be reviewed in terms of considering women's practical and strategic needs since it can be recognised as one of the key factors affecting women's participation in the labour force. The major transport problems in Manila include the following:

- i. Deterioration of mobility with the continued growth and distribution of population and the surge of large scale development in all directions despite the presence of an extensive choice of intermodal transport networks.

- ii. Traffic congestion occurring during peak hours along major roads and high density areas.
- iii. Increased transport costs which are unaffordable to low income groups.

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women mentions in its study in Manila that women who work spend on average more than an hour to get to work and are much inconvenienced by the distance from home and place of work and the traffic congestion during peak hours. Likewise, women are burdened with the transport costs considering the recent increases that have been effected and the relatively lower pay that they receive from their employment. Women also face the problem of physical safety on the transport system. Addressing the issues above, together with the general problems that have earlier been considered, the following proposals are made:

- i. Transport planning methodology should be based on the real mobility and accessibility needs of the different sections of the population, e.g. men vis-a-vis women, middle class vis-a-vis working class, in order to result in a more responsive answer to the problem. Statistical data relating to mobility and transport needs of women have to be collected and analysed as women's needs have always been subsumed in men's needs.
- ii. Design of public transport systems, i.e. times of services, routes, design of vehicles and siting of bus stops should be more sensitive to the journey pattern and travel needs of women in order to support the performance of their triple roles. These might relieve the problems of mobility, accessibility and traffic congestion, particularly during peak hours.
- iii. The possibility of providing transport subsidy schemes should be examined in the light of increased transport costs and the effects on users' groups, i.e. men, women and children, so as not to overburden them in the performance of specific roles.
- iv. Transport schemes and patterns should support the extension of women's choice of employment and her triple roles, i.e. they should increase accessibility of women to employment and facilitate their roles as reproducers and household managers as well, thereby encouraging their participation in the economic sector.
- v. Physical safety of women should likewise be taken into consideration in the planning and design of transport systems and routes so that they feel free to move about in performing their triple roles.

### **Institutional Arrangements for Policy Recommendations**

In order to incorporate gender aware recommendations in the planning process, there is a need to look into the existing institutions charged with the functions of policy, programmes and project formulation, planning and implementation. Institutional arrangements have to be undertaken if only to ensure that the proper entry points can be pursued and commitments drawn.

Taking into account the current scarcity of resources facing all levels of government, it is proposed that the existing organisational structures be utilised to introduce gender planning. Existing staff could be identified and linkages strengthened among the national, metropolitan and local levels such that integrative working arrangements are effected while considering available resources. Such efforts are geared towards attaining an integrated approach for policy, programme and project formulation taking the triple role needs of women into focus.

## Framework for Activities

A work plan should be established which would identify the activities that have to be undertaken jointly by the agencies involved, the approaches required for such activities and the resources required to do them. The following chart proposes a framework for the major activities that have to be undertaken assuming institutional arrangements are effected (see following page).

The functional responsibilities and framework of activities as presented is the general approach that can be applied for introducing gender planning at the three levels of policy, programme and project formulation and implementation. The degree of variation, however, such as in the time frame to effect changes, would surface in the actual performance of such activities. It is suggested that a top down and bottom up approach be simultaneously undertaken, i.e. a review of policies on one hand and the specific programmes and projects on the other so that gaps and problems can be easily identified from both the macro and micro points of view. The bottom up approach would assist in justifying policy statements since the experiences at the project level would very well illustrate the failure of the planning process to recognise women's needs. On the other hand, looking at policies and working towards their revision to incorporate specific gender needs would work towards the longer term objectives of gender planning.

	PLANNING STAGES	AGENCIES INVOLVED
1	Preliminary data gathering on women's condition as a support to staff orientation	National Commission for Research on Filipino Women MMC Corplan Barangay Operations Centre (BOC)
2	Staff orientation/training on the gender planning approach	Integrative Planning Service Corplan BOC
3	Data analyses and evaluation on priority sectors	
4	Evaluation of existing policies, programmes and projects based on analyses	
5	Formulation and evaluation of alternative/new policies, programmes and projects for various sectors	Women's groups
6	Approval of proposed alternative/new policies, programmes and projects	Ministries MMC Board/Governor Mayors Parliament
7	Implementation of approved plans, including information dissemination and legislation	Regional Development Framework Plan Land use plans Transport plans
8	Monitoring, evaluation and updating of plans	

Stage I of the framework of activities requires a thorough review of the amount of information that has already been collected and analysed on women's needs that could support gender planning. The existence of other women's groups, their objectives and accomplishments and their recommendations for development changes illustrating women's roles should also be looked into as a first activity. After such activities have been carried out, Stage 2, i.e. staff orientation/training could be undertaken. This would have to start with the staff of the MMC Office of the Commissioner for Planning and the Barangay Operations Centre which would be involved eventually in data analyses and evaluation. At this point, research methods that are to be applied to further the studies should be incorporated and a preliminary concept paper supporting gender planning should be introduced. Likewise possible sources of information should have been identified. After training/ orientation is completed, Stage 3, i.e. data retrieval, analyses and evaluation would follow. It is suggested that such activities be initiated for the sectors that have been reviewed in this paper, i.e. income, employment and transport, since the need for gender planning has already been illustrated in these areas. The idea is to identify gaps in the delivery of such services and strengthen the statements of sectoral issues that require alteration where responding to women's needs is concerned.

The fourth activity of evaluating existing policies, programmes and projects based on the data analyses will have to be undertaken jointly by the planning staff concerned of the sectoral agencies. At this point, it may be stated that evaluation and adjustments at the project level may be easier to tackle than at the policy level. For one, the policy statements which have long term implications will require a very thorough review and will have to be adjusted in time for the regular updates of plans which are carried out on an average five-year basis. On the other hand, projects which are both on-going or in the pipeline which have shorter duration and a more immediate impact may still accommodate adjustments where the arguments on gender planning can be supported. The outcome, however, of revisions made at the project level would eventually strengthen the need for changes at the policy and programme levels.

All these efforts will have to be achieved simultaneously so as to bridge the gaps more easily. The ease of implementing the other activities would then largely depend on the extent of success made at the first four stages. The approach should be tackled subtly so as to avoid the consequence of adding burden to existing processes. The more important entry point is the need to emphasise that while planners have been responsible for all people, in the past they have largely ignored half of them. And if such an argument could be put forth and eventually agreed upon, drawing commitments to the effort would then be facilitated.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

In summary it may be said that there is a large area in the planning process that has to be examined to appreciate the need for gender planning. Women's roles have largely been ignored and their needs have been treated as invisible even if in fact they have been or could still serve as great contributors to development.

The most important point to consider, then, is the manner by which women could truly be integrated in the development process. And this would require a review of efforts that have been made in the past, the extent to which women have participated, the reasons for their commitments and the means by which to further encourage their involvement. Consequently, the support required for them to be truly involved as positive agents for growth and development should be provided. Only then can planning speak of a truly egalitarian needs approach for all its constituents.

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## **IX. Toward a Conceptual Framework for Gender Aware Planning: An Evaluation of the 'Reaching Children of the Urban Poor' Project in The Philippines**

Ruth D. Ruiz

### **Introduction**

Women's role in urban development is constantly undermined, although they are mainly responsible for the implementation of social projects in health, nutrition, population, education, food production and livelihood. In the project 'Reaching Children of the Urban Poor' (RCUP) in the Philippines, women play a critical factor in the provision of basic services to children, in generating income and in the production of medicinal herbs and food for household consumption.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the extent to which the project has in turn responded to the women's needs. While women's invaluable participation in the project has been lauded, women's ability to participate is determined by their triple role as reproducers, producers and urban managers. To an extent these roles have been recognised and considered in the formulation of project work plans and activities but it has also been common for women themselves to be blamed for project activities which have been slow or unable to take off. This is then attributed to reasons such as laziness, or an uncooperative attitude, rather than with the multiplicity of women's role brought about by a stereotyped sexual division of labour. A stereotyping of households headed by men has also ignored the fact that some households in reality are headed by women who in addition to their childrearing, caring and domestic work and participation in community activities, are the primary wage earners. A question must then be posed: 'How much time and effort do women have to put in to be seen to be effectively participating in a project?'

The paper will thus present a critique of the RCUP project, both in terms of its planning and implementation processes and will also highlight gender related issues. It will also propose changes through the formulation of new policies and guidelines and an adoption of innovative implementation strategies. These are deemed more responsive to the needs of women and toward a more effective delivery of services to poor urban children and households and therefore to a purposive attainment of project goals.

### **Background to the Project**

#### **The Objectives of the Project**

The project, which is being implemented for five years from 1983-1987, is located in depressed areas in the cities of Olongapo, Davao, Bacolod and Iloilo. It is one of the eleven programmes of the Second Country Programme for Children of the Philippines (CPC II) being assisted by UNICEF. The project recognises the problems and needs of special groups of children such as the abandoned, abused, neglected, and children of poor households in slums and depressed squatter communities in urban areas. The project's response is to increase the level of services to children and to provide opportunities for poor households to increase their capabilities in addressing child-related needs. It attacks children's problems comprehensively providing basic health and nutrition services, training and education in primary health care, environmental sanitation, training in production skills and business, production of food and medicinal herbs, training in community planning and evaluation and community research.

Hopefully the project is extending its services to 28,335 families (141,675 children).

### **The Project Planning Mechanism and its Implementation**

The project taps the planning structure of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) but it also led to the organisation of a Coordinating Committee composed of NEDA officials who are responsible for providing project implementation guidelines. This committee comprises six men and three women policy makers. Working alongside this committee is the technical staff, of seven men and fifteen women of the NEDA. In the planning exercise the national social agencies in health, nutrition, education, social infrastructures and non-government agencies are represented by thirteen women and four men. About 65% of the planners of the project are women. The planners in general are orientated to the notion that the social sector is the women's sphere and so women planners are assigned to design and monitor projects in health, nutrition and early childhood education, while men are responsible for environmental planning such as sanitation and water.

The approach adopted was top down. CPC 11 was formulated at the national level and participated in by representatives of the national social agencies and the NEDA. Although the approach encouraged 'consultation' with target communities, it was expected that alteration of planning decisions would be minimal. Participants to these discussions usually would include men and women, but women are especially sought out because of their basic reproductive role. The assumption was that they were willing participants since activities were aligned with their role as mothers. To this extent women are coerced into the planning process in terms of their biological function.

A community-based/home-based approach was adopted in the delivery of services to urban poor children. This implies no preference for any member of the family or community but a concerted effort from all members in responding to children's needs. Largely, community meetings where decisions have to be made are participated in by men and women. Where there are more men, usually their decision dominates. In assigning tasks, a clear division of labour prevails in which men take care of providing and maintaining infrastructure for example and women provide food which is an extension of their domestic work. Since the project is basically social, women undertake more activities than men do.

Despite the advocacy of a concerted effort of members of the family and community in child-focused services, women and children are identified targets and nowhere in the plan is it indicated where men are explicitly identified in specific project activities. Invariably in implementation, training and education in health and nutrition, early childhood education and delivery of basic services are given by mothers and surrogate mothers like aunts, sisters or female relatives. Only mothers and surrogate mothers are known to bring their children to under-six clinics or community health centres for immunisation, medication and growth monitoring. To top this only females are recruited for training as health volunteers. Men members of the community undertake environmental sanitation and water provision.

### **Gender Related Issues**

#### **The Sexual Division of Labour and the Social Ascription of Gender**

Active participation of women was shown in making decisions in responding to the needs and problems of urban poor children. These women planners along with men planners are orientated to separate gender roles of men and women and have actually identified women as primary implementers of activities since childrearing and caring are ascribed as women's jobs. The Filipino tradition states that women should do them and that these are part of their domestic chores. Men are considered clumsy and 'naturally' do not know how to handle babies. A man who does domestic chores is labelled as being henpecked or

feminine. He is expected primarily to earn an income for his household.

This stereotyped sexual division of labour which underlies planning has resulted in the exclusion of men in the delivery of services to children and has disadvantaged women who have become the main channel of the so-called home-based community-based services for children. It has further aggravated women's position as project implementers and has loaded them, because in the beginning this view has coopted women to participate in various government-led social projects. There is a need to reconsider this traditional view as an underlying assumption in planning which negates the family-based/community-based approach of responding to the needs of children and confront planners with the question of whether using women alone to implement strategies is the more effective way of alleviating the condition of urban poor children.

### **The Undervaluing of Women's Roles**

While women's role in the delivery of services to children has been crucial, their participation has not been viewed in relation to their roles in reproduction, production and as managers of community activities. No systematic assessment of the amount of time and effort women put into their triple role has been done and it is assumed that these roles will not hinder their participation in the project. Women at home rearing and caring for children and doing their domestic chores are considered 'not doing anything and should be tapped for a productive activity'. This undervaluing of the triple role of women is made even more obvious in relation to income generating activities, which connotes small scale activities intended to generate 'pin' money for women. These activities require a minimum capital outlay and do not take into account economic parameters such as expected rate of return of investment, profit margins or the women's need for cash throughout the year. These activities are also considered menial which women can undertake simultaneously with their domestic chores. Yet these activities, which require women to organise and skill themselves, are time consuming.

The strategy adopted in income generating activities tends to undermine women's productive role and their contribution to household income is considered as a mere supplement. Yet this cannot be so when the primary wage earner is underemployed or unemployed or when women's income is the main source of household income. Worse still, these activities may be treated in isolation and in no way considered integral to the formal economy. Undervaluing the triple role of women has devalued the needs of women arising from their triple role. Also, this has resulted in women having multiple tasks to perform for the project. Women attend various meetings for training in health and nutrition, and they participate in operating community services for children such as day care centres, supplemental feeding, and child growth monitoring. Small income generating activities have actually marginalised women from access to better training for employment because the type of training they are getting is aimed at limited production and marketing.

### **Data Inadequacies**

Planners use aggregated data available at the National Census and Statistics Office or from agency documents which are routinely collected. These usually contain standard information on the demographic, social, economic and cultural characteristics of households. Data also show a stereotyped formation of households comprising a male household head, women and children. This does not lend itself to an analysis of female headed households and their specific characteristics such as employment status, employment skills and needs. Because of this, households were considered homogenous, having similar needs. It is, however, obvious that there are households which are female headed, who do not rely on others for income and whose main source of income comes from employment of the female head. In

this case small income generating activities can bring about disbenefits rather than benefits to women who have to have employment. Also, considering this group as channels of basic services will result in an ineffective implementation of project activities, due to a lack of time of female household heads.

### **Recommendations for Action**

There is no doubt that women will continue to be seen as the channel for implementation of child focused projects. And because of prevailing economic difficulties which will continue adversely to affect poor households, women's continued participation in production will be necessary. It is for these reasons that there is a need to rethink the gender blind planning, implementation and research processes which prejudice women's participation. This necessitates raising consciousness among decision makers, implementers and researchers about the different yet interacting roles of men and women. In the project the needs of women arising from their triple roles have been considerably played down and undermined. Thus poor women are marginalised from the social and economic spheres where men dominate. In order to rectify this oversight, some specific recommendations are put forward.

### **A Policy for Job Sharing**

It is recommended to decision makers and implementers that the project should uphold a policy of job sharing among members of households and communities to approximate the community-based, home-based approach in the delivery of services to children. It will bring in men who were previously excluded from childrearing and caring and they will now participate in appropriate training activities. In addition men will be integrated in volunteer work which will require a reworking of the time schedule of project activities to allow ease of participation. This policy intends to meet both the practical and strategic needs of women and initiate a sense of equality among women and men through a sharing of domestic tasks such as child caring and alleviation of the load placed upon women in these tasks. Job sharing is expected to release women's time for the pursuit of their other needs and facilitate access to employment and skill training. Given an extended kinship system, neighbourhood caring and meeting the needs of children will be organised toward a more socialised caring of children.

### **Making Income Generating Activities a Source of Employment**

Because of the economic importance which should be attached to income generating activities and the need to view these as a major source of income rather than as a supplemental one, a change in the strategy of income generating activities must be instituted. For example, loan assistance must be reviewed, as most skilling of women for a broader range of employment. This will allow income generating activities to be considered as 'real' employment and will establish their economic importance to the household and the community at large.

It is important to regard these income generating activities not as a separate economic activity but as integral units of production relevant to national development.

In essence, women's labour in the provision of basic health, nutrition and early education to children must be regarded as a source of income and therefore should be compensated. Community and health workers should be paid a wage. In this vein, local governments should also adopt a self reliant attitude and take responsibility in providing salaries for the workers.

### **Bringing Planning into the Community**

The project will need to strengthen its strategy for bringing its plans to the community which is the arena for all project activities. National plans should be discussed in local communities in order to spell out the aims, expected input and output and impact of the project, but more importantly to bring about a thorough understanding of the roles of men and women in achieving project goals. Since women have been positively discriminated against in project implementation which puts on them the heavier burden of providing services to children, these discussion sessions should be directed towards a more equitable distribution of tasks among members of households and the community.

### **Establishing a Data System**

As a basis for establishing accurate assumptions about target communities and households, the project needs to improve its data system to enable a more detailed description of the characteristics of target groups.

Data which veers away from looking at communities and households as homogenous units is needed. For example, data which provides information on the various categories of households such as whether these are nuclear, extended, or single parent or male or female headed, plus the employment status of women and available employment skills among other household members. This type of information has a bearing on the extent to which women can participate in projects and on the type of employment opportunities which may be provided for them.

There is also a need to realign research objectives in order to build up information on women's poverty and its underlying causes. Furthermore, research efforts to investigate women's patterns of activities and time utilisation are needed to provide a rational basis for women's participation in the project.



## **X. An Evaluation of Past and Future Interventions in Majesty Gardens, Kingston, Jamaica**

Frances Madden

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to attempt to address some of the problems being faced by a specific low income community in Majesty Gardens in the city of Kingston, with a view to developing a clearer understanding of the problems faced by the residents. The paper will also attempt to set out a proposal of redevelopment for this community using an integrated approach to community development. However, this proposal is in no way to be taken as a solution to the immense problems being faced by numerous other communities living in similar conditions in Kingston, as a number of conditions are specific to the community being studied.

The paper concludes with a project proposal of urban farming for women in Majesty Gardens who have no visible source of income.

### **An Overview of Conditions and Interventions in Majesty Gardens**

#### **Background and Descriptive Overview**

Majesty Gardens is a socially and economically depressed area, which is highly polarised politically and not a community into which outsiders readily enter<sup>3</sup>. It has a population of over 5,000 with 65% of the households headed by women, many of whom live in absolute poverty. The area exhibits the following characteristics:

- i. derelict and incomplete government housing;
- ii. a general lack of basic amenities, e.g. toilet and bathroom facilities;
- iii. a high crime rate;
- iv. poor sanitation; and
- v. a high youth-adult ratio.

In this community young men and women move about listlessly or sit on street corners begging money or a job. Human and animal excreta and young boys and girls and elderly people digging through the garbage for their daily subsistence are all part of the scenario which meets you on entering Majesty Gardens. Many of the older people, who make up less than 10% of the total population and who have lived there for over 25 years, see no hope for the future, as years of this kind of existence has sapped them of the will to strive for self improvement. As Webster (1984, 29) so aptly describes:

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<sup>3</sup>Majesty Gardens are bordered to the north by Spanish Town Road, to the west by Marcus Garvey Drive, to the east by Hunts Bay Road and to the south by the train line.

Many in Third World countries are in or close to this vulnerable position, relying on aid, food relief or their own meagre returns from squatter farming, scavenging on refuse tips, prostitution, street hawking and so on.

Due to the nature of their community the residents are constantly faced with specific problems. These are outlined below:

### **Lack of legitimate employment**

In this community the unemployment rate stands at 95% with the majority of the unemployed being women; this being due to the high percentage of female headed households. Women are forced to earn their living through illegal means, such as shoplifting, selling illegal goods or by 'selective prostitution'. This places women in an economically disadvantaged position in addition to being abused by the men they sleep with or sell goods for.

The remaining 5% of the population are involved in small economic enterprises, and informal commercial activity; women are a minority in this group. The high crime rate within this community results in prospective employers not giving jobs readily to local residents. This puts women (who in most cases have made a great effort to gain academic achievement) at a further disadvantage, as they have to depend upon men in responsible positions to help them get a job. This dependency situation has led to sexual harassment and abuse of women in some instances.

### **Under-utilisation of skills and financial aid sources**

In instances where men and women have skills which can be utilised in self-help projects they are often not used or explored to their fullest potential, because the individuals do not have the financial or material resources for doing so. The limited finances available to women are used first and foremost to look after their families. Also in instances where aid is available, women are often not aware that this is the case because they are preoccupied with their reproductive role (trying to find food for their children).

### **Actions by Outside Agencies**

In recognising these conditions government and voluntary organisations have attempted to establish several projects using an anti- poverty approach.

### **Inputs from the church**

In this community the church, with funding from several international organisations, has concentrated on the provision of the following:

- i. Social services: daycare centres, a school, clinic, library, community centre, and programmes for the elderly such as meals on wheels and the Golden Age Club.
- ii. Trade training: a centre has been established to teach skills in areas such as refrigeration techniques, electrical installation and dressmaking.

### **Government Inputs**



The government has attempted to tackle both housing conditions and income generating projects. The Ministry of Housing constructed a number of housing units in an attempt to upgrade the housing conditions in the area, These houses were allocated to people within the community who could afford the deposits. However, due to economic constraints a number of the housing units within this community remain unfinished. The income generating projects include broom making, wine making, pastry making and poultry rearing. However, the hard core economic realities of the community remained untouched. In response to this situation Grace Kennedy and Co. Ltd., through the Grace and Staff Foundation, took a further initiative.

### **Grace and Staff Foundation Input**

This has been involved in the following activities:

- i. Organising community meetings and coordinating all internal and external resources.
- ii. Assisting both the informal and formal leaders of the community to identify needs.
- iii. Financing the expansion of small commercial enterprises such as fishing activities, animal husbandry and grocery shops.
- iv. Assisting high school students with financial and material resources.
- v. Providing holiday employment for women and high school students.
- vi. Assisting with food aid for the elderly and young children.

These were undertaken as emergency measures to try to decrease the growing tension within the community, to develop confidence in the organisation and to set the stage for the identification of constraints which affected past projects.

### **Evaluation of Action by Outside Agencies**

Any evaluation has to take the following points into consideration:

- i. Most of the activities identified by government and the voluntary sector were for men, as they were seen as the more aggressive and as the greatest contributors to the violent activities taking place within the community. Funding was also given to men in keeping with the traditional belief that men are the breadwinners of the family.
- ii. Funding was mainly given to groups, who were affiliated to specific political organisations, which resulted in the money being used for alternative purposes.
- iii. Successful projects managed by women were constantly being frustrated by attacks made on the projects by rival community groups.
- iv. Projects lacked bottom up participation in identifying needs, monitoring, maintenance, and decision making. Thus, when the Community Development worker left the projects stopped functioning.

- v. The projects identified ignored the managerial skills of the women, and therefore men were put in charge of the projects. However, from observation the women in their roles as urban managers were fully involved in demonstrations, for example, for road repairs etc.
- vi. The level of funding for women's projects was much lower than funding for men's, as it is assumed that women's projects are small scale in that women are expected to do work which is merely an extension of their domestic roles, which in turn is given a low value.
- vii. Income gained from the projects was not as lucrative as that which could be earned by illegal means, and therefore the women did not feel encouraged to participate as they still had to do their 'hustling' and participation in the projects restricted these illegal activities.
- viii. Income generating projects lacked concrete achievements. Most of these projects only concentrated on providing food, and therefore the participants did not see anything concrete for their efforts, such as improved infrastructure or housing.
- ix. There was no coherent programme for the community; instead funding was given to individuals, who could show they had a good idea or to groups organised by the community development worker, and these organised groups then lacked understanding of basic management skills.

### **Recommended Criteria for Future Programmes**

- i. In order to have any success within this community, there is a need for a coherent programme, incorporating the various different agencies involved in their community. This would alleviate the piecemeal way in which the work was presently being done.
- ii. In planning any programmes, the level of female headed households should be taken into consideration. This would help in the allocation of project funding and in identifying the needs of women.
- iii. Finances for income generating projects should be administered by non-governmental organisations as these appear to be better able to set guidelines for the usage of funds.
- iv. There is need for an informal education component which would enable the women to discuss their problems and bring about a greater level of awareness and self consciousness.
- v. There is a need for overall community education in terms of the relationship between men and women. Men need to be made aware of the important roles that women are playing in the community.
- vi. Mechanisms should be set up whereby income generating projects can be linked with concrete outcomes.
- vii. The level of income from projects will have to be adequate so that women will not see the need to participate in illegal activities.

### **Proposed Programme for Majesty Gardens**

Whilst the foremost concern is for the economic conditions being faced by individuals within the

community, especially the women, it is of vital importance that consideration be given to the immediate environment of the community with a view to improving some of the existing social conditions.

### **Proposed Programme Objectives**

- i. To create an environment which is conducive to human development;
- ii. To create opportunities whereby individuals can channel their energies, skills and creativity towards self development;
- iii. To identify, mobilise and coordinate available internal and external resources so that they will better benefit women;
- iv. To encourage women to participate in acquiring unfinished housing and complete it through self-help;
- v. To create a level of self awareness and consciousness between men and women, so that there will be mutual respect and understanding.

### **Rationale for Choice of Majesty Gardens**

- i. Over the years Majesty Gardens has been an area where a number of activities have been taking place, and therefore a number of facilities and infrastructure are already in place. These include daycare facilities, basic school and play park for children. Because these facilities are already in place, it makes it easy to organise women in project activities, as the women can be released from their childcaring roles and feel confident that their children are being attended.
- ii. Present training facilities such as trade training centres, garment manufacturing equipment and public markets are already in place, so there is no need to find markets for fishing or vegetable crops, as these are readily available. For youths who have no skills the trade training centre is available, which offers a wide range of skills, hence the immediate need is to mobilise them towards the use of these facilities.
- iii. There are a number of resource personnel available. A number of agencies have had previous inputs in one way or another in this community, and therefore are already aware of the problems facing the residents. This makes it easier to incorporate external resource personnel. There also are a number of retired boxers who are presently unemployed in the community and willing to help in passing on their skills. In addition, Grace Agriculture and Food Canning Division is also in this area, and since its company's policy is to work with communities in the immediate area of the subsidiaries, then personnel will be available to assist with farming.
- iv. Residents maintain their knowledge of previous self-help programmes in which they participated. This experience makes the groups already prone to be organised.
- v. There is a reasonable business population in the immediate environment which could be mobilised to assist with some aspects of programme funding.
- vi. Most important of all, the residents of this community have lent their support and have expressed their desire for full involvement as they see the efforts targeted to the improvement of their general welfare as being without any personal strings attached.

## **Organisation**

In order to meet these objectives a committee should be set up within the community comprising:

- Business managers within the area;
- Informal and formal community leadership;
- People who have lived in the community for a long time;
- A representative from the Ministry of Health, Education, Agriculture\Youth;
- The National Water Authority;
- Local government councillors;
- Representatives of voluntary organisations operating within the area.

This committee should be responsible for:

- Programme monitoring and coordination;
- Assisting with training of project personnel;
- Health education and sanitation projects, e.g. refuse collection;
- Fund raising.

In order to address the conditions previously mentioned, it is proposed that the following projects be considered for implementation:

## **Social conditions**

- i. Sanitation This will involve the cleaning and burning of refuse and the clearing of empty lots as this contributes to the 'weeding out' of mosquitoes. It will also include provision of a proper water and sanitary system.
- ii. Health education programmes Using visual aids, talks with community groups will be used to highlight various aspects of health such as family planning and nutrition. Target group: The entire community. This would then place responsibility for participation in service implementation on all the various groups and not only on women.

## **Economic conditions**

This aspect can be addressed by the use of self-help and income generating projects such as the following:

- i. Agriculture This would involve the upgrading of women's traditional skills in farming and put into operation 5 acres of vacant land within the community for cash crops. Target group: 20 women aged 26-45.
- ii. Training women in non-traditional skills, so that they will become eligible to compete on the job market.
- iii. Fishing Providing funding to help men with boat repairs, net making and mending. Target group: men aged 16- 27.

## **Proposal for Urban Farming**

### **Introduction**

Jamaica has a high population pressure with 424 persons per square mile. The density of Kingston and St Andrew is 15,179 persons per square mile. The rate of unemployment in Jamaica in 1982 stood at 27.9% of the total population. In 1974 (before the minimum wage law was implemented) the national savings committee pointed out that 80% of the population earns \$30 per week or less. Thus widespread poverty is well reflected in the low level of living of the mass of the population. Agricultural products in their original and processed forms contribute to a large extent to the gross domestic product. Agriculture also provides employment for about a third of the population over 14 years of age. While large farmers concentrate on producing food for export, the small farmers are preoccupied with the consumption needs of their households:

Therefore most of the food from these small farms constitutes most of the food locally produced for consumption. The small farmer also manages his farm in conjunction with his work on his farm and in employment outside. This leaves great stress on the women within the household, whether she is head or not, as while the man is out she has to carry out his task, thus increasing her 'triple burden'. (Edwards 1961, 28)

Traditionally women have always been involved in either cultivating for themselves and family - even when there was a husband present. The extent to which this was practical reveals that it is the women who actually do the farming, as opposed to the men. Women were also expected to market the products as they were considered better at managing money than men. However, as more land was taken over for mining, and large scale farming for export, farmers and particularly women left the rural areas to find work in the urban areas in order to support their families. If, however, farmers were not displaced from their land, their low crop yields and low financial status forced them to discourage their children from participating in this tradition. The children, especially the young girls, then looked to the city in order to find jobs in the factories or in domestic service. However, the low income paid by these sectors forced the women to seek living quarters in the ghettos of Kingston, as houses in these areas were usually cheap and in some instances free. One such community is Majesty Gardens.

### **Profile of Target Group**

Approximately twenty women, aged between 26 and 45, have been identified to be involved in this project initially. Most of these women originated from rural parishes, where they were previously involved in agricultural activities. The group has been constantly involved in backyard gardening in order to supplement meat in their diet.

They have an average between them of 6 children. They are all unemployed and depend greatly on illegal activities carried out by themselves, their children or their children's father for survival. The women are all involved in common-law, or visiting unions; however, they are all the main providers for their households as in most cases the men do not maintain the children, and in cases where they do the amount given is very small. The low level of skill and educational attainment stereotyped them for particular jobs such as domestic and factory work. However, given the present economic situation where lay-offs have been the order of the day, jobs have become extremely scarce and practically impossible to obtain. Hence these women are now forced into situations with men where they are at a disadvantage.

These are some of the push factors which make the group ideal for this project. The women do not find

childcaring a problem as even when they are not working they send the children to daycare centres and basic school, since the children are given three meals each day and the cost is minimal.

### **Specific Short Term Objectives**

- i. To create employment and income for 20 women in agriculture.
- ii. To provide a model for similar initiatives and thereby encourage other groups towards self reliance.
- iii. To improve the nutritional level of the families and other members of the community.
- iv. To encourage community participation by getting the women to take on leadership roles and decision making responsibilities.
- v. To develop a positive attitude towards self and work.

### **Project Implementation**

The initial 12 months of operation will be as follows. The women will be organised in five groups of four: each group will be in charge of 20 beds putting a total of 100 beds into operation. There will be a concentration on putting in crops which have high nutritional value and yields, and which are in need of intensive labour.

#### **Phase 1**

Recruitment and training

After recruitment, the women will be given 6 weeks' training in agricultural methods, basic management skills and marketing. In this phase land and tools will also be acquired.

#### **Phase 2**

Preparation of land

This phase will include clearing the land, building up the soil and spraying it. Fencing will be put up and a water system constructed.

#### **Phase 3**

Sowing of seedlings and seeds

#### **Phase 4**

Reaping and marketing of crops

Crops will be reaped and marketed in the local community, in the public market which caters for financially stable groups. This market operates every day, but attracts most buyers from Thursdays to Saturdays. The major crops sold in this market are vegetables. Once the farm is in operation women who usually go to the country to buy vegetables will buy from the group instead, as bus fares are usually very

expensive and these will be saved, and sometimes in transporting their goods to town they become damaged. Thus this problem will also be alleviated. Other women could also buy and sell back in the market; in this case employment; is created for other women within the community.

## **Phase 5**

### Monitoring and management

The women themselves will be expected to select from among themselves an individual to carry out this function. However, close monitoring will be carried out by the Majesty Gardens Working Committee, who will provide constant advice and guidance to the group.

## **Resource Personnel and Funding**

Technical Grace Agricultural Foundation will participate fully in the training and giving of technical advice to the women on crop rotation, soil usage, chemical usage and crop yields. Government agricultural extension officers will also be asked to assist.

Funding will be gained from different businesses within the community, along with that from the Grace and Staff Foundation.

This money will go towards the initial phases of the project such as the purchasing of seedlings, hand tools, fertiliser etc. However, external funding will be sought to assist with implementation.

## **Indicators for Evaluation**

- i. Length of time women remain in the group.
- ii. Level of participation in other community activities by group members.
- iii. Frequency of arrest for illegal activities
- iv. Frequency of malnutrition, and level of illness within the community (this can be known from clinic records).
- v. Regularity with which children attend school.
- vi. Regular meetings with groups and individual interviews will help in the evaluation of attitudinal change, with regard to self concepts and new patterns of thinking;
- vii. Interest shown by other individuals for projects of a similar nature.

Because evaluation is a new concept continuous appraisal for every phase of the project will be documented and assessed by the working committee and members of the project, with a final appraisal at the end of the first 8 months' period. Based on the success of the first 8 months, continual appraisal may be necessary for the first 5 years. After this time an evaluation to assess the impact of the project will be carried out in order to plan for the next 5 years. This will be carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture in coordination with the working committee.

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## XI. Identification of Women's Needs in Bluefields, Nicaragua

Joan Bent

### Introduction: Women's Roles

It is necessary to identify women's needs for a number of reasons. First, because women have an important economic function as producers, i.e. in income earning activities. Most women, because of the conditions of poverty in which they live, combined with a situation of dependence on their husbands' income (which is often very low) have to work most of the time to help better their living conditions. Most of the time this work is done outside the household at the neighbourhood level in the informal sector enterprises. The income from the informal sector activities is seen as secondary income, because of the stereotyped assumption of the nuclear family which asserts that men are the breadwinners and women the housewives.

In the case of Nicaragua, women are very productive. The majority of women work in agriculture, cutting coffee, cotton, etc. 60% of the work in the tobacco sector and 40% in the coffee and cotton sector is done by women. The majority of these women come from low income households.

Secondly, because women are important as managers. Because of their roles as organisers of their households women are involved in managing their local communities where they constantly take on the responsibility for providing or allocating limited resources. To be able to do this work better, women need childcare centres where they can leave their children. This will help to lighten the domestic burden of women.

In the case of Nicaragua where there is an economic crisis, plus the constant aggression coming from the counterrevolution, women once more, as an extension of their domestic work, have been taking primary responsibility for the formation, organisation and success of the 'new man' by participating in different programmes such as:

- i. The Literacy Crusade in 1980.
- ii. The Health Campaign (70% of participants are women).
- iii. Adult Education (71% of participants in urban areas and 45% in rural areas are women).
- iv. Defence of the country (47% of the Territorial Militias are women).
- v. Sandanista's Defence Committee (CDS) (50% of participants are women).

Most of these women are unpaid; therefore women as managers have an indirect economic function.

Thirdly, women are important as reproducers, i.e. in bringing up and socialising their families.

Given these three important roles, why are women's needs ignored? Simply because their triple role as reproducers, producers, and community managers is not identified, and it is not identified because of the stereotyped assumptions of politicians and planners that men are the breadwinners and women are merely housewives. As a result, women are always looked upon as mothers, and housewives, and not as someone having the ability to compete in the labour force alongside men.

## **The Situation of Women in Bluefields**

Most women in Bluefields come from low income households, who struggle hard to educate, clothe and look after the health of their children. Because of the conditions of poverty in which the majority of the population live, often women are forced out of the household to earn an income to help better their living conditions. Women and men often face a problem of employment, which is a national problem that the government is trying hard to eradicate by creating job opportunities. However, despite the government's efforts, they still cannot reach their goal of employment because of two reasons:

- i. The poor economic situation in which the country was in and continues to be in given the embargo on the economy by the USA.
- ii. The constant attacks by the counter-revolutionaries which often destroys work centres, projects etc., leaving many families without jobs.

Another problem women face in Bluefields is that of having to be de facto heads of household which means that they are responsible for the members of the household in providing them with food, clothes and education etc. while their husbands are doing their military service (SMP) from which some never return. This means that women have to manage to earn an income to run the home while their husbands are absent. Besides these women, there are many single women headed households who do not have the support of a male.

Another reason why women often find it very difficult to get a job is due to the criteria institutions of the government use to offer jobs; many women lack educational qualifications. Furthermore, many women in Bluefields are highly religious and because of the strong influence religion has on the population most women tend to see themselves solely as housewives and mothers on getting married.

## **A Research Design**

Because women are economically important as managers in allocating basic resources etc. and seeing how efficiently they participate and contribute to different programmes of the revolution, it is important to help them further meet their needs.

Research is necessary as there is insufficient information on women's living conditions. Hopefully this research will help to make planners able to be gender aware, i.e. aware of the differences between men and women.

The type of information needed on women in Bluefields is listed below:

- i. What percentage of households are headed by women? How many women are de facto heads of household? How many single women headed households are there?
- ii. What differences in size are there between the households headed by single women, married women, and women living in common law marriages?
- iii. What kind of jobs do men and women from different types of household do?
- iv. What skills do men and women have and how do they obtain them? (This includes level of formal

education - schooling - etc., and also level of informal education, by training, courses etc..)

After knowing the target group one is going to work with (in this case low income households), then it is necessary to take only a random sample of them from the barrios. After choosing the sample, then one can proceed with the questionnaire, making sure to include all the objectives in the questions and handling with care questions involving work, income, skills, and education.

### **The Pilot Survey**

This must be implemented before the fieldwork proper, in order to be able to see which questions are difficult for people to answer, and if there are any difficulties in identifying the households to be interviewed. When selecting interviewers it is important to remember that an interviewer's personality is often more important than education qualifications. Interviewers should be able to gain the respondents' confidence, and be courteous and patient. Furthermore, the interviewers to carry out this research should be women, because they are more flexible and able to obtain information from other women. Instructions should be prepared for interviewers on the sampling and interviewing procedures. In addition it is necessary to counter their 'unconscious' prejudices about women and work; the stereotyped assumptions should be explained in order to enable them to see why this research is so necessary.

Each enumerator should interview each household in 15-20 minutes. Those households where it is difficult to contact the head should be visited three times during the day or on another day, mostly during hours the family would be at home, or on Saturday and Sunday when most people are at home. After having the results and tabulations made up, one should then proceed to the survey results. In particular the response rate should be checked, i.e. what proportion of the sample were interviewed. Also check for missing data and interviewers' biases, i.e. had the interviewers influenced people's answers at all.

The final stage involves writing the report. The purpose of this is to communicate the results of the survey to people. To begin, one should start with a short explanation of why the survey was conducted, outlining the policy questions that the research was intended to illustrate, then go on to describe how the survey was done. The bulk of the report is the presentation of the results and policy implications.

This information should be used to help women better their living conditions. This can be done in two ways. First, by talking with them about the results to see what they would really like to do. A second way involves writing a proposal to the local authority stating the conditions of low income households, with some recommendation of what can be done.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Dr Caroline Moser for the help she gave me while I worked on this paper. Also to the people who will read this paper I would like to explain that I myself am a Miskitu woman. And last, but not least, I give my thanks in advance to all who may support the recommendations as a result of this study.

## **XII. Recommendations for the Improvement of the Standard of Living of Miskitu Women in Nicaragua**

Mary Bushey

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the present situation of the Nicaraguan Miskitu women and to make recommendations towards improving their standard of living. The Miskitu are the largest ethnic minority in Nicaragua and most currently live in North Zelaya, mainly in rural villages located around the lagoons, rivers, coast and roads. However, as a result of displacement after the war, some live in South Zelaya, some live in resettlements in Jinotega and Matagalpa, and a good number live in Managua. Miskitu women play particularly important roles in preserving the Miskitu culture, in both waged and unwaged work, and in their communities.

After centuries of English colonial and North American neocolonial domination, the Miskitus are almost on the point of extinction. The existing Miskitu culture has been transmitted from generation to generation by the training that Miskitu women give to their children and grandchildren. Their rich oral history, language preservation and community customs have been the silent activities of Miskitu women over the centuries. They also play a very important role in formal education. Currently at least 60% of teachers in North Zelaya are Miskitu women.

Besides playing a critical role in reproducing the culture of this ethnic social group, women bear the heaviest burden in reproducing the Miskitu people themselves, both in childcare and in domestic work. Miskitu women participate actively in the economic activities of their community and family, most often working in poorly paid jobs, which are very routine and of low status. Miskitu women also work actively in agriculture and fishing to provide food for their families. With the counterrevolutionary war in Nicaragua, the number of women heads of household is increasing and therefore the participation of these women in productive and economic activities is becoming even more important. Women are the main caretakers of collective properties such as churches, schools, clinics, etc. For example, both in traditional herbal and in ritual medicine, and also in modern health care, Miskitu women are active participants and outnumber their male counterparts. In addition, more women than men support and participate as volunteers in the popular health campaigns run by the government. Moreover, in collective activities for community development it is the women who work hardest in preparing food for the participants. However, they are not usually included in decision making discussion.

Community administration is the responsibility of the men, thus restricting women's political and organisational participation. Among other reasons this is due to women's seclusion at home; the burden of child raising; the care of the sick and elderly; having sole responsibility for domestic work; the lack of skills, education, knowledge of other language; contact with the outer political context; and, most of all, the men's will to keep them in a submissive state.

While Miskitu men are mainly involved in waged work, their female counterparts are engaged in both waged and unwaged work. Therefore, it can be argued, they are equally or even more important in the present and future of the Miskitu ethnic group. Also, while the men's productive role is highly esteemed and remunerated, the women's double role is taken for granted and not recognised. It is assumed that Miskitu women's only responsibility is to bear and raise children and to do domestic work. For a number of reasons it is unpractical to continue believing the above assumption that expects women to have a submissive, domestic, male dominated role.

The first and most outstanding reason is a product of the USA aggression currently being suffered by the people of Nicaragua. As a result of this war, many Miskitu men have been killed by the counter-revolutionaries, leaving behind wives, mothers and children. These men are members of the FSLN, the Sandinista Popular Army, the Ministry of the Interior, the Civil Sandinista Militia, and government employees in health, education, agriculture and other fields of work. This war has therefore resulted in a division of the Miskitu family and the separation of the men from productive work. As a result of this the number of Miskitu families headed by women is increasing daily.

As a result of men's irresponsibility and disregard for women's rights, traditionally there has been quite a high number of households headed by women, but the number is increasing as a result of the war. Even though these female headed households engage in both productive and reproductive work, very often they are the poorest of the poor and they also suffer discrimination from the elite of married women. It is necessary to start recognising the very important economic and management role that women play in Miskitu society.

Apart from the changing economic reality, another important factor contributing to Miskitu women's changing role arises from the ethnic differences between Nicaraguan women from the Pacific and women of the ethnic groups of the Atlantic coast. These differences explain why the need of Miskitu women, as women, for organisation and representation has to be related to the struggle for ethnic identity of the Miskitu people. In Nicaragua, the ethnic identity struggle is headed by MISATAN (Miskitu Asia Takanka Nicaragua Ra), an indigenous organisation of the Nicaraguan Miskitu people, created to demand the full rights of the Miskitu people, based on history and cultural experiences, and within the principles of the Sandinista Poollar Revolution MISATAN struggles to create conditions to enable the full participation of all Miskitu people, to make social changes to improve their conditions of life, and to ensure ethnic identity. It seeks peace and the reunification of Miskitu families, each community on their traditional land. MISATAN is currently male dominated even though women are very supportive of the organisation. Generally women adapt more rapidly to social change and have a very important contribution to offer in the ethnic struggle. In the case of the Miskitu people's struggle for ethnic identity, women have great potential power and ability to organise and direct their communities, and they should claim this right and obligation.

## **Background**

### **Class Struggle in Nicaragua**

For five decades Nicaragua was under the dictatorship of the Somoza family and their National Guard, created by the USA government to ensure its indirect rule in Nicaragua. Under that dictatorship the working class of the cities, towns and countryside were brutally abused and exploited by the landlords and local and foreign bourgeoisie. But the conditions of the women were even more dramatic, because they also suffered from machismo. It was in the Pacific area that the FSLN headed and carried out a class struggle to overthrow the regime; on the Atlantic coast there were very few and sporadic guerrilla activities of the FSLN during the National Liberation War. But people of the Atlantic coast who were living in the Pacific area participated in the war, of which the most outstanding ones (because of their bravery and commitment) were: Nidia White, a Miskitu girl from the Rio Coco; Fabian Sang, a Miskitu man; and Peter Ferrera and Ivan Dixon, both Creole boys from Puerto Cabezas. All these died in the war.

## **Mestizo Women in the Pacific**

The Mestizo women of the Pacific abandoned their stereotyped traditional role and participated actively in the National Liberation War and in the popular insurrection. These women understood that, as members of the working class, only by participating actively to overthrow the regime was it possible to install a revolutionary government, which would start a series of reforms in favour of the working class. Even before the triumph the Mestizo women of the Pacific created their organisation called AMPRONAC, the Association of Women faced with the National Problem. After the triumph, this group became AMNLAE, which is a women's emancipation movement that strongly supports the defence of the Sandinista Revolutionary government.

The active role of AMNLAE has led the Sandinista government to bring about great achievements to overcome women's specific problems and needs. The most outstanding ones include political participation of women on a mass scale in all the different aspects of the revolutionary process, and the participation of AMNLAE in policy making. AMNLAE has succeeded in creating the following: the Food Act, which states that men are equally responsible with women for the provision of food for their children; the law prohibiting the use of the female image in commercial advertising; the installation of a hospital for women; the programme to create child daycare centres to assist working class women in the commitment to equal pay and job opportunities for women. Furthermore, with the existence of local voluntary nightwatch teams, women acquired more mobility at night because they are safe from sexual harassment and robbery on the streets. Also, the Ministry of Social Security and Welfare (INSSBI) runs a Family Protection office where battered wives can seek refuge.

## **Differences between the Pacific and Atlantic Areas**

On the Atlantic coast, Miskitu women suffered oppression not only of class and gender (as did the women from the area of the Pacific), but also of race. The constraints in the relationship between the different ethnic groups of Nicaragua are due partly to historic differences. The Pacific was colonised by Spain, where the original inhabitants who were not massacred were forced to assimilate the Spanish culture, especially the language. The Atlantic coast, however, was colonised by Britain, so the people from the East coast assimilated English culture and language. This marked a barrier which still exists today. Also the Isabelia central mountain range marks a geographic distinction which leaves the Atlantic coast to the influence of the Caribbean climatic conditions based on tropical forest and humid savannah with a heavy rainfall. This climate is quite different from the Pacific. Another element to mark the Atlantic-Pacific difference is the absence of communication. North Zelaya only has airplane communication with the Pacific, i.e. no telephone or television communication. Although there are three local radio stations, they all have small transmitters (and problems with spare parts). The most powerfully transmitted radio programmes are those from Costa Rica, the Island of San Andres, Honduras and the USA, which are loaded with anti-Sandinista propaganda. Passing through centuries of a different history and form of exploitation, we come to another reason for the difference between the Pacific and the Atlantic: the propaganda of the counterrevolution which is directed particularly through indigenous of actions. Thus, constant propaganda against all the revolutionary mass organisations is maintained.

## **The Miskitu People**



## **Production**

The productive traditions of the Miskitu are based on subsistence agriculture and small scale fishing. Parallel to these activities paid jobs are sometimes available in the mines, in lumbering and in commercial fishing. Other find work in government institutions. Prior to the revolution, with the introduction of capitalist enclaves in the Atlantic coast, many Miskitu women left their communities and went to towns and the 'company camps', where they took on poorly paid domestic work or became saloon bar attendants, prostitutes, or the partner of a man to whom they gave sexual and domestic services.

Within the sexual division of labour in the productive sphere, so-called 'men's' jobs - such as truck drivers, watchmen, miners, boat or sea workers, etc. - are held with higher regard and better pay. Meanwhile, the so-called 'women's' jobs - such as washerwomen, domestic servants, office cleaners, food vendors, etc. - are of low esteem and pay. In recent decades an increasing number of Miskitu women began to acquire education but soon found themselves in stereotyped 'women's' jobs such as nursing, secretarial work and teaching, which also have less pay and prestige than the typical male stereotyped jobs like accountants, agronomists, etc. Thus, while the Miskitu ethnic group has been abused and exploited by foreign capitalists and local Mestizo and Creole people, within this Miskitu women suffer from another type of discrimination: male dominance. The men in their work acquired skills, learnt another language and accumulated spending money, which gave them supremacy over their female counterparts. The Sandinista Revolution, however, has made some changes that benefit some Miskitu women. The wages of domestic servants are improving and other benefits such as holiday pay and fewer working hours are available. More women have been given access to education. At an intellectual level, the FSLN has made efforts to give more participation to women, for example the government minister in North Zelaya is currently a woman but still all the government institutions are headed by men, and in those areas such as health and education, the policy making jobs are also still held by men.

## **Reproduction**

Women are responsible for bearing and raising children, but this activity has little status in Miskitu society. Even though Miskitu men pride themselves highly for fathering many children, the actual raising of children falls on the women. The belief that a woman should have as many children as 'God sends' is a hazard to a woman's health and the only control she has is to breastfeed her offspring up to the age of two, in the hope that it will delay the following pregnancy. Very often women's role as mother is confused with that of a domestic servant. Because of this women do a 'double day's work'; after they have completed a productive day's work they go home to wash, cook, care for children and old people, etc. The majority of men have no consideration of the human dignity of Miskitu women and they consider young Miskitu women as objects to give them pleasure. They believe women to be their private property which they can freely ill-treat.

The most significant achievements of the revolution have been free health care for women and their family, and free and available education. Yet Miskitu women in the rural areas have not realised the importance of education for their emancipation as women and as part of an ethnic minority, and INSSBI's laws on food, family protection and other achievements are unknown to most Miskitu women.

## **Recommendations**

### **To Miskitu Women**

In a society with class differences, with different ethnic groups and with male discrimination practised towards women, class, ethnic and gender struggles cannot be separated, nor can one be prioritised over

another. In Nicaragua the National Liberation War freed Nicaraguans from the domination of a small elite class. At present the working class Nicaraguans are struggling to defend their freedom, so Miskitu men and women should participate in this defence of class rights. But emancipation should at the same time go further to ensure ethnic demands. This is the struggle of MISATAN and the government committees on autonomy for the Atlantic coast area. In addition, Miskitu women have to struggle for gender rights to be obtained along with ethnic and class rights. This can only be effectively achieved through participation.

This paper recommends that MISATAN seek to lighten Miskitu women's triple burden of class, ethnicity and gender so they can participate actively in all levels of the organisation. To do this MISATAN should create a women's council, where women will be able to get together and identify their needs and constraints and seek help. This paper does not recommend the integration of Miskitu women in AMNLAE because of the historic, geographic and ethnic differences which separate women from the Pacific and Atlantic areas. As a consequence of these differences, AMNLAE cannot voice the specific needs of Miskitu women because it does not understand them and will not see their importance, nor high priority.

It is time for Miskitu women to get up and speak for themselves because they, better than other women or Miskitu men, know what are their needs, problems and expectations.

### **To the Regional Autonomous Government**

The regional government should encourage and implement training programmes for Miskitu women to provide income generating projects and lessen their burden of childcare and domestic work. Also it should run education campaigns about birth control and make available methods for those women in need. Miskitu women are vital to the economic activity in North Zelaya, in South Zelaya and in the resettlements of Jinotega and Matagalpa, and the government cannot underestimate their present and potential value. Two areas in which women's value is underestimated are agriculture and education.

Miskitu women peasants are active agricultural workers but very few get trained as agronomists, veterinary technicians or in other skills in this field. The Agrarian Reform Ministry (MIDINRA) should implement a policy to encourage and help young Miskitu women to study these careers. MIDINRA could also implement policies to introduce animals (instead of women) to carry crops, and also encourage women's-only cooperatives, and where women are already in mixed cooperatives it should encourage women to become involved in its management.

Teaching jobs have been stereotyped as women's jobs; nonetheless, all the administrative functions of the Ministry of Education in the region of North Zelaya are held by men, or Mestizo women. Miskitu women teachers should be given the chance to be administrators in the education system in the regions where Miskitu people live. Special care should be taken to allocate an equal number of scholarships to women and to men, and in all academic or technical fields. Furthermore, a review should be made of education materials, especially of the Miskitu bilingual education materials, to ensure that women's subordination and machismo are not transmitted.

### **To the Research and Documentary Centre for the Atlantic Coast(CIDCA)**

A study should be made of the present situation of Miskitu women in North Zelaya, South Zelaya, Matagalpa and Jinotega, to provide a data base from which to plan policies, programmes and projects with gender awareness, with particular reference to women's present and potential roles in reproduction, production and management of their home and communities.

### **XIII. Proposal for a Battered Women's Refuge in San Jose in Costa Rica**

Alexa Jengich

When we look at the many problems facing battered women in their struggle to survive as single parents then the question 'But why do women go back to violent men?' becomes patently less appropriate than the question 'But where do women find the strength to survive?'. (Report from Battered Women and the State Conference 1980)

#### **Introduction**

The main purpose of this paper is to describe the setting up of a refuge in Costa Rica to provide battered women and their children with a temporary but safe space. It is very important, in helping women to get away from stressful and psychologically unhealthy relationships, that the necessary support from outside the family is available. As women in Costa Rica cannot apply for social benefits and housing if they declare themselves homeless, this project also has to deal with the need to help women to become economically independent in order to be able to look after their children. Thus, the project will have two aspects that should be developed simultaneously: giving emotional support and helping women to participate in discussions about different issues of interest to them; and secondly providing real opportunities to enter the labour market, using known skills or by teaching them some basic ones. Thus the project could be considered as an income generating one. The idea is to set up a cooperative with the women that come to the refuge and later on to expand membership to women who will have since left the refuge. The target group of the refuge is to be low income women, as these have fewer opportunities for finding housing, employment, friends, etc. This does not mean that middle and high class women are never battered, but they are often in a financially better position to leave a dangerous situation. Moreover, low income families are characterised by unstable partners, an average of four children, alcoholism, child abuse, neglected children and mental health problems. (A low income is taken here as £40 or less per month.)

The objectives of the project are, therefore:

#### **Specific economic objective:**

- a. to build a cooperative, which can provide jobs and increase family income;
- b. to recognise women's role as producers and not just as reproducers;
- c. to give women the basic necessary skills that will allow them to enter the labour market in satisfactory conditions;
- d. to provide the necessary information about legal rights and demand for certain goods, bank credits, etc.

#### **Specific psychological objective:**

to build a discussion group in order to analyse domestic violence, personality development (setting their own goals in their life, learning to be more assertive and self confident).

## **Background to the Project**

### **The Position of Women in Costa Rica**

In a 'developing' country such as Costa Rica, it is quite important to develop human resources to their full potential. However, lack of jobs, lack of training opportunities and social values or attitudes can lead to a 'vicious circle' of poverty which seems impossible to break. Although it is hard for both men and women, it is particularly difficult for women to enter the labour market with the same opportunities as men. Women have been trained to accept a different place in society; it is the traditional view that women are responsible for rearing children and housework, while men are seen as the 'breadwinners'.

Nevertheless, the situation is changing and many women are, in effect, the heads of households even though they may not recognise their new role. In general, women's role as producers has not been considered even when, according to statistics, more than 50% of families in Costa Rica are supported by women as the major breadwinner.

Industry in Costa Rica is mainly related to assembly, food production and clothing, but it is not sufficient to employ women in a steady way. Moreover, an increasing population rate in the city of San Jose due to migration and natural increase makes the situation of finding employment and housing more difficult. Women, therefore, face great problems, especially battered women who want to leave a situation of domestic violence, as they are confronted with a lack of opportunities. Women are not able to look for better jobs because many are drop-outs from school and they do not have the skills required in the labour market.

Women's conditions of living in San Jose are difficult, particularly those who live with domestic violence. Whilst it is difficult to know the extent of the problem, it is impossible to deny it. Although accurate figures are not available in any country, it is clear that it is a social problem widespread in many societies, social groups, rural and urban areas, socio-economic classes, etc. Women are often reluctant to admit that they are beaten and instead may mention that they are depressed, unable to cope with the marriage, or they complain about the alcoholism of their partners, and so on. Sometimes, this is due to shame or to the pressure of responsibilities such as rearing children to social ideas about the need to remain in a relationship and being able to cope with any problem. It can also be reinforced by religious points of view. Isolation and lack of support from organisations and institutions make women keep their fear and anxiety to themselves. In addition, when battering cases are reported, they are not recorded as criminal offenses but as a private matter. Some policemen tend to see violence as a 'matrimonial difficulty' which leads to suggestions of marriage guidance counselling. Domestic violence and fear of violence are not recognised as such and it is often expected (and a fact) that charges will be withdrawn, as women are often assumed responsible for the violence of men. But domestic violence is a reality. It is defined here as an assault such as slapping, kicking, broken bones, facial cuts, attempts of strangulation as well as comments which make women believe that they are ugly, stupid, mentally ill, not sexually desirable, etc.

It is important to mention the advanced approach to domestic violence in different countries, such as Australia, the United States of America and Great Britain. For instance, in Scotland the Women's Aid Organisation has been working on the subject since 1973. Their work is related to the legal protection of women and they have been working to make battering be seen as a social problem that requires a broad solution. Housing is a major concern and at the present time, according to the Matrimonial Homes Bill, married women have the occupancy right and with an 'exclusion order' women can exclude a man from the home and surrounding area even if he is the sole legal owner or tenant of the house. It is understood that a man's behaviour could be injurious to a woman's physical or mental health and men can be arrested if they break the interdict. Furthermore, battered women can be rehoused under the Homeless

Persons Act, even when it was previously believed that battered women who were suffering physical violence had become intentionally homeless. There are 29 refuges alone in Scotland, although the refuge workers state that it is not enough for the demand that has increased rapidly.

### **The Need for a Refuge**

It is important to understand that the family is the place where we learn the behavioral patterns accepted in society. In considering the nature of the problem of domestic violence one should remember that many battered women come from families characterised by this type of violence and many male aggressors as well come from a childhood characterised by punishments. There are many theories which try to explain this issue. Some psychological theories insist that violence is viewed as an instinct, as inner forces. Other theories see the problem as a result of powerful structural forces in society and the subordinate place of women in the society versus male dominance. According to the theory chosen, different approaches will be taken to tackle the problem: to blame the individual (the victim is often blamed as much as the aggressor); to blame the system; or to blame both the individual and the social system.

It seems that domestic violence is an important problem regardless of socio-economic class, religion or culture. Although there is not much research done in the field, it appears that socio-economic and psychological factors are interrelated. For example, an early emotional deprivation of the victim can cause her to be too frightened to leave and lose her home or fear of her partner's retaliation can also stop her making a decision to take a legal action. In addition, lack of housing and employment can make women remain with their male aggressor, as happens in Costa Rica.

It is important to mention that an individual's mental health is related to the capacity of that individual to be productive and to have the opportunity to develop personal abilities. Different authors (such as Erich Fromm and Erick Erickson) have pointed to this in their references to personal development. In the case of women, it is necessary to relate their mental health with the childrearing issue that sometimes is seen as the only activity that women can do, thus not allowing them to develop their capacity to do other activities. Provision of childcare facilities could provide women with the possibility to choose if they want to stay at home or not. In other words, a project such as a refuge will bring a possibility of improving mental health conditions, if one accepts that mental health problems in many cases are related to a lack of real opportunities to participate actively in the society. This project will also be preventive in the sense that it will prevent the next generation from continuing into patterns of domestic violence.

Another point to mention is the need to work with social stereotypes that shape masculine and feminine roles in the society, which support a particular division of labour. In addition, it is important when working with women to explore fears of being emotionally independent, lack of self confidence, loneliness, helplessness, lack of goals in their lives, etc. One must take into account that battered women who will come to the centre will lack sufficient confidence to start working, because many of them have never worked or they have depended on their partners for a long time. Moreover, some of them may have been so isolated for long periods that they may not be used to being with a group of women. In other words, their capacity for work could be influenced negatively by these emotional aspects. Thus, it can be considered quite important that women produce something while they are in the refuge, so that they keep busy and they can start earning some money to be able to pay the rent of a room when they leave the place. Some tasks in the refuge are social, such as the cleaning of the house, childrearing, cooking, etc. It is necessary to understand that poverty alleviation and satisfaction of basic needs (food, clothes, housing, education and health services) must be related to the responsibility and the right of each citizen to contribute to solving their own problems. A paternalistic way of solving women's needs would exclude them from participation in any decision making process.

The idea of the possibility of setting up a cooperative with the members of the refuge is related to all the above points. It is important that women get equal pay no matter what kind of work they do in the refuge, and that flexible working hours be allowed. The cooperative could be involved in such services as cleaning and washing clothes, or receiving children for daycare from other mothers that have been in the refuge, etc. In addition, the refuge could be involved in the production of goods such as cooking tamales or tortillas for restaurants, etc. Women in the refuge should be trained with basic skills in managing, how to sell a product, etc. It is important to recognise that long term skills cannot be taught because each woman will not stay for long in the refuge. It would be important to consider the possibility for the members who leave to live on their own to rent a place close to the refuge.

### **Framework for the Project**

- i. Look for a place where the refuge could be set up. Simultaneously, look for financial cooperation to start the project. The place could be a government building, a rental house if a grant is obtained, or a house may be donated. The house will need several rooms, a big room for children to play, and if it is possible, a backyard. Security measures must also be taken into account. A primary school should be close by. Some budget will be required to buy the minimal things to run a house. A public telephone should also be in the house. It will be important, too, to look for donations of second hand toys, clothing, etc. Some budget will also be required to start the production of income generating projects.
- ii. Announce the project to hospitals and to the police, in order to receive referrals. Some advertisement could be placed with radio, television, or in newspapers, or by means of posters.
- iii. Recruit some volunteers from different fields and people interested in the subject to work with women and their children.
- iv. Work with the women who decide to come to the centre. Build up a group, encourage self support, sharing experience, build self confidence, etc.
- v. Select an activity that could bring some income to the women. The activity should be according to their interest, to their skills and to the demand of the goods produced or the need of the service that could be given.
- vi. Incentives must be introduced to the group, according to their participation. However, cooperation among the members should be reinforced instead of a sense of competition. Women who have been in the refuge should be encouraged to keep a link with the refuge as members of the cooperative.
- vii. Keep records of the information, calls, etc. and work towards raising public awareness about domestic violence.
- viii. It would be important to use self evaluation of each member on a regular basis while they are in the refuge. A questionnaire could be designed to evaluate the feelings of the family when they arrive and when they are ready to leave the refuge. It should be noted when families start feeling part of the group, the problems they face, their needs that have not been met, etc. The last goal will be the members' own analysis of the improvements in their individual lives and as a group.

## **Conclusion**

The project is related to two difficult aspects: poverty and the role of women in the family and in society. Both issues require a long term project. In addition this project is also related to attitudes towards women as producers, job opportunities, housing, etc. As a result, the project cannot be seen in isolation from other projects if one wants to face the problem of domestic violence.

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