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Expert Group Meeting on the  
Establishment of a Data Bank  
on Women and Development in Africa

Addis Ababa  
15-19 May 1989

**ZAMBIA ASSOCIATION FOR  
RESEARCH ON DEVELOPMENT (ZARD)**

by

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PAPER PRESENTED TO THE ECA EXPERT GROUP MEETING  
ON ESTABLISHMENT OF DATA BANK ON WOMEN AND  
DEVELOPMENT 15 - 19 MAY 1989, ADDIS ABABA  
ETHIOPIA.

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Secondly, I wish to express my gratitude to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada through their Regional Office in Nairobi for the travel grant and support of my participation to this important meeting.

Thirdly, I am indebted to the Zambia Association for Research and Development (ZARD) for allowing me the opportunity to represent the Association at this meeting.

Last, but not the least, I cannot thank the ATRCW and PADIS enough, for inviting a representative from a Non-Governmental Organization in Zambia. I believe this is an impetus of Networking among women in Africa.

## SUMMARY

In Zambia women have contributed as much as men to the economic development process in the years since independence. Unfortunately, most of the women's contributions have either gone unnoticed or with very little value attached to them. In recent years, however, increasing awareness of the role played by women is becoming more evident. Furthermore, women themselves are becoming increasingly aware of their roles and contributions to the Zambian society.

This awareness has created a need for information on women, their roles both at home and at work, and their contributions to economic development. Unfortunately information on these issues is not organized or properly documented for easy access and dissemination.

Therefore, there is need to establish a Data Bank that can acquire, store and disseminate information on women. The Zambia Association for Research and Development (ZARD) is attempting to fill this gap by establishing a National Women's Resource Centre in Zambia.

## INTRODUCTION

The Zambia Association for Research and Development (ZARD) informally came into existence in 1984, when professional women working in various fields in Lusaka became concerned and aware of women developmental problems in Africa, in general and, Zambia in particular. This was after recognizing the need to investigate the extent to which women in Zambia have been left out in making full use of their potential and, further recognising the importance of participatory research and development.

A number of interested women in various disciplines i.e. Professionals - Researchers, Developers, Lawyers, Economists, Administrators, Librarians, Health personnel, Social Scientists, Medical Doctors, Educationalists, to mention but a few; have come together and are determined to identify and investigate the constraints which hinder women's social and economic progress, and to raise awareness of the need to articulate their own reality as researchers and to encourage relevant research and implementation.

ZARD was formed for the purpose of encouraging research on the position of women in Zambia, with the overall aim of encouraging research aimed at forwarding the development of women. The Association has the following objectives:

- To create channels of communication between researchers and people concerned or interested with the place of women in the development process in Zambia.

- To encourage women to investigate aspects of their own social situation in order to understand their place in society.
- To organize seminars/workshops and conferences on women issues.
- To act as an intermediary and agent in forwarding research proposals to appropriate donor agencies for their consideration.

Upon its establishment, the Zambia Association for Research and Development maintained the same principles as those of the Association for African Women in Research and Development (AAWORD) in West Africa i.e. membership was only open to African Women and no men were allowed to become members. However, now these principles have been relaxed due to interest shown by some men in light of the aims and objectives of the Association. As a result the Association is now open to both male and female as well as the non-African women. Though the male members do not hold any positions in ZARD, they play an encouraging role in promoting women activities even in their work-places.

ZARD has greatly benefited from the male members because they are gender aware and they have greatly supported ZARD female members in their research endeavours. We have found out that involving male members in the Association promotes working together towards achieving one goal. This makes the heavy burden lighter and easier to carry out when both parties are working together in promoting a target group which in this case happens to be women at all levels of development.

ZARD currently has a membership of approximately seventy (70) members and all these are voluntary workers except for 1 full-time Women's Resource Centre Coordinator and

1 full-time Librarian who are being paid using the resource centre funds on a contract of two years, renewable subject to availability of funds. The Coordinator for the women's resource centre helps out with most of ZARD Administrative work.

Management of the business of the Association is vested in a Co-ordinating Committee which is constituted of: 1 Chairperson, 1 Vice-Chairperson, 2 Administrative Co-Secretaries, 2 Co-Treasurers and 1 Committee Member. In addition to this Committee, there is also a Project Committee whose responsibility is that of selecting projects for funding, monitoring and evaluating research projects which are selected by members. The Committee consists of: Six members selected at the General Meeting, 3 representatives from the Co-ordinating Committee which includes Chairperson, 1 Co-Secretary and 1 Co-Treasurer and 2 temporary Co-opted members. The Chairperson and Secretary of the Projects Committee is elected by the members of the Committee amongst themselves. The General Meeting governs the affairs of the Association and provide guidance to the Co-ordinating and Projects Committees established under the Constitution for the general operation and management of the Association's activities.

Listing of work undertaken by ZARD since its inception

Currently, there has been a considerable interest amongst particular donor agencies in promoting and enhancing the role of women in Zambian society, and in the development process. ZARD has been able to accomplish the following actions through grants by various donors both local and international.

(i) Workshops:

- (a) "Women in Research: Tapping Research Resources"  
Lusaka, June 1984.
- (b) "Women's Rights Conference in Zambia"  
Kitwe, March 1985.
- (c) "Importance of Research in Developmental Issues  
concerning Rural and Urban Women in Zambia"  
Nairobi, Kenya 1985 UN Decade.
- (d) "Images of Women in the Mass Media in Zambia"  
Nairobi, Kenya 1985 UN Decade.
- (e) "SNV Project on Research Methodologies Seminar"  
Lusaka, 1987
- (f) "Meeting on the Inheritance Bill"  
Lusaka, 1988.
- (g) "Research Methodologies on Women in Mass-Media"  
(in conjunction with AAWORD) Lusaka, 1986.
- (ii) Research in Progress
  - (a) Images of Women in Mass Media in Zambia
  - (b) Discriminatory Laws against Women in Zambia
  - (c) Images of Women in Zambian Songs (Music)
  - (d) The Working Woman and Housing Problems
  - (e) An analysis of the participation of Zambian  
women in Agricultural Extension Programs and  
Training Services.
  - (f) Women's participation in Functional Literacy  
Programs
  - (g) Inheritance Bill Campaign (completed)
  - (h) Oral History
  - (i) International Women's Day Activities (completed)
  - (j) Treatment of women in Maternity Hospitals
  - (k) Actual Discriminatory Cases against women in  
Zambia.



- (l) Traditional Child Rearing Practices (completed)
- (m) Family Planning and Population Communication in Zambia (completed)
- (n) Investigation into the extent of Women's participation in SNV Supported Projects (completed)

(iii) Publications

- (a) Annotated Bibliography of Research on  
Zambian Women. June 1985. Lusaka
- (b) Women's Rights in Zambia. Proceedings of 2nd  
National Women's Rights Conference. July 1985
- (c) Preliminary Appropriate Technology Directory  
for Zambia, Co-authored with YWCA (Zambia)  
July 1985.

(iv) Establishment of a National Women's Resource Centre

ZARD's first attempt to respond to the need for co-ordination of information on women was to publish a bibliography of research on Zambian women in 1985. This was a very important step, but the need for comparative information on what has been done in other developing countries in the world and, to be able to obtain a full copy of the research study listed, and have a centre or organization which could help identify related research, remain unanswered needs.

ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF WOMEN'S NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN DATA COLLECTION

In Zambia there are many non-governmental organizations that are working on issues relating to women. Their projects could benefit from information in a Data Bank. There are also other outside agencies such as development organizations that come to Zambia to undertake research which could benefit from guidance of a local institution which could give them information on already existing research and local sources of information.

Listed below are some of the Non-Governmental organizations in Zambia that are dealing with women issues and have contributed to women's developmental process.

1. Africa Development (ADA) - It is involved in Economic Development, Law Culture, Language, Health and Agricultural Development, and Women in Development. ADA has enhanced collaboration efforts among the Non-Governmental Organizations by producing a Directory of NGO's briefly outlines what each NGO is doing. This will provide greater collaboration, cohesion and co-operation among NGOs in Zambia.
2. National Association of Business and Professional Women of Zambia (BPW) - This deals mainly in career guidance for women and extends opportunities of business and professional women through education.
3. Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia (PPAZ) - This is involved in family planning and population issues. It produces educational materials, journals (Parenthood Magazine) and avails modern contraceptives at low prices and provides counselling services.

4. Zambia Association of University Women (ZAUW)  
The Association enhances and uplifts the standards of women through education. Holds seminars and discussions on subjects concerning women in the community.
  
5. Zambia Alliance of Women (ZAW)  
The organization aims at promoting the welfare of women and children..
  
6. Non-Governmental Organization Coordinating Committee (NGOCC) - This is involved in women in development activities and its main objective is to act as a mother body for all NGO's in Zambia. Its tasks include to co-ordinate; provide guidance; reduce duplication of efforts; provide information, conscientise; lobby; disseminate, educate; be a forum for debate, exchange ideas and experiences and to act as a pressure group to voice women's concerns to the government of the Republic of Zambia and, to establish national and international contacts. NGOCC was established in July 1985 to coordinate the UN Decade activities among NGO's.

NGO'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF INFORMATION TRANSFER  
SYSTEM ON WOMEN

One of ZARD objective is to establish and maintain a system of information, documentation and communication in order to disseminate information on women's issues and the work of Non-Governmental organizations in Zambia. ZARD has been working closely with NGOCC and NGOCC has set up a documentation centre in order to strengthen communication among NGO's. ZARD is in the process of establishing a Women's Resource Centre which eventually might submerge the documentation centre. NGOCC will refer people to ZARD Women's Resource Centre as it will cover most of the subjects on women and we hope to receive a fair amount of funding to run this project. To reduce duplication of efforts in research projects, the NGOCC acts as an intermediary between NGO's and funding agencies. When annual plans are drawn by various NGO's, they are submitted to NGOCC for approval and forwarding to appropriate funding agencies. NGOCC has had seminars on proposal writing in an endeavour to help NGO's in formulating project proposals.

Another way of transferring information on women is through membership. NGOCC is represented by various NGO's on its executive Committee. These Committee members bring in information to NGOCC Executive Committee meeting which is held on every first Tuesday of the month. There are 9 NGO's represented on this Committee. The other information transfer system is through the "Manela Magazine" which gives a wider coverage of women issues and, the NGOCC Newsletter which informs all the NGO's on what other NGO's are doing both local and international. Annual plans are also a helpful information transfer system as it gives information in details of what kinds of actions will be taken by various NGO's and how they hope to achieve their objectives.

Both ZARD and NGOCC find that information on women is scattered, and undocumented which makes it very difficult for one to carry out research on this crucial issue of women in development. ZARD's establishment of a women's Resource Centre will be the first of its kind in Zambia. The Centre will serve the user's time in search of information as it will be made available and accessible to users. ZARD intends to gather information from all these NGO's on a periodic basis.

It is also hoped that the Centre will be linked with other information networks with similar interest and this will enable them have information readily available within the network. This will also help build communication channels between researchers.

The survey which was carried out by ZARD in 1985 revealed that very little information was available or documented, a problem that is replicated throughout the African region, where there is little coordination of information on women's issues, concerns and status. Although such regional groups as African Association of Women in Research and Development (AAWORD) and African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) have begun to systematically identify and collect research being done on women, there is yet to be widespread efforts of this type at the national level.

The Women's Resource Centre will attempt to fill the existing gaps and deficiencies in information availability on women in Zambia by collecting information on and about women in Zambia and making it available and accessible to users. This will in return help build up an information base for ZARD in its endeavour to carry out research and consultancy services. It will also encourage networking among other organizations and attempt to encourage more collaborative efforts in sharing information about work on women's projects.

This will also minimise duplication of research projects.

In view of the above problems, the National Women's Resource Centre is attempting to collect research materials, training materials, audio-visual and printed information and project information. Also a project on collecting Oral History on Zambia women is underway to curb the deficit being experienced on the undocumented literature on Zambian women. The collection of oral history is significant because Zambia is basically an oral society, and most of the information on Zambian women is still untold and unwritten. Most women are illiterate due to lack of access to formal education. The Women's Resource Centre emphasis will initially be on collecting information that is directly about or pertinent to women in Zambia. However, it ultimately hopes to build a collection that is strong in reflecting research and action related to women through out Africa. The centre hopes to offer information about women's efforts in developing countries worldwide.

Other organizations such as the Young Women's Christian Association has developed a Directory of Appropriate Technologies on women in Zambia, The African Development Assistance, as mentioned before, came up with a Directory of Non-Governmental Organizations in Zambia, outlining their aims and objectives and their activities. The Zambia Council for Social Development have published a similar directory of NGOs in Zambia. These directories will be very helpful to the resource centre.

MANAGEMENT AND USE OF INFORMATION ON WOMEN

In order to enhance roles and contributions of women's non-governmental organizations in data collection, management and use, ZARD is in the process of establishing the National Women's Resource Centre. Once this Centre is operational, it will enhance roles and contributions of NGO's in data collection thus, achieving the following objectives:

- Identify, collect and make available research that has been undertaken on the situation of Zambian women to a wide range of Zambian institutions and individuals working on women's issues.
- Maintain current information on research activities being done about women in Zambia, either by Zambians or outside researchers in an effort to reduce duplication of efforts.
- Involve a variety of organizations and individuals working on women's developmental issues, including researchers, community development workers, advocates, etc. in identifying, collecting and using different types of information and materials relevant to women in their own activities.
- Increase access within Zambia to information about women's activities throughout Africa globally.
- Create channels of information and communication with other women's research and information groups both at home and abroad.

DATA AND INFORMATION NEEDS OF VARIOUS USER GROUPS

Since a number of the Non-Governmental organizations are composed of educated people who at one time or the other held responsible positions in both government and parastatal companies, they seem to be in a position to acquire information that would benefit users, at their own levels.

Most NGO's hold seminars, workshops and conferences to which they invite women at various levels depending on the subject matter of discussion. In this way information is disseminated to both urban and rural women.

NGO's disseminate information to grassroots women through their women's clubs in their different settings. The PPAZ, YWCA of Zambia, NGOCC, ZARD, ZAW, Zambia Council for Social Development are a few of such women's NGO's that have attempted to identify needs of various user groups of data and information according to their own rural and urban settings. In collecting data and information on women, it is interesting to find that both urban and rural women face similar problems and information given to the rural woman will also be applied to the urban woman. In Zambia you find that the line between rural woman and urban woman is very thin.

The success of any information system is heavily dependent on the feedback of the data collected. Unless staff at the resource centre understand the importance of the data they are collecting for aggregation and analysis, the value and use of the information will be negligible.

The Resource Centre will be operational by September.