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PREFACE

These are summaries of 23 national reports submitted by member States. Many of them came in as "drafts" and many also did not contain conclusions and recommendations. It is hoped that member States will, at a latter date, submit their conclusions and recommendations as these are considered very vital to future action by governments as well as for joint activities or programmes between the African Centre for Women and member States and/or NGOs and various women's associations and organizations.

Efforts have been made to provide, as accurately and as concisely as possible, in these summaries, the information contained in the national reports, some of which are quite voluminous due to the various issues addressed.

In general, most of the reports pointed out that, although much has been achieved in the area of awareness-raising to women's issues and concerns and in the emergence and proliferation of women's groups, associations and organizations, all addressing various issues affecting the advancement of women, governments still have a long way to go regarding the implementation of the provisions of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. The failure of governments to implement fully some of the Strategies had been due to their inability to address various social issues because of structural transformation and reforms which many of them had to go through for economic recovery. These programmes had failed to take into account the social costs of adjustment and their serious and negative impact on the majority of the population more than half of whom, in many cases are women.

Decision making and political participation was a major concern of all the reports. Although in most of the countries that submitted reports, women account for more than 50 per cent of the population, their participation in parliament and local government bodies has been minimal. It was also noted in most of the reports that many women consider politics the domain of men. The absence or low representation of women at all levels of decision making was given as the main reason for women's issues and concerns not being adequately addressed.

The question of **education** was taken up by all the reports. They all emphasized the low enrolment of girls at all levels for economic and cultural reasons, the great disparity in the completion rate between girls and boys as well as the high drop-out rates among girls, for various reasons. An important issue regarding education was the small number of girls/women who enroll for courses in science and technology.

Women's employment which has a direct bearing on their poverty was discussed by all the reports. Although there is no *de jure* discrimination in respect of access to jobs, women in managerial positions are still very few to have any impact on economic policies. Most women are found in low-paying non-skilled jobs and, where they are self-employed, their lack of access to productive resources and low level of education result in low-level production and low incomes.

All the reports point to the deterioration in the **health** of women and children since the late 1980s. This situation has been partly due to the rapid population growth, reduction in public expenditure on health, increasing poverty, the AIDS pandemic and socio-cultural practices which adversely affect the health of women and children. There has been a general rise in maternal and infant and under-5 mortality due in part to the prevalence of malnutrition and anaemia. Accessibility to health facilities, family planning services, safe water and sanitation is generally below 50 per cent.

Almost all the reports addressed the interrelated phenomenon of mass **poverty**, underemployment and the increasing number of female-headed households. In some of the countries concerned, governments have taken measures to address this burning issue. Another issue addressed by all reports was that of **national machineries for the advancement of women**. The reports showed that, despite the efforts made by the national machineries themselves to advance the cause of women in one way or the other, these efforts were constrained by the lack of adequate resource allocation by governments and the fact that most of the machineries are under-staffed and not at a level that could influence policy.

Women's access to resources was discussed in nearly all the reports with the acknowledgement that this lack of access to resources by women is largely responsible to their low input to national economic development and self-development. Of equal importance also was the question of **women's legal rights** and violence against women, with particular emphasis on *de facto* and *de jure* discrimination against women in the provisions of the constitutions of many countries and the absence of mechanisms to combat violence against women. Again, there were cases in which governments and NGOs have taken steps to address these issues. In this respect, many of the reports have placed great emphasis on the need for legal literacy for both men and women.

Although cultural and traditional attitudes appeared as the major underlying contributing factor to many of the obstacles in all areas of concern addressed by most reports, the issue itself was briefly analyzed by only one report.

It is our hope that, through these summaries, member States will take advantage of the experience of others as to how various obstacles were overcome or what measures were being taken to address or remove them.

ANGOLA

INTRODUCTION

Angola has an area of 1,246,700 km² and a population of 10.5 million, 51 per cent of whom are women.

It has a huge foreign debt which is impacting negatively on the country's capacity for financing its social programmes. Successive structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), which were started in 1987, continue to have a negative effect on the lives of the population, in particular, women. The reorganization of state enterprises and privatization of some social and almost all economic activity, aggravated by high inflation (1000 per cent), the low level of women's education and vocational training have all combined to deteriorate the status of women in Angola.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Although there is equality between men and women to vote and be voted for and to participate in political activities, multi-party politics in Angola has led to women's inability to participate in various political activities. This has been due to their lack of organizational ability and capacity to contest in political parties led by men. The situation has been aggravated by their inability to adapt to the new circumstances.

At all levels, there is gender disparity which is clearly demonstrated in the low participation in decision making despite the important contribution of women to the national economy and family life.

In the National Assembly, the legislative organ, women account for 9.5 per cent and in the Government, the executive organ, they represent about 20 per cent. The judiciary, with the exception of the large number of female lawyers, has the smallest percentage of women.

During the Second Republic, the situation of women, under the leadership of the Organization of Angolan Women, had retrogressed in their struggle for equality and participation in national development.

Education

Although there is no discrimination in respect of access to various levels of education, in Angola, like many other African countries, girls' participation in education is low due to social and cultural practices, including early marriages that prevent girls from continuing and/or completing their education. Thus, school enrolment stands at 55.5 and 44.5 per cent for boys and girls respectively. In secondary school, the gender disparity is even more pronounced, with ninth grade achievement being 7.1 per cent by boys as against 2.9 per cent by girls.

Health

The health situation of Angolan women, like that of most women on the continent, is poor. The situation, aggravated by the civil war, is characterized by high infant and maternal mortality, infertility, low level of under-1/under-5 immunization, limited availability of food, inefficient supply system of potable water, poor sanitation, limited health care service coverage and health education. There is a low rate of use of contraceptives, with only 2 per cent of new consumers.

Availability of health service facilities: Maternal/child health facilities were available at only 5 per cent of the health centres in 1988; this increased slightly until 1992 when the numbers declined significantly. Ante-natal coverage is 17 per cent; 15 per cent of women give birth in hospital while 85 per cent give birth at home; of these, 80 per cent are attended by traditional birth attendants (TBAs).

The high mortality rate is due to continuous infection, haemorrhage, toxæmia, malaria, hepatitis and induced abortion. Lack of food is a major contributor to the predominance of malnutrition among mothers and children.

Employment

Due to population movements, it is difficult to make a precise analysis of the labour force in Angola. However, data from a survey of 1,500 families in Luanda, the capital, indicate that the rate of women's participation in the labour force rose from 47.4 per cent in 1986 to 49.2 per cent in 1992. An analysis of female unemployment during the same period was 24.96 per cent as against 20.34 per cent for men. The unemployment situation is more serious in the interior of the country where there has been a forced migration of 3 million people.

Women's legal rights

The principle of equality among men and women is enshrined in the Constitution. In common law, the family code provides that husband and wife are equal.

The principle of equality has, however, been difficult to translate into action because of socio-cultural attitudes which have relegated women to the status of second-class citizens. For the same reasons, the adoption of specific policies guaranteeing active participation by women in the development process are difficult to implement.

Action for the protection and promotion of women in the field of work has been incorporated into the family code, in force since 1988. The family code has addressed the aspects of the law dealing with guardianship, adoption, marriage, parental authority, divorce, etc. This has led to a better balance among members of the family and the relation between the family and society in general.

Angola has adhered to all international instruments relating to human rights and the rights of women but no legislative or administrative steps have been taken to implement the provisions of these instruments.

Violence against women: The most perverse and common form of the violation of women's rights is violence in all its manifestations, including wife-beating, incest, rape, female genital mutilation, sexual enslavement and even death.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Although the Government had appointed a Secretary of State for the Advancement and Development of Women, due to the lack of resources (human, material and financial), the objectives have not been realized.

Non-governmental organizations

Due to the lack of organizational capacity, Angolan women have not established NGOs or women's associations.

Women's access to resources

Drinking water and sanitation: Between 1988 and 1990, 39 per cent of the population were supplied with drinking water; 41 per cent of this was treated water, 70 per cent of which was used in the urban areas and 30 per cent in the rural areas. This compelled rural women to walk long distances to fetch drinking water. High environmental degradation caused by, among others, water and atmospheric pollution, inadequate sanitation, soil erosion, pollution from domestic fuel wood and lack of food have seriously affected the population, particularly women.

Women and disaster management: Rural women play an important role in the management of natural resources, namely soil, forests and water in their attempts to improve the quality of life of their families.

Despite the country's vast wealth of natural resources, drought and desertification have adversely affected the productive and domestic activities of the population and, in particular, women.

BOTSWANA

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Southern African subregion, Botswana is affected by the political and economic changes that take place in that area. The political changes in South Africa are the most important because of Botswana's strong historical attachment. Economic recession and SAPs have accompanied these changes, leading to widespread entrenchment and the deterioration in household and personal incomes among the populations of the countries of the subregion. Botswana has not totally escaped, though the situation cannot approach that existing in other parts of Africa. Botswana has had a sustained and rapid economic growth and a liberal democratic political system which have combined to allow the nation to build and develop its social and physical infrastructure as well as its productive base and thus the quality of life of its people.

Rapid population growth is, however, affecting the country's capacity to cope with the demands of this phenomenon. In spite of this, Botswana recognizes the importance of the crucial role of women who make up more than half of the population and the fact that further national advancement will depend on enabling women to participate more fully, without undue hindrance, in national development.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Botswana women tend to have a very limited presence in the upper echelons of power and decision making. Although women account for 58 per cent of voters (1989 elections), they still perceive men as the sole legitimate heirs to positions of leadership and will invariably support their candidature for political office. Thus, the parliament of 34 elected and four nominated members has only two female members (5 per cent), a percentage which has never been exceeded. In a cabinet of 11 ministers and the Attorney General, there is one female (8 per cent), a situation that has not changed since independence.

The level of appointments for diplomatic posts in the civil service has also been low; for example, of the 11 foreign missions/embassies, only one (8 per cent) is headed by a woman and women account for 33 per cent of the top management team (counsellors, first, second and third secretaries). In the civil service itself, women account for less than 20 per cent of the top management positions. The opportunities for women to advance to these top-level civil service posts are better in central than in local government.

Constraints to women reaching the heights of political power are, firstly, that initial nominations and elections take place at local level politics and secondly, traditional and cultural values. There has not been sufficient sensitization and education on gender issues for most rural voters to grasp the significance of their voting power in relation to the advancement of women.

Management and senior administrative posts have also been made available to women in various ministries but the percentages have been low; the service sector offers 29 per cent of its senior posts to women. Women have also made limited progress in economic power-sharing; they are conspicuously absent from the boards of directors, with the exception of two of the private parastatal companies. Women's involvement in business is largely confined to small-scale activities in the informal sector.

Health

The health strategy includes both preventive and curative health services with emphasis on education and information dissemination as well as improved economic conditions that will enable people to have adequate food and nutrition, safe water and sanitation. The Government is committed to the goal of Health For All by the Year 2000. The health of women and children is given particular attention and the core of the strategy for this group is the maternal and child health and family planning programme which includes ante-natal care, safe delivery and post-natal care.

Life expectancy in Botswana was estimated in 1981 to be 59.7 for females and 52.3 for males; in 1991, it rose to 65.9 and 59.4. Total fertility in 1981 was 7.07; in 1991 it dropped to 5.25. Available statistics for maternal mortality rate for 1991 was 200-300/100000 live births. The main causes for this are haemorrhage (26 per cent), infection (25 per cent) and hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (17 per cent).

The health status of women is expected to improve by raising the proportion of women of reproductive age who use modern methods of contraception to 40 per cent; targets for 1997 are to increase the rate of attendance of ante-natal clinics by pregnant women to 98 per cent; post-natal attendance and the proportion of supervised deliveries to 80 per cent.

The country still faces constraints in the health sector, including shortage of trained manpower; 15 per cent of the population is still beyond the reach of health services; increasing teenage pregnancies and the problem of collecting gender disaggregated data.

The Government collaborates with private institutions in the expansion and improvement of the health services. The Council of Botswana Women is collaborating with the Ministry of Health and the University Institute for Development Research and Documentation on a research programme aimed at raising public awareness to the danger of AIDS. There is a programme aimed at empowering women with communication skills and self-assertiveness in negotiating safer sex with their partners. Through this pro-gramme, women have also been trained as peer leaders to train their families, friends and co-workers in AIDS prevention seminars and workshops.

Education

Botswana recognizes access to education as a basic human right and a contributor to both economic growth and social progress. Although education is promised for all, it is still minimal for disabled youth and children.

Primary and junior secondary school expansion has progressed steadily so that now 70 per cent of those who enter primary school can expect to proceed to secondary school. Girls are dominant at the lower education levels due to the fact that the total school enrolment reflects the sex composition of the school-age population nationally. For example, primary enrolment for girls in 1978 and 1981 accounted for 52.6 and 51.7 per cent respectively, relating to their proportion in the total national population. The completion rate for girls at the primary school level also shows a progressive increase over boys. In 1987, the proportion of girls in Standard 5 was 52.6 per cent, in 1988 in Standard 6, it was 54.1 per cent and in 1989 in Standard 7, it was 56 per cent. This is because girls stay in school longer than boys to complete their education or even repeat. For boys, however, dropouts are pronounced from middle primary level, resulting in few numbers in the later years.

In the older teenage years (15-19), girls' participation falls below their population proportion, their drop-out rate at this stage is higher and only 3 per cent progress to secondary school. Girls' under-performance at this stage is due to such factors as gender bias in classroom practice on the part of teachers,

low expectations for girls' performance from both parents and teachers, gender-biased teaching materials, etc., which result in low self-esteem among girls just maturing into womanhood.

This situation has led to innovative intervention strategies aimed at removing these biases and barriers limiting girls' opportunities for better performance and greater participation in higher education. As a result, young women are now slowly entering fields previously tended to be exclusively male, e.g., pilots, mechanical engineers, electricians, etc.; participation is, however, still negligible.

There has been appreciable progress in terms of access to tertiary education; for the first time, in 1985, women's participation at the University of Botswana peaked at 45 per cent of the student body. Participation in vocational and technical colleges still lags behind where their involvement never exceeds 35 per cent. They tend to be concentrated around traditional female fields such as secretarial, nursing and textile-related training. This means that after training, their employability is limited to the age-old traditional sectors of employment. Data from the University is not gender disaggregated to indicate the courses that men and women normally follow. In general, women would be more concentrated in education, social science and humanities than in the natural sciences.

Employment

Official figures suggest that while women account for the majority of the nation's population, they do not contribute significantly to the labour force. The apparently low participation rate of women is a reflection of the under-reporting of female activities. Official data collection relies on only one economic activity (cash earning) and ignores the multiple activities of women, including subsistence activities on which rural households rely and in which women engage.

Gender inequalities are reflected in the way in which men and women enter the labour market after their requisite education and training. Women are less able to find jobs when they have no education. In 1991, only 16 per cent of females without education found cash employment as compared to 31 per cent of males. A further 45 per cent of women with some primary school education found cash employment, bringing the total to 61 per cent of the labour force. Among men with primary education, the figure was 40 per cent, bringing the total to 71 per cent. Thus, men had 10 per cent more chances than women in finding jobs with just primary education and 20 per cent more chances than women with no education.

Disparities in access to education are reflected in the opportunities for entry into professional jobs. Women account for just 33 per cent of all professional posts across industries including the civil service; they are most prominent in educational professions where they account for 43 per cent; local and central government offers them only 35 per cent of the positions while the service sector has only 29 per cent among its professional cadre.

The decade 1981-1991 saw a shift in economic participation away from agriculture to cash employment. While in 1981 agriculture was the principal activity for female adults, in 1991 this had dropped to 21 per cent of the economically active labour force while cash employment accounted for 71 per cent of the female labour force (compared to 31 per cent in 1981). The rate of employment on the other hand remained basically unchanged, implying that those moving from agriculture did not become unemployed but found cash paying jobs. This suggests that employment creation strategies in Botswana have benefited various sectors of the population and that women have had a share in these increased opportunities as measured by their rates of participation in the formal sector.

Women's legal rights

Although the Constitution guarantees the enjoyment of certain rights and freedoms, Botswana women are still disadvantaged in certain areas. These inequalities derive both from cultural practices and customary laws as well as from common law which comprises Dutch Roman Law and Acts of Parliament.

Among the most important of the provisions of common law is the Constitution which contains a bill of rights guaranteeing basic rights and freedoms for all. In its definition of discrimination, it does not specify "sex" as one of the grounds on which discrimination is prohibited. Laws such as the Marriage Act, the Married Persons Property Act, and the Deeds Act together have the effect of restricting married women's rights to land or transfer or to process other moveable property like houses, business premises, etc. These provisions do not in any way restrict how men manage and control the family estate and men can even transfer property without the knowledge of the wife even in circumstances where the property may be the residence of the wife and children.

By the provisions of other acts both in common law and customary law, women have very serious problems raising business loans or acquiring immoveable property. Marriage laws confer all discretionary and control rights on men with no provision for women to contest, thus taking away their rights as adults and decision makers and reducing them to minors.

Botswana women have particularly singled out at least seven out of twenty-five discriminatory provisions as the ones with the greatest negative impact on their life chances and their basic rights. One of these is the Citizen Act which denies children born to Botswana women married to foreigners the right to the mother's citizenship. This Act was successfully challenged in court (1992) but it has still not been amended.

Cultural and traditional values have greatly contributed to women's low status. While they place great premium on women's procreative capacity, they do not recognize women's rights as legal guardians to their children. In denying them access and rights to inheritance of such assets as land and cattle for instance, the cultural principles also deny women their right to an independent means of living and thus tie them to a dependent relationship with men as fathers, husbands, uncles and even sons.

There has been advocacy for change of these cultural values. Women's organizations such as Emang Basadi, the Women in Law Southern Africa (WALSA) and Metlhaetsile Information Centre have been actively involved in educational campaigns both for awareness raising and for lobbying for the change of all discriminatory laws. Legal rights workshops have been organized and some research on inheritance rights and maintenance have been carried out. Information and counselling are provided at the Metlhaetsile Centre which caters to the interests of rural women.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The institutional mechanism for dealing with women's affairs in the government structure is the Women's Affairs Division in the Ministry of Labour and Community Affairs. Its major responsibility is to advise the Government on the impact on women of all policies for integrating their interests in these policies; to ensure and facilitate the full involvement and integration of women in the country's development. It should carry out research on women's issues, participate in the formulation of policies and programmes of various ministries as well as monitor and evaluate the implementation of programmes and conventions adopted by the Government at various levels. It is also expected to ensure an effective channel of communication between the Government and NGOs. Being a small division with a staff of only three and under the responsibility of a Director who also supervises three other divisions, this is a formidable and monumental task far beyond the capacity and capability of such a structure. Its location limits its authority in terms of influence and channels of communication with other ministries. Another limiting factor is the

lack of manpower, technical and financial resources. The Division is further hampered by the absence of a policy on women, guidelines to direct its activities and indicate its line of authority.

Awareness of women's issues has increased since the Nairobi Conference though it has not permeated the whole government structure. Botswana was a signatory to the policy of the SADC Council of Ministers that gender should be incorporated into all SADC programmes and structures. Operationalization has been hampered by limited skills in translating gender issues into implementable programmes and structures.

Non-governmental organizations

The effectiveness of NGOs as instruments of change for the advancement of women in Botswana is limited by lack of resources and the absence of a central coordinating body. Women NGOs operate in the areas of social welfare, employment, political education, law and business.

NGOs primarily engaged in social welfare are concerned with the improvement of women's domestic responsibilities, service to the community and the provision of pre-school and training for disadvantaged girls, organizing seminars on AIDS and literacy, among other things. Political education which concerns women's legal rights has been expanded into more political activist roles to ensure greater participation of women in the political process. As a result, the Women's Manifesto has been adopted which sets out demands for women's participation in all spheres of national life.

There has now emerged a coalition of NGOs specifically to facilitate preparations for the Beijing Conference. Women NGOs, however, face serious constraints, including limited financial resources, inadequate human resources and lack of management and operational skills.

International support: Earlier international support for women's advancement in Botswana was mainly welfare-oriented with small-scale income-generating activities for rural women. The post-Nairobi period has seen a greater development of more clearly defined policies and strategies in women-in-development (WID) programmes. There are programmes with women or women groups as target beneficiaries and there are those aimed at the integration of women in ongoing programmes on rural development, youth and small-scale entrepreneurs as the target beneficiaries.

With regard to enhancing women's share of economic power, international support has usually been in the form of small enterprises development with the Peace Corps, USAID, NORAD, collaborating with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Political empowerment of women has received international support in the form of assistance from NORAD, SIDA and UNICEF for workshops and seminars aimed at political education among women. Education and training have received support for various activities involving the University of Botswana and training in various fields including health and human resources development. Donors included the British Council, UNFPA, UNICEF, NORAD, SIDA, SNV, UNIFEM and USAID.

In health, population and development, UNFPA played a catalytic role in facilitating the Government's adoption of a population policy and has provided the necessary requisites for the integration of population factors in development planning, improvement of the nation's data analysis system and ensuring that women's issues are taken into account in development efforts as well as expanding the capacity of the maternal and child health and family planning project.

Problems and constraints: A study on donor intervention (1992) showed that they had a limited impact on the status of women, partly because of the approach in addressing the problems and partly due to the structural and institutional impediments which are not usually addressed. Projects targeted at women also tended to be carried out in isolation from mainstream development activities and thus tended to

marginalize women even more. In the case of integration programmes, resources are not always set aside to address specific problems of women and this could fail to enhance women's participation.

Donors too are often frustrated by the apparent lack of initiative on the part of local organizations and institutions which do not often have any clear-cut agenda.

Conclusions and recommendations

Botswana clearly has a long way to go in terms of implementing the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies in furtherance of the advancement of its women. To move forward, fundamental changes are necessary, beginning with improvements in institutional and political frameworks and embracing strategies for capacity building in such areas as: (a) research and data collection; (b) practical skills for incorporation of gender in development planning, policy and project formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and (c) identification of implementable programmes for improving the status of women in all spheres of life.

EGYPT

INTRODUCTION

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the Egyptian Women Movement persistently emphasized the human rights and social roles of women. This eventually led to a complete recognition of women's rights and their equality with men by both the Constitution and society at large. The Egyptian National Constitution, after an elaborate identification and explanation of women's rights, had exclusively devoted Article 40 to the non-discrimination on grounds of sex, race, colour or religion. Statutory Laws Nos. 73, 38 and 120 for 1956, 1972 and 1980 respectively clearly emphasized the basic human rights and the equality between males and females in all aspects of human life, political, civic, commercial, economical, employment, etc. These statutory laws, which provided women with full equality status, were consistent with Islamic Sharia Laws which had always emphasized the same points. This means that the whole structure of the statutory laws governing the status of women's rights in Egypt were based on the total recognition of women's human rights and equality with men. Egyptian women therefore did not have to fight in order to ensure these rights either at the national Constitution or at the social Levels.

Since 1985, moves towards the achievement of women's rights have been at two levels: the official (governmental) level, at which the Government used its authority to promote women's cause; and the community level, which took the form of women's committees, clubs and associations, engaging in various activities that would serve the cause of women. At the government official level, the following major developments could be pinpointed:

- (a) Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1981;
- (b) Establishment of the Egyptian National Council for the Protection of Childhood and Motherhood, 1988;
- (c) Establishment of the Ministry of Population and Women Affairs, 1993;
- (d) Restructuring, developing and promoting the National Council for Women in 1993 (previously established in 1978).
- (e) Establishment and/or promotion of government departments and units concerned with women's affairs within the Ministries of Social Affairs, Health and Agriculture.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Egyptian women acquired their political rights and equality with men in 1956. The Constitution provides for equality between males and females in all fields of political and social affairs, including the right to vote and be voted for. In 1963, the first women minister had been appointed to office for the first time in the history of Egypt. Two more women ministerial appointments took place in 1993. However, from the early 1980s to date, the participation of women in parliament had fluctuated greatly. Statutory Law No. 38 of 1972 allocated 30 seats in the national parliament exclusively for women.

As a result, women's participation in parliament and other political organs increased in the early 1980s. The number of women in the Egyptian Parliament decreased in 1984, following the enactment of Decree No. 293 which cancelled the allocation of their seats. This Decree stated that women could vote and

be voted for on equal basis with men without any guarantees for parliamentary seats outside the election mechanism. Hence, women's participation in the parliament declined sharply from 9 per cent in 1979 to 2.2 per cent in 1992, but increased slightly in the Advisory Council from 3.3 per cent in 1980 to 4.7 per cent in 1992; however, this increase was brought about by government appointments of women to the Advisory Council rather than by national elections.

Women joined government ministries, units and departments in relatively large numbers, due to the fact that prospects for rights, duties and responsibilities were greater for women in the public sector than in the private sector. In the public sector, the percentage of women reached 14.4 and 30 per cent in 1980 and 1992 respectively, compared to the total labour force. Despite this, however, the employment of women in senior and managerial jobs was as low as 5.7 and 11.8 per cent for the same periods (first under-secretary, under-secretary and general managers).

Women joined the diplomatic service in the early 1960s and reached positions of ambassador. There were 123 women career diplomats (14 per cent) at all levels in 1993 out of a total of 929 diplomats. In the judicial system, there were no women; in local governments/councils, the number of women declined from 11.2 per cent in 1979 to 1.2 per cent in 1992. At the senior managerial level there was, however, a slight increase in the number of women from 11 per cent in 1976 to 12 per cent in 1986. In the field of business activities, official statistics of the labour force showed that recently women entrepreneurship had relatively increased. The percentage of women entrepreneurs to men was 17 per cent in 1988.

Education

Despite the strict constitutional provisions regarding equality between males and females, it has been observed that gender bias in favour of men still exists. Women suffer a lot from high rates of illiteracy, especially in the age group 15-44, where the rate was 45.6 per cent as against 28 per cent for men, 85.3 per cent for age group 45 and above, compared to 59 per cent for men (1986). In rural areas, 76 per cent of the women are illiterate women as against 45 per cent for women in the urban areas in 1986.

In primary school, enrolment for age group 6-11 increased from 57.5 per cent in 1980/1981 to 80 per cent in 1988 and 86 per cent in 1989/1990. At secondary level education and despite the increase in the percentage of female graduates from 32 to 40 per cent in 1989/1990, of the total number of graduates, it was observed that the majority had concentrated in the humanities (about 44 per cent); on the other hand, there was a considerable decrease in the number of graduates in mathematics and other scientific disciplines. Obviously, this would adversely affect females in that they would not be able to join faculties that would equip them for non-traditional occupations.

Health

Despite the economic crisis, health service provisions are progressively increasing in Egypt. These take the form of free medical services of the Ministry of Health: hospitals, dispensaries and health centres in all urban and rural areas. This has been reflected in an increase in life expectancy for all age groups: female life expectancy increased from 51.9 years in 1981-1982 to 65.9 in 1992-1993; for males, it increased from 49.5 in 1981-1982 to 62.5 in 1992-1993. Health indicators showed a decline in the infant mortality rate from 10.8/1000 in 1980 to 5.9/1000 in 1989. There was also a slight drop in the maternal mortality rate from 190/100,000. A recent research study showed the infant mortality rate to be 53/1000 for females compared to 58/1000 for males.

Use of contraceptives varies from area to area, e.g., in some urban areas, it was 59 per cent, compared to 51 per cent in some rural areas. The health situation of women in Egypt was affected by repeated incidence of deliveries and the low standard of living, especially in the rural areas. A research conducted in 1978 showed that 22.4 per cent of women suffered from anaemia/iron deficiency during pregnancy. On

the other hand, malnutrition was common among children and the rate increased for all age groups from 48 per cent in 1979 to 51.6 per cent in 1986. The Ministry of Health has exerted great efforts to make immunization available for children aged 1-2 years. As for infants (under one year), the rate of immunization increased from 69 per cent in 1985 to 89 per cent in 1992.

Despite the availability of ante-natal services, the majority of mothers delivered with traditional mid-wives. However, there was a progressive trend to use more trained and professional personnel, e.g., medical officers. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with UNICEF, also started a training programme for some 1,200 mid-wives, out of which 800 had already completed their training and were provided with the necessary equipment.

Employment

For thousands of years, Egyptian women have worked side-by-side with men in the agricultural sector; they entered modern sector employment at the beginning of this century. Manpower statistics of 1988 showed that 48.4 per cent of women in rural areas were economically active, compared to 26 per cent in the urban areas. According to 1988 population data, the ratio of female manpower increased from 41.3 per cent in 1984 to 67.2 per cent in the agricultural sector, compared to male ratios of 37.4 and 35.8 per cent for the same period. In the social services sector, the ratio of women decreased from 23.9 to 15.2 per cent, compared to 19.5 and 18.7 per cent for males for the same period. In the industrial sector, there was also a slight decrease in female ratios from 8.6 per cent in 1984 to 7.9 per cent in 1988, compared to 14.1 to 5.5 per cent for men. Despite this, it was worth noting that 60 per cent of women's employment was usually unpaid, compared to 14 per cent of male unpaid employment. The ratio of unpaid employment of women (employment from within the family) increased in rural agricultural areas to 74 per cent, compared with men's unpaid employment (employment from within the family) which was 21 per cent. In general, there was a decrease in women's employment in the professional and more reputable senior jobs which would certainly reflect the low standard of education of women in Egypt. This would usually lead to women shifting to more marginalized jobs in the clerical and social services sectors, or simply reverting to unpaid employment in the agricultural sector.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Several institutions such as the National Council for Women; the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood Protection; the Ministry of Population and Family Planning; the departments concerned with women's affairs in various ministries; civic associations, women clubs, trade unions and political parties have all been concerned with the enhancement and promotion of women's affairs.

The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood Protection was set up in 1988 to facilitate the effective integration between various ministries and government departments, as appropriate, in all matters pertaining to childhood and motherhood. It is composed of the concerned senior ministers who report directly to the Prime Minister. The objectives of this Council, among others, were to formulate public policies and programmes for the protection of childhood and motherhood, implement and follow-up these policies and programmes and cooperate with governmental and non-governmental organizations in all issues relating to childhood and motherhood.

The objective of the Ministry of Population and Family Planning, established in 1993, is to formulate policies, plans and projects in the area of population and family planning. It also acts as an implementing and follow-up machinery for these policies and plans, e.g., research projects, administrative development, health training and family planning.

Non-governmental organizations

There has been a growing number of NGOs concerned with women affairs and problems. It is worth noting that there has been a great shift from the usual concern with women's living conditions and welfare problems to a more serious approach. These newly adopted approaches are concentrated mainly on women's empowerment. However, there were some constraints to the achievement of women targeted goals and objectives, the causes of which were:

- (a) The sharp drop in oil prices in the mid-1980s;
- (b) The sharp decline in the number of expatriate workers in the Gulf States, especially after the Gulf War;
- (c) The effects of the SAP and privatization of projects of national priority and urgency.

Women's legal rights

Although the Labour Relations Act emphasized complete equality between males and females, it has provided certain extra rights to women, such as entitlement to unpaid leave for a period of two years, three times in life. This was called child-care leave. It was legally prohibited to assign women employees any duties between 8.00 p.m. and 7.00 a.m. except in hotels, hospitals, airports, etc. and to employ women in hard and/or difficult working environments that might possibly affect their health, e.g., mines. Women were entitled to three months' paid maternity leave, three times in their lives. On request, a woman could work half the working hours for half the pay, half the annual and sick leaves.

Statutory Law No. 100 of 1985 provided married women with the right to ask for divorce on the following grounds: if the husband's second marriage could affect her financially or morally; if affected by husband's absence for more than one year; husband's imprisonment for three years and above; husband's sexual inability; husband's refusal to support the family; husband incurably diseased.

However, married women could not obtain an Egyptian passport without the consent of the husband. There was also a discriminatory bias against women in the Egyptian Nationality Laws: children from an Egyptian husband could be provided with Egyptian nationality regardless of the nationality of the mother whereas children from non-Egyptian husbands could not be provided with Egyptian nationality.

Poverty

Poverty is the most rampant problem in all developing countries. In Egypt, the poverty situation has been worsened by the introduction of the structural adjustment and privatization programmes. The 1993 United Nations Human Development Report estimated that between 1977 and 1989, 23 per cent of Egyptians lived in absolute poverty. This increased in the rural areas to 25 per cent. Women tend to constitute the vast majority of the poor, particularly those who are heads of households. They also form the largest group of the population who are mostly unemployed, particularly in the urban areas. The high rate of unemployment among women is due to the fact that many lack supportive social and family services (day-care centres) and vocational skills training that would equip them in their search for suitable wage employment. In this respect, it was estimated in 1988 that 18 per cent of Egyptian households are headed by women, 60 per cent of whom were widows. Women were also exposed to high rates of unemployment compared with men, particularly during the economic crisis. This was due to the fact that employers preferred men to women, especially when labour supply exceeded demand. The situation was even worse in urban areas because the subsistence economy in the rural areas could provide a minimum subsistence income. In general, however, the number of unemployed women was estimated to be three times the number of men across the country.

International support

The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with a number of international organizations, has embarked on a number of literacy campaigns targeted to women and housewives, especially those in the age group 15-35. Other training services are also provided in tailoring, small-scale business, food processing and home economics. The Public Bureau for Literacy Campaigns was established in 1991, targeting women of the age group 15-35, estimated to number about 4 million. Other projects, including family planning, motherhood and childhood care, were launched in collaboration with the Government of Japan (JICA), the European Community (EC) and USAID; projects for development of administrative skills were implemented in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and USAID; research projects were also undertaken in collaboration with UNFPA and USAID.

Some of the constraints faced by these projects are that most of the international support used to come in the form of financial assistance, and such projects became unsustainable once this support ceased; it has been observed that some of these projects concentrated on small income-generating activities, and training of women in traditional activities such as tailoring and home economics; thus the fear that this would lead to gender division of activities which would ultimately confine women to the traditional and low income-generating activities to which they were currently subjected.

Conclusion

One could conclude that the women's movement in Egypt has reached a stage of no retreat. The future prospects of this movement are strong and promising, the social and political environments very conducive and encouraging and the official government stand has always been a strong and effective element in the process of women's advancement. The challenges are great for Egyptian society as a whole and Egyptian women have a great role to play to face these challenges in the economic, social and political arenas.

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

INTRODUCTION

Due to the lack of statistics, this report is a general review of the current situation of women and not specifically an evaluation of the fulfilment of the objectives of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies.

The economic system of Equatorial Guinea is based on the principle of a free market and free enterprise. The private sector co-exists with the traditional subsistence economy. In 1990, income per capita was estimated at \$US 270, while it was estimated that the incomes of about 40 per cent of the population were lower than \$180. Only 10 per cent of the economically active population have jobs and consequently, the majority earn income from subsistence activities. The fall in the prices of agricultural products in international markets resulted in a very precarious situation at the level of the family generally. This has been further aggravated by the recent devaluation of the CFA franc.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Women have still not achieved much decision-making power, either in the public sector or in the private sector. In parliament there are also few women.

Education

Literacy: The average national literacy rate is estimated at 70 per cent. The difference between literacy rates by sex is very wide: about 48 per cent of women and 85 per cent of men are literate. According to the 1983 census, women between 30 and 50 years of age in rural areas are the least literate. This has, however, changed. It is found that through rural migration to neighbouring countries, youth between 15 and 25 years of age are almost illiterate in the official language.

Professional training: National as well as private structures are few and are located in Malabo, the capital, and Bata, the second city of importance. Female students are generally in lower numbers than male students, although this varies according to centres. The Agricultural Training School has 18.5 per cent girls, the Centre for Professional Training in Malabo has 50 per cent girls. Very few female students are found in higher education.

Education, training and skills development of the population in general and women and girls in particular, are a high priority if integrated development of the country is to be achieved.

Health

The national health system is based on primary health care. In 1990, there were 146 health posts, 259 health committees, 374 community health workers and 126 trained midwives at the first level. At the second and third levels, there were two regional hospitals, five provincial hospitals, 11 district hospitals, three urban and eight rural health centres. Among the country's 44 doctors, there are seven women (3 per cent). There are 30 hospital and health centre beds for every 10,000 persons, two doctors/10,000 persons and eight midwives/10,000 women of child-bearing age.

The global fertility rate is 5.63/1000 live births and the cases of early fertility (14-20 years) and rapid pregnancies at short intervals are numerous, with all the attendant consequences. A 1991 study in Malabo pointed to significant levels of sterility. Long post-partum abstinences are the most frequent forms of natural contraception for spacing pregnancies. Induced abortions, on which no national research exists, are a real danger to health, fertility and the life of women of child-bearing age. The problem of abortions among females 14-20 years of age is of special concern. These abortions occur in this age group due to lack of information and preparation of these young girls in sexual relations and contraceptive use. The maternal mortality rate is 400/100,000 and the infant mortality rate is also high by 1991 estimates.

Access to health facilities: Maternal child health and family planning services are offered at centres and general health posts with a coverage of 10 per cent for women and 25 per cent for children. About 75 per cent of births take place in the home with the help of midwives.

Employment

Women constitute 56 per cent of the total labour force. Due to the deficiencies in statistical data, it is difficult to state the number or percentage of economically active population by sector. Nevertheless, it is distributed between the informal (including agriculture) and the formal sectors. Women form an active labour force and contribute notably in house-holds through various tasks which would be remunerated if undertaken by salaried employees.

Due to lack of reliable statistics, it is not possible to indicate the rate of participation of women in productive employment; however, it is possible to indicate that such participation rose to approximately 89 per cent in the service sector, within the few businesses and work centres registered with the labour inspectors.

Women's legal rights

By Law 14/1975 of 2 May 1975, amendments were made to the legal status of married women and the rights and duties of married couples. This has superseded the former law which gave marital authority to the husband over the wife. Currently, therefore, the legal system fully embraces the principle of the equality of married partners.

The same equality does not exist in broken marriages where, in the case of divorce, the wife has no right over the property of the husband; on the contrary, she is requested to refund the "dowry" and all expenses the husband incurred on behalf of her family. In the case of widowhood, in substance, the widow receives degrading treatment as though she were the cause of the death of the spouse.

Although there has been a change in favour of women in specific areas in respect of marriage laws, a family code should be drafted which would address all aspects of married and family life as well as provide ample information on the rights of spouses.

A 1993 law on national employment policy affirms that there should be no discrimination against women in employment. In addition, the law recognizes the principle of equal pay for equal work.

In general, however, it is only through self-development that women can benefit from legislation or social reforms which are meant to protect them.

Conclusion

In spite of non-discriminatory legislation against women which does not always prevail over traditional practices but which future measures might help to achieve, society in general and women in particular find it difficult to achieve satisfactory levels of development, given the prevailing economic situation.

ETHIOPIA

INTRODUCTION

The population of Ethiopia was 50.9 million (mid-1990), of which 89 per cent live in the rural areas. Children and women constitute about three quarters of the estimated population.

Agriculture is the backbone of Ethiopia's economy and is the major area of employment for the 89 per cent residing in the rural areas. The country's export trade depends very heavily on coffee which provided about 54 per cent of the export earnings in 1978-1984 and to 55.2 per cent in 1986-1987.

The post-war environment in Ethiopia has focused special attention on women's participation in the development process, in sharing of resources equally with men and in changing society. The Transitional Government has formulated a national policy on Ethiopian women that encourages the integration of gender issues in the overall development programme of the country. The Government has also established the National Programme of Action (NPA) with objectives to increase income, increase women's labour force in agriculture, industries, occupations, etc.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Women in Ethiopia have been kept away from decision-making positions because of lack of policy guidelines, unequal educational opportunities and discriminatory sex barriers. They also lacked support and awareness to participate in the country's political affairs. Cultural biases deep rooted in society also restricted women and prevented them from being seen as equal to men to contest in politics.

However, efforts have been initiated to change the situation. Four women ministers and one vice-minister have been appointed within the transitional government structure. There are 20 women appointees at the managerial level in government ministries and 20 at the department head level. This is an encouraging situation for Ethiopian women in future in sharing power and in making decisions that affect their lives.

Education

Despite government efforts to offer more opportunities to women in education and training and non-discriminatory policies, the goals of the education plans are still far from being fully achieved. Education for women still lags behind that of men from primary to university level, and inequality in curricula and enrolment still exists. Girls continue to be offered more of the home- rather than employment-oriented subjects.

The percentage of female students enrolled in 1989 at primary, junior and senior secondary schools was 39, 41 and 39 per cent respectively while the number of males in all levels increased every year between 1974 and 1985. University intake of under-graduate girls accounts for only 10.9 per cent. Their distribution in various fields of specialty clusters around social sciences, agriculture (home science), the natural sciences and veterinary science, in that order. Although they have started to penetrate some male-dominated fields, they are still in the minority. The education curricula in Ethiopia still classifies educational fields "for women" and "for men".

Literacy: Many women who are responsible for the very exhaustive and time-consuming tasks in the home as well as in agriculture can be reached only through the main mechanism of non-formal education. The past literacy campaigns and other adult education in the non-formal education sector gave women the opportunity to acquire some reading and writing skills. Due to lack of follow-up and continuity as well as other factors, many women have lapsed into illiteracy and inability to apply the skills they acquired.

The Government, in particular the Ministry of Education, set up a forum which discussed the problem of education in Ethiopia in general and the gender biased curricula in particular. The results of the forum led to the formulation of the education policy with a strategy to focus on national and local realities and needs with special consideration to gender issues.

Health

Ethiopia endorsed the objective of "Health for All by the Year 2000" using the primary health care strategy as its mode of implementation. The network of health care services has always been limited in scope. Increasing population pressure and economic decline has critically curtailed the Government's ability to provide adequately or improve significantly health services.

The average fertility rate was 7.5 in 1992; this is partly due to the common practice of early marriage in the rural areas where reproduction starts among many women at 12-14 years. The prevalence of teenage pregnancies in Ethiopia is about 20 per cent. Maternal mortality rate is estimated at 700/100,000 live births, one of the highest in the world. Infant and child mortality rates are also very high. The high mortality rates are due to early marriages, short birth intervals, pregnancies in women 20 or over 35 years of age, high nutrition deficiencies, high prevalence of infection and communicable diseases, lack of ante-natal care and lack of access to basic amenities such as potable water and sanitation.

Access to health facilities: It was estimated that in 1990, only 46 per cent or less of the population lived within a reasonable distance from health care facilities. The population/physician and population/nurse ratio are approximately 30,700/1 and 15,000/1 respectively. The recent devaluation has also greatly constrained access to drugs and basic health services from the private sector.

To improve the situation, the Transitional Government formulated a national health policy in 1993 which provides a foundation for the development of the health sectors in the country.

HIV/AIDS: The prevalence of AIDS in Ethiopia is increasing at an alarming rate. From the first two cases reported in January 1986, the number had risen to 5,059 by January 1993. Forty per cent of the cases were from Addis Ababa while the rest were from other urban areas. The overall sex ratio is 2:1 (63 per cent of males to 37 per cent of females). The projection is that in the next three years, 95,500 children are expected to lose their mothers.

Employment

Participation of women in the modern sector labour force is limited. The employment survey of Ethiopia published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs showed that of the total number of employees in both the public and private sectors, 82.1 per cent were males and 17.9 per cent were females. In wage/salary employment, the dominance of males is very high, including the professional and technical fields where women accounted for only 13.2 per cent of the total number in 1970, and 22.8 per cent in the private sector. By 1986-1987, the number had only increased to 23 per cent. Women employed by the Government in the same year was only 25 per cent and by 1989, it was only 2.9 and 4.2 per cent in the private sector and in government respectively.

The most common type of work in the urban area is self-employment which engages about 55.5 of women. Out of this figure, 33.3 per cent are either single, widowed or divorced.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The previous government established the Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association (REWA) to pre-prepare women "to occupy their appropriate positions in society", among other things. Although REWA succeeded in mobilizing and sensitizing women, it failed to integrate them into mainstream development. During the last years of that government, a number of women's units were established in ministries such as Agriculture, Labour and Social Affairs, the National Committee for Central Planning and the Addis Ababa University.

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia established a Women's Affairs Office (WAO) in the Prime Minister's Office which started functioning officially in October 1992, with a head at ministerial level. The Office is mandated, among other things, to articulate policies and serve as a link between government WID departments. The objectives of WAO include coordination of agencies and activities addressing women, monitoring women's access to resources and being a link between government sectors, bilateral and multilateral agencies and self-help schemes. The Transitional Government ear-marked \$US 17.3 million for a ten-year period (1993-2000), 50 per cent of the budget to be used to strengthen the national machinery and 50 per cent to be solicited from donors.

WID units have also been established at the Central Statistics Office, the Ministries of Economic Planning, Natural Resources and Environment, Justice, Water Resources and the Addis Ababa University (IDR) since the policy on women was endorsed by the Government.

National researchers have recently developed great interest in women's issues through the Centre for Research and Training for Women in Development (CERTWID) which awards grants for research in various aspects of women's issues.

Non-governmental organizations

Several bilateral and multilateral agencies in Ethiopia have established WID units where they have worked to create awareness about WID in pro-programmes or have instituted policies concerning gender issues for development programming. However, there is still little coordination between donor units, resulting in minimal information dissemination. Inadequate impact evaluation is undertaken as to the effectiveness of policies at the grass-roots level. Subsequently, at the project level, negative consequences encountered frequently outweigh the envisioned benefits to women beneficiaries.

Women's access to resources

Credit: Access to credit is both institutionally and economically controlled. In the rural areas, service cooperatives and producer cooperatives in which women have marginal representation were the mechanisms for obtaining credit. They were thus obstructed from acquiring approval for obtaining credit. In the urban areas, the possession of assets for collateral qualifies women for credit.

Land ownership: Rural and nomadic women account for 49.7 per cent of the agrarian population. However, land distribution does not include women; since men are considered heads of households and representatives of the family, they take ownership of the family land. Thus, women have no place in the most important means of livelihood, land.

In general, women have had limited access to such inputs as fertilizers, seeds, implements and credit; these are mostly directed to cash crops production and women are subsistence farmers.

Women's legal rights

Various laws affecting women particularly in the areas of marriage, inheritance, access to property and ownership of commodities, are often defined in the context of traditional and cultural systems. In most cases, the preferential treatment of men continues to be propagated and traditions continue to have pre-eminence. This practice invalidates the pertinence and effectiveness of the country's Constitution.

In the past promotion units were established in an attempt to sensitize decision makers to the existing discrimination culturally imposed on women. These attempts appear to have had little impact so that the socio-cultural status of women in Ethiopia remains unchanged.

Since the establishment of the Women's Affairs Office, women have been included in the drafting of the new constitution and committees are being formed at regional and zonal levels to facilitate the flow of ideas from the grassroots to the top and at the same time follow up the progress of women's participation in the drafting of the Constitution.

Violence against women: Although there is no data based analysis of violence against women in Ethiopia, various cases exist. There are at the moment no policies or legislation defending women. The Transitional Government is in the process of drafting the national constitution, introducing democratization, etc.

Poverty

According to a UNDP 1990 estimate, 60 and 65 per cent of the urban and rural population respectively live below the poverty line. Women, who form the majority of the population, are highly poverty stricken. Poverty has manifested itself in various forms ranging from urban unemployment (40 per cent of the labour force) and rural unemployment. Drought, famine and war have left hundreds destitute, demobilized soldiers, abandoned children and orphans disabled persons and female-headed households most of them unable to support themselves. The poor performance of the Ethiopian economy compounds the situation.

Although in recent years women's contribution to agriculture is being recognized, it has not been followed by policies and action to improve their work and increase their productivity. The technology utilized in farming remains primitive and approximately 37 per cent of the peasantry do not own an ox for ploughing. This and the absence of health facilities and transportation leave rural women in dismal living conditions.

The majority of women out of the regular fields of employment are engaged in non-guaranteed jobs such as collecting and selling fire wood, various low-profit trading activities, contraband trade and prostitution. In addition, most women have no access to vocational training opportunities. In the temporary shelters scattered around the country, women and children account for more than 75 per cent.

Conflicts and their effects on women

Ethnic conflicts and the purging of thousands has created a large displacement of populations of which a significant proportion are women and children, with the result that women who have lost their support infrastructures are being forced to survive on their own. Ethnic purging, which started in a limited

area, has spread as ethnic groups attempt to establish their territorial rights. Thousands of families have been dislocated, homes burnt and wives and children abandoned or divorced due to their ethnicity.

Recommendations

There is need to establish WID departments in the regional administration affairs offices. Their functions need to be similar to those of the Women Affairs Office and should be able reach to the community. WID departments also need to be established in ministries where they do not exist.

To improve the employment situation of Ethiopian women, government national machineries and NGOs have to make organized and coordinated efforts to mobilize them through women's groups in rural and urban centres as well as through implementation of policies.

THE GAMBIA

INTRODUCTION

The Gambia has a multi-party democracy where women constitute 49 per cent of the population. It has an agrarian economy in which 75 per cent of the population are engaged in subsistence farming, live-stock rearing and groundnut farming.

An important development since 1985 has been the translation of commitment to women's concerns into definite action through programmes. National policies now place high priority on women and their role in national development. At the moment, the Government is focusing on participatory development with women at the centre, under its poverty alleviation strategy.

For women themselves, poor health, limited education, inadequate access to productive resources and lack of basic social services have locked them into a high fertility/low productivity pattern which, in the end, damages the well-being of their families and that of the entire community.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision-making

Though there are no discriminatory laws against women in respect of political participation, Gambian women generally view themselves as active supporters in politics (party campaigns and rallies). Thus, even though women, particularly rural women, make up the majority of the voting population, they do not exercise their voting rights.

Until 1992, there had been only one female nominated to the cabinet; at the moment, there is no woman in the cabinet. Out of a parliament of 51 members, only four (7.8 per cent) are females (nominated). At the municipal level, there are only two female nominated members. At the divisional level, there are no divisional commissioners nor are there any female chiefs. At the grass-roots level, women are not allowed to vote in chieftaincy elections. In addition to their low level participation in public and political life, women face traditional constraints which hinder their progress to overcome barriers to reach decision-making positions.

At the international and diplomatic levels, women are poorly represented. At present, there is only one (12.5 per cent) female ambassador, compared to eight males and two (12.5 per cent) female and 14 male counsellors. For posts like the above requiring educational qualifications, women's chances are very slim, given that only 10-15 per cent of women are literate of which less than 20 per cent attain university-level education.

Education

Education is tuition-free and non-compulsory at primary level. In 1980, over 90 per cent of Gambians over the age of 15 were illiterate. The 1993 census reveals that 80 per cent of women and 70 per cent of men respectively are illiterate. Female participation in education has for a long time lagged behind that of men and the current statistics for 1992/93 show that the actual enrolment of girls at primary level is 41 per cent. Statistics also show that, the further one moves away from the capital and its immediate environs, the more women's participation tapers off. This pattern is the same for the last three grades of the primary school system. The situation worsens in subsequent levels of secondary and middle school and third level of high school.

The low rate of female participation in education is due to a number of interdependent variables, i.e., economic - girls' labour is usually needed for commercial and non-commercial ventures; socio-economic levels of parents - some parents cannot afford the cost of books, uniforms, furniture and other charges; teenage pregnancies; socio-cultural factors including early marriages; religion - Muslims who constitute 85 per cent of the population are not keen on access of "Western" education to girls; demographic - the rural-urban drift has led to population increase in some areas which get better education facilities.

The Government is intervening to improve girls' education; a Women in Education Committee has been established to develop a plan of action on the promotion of female participation in development and education in particular. NGOs also have been targeting economic empowerment of women through formal and non-formal education.

Employment

Women make up 44 per cent of the total labour force. However, in the field of employment, they lag behind men. In the public sector, only 3.5 per cent of the professionals are women, whereas they predominate in the less lucrative industries such as agriculture, in which 54 per cent are women and the personal household services, in which 53.7 per cent are women. Although 30.4 per cent of medical industry employees are women, it is suspected that the majority of them might be unqualified nurses and personnel in the menial job category. The Employment Quarterly of 1986 reveals that in the public sector, the female work force accounted for 19.5 per cent and in the private sector, 18.6 per cent. While 35 per cent of females in the public sector are in the management level, in the private sector they represent 14.6 per cent of the management and administrative positions. The highest contribution of females in the public sector is at the clerical level where they represent 34.3 per cent. It is noteworthy, however, that in the 1990s, there are a number of Gambian women in the higher echelons of managerial positions - 35 per cent in senior administrative and management positions.

In addition to the constraints of low level education attainment and societal attitudes in respect of employment, the Gambia does not have a day care support system for working mothers.

Health

The health status among Gambian women is among the lowest in the world. Maternal mortality rate of 10/1000 live births is more than twice the average rate in the developing countries and in the rural areas this rate may be as high as 20-22. The infant and under-5 mortality rates of 143/1000 and 242/1000 are among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. The main factors affecting mortality rates are malnutrition, lack of an effective early-warning system, inadequate access to ante-natal care, unavailability of transportation in an emergency and first referral level not being well-equipped to deal with high-risk cases. Fertility rates are high, at 5 to 6 live births per woman.

Family planning is one of the Government's strategies for controlling fertility and promoting the well-being of women. The Gambia Family Planning Association is the first national NGO with the principal objective of advancing family planning and responsible parenthood. Its activities have met with a number of constraints that have impeded a wider acceptance of the services by men and women alike. Among the constraints are the bias towards large families, misconceptions about family planning among men and women, and women's lack of power and ability in making decisions on issues affecting their bodies and their lives in general.

HIV/AIDS: Another health problem with severe morbidity for women is that of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including AIDS. Data from selected health facilities indicate a high prevalence of syphilis among women. HIV infection among women is on the increase. Data from a peri-natal study conducted nationwide has shown that 1.7 per cent of women attending ante-natal clinics are HIV-infected.

Among interventions designed to protect women are educating single girls to reduce the number of partners and take the initiative to negotiate safer sex with their partners, and early treatment and prevention of STDs in women through the establishment of "Well Women Centres".

Women in agriculture and rural development

Agriculture, which accounts for 30 per cent of GDP, is the mainstay of the economy, engaging 75 per cent of the population. Women are the sole producers of the country's most important food crop, rice; they predominate in the production of sesame and in horticulture and contribute to the production of cereals, groundnuts and cotton.

Women's productivity suffers, however, from limited access to production inputs. Their access to farm implements and technological inputs are determined by men as heads of households and village leaders who invariably take the best for themselves. Working on poor quality land with little or no inputs and in the absence of improved technologies, the result of women's hard labour is low production, quantitatively and qualitatively.

NGOs and the Department of Agricultural Services have made efforts to train more women in the use of draught equipment; this technology has not proved appropriate for the lowland in which women farm and has proved, in some cases, too heavy for them to manipulate. Other NGOs have intervened in vegetable processing and preservation. ACTION AID in particular has assisted rural women by lending farming inputs to already established village level groups which has helped in the development of skills using new technologies, thereby accelerating their production. NGOs have also developed labour-saving technologies for food production, farming and water collection, thus allowing women's time for other economic activities.

Women's legal rights

The Gambia is a signatory and State party to several international human rights instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which it ratified in December 1992. With an incidence of 80 per cent illiteracy, the majority of Gambian women are ignorant of their fundamental human rights embodied in national legislation. Although attempts have been made by the Government and NGOs to educate women about their rights in the traditional setting, some of these campaigns are viewed as radical or revolutionary.

Provisions of the Gambian Constitution have elements that do not give protection to women against discrimination as the word "sex" is omitted from the list of the grounds on which discrimination is prohibited. In the part of the Constitution that deals with qualification for citizenship, section 6 provides that the citizenship of children born out of the Gambia depends on the nationality of the father.

The Gambia recognizes the application of customary and Islamic laws in family law, an area where most of the discriminatory practices are perpetrated against women. To date, there has been no move to reform these laws with a view to elevate the status of women. In laws relating to marriage in the traditional setting, a man can marry a woman once he can pay the bride price; girls are also married off at a very young age. Polygamy remains a practice in customary and religious marriages. Islamic laws of inheritance are applied with the inequitable mode of discrimination against women.

One area of family law which has been improved is in the area of maintenance of children; it cuts across religious and customary boundaries. The illiteracy factor among a significant percentage of the female population means that most of them are not in a position to appreciate any legislation that protects their rights.

NGOs have been playing a significant role in complementing the efforts of the Women's Bureau and other agencies to educate the public about their rights.

Violence against women: Violence against women, which still exists in all parts of the country, takes various forms mostly physical, including pushing, choking, burning, clubbing, stabbing and can range from bruising to murder. It is also manifested in the form of domestic or private violence taking the form of rape, incest, sexual harassment and female genital mutilation.

Wife battery exists but it is considered as a family affair; rape, on the other hand, is sometimes dealt with by the police. Domestic violence is common in relation to female domestic servants who suffer gross violations of their rights from the hands of their employers. Young servant girls have been the victims of sexual assault within the household. In the extended families, much violence is directed at wives from mothers- or sisters-in-law.

Unfortunately, victims of sexual abuse are not well received by Gambian society and are viewed with suspicion, blamed and held responsible for enticing the violence perpetrated against them. Sexual assault cases are tried in the open, making the victim suffer the double humiliation of going through a traumatic experience and having to explain the ordeal in open court to secure the conviction of the culprit.

The State itself has no established institutions for victims of violence nor have NGOs or private organizations accorded much attention to the needs of victims of violence. Most victims end up as medical cases in hospitals and health centres.

Female genital mutilation, widely practised in the country, is deeply rooted in Gambian tradition and culture. Apart from causing pain and interfering with women's sexuality, it is dangerous to their health. Numerous activities and campaigns have been under-taken to educate people about the hazards of female genital mutilation by both the Government and NGOs. There is still no legislation prohibiting the practice. It is hoped that through education and awareness raising, the practice will be considerably reduced, if not altogether eradicated.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The National Women's Council and Bureau were established in 1980 by an Act of Parliament. The Bureau advises the Government on women's concerns and promotes the interests of women and their integration into sectoral, national and regional planning. It has implemented various programmes and projects with donor funding, aimed at enhancing women's welfare with emphasis on easing their workload, their acquisition of skills and addressing traditional practices harmful to their health.

The Bureau, however, has faced constraints in the lack of financial, human and material resources so that its coordinating efforts are hampered; focal point officers provided by other ministries are not very active in addressing women's issues. The Government is addressing the issue of strengthening the Bureau to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

The Law Reform Commission: Established in 1985 by an Act of Parliament, this Commission is entrusted with keeping under constant review the statutes and other laws and recommending improvements, modernization and reform. While it had been hoped that the Commission would serve as a forum for reforming religious and traditional laws impeding women's advancement, it is restricted to undertaking research and studies and thereafter making recommendations. Although in 1987 it produced a comprehensive proposal relating to marriage and divorce in respect of Muslims, no attention appears to have been paid to the proposal.

Non-governmental organizations

The Government has created an enabling environment for NGOs to complement its development efforts. Collaboration has focused on the development needs of the country while reinforcing each other's role in the drive to fulfil the objectives of growth and women's access to the productive process in various ways; 18 NGOs focus exclusively on impacting on the status of women. The Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children actively involves grass-roots women circumcisers, traditional birth attendants, girls, mothers and others in the drive to eradicate female genital mutilation.

Poverty

Findings from an ILO poverty study in the Gambia indicate that 33.1 per cent of the urban population and 22 per cent of the urban households were food-poor, whereas 51 per cent of households and 63 per cent of the population are overall poor. In the rural areas, 67 per cent of households and 76 per cent of the population are overall poor, whereas 78 per cent of households and 74 per cent of the population were food-poor. From the study, it can be seen that while women experience a lower severity of poverty (28.5 per cent) than men (32.1 per cent), they have a higher incidence of poverty (71 per cent against 62.3 per cent for men).

Women tend to be poorer partly because of discriminatory practices and customs. Among Muslims, women are disadvantaged in terms of inheritance; in accordance with customary laws, land allocation in rural areas (the prerogative of men) works against the welfare of women as the men keep the best lands for themselves.

As women's lack of access to education (80 per cent illiteracy) makes it difficult for them to compete in formal employment high-paying jobs, they resort to low-paying unskilled jobs or work as unpaid family helpers (24 per cent of women and 15 per cent of men). Four per cent of women are wage earners in relation to 16 per cent of men; 15 per cent of women are unemployed, compared to 9 per cent of men.

Development projects, particularly in agriculture, aimed at improving the condition of women have ended up providing more opportunities for men as the project designs do not take into account the gender implications inherent in land distribution.

The social costs of the Government's Economic Recovery Programme have been severe for women; in the formal sector, more women lost jobs because of retrenchment and were not able to find other jobs. Prices of agricultural inputs rose, making their access to women cost prohibitive while prices of produce dropped, thus lowering incomes.

To alleviate poverty, the Government launched the Programme for Sustained Development; the participatory approach to poverty alleviation programmes started in 1992. Private sector NGOs have assisted women by increasing their access to available resources including income-generation, credit and savings mobilization, business and entrepreneurship promotion, literacy and numeracy skills.

Conclusions and recommendations

While various mechanisms exist for the advancement of women, there are limitations which militate it. Institutionalization has given legitimacy to women's concerns and provided the scope for addressing women's issues, especially long-term changes in their situation. It, however, depends on the calibre of the

staff manning these institutions who need the right orientation that would enable them to have a hidden agenda for women in relation to the national one.

GHANA

INTRODUCTION

The population of Ghana is estimated to be about 16.4 million, with women making up 51 per cent of the total in 1993. Ghana has had a parliamentary system of government since January 1993.

Ghana went through a very difficult period in the early 1980s. Acute drought resulted in serious food shortages. In addition, unfavourable terms of trade and foreign exchange problems coupled with the then existing system of import licensing resulted in the shortage of essential goods. The economic situation forced many Ghanaians, especially men, to seek employment in neighbouring countries and elsewhere. The country embarked in the early 1980s in the SAPs has experienced dramatic socio-economic changes since 1985. Within these harsh economic conditions both governmental and NGOs have embarked on programmes to raise the status of women.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

There is no law that bars women from participating in political, administrative social and economic life. Successive governments and constitutions since independence have formally affirmed equality of men and women. Every citizen has equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law. In principle, women are free to take up any position of power.

The Council of State, an advisory body to the President, has a membership of 24, of which 17 per cent are women. The Cabinet, the highest executive body, consists of 17 men and two women. There are 35 ministers of state appointments and 45 deputy positions. The ratio of women at these positions are 9 and 11 per cent respectively. Legislative power is presently vested in 200 parliamentarians, 15 (8 per cent) of whom are women.

Chieftaincy continues to be a powerful institution. Many women are more aware of the rules in their traditional areas than the constitutional equality provisions.

The highest decision-making body is the Council chaired by the head of State. There were on average six men on the Council compared with one woman. The Committee of Secretaries (equivalent to the cabinet) in 1985 was made up of 16 persons and included only one woman.

Representation of women in the judiciary was estimated to be about 10 per cent in 1982 and 11 per cent in 1994. In the civil service, the highest post is the chief director; out of the 16 chief directors appointed in 1994, one is a woman.

With respect to decision making in industry and commerce data indicates that women make up 39 per cent of the Ghana National Chamber of Commerce (NCC) and 10 per cent of the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI). The Government has initiated policy to ensure equitable representation of women at all levels of policy and decision making by raising their representation from the present 0.5 per cent to at least 30 per cent by the year 2000.

Representation of women in the judiciary was estimated to be about 10 per cent for both superior and inferior courts in 1982 and has only risen to 11 per cent in 1994.

Women make up 33 per cent of the total number of the civil service personnel. They constitute 25 per cent of the senior civil service grade, but decrease to 9 per cent at the director grade a position where decisions are made. Women made up about 25 per cent of the total Trade Union Congress membership and 10 per cent of the National Executive Council of the Union in both 1990 and 1994.

Customary and religious laws inhibit women's participation in political and public life and make them accept positions of minor importance.

Agriculture

Agriculture, the dominant sector of the economy, accounting for roughly 50 per cent of the country's GDP and about 70 per cent of merchandise exports, employs 66 per cent of the population, 70 per cent of which live in the rural areas where they depend directly or indirectly on agriculture and related activities for their survival. Rural women farmers are actively involved, producing 70 per cent of the national crop output and contributing to about 46 per cent of agricultural GDP.

Education

Currently, Ghana's education policy is geared towards universal enrolment and eradication of illiteracy. Estimates of the illiterate population aged 15+ was 54, 47 and 40 per cent in 1981, 1985 and 1990, respectively. The illiterate rates in the same period were 65, 57 and 49 per cent for females and 44, 36 and 30 per cent for males, respectively.

Although there is gender parity in school enrolment, girls lag behind their male counterparts by less than 20 per cent at all levels of enrolment at university.

Generally, enrolment in natural sciences and related subjects is quite low and at all three universities, female science students represented less than 20 per cent.

Although throughout the school system there is a general drop-out among students, that of girls is for higher; for example, at the end of the 1987/88 academic year while 57 per cent of males who started were still in school, the figure for girls was 44 per cent. The most significant reason for non-attendance is the inability of poor households to pay fees; child labour and pregnancies are additional factors.

Participation in teacher education also shows that female enrolment in teacher training colleges is less than half the total enrolment. It decreases as the level of training or expected qualification of the teacher in training increases. For those already in the service, more of the untrained than the trained teachers tend to be female. In addition, a decreasing number of women teach at the higher levels of the educational ladder.

To redress the existing gender gap, in 1987, the Government initiated special programmes for girls, in collaboration with the Science and Technology and Mothers Education Unit of the Ghana Education Service. The Ghana Association of School Teachers, the Ghanaian Science Association, Women in Science and Technology, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the NCWD, the 31st December Women's Movement and others.

Health

Considerable progress has been made in overall health conditions. Since the beginning of the present decade, life expectancy has improved from 52 years in 1980 through 53 years in 1985 to 56 years in 1990. The infant mortality rate, which was 103/1000 live births in 1980 also improved to 98/1000 in 1985 and

90/1000 in 1990. Child (1-5) mortality rates were 166/1000 live births in 1980, 197/1000 in 1985 and 140/1000 in 1990.

The immediate causes of maternal mortality are haemorrhage, abortion, hypertensive diseases (42 per cent of deaths) and ruptured uteruses, malaria, anaemia, respiratory, cardiovascular and sickle cell diseases (32 per cent of deaths). The fertility rate is about 6 and differentials exist as a result of an interplay of some variables such as place of residence, level of education and occupation of women. A minority of women practice contraceptive use (37.3 per cent) and fewer still currently use contraceptives (13 per cent). Many females do not use them because of lack of knowledge and access to family planning services. The result is high illegal abortions. There is a high rate of micro-nutrient, vitamin A and iodine deficiencies generally.

Immunization: The country is still far removed from the internationally set targets for polio eradication and measles reduction. The coverage for 1992 for both were 40 per cent. Only 22 per cent of children aged 0-11 months were fully immunized despite accessibility for 88 per cent. Special pro-programmes are being undertaken to include diarrhoeal diseases.

Access to health facilities: Provision of access to health facilities remains inadequate, with only 60 per cent of the entire population having access to such facilities with long distances to be covered in the absence of adequate access to transportation. Women are less likely to use these facilities because of cost and enormity of their workload. Few health personnel are available. There are still marked regional and urban-rural disparities.

HIV/AIDS: Cases of AIDS were reported in 1986 and by the end of 1992, 10,192 cases had been reported. There were, however, 13,327 reported HIV-positive cases between 1986 and 1992 which revealed that 71 per cent of the AIDS cases were women. All age groups show a preponderance of AIDS, except 0-14; 81 per cent in the age group 15-29 are women.

Employment

In 1984, the economically active population constituted 52 per cent of the total population. Wage employment was estimated at 16 per cent in 1986 and 17 per cent in 1988. About 82 per cent were self-employed, specifically in the informal sector.

While 27 per cent of economically active men are employed in the formal sector, only 8 per cent of women are in wage employment. This 8 per cent do not participate as intellectuals, policy makers, planners, etc., but largely at the lower levels, providing unskilled labour.

Women make up a significant proportion of the labour force in the informal sector where, in 1984, 56 per cent were self-employed and 63 per cent were unpaid family workers. In 1991, 91 per cent of the female labour force were self-employed in the informal sector, 49 per cent are in agriculture, where in the rural areas women continue to cultivate small holdings. There were over 1.4 million farm holders in 1988 and about 1.8 million in 1990. Women accounted for 28 per cent of total holders in 1988.

The Government is concerned about the employment situation and recognizes the informal sector as a potential area for job creation. Concerted efforts by the Government and NGOs are being made to address the situation. Some programmes established have women components and there are many others solely directed towards addressing the employment of women.

Women's access to resources

Credit: Access to credit is generally not easy. Government monetary policies are such that interest rates are high, thus discouraging borrowing. In addition, most women do not possess the collateral security in the form of landed property which banks demand.

For most women in the private sector, these factors affect them more significantly as most do not own property and those who do have them registered in their husband's name and need his written permission. Banks also tend to favour large businesses to small ones.

Recognition of this problem in recent times has prompted various institutions to help women in particular to have access to credit. These include the Women's World Banking Ghana Limited (WWB GH), the National Board for Small-Scale Industries, Mutual Susu Limited (a subsidiary of WWB GH), Ghana Cooperatives Credit Unions Associations. Many women have benefitted from loans from these institutions and the recovery rates have been high - 88-97 per cent.

Land tenure: Ghana maintains a plural system of land tenure. Access to land may be through inheritance, marriage, share cropping, buying and as a gift. Traditionally, in patrilineal areas, women may have access to land through marriage as long as the marriage lasts. Where a woman is divorced or widowed, she loses the land. Women may also have access to land which belongs to their grown-up sons or brothers. Women's access to land seems better in matrilineal areas where over 50 per cent of the land holders are women.

Apart from customary land tenure systems land may be acquired or bought on lease. However, the dominance of certain interests - mining, large-scale agriculture and industries, roads and logging - have not made it possible for rural women and small-scale entrepreneurs to benefit because of the amount of capital involved.

Efforts are now being made to give women access to land. In addition, women often come together to form cooperatives or village women's groups and this enables them to acquire land.

Technological inputs and extension services: Provision of technological inputs to rural women is through the NCWD, the Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology and Industrial Services (GRATIS) and various NGOs.

Extension services are provided by the Extension Services Department of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Community Development Department of the Ministry of Local Government and the Nutrition Department of the Ministry of Health.

Although the problems of access by women to resources have not been adequately addressed, women, through increasing exposure, are beginning to reach out and produce for themselves and their families.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) is the national machinery responsible for the advancement of Women. It is headed by an executive Secretary with ten regional coordinators in the regions. It is also governed by a 30-member policy-formulating and advisory council comprising both male and female representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, Education, Health, Labour, Social Welfare, Information, Economic Planning and Foreign Affairs.

It has a working relationship with government ministries some of which have women's desks. Currently, the NCWD is directly in the office of the president. It has representation on major national committees such as the National Development Commission and the National Population Council, etc.

Its functions include advising the Government generally on matters relating to the full integration of women in development at all levels, studying and evaluating women's contribution to economic social and cultural fields .

The NCWD Fifteen-Year Plan of Action (1986-2000) focused on the areas of education, health, employment, legal issues and political participation. The plan covered rural poor women, urban poor women, female-headed households, young women, physically and mentally disabled women, refugee and displaced women and children.

Constraints: Budget allocation to the NCWD was only 0.006 per cent of government expenditure in 1989 and was raised to 0.01 per cent in 1991. Funds approved are mainly for conferences workshops and training, making it difficult for the NCWD to carry out its mandate.

Non-governmental organizations

One of the major functions of the NCWD is to coordinate and liaise with women organizations and ensure that their activities are directed to women as a special target group. At the moment, 120 NGOs are registered with the NCWD. It cooperates with NGOs in education counselling, research and income-generating activities.

Since 1988, the working relationship of the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) and NGOs has improved through networking, information sharing, providing training in relevant fields, and linking the NGOs to government and external assistance.

Women's legal rights

Ghanaian women have equal rights under the law. They are accorded equal treatment before the courts of law; they have the right to enter into contracts and can administer property and own property. They have absolute control over property acquired through their own efforts.

Ghana ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in January 1986 without reservation. The Convention is being implemented though it has not been incorporated into Ghana's law making it difficult to challenge any breach of its provisions in a court of law.

The Government is in the process of putting in place a law which will make female circumcision illegal.

In 1985, Ghana passed the Intestate Succession Law and Registration of Marriages and Divorce Law to provide one standard of inheritance on the demise of spouses against the different customary laws of inheritance. An important initiative in favour of women has been the legal rights awareness programmes and legal services embarked upon by the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) and the 31st December Movement and religious bodies, etc. They have also raised women's awareness to economic empowerment as well as human rights issues.

Violence against women: Many women in Ghanaian society go through the three forms of violence against women: domestic, mental and sexual violence. There are no specific measures taken to combat violence against women, especially domestic violence. There are no institutionalized shelters for battered

women. However, within the family system a battered woman is normally given the necessary protection by family and friends while the culprit is dealt with by the family of the victim.

Women in the judiciary are few and the few women in the police force have not received any specialized training in relation to violence; as a result, the issue has not received serious attention.

At the national level, there is a debate, especially among women's groups, aimed at designing strategies including legislation, training of personnel of the law enforcement agencies and the establishment of special units within the agencies to deal with gender-related cases of violence.

Poverty

Poverty in Ghana is predominantly a rural phenomenon. While 43 per cent of rural dwellers are below the poverty line, 27 per cent are non-Accra urban residents while only 4 per cent of Accra residents live below the poverty line.

Rural poverty is high as majority of rural dwellers earn their living from subsistence agriculture or as low paid farm workers. Poverty in Ghana has been caused by continuing low per capita income and the highly unequal distribution of that income, high population growth (3 per cent per year) which has diluted the impact of economic recovery programmes on the average household; the economic recession and structural adjustment have also exacerbated the situation.

There is a phenomenal increase in the proportion of female headed households in the country; implying that women alone are becoming directly responsible for the needs of the family and are often employed in a variety of activities sometimes at great cost to their health. The 5 per cent increase in female-headed householders occurred between 1960 and 1970, implying that roughly 1 million more Ghanaians are living in female-headed households in which a large proportion are widowed, divorced and separated.

Women constitute 51 per cent of the population and about 39 per cent of the economically active population. Women's work activities include domestic work, unpaid work, on their own account in farming, trading or both.

Women are overburdened by their economic, reproductive and domestic functions which worsen their vulnerability and poverty-stricken status especially rural dwellers and the urban poor.

Governments poverty alleviation initiative in collaboration with the UNDP has specific strategies for the implementation of the programme and these includes rural development informal sector development, employment promotion on development of women, provision of bank services, non-formal education, etc., women are expected to benefit from these.

Conflicts and their effects on women

As a result of conflicts that have engulfed Africa in general and the West African subregion in particular, there has been a considerable level of displacement of persons especially women and children both internally and across the border. In 1990 and 1993 the total number of refugees in Ghana were 5,944 and 52,602 respectively and of these, 1,995 and 28,246 respectively were women. In 1994, UNHCR gave the figure as 135,105 of which 55,850 were women.

As a result of the conflict in Togo, a number of refugees fled into Ghana, most of them were absorbed into their families since land borders mean that families were artificially divided. The numbers involved were far more than had been recorded. As a result of the conflict that had erupted in northern

Ghana in early 1994, there has been a considerable displacement of men, women and children. Because the situation is still unsettled, it has not been possible to obtain figures.

All efforts are being made to resolve the underlying causes of the conflict to alleviate the hardship of women and children. In line with this, in March 1994 towards the fourth World Conference on Women, Ghanaian women went on nation-wide peace marches.

International support

Both the NCWD and NGOs receive bilateral and multilateral donor support in form of economic projects, technical and material support. Notable among the donor agencies are UNDP, CIDA, USAID, UNFPA, UNICEF, ILO, UNESCO and UNIFEM.

The policies of donor agencies on the plight of women in the country have evolved from welfare concerns that emphasized relief aid towards status enhancing or empowerment programmes aimed at building self-sustaining development opportunities of women. Others are providing support in critical areas of concern including health, water and sanitation, rural poverty and the provision of religious bodies, communities and others employment; they operate mainly through local NGOs.

Recommendations

In order for the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) to execute its role fully as the focal point for coordinating and liaising with national and international organizations on women issues, adequate resources in personnel, materials and equipment should be provided. There is therefore need to improve the financial flow into the country and debt-relief measures.

The NCWD should categorize future strategic objectives into short, medium and long term. In order to carry out its mandate effectively, it should formulate strategies into programmes and solicit funding towards their implementation especially in the areas of research, education and establishment of information systems.

The rural poor are among the disadvantaged in society. They work hard but their efforts are hampered by unfavourable pricing policies and credit systems. Since the majority are engaged in agriculture, there is need to focus on traditional crops to ensure food security and also promote off-farm income-generating activities. There must also be more direct support and financial assistance for the productive role of women notably by improving their direct access to credit. The international community should therefore assist the Government of Ghana in the provision and effective delivery of economic services and assets such as credit and technology.

In view of the constant decline in the prices of Ghana's traditional exports, e.g., cocoa, coffee, gold, there is need for international financial support to help Ghana diversify its commodity dependent economy.

KENYA

INTRODUCTION

Since independence, the Kenya Government has been aware of the international community's concern for gender equity and its various policy documents and national plans have acknowledged the enormous contribution of women to national development.

The Government has participated in all regional and international conferences on women between 1975 and 1989. It hosted the third World Conference on Women in 1985 and actively participated in the formulation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Having adopted the Strategies, it assigned to all departments various roles relevant to their mandates.

Significant progress has been made in many areas of development, including accessing women to improved health and nutrition, education and training, employment, food and increased agricultural productivity, water and sanitation.

However, there are areas where much remains to be done and these include equitable participation in the decision-making process, persistent illiteracy, women's heavy workloads, legal illiteracy and socio-cultural attitudes that militate against the advancement of women.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Although women make up 51 per cent of the population and are the majority voters, and though the Constitution provides for participation in decision-making bodies by men and women on equal terms, very few women have stood for parliamentary or civic elections.

In 1988, two women were elected to parliament as compared to 99 men and one woman was nominated to parliament compared to 10 men. In 1992, six women were elected to parliament compared to 97 men and while no woman was nominated to parliament, 12 men were nominated. The election results of 1992 came as a result of several seminars, workshops and meetings organized by political parties and pressure groups to sensitize women to stand for parliamentary and civic elections.

Women's participation in local authority, which is the beginning of national leadership and a chance for political participation, is still low. For example, in 1986, in the 37 county councils, there were 11 women as against 620 men; in the 45 county councils in 1992, there were 24 women and 1005 men. In 1992, in the 31 town councils, there were 25 women and 226 men. In the 18 urban councils in 1986, there were seven women as against 208 men and in 1992, there were only two women and 100 men. In 1992, there were seven women in the city councils and 51 men.

In the public sector, women are concentrated in the lower cadre of the civil service, their representation decreasing appreciably in the upper job groups. At the community levels, women were not traditionally represented in the decision-making bodies at the village, clan or sub-clan councils where all political and judicial decisions were made. Inroads are now being made with women being elected as councillors and others rising to become grass-roots leaders.

Education

The end of the Women's Decade coincided with basic structural and curricula changes in the Kenyan education system. From a gender perspective, the change in curriculum was significant because both boys and girls were expected to be exposed to the same core subjects, e.g., in primary schools, children, irrespective of sex, had to study home science and carpentry. At secondary level, mathematics is compulsory for boys and girls.

There has been an increase in school enrolment by girls and though only 30 per cent of the 3-5 year-olds participate in early childhood education programmes, participation rates by sex have been constant between 1989-1990 at 51 per cent for boys and 49 per cent for girls. Although the enrolment rate in secondary schools rose phenomenally, about 40 per cent of those completing the primary cycle gain access to secondary schools.

Since 1991, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of girls entering universities in the country, reaching 27 per cent in 1992/93. At university and other tertiary level educational institutions, women are best represented in education faculties and colleges. Females constituted 46 per cent of the total enrolments in primary teachers' training colleges by 1992/93. In science and technology oriented institutions, female enrolment ranges from 3 to 6 per cent.

Over the years, there has been no improvement in female participation in subjects traditionally perceived to be male-oriented. More than 30 years after independence, girls continue to dominate secretarial and nursing courses in post-secondary institutions.

Non-formal education in Kenya includes the provision of functional literacy, basic education and training for out-of-school youth and adults to empower them for effective participation in the development process. Various NGOs and government agencies provide aspects of non-formal education as part of their community-based programmes, including agriculture, health and population. Literacy currently stands at 60 per cent. The majority of the country's illiterate are women; while the literacy rate for men is 69 per cent, for women it is 40 per cent.

Non-enrolment and wastage of girls: Several factors, both out-of-school and in-school, contribute to this phenomenon. Out-of-school factors include, *inter alia*, specific socio-cultural attitudes and practices like early marriages, and the perceived low level of education by parents and the community. The in-school factors include the availability of schools, school drop outs caused by poor exam performance, pregnancy, gender insensitivity reflected in the design of the physical facilities that violate the privacy of adolescent girls, and the sex of school head teachers, the majority of whom are men.

With the realization that the attainment of the goals set for the year 2000 is dependent on the reduction of gender disparity in education, the Government has set out strategies to attract girls into the school system and to remain there at least through the secondary cycle. Measures are also being taken to improve the exam performance of girls so that they can compete with boys on equal terms for entry into the tertiary level, especially in science and technology as well as the creation of an enabling environment for girls.

Health

As the health of the population is considered a major factor in socio-economic development, the Government has always placed a high priority on the improvement of the health of the people. Health indicators have therefore progressed steadily and considerably better.

Life expectancy has increased from 44 years in 1963 to 59 years in 1989 with women living generally three to four years longer. Infant mortality declined from 126 per 1000 live births in 1963 to 74 in 1989; the under-5 mortality has gone down to 105 in 1989 from 211 in 1969. Major causes of child mortality are malnutrition, especially protein-energy malnutrition, infectious and parasitic diseases. Figures from studies undertaken in Kenyatta National Hospital put maternal mortality rates as 300 per 100,000 in 1987 and 255 in 100,000 in 1989. Maternal mortality is also due to malnutrition and diseases such as eclampsia and anaemia.

Major interventions in maternal and child care have included increased attendance at ante-natal and post-natal clinic, access to safe childbirth and child immunization against the common killer diseases.

Fertility: Since it reached a peak of 7.0 in 1977, the fertility rate has been declining. There was a 20 per cent decline from 6.7 in 1989 to 5.4 in 1993. This is indicative of a successful population control and family planning programme. Ninety-six per cent of women aged 15-49 in Kenya know at least one method of family planning; about 93 per cent of currently married women know a source for family planning methods.

HIV/AIDS: By March 1993, over 34,293 AIDS cases had been reported in Kenya and more than 50 per cent may have died. The Kenya National AIDS Control Programme (KNACP) estimates that from 750,000 to 1,000,000 people in Kenya are HIV-positive. The HIV positivity is shown to be 5-6 per cent in the general population and 8.9 per cent among ante-natal mothers, and in western Kenya, there has been an increase from 5.3 per cent in 1990 to 11.5 per cent in 1991 and 15.1 per cent in 1992. Other information from KNACP indicate that 75 per cent of the cases are between the ages of 20-40, with roughly an equal distribution between males and females. However, peak ages for AIDS are 25-29 for females and 30-34 for males.

Employment

The population census of 1989 shows the labour force of Kenya as 9 million; 42 per cent of the total population; 4.6 million were females, representing 51 per cent of the labour force and 21 per cent of the population. In the urban areas, 80 per cent of males in the age group 15-64 participate in the labour force compared to 55 per cent of females. A 1990 economic survey indicates unemployment rates of 24.1 per cent for females and 11.7 per cent for males. Rural women are involved in one activity or another, thus the question of unemployment does not arise in the rural areas.

Women have entered wage employment in large numbers in the last few years with female representation in the sector standing at 21 per cent in 1987. They are concentrated in the narrow ranges of industries and occupations, notably agriculture and forestry, finance, insurance, real estate, business and commercial services and pensions. Even in these sectors, men are the dominant employers. Women predominate only numerically in secretarial work, nursing, domestic work and as tea girls. About 78 per cent of the enterprises in the informal sector are owned by men, with 22 per cent owned by women. In the rural areas, a greater proportion of the rural labour force is engaged in own household farm activities. Wage employment in rural areas is taken more by males as a means of supplementing the family holding.

Various efforts are being made to increase opportunities of women's in economic development. The Government encourages the formation of women's groups to sensitize them to their economic role. Progress has been made in reducing gender imbalances within the civil service. Private and public banks are being sensitized to the need for special measures aimed at greater access to credit by women in rural and urban areas.

In industry, the Government's policy has been to encourage the development of small-scale enterprises and the indigenization of the economy as a means of greater employment generation. In this

respect, hawker sheds and markets have been constructed with instructions specifically to target women entrepreneurs.

Women's access to resources

Property ownership: Though access to land in most ethnic groups is open to all members of the lineage, in certain communities, property ownership and inheritance is still biased against women. With government intervention to protect the interests of women, today no law exists that prohibits women, even when married, to buy or sell land under their names. This notwithstanding, cultural discrimination against women remains common. Many still consider the son to be the rightful heir to the family name and estate.

Women manage at least 40 per cent of Kenyan small holdings and exercise substantial influence over the rest. Thus, although control over land through title deeds still substantially lies with the man, almost all women have access to land and its utilization and increasingly women are in charge of cash and food crops.

Real estate tenure in urban areas: The increase in urban population due to rural-urban migration has brought social, economic and cultural repercussions, one of which has been the steady increase in the number of female-headed households. An urban housing survey (1983) on women's access to property (housing) by scheme indicated that the highest percentage of women were in unauthorized housing and rental housing, while the highest percentage of men owned private or mortgaged housing.

A 1989 study showed that women and children were the majority residents of slum/squatter settlements. The formation of women groups is improving the situation as it enables women to own property collectively. These groups include savings and housing improvement, building groups (houses, nursery schools), welfare groups (funerals) and fellowship groups (mainly religious).

Credit: Kenya has no law specifically prohibiting women from accessing credit facilities offered by either public or private institutions. However, performance in this sector has generally been below expectation and very few women have borrowed from Kenya's main credit institutions (banks included). For institutions lending in the rural areas, it is estimated that rural women represent about 10 per cent of all loanees.

Barriers which women face include absence of formal financial institutions in rural areas where the majority of women are found; lack of collateral; lack of information about credit sources and credit worthiness; lack of credit histories and reputations for credit worthiness and cultural inhibitions and prejudices.

There have, however, been some advances: informal lending and borrowing among women through women groups has been a major breakthrough. Of 23,046 women groups in existence in 1993, 1,858 had informal lending and borrowing as their major activity. The Government also instituted a credit programme in 1993 called the Rural Development Fund with fund base of Ksh 400 million with a special presidential directive to have a bias toward women.

Water and sanitation: Provision of water to households is still high on the Government's development agenda. A survey carried out in the 1980s indicates that about 31 per cent of households in the rural and urban areas had access to drinking water mainly from house connections, protected wells and public taps. Although the situation has improved with an increase from 36 per cent in 1989 to 42 per cent in 1993, the majority of women however continue to walk long distances to collect water which is often unsafe for drinking.

Shelter: Very few women are in private mortgage (14.4 per cent), tenant purchase (25.2 per cent) and site and service (21.2 per cent) schemes, according to a 1983 survey. Socio-economic factors such as lack of access to land or lack of all forms of collateral for loans explain the low proportion of women engaged in mortgage, private or tenant purchase. Currently, there are many women groups involved in shelter development for themselves and also the production of building materials for sale.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Prior to the establishment of the Women's Bureau as an institution for integrating women into national development in 1976, there were already special units in various ministries specifically addressing women's issues, i.e., the Home Economics Unit in the Ministry of Education; Home Economics Section in the Ministry of Agriculture; Maternal and Child Health Services in the Ministry of Health. These units have continued to expand and have recently been addressing a diversified range of gender concerns. The Women's Bureau's responsibilities include formulating, implementing and evaluating women policies coordinating all government initiatives and programmes for women, collecting and analyzing data required for the design, monitoring and evaluation of projects. The Bureau's outreach extends to all levels where it has various representatives who articulate women issues at their level throughout the country. The Government's allocation of funds to the Bureau has continued to decline from Ksh 3.6 million in 1986 to Ksh 2.6 million in 1989.

The Government's policy in the 1994-1996 National Development Plan is to have women's desks in all ministries. Desks have already been established at the Ministry of Planning and National Development, Ministry of Research Science and Technology and Applied Technology, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Office of the Attorney General. The Government has also taken the initiative of addressing and solving women's issues through the establishment of various task forces. There is already a task force to review all existing laws and regulations, practices, customs and policies which have negative effects on all aspects of the advancement of women.

Non-governmental organizations

There are various NGOs which continue to address women's concerns. The oldest among these is the MAENDELEO YA WANAWAKE established in 1952. Many NGOs have emerged with specific agenda for women's advancement. Currently, there are over 100 registered NGOs. Women NGOs have become a strong instrument for advocacy and lobbying for the advancement of women, a factor which was demonstrated when NGOs assisted women political aspirants during the parliamentary and civil elections held in 1992.

Women's groups: Women's groups have increased over the years; by 1990, there were 23,614 groups with a membership of 968,941. These groups provide a viable channel for outreach by the Government and other development agencies while at the same time they provide a mutually supporting environment for women's education and awareness creation. They have made noteworthy gains in socio-economic areas where they have collectively bought land, built houses, business premises and initiated projects in health water industry and small-scale businesses.

Women's legal rights

Kenya ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1984 and fully subscribed to the formulation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Chapter V of the Kenya Constitution guarantees fundamental rights and freedom for all. However, persistent cultural and customary practices have continued to deny women some of their fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. The legal and socio-cultural issues that need to be addressed for improving the status of women are in the areas of family law, divorce, maintenance, matrimonial property, succession, education,

training, employment and reproduction rights. In 1993, the Government established a task force to review all laws that conflict with the fundamental rights of women.

Violence against women: Although, due to various reasons, wife beating was considered a domestic issue, there are provisions in the criminal law code where it is an offence to unlawfully assault another person; the law also allows for divorce or separation on grounds of cruelty which includes battery of a wife or the exercise of other forms of violence. Although there are stiff penalties for rape and defilement, wife beating and other acts of violence against women have been hard to punish due to failure to put them in the categories of offenses under the penal code.

The Government has further addressed the issue in an education-oriented campaign in which the Women's Bureau, in conjunction with the Public Law Institute, began a legal programme called WRAP (Women's Rights Awareness Project).

At the NGO level, the Kenyan chapter of International Federation of Women Lawyers has instituted a project which will involve cooperation with the law enforcement agencies to establish the extent of the problem. Other organizations are also engaged in promoting women's awareness; these include OXFAM and WILDAF (Women Law and Development in Africa).

Poverty

Despite Kenya's impressive economic performance, it is generally a poor country where the per capita in the 1990s is Ksh 395 (\$250), as compared to the United Nations \$370 for poor countries. Kenyan households are predominantly headed by men (69.1 and 29.1 per cent) and a 1992 survey confirmed that this has remained constant at 70-30 per cent. This headship of a household does not seem to be a dynamic indication of poverty. The incidence of absolute poverty has remained constant at 47 per cent. In households headed by females (single, divorced or widowed), however, the ranks of the poor have increased from 47 per cent in 1982 to 53 per cent in 1992. This can be explained by the fact that they had no male remitters of income which their (female-married) counterparts had.

The unemployment rate in 1986 was 11.7 per cent, with 9.3 per cent for males to 16.5 per cent for females, showing that females were significantly at risk for employment. The Government's goals for poverty reduction for both gender are, among others, a reduction of household poverty incidence by 50 per cent of the 1993 levels by the year 2000.

Environment

The level of Kenyan women's awareness on environmental issues has increased since the 1980s when they were involved in the establishment of tree nurseries and green belts in the rural areas. The women in development and environment group has also initiated support services for slum women, including awareness creation on environmental issues.

Energy

Recent studies (1993) show that the country is still heavily dependent on wood fuel. An enterprising project in energy is the MAENDELEO JIKO, a stove by the MAENDELEO YA Wanawake Organization; the stove is known to reduce fuel wood demands by more than 50 per cent, compared to the three-stones fire. It is time saving, thus enabling women to engage in other productive activities.

Information/communication

There has been much progress in the collection and dissemination of information relating to women, both in quantity and context. The number of women working in the media has increased while many have moved to more senior positions and decision-making levels, thereby influencing the dissemination of useful information to women and campaigns for women's issues.

International support

There are many projects and programmes from technical resource flows which benefit women though they cannot be quantified without disaggregated data on funding. Those sectors from which women have benefitted directly are health, population, housing environment, cooperatives and education; in some cases, they have been targeted at specific women groups at grass-roots level, mainly for income-generating activities. All donors giving financial and material support to Kenya have had components which benefit women.

There have, however, been major constraints encountered in the process of collaboration with donors; these include lack of coordination between the treasury, ministries and auditors; poor accounting information; different accounting procedures between government and donors and among donors, and the lack of supervision which adversely affects sustainability.

LESOTHO

INTRODUCTION

The landlocked country of Lesotho has an area of 30,335 sq. kilometres, two-thirds of its surface being mountainous; arable land is only 6 per cent of the land surface while pasture land is 66 per cent. It has a population of 1,980,818, over 50 per cent of them being women.

The country is a constitutional monarchy with a National Assembly of elected members and a Senate or upper house of nominees from various social sectors. The representation of women in politics, despite their large numbers, is very minimal.

Economically, Lesotho is heavily dependent on the Republic of South Africa for imports; revenue is derived mainly from remittances from migrant workers in the South African mines and from the southern African Customs Union. The country is largely agricultural with almost 80 per cent of the people deriving their income from agriculture. With virtually no natural resource endowment, the country emphasises human resource development as key to its future growth and is investing heavily in human resource to ensure human capital formation necessary for sustainable socio-economic development. In general, the current economic policy attempts to increase domestic employment opportunities by promoting direct foreign investment in labour-intensive industries.

The government policy reaffirms that Lesotho's society is made up of both men and women who are expected to participate in the social, economic and political development of the country. To realise the goals of this policy the government has decided to review all laws and statutes which discriminate on the basis of gender and open up employment opportunities to both men and women.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision-making

Despite their numbers, women have not been represented in decision-making in any significant way. In 1966 for instance of the 4 women (4.3%) in the Assembly and Senate of 93 people, 3 were appointed in their official capacities as Principal Chiefs. Nevertheless, because of the strong traditional role Basotho women play in the political and other activities of their menfolk, their desire to be involved in modern politics has not dwindled. Thus, during the preparations for the democratic

process in 1990, women became more vocal on political issues; further, one political party that stood for elections was founded by a well-known woman.

In the democratic elections in 1993, 6 women stood for elections and currently there are 3 women in the National Assembly in addition to 6 appointees in the Senate.

In other decision-making institutions, women are seriously taking the initiative to be included in the decision-making processes of such institutions. Lesotho women have organized themselves largely through women associations, religious and home economics to further empower themselves.

Education

The 1993 constitution in respect of education calls for: the adoption of policies that would ensure the availability of and accessibility to primary, secondary vocational and technical education to all by every appropriate means; the equitable accessibility to higher education to all on the basis of capacity by progressive introduction of free education; and the encouragement and intensification of basic education to those who have not received it or completed only primary education.

The main thrust of the education policy is to provide good quality education for all. First priority is given to basic education and the second general priority focuses on the provision of sufficient number of people with appropriate occupational, technical and managerial skills essential for economic development and employment creation. These policies cater for both sexes equally.

Lesotho has a high literacy rate of about 75 per cent. This is even higher (about 80%) in the case of the female population. In 1993, of the total number of primary enrolment of 354,275, female students totalled over 56 per cent; in secondary schools, out of a total of 53,988 students, 59 per cent were female. By and large, there are more educated females than males due to various contributing factors amongst which migrant labour and livestock herding by boys, are primary

Sex stereotyping persists in the schools and gender categories are used for ease of organizational and administrative purposes whereby boys and girls are listed separately in registers, sit separately in classrooms and are separated when lining up to go in or out of school. Subject choices have remained sex segregated and options are usually time tabled so as to encourage sex segregated choices. For example, it could be difficult to take Physical Science because this usually clashes with Crafts and Home Economics and vice versa.

In vocational and technical education women's participation dropped from 53 per cent in 1983 to 46 per cent in 1992. Even at this level there is stereotyping in courses; for example in 1992, there were 99 males against 1 female in Bricklaying, 36 females against 26 males in Commercial Studies and 131 females with no males in Home Economics.

There are a number of problems with the current vocational training in respect to women, namely:

- (a) Most of the courses are expensive and beyond the reach of many women;
- (b) Majority of the courses are based in the lowlands making them inaccessible to the least educated in the mountains;
- (c) In most cases the training in unregistered centres does not lead to a recognized qualification; and
- (d) Income-generating skills training does not challenge sex stereotyping in the activities undertaken, with women's groups tending to focus on knitting and sewing.

This is the overall pattern and women have not broken significantly through to train in non-traditional fields.

While enrolment of females at university was lower than that of males until 1989, it is now higher in all faculties except that of the Physical Sciences and Mathematics.

Health

The government health policy aims at better health for all by the year 2000 because it believes that good health is a pre-requisite for the socio-economic development of a nation.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is the national body responsible for all health activities. Health care has relatively improved over the years because of increased number of health centres. The provision of these centres has contributed to improved quality maternal health care and improved services for family planning and general health needs.

Since the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, particularly those regarding the improvement of women in the field of health, a significant number of women has been studying for health related professions. Thus in 1988 there were 4 women against 1 man studying Dental mechanics, 454 women against 56 as Nursing Staff, 23 women against 10 males as Pharmacy Technicians, 10 women against 3 males as Laboratory Technicians; there were, however, 40 males against 18 females as Physicians, 27 males against 9 females as Health Assistants.

Maternal mortality rate in Lesotho is calculated according to women who give birth in hospital and these are usually high risk cases referred by Village Health Workers, Traditional Birth Attendants or Health Care Personnel. In 1993 the maternal mortality rate was 220/100,000 live births. The major contributing factors/problems are hypertension, pelvic inflammatory diseases, coupled with delayed antenatal care as well as poor management of high risk women by both health workers and communities during labour, delivery, and failure to attend post natal care for detection of complications in time. Lesotho Safe Motherhood initiative has been implemented with the view to empowering women to make decisions on their health matters.

Fertility varies between urban and rural as well as ecological zones. Women in rural areas have a higher fertility rate (5.3) than women in urban areas (4.5). Similarly, women in the mountains have a higher fertility rate than their counterparts in the lowlands. The disparity in the distribution of services and educational levels may be responsible for the differentials in favour of urban and lowland areas.

With respect to family planning, there is a coverage rate of 21 per cent with a wide range of contraceptive methods to suit the wide range of needs. There is a community-based distribution of devices which can be accelerated by making women aware of their rights.

Immunization

There has been an increase in immunization coverage from 50 to 71 per cent between 1984-1993, from 71 to 90 per cent between 1993 and 1994. The trend observed between 1984 and 1993 may have been due to poor record keeping and failure to enter the results of direct immunization campaigns in clinic records. Efforts are being made to address the record keeping problem as well as to increase the coverage to 95 per cent in 1995.

Vaccination of pregnant women against tetanus was introduced in 1992; however the prevalence of the disease is insignificant so that its usefulness as an indicator of women's health is questionable.

Accessibility of health service facilities to women

The government endorsed Primary Health Care (PHC) as a strategy for involving the community in primary care activities. To facilitate the process of delivery of PHC, the government has built Health Service Centres. There are 157 Health Centres in the country with village Health Posts supported by Village Health workers and Trained Traditional Birth Attendants at the community level. One hundred and one of the health centres are controlled by non-governmental organizations.

The package of PHC activities offered to women within the Maternal and Child Health/Family Planning (MCH/FP) are : Antenatal Care, Family Planning and Immunization for children and mothers, with Health Education and Postnatal Care as preventive tools.

HIV Positive Women

Available figures suggest that 57.5 per cent of the total of AIDS cases are female. The first AIDS case was reported in 1986 and since then the country has seen a steady increase in the number of both AIDS and HIV seropositive especially in urban areas. The cumulative AIDS cases reported at the end of September 1994 was 440 with an increase of 13 per cent and 51 per cent in 1989 and 1991 respectively. Seventy-five per cent of reported cases are in the age group 15-39.

In terms of combatting the disease, it would appear that despite ample donor funding, the AIDS control programme has been slow to establish an adequate prevention programme. The NGOs on the other hand have been very active particularly in the promotion of AIDS prevention and education. These NGOs have joined to form a committee known as LENASA (Lesotho Network of AIDS Service Organization). Many other donors, including bi-lateral and multi-lateral, also support AIDS work in Lesotho. Although there is no shortage of funds, there is little evidence that AIDS education has had an impact.

Employment

The all-encompassing legal framework for the Ministry of Employment is the Labour Code of 1992. It protects women against all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment at the work place. It calls for equal pay for work of equal value and provides statutory maternity rights.

As most women in Lesotho are domestic workers, a minimum wage has been established to protect this group from exploitation.

In spite of these provisions in the law to protect women, however, government cannot, for instance, force employers to offer paid maternity leave, as in most businesses pay is related to production. Furthermore penalties for contravention of these provisions are relatively insignificant, making their enforcement ineffective.

Agriculture

Nearly 84 per cent of the population live in rural areas and about 70 per cent derive part of their income from agriculture, both farming and livestock. In recent years, due to persistent drought, environmental degradation and inappropriate practices, agricultural output has declined and has accounted for less than 20 per cent of the GDP. This decline has affected the majority of the Basotho who rely on agriculture as their main source of income. Women and children have been adversely affected as an increasing number of households dependent on agriculture are headed by women.

There have been heavy investments in agriculture to raise the output of staple food crops especially maize, and some cash crops; efforts to improve agricultural production, however, face serious constraints due to unreliable climatic conditions and poor soils.

The government has introduced a number of initiatives to encourage diversification away from extensive food grain monocropping towards high-value, labour-intensive agricultural activities in order to create employment and protect soil erosion. Thus there is now the cultivation of non-traditional crops such as asparagus, cabbage, and potatoes which yield much higher returns per hectare and involve activities that are more suitable for women in addition to their income-generating potential.

Although in recent years land security tenure through amendments of the 1979 Land Act has benefitted majority of farmers, women who are minors by Customary and other Laws have difficulty in acquiring land use rights from their chiefs in their own names.

Women's Access to Resources

Access to Credit

The National Development and Savings Order of 1971 allows married women to open bank accounts and execute all necessary documents and give all necessary acquittance without assistance from the husband. However, the Order also imposes restrictions on the amount that a married woman can execute and transact unassisted by her husband. By virtue of being married in community of property, and being subject to the husband's marital power, married women cannot have collateral without their husband's prior consent.

Access to Land

The Land (Amendment) Order of 1992 has provided women with full rights to the ownership of land that constitutes part of the joint estate. In practice, however, a married woman cannot have land registered in her name, despite land entitlement vested in by the Land (Amendment) Order of 1992. Legislatively also, no

corresponding amendment has been made to the Deeds Registry Act of 1967 enabling registration by married of title in the land, making the Land (Amendment) Order ineffective.

National Machineries

In 1979, Lesotho established a national machinery mandated to promote and coordinate issues of gender equality. The **Women's Bureau** as it was known fell directly under the Prime Minister's office and subsequently under different executive powers, one being the Military Council in 1986. From the beginning it operated with a very confused mandate. While in some quarters it was seen as a mobilization force for rural women to form self-help groups, in others it was perceived as a politicised body serving the interests of the ruling party of the day. Further still it targeted only rural women, leaving aside those in the urban areas.

On the basis of the misdirection of the Bureau and the mistrusts largely expressed by women themselves, this institution was abolished by the present government. At present the government has mandated sectoral gender planning within different ministries with a harmonizing role by the Ministry of Central Planning.

Women's Legal Rights

Section 18 of the constitution provides that no law enacted shall be discriminatory. However, within this section is a proviso that stipulates that any existing laws in regard to citizenship, marriage, divorce, adoption, devolution of property, and customary law shall not be regarded as discriminatory.

Lesotho has a dual legal system whereby Customary Law and Dutch Roman Law coexist. Under both systems a married woman is a minor. Under Dutch-Roman Law this is the case if the woman is married in community of property, and is subject to her husband's marital power. About 95 per cent of marriages in Lesotho are in community property, and subject to their husband's marital power, thus automatically giving women a minority status. As minors, married women cannot sue or be sued, contract or acquire or dispose of property, without the husband's assistance or prior consent.

Under Customary Law also, women do not inherit land, but only possess usufructuary rights in regard to property until their death. The first male issue is the sole heir under Customary Law; this therefore makes a woman a perpetual minor from birth to death.

With respect to citizenship, the constitution provides that a person becomes a citizen of Lesotho by birth and descent, if at the time of birth that person's father was a citizen of Lesotho,

or in the case of a person born out of wedlock, if the mother was a citizen of Lesotho. A woman married to a foreigner has the right to remain a citizen of Lesotho but these rights do not extend to children born of her during marriage.

In accordance with the Public Service (the single largest single employer) Rules and Regulations of 1969, married women were employed on temporary terms and conditions without pension rights. Although the situation has now been redressed, in administrative application, the Pension (Amendment) Order no. 12 of 1992 applies to female officers married subsequent to 10th August, 1984. Those female officers married prior to that date, have no security of tenure in employment, as they are neither permanent nor pensionable.

The Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has been signed by Lesotho but not yet ratified because of reservations on articles 15 and 16 dealing with women's identical legal capacity with men and the equality of spouses in marriage, respectively. The provisions of the two articles are addressed differently in Lesotho's dual legal system, and it is not possible for government to ratify CEDAW without a detailed study on how to incorporate articles 15 and 16 in the municipal law to achieve gender balance without undermining some of the existing positive socio-cultural and economic aspects.

The government, in its efforts to achieve the goals of its policy of equality, plans to establish a Human Rights Unit within the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, and is putting in place a human rights structure which permeates all government Ministries and Non-Governmental Organizations in the promotion and dissemination of information and human rights of women. A Law Reform Commission will also be established through the Law Reform Act of 1993, which will, inter alia, review all laws which discriminate on the basis of gender.

Violence against women

The issue of violence against women has only begun to be seriously viewed in Lesotho because of cultural and traditional beliefs and practices. Violence in the family is still culturally accepted and is therefore unreported in some quarters as it is considered culturally normal for a husband to beat his wife. A wife who reports her husband's violent behaviour against her is often ridiculed and scorned.

Cases involving indecent assault are numerous and, though it appears to be a gender-neutral crime, it is committed mostly among under-aged girls, and is eventually classified as rape.

Sexual harassment is common in the streets and in schools-school girls are vulnerable to sexual abuse by male teachers (allocation of higher grades is used as bait by male teachers for sexual favours). Though rape is the most heinous crime, because of social consequences, many rape victims never come into the open. Recently, however, there seems to be an alarming escalation in the number of rape cases reported.

Violence by the state is manifested in the incarceration of offenders particularly expectant and/or nursing mothers who tend to be more adversely affected by the prison living conditions. Some of the more sophisticated violent crimes against women such as commercialized violence, pornography and incest are rare because of scanty reporting.

Reported cases of violence against women in 1993 were as follows: rape: 826; abduction: 190; assault: 3; intent to rape: 37; and neglect: 496.

There are institutions within the country, for example, Law enforcement Agencies, Churches and Women's Groups, concerned with fundamental human rights in general but are not specific to violence on women.

Non-governmental organizations such as the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) and the Community Legal Resources Centre (CLRC) have made efforts to promote women's legal literacy; they have organized campaigns on legal awareness, trained paralegals, and produced accessible booklets in Sesotho and English on "Women and the Law in Lesotho. Both organizations were active throughout the country undertaking voter education prior to the 1993 democratic elections.

LIBERIA

INTRODUCTION

The 1984 population census (latest) showed Liberia to have a population of 2.5 million, 49.4 per cent of which were women. Liberian women generally are not only workers but contribute about 75 per cent of their input to the agricultural sector and trading activities.

With the complete breakdown of socio-economic activities due to the civil war in the country, women are now virtually without visible means of support. Their vulnerability has been compounded by the hardship they have to face with the loss of their male source of back-up assistance. Some of them have been displaced and lost their means of support and many of them have been forced to assume leadership roles which some find difficult as they do not possess the requisite skills or funds to engage in self-sustaining endeavours.

On the whole, there has never been a national policy to promote women or increase their representation in government or business; there is yet no strategy to reduce women's disadvantage in getting education. Those cultural practices which impede their education have been upheld in a hybrid system of national administrators in which laws and customs accord recognition, albeit conflicting, to statutes and customs.

Liberian socio-political culture remains a patron/client system which does not design policies to affect target groups. The condition of women has remained unchanged throughout Liberian history; perhaps the consequence of the prolonged civil war might create policy consciousness and political will to focus policy action on targeted groups such as women and children. With respect to this national report, it is important to note that data for socio-economic analysis and planning are not available; as a result of the ongoing war, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs suffered a complete destruction of its data bank; other available data are often unreliable.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision-making

Women have been represented in the Liberian cabinet of all the various administrations; they have been in the diplomatic service and in senior executive positions in State-owned enterprises. However, their participation in policy formulation and executive decision making has been relatively low. For example, in 1985, of the 50 members of parliament (MPs), two were women; in 1990 (Government of National Unity), five of the 90 MPs were women; in 1993 (Transitional Legislative Assembly), two of the 30 MPs were women. Insignificant female participation has not been limited to these areas but in all major institutions of culture, society and the economy. Thus, decisions determining the well-being of women and the enhancement of the quality of their lives are made by social and administrative structures in which they have no significant representation.

The marginalization of women in the Liberian development process is due to a number of factors among which are: (a) fact of disaggregated data which restrains the need to focus concerns on women in the development plan process; (b) gender biases in development planning and strategies; (c) social, cultural and economic factors.

Participation in local representative bodies: Local government officials are not elected in Liberia; they are appointed by the President; they include country superintendents, members of city councils, provincial and county commissioners and their advisors. Female appointment in these bodies is token; there are very few women in administrative and managerial positions in the formal sector; with very few exceptions, women managers and employers have been scarce.

Employment

The largest employer of labour in Liberia is the agriculture/forestry subsector which constitutes 70 per cent of all employment. Female employment here is 83.4 per cent, comprising many rural women who are basically engaged in subsistence farming, as compared to 60.3 per cent of the men. Women are also concentrated in sales, where they represent 8.3 per cent of the population, as compared to men who represent 5 per cent. The concentration of women in agriculture and sales is explained by the fact that employment here does not require education, skills or capital. Female representation in the professions, especially law, the clergy and medicine, is high; women as own account workers, especially in real estate, management and absentee rubber farming have been present on the Liberian scene for a long time.

Education

The illiteracy rate for women is higher than that for men in the 15-45 years age groups; in the whole country, the illiteracy pattern is the same both in the rural and urban areas. Available statistics from the West African Examination Council show that, in 1989, the number of girls who finished ninth grade was 5,050 (37 per cent) and that of boys was 8,596 (63 per cent); in 1991, the numbers were 949 (40 per cent) for girls and 1,423 (60 per cent) for boys. During the same period, those completing twelfth grade were 2,964 (37 per cent) girls, 5,046 (63 per cent) boys and 894 (44 per cent) girls and 1,313 (56 per cent) boys respectively. The University of Liberia Office of Admissions (excluding graduates from Cuttington College and the WVST Technical College) shows third level graduation in 1985 as 260 males and 85 females; in 1993, 322 males and 75 females; from the same source, graduates from the School of Law in 1987 were 17 males and 11 females. From the School of Medicine, in 1985, it was eight males and two females; in 1993, seven males and two females. In the technical field in 1985, there were 16 males, no female and in 1993, 10 males and one female.

Vocational training: There are 44 vocational and technical institutions that provide training for both men and women on an equal basis. However, the enrolment ratio for boys is much higher than for girls. Although the situation is gradually changing, cultural patterns, early marriage and child bearing make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to have women and men enrolled and graduate on an equal basis.

Teachers: Due to the difficulties in collecting accurate and reliable data, information on women and their participation in the teaching profession cannot be fully analyzed. However, student admission to teacher training colleges shows, for secondary education, 179 males 13 females in 1985, 180 males and 29 females in 1986 and 206 males and 26 females in 1987; for elementary education, the figures were, in 1985, four males and nine females, in 1986, four males and 11 females and in 1987, 13 males and 10 females.

Health

The provision of health services by the Government has always been urban-biased. Up to the 1980s, emphasis was on curative methods. Beyond the 1980s, USAID funded a trial preventive project in the south east of the country, targeting disadvantaged groups especially women and children. Unfortunately, the civil war prevented the full implementation of the project.

According to ADB economic and social statistics for Africa, life expectancy in Liberia in 1985 was 50 for males and 54 for females; in 1990, it was 54 for males and 56 for females and in 1992 it was 55 for

males and 57 for females. Health services are blessed with a unique form of partnership between the Government and other providers such as NGOs and concessions. Prior to the civil war, much emphasis was placed on strengthening and extending health care to all Liberians, especially rural dwellers. Despite increasing attempts to achieve this objective, the health care available to most Liberians cannot be described as satisfactory.

The fertility rate is relatively high at 6.5; the fertility rates were 6.5 in 1980 and 1985; 6.3 in 1991; and 6.2 in 1992. Maternal mortality rate is 49 per 1000; infant mortality rate is 49 per 1000. The infant mortality rate is 144 per 1000 while the under-5 mortality rate is 220 per 1000. Liberia continues to experience a high incidence of child mortality. Comparatively, these rates are one of the highest in sub-Saharan Africa and about 50 per cent of these deaths occur in children under five. The diseases causing such deaths include communicable and preventable diseases, i.e., diarrhoea, malaria, pneumonia, whooping cough, diphtheria, typhus, measles, yellow fever, tuberculosis and internal parasites.

Contraception: According to 1986 demographic and health statistics, 72 per cent of females of childbearing age were knowledgeable about family planning; 70 per cent were reported being familiar with modern methods and 30 per cent with traditional methods.

HIV/AIDS: Diagnosis of AIDS have been confirmed in a number of women of childbearing age. Out of a sample of 505 ante-natal women aged 16-39 years screened for HIV 1 and 2, 26 (6.3 per cent) were positive.

Women's access to resources

Credit facilities in public banks: Women have found it difficult to obtain credit from public banks in Liberia because (a) the banks are undercapitalized and consider women clients "risks"; (b) these banks do not have branches in the rural areas where the majority of women entrepreneurs operate; (c) the majority working population of women are illiterate and unfamiliar with the complex procedures of formal financial institutions; (d) the land tenure and property ownership patterns do not enable women to easily satisfy collateral requirements of public financial institutions. Figures from the Agricultural and Cooperative Development Bank show that, in 1985, loans to women represented 4.11 per cent of total loans; in 1991, it was 38.52 per cent, in 1992, 6.25 per cent but in 1993, it was 68.37 per cent. Women's loan performance appears to have been satisfactory.

Rural land ownership/rent estate tenure in urban areas: In Liberian customary law, personal ownership of land does not exist. Land belongs to the tribe or clan and individual members are allotted or granted user rights rather than private ownership. As regards ownership of property (real estate) by women in urban areas, there are no gender discriminatory laws but because of their low income and other impediments, very few of them purchase land in their own respect.

Productive resources: Despite the widespread dependence of traditional production systems upon female labour, very little extension effort or addition to infrastructure has been specifically directed towards women. New cash crops and the adoption of technological innovations have tended to be regarded as a male preserve, while emphasis upon males as targets for extension work has itself diverted resources and attention from subsistence food production systems.

Women's legal rights

The Liberian Government is aware of and committed to internationally and nationally recognized women's rights. For example, the 1985 Constitution explicitly recognized the necessity to lessen or remove language that was discriminatory to women. Amendments have been made to legislation in respect of property inheritance which favour women. In this respect, the 1986 Constitution recognized the difference between "educated" and "tribal" women. "Tribal" women are dowried and are themselves considered property (according to customary law). Chapter III, Article III (b) of the Constitution recognizes "surviving" dowried spouses as not part of the husband's estate and it makes provisions for laws that establish her rights to her husband's estate.

Certain specific discriminations do remain however, e.g., a woman cannot obtain credit without the approval of her husband nor she cannot obtain a passport to travel without her husband's approval.

Although the Constitution provides for equal opportunity for all regardless of age, sex or ethnic affiliation, there are customs, practices and attitudes which discriminate against women. Depending on which of the parallel legal system is under discussion, and given the socio-economic status of the woman seeking redress, biases and discrimination abound. The women's educational level, ethnic and religious affiliation are also relevant to the degree of fairness that is accorded her.

The legal system is in two parts: statutory laws are within the purview of the Ministry of Justice which accepts all aspects of the Constitution and Western practices; customary laws are administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and traditional chiefs make, interpret and enforce customary laws. Educated women, even if born of tribal parents, marry and are governed by statutory laws. It would seem that educating females could be a major step towards increasing awareness of women's rights. There is however, no policy specifically designed to create such awareness or to improve women to overcome the impediments they face.

Violence against women: Prior to the civil war in 1989, violence and sexual abuse of women and adolescence girls was almost non-existent in Liberia. However, during the last four years, women and girls have been hard hit as evidenced by the increasing number of reported, though undocumented, cases of mass rapes and violent abuse of women and girls by fighters of many factions.

In collaboration with and under the auspices of UNICEF, the National Women Commission of Liberia has established a centre called "My Sister's Place" which offers psychological and rape counselling, legal counselling, AIDS /HIV counselling, medical/genealogical check-ups and training in income-generating activities. In addition, the project has made available a mobile unit comprising some graduates to offer trauma counselling and provides counselling services to women and girls at the displaced centres in and around Monrovia. Since the majority of rape and sex abuse victims live in the rural areas, the need to extend this project throughout the country cannot be overemphasized.

The outlook for 1994 and beyond will largely depend on the pace of improvements in the political security conditions throughout the country, cessation of hostilities, removal of all barriers to reunification of the country and restoration of the rationalization of the productive sectors of the economy.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The need to establish a women's bureau within the Government to spearhead the effective integration of women and to promote women's issues in the development process has been discussed on numerous occasions and in various fora since 1975; however, the machinery has yet to be established. The delay in its establishment has been due to unresolved debates over the life span of the machinery, its location and the processes and procedures of its establishment.

Non-governmental organizations

Women's organizations which were grouped under the Liberian Federation of Women Organizations (LFWO) ceased functioning when the coup in 1980 banned the Federation which it viewed as supportive of the previous regime.

In 1989, the Women's Development Association of Liberia was established. It is engaged in developmental activities for improving the standard of living of Liberian women and subsists on funds generated from self-help projects. The United Muslim Women's Association of Liberia (1987) conducts workshops, seminars and symposia to educate and create awareness among women; it also establishes and supports Islamic schools, health centres and other facilities.

The Concerned Women of Liberia (1991) organizes skill programmes and proposals for women groups. Realizing the need to address the concerns of women in war-torn Liberia, various women's organizations established the National Women Commission of Liberia (NAWOCOL). Its goal is to consolidate all groups in an effort to ensure proper promotion and coordination of women's activities. The Commission now has 35 women groups, with a membership of 13,000. In addition, NAWOCOL intends to harmonize all women's activities during the period of reconstruction, restoration and rehabilitation and gear them towards viability of the Liberian masses from the grass-roots in community levels. Activities of the Commission are in the areas of agriculture, health, child welfare and educational and cultured public awareness campaigns and literacy programmes.

Poverty

Generally, poverty in Liberia is spread unevenly within the family with acute deprivation for women and children who make up a disproportionate percentage of those in absolute poverty. Poor families are usually those with the lowest income, without assets, illiterate and with insufficient access to productive employment. They live on rural farms with fewer income earnings relative to the number to be supported. They play a minor role in village life, do not participate meaningfully in community affairs and have little power to reform the courses of their own lives.

The rural poor are preoccupied solely with survival and basic needs; for them, work is frequently not available and when it is, conditions are intolerable and pay is very low. An important feature of rural poverty is its seasonal stress. In the rainy season, the poor have increasing difficulty in finding paid work; they run down their food supplies; diseases add to their fear because of weather conditions and under nutrition increases; susceptibility to illness which in turn makes it difficult to get limited work that may be available. Survival may sometimes depend on borrowing which can lead to an inescapable burden of indebtedness.

To address the immediate problem of poverty, the Government's economic policy will have to include social advancement. Linkages will have to be forged between the concessions and the rest of the economy and Liberianization of jobs and enterprises will have to be strongly promoted. Income distribution will be improved through increasing and diversifying income and employment opportunities of the disadvantaged majority, especially women, while reducing urban bias in the design and administration of tax and income policies. Expanded and improved economic and social services, combined with stimulation and support of local participation by women in development, will have to be vigorously and seriously addressed.

Conflicts and their effects on women

The Liberian armed conflict continues to impose a serious threat to the lives of Liberian citizens, particularly women and children. Women have continued to be stranded in both urban and rural areas as a result of internal displacement. They are under constant threat of violence and sexual harassment while children have continued to suffer from malnutrition and related diseases.

Women's family responsibilities have been made more difficult by the emergency situation and limited resources. Their ability to provide shelter for their families has been greatly reduced by the civil conflict, leaving many displaced (75 per cent of rural women) from their homes and ending up in camps.

Liberian women and children have been the major victims of the conflict, e.g., in the Harbel massacre, 390 of the 460 reported killed were women and children. Very serious cases of violence and social abuse of women and children continues. Reconstruction and rehabilitation projects and programmes have now been put in place by a number of PVOs/NGOs with government technical assistance to help the victims of war. The projects are designed to improve the diet of the family and to encourage women to form farming cooperatives for food production for consumption and sales.

MALAWI

INTRODUCTION

Malawi is basically an agrarian rural society with 85 per cent of its total population engaged in subsistence agriculture. By 1993, the estimated total population was 10 million, with women accounting for 52 per cent and making a significant contribution to the economy, especially in the subsistence sector. Women also form an important proportion of the total labour force in the informal sector of the economy. Their contribution to the development process is, however, limited because of a variety of social, economic, cultural and other constraints.

Given the percentage of women in the population, policies aimed at promoting their integration into the development process are not only an issue of equity but more importantly one of economic efficiency. The removal of gender-specific barriers encountered by women not only gives them an opportunity to obtain their fair share of the benefits of development but also enhances national production.

Global and regional concerns on strategies to integrate women into the development process, particularly mainstream development, led to the establishment in 1984 of the National Commission on Women in Development (NCWID). After the 1985 World Conference on Women, a number of achievements have been made by the Government through the National Commission. After its accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1987, Malawi has reviewed all laws that affect women and proposals have been made for reform.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Until the introduction of multi-party politics in 1993, Malawi women's participation in political activity was through the League of Malawi Women, a wing of the ruling Malawi Congress Party. Their participation in the party's decision making was limited as none were included in the National Executive Committee until 1992, when three were appointed. Even with multi-party politics, very few women hold high position in the political machineries. The participation of women in decision making, such as in parliament, government, diplomatic service and local representative bodies like municipalities, remained low throughout the decade.

There are no women at ambassadorial level and only 16 (22.8 per cent) of the 70 persons in diplomatic missions are women, most of them being secretarial staff or third secretary rank level with two women at second secretary level. Of the 11 judges in the judiciary, only one (9 per cent) is a woman and only one woman owns a legal practice. While women make up 29 per cent of the professional and technical labour force, they represent only 8 per cent of the administrative and related areas positions.

Another critical area with inequality in power sharing and decision making is the mass media. In the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism, only two of the 10 women are at the decision-making level. Of the 115 employed in mainstream newspapers, 20 are women, of whom one woman is at the second level managerial position and three are board members. In the administrative and managerial sectors, women make up less than 5 per cent of the workers in the country; of the 40 principal secretaries, only four are women; of the 27 general managers of statutory organizations, only one is a woman and no woman holds the position of chairperson of an executive board of any statutory body.

At the household level, especially in female-headed households which make up 30 per cent of households, women have more responsibility in intra-household decision making and this tends to enhance

their status. In addition, due to male urban migration, 42 per cent of women in male-headed households make their own decisions.

Education

Women and girls are generally underrepresented in the educational system. Consequently, their participation in the socio-economic, political and cultural development of the country is restricted.

Primary level: The last decade witnessed a steady increase in girls' enrolment and an even longer stay. At the primary level, admission increased from 46 per cent in 1980/81 to 47 per cent in 1984/85 and 51 per cent in 1992/93. In 1992/93, girls' net enrolment for the first time outnumbered boys at 60 per cent and 57 per cent respectively. Persistence through the primary system also increased - 30 per cent completed in 1984/85 and 38 per cent completed in 1992/93. In spite of the increased persistence, achievements remain a problem; for example, of the number of pupils passing the primary school leaving exam in 1984/85, 21 per cent of girls were successful and in 1992/93, 56 per cent of girls were successful. During the same periods, the percentage of boys who were successful was 73 and 75 per cent respectively.

The achievements in enrolment and persistence of girls through the primary system has been the result of policies, programmes and projects put in place by the Government in the last decade aimed at improving access and quality of education. School drop-out rates and poor performance among girls is due, inter alia, to socio-economic reasons, including lack of school fees, early pregnancies and marriages and the low perception of the value or usefulness of education for girls.

There has also been an increase in the participation of girls at secondary level, partly due to the Ministry of Education policy of reserving 33 per cent of total secondary school enrolment for girls. This target was even surpassed in 1988 with 35 per cent of girls selected for enrolment to form 1. There is, however, still the problem of low achievement which has led to girls getting only 23 per cent of university places.

Girls' access to post-secondary school institutions has been mainly confined to traditional courses. Recently, however, girls have entered non-traditional fields such as computing, construction technology, architecture, law, engineering, medicine and accountancy. Currently, 23 per cent of the total enrolled at the University of Malawi are female, an improvement which could be related to the introduction of the Diploma in Nursing and Mid-Wifery, an option dominated by women.

In teacher training colleges, female enrolment is still lower than that of men and the University of Malawi has produced more males with M.Ed, B.Ed and Dip. Ed. However, the number of females with University Certificates in Education (UCE) outnumbers that of males. Lack of female teachers in non-traditional fields has implication for girls' participation in these subjects.

Extension education: Programmes in this sector cover agriculture and community development services, business and religion and are implemented by the Government, the private sector and NGOs. Women have been involved in agricultural extension both at training and community level but their numbers have been small, e.g., of the total 2,000 agricultural extension workers in the country, only 190 (9.5 per cent) are women.

Health

Malawi's health services, provided by government and other non-governmental institutions, are at the community, rural health district hospital, central hospital and special hospital levels. Their availability is seriously constrained by rapid population growth. In 1983 for example, the patient/doctor ratio was 41,000:1; in 1989, it was 60,000:1. The patient/registered nurse ratio is 5000:1.

On the average, 80 per cent of the population live within 8 km of a health unit so that a high percentage of women receive ante-natal services from trained nurses and midwives. In other areas, women continue to rely on traditional birth attendants (TBAs) who have now been incorporated into the maternal and child health care services to ensure better services.

Life expectancy in Malawi remains one of the lowest in Africa at 47 and 49 for males and females respectively. Maternal mortality is among the highest in the world at 620/100,000 live births, due to preventable factors such as protein-energy malnutrition, poor household decision making on what to eat, very high household food insecurity, insufficient medical facilities, etc. Thirty-three per cent of maternal mortality is also due to deaths from illegal abortions. Infant mortality, which was 151 per 1000 live births in 1977-1984, rose to 159 in 1987 and has dropped to 135.7 in 1992. Child mortality is 240 per 1000 live births, one of the highest in the world. Child mortality is linked to the age of the mother, low levels of maternal education, short intervals between childbirth and malnutrition. Malnutrition has also been responsible for 56 per cent of stunting and 20 per cent of underweight births.

Fertility: Malawi's fertility rate has been declining; it is now 6.7, down from 7.6 in 1984 and 7.4 in 1987. In rural areas, the average fertility rate is 6.9, compared to 5.5 in urban areas. The adoption of the population policy in 1993 led to the establishment of the National Family Welfare Council (NFWC) in 1992. The NFWC coordinates the Safe Motherhood Initiative programme whose objective is to reduce maternal mortality. Family planning services were liberalized in 1992 and the current contraceptive prevalence rate for age 15-49 is 7 per cent, while the knowledge rate is 94.6 per cent. In spite of the progress in family planning, challenges that need to be addressed include educating men and women on reproductive rights as well as improved access to family planning methods.

HIV/AIDS: Since the first reported cases in 1985, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Malawi has been on the increase. By 1993, a cumulative total of 31,871 cases had been reported and age and sex distribution indicate heterosexual transmission. About 5 per cent of the cases are children under five and the highest incidence are among men and women of the 20-40 age group with women outnumbering men by 3:1 for those under 30 years. HIV infection is relatively low in male youth but rather high in adolescent girls; in tertiary institutions, about 2 per cent in boys but 7 per cent in girls.

Women's access to resources

Credit facilities: Malawi's three main banks and the New Building Society Bank call for collateral from prospective borrowers and as a result, less than 1 per cent of the total female population have benefitted from loans. The situation is aggravated by the absence of banking facilities in the rural areas. General measures have been undertaken to enhance women's access to credit facilities. Credit facilities open to women have been provided by the Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (1980), the Ministry of Agriculture (1983), the Ministry of Women and Children and Community Services (1986), the Small Enterprises Development of Malawi (1983), the Malawi Mudzi Fund (1988) and the National Association of Business Women (1990). The percentage of women that have made use of the facilities has ranged from 34 to 15 per cent. The only facility in which 80 per cent of borrowers were women is the Malawi Mudzi Fund. However, the project is operational in only two districts on a pilot basis. NGOs, such as the Christian Service Committee, World Vision International, Action Aid and Save the Children (USA) also provide credit for grass-roots women engaged in economic activities.

Most of these efforts and developments are still on a pilot basis and their sustainability is not yet realized. As a result, women's access to credit is still lower than that of men. The lack of rural banking institutions to provide access to credit to a wider women population remains a critical problem.

Rural land ownership: Since the economy depends on agriculture, land is an important economic asset in Malawi. The law in Malawi recognizes three types of land: customary, private and public. Most of the land is customary and the majority of the population gets its livelihood from it. A 1984/85 annual agriculture survey indicated that 55.3 per cent of small-holder households cultivate less than 1 ha and female-headed households account for 40 per cent of the 55.3 per cent small-holder households.

Real estate: Private land which is leasehold is owned by the Government and can be leased to individuals or organizations for 99 years. Land law per se is not discriminatory. Financial limitations, cultural traditions and lack of legal awareness, however, affect the acquisition of land by women. For example, out of 150,000 urban squatter households, 60 per cent are headed by females.

Women's legal rights

Malawi is party to many conventions safeguarding the rights of women including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. At the national level, the present Republican Constitution enshrines a Bill of Rights which takes into account internationally established standards, including those on women.

Through the National Commission on Women in Development, efforts have been made to redress the lack of awareness of international and national rights, particularly among women, by the publication of the book *Women and the Law in Malawi* (1993). The book outlines all laws that affect women in Malawi and makes proposals for reform in areas of the legal status of the woman and marriage: custody and maintenance of children, inheritance, land ownership, access to business, employment and citizenship and women and criminal law. The book also combines a summary of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. In complying with the provisions of that Convention, the Government has, inter alia, reviewed all gender stereotyping in the education curricula at all levels.

A number of NGOs, including the Foundation of Integrity Creation and Justice and Peace, have been established to encourage the promotion and protection of human rights with women specifically targeted as the core group.

Violence against women: Violence against women has been on the increase and recently there have been many reported cases of women and girls being molested, indecently assaulted and raped. Due to the lack of awareness, counselling services at the district levels for victims of sexual abuse and rape have not been utilized.

There is no specific provision in the penal code that makes "violence against women" an offence. However, offenders are prosecuted under the law relating to assault, assault occasioning actual body harm, defilement, indecent assault, rape or molesting the modesty of the woman. Following the increase in violence against women, measures have been taken to address the issue, including the formation of an action support group for victims of violence.

Violence in the home and in the family is hardly reported and mechanisms to support victims are minimal and not well-known; traditional values and practices also tend to limit women's freedom to speak when they fall victim.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Until the establishment of the National Commission on Women in Development (NCWID) in 1984, women in Malawi were mobilized through the League of Malawi Women of the Malawi Congress Party.

The NCWID, established for the integration of women into mainstream development, has its secretariat in the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and Community Services and plays an advocacy role, in addition to monitoring and evaluating programmes of government ministries. It also maintains linkages with public, private sector institutions and NGOs to ensure the inclusion of gender issues in their programmes. It operates through specialized committees (Legal, Education and Training, Family Health and Welfare Planning, Research and Evaluation, Employment, Small- and Medium-Scale Enterprises and Agriculture and Natural Resources) in which NGOs are represented.

NCWID has desk officers in all ministries and key organizations where they sensitize the incorporation of gender concerns in development endeavours; it represents women within the Government and is an important source of information on funding needs for women by bilateral and multilateral donors.

Through its specialized committees, the NCWID has achieved significant results. These include facilitating the establishment of the Business Advisory Service for Women, the National Association of Business Women, Women's World Banking (Malawi affiliate) and the National Family Welfare Council. NCWID played an important role in the introduction of the three months' paid maternity leave for female civil servants, provision of technical support for women's organizations, formulation of a policy on women in Malawi and a five-year plan of action on women for the implementation of the policy.

Constraints faced by NCWID are dependence on financial allocation, absence of representation at grass-roots level, lack of premises of its own and reliance on ministry staff who serve as a secretariat.

Non-governmental organizations

Both international and national NGOs in Malawi emerged in response to the influx of Mozambican refugees into the country and to the natural disaster the country experienced, respectively. However, these categories are now focusing more on national development issues, particularly at the grass-roots level. Programmes have been targeting women in areas such as health, water and sanitation, entrepreneurial development, agriculture and women's rights. In addition, women's organizations have emerged during the last five years which are mainly focusing on grass-roots women.

In spite of this development, local NGOs face financial and human resources constraints; further, due to their earlier involvement in relief work, most NGOs are concentrated in those areas/districts which were affected by refugees and natural disasters.

Poverty

A government document "Situation of Poverty in Malawi" (1993) shows that poverty in both urban and rural areas affects more than 50 per cent of the population. In 1990, the World Bank estimated that 60 per cent of the small-holder population in Malawi is living below the poverty line (women make up 30 per cent of household heads).

The huge foreign debt and SAPs, together with a high annual population growth rate, have significantly contributed towards this state of affairs.

Generally, in Malawi, poverty affects a wide range of groups of people including small-holder farmers, casual labourers and estate agricultural workers, tenant farmers and the urban low-income households (both male- and female-headed). In the urban sector, one in every two females is a small-holder farmer, as compared to one in every 10 males; in the informal sector, 40 per cent of women are female employers and 9 per cent are self-employed, compared to 71 and 28 per cent respectively for males. Cases of beggars and street children are on the increase.

Energy

Beside biomass which accounts for 93 per cent of total energy consumption for which women have to walk between 2 and 8 km and carry between 25-35 kg of firewood per trip, the remaining energy sources are electricity and coal. In 1992, about 20 per cent of households in the urban areas and 1 per cent in the rural areas had access to electricity mains in their homes. Overall, only 3 per cent of Malawian homes had access to electricity mains in their home.

Women's access to resources

Safe drinking water: While 82 per cent of urban households have access to piped water, 48.5 per cent of them obtain water from a public tap. In rural households, 64.3 per cent get water from a well, 15.8 per cent from either a river, stream or spring and about 2 per cent from lakes, dams or ponds. At the national level, 54 per cent of all households obtain their water from sources that may be unsafe. The poor quality and quantity of water, long distances and time taken to collect it create an additional burden to women.

From these indicators of urban unemployment, energy resource, water and sanitation facilities, Malawi women are still the most adversely affected by the widespread poverty in the country.

Conflicts and their effects on women

From 1986 to the present, Malawi has hosted about 1.2 million refugees (10 per cent of the Malawi population), mainly from Mozambique, and initially Malawian families shared their limited resources with them. Malawi has been able, with donor assistance, to provide the necessary facilities in such fields as health, education, sanitation, income-generation and related social welfare services. Malawi women workers, such as community development assistants and home craft workers, have played a major role in the rehabilitation of refugees. The refugee presence, however, has had an adverse impact on the environment, land availability and socio-economic amenities which, in turn, has affected Malawi women and children.

International support

Malawi has received assistance in the form of funds and/or technical assistance for individual projects some of them directly targeted at women from bilateral and multilateral donors. Crucial development areas such as education, population and health, agriculture and business development have benefitted from donor support. Poverty alleviation programmes have received support from the World Bank, USAID, UNDP, the German Government, ADB, UNICEF, EC, ODA and UNIFEM. These donors have also provided assistance to support business management skills training, credit facilities and institutional capacity building. It is estimated that about 10,000 women have benefitted from this assistance. In the agricultural sector, particular effort has been made to target some of the funding to women especially in the areas of access to

credit and extension services. Some support has also been provided (UNFPA) for population-related activities to assist the community in services which include reproductive health and family planning.

A significant drawback, however, is that most of the donor-supported projects have been short term without built-in sustainability; as a result, they phase out as soon as donor support ends.

Conclusions and recommendations

Despite the efforts of the Malawi Government since 1985 to implement the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies and thereby improve the status of women, the analysis of the constraints women face in such areas as education, health, agriculture, employment and decision making, especially at the policy level, indicate that a lot of work still needs to be done to fully achieve the targets set by those Strategies. As Malawi has experienced the paradox of "economic growth and increased poverty", the current approach of growth through poverty reduction has recognized the need to give increased attention to women issues.

Because a series of recommendations have been made in respect of each critical area of concern in the national report, it will be practical in this summary to highlight the two main points that followed the conclusions of the report:

- (a) The need for a more concerted and affirmative action;
- (b) The promotion and support of the role of NGOs in implementing gender-sensitive programmes at the grass-roots level.

MAURITIUS

INTRODUCTION

Mauritius is made up of several islands, the major ones being Mauritius island and the Island of Rodrigues. Mauritius moved from a democratic parliamentary monarchy to a full-fledged Republic in 1992 by a constitutional vote in the National Assembly. Women represent 50 per cent of a population of 1.09 million.

Like any other African country, Mauritius has had its share of problems of balance of payments, foreign exchange shortages, high rising debt servicing and high unemployment and low investment and saving. All these led to the adoption of a stabilization adjustment programme with the IMF. This has paid off positively as the country now has a diversified economy with no unemployment problems. In all this, women have played an important role, willing to accept the continued sacrifice and hardship while working for a better future which, for many at that time, seemed a long way away.

Mauritian women have also contributed to their country's economic success in the area of fertility control, bringing about a spectacular 36 per cent drop in the crude birth rate between 1962-1972 which has maintained a steady decline to the present day. In 1990, Mauritius was awarded the world population prize by the United Nations Population Fund.

There is, nevertheless, a lower level of development achieved in Rodrigues when compared to that of Mauritius. Rodrigues is an integral part of the State of Mauritius and all development policies should encourage a closer sense of belonging to the State while respecting the specificity of Rodriguan life. This has not always been easy for the basic reason that the population of Rodrigues is 90 per cent Creole or mixed descent, while that of Mauritius is nearly 70 per cent of Asiatic origin (descendants from the indentured labour who came from the Indian continent and from traders who came in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries).

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

In all the elections held since 1968, Mauritian women (aged 18 and over) have exercised their rights to the same extent as men. However, their presence among those elected remains very small. In the present National Assembly (1991), there are only two (2.7 per cent) women among 72 members, of whom one is a Minister for Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare. Of the 126 municipal councillors elected in 1991, only seven (5.5 per cent) are women and in the past ten years, there had been only two female mayors and no lady mayors. In the village council elections of 1992, 1,378 were men as against 14 (1 per cent) women.

All major parties with women's wings do put up women candidates, albeit in a minority, yet results are poor. Party politics are considered the domain of men and the prevailing tactics chosen do not accommodate a more feminine approach; in addition, many women may not want to support their womenfolk wishing to enter the fray in such a tough environment. In some cases also, both male and female electors are still prey to traditional beliefs and prejudices about a women's ability to lead and get things done.

The judiciary: Women are present at various levels of the judiciary. A 1994 Almanarch du Cerneen statistics survey shows that in the Supreme Court, there is one lady Puisne Judge (out of six), both the Master and Deputy Master in Bankruptcy are women. Three (50 per cent) of the six Intermediate Court Magistrates are women while the Industrial Court is presided over by a woman. Three (25 per cent) of the 12 District Court Magistrates are women. However, there are no women in authoritative positions in the various levels of court administration.

Education

Primary education in Mauritius has been free for a long time and secondary education became free in 1976. Nominal fees are paid by students for some courses at the University of Mauritius. Due to the lack of sufficient good quality schools, the educational system is highly competitive. After 1976, there was a spectacular rise in enrolment at secondary school level as well as parity of the sexes in the school population, e.g., enrolment in 1972 was 33.9 per cent for males, 28.0 per cent for females; in 1983, it was 46.2 per cent for males and 42.4 per cent for females; in 1990, it was 50 per cent for males and 48.9 per cent for females.

A comparison of examination results shows a higher number of the passes for girls in the CPE and SC but a lower rate in the 1992 HSC exams, i.e., CPE girls 63.9 per cent, boys 57.1 per cent; SC girls 65.8 per cent, boys 61.3 per cent; HSC girls 53.1 per cent and boys 54.1 per cent. These results would indicate that girls are well qualified to enter tertiary education or a higher level on the employment market. In reality however, many girls tend to take traditionally feminine subjects which have low career prospects.

Systematic vocational and technical training on a widespread basis in response to manpower needs is a recent development in the education field in Mauritius. The constraints on their choice of orientation in secondary education influence the chances of girls' access to professional training. As most of the training is aimed at people sponsored by their employers, the real barrier comes at the recruitment stage, when men have more chances of being appointed to a responsible position.

Adult literacy: Female literacy is still an area of concern. The 1990 census revealed that about 24 per cent of females aged 12 years were completely illiterate; in the island of Rodrigues the number is 43 per cent. The Women's Ministry, some NGOs and the Roman Catholic Diocese in Port Louis run literacy classes in women's centres and social welfare centres.

Health

Over the past 20 years, the standard of health in Mauritius has been steadily improving. There has been a gradual spread of health services throughout all the islands and a successful implementation of the compulsory infantile vaccination programme as well as a systematic control of such infectious diseases as malaria and typhoid. This has increased life expectancy for all age groups while infant mortality has been greatly reduced. Life expectancy in 1983 for men in the country was 64.4 years and for women 76.7 years; in 1993, it was 60.2 years for males and 73.9 years for females. The average infant mortality rate was 63.5/1000 in 1972, 25.5/1000 in 1983 and 18/1000 in 1991.

Health care is provided by both the public and private sectors; public health sector services are comprehensive and free and the majority of women in the lower-income bracket use the public health care services. Family planning is a continuing success in the country. About 75 per cent of married couples use some form of family planning method.

Reproductive health: Breast, cervical and uterine cancer appear to be on the increase and as yet there is no systematic campaign for early detection. Despite the successes of planned parenthood campaigns, abortion is another risk, particularly among poorer women who indulge in life-threatening back-street

abortions because many are mothers who are unable to feed another mouth. As the laws on abortion are stringent, many women's associations are pressing for reform if only to stop children from being orphaned.

HIV/AIDS: Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and AIDS do exist but not at alarming proportions as elsewhere. The Ministry of Health, through its AIDS Unit, is engaged in an intensive information, education and prevention campaign in schools, welfare centres and women's centres with the help of the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare.

In general, the Government has identified priority areas for the 1990-1995 period. These include strengthening of the health care services, particularly in the rural areas; increased and improved information campaigns on nutrition, non-communicable diseases, alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, STDs in schools, social welfare centres, women's centres and through the media.

Employment

In 1993, women accounted for 36.7 per cent of the economically active population although the number of women in full-time employment almost doubled from 93,000 to 183,000 in 1983-1993, yet a 1990 housing and population census indicated that only 35 per cent of the female population is economically active. For the two main islands, the main areas of female activity were as follows: 50 per cent of women in Mauritius work in manufacturing but only 11 per cent do so in Rodrigues; on the other hand, 50 per cent of the women employed in Rodrigues work in agriculture, compared to only 13 per cent in Mauritius. In both islands, women are engaged in low-level activities with little or no decision-making powers. Furthermore, the labour-intensive industrial activity in Mauritius requires little or no skill and women enter work without any need for training. In the predominant clothing and electronics sectors, considered to be women's work, payment is lower and promotions fewer.

In the administrative and management sectors, career-minded women appear to hit a glass ceiling beyond which they cannot go. At present, there are 12 top-level female civil servants; the Registrar General, the Deputy Registrar and four (80 per cent) of the five Principal Registration Officers are all women. In the private sector, there are only 64 (7.3 per cent) women out of the total of 872 managing directors. Only 39 (6.5 per cent) of the 600 small- and medium-size business registered with the Small Industrial Development Organization (SIDO) are headed by women.

In 1991, women accounted for 46.6 per cent of primary school teachers and 41.5 per cent of secondary school teachers. At the tertiary level, however, they are much fewer in number. At the Institute of Education, the number of female doctors, dentists and lawyers is increasing while still very much in the minority. Women are progressing in those domains traditionally considered feminine but in the traditionally male-oriented sphere of finance, construction and other business conglomerates, women have made little or no headway.

Between 1990 and 1993 however, there has returned to the country a new breed of young highly qualified women who want recognition through a career offering them challenge and responsibility, and the question now is whether traditional prejudices and taboos are stronger than economic necessity.

Women entrepreneurs: Though the Mauritius Commercial Development Bank and the State Commercial Bank treat all applications for finance on an equal footing, women entrepreneurs account for only 30 per cent of the clients of the State Commercial Bank. A UNDP-commissioned report (1993) on women entrepreneurs pointed out the lack of professional and technical skills shown by many women entrepreneurs and highlighted the lack of motivation to build up business.

Agriculture

In addition to the production of the main cash crop, sugar, many large agricultural estates in Mauritius now have a diversified agriculture for both home consumption and export; thus, women are not very concerned about the actual production of food for their families and are free to take up full employment in the industrial sector.

On the island of Rodrigues, subsistence farming is the norm, with livestock rearing and fishing for local consumption and sale to Mauritius. Fifty per cent of Rodriguan women are engaged in agriculture; they also have part-time activities which are energy consuming but which contribute to overall cash income and food security. Agricultural development in Rodrigues is a crucial issue in the progress of the island itself and to the status of women. There is a strong need to put farming on to a more rationalized and specialized base as a full-time activity supported by appropriate technology. The vulnerability of Rodriguan women to retain their livelihood is quite high as land for agricultural exploitation is traditionally leased to men, even if they are not actually involved in agriculture.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The first Ministry of Women's Affairs which was set up in 1976 was replaced in 1977 by a women's desk at the office of the Prime Minister in 1977. In 1982, it became a full-fledged ministry, the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare.

The absence of women in the decision making of Mauritian party politics has increased the load of the Ministry in its efforts to further the cause of women. In 1988, to facilitate the work of the Ministry, women's desks were set up in other key ministries but these are largely inoperative.

In 1985, the National Women's Council was set up to coordinate all activities organized by women at various levels. This has been more successful in supporting the work of the Ministry, particularly in areas of adult literacy programmes, cultural and recreational activities, training programmes in sewing, embroidery, and family counselling services. A private grass-roots organization, "Letikasy Pu Traivayer", runs independent literacy programmes both for men and women. Women's associations and other NGOs are particularly active in the island of Rodrigues for self-help schemes.

Women's access to resources

Water: The demand for potable water in Mauritius continues to grow due to population increase, the rise in the standard of living and the rapid development of the industrial commercial and tourism sectors. Water is not supplied on a 24-hour basis and in times of drought, cuts can last day and night. As a general rule, cuts are longer in the rural areas. Rural women spend considerable time and energy fetching and storing water for family use.

The Government is engaged on an island-wide pipe-laying project to renew and expand the system which should alleviate the problem at least by 1995.

In Rodrigues, the situation is worse because most of the population is rural. Pipe water is available to only 50 per cent of the population and the other half has to rely on wells, springs, rivers and rain water. The women spend even more time fetching water for various uses.

Energy: Though electricity supply is widespread, it is not the only source of energy for cooking because it is expensive. Some poorer rural households still use traditional wood stoves, for which women have to collect the necessary firewood. Kerosene stoves are also widely used though their incorrect use has been responsible for a considerable number of fatal accidents to women and children.

Housing: With the increase of the population and the break-up of the extended family system, the pressure on the supply of new housing has become acute, particularly for low-income families. In the 1980s, housing development, particularly blocks of flats, became a growth sector for private enterprise. However, the cost was still prohibitive for the lower-income families. The lack of decent housing for the lower-income families, particularly in the urban areas, became very acute by the end of the 1980s; social problems associated with inadequate living conditions - promiscuity, alcoholism, larceny and generally rough social behaviour - were exacerbated.

Housing loans are today granted to the head of the household or jointly to husband and wife. In both Mauritius and Rodrigues, only 20 per cent of households are headed by women, mostly widows. While women are not barred from taking mortgages on their own, in practice it is extremely difficult because of their low incomes.

Social services: In the Mauritius welfare system, a range of allowances is paid to eligible persons including the Unemployment Hardship Relief Scheme for unemployed women who are heads of households.

With the increase in number of women taking up full-time employment and the breakdown of the extended family system, the need for proper child care facilities is becoming more and more pressing. There are many creches and kindergartens run by private individuals. The Government is encouraging the creation of child care services close to the work place partly to facilitate breast feeding and to reduce the level of absenteeism due to child care problems.

The lack of child care services is probably the biggest constraint placed on low-income families and a major reason why only 35 per cent of the female population are economically active outside their homes.

Women's legal rights

The Mauritius Constitution guarantees the equality of all its citizens before the law with respect to their fundamental rights and freedoms. However, in Chapter II, section 3 of the Constitution, the word "sex" is not included in the list of items regarding the concept of discrimination. Women's organizations are aware of this drawback and are pressing for change. Considerable progress has, however, been made in eliminating de jure discrimination; for example, women are no longer minors nor their husband's chattel; in 1982, religious marriages obtained legal recognition; parental responsibility is shared and the welfare of the child is now paramount in deciding custody; the Jury Act was amended to enable women to sit as jurors.

There remain, however, major areas of inequality, particularly the laws pertaining to residence, citizenship and nationality with respect to foreign spouses. There is also no legislation which guarantees the principle of equal pay for equal work. This inequality in status and enjoyment of rights has been protested not only by individuals directly concerned but by all major women's organizations to no avail, so far.

Violence against women: There is no legal provision for protection against sexual harassment. Wife battery and domestic violence is seen as private and outside the authority of the police for intervention. Rape is perceived as a sexual crime not violence, and conviction of the accused depends on the victim's ability to prove that she did not consent. Marital rape is not even recognized before the law. The only positive action taken has been to raise the legal age of consent from 12 to 16.

Initiative to help abused women and children: The Ministry for Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare has taken initiatives to help abused women; they include the setting up of a Family Counselling Service and the National Children's Council. A Trust Fund for a Refuge Centre for Women and Children in Distress has also been set up.

The Ministry and women's associations have also succeeded in getting more women recruited into the police force to ensure the presence of a woman officer when complaints of violence and rape are received in any station. An SOS children's village has been set up by the international NGO, SOS.

Drugs: Drug trafficking and abuse has been an area of concern to the Government throughout the 1980s to the present. Conviction for trafficking carries the death penalty and drug abuse carries imprisonment coupled with a rehabilitation programme. Young men and women from the poorer, more deprived sections of the population are particularly affected.

Conclusions and recommendations

The status of women in Mauritius has evolved quite considerably particularly during the 1980s. This evolution has been due more as part of the overall improvement in the well-being of the Mauritian people than to explicit policies aimed at addressing women's issues. Discrimination in its legal form has been mostly removed except in two areas of the definition of the word "discrimination" in the Constitution and the legal rights of women. De facto discrimination still persists and the necessary change in mentality has yet to take place which will open the way to higher professional status and thus encourage women at all levels to be more ambitious in the political, institutional and professional areas. Hence, it is recommended that:

(a) The Government should remove all remaining forms of de jure discrimination, particularly in the omission of the word "sex" in the Constitution and in respect of women's legal rights upon marriage to foreigners;

(b) The Government and the private sector should adopt a policy of positive discrimination in favour of suitably qualified women in respect of employment, promotion and participation in international fora;

(c) The Government should enhance gender balance in education, particularly in school syllabi, provide infrastructure to enable girls to choose science and technical subjects, provide training in gender issues to those responsible for education and welfare programmes and incorporate gender-awareness in IEC programmes;

(d) The Government should continue to provide infrastructure in housing, water and transport as well as child-care facilities.

NAMIBIA

INTRODUCTION

Unlike other African countries, in 1985, Namibia was still colonized by South Africa which was not interested in the advancement of Namibian women. A regime which had refused to recognize the International Women's Year and the United Nations Decade for Women could not be expected to involve itself in programmes intended to achieve equality, development and peace for women. It will therefore be unrealistic to expect Namibia to have implemented the provisions of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies as other countries. At the 1985 World Conference, Namibia women's priority was focused on gaining support for the overthrow of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic government in Namibia.

The policies of apartheid which lasted until 1990 had brought ethnic and racial divisions within the society so that communities remained segregated geographically, socially and economically; this led to inequalities in education, health, employment and income earnings.

While Namibia women outside the country were better organized and prepared to meet development challenges, women inside the country could be arrested for holding meetings to discuss women's problems, thus mobilization among them was stifled. Women in the country suffered both as a result of apartheid, colonialism and subordination by men. Migrant labour law restrictions helped to maintain the low status of rural women and increase their burden of raising families and assuming all responsibilities for livestock and crop cultivation, including work traditionally done by men.

The government policy is now geared towards redressing the injustices of the colonial era in respect of women; it decided to reallocate more resources to services such as education, health, housing and pensions, with a view to improving the living conditions of the previously neglected section of the population.

Despite the favourable political conditions and the Constitution that provide the legal framework for gender equality in Namibia, women still have to work hard towards equal access to employment and decision making at all levels. Already, Namibian women have begun to raise awareness in respect of problems they face and identifying women's needs and designing strategies for meeting these needs. Improvements are emerging in terms of education and

social participation.

Major problems, such as cultural attitudes and the inherited legal systems which must be overhauled to bring about gender equality, still remain.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Namibia gained independence with vast gender disparities, including extreme inequality in sharing of power and decision making at all levels. The status of the Namibian women has been severely affected by colonial history, some traditional practices and the lack of adequate legal protection and education. They are at the periphery of planning and decision making which remains at an almost exclusively male domain.

Although the Government is committed to the empowerment of women at all levels of society, this has yet to be substantively implemented. Women make up 51 per cent of the population but they occupy only 8 and 7 per cent of the nation's cabinet and parliament respectively. Of the 13 regional councillors, only one is a woman and the 72-member National Assembly has only five women.

Women are doing better in the judicial system where they hold 40 per cent of the posts. There are six women advocates as against three men, 15 female prosecutors to 20 males; three of the eight legal drafters are women while 12 of the 28 magistrates are women.

Education

According to a 1991 ILO report, Namibia has an illiteracy rate of 60-70 per cent with older women being less literate than younger women and males of the same age, while rural women are less literate than their urban counterparts.

The 1991-1992 national census shows a higher percentage of girls than boys in primary school; however, this decreases at higher secondary level due to drop-out rates which are related to demands placed on children to contribute to domestic and agricultural tasks in poor rural households. In the rural areas, female students are much older than their urban counterparts and sexual harassment by male teachers continues so that teenage pregnancy is a contributing factor to their drop-out rate.

Women have limited access to vocational and technical training, especially those who do not qualify for admission to post-secondary training and this is a constraint for entering the labour market. Some private sector organizations provide vocational training for women and men.

Stereotyped occupational roles are reinforced at the tertiary level where there are gender inequalities in some subject areas. The Academy Bursary Office suggests that women tend to receive bursaries in few specific areas while the distribution to males is more diversified. In most high schools, boys are encouraged to study maths and girls to take up religious studies. Gender bias pervades the curriculum through built-in assumptions that subjects for girls should relate to their future roles as mothers or prepare them for careers in nursing, secretarial work and teaching and boys are more likely to need preparation for entry into the full range of formal employment opportunities.

The mission of the Ministry of Education and Culture is "to provide effective and efficient educational and cultural services in furtherance of the social, political and economic development of the nation". This policy is being realized through the collective efforts of NGOs, schools, teachers, parents and communities; it is important as it broadens the scope of education to accommodate different age and interest groups.

Health

At independence, Namibia inherited a health structure designed along racial lines and was concentrated entirely on curative health services. The ethnic-based health services were poorly funded and rural areas, where the majority of the population lives, did not have basic health care services.

Availability and accessibility of health care services to women is uneven, varying from inadequate in the rural areas to moderate in the townships and peri-urban areas to adequate in the former "whites only" suburbs.

The 1992 Demographic and Health Survey shows that the infant mortality rate stands at 56.6 per 1000 live births while under-5 mortality rate is 83.3 per 1000 live births and maternity mortality rate is 22.5 per 100,000 births.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services has adopted a primary health care strategy whose main aim is to attain health for all Namibians during this century but to specifically improve the health of women and children in the 1990s. The Ministry has succeeded in streamlining and reducing what used to be a curative-based health care system into a more community-based system.

Access to health delivery services: The average reproductive years among Namibian women range from 15 to 49 years but about 3 per cent of women give birth before the age of 15 and the total fertility rate is four to five children. This varies from 6.3 per women in the rural areas to 3.9 in the urban areas.

Family planning services in general are underdeveloped and the existing ones are underutilized. The provision and accessibility vary from region to region and rural women, generally living far from the supply of these services, have to travel long distances or are prevented from travelling because of heavy workloads.

At present, 68.2 per cent of all births receive ante-natal care from a doctor, a trained nurse or a midwife; in rural areas, TBAs assist 6 per cent of births. The utilization of ante-natal care facilities depends on the distance women have to walk to such facilities. In general, immunization services are closer to women than any other services and mothers with more education tend to utilize the facilities offering help during child birth.

The AIDS virus appears to be spreading at an alarming rate. HIV cases are almost equal among males and females but the infection tends to affect young females more than males of the same age group.

On the whole, the lack of access to decision-making process results in women's needs not being given priority in national development programmes.

Employment

Women's participation in the paid labour force is very low at all levels in Namibia. The majority of women are technically unemployed, self-employed or involved in entrepreneurship enterprises. More than half of the population is fed by women through back-breaking farm labour and women's labour contributes to the economy, while the mining industry has for decades relied on the unpaid maintenance work and the coping skills of women to subsidize the low wages paid to male mine workers; all this, however, is not regarded as employment.

Due to a shortage of women with training or experience at levels necessary to occupy senior positions in public or private business, the bulk of women are involved in the informal entrepreneurial or subsistence agricultural sectors.

Wage employment tends to be concentrated in the urban areas like Windhoek with 45 per cent of the jobs and 10 per cent of the population and Ovambo with 6 per cent of the jobs and 45 per cent of the population. Women who are formally employed find themselves confined to sectors such as teaching and nursing; in general, women earn less than men "by virtue of sex and not on their competency, education and experience". While there are many technical courses for men to upgrade their skills, there are none for women.

Rural women who work in the subsistence agriculture face the disadvantage of the lack of access to market outlets; located away from roads and transportation, they also lack services such as schools, hospitals and veterinarians.

Shortage of employment in both private and public sectors is compelling men and women in the labour force to seek a living in the informal sector. Though commercial banks do not grant loans to

informal sector operators, the Rossing Foundation and other private foundations have granted a few small-scale loans to informal sector operators but it is not known how many are women.

Agriculture

Agriculture provides the livelihood for the largest number of people in Namibia. At independence, concentration was on assisting commercial farmers while communal farms where the majority of women are found were neglected. Because the colonial regime made conscious efforts to prevent subsistence agriculture from becoming commercial farming, agriculture in the rural areas is still done with hand hoes with women doing most of the field work.

Due to lack of gender awareness, extension programmes benefit only male farmers. Lack of access to productive resources to improve their productivity places a heavy workload on women and greatly reduces their returns. One of the problems facing rural women is household food insecurity; it is also a contributing factor to the high levels of malnutrition in the country, particularly in female-headed households.

Women's legal rights

Until independence in 1990, there was no basis for protecting the rights of women in Namibia. Given the long history of human rights violation to which the majority of Namibians were subjected under the apartheid regime, fundamental human rights and freedoms received the highest priority within the Constitution. However, because the Constitution provides that existing legislation at the time of independence remain in force, certain discriminatory laws against women are still in force.

Measures taken to increase awareness of women's rights include the establishment of the office of the Ombudsman, one of whose responsibilities is to investigate any violations of fundamental human rights. A committee has been established to make recommendations to the commission on reform of laws which discriminate or have a negative impact on women and children. The committee has identified customary law, general law and legal literacy as areas of long-term concern.

Violence against women: At the international level, the Government supported the United Nations Declaration on Violence against Women as well as the appointment of the Special Rapporteur to study the effects of violence against women. In 1992, a committee was established for facilitating a women's and children's abuse centre in Namibia. The objectives of the centre are to improve the quality of service to traumatized victims, thereby facilitating increased reporting of rape, domestic violence and child-abuse cases. Due to a shortage of human resources, the issue of domestic violence has not been dealt with extensively at the centre but the most serious sexual crimes are dealt with first.

There is a voluntary organization (Women's Solidarity) operating since 1989 on the issue of violence against women. It provides education, counselling to victims and research on violence against women. The issue of violence against women has been a rallying point for women, particularly at the grass-roots level. As a result, other organizations have been established in other regions of Namibia.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The government's policy of affirmative action aimed at redressing past imbalances in resources planning and distribution has not been effective since it is not enforced by law and since its implementation is discretionary.

In 1991, the Government created the Department of Women's Affairs to act as a catalyst in speeding up the process of empowering women to redress gender inequality. The Department has been instrumental in Namibia's accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

in September 1990. It has worked towards policy development, sensitization and strengthening of agencies to promote the advancement of women; it has undertaken data collection, advocacy, lobbying for national, regional and international linkages and popularizing of the Convention.

As the Department is relatively new, it is difficult to judge its effectiveness but it can be said, from the activities undertaken so far, to be heading in the right direction.

Poverty

In Namibia, the extreme poverty in which the majority of the people, especially women, find themselves is the result of income disparity brought about by the apartheid policies. White Namibians, who comprise only 5 per cent of the population, control 70 per cent of the GDP while the poorest 55 per cent of the population control only 3 per cent of the GDP.

For women, poverty means the lack of the essentials needed to live a desired life, including ownership of land to produce food. A UNICEF/NISER study (1991) identified the following groups as suffering extreme poverty: (a) persons displaced internally by conflict and military occupation; (b) farm workers on low wages and their dependants; (c) rural women heads of households; (d) adult families facing lack of income as a result of retrenchments (both military- and industry-related); (e) remote area populations often living in ecologically harsh conditions; (f) victims of war former exiles; and (g) victims of family breakdown. These groups still form the deprived and needy in the Namibian society and women and their children are in the majority.

Female-headed households comprise 40 per cent of the population and can be described as one in which the head is responsible for farming the family plot. The family survives on produce from the subsistence farm, she works on numerous tasks from dawn until dusk and in her desperation she divides the household chores among the children.

NIGERIA

INTRODUCTION

Of Nigeria's 34 years of independence, 24 have been under military rule. The country operates a federal system with three tiers of government: federal, state and local. The local government is the primary unit of administration and deals directly with the grass roots where the majority of Nigerians live.

The national census of 1992 put Nigeria's population at 88.5 million, of which 44 million or 49 per cent are women, half of whom (22 million) are females 15 years and above.

Despite their numerical strength, women lay far behind men in most indicators of socio-economic development. They face many constraints which are gender specific; they lack access to resources, services and markets and have limited access to agriculture extension, productive land, training, institutionalized credit, inputs, technology and support services.

Nigeria's economy depended on the export of agricultural produce until the discovery of oil which became the main export. Following the slump in the global petroleum market and the drastic reduction in the nation's foreign exchange earnings, the country found itself in financial difficulties. Like other countries in Africa, Nigeria adopted SAPs to restructure the economy, promote productivity and self-reliance. Partly due to this economic down run compounded by the global recession, the country has experienced inflation, high interest rates and huge debt servicing. These have, in turn, led to inadequate resources to finance development activities.

The Nigerian woman has had a strong historical involvement in the economic life of the country. The Government's support for equality of the sexes is demonstrated by the major steps it has taken towards the integration of women in all aspects of nation-building.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Nigerian women have been active politically and economically but their activism has not been adequately reflected in a fair share of political and economic power.

The Nigerian political system has alternated between military and civilian regimes, the latter being theoretically democratic while the former is authoritarian. Paradoxically, however, military regimes showed greater sensitivity for women representation in decision-making structures.

Women's access to decision-making positions has been either through winning elections or through conscious and direct appointment by incumbent authorities.

While civilian rule lasted, political parties established women's wings whose functions included, inter alia, mobilization and political education of women, the content of which merely emphasized the supportive role of women in mobilizing votes for party candidates who were, in the main, men seeking elective office. Thus, women were active in political rallies and "go out to vote" activities but did not seek and could not therefore win elective posts.

During the transition period, 1985-1993, women's participation in decision making was through direct appointment by the military and by winning electoral posts. Nigerian women were appointed into decision-making structures. There were two female members of the Political Bureau; and unlike the 1976 Constitution Drafting Committee which was made up of men, the 1989 Constitution Review Committee had six females or 13 per cent of the 45 members. Similarly, the Constitutional Assembly of 1988-1989 had 14 female members out of a total of 565 members, 5 per cent of whom were elected while nine were nominated (appointed) by the federal military government. There were other female appointments also to decision-making positions; for example, a woman was appointed to the highest body, the National Electoral Commission, another was appointed as a Director to head the Family Unit in the Directorate of Social Mobilization and two (6.4 per cent) women were appointed State Directors of Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery, out of 31 State Directors.

In the public service, the number of Permanent Secretaries/Directors-General rose from three in 1985 to 10 in 1993. Between 1987 and 1994, eight women have served as Ambassador. During the same period, a woman headed the Foreign Service between 1987-1991. In the legal and judicial spheres, there are as many women lawyers practising as men. On the bench, the number of female judges rose from one in 1968 to 50 in 1994.

In the State Assembly elections of 1991, only 27 women gained seats with some states having no woman at all. At the national level, there was one woman Senator in a 91-member Senate.

In the gubernatorial elections of 1991, seven of the 30 states had female contestants out of 300 gubernatorial candidates. Nation-wide, there were only eight women and none was successful in securing the party's ticket for the elections.

The marginalization of women in the share of party and elective positions and their failure in elections is due to their neglect or indifference to and sometimes marginalization of their party structure. Most of the women aspirants ran as independent candidates against their respective party machines which were dominated by men.

Education

Of particular interest in the education area in Nigeria is the increasing number of female teachers. In 1986/87, there were 323 women academic staff in Nigerian universities and in 1987/88, this figure rose to 1,490 from 1,157. During the decade, there were 53 professors and associate professors and two women vice-chancellors of universities. Increases were also recorded at the post-primary colleges of education, polytechnic and colleges of technology.

In the field of science and technology, emphasis has been on the production of household and industrial labour-saving devices and training in improved crop production methods, storage and processing. To this end, the Government supports the enrolment of women who continue to play key roles in teaching and carrying out research and development in universities, polytechnic and research institutes all over the country. Women are to be found in all key areas of science and technology and though their numbers are few, they have continued to increase over the years.

Health

The life expectancy of Nigerian women is now 53 years, while the fertility rate is six children per woman. Maternal morbidity and mortality rates have remained high. The maternal mortality rate which was about 15 per 1000 live births in 1955 dropped to 8/1000 in 1993. There is, however, a high percentage of deaths as a result of induced and spontaneous abortions involving teenage pregnancies, haemorrhage and postnatal sepsis. Nutritional anaemia is prevalent among pregnant women and children (15.6 per cent).

The prevalence of anaemia among 15-49 year-olds for pregnant women is 24.9 per cent (WHO, 1994) and various studies have reported figures ranging from 9.6 to 23.1 per cent. Maternal malnutrition has led to a high increase in low birth weight. In 1990, 1992 and 1993, malnutrition among under-5 was as follows: mild - 43.1, 52.3 and 51 per cent respectively; moderate (for 1993 only) males 32.6 per cent, females 22.3 per cent; severe 9.2, 10.8 and 10.65 per cent, respectively.

Since the adoption and launching of the primary health care programme in 1988, access to and coverage by health services have improved from 30 to 66.5 per cent (1990 survey). There is, however, a marked difference between access by urban and rural dwellers. Efforts have been directed towards the establishment and strengthening of district and neighbourhood health services which are closer to the people.

Family planning services are being provided and family planning clinics established nation-wide for persuading parents to adopt practical birth control measures. Family life education has been introduced into the school curriculum as used in the mass media's public enlightenment for birth control and child-spacing measures. The use of family planning is generally low in Nigeria with only 8 per cent of women using a modern method. Only 6 per cent of married women used contraceptives in 1992. Nearly 50 per cent of women know of at least one method of family planning.

Access to health facilities: There is roughly one facility to every 10 villages and communities, making access to health services very poor, especially in rural areas. In rural areas, 38 per cent of children under five years of age are born with the help of hospital staff while 54.6 per cent are born with the help of TBAs, neighbours and relatives. About 74.48 per cent of urban dwellers have help from hospital personnel. About 75 per cent of urban against only 10% of rural dwellers have access to modern health facilities. Over 62.5 per cent of rural dwellers have to travel six or more kilometres to reach the nearest facility, compared to only 13.6 per cent of urban people. Generally, 66.5 per cent of households have access to a health facility, however poor.

Malignancies: Malignancies (cancers) particularly of the female genitalia and breasts are on the increase and death from these are preventable as risk factors and early-warning signals are well-documented. However, due to ignorance on the part of patients, cases are reported late. There is a need for public enlightenment companies to educate women on early-warning signs to enhance early diagnosis.

HIV/AIDS: Confirmed cases of AIDS, as of May 1989, were 35. This number may represent only a fraction due to lack of diagnostic facilities in the country. There is therefore a need to emphasize safe sexual practice.

Employment

Improved and increased education opportunities for women has led to rapid increase in the numbers of employed women both in the public and private sectors.

The combined effects of SAPs, neglect of the agricultural sector due to over-reliance on crude oil exports and reduced capacity utilization have led to mass unemployment. Employment prospects have declined both for the skilled and unskilled especially for youth (15-24 years) and women. For example, in the age group 20-24, unemployment for the years 1988, 1989 and 1990 in the urban areas for males was 32.5, 33.3 and 39.9 per cent respectively; for females in the same years it was 44.7, 29.7 and 33.3 per cent, respectively. In the rural areas, for the same period, the figures for males were 32.4, 36.1 and 39.5 per cent and for females, they were 34.5, 33 and 28.4 per cent respectively.

The Government, in response to the high unemployment rate among youth, set up the National Directorate of Employment in 1986 to promote skills acquisition and self-employment. About 160,178 jobs have been created, with women constituting 45 per cent of the beneficiaries.

Informal sector: The informal sector which is dominated by women with little education and poor resource base and related to the main sectors of the economy, both public and private, urban, rural and traditional, is largely unorganized. Because of the potential of the sector for self-employment and employment creation, there is now a recognition of the need to organize the sector to enable its operators to have access to production resources including training and skills development, credit, raw materials and markets. The World Bank and UNDP have developed a programme in this respect.

Vocational training: One major problem of women in the formal sector is inadequate training and improper career counselling and orientation. Efforts are being made, particularly in the public sector, to provide job training for women to enhance their career prospects. Although a good number of women have attended management or professional courses, the majority are typists and secretaries.

Despite being gender-neutral, the Industrial Training Fund, set up to promote and encourage the acquisition of skills in industry, has recognized the training deficiency of women entrepreneurs in the economy. Special workshops on entrepreneurial development for women were organized for women all over the Federal Republic.

Women's access to resources

Credit: As of 1993, there were 109,000 bank employees in Nigeria, 29 per cent of whom were women, with two women board chairpersons, one managing director/chief executive and four executive directors (2 per cent). However, a number of women occupy senior and middle management positions and are involved in the day-to-day operations.

In spite of the increasing participation of women in the financial sector and in spite of constitutional grantees of equality, access to credit is limited for women because of socio-cultural influence that hinders their participation in lucrative commercial ventures and the lack of collateral to back up loans. Implicit banking guidelines have been a hindrance to women borrowers.

To address this problem, particularly for women low-income earners in urban and rural areas, the Peoples Bank was launched in 1989. The only collateral demanded is evidence of membership of a cooperative society and involvement in a viable business venture. At the end of 1993, the bank had disbursed 273 million nairas, of which N192.13 million (70.38 per cent) was given to women. The loans disbursement by sector shows that 24 per cent went to small-scale agriculture and food processing and about 40 per cent to petty trading sectors dominated by women.

Community banks have been established to expand credit facilities for other productive activities which were hitherto constrained by collateral security for the rural population.

Women in subsistence farming and the informal sector have no easy access to credit, due in the case of the informal sector, to the unorganized nature of the sector.

Both the World Bank and UNDP have embarked on programmes to organize and document the sector's needs and the quantification of its contribution to the national economy.

Rural land ownership/real estate tenure in urban areas: In Nigeria, women do not inherit land and thus cannot own family land; however, they do have access to land for agricultural purposes. With respect to private and commercial ownership of land and commercial property, women who have the resources have emerged as land owners and property developers. However, their numbers are small.

Women's legal rights

The Nigerian Constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens and expressly forbids all forms of discrimination. Nigeria has thus been a signatory to all international conventions and instruments which promote human rights as they concern women. Nigeria signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1984 and ratified it in 1985.

In 1989, the Federal Ministry of Justice organized a seminar on the theme "Better Protection for Women and Children" with a view to articulating the rights of women and children. Strategies to address and redress all forms of discrimination were recommended to the Government but these recommendations are yet to be enacted into law.

Violence against women: Battery: The Nigerian penal code recognizes the correction of a woman (battery) by her husband if their native law and customs so permit as long as such correction does not amount to grievous bodily harm. Unfortunately, these native laws and customs still exist.

The police are reluctant to take action in cases of violence against women, particularly in the home as they consider it a domestic issue. There is also a lot of public opinion against the woman who pushes her case against her husband for violence.

Rape: A rape victim is usually discriminated against by the very process that should protect her. Societal attitude is negative towards rape victims and the courts generally require corroboration of a victim's testimony before conviction of the accused. In addition, a husband cannot rape his wife.

Prostitution: There is legislation against (a) encouraging the prostitution of girls under 16 years, (b) a person allowing persons under 16 years to be in brothels and (c) procuring, trading in prostitution, keeping a brothel, and unlawful detention with intent to defile. The provisions are far-reaching, particularly in the protection of young girls from trafficking and exploration.

Protective measures to assist abused women: There are no specific local welfare services such as shelters for battered women due in part to fear of the social stigma of women who made their problems public. However, there is an increase of women ascending to the bench in Nigeria; it is hoped also that the recommendations of a committee for reforms of law and instruments related to women would be implemented.

Women in the police force: Although Nigerian women are to be found in all cadres, officers and ranks in the police force, because violence against women is not usually documented and thus not brought before the police, it is difficult at this stage to determine how Nigerian police women will react to violence in their official capacity.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The Better Life Programme influenced the establishment of the National Commission for Women in 1989. Previous efforts of NGOs led to the increased awareness of the Government and the public to the need to address issues of concern to Nigerian women and this was effectively enacted into law. The law essentially set up viable structures at the federal, state and local government levels.

The Commission was established to promote policy action and programmes for enhancing women's participation in social development and eliminating all forms of social and cultural practices which tend to discriminate against women and dehumanize womanhood. Its functions include (a) formulation of policies and programmes for the advancement of women; (b) promotion, development and implementation of income-generation and employment schemes; (c) monitoring and liaising with appropriate government ministries,

departments; (d) conducting research and formulating plans for improving the status of women; and (e) coordination, structuring and monitoring the activities of women's voluntary organizations.

The Commission has now drafted a National Policy on Women which, when adopted by the Government will be a milestone as it will guide policy and sectoral action for Nigerian women at the individual and group levels.

Explicit sectoral women-in-development (WID) policies and structures have been put in place for the agriculture, health and education sectors. As such, the concerned ministries have specialized units or sections dealing with women's issues. Programmes developed by these units have continued to enjoy government and international support. The successes achieved so far have been due to the strong collaboration between the programmes and the Better Life Programme.

Other government agencies: A number of parastatals such as the Mass Mobilization for Social Economic Recovery (MAMSER) and National Directorate of Employment (NDE) have been created in recent years to promote grass-roots development with women as major beneficiaries. The NDE, for example, is to establish a Women's Employment Branch for ensuring that women's employment problems are met and that 40 per cent of all its beneficiaries in the mainstream programmes are women. Other national institutions involved in the women's programme and activities are the National Planning Commission (NPC), the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB).

Non-governmental organizations

The wave of democratization which swept across Nigeria led to a new consciousness and a new reawakening of society and an increase in civil groups which began to participate in the political process. A number of these groups had specific interest in women's affairs. Among them are:

(a) **The Better Life Programme Movement:** This movement was initiated by the wife of the Nigerian President in 1985. Under the programme, rural women were mobilized to improve their condition and to contribute to national development. The programme served as a catalyst in motivating women and linking them to relevant agencies. Initially, the programme was concerned with education, occupation and recreation; it was later expanded to include health, family planning and drug abuse.

(b) **Women in Nigeria (WIN):** With a membership of men and women, WIN was established in 1982 with the objective of combating discrimination and sexist practices in the family and in the work place. It engages in research, policy making and dissemination of information and actions aimed at improving the conditions of women.

(c) **The Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN):** It was established in 1985 as an independent forum from which Muslim women could express especially Muslim views of women's problems and of society in general. Its emphasis is on education and the development of skills and techniques. It has established adult literacy classes and primary schools with an Islamic bias, as well as nursing schools and vocational centres. It has adopted an "reach one, teach one" methodology;

(d) **Women in Communication:** The "Nigerian Association of Media Women" and the "Nigerian Association of Women Journalists" have basically the same aims and objectives and have made significant contributions to the upliftment of Nigerian women working closely with other women's associations;

(e) **Joint Armed Forces and Police Officers Wives Association:** This association promotes the social, intellectual and moral well-being of its members. Its activities include the establishment of nursery

day-care centres at the military/police formations with the families of non-commissioned officers and other ranks in the forces as target beneficiaries;

(f) **Professional Women Associations:** Within the limits of their resources these NGOs have addressed issues of relevance to their professions - engineers, pharmacists, doctors, accountants, lawyers etc., and provide educational services to the public in particular women/girls on the opportunities, privileges and responsibilities of their profession. Through these programmes, the associations act as role models for young people.

NGO projects and programmes: NGOs have undertaken a wide range of activities focusing on the advancement of women. The programmes include: education, political education and empowerment, health and environment.

Poverty

The declining fortunes of Nigerians is adequately reflected by indicators of poverty such as malnutrition, inadequate shelter and clothing as well as declining access to education and health care. Poverty is more pronounced in the rural areas where women predominate as well as in the inner cities and semi-urban settlements.

A number of factors have been responsible for the endemic poverty in the country. Among them are general world economic recession, the fall in the price of oil on which Nigeria's depended, the debt burden, all leading to a decline in the injection of foreign investment into the economy. SAPs added an undue burden on the economically disadvantaged who are the first casualties of unemployment and inflation that came in the wake of deregulation. SAPs also led to the deliberate policy of production for export at the expense of subsistence (food) production, thus reducing the income-earning capacity of rural women.

Women-headed-households: According to a 1990 Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey, 18 per cent of urban households and 12.9 per cent of rural households were headed by women. Thus, an increasing proportion of women are shouldering all the material, social and emotional responsibilities of social reproduction. Much of the farming is also done by small farmers who are increasingly in female-headed households.

Women head of households are casualties of unemployment resulting from SAPs. Even where they kept their jobs, their wage incomes were gulped by galloping inflation.

Women who dominate the informal sector do not fare well financially because of their lack of education, poor resource base and lack of access to productive resources. In respect of vocational training also, formal sector women have inadequate training, career counselling and orientation.

Conflicts and their effects on women

The results of almost all armed conflicts are very disastrous for women and children who constitute the most vulnerable groups in all societies.

In and around Nigeria, there have been border conflicts with Chad and Cameroon and between national ethnic groupings which have created a sizeable pool of refugees. The women have been subjected to inhumane treatment and have often been reported to have died as a result.

As of December 1993, the number of refugees of various nationalities comprising mostly Liberians and Chadians were 1,213 women, of which 55 were heads of households and there were a total of 1,017

refugee children. Nigerian women's organizations have been in the forefront of those who have assisted the National Commissioner for Refugees in settling these refugees from trans-border conflicts.

International support

Multilateral and bilateral organizations have contributed immensely to areas of direct concern to Nigerian women. The assistance given was in the form of technical and capital assistance and priority was given to health, population, agriculture and general development issues. Donor agencies have included WHO, EEC, the World Bank, USAID, UNFPA, the Ford Foundation, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNIFEM, AAI, FAO, IFAD.

Activities have covered community primary health care, family planning services, strengthening the Directorate of Women Affairs, adult literacy, women's welfare promotion, education for women including functional literacy, skills training to women running for elective office and adult education to provide vocational management skills specifically targeted at women for crop production. Most of these programmes have been implemented through collaboration with government sectoral agencies.

There have been constraints, however, in that since some of the programmes did not correspond to the country's needs, there has been high cost of technical assistance, multiple programmes/project delivery, inappropriate coordination and management, poor counterpart programming and poor incentives for qualified personnel. Most donor assistance/support for the promotion of WID has remained ad hoc and there has been much duplication.

There is therefore a need for agencies, in line with current United Nations policy of consolidation, to work in a more coordinated manner to avoid duplication. There is also a need for continuous assessment analysis, monitoring and evaluation by both donors and recipients. There is further a need to use more local female resource persons as consultants, programme officers, coordinators and chief technical advisers for the implementation of programmes of immediate and direct relevance to women.

Conclusions and recommendations

Successive Nigerian Governments, conscious of the need to ameliorate women's conditions and in appreciation of their contribution to the national development efforts and their potential to move the nation forward in the political and socio-economic spheres, instituted policies and embarked on programmes that addressed the issues of equality, development and peace that positively affected the development of Nigerian women in the last ten years. Women have been availed "equal opportunities in access to education, employment, etc., through deliberate policies and the appointment of women into decision-making positions in government.

Despite these laudable strides, there is much to be done. While Nigerian women have made tremendous contributions in both public and private sectors; the human capital and economic productivity constraints faced by Nigerian women still manifest themselves in their low human development indicator ratings in health, education, nutrition, facility and economic productivity. A physically demanding burden is still placed on Nigerian Women in terms of the time they spend on their productive activities such as fetching water and firewood from long distances, manual crop processing and head loading of farm produce. Problems related to the general economic development of the country have imposed a heavier burden on the poor and women. There are also the traditional practices and attitudes of both men and women rooted in the culture which continue to restrict the full participation of women in the development process.

There is still a lot to be done to remove the obstacles of ignorance, discrimination and sometimes socio-economic forces.

SEYCHELLES

INTRODUCTION

The country is made up of a group of 115 islands scattered over 1.3 million km² of the Indian Ocean. It is a micro State with a population of 70,000. The economy of the Seychelles is dominated by tourism and fisheries, both vulnerable to the exogenous forces of international trade. The economy is constrained by the absence of economies of scale, lack of natural resources, over-dependence on imports, high cost of public expenditure per capita and high costs for the general population.

The Government is at present passing through a challenging and active phase, a period of transition to multi-party democracy requiring economic stability and social peace in order to achieve the goals of sustainable development.

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the society at all levels. Women have a high profile in public life, political office and in the administrative hierarchy of the public sector. The Government, in order to achieve the effective utilization of its human resources, is pursuing the integration of gender concerns at all levels into the National Human Resources Development Plan (HRDP).

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

In spite of their high profile in public life, women in the Seychelles still do not share power and decision making on an equal basis with men. However, since 1977, women have progressed rapidly to high office due to the recognition of their ability to perform.

At the parliamentary level, a high percentage of women have been elected. In 1980 and 1985, 41 per cent of the elected National Assembly members were women but in 1993, the figure went down to 27.5 per cent. At present, women ministers make up 25 per cent of the 12 posts in the Government, holding three major portfolios: Foreign Affairs, Planning and Environment, Tourism and Transportation, and Local Government, Youth and Sports. At the international level, half of the ambassadors in the early 1980s were women though no women were appointed in the 1990s. Women's participation in the public sector has also greatly improved. In 1994, there were three (25 per cent) women principal secretaries, 37 and 40 per cent directors-general and directors, respectively. At the management level, there are 353 senior posts in both the public and private parastatal sectors, with women occupying 78 (22 per cent) of the posts. In the parastatals in 1994, only three (15.8 per cent) women hold the chair of the board of Directors; similarly, 6.5 per cent of managing directors for 31 parastatal companies are women. In the private sector, only 25.8 per cent of all businesses were registered to women in 1980; this has varied to 9.5 per cent in 1985, 16.4 per cent in 1993 and 17.7 per cent in 1994. In 1994, only eight women (10.7 per cent) were heads of some 75 NGOs or associations with two women directors representing foreign donor organizations.

It is thus clear that power-sharing and decision making in the Seychelles, though more favourable to women than in other countries, is not equitably shared between men and women.

Education

Education is free at all levels with possibilities of access to university scholarships. There is a high literacy rate of 86 per cent for women and 79 per cent for men. The literacy ratio is 85.7 and 85.7 per cent respectively for men and women but this deteriorates with age groups, with women always higher than men. Primary enrolment is 100 per cent and women show a near parity in enrolment at primary, secondary and

polytechnic levels. Girls tend to enrol in subjects such as education, clerical, community and health studies so that beyond polytechnics they are in the minority with much lower transition rates to higher education. In 1994, out of a total of 245 students on overseas training, only 93 (37.9 per cent) were women.

At the national level, there are no marked differences in attainment between men and women in all grades except for the university level. Though women are in the majority in the middle level, they are not significant in vocational categories. Training expenditure per person is much higher in the capital-intensive sector occupations and these tend to be for male-dominated occupations.

Health

Demographic trends show that, in general, the quality of life is high compared to that in some developed countries. The Government has made considerable investment in health, allocating 12 per cent of its budget to health consistently between 1987 and the early 1990s. In 1990, life expectancy was 67.5 for males and 73.2 for females. Infant mortality improved from 35.4 in 1975 to 17.9 in 1985 and was 11.9 in 1992-1993. The total fertility rate has declined over the last 15 years from 5.05 in 1975, 3.28 in 1985, to 2.71 in 1992.

Family planning services are widely available though illegal abortions are on the increase with an estimated 400 cases in 1992. In 1991, 14 per cent of all live births were to teenage mothers and most births are attended by trained personnel. There is no malnutrition in the Seychelles and little prevalence of anaemia; immunization is at 100 per cent.

HIV/AIDS: The percentage of women found to be HIV-positive is very low; up to 1994, only 24 cases were diagnosed. However, implications for an island culture and tourist destination are quite worrisome.

Employment

In general, women accounted for 645 (78 per cent) of all active job seekers from December 1987 to end of 1992. A disproportionate number of women is unable to find jobs because of lack of technical skills. Women in general are still not equitably represented in the labour force, being relegated to less prestigious and lower paying jobs despite the fact that 85 per cent of women in the Seychelles are literate and they constitute 41 per cent of the working population. In the Ministry of Education, over 63 per cent of all employees are women and at the administrative level, there is an equal proportion of men and women. In the hotel industry, large numbers of women are employed in lower paying and less prestigious jobs as cleaners, home maids, sales assistants, typists, with few appointments in senior decision-making posts.

In summary, women workers are significantly under-represented and are only predominant in traditional areas which are compatible or are extensions of their domestic functions.

Women's access to resources

Credit: A woman's easy access to credit for personal and social development is a strong indication of her ability to control her life situation. There are many lending agencies, among which are: (a) the Seychelles Credit Union which is a cooperative savings bank; (b) the Development Bank of Seychelles whose objective is to promote development activities in the country, particularly by smaller entrepreneurs; (c) the Seychelles Housing Development Corporation, a government housing agency which provides loans on a sliding scale interest rate based on the needs and the social group; and (d) the Banque commerciale française, a private commercial bank.

Women have benefited from loans from all these banking institutions, sometimes receiving higher loans with even higher values. This is because most of these institutions have found women's repayment records to be very good.

Land: Forty-three per cent of all properties in 1993 were registered to women. This may be partly explained by the former custom of the "Régime de communauté biens" which gave women automatic claim to properties of the partner (this is no longer the case). In the Seychelles, legitimate children, irrespective of sex, inherit equal shares of parents' property. An analysis of land areas showed that of registered land, 33 per cent was for women, 40 per cent for men and 40 per cent jointly registered. Due to the present land ownership laws which do not favour women in cases of divorce, wives as well as common law partners are encouraged to have land and houses put in the names of both partners.

Women's legal rights

Formal discrimination against women of a legal nature for access to education, employment and property rights no longer exists in the Seychelles. The Constitution guarantees legal equality for men and women and the 1993 Constitution of the Third Republic enshrines the right to equal protection before the law. There are laws which positively seek to provide protection for women and children.

Seychelles acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women without reservation on 13 April 1992 and ratified it on 5 May 1992; its laws are consistent with the provisions of that Convention and therefore no judicial body has been set up to implement the provisions of the Convention. Although there has been no publicity or information dissemination regarding the Convention nor efforts made to include human rights in the school curriculum from a gender perspective, there is a regular legal information programme on radio and the creation of the "Ombudsman" in 1993. In addition, the Government has ratified treaties and agreements which emphasize the positive and unique position that women hold in society.

The issue of gender equity is being addressed by a National Gender Committee established in 1994 with the objective of coordinating, monitoring and implementing a cohesive and effective national strategy. Gender sensitization workshops have been carried out among decision makers.

Violence against women: There has been an increase in attempted suicide by young girls and general violence against women from wife battering by drunken men. In 1989, out of 341 referral cases of violence, 126 (34.9 per cent) were against women. In 1990, there were 408 cases of domestic violence and 254 (62.25 per cent) involved alcoholism as a leading factor; in all the cases, the victims were women and children.

No special action has yet been taken to protect victims of violence. There are no women judges, although there are four female lawyers out of a total of 22 in the country. In the police force, 64 (14 per cent) out of 473 officers are women and none are at the decision-making level.

The situation calls for both counselling and an "Ombudsman" machinery to offer advice and arrange court prosecutions to protect women's human rights.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Prior to 1992, there was no specific government machinery for the advancement for women. Nevertheless, grass-roots women who had been politically motivated, especially in the rural areas, were involved in the political process in the country and were able to make their voices heard. This made their integration into the political process throughout the 1980s and 1990s easy.

The Government's broad-based policy which was sympathetic to women contributed to the improvement of their lives in the areas of health, education, social welfare and employment. The national strategy programme, developed in 1992, facilitated the incorporation of the gender dimension in the country's Human Resources Development Plan (HRDP). In this connection, a National Gender Focal Point was set up in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Planning and Environment for policy making, data collection and research, coordination and awareness raising in gender issues at the sectoral, national and international levels. A Gender Unit has also been set up at the Ministry of Administration and Manpower to ensure the implementation of the integration of gender issues within all human resources development programmes.

Non-governmental organizations

A number of non-governmental associations with a gender focus were set up after the establishment of the National Gender Units and the HRDP in 1992-1994. The most dynamic ones are the Soroptmists and the Seychelles Association for Professional Women (SAWOP). They organize gender sensitization workshops for professional women and educationalists (teachers, curriculum developers, student counsellors, etc.). Development and implementation of programmes for further development and progress of working women and girls are part of their activities.

Poverty

In the Seychelles, as elsewhere, women, particularly heads of households, bear a disproportionate burden of poverty. According to a 1987 census, out of 15,115 households recorded, 45 per cent were headed by women and 45 per cent of these female-headed households were classified as "non-economically active"; these are mostly situated among the unskilled or easily skilled ancillary occupations - cleaners, domestic servants and labourers.

There appears to be a link between female headship unemployment, employment in special employment schemes, school dropouts, low educational performance, low marketable skills and teenage pregnancies which in one way or another seem to perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

Employment

There is a vertical division of labour by gender; few women are in the higher more powerful echelons of employment. Typically, 94.7 per cent of secretaries and typists, 89.4 per cent of domestic servants are women while only 29.9 per cent are in administrative and managerial positions.

Day-care centres: The ability of a woman with children to hold a job can be more difficult if facilities do not exist for day-care services. As these are few and privately run, the Ministry of Health opened a fee-paying centre at the Central Hospital. The situation has changed and women themselves have become interested in managing their own day-care centres. NGOs and district administration and the National Gender Unit have also increased day-care facilities, particularly in densely populated areas.

Training: Due to the lack of tertiary institutions, much professional human resources development depends on overseas training with donor funding. Because of women's low level of education they cannot have access to the necessary skills training that would give them well-paying jobs. Thus, the vicious circle of lack of education, lack of skills and lack of well-paying jobs continues.

The Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs and the Skill for Development Centre are developing strategies and programmes to correct the gender imbalances in training opportunities.

Recommendations

There is a need for a change in attitude to education and work, planned family and responsible parenting as well as for access to flexible training and skills acquisition, part-time work and child-care facilities, particularly for heads of female-headed households.

There is a need for gender balance within the working population, both in the work place and in the different categories of work.

Women's chances should be enhanced for meeting their needs for income, child care, effective access to training and the ability to cope with their multiple roles, both productive and reproductive.

SIERRA LEONE

INTRODUCTION

According to the 1985 population census, Sierra Leone had a population of 3.5 million, 55 per cent of which were women, 70 per cent of whom lived in rural areas.

Since 1991, the Government has been prosecuting a rebel war which has adversely affected every aspect of national life and posed problems with serious negative impact on all sectors particularly the agricultural and mining sectors.

In the early 1980s, the country experienced problems similar to those besetting most developing countries: the debt-burden, the oil crisis, inflation and foreign exchange. During the period 1985-1990, Sierra Leone experimented with various economic programmes but access to factors of production remained low, ranging between 0 and 35 per cent. At present, the country is undergoing a structural adjustment programme (SAP) aimed at ameliorating the situation. Under this programme, consideration is being given to poverty alleviation and improving women's access to and participation in those elements which constitute basic sources of income.

A significant achievement since the mid- to late-1980s was the establishment of a Women's Bureau at the Ministry of Social Welfare and Rural Development. Shortly after, a national policy for women in Sierra Leone was formulated and ratified by the cabinet.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Although objective 22 of the national policy on women states that the Government will encourage the increase of women's participation in politics and their ultimate integration in the decision and policy making and political bodies, very few women have been involved in policy making at the level of parliament.

Women have become members of parliament mainly by presidential appointment; their very low representation in parliament {4 (3.5 per cent) out of 114} has limited their influence on legislative matters. Only two women have held full cabinet positions, the latest in 1991 while one woman became Minister of State for Food Affairs; in 1985 another was appointed Minister of Health. A total of five women have won elections to enter parliament; in 1986, of the three women who won election to parliament, one rose to the position of Minister of State for the Ministry of Finance and the then as Minister of State for Trade and Industry and later for Transport and Communications. Prior to the change of government in 1992, there were four female Members of Parliament, the highest ever at one given time. The situation has not improved during the present government; women are now "represented" by one person, the Secretary of State of the Department of Education. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that, for the first time in its history, Sierra Leone has a desk officer for gender issues with an office at State House.

Women's participation in local government has always been low; they have become tribal heads but at a lower status than their male counterparts, and while paramount chieftaincy is open to women in the southern and eastern provinces, it is a taboo in the northern province where women encounter immense traditional barriers to political participation.

In the foreign and diplomatic service, the first female ambassador was appointed in 1972. Since then, two other women have been appointed ambassadors.

In the civil service, women have become professional heads in the Ministries of Social Welfare, Education and Health; they have also been appointed Accountant-General, Chief Architect and Auditor-General. Although the general pattern of employment shows an increase of women at top management positions, their numbers are low relative to men in power sharing.

Top management in organizations have shown a high-level representation of women in traditionally female professions, e.g., in 1991, 100 per cent women held nursing and 64 per cent of primary school management and 52 per cent of hotel industry management positions. Despite this, women are still underrepresented in top management positions in many other areas, including NGOs, parastatals and the private sector.

Education

The 1995 census shows that whereas 64.07 per cent of the male population had no education, the percentage for females was 77.2 per cent. The National Action Plan of 1994 shows that national illiteracy is over 89 per cent. At all levels of education, women lag behind men.

At the primary school level, girls' enrolment in 1980 was 43 per cent and that for boys was 61 per cent; in 1990 at the same level, the figures were 39 and 56 per cent respectively. Although figures for survival rates for the cohorts of the same period are not available, a government report on demographic and social monitoring (1993) indicates a higher drop-out rate among girls.

Performance levels show that that of girls is far less than that of boys; at the selective entrance exams, girls' performance dropped from 50.1 in the top score in 1987 to 38.8 in 1990; graduation figures at the University of Sierra Leone show that in 1990, only 21 per cent of those graduating were women. Women have tended also to predominate in the Faculties of African Studies and Adult Education which offer non-degree programmes. In the Institute of Public Administration and Management, which has a specialized vocational bias, female graduation in 1993 compares unfavourably with men.

With respect to the teaching staff from school to university level women are also poorly represented; at the University of Sierra Leone in 1993, of a total of 272 members of the academic staff, only 37 (13.6 per cent) were women. At Fourah Bay College, there are two women in the Department of Chemistry within the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science; at Njala University, there is one woman in plant protection, one in biological sciences and six in home economics. Women are not represented in the Departments of Agricultural Education, Animal Science, Agricultural Engineering, Chemistry, Crop Science, Physics and Agronomy.

In higher education therefore, there are no role models in areas of study which are traditionally thought to be a male preserve.

Health

Health is a primary problem in the country; despite of efforts to improve the health status through a primary health care strategy, health problems persist due to shortage of trained health personnel, drugs and medical facilities.

Since the last decade, life expectancy for both sexes has increased from 35.4 years in 1984 to 43 in 1990 on the average. The 1990 statistics showed that female life expectancy was 44 years, compared 41 years for males.

The maternal mortality rate is 7/1000 live births (70/100,000) which dropped in 1980 to 4.5 per 1000 or 45/100,000 per delivery. The main causes of maternal mortality are haemorrhage, anaemia, obstructed labour, eclampsia and illegal abortions. Infant mortality rate is high - 150 per 1000 live births, one of the highest in the world. The under-5 rate is similarly very high, 260 per live births. These deaths are due mainly to protein energy malnutrition. The recent nutrition survey showed a prevalence of 21 per cent chronic protein energy malnutrition, 5.7 per cent acute malnutrition and 33.4 per cent underweight. Child mortality is declining and the 0-4 years shows a downward trend of 325/1000 in 1985 and 229/1000 in 1985.

The fertility rate has remained high. The index rate for the early 1980s was 6.3 and recent figure for 1992 estimates is 6.5. Family planning is low and contraceptive prevalence rate is between 4 and 6 per cent. In a 1988 survey for the western area, 9.2 per cent of women were using modern methods while between 1.5 and 3.0 per cent of rural women used modern contraceptives.

Access to health facilities: Pre-natal services are conducted at all maternal child health clinics, clinics with government hospitals, peripheral health units, NCH posts and primary health institutions all over the country. The Maternal and Child Health Division reported a 57 per cent coverage of the 97,000 targets set for supervisal deliveries in 1993. There is only one specialized government maternity hospital and 60 general hospitals with gynaecological wards. The ratio of women per hospital is 37:313 and there are 1,242 persons per bed. Peripheral health units provide services to rural women though none of the units has a doctor.

HIV/AIDS: The first case of AIDS was reported in 1986 and since then, over 270 cases have been reported. When women are infected they pass on the disease to their offsprings. More women are infected than men and cultural practices such as polygamy and female circumcision put women at risk of contracting the virus.

Employment

In 1992, the economically active rate for females was 46.28 per cent, compared to 53.7 per cent for males. The labour force survey from all sectors, showed that the agricultural and livestock sectors have the highest representation of both sexes: females 28 per cent while males are 34 per cent. Women's participation in the labour force is more pronounced in agriculture livestock and trade subsectors. Women are actively involved in entrepreneurial activities such as food processing where they account for 84 per cent of the activity, commerce (30 per cent) and agriculture and other related activities (42.9 per cent).

Although government is the major employer, the private sector seems to employ more females than males because the private sector comprises mainly of trade and agricultural related activities. These activities are female dominated due to their informal nature. In general, female participation in cooperative activities is minimal but membership is usually higher than that of males.

The national laws of Sierra Leone of 1960 uphold the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value, and seek the welfare of women against night work in industrial undertakings and underground work in mines.

Women's access to resources

Credit: Overall, the extent of women's access to credit and participation in credit and loan facilities available in public and financial institutions and some cooperative lending bodies has remained relatively unchanged at a low level since the 1980s to 1993. Since 1993, there has been an increased tendency to grant credit to more women. Even so, fewer women than men apply for credit.

The situation is better where institutions/cooperative schemes consciously target women. Though women participated in the cooperative lending scheme operated by the national development from 1990 to 1993, their access however continues to be negligible as they fail to meet credit prerequisites of collateral.

In the context of easing access for women within the National Cooperative Development Bank, the Barry Scheme (equivalent of the Grameen Bank) is positively responding to women's problems. In 1993-1994, there was a 95 per cent female participation and access to funds. However, the size of funds available in the lending scheme is only 20 per cent of that available in the cases where collateral is required. Because women access to smaller amounts, their scope for diversification and profit margins is limited.

Rural land: Communal land (chiefdom) ownership of land is the prevailing practice and within this framework women farmers can and do have some measure of usufructuary right to land for subsistence farming by virtue of lineage or marriage. They would, however, have to apply to the chief or male head or husband to gain access. Female holdings are usually small due to the inadequacy of financial resources to hire labour and the rudimentary nature of technology at their disposal, among other things.

Urban property: Women can and do own property in urban areas. Under the statute law, applicable to the western area, women can inherit or purchase land. The constraint to women's access to real estate tenure lies in the restriction imposed by the relatively low average income most women earn in the formal wage or informal sectors.

Information and training: Women's participation in extending information, training and supervisory services to farmers has always been low; it stands at an average of 18 per cent and actually declined from 20 per cent in 1980 to 16 per cent in 1993. Given the cultural restraints, available information and training is usually directed mostly towards male farmers.

Women's legal rights

Although Sierra Leone's one-party Constitution (1978) entitled every person to fundamental and inalienable rights and freedoms, section 17, which provides for protection against discrimination, substantially erodes women's rights as it excludes laws relating to adoption, marriage, divorce, devolution of property and other areas of customary law which adversely affect the lives of women. There are also areas such as the law relating to bail and the acquisition of property under customary law which do not treat women and men equally.

With regard to the law relating to bail, Section 79 of the Criminal Procedure Act of 1965 provides that any person of good standing in the community can act as surety. However, it is unfortunate that in reality only male persons are approved as sureties. Under customary law, women do not own real property as they are regarded as "property" to be owned by men.

Sierra Leone acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1990.

There is, at the moment, a draft constitution in the country which is being deliberated upon by the National Advisory Council with a view to enacting a fifth constitution. This presents a golden opportunity to women to ensure that their rights are protected and safeguarded by the new constitution.

Legal, judicial and other steps taken to increase awareness of women's rights: As a result of recommendations made to the 1990s Constitution Review Committee by various women's organizations, the office of the Ombudsman was created under the 1991 Constitution. The Ombudsman is responsible for implementing anti-discriminatory legislation; however, this constitutional provision has not been effected. Further, as a result of a conference held by the Sierra Leone Bar Association as well as several conferences

organized by the International Commission of Jurists, a small group of lawyers have formed a legal aid association serving both urban and rural women. Women's organizations have taken action to inform communities through seminars and public meetings about women's rights and to lobby government administrators and policy makers to spur the government to fully implement the provisions of Convention.

Violence against women: Violence against women is a common occurrence and is increasingly becoming a social concern, particularly in the war-affected areas where women are frequently becoming victims of violent crimes such as rape, abduction, acid-throwing, trafficking for immoral purposes and grievous assault. Domestic violence, including wife-beating, sometimes culminates in a simple black eye, broken limbs or even death, has existed at all levels for generations. It is hardly ever discussed as it is considered private.

With the onset of the rebel war early in 1991, violence escalated in the domestic arena and in cases of rape and sexual harassment against young and female refugees. The deterioration of the economic conditions has led to friction in the home often resulting in serious acts of violence against women. Further, due to poverty, unemployment and financial constraints, many women have fallen victim to illicit trafficking; for example, some unscrupulous persons have indulged in the trafficking of young girls initially employed as maids and taken to parts of the Middle East for trading them for immoral purposes.

Legal position: The laws in the country do not address specifically gender-based violence. There have been no amendments to the laws during the past two decades and there have been no enactment of legal provisions to deal with the issue or to correct the anomalies which exist.

As mentioned above, under the 1991 Constitution, the office of the Ombudsman was established to implement anti-discriminatory legislative, this has unfortunately not been effected.

The police, which is the largest repository of cases of violence, has no special programmes policy on gender issues and though they record 20-30 per cent of cases of gender violence, less than 50 per cent of these ever go to court and the accused are usually discharged due to lack of evidence. Women's participation in the police force is also minimal - 5 per cent in 1985 and 7.5 per cent in 1994. There is an equal absence of women in the judiciary; in 1994, there was only one female judge and three female magistrates.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The Women's Bureau located in the Department of Health and Social Services was established in 1988 by a presidential declaration. It is the Government's machinery for coordinating, monitoring, supervising and evaluating the integration of women in development at grass-roots and national levels. It is assisted by an Advisory Board of leading men and women; it is also represented at related ministries/departments by desk officers and gender focal point personnel. At the national level, however, the idea of gender focal points in sectoral departments has not yet taken off and where these exists, their involvement in policy decisions is minimal or non-existent. Policy guidelines aimed at enhancing the integration of women in all sectors of development, formulated under the Ministry of Social Services and Youth, did not provide strategies for operationalizing the policy. The Bureau is also grossly under-staffed and under-funded and as such, the women's machinery remains a token; sectors and departments thus continue to plan and programme their activities without responding to the needs and concerns of women.

At a national workshop organized by the Government, recommendations were adopted calling for the strengthening of the women's machinery and for the mainstreaming of gender issues in development policies and programmes.

Administrative structures exist for the implementation of government programmes at all administrative levels; however, women are still underrepresented at decision-making levels in these structures.

Machineries within the university: The establishment of the Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM) and the Gender Research and Documentation Centre (GRADOC) at the University of Sierra Leone created mechanisms intended to promote the achievement of women. The institutions are improving the management performance and confidence of women and enabling them to move to management positions. The women's unit in IPAM runs sensitization meetings while GRADOC provides services and training in support of research and also organizes gender sensitization seminars for teachers and education policy makers.

Non-governmental organizations

Women's organizations have had a long history in Sierra Leone and one of the oldest, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) has made tremendous contribution over the years to the provision and promotion of formal and non-formal education of women and girls.

Other NGOs, such as the Women's Association for National Development (WAND) and the National Organization of Women (NOW) are in women-related activities, including training and sensitization especially for rural women, research studies relating to women's literacy and civic rights and the implementation of child survival projects in collaboration with UNICEF as well as networking with international organizations. Many NGOs have programmes and projects in areas such as health, education and income-generation.

In November 1992, the Sierra Leone Women's Development Movement (SILWODMO) was launched by the First Lady and the wives of Secretaries of State. Its major activity is in providing credit and entrepreneurship training for women in the informal sector.

In order to improve coordination among NGOs, the Sierra Leone Association of NGOs (SLANGO) was established in 1994. SLANGO acts as a coordinating agency for all national and international NGOs in the country. A women's forum has also been recently formed by various NGOs aimed at strengthening their coordination and collaborating capacity.

Poverty

Sierra Leone is considered a poor country with a per capita of \$US 200 and the World Bank together with other statistical data have revealed that two-thirds of the population live below the poverty line. Because of the absence of a clear definition of poverty, the female-headed household has been considered an indicator in assessing poverty among women in the Sierra Leone context.

As statistics reveal, women who are heads of households are often uneducated, untrained and tend to work on family farms or be engaged in informal sector activities at the subsistence level. They are usually the only source of income for their households. In Sierra Leone, female-headed households are on the increase. In 1980, the national figure was estimated at 21 per cent and in 1990 it stood at 24 per cent. With the rebel war in the eastern and southern provinces, the proportion of women-headed households is escalating.

Vocational and technical education: In the 72 technical/vocational institutions in the country, female enrolment in the 1987/88 academic year was 58 per cent, in 1989/90 it was 49 per cent, in 1990/91 over half (52 per cent) were females. This increase for females is due to the preference of girls in subjects such

as home economics and typing taught in those institutions. This has serious consequences as they will probably find themselves as petty traders or employed in low-paying jobs such as typists and secretaries.

Day care and pre-school centres for children: If women are to participate actively in the labour force or intensify their activities in the informal sector, more adequate and affordable provisions are needed to take care of their children while at work.

Although about 84 pre-school establishments do exist in the country, they are mainly privately owned and charge fees which many poor women seeking employment outside the home can hardly afford. In addition, the usual tradition of extended family system has broken down in many parts, thus leaving women with no home help for looking after their children.

Urban and rural unemployment: Data for 1988-1989 in respect of unemployment shows that more women (54 per cent) than men (46 per cent) are unemployed in the urban areas whereas in the rural areas 69 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women are unemployed.

Thus, women's low educational achievement coupled with family responsibilities keep them in low-paying jobs or engaged in low-income activities making them the majority of the poor in the community.

Government action: Since 1992, the Government has made desperate efforts to combat poverty through various policies including the establishment of the Division of Social Action for Poverty Alleviation (SAPA) within the Department of Development and Economic Planning. The Division works closely with NGOs on programmes of poverty alleviation.

Conflicts and their effects on women

Sierra Leone's involvement in armed conflict started with its membership of ECOMOG which intervened in the Liberian civil war. The fighting spilled over into Sierra Leone resulting in an influx of refugees and Sierra Leonean returnees from Liberia. The composition of the influx was estimated as 10 per cent men, 30 per cent women and 40 per cent children.

By March 1991, a rebel war broke out in Sierra Leone along its border with Liberia increasing the number of refugees and displaced persons. Local populations contributed by allowing some of the refugees and displaced persons to stay with their families. The pressure on them was reflected in the social services particularly food, medicines and housing. The average housewife had reduced options of survival as it became necessary to share the already scarce resources.

Apart from the continuous stress and uncertainty which characterizes the every day life of rural women in the southern and eastern provinces affected by the war, their sense of womanhood, so fundamental to their existence has been seriously challenged. The burden resulting from the deaths of husbands and other male relatives in a patriarchal society sometimes exposes women to roles at variance with decent morality.

Youth, especially young girls who had been economically dependent on boy friends, took to begging or prostitution while others dropped out of school to become premature mothers.

In general, the quality of women's lives has taken a dramatic turn as they are forced to live in camps with dwindling resources to sustain themselves and their families.

SOMALIA

INTRODUCTION

In the absence of a central government, a core group of Somalis, men and women, took the initiative to request some United Nations agencies to give technical assistance for the preparation of this report.

In the absence of a national women's organization and a central government, the report aims to describe changes in the situation of women during the decade rather than to suggest policies that might reflect particular political or factional positions. The report also analyses issues of relevance to women during the post-1991 era, with special emphasis on the situation encountered by women. Almost all government documents were destroyed or looted during the initial months of the civil war and national statistics have not been collected. However, UNOSOM, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO and other United Nations agencies have begun the collection of national data that pertain to their respective mandates in geographical areas and sectors in which they implement programmes.

Somalia, situated in the Horn of Africa, has an area of 637,557 km² and a population of approximately 7.691 million (1991) and women constitute approximately half of the population.

Ethnically and linguistically, Somalis are homogeneous. Despite the ethnic homogeneity, however, clans, sub-clans and religion have played an important role in Somali politics, past and present. These, combined with colonialism and the cold war policies of the super powers, have contributed in shaping the economic, social and cultural life of the Somalis.

Economically, Somalia is one of the least developed countries in the world; in 1990, the per capita income was about \$US 290 and approximately 70 per cent of the rural population live below the poverty line, while in the urban areas, the figure is 40 per cent.

As a result of the civil war, in the countryside, grain stores, livestock, water sources and infrastructure were either looted or destroyed by bandits and militia. Farmers were unable to cultivate and by mid-1991, the country was wrecked by famine. Drought aggravated the situation and decimated the remaining crops. Farmers and herders flocked to the cities and towns; as many as 350,000 people died from a combination of violence and famine between 1991 and 1992. In December, the United Nations launched Operation Restore Hope to provide security for relief convoys and relief personnel.

The situation of women during the last two decades was normal, although by the late 1980s, the declining economy had a negative impact on women, particularly poor women. The ouster of the former regime in January 1991 heralded a new chapter in Somali history and the situation of majority of Somali women also became qualitatively different.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Significant changes relating to women's participation in governance began in the 1970s. With the establishment of the party system in 1976, women had the opportunity of holding positions of leadership and civil administration. Although there was equality before the law, women's participation in the political structure remained minimal. In government ministries and agencies, female nomination to senior management positions was negligible. In the Ministry of Education, for example, out of 35 directors only

one was female (Director of Family Life Programmes); likewise there were only two female directors in the 50 government agencies that existed in 1988. In the judiciary, an insignificant number of female judges were employed in the lower courts.

With the emergence of armed opposition groups, the nation descended into instability and women were confronted with new obstacles impeding their participation - professional appointments gave way to political appointments; professional qualifications were no longer the basis for consideration.

Following the collapse of the central government, the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) was charged with, *inter alia*, paving the way for national reconciliation. The UNOSOM Political Division has attempted to adopt strategies to ensure gender representation in district level governance; though UNOSOM has encountered considerable resistance to the requirement, it has nevertheless been fulfilled.

Traditionally, men make decisions about the sale and storage of large amounts of grain while women decide how much to consume and how much to sell to meet the daily household expenses. In cases of activities in which men contribute no labour, women normally have control over the utilization of these products. Decisions concerning the herding, husbandry, slaughter and sale of all livestock are made by the senior men of the group, although women are generally consulted.

Education

Primary school enrolment for girls increased from 30 per cent in 1972 to 36 per cent in 1981; in secondary schools, enrolment increased from 15 per cent in 1972 to 34 per cent in 1984. In 1984, female teachers constituted 35 per cent of the primary school staff while female secondary school teachers comprised 10 per cent of the total. At the Somali National University, 20 per cent of the students and 9 per cent of the staff in 1986 were female; these figures had risen to 21 and 11 per cent respectively in 1987.

Primary education enrolment consistently declined between 1981 and 1990 for both sexes and there was a significant gender gap especially between 1981 and 1986.

Throughout 1991 and 1992, schools were non-existent in Somalia except the Koranic schools which continued to function. With increased security following the international military intervention in 1992, schools were reopened around the country. Many of these schools were rehabilitated by United Nations agencies and NGOs. As a result, school enrolment is increasing significantly; enrolment data from 102 schools in Mogadiscio revealed that for grades 1-4, gender distribution is balanced: 49 per cent for girls and 51 per cent for boys. However, in orphanages, there is an inexplicable gender disparity reflected in the striking male/female ratio. This disparity may be explained by the fact that orphanages act as boarding schools for some families and the larger number of boys may correspond to greater importance attached to boys' education; another factor may be that girls are kept at home to help with household chores or because of a more protective attitude towards girls. Yet another reason may be that marriages are arranged for unaccompanied girls by kinsmen as soon as possible.

At present, the total number of teachers in Somalia, excluding the north-western region, is approximately 1,292, with women comprising 31 per cent. There is a need to promote women teachers given the important role they could play in attracting and retaining girls in school. The first Open Teacher Training Programme is providing training leading to a diploma for active unqualified teachers. There are 200 trainees, 43 per cent of whom are women.

Health

Implementation of primary health care in support of the Alma Ata Declaration has not achieved the expected results because of insufficient human and financial resources. Traditional customs, sanitation problems, widespread communicable diseases and nutritional deficiencies were contributing factors to high mortality and morbidity rates. The situation was further complicated by shortages of drug supplies, logistical problems, poor distribution of health personnel and inadequate health information.

The declining economy and deteriorating security situation meant that government was allocating more resources to the security forces. In conflict areas, social infrastructure was being destroyed while other areas were being overburdened with the influx of displaced persons.

According to UNICEF statistics, by the end of the decade, Somalia had the third highest maternal mortality rate in the world (1,100 per 100,000). Simultaneously, Somalia has one of the highest fertility rates in the world, 7 per person. Among the factors contributing to the high maternal mortality rates are the lack of access to trained child-birth attendants and adequate childbirth facilities, complications related to female circumcision, heavy workload, lack of child-spacing and nutritional practices during pregnancy.

Health problems are due to malnutrition, contaminated water supplies, cessation of health services, victims of violence, mental problems and related trauma, forced migration into refugee camps with the accompanying overcrowding, inadequate shelter and sanitary conditions. Women as the main health providers of their families have assumed a disproportionate share of the burden of health problems and the difficulty is particularly for displaced women who lack the comforting network of the extended family.

In the past year, there has been considerable improvement in the health situation and at present, there are about 30 hospitals, 73 mother/child care (MCH) centres and 131 health posts which have been re-opened with UNICEF and NGO assistance. A recent survey revealed that the average fertility rate in the sample was 5.7 and that the lowest rates were observed in refugee camps.

Female circumcision: Female circumcision creates health hazards. It is performed on girls between the ages of 6-9 and, in some cases, between 4 and 15. The two types of circumcision practised are the Sunni and the Pharonic; the latter is extreme and causes greater physical and mental trauma. Gradually, the practice is being criticized by women themselves and in March 1993, at a UNOSOM conference in Addis Ababa, Somali women outlined the salient problems confronting women and potential solutions in respect of female circumcision.

Employment

Prior to the outbreak of the civil war, the main source of employment in Mogadiscio for both men and women was the government. There were, however, substantial gender gaps because women largely occupied lower paid jobs and received lower incomes as their level of education and lack of skills put them at a disadvantage in the labour market. A 1988 survey showed that in Mogadiscio 41 per cent of women were government workers, 25 per cent small-scale traders, 11 per cent domestic servants and 9 per cent small-scale artisans, etc.

Since the outbreak of the civil strife the largest source of formal sector employment is with the international relief and development organizations. Although employment with United Nations agencies and NGOs is not likely to offer a sustainable long-term wage earning situation, it is significant that the recognition and experience gained will serve the staff when the opportunities arise to move into positions with future government agencies or emerging private sector organizations. There is, however, a low number of female United Nations and NGO wage earners in general and an extremely low number of women in positions involving responsibility and authority.

Present-day Somalia has an informal economy and informal urban markets have become the most robust and sustainable component of the economy since the outbreak of the civil war. The impact of rural-urban migration and the basing of international relief activities in urban areas have expanded opportunities for the participation of women in the urban informal sector where they account for 30 per cent of the labour force.

Women face constraints in the informal sector such as lack of capital and skills and the flooding of the market with imported goods has also limited the capacity of artisans to compete in the retail market. There is tremendous potential for women to participate in the informal sector once the overall security situation has been restored.

Women's access to resources

Credit: Before the war, women had limited access to credit vis-à-vis men; since the outbreak of the war there are neither banking systems nor credit schemes.

In recognition of women's lack of access to credit, several international agencies implemented credit projects in the 1980s targeted at rural, market and business women in squatter settlements around Mogadiscio. The Partnership for Productivity (PFP) developed a comprehensive credit scheme oriented towards refugee assistance.

At present, credit schemes are rarely implemented by international NGOs. However, traditional means of gaining access to relatively large sums of capital continue to function in Somalia involving rotating credit groups, all women, all men, or both men and women.

Sanitation and water supply: Scarcity of water has always been a major constraint to the development of the country due to its arid and semi-arid nature. The living condition of the large proportion of the population particularly was already precarious. The looting and destruction of major water supply and sanitation systems following the outbreak of the war had devastating consequences with serious implications for public health. The shortage of water has led to displacement of people and their livestock and the settled population, especially women and children have had to walk up to 10 or 15 km to fetch water from traditional sources. Initiatives to train women in improved sanitation practices have been carried out by international organizations such as UNICEF and WHO, in collaboration with NGOs such as CARE and OXFAM UK.

Agricultural extension/productive resources: Agricultural extension had always focused on male farmers overlooking the importance of women as contributors to farm production. Between 1982 and 1989, agricultural extension employment included very few women. As a result of the civil war, looting and displacement of populations from rural areas, the country has run out of seed stocks and agricultural infrastructure has been destroyed. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has implemented a seeds and tools programme throughout the country. NGOs, in collaboration with the European Community, are carrying out a common programme for professional veterinarians and women are expected to be a component of it.

Women's legal rights

In the absence of a central government, discussion of this area of concern is irrelevant. Opportunities, however, exist for addressing this critical area of concern in the context of current international interventions. The greatest opportunity exists within the mandate of UNOSOM's Justice Division which is charged with assisting Somalia to develop a legal and judicial framework for a future government. Opportunities also exist for the implementation of public information campaigns focusing on

women's rights, human rights and peace education. Channels for such campaigns include schools, Koranic schools and radio programmes.

Violence against women: Sexual assault: Traditional Somali society dealt with sexual assault either by requesting the kin of the assailant to pay compensation to the victim's clansmen, or husband if she is married, or if she is unmarried, to request the assailant or a member of his family to marry the victim.

Rape: This became a common practice in Somalia after the Ogaden war in 1977 when an aborted coup d'Etat by some of the defeated Somali army officers resulted in brutal retaliation among clansmen and clanswomen of the perpetrators. Retaliation included rape and abduction of the women by the army.

The majority of sexual assaults since the war have been perpetrated by gangs of armed men who rape women and girls individually or in groups. Rape occurs in women's homes often in front of their family members and in conjunction with other acts of violence against other members of the family. Women and girls have also been abducted for enslavement or have been sexually enslaved in their own homes by armed gangs. The attackers keep the women and girls in captivity often for months forcing them to perform household duties and provide sexual services. Some women and girls have disappeared altogether.

Refugee women in Kenya have been victimized in refugee camps either by security forces or "bandits" of both Somalia and Kenya. UNHCR is addressing the problem of refugee rape victims by providing assistance, taking preventive measures to safeguard against their being future victims and by providing continuance of service after repatriation to Somalia.

Domestic violence: The difficulties that Somali women face after marriage are domestic violence and polygamy. Wife-beating problems appear to be solved mainly either by appealing to the elders or asking the wife (daughter) "to change her behaviour" (implying it was her fault). Polygamy keeps married women in a perpetual state of insecurity; in many cases, except in households headed by men of above average means, polygamy often results in economic hardship for their wives and children. Although there is no evidence pertaining to the impact of displacement on polygamy, a UNICEF study on Ethiopian-Somali refugee women in the 1980s suggests that there was a high level of polygamous households in the refugee camps and, by extension, a high level of female-headed households.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Prior to the civil war, there were three governmental organizations established to address women's needs. There were also local NGOs and community-based women's organizations the majority of which operated in the Mogadiscio area where they centred their activities on traditional handicrafts and tailoring.

The most powerful of the governmental organizations was the Somali Women's Democratic Organization which had an outreach at all levels. It had the potential to mobilize women but due to the lack of trained leadership, lack of financial resources, and the gross nepotism and corruption, it was never able to accomplish this in the 1980s.

Another organization, the Women's Education Service later known as the Institute of Women's Education (IWE) established Family Life Education Centres all over the country and implemented programmes in health and nutrition, management and income-generating skills and the processing of credit for income-generating activities.

The third organization established was the Women's Research Unit charged with the collection of empirical data and documentation on women which could constitute meaningful policies to address the needs of Somali women.

Women's group: Since the outbreak of the war numerous women's groups have emerged in response to the needs of their various community for relief, development and reconciliation. Their activities have included training of income-generation skills, running feeding kitchens, assistance to orphans, emergency health care, community schools and the promotion of peace initiatives. Only a few of these groups have received international recognition and support because it appears their lack of knowledge of English has isolated them and the majority of these do not have the "marketing skills", e.g., development of project proposals, necessary to gain access to the recognition and thus, the funding available to support local women's initiatives.

Conflicts and their effects on women

In addition to violence, women suffer many other hardships during times of civil strife. During the civil war, Somali women "encountered difficulties such as loss of immediate family members, flight from their homes and their country, separation from family members, being killed, wounded, raped and tortured, loss of property, income sources such as jobs, business, livestock and crops and famine and malnutrition."

Civil strife generally leads to female-headed households as men leave to join the fight and are either killed, wounded, become unemployed or move elsewhere in search of security or a source of income. Women also do flee with their children to displaced and refugee camps, while their husbands stay behind to safeguard property.

Women's role both in the productive and reproductive spheres generally expands, as displaced wounded or disabled impoverished and orphaned relatives seek refuge in their households.

A UNICEF/WHO- sponsored study on the psycho-social consequences of the civil war on Somali women (1993) found that 70 per cent of women interviewed had between 10 and 18 dependants 20 per cent of those with more than 10 dependants were heads of single income households.

Witnessing or being a victim of violence often leads to psychological stress. Symptoms recorded include insomnia, nightmares, night terrors, depression and aggressiveness towards others.

Somali women's coping mechanisms for dealing with stressful situations include social support from their husbands, other family members or friends. As a large number of women have lost these sources of support, the alternative sources of support are mental health care, which in Somalia is rare as no other sources are readily available.

Poverty

A study carried out prior to 1990 to examine poverty in Somalia showed that 49 per cent of nomadic households, 47 per cent rural household and 42 per cent of urban households lived below the poverty line. Given the impact of the violence and the famine on the rural sector and the mobilization of pastoralism youth and men into the cities and towns during the civil war, these figures may be assured to be much higher in present-day Somalia.

The lack of quantitative indicators for access to health, literacy, clean water and sanitation for the Somali population in general and for women in particular limits the present information about poverty. The one factor suggesting an increasing feminization of poverty is the phenomenon of female-headed households as the consequence of the war.

International support

Before the civil war, NGOs, voluntary organizations, government organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors as well as United Nations agencies provided support to development activities in Somalia. Programmes specifically targeted to women included the provision of social services particularly in the health and education sectors, income-generation activities and skills, agriculture, non-formal and adult education, alternate technologies including fuel-saving stoves, etc.

In general, the programmes and projects were well-conceived; however, there was an absence of most of the programmes/projects in the countryside; in some cases even where the projects proved successful, they were never replicated and as a result few women benefited. Another constraint was the non-involvement of local women NGOs as the Somali Women's Democratic Organization (SWDO) preferred to work with regional SWDO branches.

Security concerns led to donor reluctance for the continuation of programmes or the beginning of new ones. Many programmes and projects experienced a geographical shrinkage of their activities and more and more regions became insecure and their operations focused increasingly on Mogadiscio and surrounding areas.

With the onset of the war, throughout 1991, some relief agencies (ICRC, SCF UK, UNICEF) carried out emergency work in Mogadiscio and other areas hardest hit by the famine and the violence.

With the emplacement of UNOSOM by the United Nations, action towards disarmament, demobilization, the promotion of a transitional structure of governance and an expansion of humanitarian operations began.

In a 100-day programme for Somalia launched in the Addis Ababa Conference in December 1992, the promotion of Somali women and greater attention to their needs, the return and resettlement of 300,000 refugees and over 100,000 displaced persons, development of food security, etc., were included in the programme; UNOSOM facilitated groups of women to identify priorities for action. Implementation of the activities have however been hampered by funding constraints. Much progress has been made in the priority areas and support for women's participation.

UNOSOM has made efforts to involve women in the political process as was evidenced by their inclusion in the two Addis Ababa Conferences delegations and another is the inclusion of women in the district councils where decision making takes place. Women have also been given job opportunities by the international agencies in the formal sector in the country.

SUDAN

INTRODUCTION

Due to the lack of understanding of the complex and multi-dimensional relationship between development and the advancement of women, the Sudanese Government in the 1980s believed that economic growth would automatically benefit women. This led to insufficient progress in the implementation of policies and programmes targeted to women resulting in fragmented efforts with minimal benefits to women.

Lack of commitment by development staff of technical ministries to women's issues together with the absence of women administrators and executives have retarded action to promote women in development. Furthermore, male-dominated decisions and choices marginalized women's needs and priorities as they were considered welfare problems. Programmes targeting women emphasized their domestic role and nutrition education; home economics constituted the main line of technical knowledge and skills extended to women.

In the Three-Year Investment Programme (1981/82-1984/85) for example, development programmes at the district and regional levels focused on female education and rural extension. The National Conference on the Role of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (1987) and the workshop on Strategies and Policies for Integrating Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (1990) both called for full recognition of the economic role of women and their integration into the development process in the light of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Other fora have called for structural change, recognition of women's economic, social and political role, in addition to the institutionalization of women's issues and their integration into the development process.

According to the 1993 census, the population of the Sudan is 24.9 million with a population growth rate of 2.63 per cent; 17.5 million (70.3 per cent) of the population live in rural areas and 12.4 million (49.8 per cent) of the population are women. The Sudan is exhausted by civil war and a poor economy; it is looking for progress and stability which can be achieved only by the effective utilization of all human resources to attain sustainable development. Women who make up about half of the population live at the edge of life with men dominating life to the utmost. The attitude of the society has deliberately underrated and under-estimated women's capabilities and this has deprived many women from giving assistance and has suppressed all incentives to cultivate their talents.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Women in the Sudan acquired political rights in the 1960s when they exercised their rights to vote and be voted for. During that period, one woman succeeded in the general elections and entered parliament. The period 1980-1985 witnessed significant progress in women's political participation when 25 women from different parts of the country were appointed to the People's Assembly. During the period 1986-1989, parliamentary membership was subjected to free competition in the general elections: two women (0.6 per cent) out of a total of 301 members were elected. Recently, the National Salvation Revolutionary Council (1992) appointed 25 women (8.3 per cent) out of the 303 members in the Transitional National Assembly (8.3 per cent).

Sudanese women have held ministerial posts mainly as ministers of State or deputy ministers of State but the percentage has varied between 2.6 and 16.6 per cent (when there were a total of six women). There has always been only one woman minister, except in 1988-1992 when there were two.

The number of women at the policy planning level at different technical ministries is negligible. Only one State member was appointed in the government at national level. At state level, five females were appointed as state members out of 130, representing 3.7 per cent. Women in parliament who influence higher policy level are 25 out of 250, representing 10 per cent. At the technical ministries which have a direct link to agriculture, women decision makers are increasing in number; at the Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment, only one female held a decision-making position (1980), representing 2 per cent; in 1985, there were five (7 per cent) out of 72 female decision makers; in 1993, the number increased to 11 (14 per cent) out of 80. Women are therefore gradually sharing power and decision making at higher policy level but not to the extent that influences policies targeting women.

In local governments, women have been appointed as deputy executive director (one out of 21), assistant executive director (one out of 60); other appointments have included six (47 per cent) local government first inspectors (against 128 men), 23 (8.3 per cent) local government inspectors (against 278 men), 16 (110 per cent) assistant local government inspectors (against 146 men) and 49 (7.8 per cent) assistant administrative officials (against 632 men).

In the Foreign Ministry, 22 women were appointed as delegated ministers and ambassadors during the period 1970-1988. In 1990, 13 of them were dismissed for political and other reasons. At present, there are two women delegated ministers, three women first secretaries and four women second secretaries.

In the general labour force, women in labour areas are 6.7 per cent employers and 12.6 per cent own account workers; in the rural areas, they are 7.5 per cent employers and 24.3 per cent own account workers. In the professional, technical and related fields, women represent 31.1 per cent in the urban areas and 25.7 per cent in the rural areas; however, the total national ratio is 71.3 per cent men to 29.7 per cent women. Among administrative and managerial workers, women in the urban areas represent 3 per cent and in the rural areas 0.2 per cent; at the national level, the percentages are 97.6 per cent for men and 2.4 per cent for women. These latter negligible percentages reflect the negative position of women, particularly in the rural areas where the society is subjected to male domination and where women are only instruments for implementing decisions.

Employment

With the exception of Khartoum, all other regions are rural and in the Sudan, 80 per cent of the labour force are in the rural areas. The western and southern regions have 92.3 and 80.2 per cent of their labour force respectively in rural areas and the large-scale movement to other regions results in the phenomenon of female-headed households. There is also a large-scale migration of seasonal labourers (about 30 per cent), leaving women to face limited resources and obligations of subsistence to their families.

Women who suffer higher rates of unemployment are involved in unpaid family labour (4,096,567 women compared to 1,237,177 men). There is need for a rural employment policy to tackle this situation which influences the living conditions of 57 per cent of the economically active population.

In local government positions, there are only 96 women (6.9 per cent), compared to 1,383 men. In the general labour force, according to Central Bureau of Statistics figures, total male employees are 85.5 per cent and females 15.5 per cent; there are 92.16 per cent male employers as against 7.4 per cent female and 77.2 per cent of male own account workers against 22.8 per cent of females. Of the total labour force, 71.5 per cent are men and 28.5 per cent are women.

Education

In spite of the increase in number of schools and pupil enrolment at primary level, literacy rates are still low: 18 per cent for women and 44.32 per cent for men (1980). In 1990, gross enrolment for girls

in primary schools was 49.8 per cent, compared to 56.3 per cent for boys. The most important problem is the low output of graduates from intermediate level of knowledge necessary for agricultural and rural development and the number of female graduates per year from these institutions is too low in a country where 80 per cent of the population is rural and where 58 per cent of the food is produced by women.

If basic and non-formal education and rural extension are to improve the quality of life for rural women, conditions must be created to ensure that they receive at least primary education, health and extension training and support to improve the quality of life.

In spite of the long-term policy of achieving equity in education and the short-term policy of universal primary education by the year 2000, the male-female gap in education is far from being narrowed. Some progress has been achieved in the last two decades but budgetary constraints and population pressure pose a challenge.

Although women continue to concentrate on arts and social sciences and traditional specialized fields such as nursing, education, secretarial, home economics, etc., they have made progress in scientific areas such as medicine, agriculture, veterinary and laboratory technologies. This progress has raised fears among the authorities that females with such specialization would not necessarily take up jobs in hardship posts and that they are likely to get married upon graduation.

Vocational training: Specialized training for females is provided mainly in education, nursing, secretarial, arts and handicrafts. Vocational training such as auto mechanics, general mechanics, electricity and construction appears to be a male domain since females appear to refrain from joining training centres either because of social and traditional reasons or due to low female labour demand. For example, the percentage of participation in these courses between 1987-1993 ranged from 0.1 to 1 per cent when there were 10 females out of 962 students.

Agriculture

The Sudan has great potential for becoming a major agricultural exporter in the Middle East region. However, desertification, soil degradation and drought have increased regional imbalance in food production that tend to turn into famine in some areas in times of unfavourable climatic conditions. Nevertheless, agriculture continues to be the backbone of the Sudanese economy as it provides livelihood for about 80 per cent of the population and accounts for 40 per cent of the GDP; women farmers in the irrigated sector represent 49 per cent and in the traditional sector about 57 per cent.

The Government's ten-year strategy projected an increase in food grain in the irrigated sector from 35 to 80 per cent of the total food grain produced. Women play a crucial role in the implementation of the strategy as a major human resource in the traditional sector where the Government has put more support and emphasis on small farmers to fulfil the objectives of food self-sufficiency and food security programmes. In the traditional sector, women constitute the majority, representing 84 per cent in the western region, 80 per cent in the eastern region and 76 per cent in the modern irrigated sector in the central region.

Due to the importance of agriculture in the Sudanese economy and due also to the dominant and important role of women in Sudanese agriculture, most of this report tends to emphasize the agricultural aspect of development in the country and the role of women in it. Policy measures have been adopted to enhance the role and status of women in the development process and particularly in the area of agriculture. Several constraints facing women in agriculture have been identified and proposals made for overcoming them.

Women's access to resources

Land: In the Sudan, land is the most crucial resource needed for agricultural production and serves as collateral for loans used to purchase agricultural inputs. Land ownership sometimes gives eligibility to cooperative membership, access to agricultural extension and production technology. Where women have land title to their names, they have direct access to production inputs.

Women's access to land is subject to the land tenure conditions which vary from region to region. There are four main land tenure systems: (a) government- owned land which is open to both sexes; (b) government land given on lease to large private farms; (c) privately owned land (small farms around the city and the banks of the Nile and are usually registered in the name of the head of the household); and (d) customary land tenure (the majority of subsistence farmers operate under this system and access and use by small farmers is uncontrolled as the land belongs to the Government).

Women have land ownership (13,000 women in Gezira have land titles to their name) but in most areas, because of socio-cultural values, a woman surrender her rights to her husband or brothers who crop the land, unless she is the land manager or she crops the land herself.

Credit: Credit plays an important role in the mobilization of productive resources and the distribution of income. A growing number of lending institutions give credit to women for agricultural production, livestock production, food processing and other income-generating activities.

Women have benefited from credit facilities through their membership of cooperatives to which some of the lending institutions give credit. With the Nuba Mountain rural development project, loans were provided in 1983-1989 to small farmers for the purchase of machinery and production inputs and majority of the beneficiaries were women. For loans disbursed for dairy and poultry production, only four (0.08 per cent) women received loans, compared to 4,910 men in 1980 and in 1993, only 10 (10.6 per cent) women received loans compared to 94 men.

The Livestock Bank, established in 1993, has made substantial loans to women cooperatives. Lifting of collateral from credit has increased the number of women entrepreneurs and the establishment of more cooperatives in different regions.

Agricultural extension and training: The agricultural extension service in general is linked with cash production in the modern sector. Thus, in the Gezira scheme with 120,000 farmers, where the women number only 13,000, extension messages are targeted at male farmers. Because of the separate communication network on the basis of gender in rural areas, women farmers who represent 84 per cent of traditional farmers have very little benefits because of the low number of female extension agents.

In 1993, there were 337 agricultural extension agents, the majority of which were employed in the urban and modern sector. More female extension agents are required for rural women to implement the programmes for food production, poverty alleviation and malnutrition among the rural population. Ultimately, development of integrated extension services based on economic need irrespective of gender and intended beneficiaries would appear to offer the best prospects for development with equity.

Production technology: Improvement in women's low productivity and relief from their heavy work load could be achieved through access to technology. Base-line studies have revealed that female labour input at the household and farm levels far exceed that of males; this is therefore a justification for women to be provided with agricultural production equipment and tools. There is also the need for knowledge and skill for maintenance for a wide range of appropriate technology suitable for a chain of activities to relieve women of their workload and increase their productivity.

National machineries for the advancement of women

During the early 1980s in the Sudan, the main objective of women in development programmes was to narrow the gap between the school and the community; programmes emphasized the domestic role of women. Nutrition education and primary health education programmes were extended through the relevant units in the major hospitals. Activities were also carried out at community development centres, school-gardening and nutrition education centres.

The World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) resolutions (1979) and the United Nations Decade for Women have all contributed to the status of women and several awareness workshops and seminar and fora have, at the national level, helped to increase awareness to women's concerns and the elimination of obstacles to their effective participation in society.

Although WID programmes have been integrated into the curricula of some of the training institutes and mechanisms have been utilized to enhance women's participation, effective national machineries for integrating women in the development process at a higher policy level are still lacking.

Various national conferences and workshops on the integration of women in agriculture and rural development have recommended the strengthening of women's machineries at all levels. This has led to the establishment of units in various technical departments of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and at the DSRC.

However, effective units within the apparatus of the executive legislation and judicial branches of government have not been established. There is a need for a national body mandated to respond to a variety of functions in different socio-economic and political situations to promote the advancement of women.

Non-governmental organizations

NGOs give support to women's activities in food production and food security. Projects being implemented include food production/processing, livestock production and dairying. There are 48 projects covering literacy, health education, training and income-generating activities. Six NGOs work in the area of environmental conservation and forestry.

The number of local NGOs has increased while that of international NGOs has decreased. However, the number of projects targeting women have increased and consequently the number of women beneficiaries. The majority of women NGOs involved emphasize economic production and penetration of the market economy through small-scale production and rural industry.

Women's legal rights

The Constitution of the Sudan guarantees equal rights to men and women in their access to education, employment, ownership of assets, equal payment, election, and access to productive resources. Although laws and by-laws have been enacted to translate these guarantees into action, special institutional measures, procedures and conditions need to be revised to ensure the implementation of these laws and rights.

In addition, there are social economic and cultural constraints which prevent women from enjoying these rights. Furthermore, most women are not aware of their rights and more effort is needed in the area of awareness creation and conscientization of women in respect of their rights.

Poverty

The last decade was marked by signs of poverty, inflation, unemployment, budget deficit, deficit in the balance of payments and trade, inefficient industry and the flourishing black market. Estimates for 1978-1980 clarified that the 10 per cent of the richest Sudanese benefit from 38 per cent of the GNP, while 40 per cent of the poorest Sudanese people receive only 12 per cent of the GNP. In 1990, the former percentage rose to 59 per cent while the latter dropped to 9 per cent.

With the Sudan's GDP standing at 12 million Sudanese pounds at the turn of the decade, its 25 million population should have received an average of \$480 but unfortunately 80 to 90 per cent of the Sudanese people live below the poverty line of \$370. A major factor behind the unequal distribution of income has been the IMF policies towards the Sudanese economy during 1978-1985. Seventeen devaluations between 1975-1992 reduced the value of the Sudanese pound to 0.04 per cent, causing severe cost-push inflation which sharply reduced the income of wage earners as well as farmers whose products were underpriced in the interest of urban consumers. Direct taxes on essential commodities were increased while subsidies were withdrawn. Direct taxes on fast-rising profits and capital gains remained very high and widely evaded, leading to a rapidly growing gap between the rich and the poor.

Rural women constitute the major segment hit by poverty because of such factors as the economic crisis resulting from the continuing war in the south, poor productivity, drought and desertification resulting from physical and man-made crisis such as deforestation and changes in production patterns. Structural and economic adjustment programmes have also resulted in disproportionate distribution of income which negatively impacts on the poor categories of the population where women are in the majority.

Gender-related poverty: Within the general context of poverty in the Sudan, women face gender violence which leads to further impoverishment. Women have been left dispossessed by development projects which ignore their needs, their knowledge and their rights. The prevailing stress on economic growth through technology as the main criteria for development bypasses the requirements for improvement and human growth and hence cannot provide an adequate policy framework for equitable gender approach. Production-enhancing technologies do actually increase women's workload, giving them no compensatory benefits. Extension of large-scale farming to meet production for export in the Sudan leads to the marginalization of a wide sector of families at the subsistence level. Male migration, which followed the extension of large-scale farming, increased women's responsibilities and workload to compensate for the absence of men.

Wars also have affected women, particularly through displacement which leads to the disintegration of communities, the breakdown of minimal support mechanisms and reduced access to food and shelter. Such disruption places extraordinary stress on women as family guardians and affects their critical roles in maintaining the social fabric and managing the food deficit.

Female-headed households: Given the cultural assumptions and methods of data collection, women are not usually counted as heads of households unless they are living alone or there is no male adult in the household. Statistics on men and women heads of households are not therefore reliable.

However the recurrence of drought in the Sudan, climaxing in 1984, resulted in the displacement of a large number of the rural populations who lost their seeds, livestock and all means of production. Large numbers migrated to big towns and settled as displaced, being in shanty poor areas. Displaced women were forced to engage in unsecured and informal income-generating activities to maintain the household survival.

Urban unemployment: Famine and drought which devastated the Sudan in the 1980s marginalized and displaced farmers at the subsistence level and these became vulnerable to urban unemployment; continued out-migration of the men put more burden on the already over-burdened women. The burden that women in poverty carry forces them to transfer part of their workload to other women, such as daughters, mothers or sisters.

SWAZILAND

INTRODUCTION

Swaziland has a homogenous population of 800,000, 52 per cent of whom are women. The population growth rate is 3.2 per cent, with a fertility rate of 6.4 births per women. More than 70 per cent of the population live in rural areas.

Since 1968, Swaziland has been ruled as a constitutional monarchy incorporating a Westminster parliamentary system. The King also rules through various traditional institutions and councils, the main one being the Swazi National Council. The central government is led by an elected parliamentary cabinet team appointed by His Majesty the King. A modern civil service system is responsible for public administration and social and economic development planning.

The economy is dualistic, consisting of a traditional subsistence sector and a modern, highly capital intensive sector, mainly foreign controlled. The major sectors of the economy are agriculture and forestry, manufacturing and the public sector. Recorded imports and exports accounted for 88 and 61 per cent respectively of GDP.

A decade ago, according to both customary and common law, women were regarded as minors. At national and local authority levels, decision-making roles were almost exclusively held by males. A major breakthrough occurred in 1993 when the Government agreed to support the development of a women's policy, the outcome of which will be a written policy on women's affairs detailing a structure and resources necessary to raise women's status and coordinate development issues and inputs.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Political activity became illegal after a state of emergency was declared in 1973. Any advocacy for social concern was closely scrutinized with meetings requiring security clearance. The only national women's organization operated with official sanction. The above concerns were prevalent during the period preceding the Nairobi Conference in 1985. The position has regrettably changed minimally since then. In successive parliaments since independence in 1968, only one woman has been appointed to a cabinet post. In 1980, of the 33 members in the House of Assembly, three (9 per cent) were women and in 1983, out of 29 members, only two (6.8 per cent) were women. In the current parliament, women account for 11 per cent of the members. Of note, however, is the appointment of a woman to the position of Deputy President of Senate. In 1994, two more women were appointed Permanent Secretaries in the Ministries of Finance and Transportation and Communication. At under-secretary level, women are in the Ministries of Finance, Commerce and Industry as well as Broadcasting, Information and Tourism.

In foreign affairs, Swaziland's first woman ambassador was appointed in 1987. The second woman ambassador-designate has been appointed in 1994. These two (22 per cent) women appointees are out of a total of nine missions. Two women are functioning at counsellor level in missions.

At national and local authority levels, decision-making roles were almost exclusively held by males. Women's participation in government decision-making levels is minimal, a mere 5.4 per cent (1989). All traditional chiefs who exercised authority at local level were male. At cabinet level, there had been no women appointed since independence in 1968. Minimal participation of women was also observed within top government and private sector management cadres. At professional director level, there are currently

16 posts, of which five (31.5 per cent) are held by women. It is encouraging, however, that the few women appointees have been placed in strategic decision-making positions such as finance, development planning and industrial development.

Education

The censuses of 1966, 1976 and 1986 show that literacy increased sharply during the first decade and slowed down in the second 10-year period. Literacy rates of over 15 years vary by sex and region. The male rate is 64 per cent, while that of women is 63 per cent.

Since 1968, there has been a rapid expansion in the primary school system and by 1988 the primary population had doubled. A 1991 study shows a primary school enrolment of 139,440, with girls accounting for 49.7 per cent. At the secondary level, of the 29,173 students enrolled, 49.3 per cent were females. However, at secondary level, 695 pupils dropped out between forms 1 and 5. Of these, 66 per cent were females. Drop-out rates among girls were attributed to financial difficulties, being over-age, parental pressure to assist at home, pressure on girls to leave after primary education and pregnancies.

At the secondary level, there is a marked avoidance of mathematics and science by girls. Careful research has shown that girls are not incompetent as science scholars but that they receive no encouragement since many scientific careers are seen as "not readily accessible to women".

At university, boys outnumber girls though their number in the population is small and they are more likely than girls to obtain post-vocational diplomas.

Health

The overall life expectancy at birth is 53 years. Female life expectancy was 59.9 years in 1986 compared to 52.8 years for males. The total fertility rate, which was 6.5 in 1986, has declined marginally from 6.9 live births in 1976 to 6.5 in 1986. Maternal mortality rate is 110 per 100,000 (1990), most of it due to high-risk pregnancies and are avoidable. The infant mortality rate is 98 per 1,000 live births (1991). The under-5 mortality rate is recorded at 141 per 1,000 per live births. The major causes of high infant mortality are malnutrition, acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea and other causes such as low birth weight. The contraceptive prevalence rate is 17 per cent. Although 80 per cent knowledge of contraception is recorded, actual use is limited partly due to pro-natal socio-cultural values.

Due to the high population growth rate, the demands of which the country's resources and economy cannot meet, women will have to play a critical role in national efforts to reduce fertility.

Access to health care facilities: Only 56 per cent of total births take place in health facilities under the supervision of trained health personnel. The remaining 44 per cent of deliveries take place in homesteads without the supervision of trained personnel. However, improvements are noted where 70 per cent of the national population is within 8 km of a health facility.

HIV/AIDS: The majority of women infected with HIV are married and monogamous. Cultural norms are tolerant of men's extra-marital sexual contacts. The chances of the spread of AIDS in these practices are very high. In addition to this is the high level of male migration in search of jobs, particularly from rural areas where the majority of the population reside.

Employment

The total labour force was cited at 300,000 in the 1991 census. Women's share of employment steadily increased, particularly in the public sector where women are more than a third of employees. The share of jobs rose from 25 per cent in 1981 to 35 per cent in 1987. The informal sector is also dominated by women. In 1987, 28.8 per cent of informal sector jobs were held by women, representing a steady increase in women's share of the job market since 1981.

Women's legal rights

Swaziland has not yet acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Swazi legal system is dualistic in which the Roman Dutch Law operates parallel to Swazi Customary Law. Discriminatory elements are found in both systems. For example, upon entering marriage, the woman, under the Roman Dutch system, becomes a minor and comes under the wardship of her husband. A similar arrangement obtains under Swazi Law and custom whereby a married woman becomes a child of the new family she joins. She is under the authority of all older members of her husband's family.

A change to the role definitions with their attendant authority patterns would impact on the cultural foundations of Swazi society. However, certain pieces of legislation have been incorporated into Swaziland's body of laws to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and at the workplace.

A lot still needs to be done to ensure that rights of women are protected in other areas. Marriage laws need to be amended to recognize the adult status of women and their capacity to make rational decisions about their lives.

Violence against women: Domestic violence is widely prevalent. Statistics on various kinds of assault are, however, not analyzed by sex. Only rape is identifiable as a sex-related offence of violence. Statistics indicate that the conviction rate in rape cases is consistently low.

Participation of women in the judiciary and the police force is low. There has never been a female Judge in Swaziland since independence. There are currently 14 male magistrates and only one female. Since 1980, there have been 56 male attorneys and 11 female attorneys. In 1985, the total number of police was 1,509, of whom 122 were women. The higher level of participation of women lawyers is a positive development, the currently acting Registrar of the High Court of Swaziland is a woman.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The Swaziland delegation that attended the Nairobi Conference in 1985 returned home imbued with the idea of the establishment of a machinery to coordinate women's affairs in the country. The establishment of an appropriate governmental machinery to coordinate women's affairs was realized when the Government agreed to develop a policy on women in 1993. From the policy statement would flow the details of structure of a coordinating mechanism as well as the resources needed such as manpower, infrastructure facilities and a strategy for programme implementation. The exercise is facilitated by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Government agencies: Two major programmes within the Government have focused on the advancement of women. The first is the WID programme designed to increase women's income and lessen their domestic burden through the introduction of appropriate devices. Upon the acquisition of skills, women could have access to a loan facility to acquire essential inputs. The second is the self-help programme, an outreach programme for home improvement. It has reached some 200 women country-wide who then formed groups of their own to sustain their activities.

The Lutsango Lwaka Ngwene is the national regimental organization which has, since independence, been the focal point for cultural national women's activities.

Non-governmental organizations

There has been a proliferation of NGOs since independence and the NGO sector is particularly active in women-related initiatives. The vast majority are self-help groups while others are involved in entrepreneurship activities.

Women's access to resources

Credit: In response to the problem of collateral, small-scale business operations, the Government and the Central Bank of Swaziland established an innovative Loan Guarantee Fund in 1990 to promote the increase of participation of Swazi nationals in small-scale business and industries. By December 1993, 21 per cent in value of loans were given to women, 39.3 per cent to men and 38.8 per cent to companies. The low value of women's loans was due to the fact that women take small loans; thus, of the total number of loans, 128 were to women, 133 to men and 108 to companies.

Land ownership: Land is allocated to the male head of the homestead who has to be screened and approved by the chief's council. In the case of female-headed households, the closest senior male relative is requested to make application on behalf, not of the woman but of the male heir. Although women do most of the agricultural work in the fields, they have no authority to decide on land use.

Poverty

The incidence of poverty among female-headed households is estimated to be nearly double (1.7) that of male-headed households. Female-headed households have less than average land, less labour and money to spend, less food and cash crops. In order to make ends meet, many women work outside the home in the formal sector where incomes are 60 per cent higher than in the agricultural subsistence sector.

Women and culture

Swaziland, like many African countries, has strong cultural traditions. Swazi society reflects a strong communalism which promotes group interests over those of the individual. Gender roles are very clearly defined, with women being the home-makers and care givers while men are decision makers and authority figures. Mothers teach their sons that boys' work is outside the home and discourage daughters from being argumentative and confrontational but encourage them to be hard workers.

International support

Two projects in the women's sector received major technical assistance from the donor community. The notable donors are UN/DTCD, UNDP and the Government of the Netherlands which assisted in expanding the project for training in home-crafts and construction. UNIFEM's support was through the establishment of a revolving fund which has been supported by other donors like UNICEF, ECA, USAID and Zonta Denmark. UNIFEM has also given support in the form of inputs and raw materials.

Other donors include FAO which is supporting the people's participation project (PPP) based on community development; ILO is providing technical assistance and support to the Ministry of Education through a skills development for self-reliance project; EEC with support to agriculture and social infrastructure, USAID with training women's self help groups in sewing, leadership and business development. The People's Republic of China has provided extensive assistance to handicraft training to school leavers and unemployed young people.

UGANDA

INTRODUCTION

According to the 1991 national census, Uganda's population was 16.67 million, growing at an average of 2.5 per annum. Women constitute 50.9 per cent of the population, with 88.7 per cent living in rural areas. However, there is a higher female/male ratio in towns than in the countryside, i.e, 51.67 per cent of the urban population is female and 50.97 per cent of the rural population is female. This demographic change is particularly noticeable in Kampala where the ratio of males per 100 females changed from 123 in 1969 through 102.6 in 1980 to 95.0 in 1991. These dynamic changes have brought new challenges in national gender planning during the 1990s and beyond.

Since 1986, the Ugandan Government has followed an "accommodative" movement type of government known as the Resistance Movement Government, committed to the protection of basic rights, including the rights of women to self-emancipation. In 1985, the Government ratified the Convention on the Elimination Of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and, on the basis of this, took major steps toward the full observance of the rights of women and the elimination of de jure and de facto discrimination against women.

Government policy is directed at strengthening the position of women in the economy by raising the value and productivity of their labour and ensuring the integration of women in all stages of development process. In effecting this, the Government initiated programmes to review and reformulate sectoral policies to ensure gender responsiveness as well as the implementation for addressing this.

Like many other African countries, Uganda is affected by the global recession and is also implementing SAPs which have negative effects particularly on women. In this respect, the Government has undertaken poverty alleviation programmes.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Political participation by women in Uganda is still low and, being a patriarchal society, the task of decision-making is predominantly a male task as allocated by the social system and structures that govern it.

There has however been much improvement since the 1970s and 1980s when there was only one woman in both parliament and cabinet. The 1990s have now witnessed an upward trend in the involvement of women in political decision-making activities where they constitute 16 per cent in parliament and at the administrative levels where they constitute 16 per cent of the district administrators.

To date, there are two women out of 21 cabinet ministers, 51 women out of 286 members of the Constituent Assembly and in the civil service, women make up 20 per cent of the permanent secretaries, 35 per cent of under-secretaries and nine of the 39 district executive secretaries.

At the household level, decision making is usually done by the person who controls and owns wealth and property. As property is traditionally handed down to the male heir through lineage, matters relating to land and agricultural products and proceeds are decided upon by men, particularly in the rural areas. However, household decisions by gender over the sale of major crops and proceeds do exist.

Traditional/cultural perceptions in respect of decision making as a man's domain are still a major constraint. There is still a need for training in leadership skills and confidence-building as well as empowerment of women to make them confident to take up decision-making roles.

Employment

Twenty per cent of the female population is outside the labour force because they are either young, old or disabled. Twenty-three per cent are students, 33 per cent are involved in household enterprises, only 15 per cent are self-employed, employed or employees and only 1 per cent are unemployed.

Women in formal employment are few, representing only 20 per cent of the total employed in the sector. In the category of skilled workers, women's share is only 26 per cent. In terms of sectors, 88 per cent of all women are engaged in agriculture, 11 per cent in services and only 1 per cent in industry. In the public sector, women hold only 0.05 per cent of the senior positions although they constitute 30 per cent of the civil service and in 1987, they were employed in stereotype jobs such as nursing, teaching and secretarial work.

Women are strongly represented in both the rural and urban informal sectors. The urban informal sector, which was uncommon in the 1970s, has emerged as important following the breakdown of the economy due to the years of civil strife which led to urban migration. Though the majority of women operate in the sector, there are still fewer women-headed units (25 per cent) than men; they represent 84, 43 and 41 per cent in handicrafts, food processing, clothes/shoes respectively in the urban areas.

Health

The national health policy aims at promoting primary health care (PHC) with emphasis on community-based interventions in health promotion, disease control, sanitation and simple curative and rehabilitative health care.

The health situation of women and children is generally poor, as exemplified by the high levels of maternal mortality (500 per 100,000 live births), infant mortality (120 per 100,000 live births) and childhood mortality (180 per 1000 live births); life expectancy for women is 58 years and that for men is 47 years. The physician to population ratio is 1:24,700, nurses and midwives is 1:8,900, medical assistants is 1:20,500 and health inspectors 1:58,000. Thus, only 39 per cent of births are assisted by trained attendants, while only 6 per cent use traditional birth attendants with modern training and 55 per cent deliver at home. The continued deteriorating trend in infant and childhood mortality despite efforts at immunization could be attributed to the AIDS pandemic and the corresponding vertical transmission from mother to child.

The high level of maternal mortality is due, among others, to the effects of malaria, nutritional and iron deficiency anaemia and pregnancies at either end of the reproductive limits. The high total fertility rate of 7.4 makes women vulnerable to problems of production of many children with poor spacing and inability to cater for them.

Contraceptive prevalence is extremely low for all methods, 2.7 per cent for modern methods and 2.3 per cent for traditional methods. This is reflected in the high fertility rate of 7.4.

HIV/AIDS: The AIDS control programme data of June 1993 indicates that the cumulative reported cases are 39,495, of which 51.9 per cent are females. The adolescent AIDS cases stand at 315 for boys and 1,736 for girls, representing the male-female sex ratio of approximately 1:6 in this age group. The overall trend of HIV infection is on the increase amongst women of the child-bearing age group. Women also bear the burden of caring for the sick and the family members. Other STDs are also common in women particularly those living in urban areas; this is true for gonorrhoea, chancroid syphilis and genital ulcers.

Women are highly vulnerable to STDs/HIV/AIDS because of their poor health behaviours, low level of education, poor socio-economic status and cultural barriers to which they are subjected.

Despite the efforts of the Government to address the health sector, several constraints continue to hinder the full realization of projected objectives. These include the low level of awareness, inaccessibility to health services, inadequate health personnel and cultural attitudes and practices.

Education

The average percentage of girls enrolled in primary schools between 1986 and 1990 was 44.6 per cent of which 50 per cent will have dropped out of school before the end of the primary school cycle. Between 1986 and 1990, the percentage of girls enrolled in secondary schools increased from 35 to 36.6 per cent but the percentage of girls attending technical institutions and colleges was only 3 per cent. Commercial colleges had the highest - 53 per cent, followed by teacher training at 32 per cent. This indicates the stereotype career perceptions where girls are trained to be secretaries, teachers and caterers and are not encouraged to study subjects that would qualify them to undertake scientific and technical courses.

At the main national university, girls constituted about 25 per cent of the student enrolment. This increased to 33 per cent due to the Government's affirmative action in this respect. Women constitute 45, 29 and 5 per cent of the teaching force at primary, secondary and technical schools respectively.

The Government's current policy is to encourage positive discrimination in favour of women until gender balance is attained. This policy is being implemented now in government institutions of higher learning. It has assisted at least 50 per cent of the enrolled women to enter university and has remarkably increased the percentage from 23 per cent in 1987 to 34 per cent in the 1991/92 academic year.

With reference to literacy, the Government has endeavoured to promote non-formal education through literacy programmes and campaigns and providing training and vocational skills structured in such a way as to cater for school drop outs. On the whole, the levels of literacy among women is still very low despite the Government's policy aimed at eradicating illiteracy in the country.

The main constraints to women's education include poverty, cultural and traditional biases, adult burdens taken up by girls at an early age, early marriages and parental preferences for boys; to be included also are girls' vulnerability to sexual abuse compared to boys especially in urban areas where most large secondary schools and tertiary institutions are located; inadequacy of relevant/alternative educational opportunities for those who drop out of school for various reasons and traditional stereotyping which continues to hinder girls/women from taking scientific and technical subjects in school, leading to very low enrolment in technical institutions and scientific subjects at universities.

Agriculture

This is the most important sector of the economy, accounting for 76 per cent of GDP and 97 per cent of export earnings. It provides employment for 80 per cent of the population and is the base of most of the manufacturing and service industries.

Women, who constitute 70 to 80 per cent of the total agricultural labour force account for over 80 per cent of the food production. Food crop production in 1988 and 1989 grew by 11.8 and 12.2 per cent respectively compared to the population growth of 2.5 per cent per annum.

Since 1988, policy direction has been changing towards the advancement of women within agriculture. Thirty-four per cent of the district level decision makers are women and in 1993, about 20 per cent of decision makers in the crop sector were women; 21 per cent of crop extension graduates and 12.8

per cent of all extension personnel were women. In 1992, women made up 34 per cent of the personnel at the two main agricultural research stations.

Because decision making at the farm level is in the hands of men who own land, the Government is trying to increase women's decision-making ability through training, gender sensitization, income-generating activities and exchange tours.

The constraints that continue to hinder women's effective participation in the sector where most women continue to produce at the subsistence level, are the limited ownership of land, inadequate extension services and the lack of credit and other production inputs.

Women's access to resources

Land: Although 97 per cent of women have access to land, only 8 per cent have leaseholds and 7 per cent actually own land and available statistics from 26 districts indicate that of all land holders 84 per cent are men and 18 per cent are women. Residential land use takes up 50 per cent of urban land and lack of access to land and security of tenure limits women's ability to build and improve on urban areas, making their ownership of urban land insignificant.

Credit: Prior to 1987, the state-owned Commercial Bank concentrated on financing long-term development-oriented projects which benefitted only 5 per cent of women. The Cooperative Bank, with a network of 23 branches, has had no impact on women because of their limited participation in the cooperative movement. Even where the Central Bank put in place a credit guarantee scheme to enable commercial banks to lend to risky loanees such as women and the rural poor, very few banks fulfilled the preconditions of this facility.

Since 1984, the Uganda Women Finance and Credit Trust has made significant attempts at providing credit to women. About 200 women have benefitted from credit in the organization though 4,000 are saving with the Trust.

Water and environmental sanitation: Fifty per cent and 60 per cent of the urban populations have access to safe water supply and adequate sanitation respectively. In the rural areas, only 20 per cent of the population have access to safe water supply within 1.5 km of their homes and up to two-thirds of the rural families (women and children) have to walk more than 1.5 km to collect water, the distances getting longer during the dry season.

Energy: Over 95 per cent of energy consumed in the country is from fuel wood. Women are the main collectors of fuel wood which constitutes 70 per cent of the domestic energy consumption. As most of the woodland becomes depleted, the acquisition of fuel wood is becoming increasingly difficult as women have to cover longer distances in search of wood.

The major constraints limiting women's access to resources include low level of education and lack of awareness, people's attitudes and practices, and inadequate services.

Women's legal rights

Although Uganda ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1985, it is significant that the national constitution lacks provision banning discrimination on the grounds of sex. This omission has contributed to the lack of recognition of and commitment to women's rights in the country.

The citizenship provision in the constitution is discriminatory against women. Statutory law, compounded by customary law and religious laws has encouraged discrimination against women in areas of custody of children, employment, education health and penal law.

Steps are now being taken to improve the situation of women vis-à-vis their de jure and de facto rights. Women were consulted in the drafting of the new constitution and they have made constitutional provisions that would define the scope and content of sexual equality. The Government, in recognition of the need to invoke a gradual change in attitudes and customs that usually override women's rights has, in collaboration with NGOs, put in place measures to create awareness and proper understanding of women's rights.

A pilot paralegal programme is being implemented in one district which has had a far reaching impact in creating awareness of women's rights within the community. Topics addressed by the paralegals have included marriage law, inheritance law, children's rights, rape, defilement, land law, etc. The Government has further supported the awareness campaign by giving financial assistance to NGOs for legal education and sensitization. In addition, the Government has appointed more resident judges, increased the number of magisterial areas and established informal courts for every village. Other areas that have not been addressed are the question of violence against women and the sensitization of law enforcement personnel on violence against women.

The participation of women in the judicial system has improved. In 1994, women make up 17 per cent of high court judges and the percentage of women State Attorneys has improved from 24 per cent in 1990 to 41 per cent in 1994. On the other hand, participation of women in the police has not improved, having dropped from 13 per cent in 1990 to 12 per cent in 1994.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The Department of Women in Development in the Ministry of Women, Youth and Culture spearheads the national machinery for the advancement of women and coordinates other structures such as the Political Directorate, women NGOs as well as the policies and activities for the advancement for women. The Department collaborates with line ministries through focal point officers trained in gender analysis who monitor and raise gender concerns in their respective sectors.

At the National Resistance Secretariat is a women's desk geared mainly to the political improvement of women through awareness raising and political education to grassroots. Women's councils established in 1993 with outreaches at all levels provide local fora for mobilizing women for civic participation and for communicating their common needs to various levels of community planning.

The National Council for Women (NCW), in existence since 1940, became the main national machinery for the integration of women in development as well as the umbrella body for all women NGOs in Uganda in 1978. After the creation of the Ministry of Women, Youth and Culture, the NCW continued to coordinate women NGOs until 1993 when it evolved into an autonomous body for women NGOs and became the National Association of Women Organizations in Uganda.

The major constraint for the Government has been the minimal funding for the activities of the Department. Between 1988 and 1990, for example, the average development budget for the Department of Women in Development was only 0.09 per cent of the total government development budget. For the recurrent budget, the percentage on WID was only 0.06 per cent. There have, however, been improvements in subsequent years so that by 1994 the percentage has risen to 2.3 per cent.

Non-governmental organizations

After 1986, many NGOs came into existence joining the mainly church-based ones. There are professional NGOs (doctors, engineers, technicians and lawyers), 1,935 self-help grass-roots organizations, local chapters of international NGOs as well as international NGOs in the country. Their activities include relief work, rehabilitation and development; health, agriculture, community development, education, water, sanitation, environment and coping with disability.

The Government has used NGOs for several purposes, including the mobilization of women for development and as communication channels to grassroots. NGOs transform government ideas into projects and programmes and have contributed to awareness-raising among women of their potential, to environmental issues and energy-saving devices. Some have carried out research whose output has been used for programme planning.

Poverty

Uganda is classified as one of the poorest countries with a GDP per capita of \$159. About 57 per cent of the rural population lives below the poverty line while it is 38 per cent for the urban areas. Poor households tend to be larger, have older and less educated heads and are more likely to be headed by women and at least 20 per cent of Ugandan households are headed by women.

The Uganda female-headed households have emerged from the recent history of dictatorship which effectively eliminated all opposition; civil strife, economic hardship (migration to greener pastures), women's desire to escape oppression and, most recently, the AIDS pandemic are other contributing factors.

Although women do a very high proportion of the work for cash and food production, men usually control cash crop marketing and the generated income. Women have more control over the sale of food crops but the relative price is low.

In the urban areas women constitute the majority of the population and employment opportunities for them are scanty due to the disadvantages they have. Thus, urban unemployment compounds the difficulties women face in meeting their multiple roles which require substantial financial input in the urban setting and poses a grave situation for them.

The main government policy is directed towards poverty alleviation through the promotion of income-generating programmes for each household. In the rural areas, the emphasis is on the promotion of increased agricultural output for home consumption, local and export markets.

International support

There has been substantial support from multilateral, bilateral and NGO sources in terms of technical and financial assistance. Support has been targeted at institutional strengthening, at sectors with components targeting women; these have included agriculture where women received input supplies, training and credit facilities; health, in which MCH services, drugs, water and sanitation were targeted, education and training including the award of fellowships and the legal sector where support was directed at legal research reform and education.

Most donors are gender sensitive and would not fund programmes that do not take gender into consideration. Most international support is targeted at NGOs rather than the national machinery. This substantial flow of funds without government involvement constrains thorough accountability of funds disbursed.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

INTRODUCTION

With an area of 945,000 km², the United Republic of Tanzania has a population of 23 million (1988 census) with an annual growth rate of 2.8 per cent and women making up 51 per cent of the population. It has an agrarian economy and is a parliamentary democracy with a partly decentralized system.

Between 1985 and 1994, the United Republic of Tanzania was implementing structural adjustment policies which have had negative impact on women. Implementation of the 1984 bill of rights led to various law reviews and to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It ratified major international instruments outlawing discrimination against women. It was also a period which witnessed a sharp increase of AIDS victims and the greatest influx of refugees, mainly women and children from tribal war-torn neighbouring countries. The period saw the enactment of the law providing fixed percentages of women in national and local assemblies. The country's priority centres on increasing participation of women in all sectors of the economy including state organs. The Government intends to effect Law Reform recommendations of the Law Reform Commission to remove violence against women and to accord them ownership and succession rights.

The United Republic of Tanzania is comprised of mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. According to the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, there are issues which each country can plan and implement independently. Women issues are not a union affair but the Department of Women work closely together dealing with women development issues. Although there were two separate reports, this summary will try as much as possible to merge the two, making sure that issues concerning each country stand out clearly.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

Because of the right to vote and be voted for, upon independence, six (7.5 per cent) women were elected into parliament, as against 74 men. This percentage has continued to decline. In subsequent elections years, the number of women participants particularly in 1985 was 27 (11 per cent), including 15 reserved seats out of 224, and in 1990 it was 28 (9.7 per cent) out of 228. In 1992, a law was enacted stipulating that at least 15 per cent of members of parliament should be women and at least 25 per cent of local government seats must go to women.

Zanzibari women have been members of parliament and cabinet as well as members of the House of Representatives and the Shehia Councils. They have served as chairpersons and secretaries of the ruling political party and various other organs of the ruling political party; their numbers, however, have been consistently far lower than those of men. Under the Zanzibar Constitution of 1984, five seats are reserved for women in the House of Representatives.

On the mainland, appointments and promotions of women to high posts of political, judicial and managerial influence is minimal. In 1980, out of 33 cabinet ministers, only 3 (9 per cent) were women; these figures remained constant until the 1985 and 1990 elections. In spite of the fact that women were in the first group of trained lawyers, only two women have ever been appointed as judges. Currently, there is only one (2.5 per cent) practising judge out of 40; also, only 2 women have ever attained the top civil service post of principal secretary of a ministry. Although there have been a large number of women managers they are not placed in strategic sectors.

In Zanzibar, few women have held posts in the administrative sector. For example, between 1980 and 1993, there has been only one female mayor, one councillor each (2 per cent) in 1988, 1990 and 1993 among a total 50, 50 and 46 respectively. Within the government structure, up to 1993, the number of nominated female administrators remained few. There have been only two district commissioners, two deputy secretaries (17 per cent), one deputy minister (20 per cent) and two ministers (13 per cent), all in 1990. In 1993, there were five (10 per cent) directors, two (14 per cent) deputy principal secretaries, one (17 per cent) deputy ministers and three (19 per cent) ministers. Women's representation in power sharing and decision making at all levels is very low.

Employment

In 1991, only 36 per cent of the total labour force was unemployed, 2.1 per cent being female. Women constitute 49 per cent of the employed population on mainland Tanzania and 90.3 per cent of these are in agricultural activities where they are 53.6 per cent of those engaged in these activities. Of the 4,910,963 women engaged in agriculture activities, 4,534,503 (93.3 per cent) are in rural areas and the 6.7 per cent are in urban areas.

The 1990-1991 Labour Force Survey indicates that in the professional area of work, 89.8 per cent are men and 10.2 per cent are women. In the administrative and managerial cadre, 21.0 per cent are women and 79 per cent men. Although the labour force in mainland Tanzania is evenly distributed among all sectors of economic activities, there are more female employees in the private sector 48.6 and 46.3 per cent respectively. The reason for the presence of more women in the private sector, which is the largest employer in the country, is that the wages are fairly lower than those paid in well-established public activities including government departments.

This notwithstanding, there has been a growth of job insecurity during the decade even for new graduates due to retrenchment. Although formal employment continues to provide job security and tenure for adequately qualified women (3 per cent), many could not find jobs during retrenchment and their salaries are ridiculously low making it necessary to depend on male support, semi prostitution or to be in absolute poverty.

School dropouts (22 per cent) have had to work in poor employment areas such as domestic help, bar maids, or simply under employed as housekeepers in urban areas and/or rural unpaid labour.

Discrimination, harassment and stereotyped set roles have continued to dominate the work place; promotion to top level decision-making posts have remained a token number and mostly by chance or circumstance as well as through favouritism. In 1985 and 1990, there were no female regional development directors and in 1993 to date there is only one. The number of women ministers has never exceeded three while that of principal secretaries has never exceeded two.

Women in the informal sector are making efforts to promote entrepreneurship, access to credit and land ownership to improve women's area of paid employment. Donor support has for a long time been directed to women in recognition of this fact in addition to the fact that women will help more in debt repayment if they are facilitated to improve their family conditions and that of their own.

In Zanzibar, the employment and involvement of women in all sectors of the economy are constrained by several factors among which is women's poor educational background. The number of women engaged in wage/salary employment has been increasing at a slow pace and they are mainly employed and clustered in female stereotype occupations such as nursing, midwifery, teaching and typing. There are very few women who hold high positions of responsibility in the public service. For example, women account for 13.8 per cent in administration, 27 per cent of government employees in the ministries

and 20 per cent of employees of parastatals. In fields of specialization, women are 19 per cent of planners, economists and administrators, 3 per cent of engineers, 26 per cent of doctors, etc.

In the informal sector, where women make up 80 per cent of the operators, they are said to have better returns per day than formally employed women in low cadres. This means that formal employment in a poor economy is no security for many women with less education and skills. Besides this anomaly, women's informal employment is a mere 13 per cent of the total employed labour force of 10,889,205.

Education

The educational philosophy in the United Republic of Tanzania is "education for self-reliance" and the policy is to eliminate gender inequality. However, major inequalities still exist especially at the secondary and higher levels where women have had less access to educational facilities particularly in science and technological related disciplines.

The enrolment ratio for boys and girls in primary schools was 50:50 in 1989 as primary education in the country is both universal and compulsory. There is thus gender equity at this level. There has, however, been a decline for girls to 49.2 per cent in 1990, 48.5 per cent in 1991 and 48.6 per cent in 1992.

Tanzania has the lowest transit rate from primary to secondary school in sub-Saharan Africa, next to Burundi. Less than 15 per cent of primary school-leavers transit to secondary schools. The primary school dropouts apply to both boys and girls although reasons for this differ gender wise. For boys economic reasons predominate and for girls early pregnancies rank high; drop out rates are believed to be higher for girls than for boys.

Secondary enrolment shows that more girls are in private schools than in governments schools. While the percentage of girls in government public schools was 32 per cent in 1985 and increased to 43.4 per cent in 1992, that for private schools rose from 41 to 46 per cent in the same period.

In Zanzibar, however, transit from primary to secondary school has been quite consistent and high at 50, 51, 52, 51 and 50 per cent of girls in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993 respectively. Completion rate for girls, however, has been low.

Participation of girls at technical level on the mainland has been low. From 1986 to 1990, the percentage of female students in all three colleges declined from 10 per cent in 1986 to 6.6 per cent in 1990. The majority of men were concentrated in electrical and telecommunication fields. In Zanzibar too, the female enrolment in technical schools has been low due to cultural and social behaviour and attitudes of Zanzibaris who are not used to having women work in technical fields.

Female access to higher education is extremely marginal; in 1980/81 female under graduates were 26 per cent of the student population and this has been declining from 16 per cent in 1985 to 15.2 per cent in 1987 and increased to 18.47 per cent in 1992/93. At university level, women tend to take either social sciences or general science.

Health

Tanzania's health policy emphasizes primary health care which targets the rural sector and is preventive-oriented. To date, the health care referral system on the mainland includes over 3,382 facilities which extend from village health posts dispensaries, rural health centres, districts, to regional and national referral hospitals.

In Zanzibar in general, women's health appears to be poorer than men due to overwork, un-spaced births, diseases such as cholera, malaria, anaemia etc and poverty.

Data on maternal mortality in both the mainland and in Zanzibar is limited. However in 1980 hospital figures in Zanzibar put the rate at 300 per 100,000 births, this declined to 200 in 1993 due to the implementation of primary health care at the local community level. On the mainland, hospital records show a systematic rise since the 1980s. These rates were 167, 190, 190 and 215 in the years 1985, 1987, 1990 and 1991 respectively. Causes of death included lack of proper care of mothers and diseases, especially malaria and anaemia.

With respect to infant mortality a 1990 survey in Zanzibar showed a rate of 130 per 100,000 live births, the decrease has been attributed to awareness of mothers of primary health care. Child (1-4 years) mortality rate was high in the early 1980s (202 per 1000) than in 1993 (165 per 1000) child mortality is mainly due to inadequate food consumption and diseases.

On the mainland infant mortality rate has been decreasing steadily until recently when, due to AIDS and the poor economy, it is on the increase.

Immunization: The immunization campaign of 1985-1988 covered 85 per cent of the total immunizable population and in extending its services to the rural areas government established rural health centres. By 1990, 72 per cent of the population was within 5 km of a health facility and 93 per cent within 10 km.

In Zanzibar, immunization rates are high and incidence of immunizable diseases had fallen among children in the last few years; the percentage of immunized pregnant women is also on the increase.

HIV/AIDS: On the mainland by early 1990s, AIDS was said to have been the greatest cause of deaths in both adults and children, overtaking malaria which, until then, was the most killer disease. Epidemiological analysis has illustrated that 80 per cent of the HIV transmission results from heterosexual transmission. As a result of polygamous practices and given the existing attitudes on sex, sexuality and women's rights, women had little option in protecting themselves.

Women have been found to be more at risk than men, with 7.3 per cent HIV positivity, compared to 5.6 per cent men. Women are infected at much younger ages, the peak being between 20-24 years and men peaking at 25-35 years. HIV infection among pregnant mothers in ante-natal clinics indicate a high transmission women from 2.3 per cent in some rural areas to more than 30 per cent in urban clinics.

The figure of victims of AIDS in 1992 are as follows: HIV positive: 800,000, AIDS virus: 160,000, dead 7,500 known cases and orphaned children: 130,000. The infection rate is 5.4 per cent for male adults and 7.0 per cent for female adults. It is thus estimated that by the year 2000, AIDS victims will be about 2,400,000 and orphaned children between 750,000 and 1,000,000. Seventeen per cent of all people who have tested HIV positive in Zanzibar are women. The majority of them are in the 20-39 years age group.

Government action: The Government has, among other things, established (1988) a National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) which has activities towards prevention, control and surveillance of HIV infection and AIDS. In Zanzibar, there is a decentralization of prevention and control activities to the grassroots levels in districts, ward and villages. Improved management and coordination of the various sectors include NGOs, religions bodies, women's organizations, traditional healers and community health workers.

Health service availability: In the 1990s, the debt crisis reversed public health care trends; on the mainland they have continued to decline. At the household level, health budgets are unaffordable to many rural and urban poor who have no steady income and those whose incomes are too low to afford the rising costs of medical goods and services. While women's incomes have not improved they and children are the majority of patients who need greater household incomes including transportation costs. Women are increasingly being forced to shoulder the household burdens including raising necessary finances for health, food and education in the presence and/or absence of men.

In Zanzibar, trained personnel are needed to offer health service to the people. The lack of medical personnel is due mainly to financial constraints on the government. In 1991-1992, about 35 per cent of births were attended by trained or skilled personnel and 64 per cent of births were attended by TBAs.

Cultural and traditional attitudes and practices

Peoples' attitudes and values affect the socialization process generally and particularly the social construction of what it is to be a woman or a man. In most societies, especially those in developing countries in general and Africa in particular, there are certain social structures or norms that generate some discrimination against women and men. Instances of such situations include eating habits, choices about who to feed in times of hunger, leadership and status at household levels, length of working hours and distribution of resources.

Women are rarely heads of households except where they are single parents or as a result of death of husband, divorce and abandonment, migration of men and women. Generally, such households are characterized by poverty. Women who live permanently with men are not regarded as heads of households even if they may be earning more than the men.

Women are equally discriminated in the distribution of money, food and decision-making. Men, especially husbands have the power to decide as to whether or not the wife should do paid work. Even when women are allowed to do paid work, very few have much to say as to how the wages should be spent. Women are usually not allowed to participate in decision making. There is also discrimination in the allocation of food within the family. In some cultures, women do not eat until the men, especially husbands, have had enough to eat. Should the food be sufficient, women go without eating or eat leftovers from the men. The absence of resources should be seen as one of the most fundamental forms oppression.

Women's access to resources

Credit: The financial institutions currently serving in rural and urban areas do not discriminate formally against women. Due to many constraints including poor and distant banking services, lengthy and cumbersome processes women have been unable to use their services.

Two commercial banks and one investment bank, however, have established micro lending programmes for women with varying size of capital, interest rates and in conformity with donor regulations. The Government has formulated credit guidelines to access women to credit and a women's employment policy to introduce gender sensitive provisions under sectoral policies.

From data in respect of credit the National Bank of Commerce (NBC) Zanzibar branch and the Peoples' Bank of Zanzibar, women have been able to obtain credit individually and in groups both in the urban and rural areas.

Women's constraints to access to credit is the failure "to produce properties which would act as a security."

Land ownership: On the mainland, excluding large-scale leases to private and public organizations, the predominant systems of land ownership for the majority are governed by customary and collective land tenure systems. Most of the customary laws are based on patrilineal ownership and inheritance of property. In rural areas land, cattle and property are owned and inherited by men while women enjoy usufruct rights only. Land allocations are made to heads of households who are usually men.

Land ownership in Zanzibar is categorized as public, private, granted and government property. Access to land is through gifts, inheritance and purchase. However, data on registered properties by gender shows an imbalance. On Unguya Island, in 1993, 2,925 men had registered properties against 159 women. Imbalance in real estate tenure also exists between men and women in Zanzibar Town and on Inguya Island. Of registered properties in 1993, about 65 per cent are owned by men, 25 per cent owned by women and 13 per cent are jointly owned.

Sustainable shelter: In demand and supply terms, the current rate of supply of housing is 20 per cent of the demand. It is estimated that 40 to 70 per cent of the urban population lives in unplanned settlements without environmentally sound services. Women are the first victims of the resulting environmental crisis; yet they are not involved in the decisions and plans regarding shelter. The consequences of non-involvement of women in shelter design etc. is that most shelters do not adequately cover the productive roles of women.

Energy: Wood fuel provided in the form of firewood or charcoal accounts for 95 per cent of domestic energy used for cooking by rural and a majority of urban dwellers. It is also used in agricultural processing and small-scale industries. Wood has decreased from population centres forcing women to spend hours (from 5 to 8) looking for fire wood in areas of wood shortage.

Since 1984, the Government and NGOs have taken initiatives to save on wood energy; these have led to the production of improved and affordable household and institutional charcoal stoves. The Government also has an electrification programme for urban and rural areas. However, the 1991 energy policy put emphasis on renewable sources of energy, such as solar and wind energy, biogas and natural gas.

Drinking water supply and sanitation: It is estimated that 45 per cent of Tanzania's rural population and 75 per cent of the urban population have easy access to potable water. In response to the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, 1981-1991, the Government initiated a number of programmes for the protection of quality supply of water as well as health and sanitation activities in the various regions. In response also to the drinking water programme within Agenda 21, the Government has developed a country programme focusing, *inter alia*, on rehabilitation of major rural and urban water supply schemes.

The number of women in the water sector at all levels is very low with none at the decision-making level. However, in recognition of the importance of the involvement of women in water and sanitation, the Government has institutionalized PROWES (Promotion of the Role of Women in Environmental Sanitation) to enhance the full and effective involvement of women, particularly at grass-roots levels, in the whole process of provision and management of water and environmental facilities.

Training, technologies, factors and means of production and markets: Women's productive and effective utilization of their own labour is conditioned by their the level of education and skill, availability of time for productive work and their physical condition. Lack of time and multiple roles assumed at an early age also prevent skill acquisition through formal training.

The curriculum in secondary schools has a bias in vocational skills in agriculture, commerce technical subjects and home economics. Women are not allowed to opt out of home economics. In the 60 rural vocational training centres (RVTC) established for adult education, 40 per cent of the students in 1986-1988 were unmarried girls; 85 per cent opted for traditional feminine subjects while male students chose animal husbandry, crop production, metal work, etc. The National Vocational Training Centres report 80 per cent male enrolment. On the whole, female participation in secondary and rural vocational and agricultural subjects is low.

Women entrepreneurs have limited access to markets due to lack of contacts resulting from social norms which restrict women's movements since most of their enterprises are operated at home. The undeveloped informal sector opportunities for women and women's groups does not provide easy access to sub-contracts from industries.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Up to the 1980s, the Umoja Wa Wanawake Tanzania (UWT), an organization of the ruling political party, was the only national organization concerned with women's affairs and united women of the mainland and Zanzibar. Its main objective was to enhance women's participation in all aspects of the development process and in this respect its efforts were directed at creating awareness of the importance of women's advancement.

Machineries for women's issues have been changing from time to time. In 1980 they were dealt with by the Department of Community Development in the Prime Minister's Office; in 1985, by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and in 1989 they were transferred to the Ministry of Local Government Cooperatives and Marketing. Since November 1990, the responsibility has been that of a new Ministry of Community Development. Its women's policy called for the establishment of an effective women's machinery that would separate women's issues from community development *per se*. Currently the role of the Department of Women and Children includes formulation and implementation of policies and programmes, coordination, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of various WID programmes and projects, gender sensitizing and collaborating with other sectors, NGOs and international agencies and women's organizations. It depends on other departments for gender statistics, grass-roots research planning training, development and dissemination of appropriate technologies. It has linkages the with WID focal points of other sectors.

Women's priority issues originate from the women's machinery, women's groups and associations and NGO recommendations and research findings.

The national budget allocation to the Ministry of Community Development Women Affairs and Children is considerably low. In 1992/93 and 1993/94, the development budget and recurrent budget were 2 and 5 per cent respectively, of the national budget.

In 1990, in Zanzibar the unit for women which had been established in 1987 in the Office of the Chief Minister (Zanzibar) was transferred to the Ministry of Information Culture and Tourism as the Department of Women and Youth. Eventually it became the Ministry of State in Charge of Women and Children Affairs in the office of the President in 1992. It is the national coordinating body for all activities concerning the development of women and children and is responsible for the formulation of policy on women and children. It has also assisted women in respect of their legal rights and violence against women

and encourages Zanzibari women to form groups for income-generating activities and such group have now been established.

The Ministry of State collaborates with other ministries and NGOs, with assistance from the office of the Attorney General. It has formed a task force to review and analyze existing laws with a view to achieving gender equality in legal matters. It has collaborated with the Ministry of Planning and Education to monitor government initiative in giving priority to women to pursue higher education. The Department of Adult Education has started a special project which provided basic training in domestic science for form III graduate girls. The Ministry of Agriculture has extension agents who work with village communities and sensitizes women to adopt new technologies for increasing their productivity and reduce their workload.

Non-governmental organizations

The number of NGOs focusing, among others, on women's issues have increased to 175 under two main umbrella organizations, namely the Tanzania Association of Non-governmental Organizations ((TANGO) and the Tanzania Council for Social Development (TACOSODE). These NGOs are engaged in family planning, skills training, counselling, research and dissemination of information for and about women and processes articulating gender issues.

Many women's organizations started after 1985 and currently there are 3,000 women's groups, most of which were initiated with a service component in addition to an income generation component. The benefits to women include the acquisition of technical skills, forum for women's meetings and exchange of information, empowerment for leadership and political participation, organizational and management skills.

The Zanzibar Labour Commission established a vocational centre in 1990 which trains both male and female youths and gives credit in the form of capital or equipment to graduates from the centre.

The Organization of Tanzania Trade Unions started a department for women and youth in 1987; women are mobilized and sensitized to the importance of higher and technical education to enable them to hold positions in the political, social and economic sectors. The department acts as the spokesperson and representative of female workers on issues related to workers rights and their working environment; it also makes recommendations to government on employment laws which affect the welfare of women.

Women's legal rights

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has taken a very strong position on the general principles of equality and human rights. The 1984 revision of the country's constitution introduced a bill of rights which provides guarantees for fundamental freedoms against discrimination based on sex or religion. The Law Revision Commission, working on legislation with gender discrimination, had identified the Marriage Act and the Law of the Child as areas that need reform. In 1991, the Ministry responsible for women's affairs identified and forwarded to the Commission ten pieces of legislation which relegate women to positions of inequality in relation to men in various spheres of life.

Various NGOs carry out legal literacy campaigns, some directed at sensitizing women and men of their legal rights. The Tanzania Media Women Association has launched various radio and publication programmes to sensitize the public on human rights generally and particularly women's rights to life, liberty and their freedom from fear. The University Legal Aid Scheme conducts legal clinics and carries out several legal literacy programmes directed at both men and women.

In Zanzibar, where 99 per cent of the population is Muslim, Islamic Laws which are codified are applied in matters relating to inheritance. Secular and customary laws and/or beliefs are applied to matters of inheritance, marriage and divorce to the remaining 1 per cent of the non-Muslim population. The major

constraint to having laws that guarantee equality between the sexes, beside male dominance and bias, is the prevailing legal illiteracy. Many people, men and women, do not know their legal rights nor the laws that protect their rights. They depend too much on customary laws, tradition and practices which favour men. The Ministry responsible for women and children affairs is carrying out campaigns to increase awareness among the population on the rights of women through the mass media, training, seminars and individual counselling.

Violence against women: A 1990 survey in the United Republic of Tanzania showed that 90 per cent of women are battered or have experienced violence in some form. Very few cases are reported and fewer still get prosecuted. This is partly because victims prefer settlement out of court and partly because society in general treats this type of violence as a private matter. The law of marriage, however, prohibits violence against the spouse and under the penal code violence is punishable by 14 years imprisonment. Sexual violence is expressed in rape and child defilement; these are very serious crimes and are punishable by life imprisonment. Available figures on assaults and rape for 1991, 1992 and 1993 are 1,525, 1,541 and 2,094 for assaults and 497, 736 and 721 for rape respectively.

Female genital mutilation or female circumcision is practised in six of the twenty regions of the mainland. Women who have been bold enough to defy the practice are subjected to it during their labour pains. There have been many calls to the government to make female circumcision illegal and punishable by law but the practice is still going on.

Violence against women is perpetrated through laws, customs and traditional practices. The United Republic of Tanzania operates a dual legal system where statutes and customary laws operate simultaneously.

In Zanzibar, violence against women appears in both physical and mental forms. Sexual harassment, rape, defilement, assault, attempted rape, abduction, prostitution, adultery and drug abuse are regarded as criminal offenses.

The Government has enacted laws to protect women. Penal decree Cap 13 Part XV deals with offenses against morality, rape, defilement, assault and attempted rape. These are offenses punishable by life imprisonment but the anomaly of the law is that judges are allowed to exercise discretion in giving out minimum sentences which in some cases have been one year or less. Some cases of violence against women as reported in the courts between 1986 and 1993 are as follows: rape 1992, 3; 1993, 5; defilement 1987, 10; 1990, 7; 1991, 17; 1992, 8; assault 1986, 6; 1991, 5; 1992, 9; 1993, 8; and indecent assault 1986, 3; 1988, 5; and 1989, 6.

Constraints: There is only one woman prosecutor in the judicial system and this is due to the fact that prosecutors first have to be police officers and almost all those posts are occupied by men. Only two out of the 12 primary court magistrates are women and only one out of the nine district magistrates is a woman. There is no female regional magistrate in Zanzibar.

On the mainland, the Police Force has started a recruitment drive to increase the number of women; there is also a special training course for all police officers to enable them to handle cases of sexual violence. The Tanzania Media Women Association has launched awareness raising programmes in respect of violence and sexual abuse. A Women's Crisis Centre to provide support to victims of violence was started in 1990.

Poverty

Though no data are available, it has been established that more households in Zanzibar were better off in the 1980s than in the 1990s. This is evidenced by the prices of necessities and income levels.

Normally Zanzibari men are the bread earners therefore the hardships of poverty are felt more acutely by households headed by women. This is because women do not hold high paying, reliable or permanent jobs that enable them to meet the basic needs of their families. In 1991, 25 per cent of households in Zanzibar were female-headed; this went down to 22 per cent in 1991/92. In spite of this there are family disruptions and more and more children are left to live only on their mothers' incomes. There are also indications of complaints for child support from divorced women or unmarried mothers.

Government's efforts have been in the provision of vocational training to ease the unemployment problems; women's participation has not been very significant. Other efforts by the Government include encouraging women to enrol in vocational schools, putting emphasis on education for girls, supporting individual or group income-generating activities and campaigning for family cohesion.

International support

Donor support towards the advancement of women started in Zanzibar in 1989 after the creation of the National Machinery for Women and Youth.

The number of bilateral, multilateral and NGOs supporting programmes and activities related to women's advancement has been steadily increasing and there has been much donor/government collaboration. UNDP, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, IFAD and UNIDO have provided technical assistance in strengthening various economic and social sectors as well as the promotion of the status of women.

Bilateral donors such as DANIDA, NORAD, CIDA, FINNIDA, SIDA and SICA have women components in their programmes and policies. International NGOs like CUSO, FFHC and African 2000 Network have assisted Zanzibar in alleviating women's poverty by providing grants, equipment, training and guidance 20 women's income-generating groups. In addition, UNIFEM, in collaboration with UNDP and DANIDA, has established a credit programme for women's productive activities, including institutional strengthening for sustainability of the programme and the training of women borrowers.

Constraints

Constraints include (a) the lack of an effective coordination mechanism which has resulted in unnecessary duplication of efforts and lack of programme congruency; (b) donor pressure caused by an expanding number and configuration of different partners against a multitude of development priorities on the part of the recipient country; (c) lack of emphasis on national capacity-building and technology transfer which encourages dependency on international professionals and the non-promotion of local expertise; and (d) failure by governments to fulfil their counterpart obligations.

Conclusions and recommendations

Despite some positive results, it has become clear that due to structural adjustment programmes and the debt crisis, overall progress for women has been slow and patchy. The development and health of women has deteriorated and AIDS has claimed many productive lives. The challenge for the year 2000 and beyond lies in finding the best means to integrate women effectively and fully into the development process. With a women's policy in place, a strong women's machinery, sectoral WID Focal Points, concerned NGOs and a positive political will, sensitization, training in gender analysis and development of gender disaggregated statistics, what is needed is the abolition of discriminatory laws and repugnant traditional beliefs and practices.

Furthermore, there is a need to promote women as agents of change, to make their health and social needs top priority and to equip them with equal access to information, technical and economic resource skills, education opportunities to benefit them in their own right and all people for a good future generation. To effect this, there is need for increased financial as well as human resources provision.

In Zanzibar, it is evident that the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government is making efforts to bring about advancement of women in key areas of concern. However, the situation in key areas like poverty, access to education, health employment and decision-making, and awareness of women's rights is far from satisfactory.

ZAMBIA

INTRODUCTION

Zambia is one of the few countries in Africa that has had a peaceful transition from a centralized type of government to that of plural politics, following the successful national elections that took place in 1991. Women comprise 51 per cent of the population.

With the advent of multi-partyism, the Government had to embark on several economic, social and education reforms aimed at addressing the dilapidated economy it inherited. In this effort, the Government has had to shelve some of the programmes in the fourth National Development Plan which contained the chapter on women in development.

The change also heralded a new economic and political programme which entails the removal of subsidies, privatization and restructuring of parastatals, more open trade, aggressive reforms and financial discipline. These measures are more devastating on women because of their existing socio-economic disadvantages and the lack of a clear gender policy.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

After almost 30 years of independence, women's participation in the political and decision-making process in Zambia is insignificant. This applies also to all institutions and organs of government, private, parastatal and local government level and other areas.

Although women comprise 51 per cent of the population and over 53 per cent of the electorate, their presence in the National Assembly is only 12 per cent. The highest number of females in parliament (1989-1991) was eight (5.9 per cent) and the lowest (1984-1988) was five (2.9 per cent) against 127 men. From 1991 to date, there are two females as against 23 cabinet ministers, one female against 32 male deputy ministers, six females against 35 permanent secretaries, six females against 47 male deputy permanent secretaries and 14 females against 52 male assistant secretaries.

In the foreign service, there were four ambassadors as against 25 males in 1992, in 1993 the ratio was 4:26 and in 1994, it was 3:26. The distribution of officers at the director level in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows a slight gender balance between 1988-1994.

Women's participation at local government level is of great concern because this is the level at which women can be exposed and prepared for higher office at central government level. Yet their participation at this level is very low. For example, in 1991, only 16 (1.4 per cent) women were elected councillors against 1,113 men.

At the administrative and managerial levels, men continue to dominate in decision-making positions. Although the Government appears to have embarked on a policy of gender balancing, statistics continue to reveal that this is not the case. For example, in the professional and technical occupation, women account for 31.8 per cent and at the administrative and managerial level, women account for only 5.7 per cent. Some women in Zambia have been registered as owners of enterprises although they are few in number compared to their male counterparts.

Though women in Zambia played a major role in the fight for political independence and the rebirth of plural politics in 1991, their participation in decision-making has been disappointing. In the judiciary, for example, there is 1 female judge against 17 men, 16 female magistrates against 64 males and 3 local court females justices as against 69 males.

Education

The Zambian Education system emphasizes compulsory education up to grade 7 and proposals to provide a nine-year universal basic education system are under way.

The 1980 census show that the literate population (15 years and over) by sex was 76 per cent for males and 54 per cent for females. This inability to read and write is rooted in inequality in women's access to education and other means of maximizing awareness to rights and use of their capacities.

According to the Planning Unit in the Ministry of Education, the average enrolments in institutions of learning in 1980 shows the following: 48 per cent enrolment in primary schools were girls and 52 per cent for boys. In secondary school, the enrolment percentages were 37 per cent for girls and 63 per cent for boys; vocational schools had 22 per cent girls and 78 per cent boys and teacher training was 45 per cent for girls and 55 per cent for males.

The 1991 enrolment in vocational and technical education training show that female students continued to concentrate in secretarial studies where 524 were enrolled and no males. Out of 394 students in the arts and business studies, only 93 (23.6 per cent) of these were females. In technology, of 409 enrolled, only six (1.4 per cent) were females. In science and paramedical studies, 219 were enrolled of which 48 (21.9 per cent) were females.

At the University of Zambia, the 1990 record shows that females accounted for 19.5 per cent of the total enrolment and that females proportion was highest in the school of medicine (33.2 per cent), following upgrading of the nursing degree course.

At every level of education, gross attendance rates are higher for boys and the sex difference in favour of boys increases drastically with increasing level of education. Rural/urban differences are also pronounced. The attendant rates at various levels are higher in the urban than in the rural areas and the rates for urban girls are higher than for rural girls. This is more striking at senior secondary education level where only 3 per cent of rural girls are enrolled as compared to 19 for urban girls.

There is an increasing drop-out rate of girls in school due to various economic factors which include the preference to education of boys in case of financial crisis, especially in most rural Zambian families. Socially female students face a lot of problems which make them fail to complete their schooling. Zambian colleges and universities do not admit married students.

The overall graduation from colleges, technical and vocational institutes and universities indicate a low output of females.

Health

The provision of health services to the Zambian population and to women in particular since 1980 has not been very satisfactory because of the overall performance of the economy.

In 1980, life expectancy at birth was 45.8 and 41.8 for women and men respectively; it increased to 52.5 and 50.4 respectively in 1990 and is slowly declining. The total fertility rate oscillates between 6 and 7. Maternal mortality rate is 200/100,000 deliveries, and in the western province it is estimated at

800/100,000 deliveries. About 82 per cent of the deaths during pre- and post-partum periods are due to puerperal sepsis, post-partum haemorrhage, eclampsia and ruptured uterus. Illegal abortions account for about 10 per cent of the maternity admissions, with a fatality of 4/1000. The major causes of morbidity and mortality among women of childbearing age are anaemia, malaria, sexually transmitted disease, hypertension, malnutrition, tuberculosis, AIDs and cancer of the breasts and cervix. Maternal health is affected by several factors such as ill-equipped health centres, poor quality services, with the main problems being related to poor supply of contraceptives at service centres, inadequate trained staff and long-distance service centres.

Access to and effective utilization of family planning facilities has been low; two surveys in 1988 and 1992 revealed that only 9 and 11 per cent of women of reproductive age utilized contraceptives respectively. Available information show that over 90 per cent of married women know about a modern contraceptive method and almost 49 per cent have used a contraceptive method and currently only 12 per cent are using one or more methods.

Pneumonia is one of the causes of infant mortality while diarrhoea and malnutrition are responsible for the death of children under five years of age, 40 per cent of such children are stunted while about 25 per cent suffer from moderate to severe malnutrition and 7 per cent suffer from severe malnutrition.

Immunization: The Government adopted the policy of the elimination of neo-natal tetanus in 1989. According to 1992 findings, the proportion of pregnant women not protected against tetanus in rural areas is twice that of women in urban areas; the findings further indicate that mothers in rural areas (38 per cent) and those with no education (30 per cent) are less likely to have received TT immunization than mothers in urban areas (41 per cent) and those with higher education (58 per cent).

HIV/AIDS: AIDS is increasingly becoming a serious concern for the nation, as its tendency has been to claim the youth an energetic section of society. Availability of gender disaggregated data on AIDS/HIV cases continues to be very scanty and largely misleading but a sample survey carried out over a seven-year period showed that 51 per cent of reported and confirmed cases of AIDS were women in the 20-39 age group.

AIDs has drawn attention from all sections of society and serious efforts from the Government, NGOs and members of the community and activities are aimed at creating awareness and measures to control and prevent transmission of HIV.

Government policy on health is concentrated on the concept of primary health care the objective of which is to improve the standard of living and quality of life of all Zambians.

Employment

The main problem facing Zambia in relation to attaining higher levels of employment are the high increase in the growth of the labour force, poor economic performance and limited expansion of the formal sector to absorb new entrants. In the resulting competition for jobs, women usually find themselves in a disadvantaged position. According to available statistics, women constitute 51 per cent of the total population but their level in formal employment has been less than 10 per cent since 1980. In 1986 and 1991, these figures rose to 13.3 and 19.9 per cent respectively.

According to a 1986 labour force survey, most employed persons are in the informal section and in 1986 of 1,826,300 employed in the informal sector 824,200 (45.1 per cent) were males and 970,100 (53.1 per cent) were females; in 1991, the figure rose to 1,912,276, of which 988,154 (51.67 per cent) were females and 924,122 (48.32 per cent) were males.

Since 1980 significant development to enhance the country's legal framework on labour to achieve sex equality in the work force led to an increase in women's participation in the formal and informal employment sectors at the lower levels.

Women's access to resources

Credit: The marginalization of women has been apparent in the rules and regulations applied by public institutions such as lending institutions. For instance, banks in Zambia, until recently insisted that married women should obtain consent from their husbands to get credit. Lack of sufficient credit has also hindered the growth of the informal sector activities in which 70 per cent of women are engaged. To ease the problem, a credit support scheme, based on traditional credit schemes was formulated by UNDP, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies and NGOs and National Credit and Savings Bank.

In some parts of Zambia, applying for credit is regarded as a male preserve. Due to lack of collateral equity low women entrepreneurs have not benefitted from development assistance from institutions that promote small-scale industries. Consequently, only 16 per cent of Zambian women have had the courage to go for formal credit and yet it has been found that women are more dependable debtors as they have higher recovery rates than men despite their disadvantaged position with credit institutions.

Rural land ownership: No legal restriction on land ownership exists in Zambia but women have had difficulties in obtaining land from land authorities. According to a research study, marginalization was evident as married women had to provide evidence of their husband's consent to obtain land, while unmarried women were often not recommended for land allocation if they did not have children. Lack of representation of women in decision-making bodies leads to constraints such as the extended family system which prevents joint ownership of land by married couples.

Urban property: In Zambia, in 1992, 65 per cent of households occupied their own dwellings, while 25 per cent were renting and 8 per cent had free housing. House ownership was more common among female-headed households (76 per cent) than male-headed households (63 per cent), rented as 27 per cent for males and 17 per cent for females.

National machineries for the advancement of women

Following the reintroduction of multi-party politics, the Women's Affairs Committee (WAC) which had acted as a national machinery for the advancement of women was replaced by the Women in Development Department at the National Commission for Development Planning.

The Department had been a unit set up as a link between the WAC and line ministries. It also coordinated, planned and integrated WID issues and concerns in government plans and other documents. As a department, its mandate includes sensitization of policy makers, creation of awareness and education of women to human rights issues formulation and development of gender and development policies, research, etc.

Women's organizations, although recognizing the existence of the Department, are urging the Government to upgrade women's issues to their previous level (the WAC was at the Central Committee level in the previous government).

A major achievement of the Department is in its role in the interaction and co-option of women in different political parties through encouragement for working together in various programmes.

At the provincial level, gender issues are dealt with by gender analysts and personnel mandated to analyze the impact on women of all programmes in the provinces.

Constraints faced by the Department include low financial allocation from the Government and the fact that decision making is at the departmental level.

Non-governmental organizations

The various roles played by NGOs are to (a) carry out civic education programmes on issues such as human rights, inheritance law, etc.; (b) organize gender sensitization seminars at grass-roots level; (c) provide skills and financial assistance to young girls, school leavers and women; (d) conduct education sessions on health, family and the impact of HIV infection, the importance of nutrition and breast feeding; and (e) carry out research on gender issues.

The constraint, however, is that coordination among NGOs is lacking and, as a result, there is duplicity of work leading to wastage of scarce resources.

Women's legal rights

After adoption of the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1979 and its ratification in 1985 by the Zambian Government, efforts were made to eliminate both de jure and de facto discriminatory laws and practices.

In this respect, certain discriminatory areas in government have been addressed. For example, the word "sex" which had been omitted in defining the work discrimination in the Constitution has been inserted. Also, the Employment of Women, Children and Young People's Act, which had previously lumped women together with youth and minors in terms of employment, has been amended to remove "women". This, therefore, gives women the right to seek any type of employment like their male counterparts. Other positive amendments include maternity leave, income tax, civil service pension, citizenship and the removal of certain stereotypical education which prevailed in the school curriculum.

Beside the efforts being made by the Government, NGOs have vigorously embarked on various programmes and projects addressing the matter. Seminars and Workshops have been organized by the Law Association of Zambia's Human Rights Committees, the Women's Lobby Group, the Zambian Association for Research and Development, the YWCA Women and Law in Southern Africa (WILSA) and Women in Law Development in Africa (WILDAF).

In spite of the above efforts, a large number of both men and women still remain unaware of the existing women's rights. Notwithstanding this, many NGOs involved in dissemination of such information are currently engaged in various projects and programmes aimed at infusing human rights issues in the curriculum of the country's educational system.

Violence against women: Zambia, like most countries, does not have the accurate statistics on the extent of violence against women. What is clear however, from the media, the Drop-in-Centre run by the YWCA and the Legal Aid Clinic for women run by the Women's Rights Committee of the Law Association of Zambia, is that physical violence against women has become visible in the society.

The Constitution of Zambia and the Penal Code have provisions which protect rights to life, liberty security of the person and protect women and young persons from violence. However the Constitution provides that these rights are subject to customary laws. Thus, whereas it is a crime to beat up a woman who refuses to have sex with a man, it is not a crime if that man is her husband regardless of security, because culture permits a man to beat up his wife to correct her behaviour, just like a parent may spank a naughty child.

In cases where the law is invoked, law enforcement agents are insensitive and unsympathetic to women. The police and the courts conduct themselves in a way that puts the blame on women. For this reason, many cases of domestic violence and rape are either not reported or are withdrawn prematurely.

The Matrimonial Causes Act recognizes unreasonable behaviour as a grounds for divorce. The burden of proof is on the women whose evidence must be gathered, as in the other cases. Customary law too accepts wife battering as ground for divorce if it is persistent and serious enough.

There is no national policy on violence against women and the judiciary at all levels appears to be insensitive to issues of domestic violence. The society is dictated to by traditional values which influence the perception of the police, prosecutors, magistrates and judges.

Protective measures taken to assist abused women: A number of Zambian professional women doctors, lawyers, social workers, sociologists, educators, etc., are working closely with the YWCA in providing support services to women victims of violence in the areas of counselling and information sharing.

The Legal Aid Clinic is also utilized by other NGOs counselling services, including Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) and the Zambian Association for Research and Development for their counselling services.

Armed conflicts and their effects on women

Armed conflicts in Angola, Namibia, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Mozambique, displaced many people and led to an influx of refugees, the majority of whom were children (below 17 years) and women.

Women refugees experienced much hardship both in transit and in refugee camps. They were usually sexually molested by both males and male security or defence personnel who were responsible for refugees within the borders or in refugee camps. Fifty per cent of those women refugees witnessed scenes of torture before fleeing from their countries of origin thereby being subjected to psychological and mental stress. Within the confines of refugee camps women also had to struggle for their survival particularly so since most of the camps were overcrowded. They faced problems of climatization, health, food, education and access to the related facilities, often with little prospect of resuming normal lives.

The Government has facilitated the creation of education and health centres in the camps and provided the refugees with land for agricultural use. For women refugees who are most vulnerable, many self-help schemes aimed at providing skills were set up. In order to reduce mortality and disease, refugees have been provided with skills in primary health care and family planning.

Poverty

This is the most crucial issue affecting the majority of women in Zambia. Available data show that the burden of poverty falls disproportionately on women. The number of female-headed households is growing tremendously and female headed household are among the poorest; the dominance of women among the poorest resulting in the feminization of poverty. The current economic crisis devastates women because of their traditionally weak economic position and their multiple roles as producers and reproducers.

Conclusions

While there have been some positive changes, the majority of women are still marginalized from decision making and have limited access to education, health, employment, legal redress and economic factors of production.

While steps have been taken to eliminate inequality and discrimination, de facto inequality and discrimination continue and are albeit by lack of a clear gender policy and adequate machinery at all levels to promote gender equality.

The strength and hope for Zambia lie in the work of NGOs and some government departments.

ZIMBABWE

INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe joined the United Nations Decade for Women half way through the process on independence in 1980. Despite the late start, significant achievements in the advancement of women were realized particularly in the legal, health and education sectors. During the 1980-1991 period, the Government introduced legislative measures and new programmes to improve the socio-economic status of women.

In 1990, Zimbabwe adopted the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). It also endured the worst drought (1991/1992) in the century. GDP contracted by about 8.3 per cent, inflation grew and the balance of payments came under severe pressure. Agricultural production fell by 27.5 per cent, mining production contracted as a result of power and water shortages and the manufacturing sector was hit by a combination of falling demand, a shortage of raw materials for the agro-processing subsector and a contraction of imported inputs.

ESAP eroded the economic gains through cost recovery measures; women's condition deteriorated because its market related policies reduced women's survival opportunities, marginalizing them to the informal sector. The rationalization of the civil service particularly those social services related to ministries and programmes, including the elimination of the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs, has contributed to the slowing down of the momentum towards women's advancement. The 1990s for Zimbabwean women are characterized as years of stagnation and, in some cases, retrogression in overall women's advancement.

SITUATION ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

Political participation/decision making

In the 1980s, women's political participation took the form of mobilizing the populace for elections and other party political activities. Women's participation in national legislative bodies in Zimbabwe has been largely determined by political party structures and processes. It is therefore common to see women in leadership positions in the women's wing, youth league and the main wing, although it is easier for women to occupy party official positions in the women's wing.

Although women have held ministerial and ambassadorial posts since independence, the numbers have remained few. There is no woman in the present Zimbabwe cabinet. It is interesting to note that although whites constitute 2 per cent of the population, there are two white cabinet members compared to no woman in cabinet when women constitute about 50 per cent of the population.

In the civil service, there are four permanent secretaries (1994), six deputy secretaries as against 38 men, 21 under-secretaries against 65 men, and 20 assistant secretaries as against 65 men. There are two women in the Public Service Commission (PSC), against three men and one vacant post).

A government circular (G/46 1772), issued to advance women's participation in management, is targeted to have 33 per cent of the senior public service posts held by women by the year 2000. The Zimbabwe Institute of Public Administration and Management runs a specific management development programme for civil servants.

In the private sector, race and gender combine to negatively affect women's chances as employers, proprietors of businesses and opportunities for managerial position. Interestingly many business enterprises owned by black Zimbabweans are run by women even though they do not have propriety rights.

Constraints of women's political participation and decision making include women's multiple role demands, lack of access to financial resources either for attending meetings or running a campaign, fear of intimidation and violence, cultural and attitudinal constraints and lack of information and education.

Education

At independence (1980), Zimbabwe had a literacy rate of 65 per cent. In 1983, the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs launched a literacy campaign and by 1985, more than 75 per cent of the 350,000 adults who had attended classes were women. However, the total number of those declared literate declined from 15,493 in 1985, to 1,728, 12,468, 9256, 7217 and 6052 in 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1992 respectively. Currently the literacy programme resource materials are produced at random and the Adult Literacy Organization of Zimbabwe (ALoz) has become the main actor. Economic difficulties of ESAP had also reduced attendance at literacy classes.

Although the Government of Zimbabwe made primary education free but not compulsory, enrolment patterns indicate that the number of girls enrolled increased although the number is still smaller than for boys. Drop-out rates for girls was also greater, and the completion rate for girls has been consistently lower (11.9 per cent) than that of boys.

The major causes of girls' lower participation and completion rate are cultural influences on parents preferences over education of female and male children, heavy domestic work demands on girls, early marriages and teenage pregnancies. In a study carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture, it was established that at the primary school level, girls' achievement is not different from that of boys. At secondary school level, however, girls' performance has been shown to be significantly lower.

A 1992 study shows that at primary level, girls constitute 50.2 per cent of the total school enrolment; at the Form I-IV level, they account for 40 per cent and at the upper secondary level they drop to 29.0 per cent. In technical/vocational colleges, females make up 34.0 per cent of the student population and at community colleges, 26 per cent. Vocational training centres had virtually no female population. For all institutions, female proportions were significantly lower for engineering and science areas.

Education for the disabled: Zimbabwe is the only African country that has a legislation in place specifically designed to protect and promote the well-being and status of disabled persons. Ten per cent of 10.5 million Zimbabweans are disabled and the majority of them are women. There are three schools for the deaf and the enrolment is 100 out of a population 20,000 deaf and hearing-impaired, the majority of whom are women. Constraints here include the lack of appropriate equipments, trained teachers, appropriate communications and lack of policy on admission of the deaf in teacher training colleges.

Health

Primary health care remains the centre of health delivery in Zimbabwe with greater emphasis on immunization, health education, family planning as preventive tools.

Health indicators between 1980 and 1990 show respectively infant mortality as being 120-150/1000, and 61/1000; child mortality (1-4 years): 40/1000 and 22/1000; under-5 mortality rate: 100-110/1000 and 87/1000; maternal mortality (per delivery): 100/100000 and 200-500/100000.

Forty-three per cent of women use contraceptives. In 1993, a male motivation campaign was launched by the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council which felt that family planning was the responsibility of both husbands and wives. Ante-natal attendances are naturally high (more than 80 per cent in 1991). However more than 40 per cent of mothers deliver with traditional mid-wives.

About 15 to 20 per cent of children in all age groups are undernourished, 30 per cent of those aged 1-2 years are stunted, 1 to 30 per cent stabilize at 2 years of age while 20 to 25 per cent stabilize at 4 years of age. Zimbabwe has realised unusual coverage in immunization in 1993 and over 80 per cent of all infants under one year are immunized.

HIV/AIDS: Up to 1992, HIV-positive women numbered 18,731, and the cumulative total was 10,000; a gender analysis suggests that more males than women are affected, with a ratio of 4:3. Family life education programmes have been given in schools, coupled with parent education programmes to improve communication in the home. The problem of AIDS has made it necessary for greater efforts to be made to address the issues of adolescent sexuality as well as child abuse.

Problems and constraints: Zimbabwe's gains in health in the 1980s are being eroded by the negative impact of ESAP especially the effects of cost recovery measures on the use of health facilities, the lack of participation of women in high professional and managerial positions in health units.

Employment

Policy changes introduced since independence to improve the employment structure of women were selected such so that their impacts were limited and marginal. Being political rather than economic, gains secured by women as a result of presidential directives and affirmation action programmes were non-sustainable. Thus, female formal sector employment trends appeared more vulnerable and dispensable during the drought and the recession of the early 1990s. The beneficiaries affected were an insignificant proportion of urban-based female professional in paid employment with resources to fight enforcement.

Women in rural areas who constitute 75 per cent of the population and also a large proportion in the informal sector were excluded from these developments, and were still beyond the reach of national policy planning systems.

Formal sector employment: Though women constitute 52 per cent of the population, female formal sector employment is only 2 per cent compared to 10 per cent for men. The growth in formal sector employment has been generally below the population growth rate, indicating a steady decline over the years, e.g. (1992, 13.9 per cent; 1990, 12.2 per cent; 1992, 11.8 per cent). In the 1980s, women's formal sector employment constituted 16.3 per cent of the total sector employment compared to 83.7 per cent male employment in 1992. During this period many women were concentrated in feminine sectors such as health, education and local government. In 1987, women in substantive managerial positions in government accounted for 11.6 per cent senior managerial position with the majority being assistant secretaries.

Informal sector employment: An increasing number of women have found their way into the informal sector. Surveys by Gemini in 1991 and 1993 indicated that the number of medium to small-scale enterprises owned by women increased from 67 per cent (1991) to 70.7 per cent (1993), the survey, also indicated that women are concentrated in low project sectors such as clothing, knitting and vending. Because of the labour-intensive nature of the informal sector its job creation position is enhanced particularly for the unskilled and semi-skilled section of the population. Structural adjustment has led to changes in household and community livelihood systems. Changes in the structure and pattern of demand for labour at the household level leads to a social and gender based division of labour characterized by increased exploitation of female labour.

Income-generating activities: These provide women with income in their own right and include household and community based owner operated petty trade, retail and sewing activities. Women are mostly represented in the traditional food kiosks, vegetable grocery, fire wood selling, hair dressing, selling of clothes and tailoring. Women's cooperative sewing activities alone have accounted for over 50 per cent of all cooperative manufacturing activities.

Women's access to resources

Credit: Local economic and social structures operate in a way that does not provide user friendly or a strong basis for women to secure funds. Banks and financial houses still require husbands' signature on nearly all of their forms for married women. In addition, the requirement for collateral in borrowing inhibits women from even approaching banking institutions. Bureaucratic red tape, negative, hostile/unfriendly and condescending attitudes by bank personnel negatively affect would be women borrowers. Although the Government has initiated credit guarantee programmes to address these constraints, there is an inaccessibility of information to women.

Land: Women's lack of access to land is being looked into by the Land Tenure Commission. The presence of only one woman on the 15-member Commission shows the invisibility of women in agriculture. The Commission's report is eagerly awaited to see what constitutional legal and administrative guarantees to women's access and control of land will be recommended.

Women in business: Although women make up 67 per cent of small-scale enterprises in the informal sector, their lack of entrepreneurial skills and societal attitudes are a major obstacle. The Government has developed a range of programmes including low/affordable interest loans to women's groups, micro enterprises, handcrafts and cottage industries.

Government policies, system and practices: Government regulations, structures and bureaucratic procedures frustrate economic efforts of women to advance themselves. Negative attitudes from both males and females in authority suffocate the aspirations of those below them in the hierarchy. Information regarding government strategy on women in business is not disseminated fully to have an impact.

Constraints to women's access to productive resources include the lack of supportive environment to women's economic advancement, governmental bureaucratic procedures and regulation and the invisibility of women in economic decision-making structures.

National machineries for the advancement of women

The Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs was set up to facilitate the integration of women in all development programmes and to facilitate, organize, coordinate and monitor public, private and non-governmental programmes geared to closing the disparity gaps between men and women. It had officials from grass-roots to national levels. There has, however, been a steady decline from a full-fledged ministry status to, currently, a unit in the Ministry of National Affairs Employment Creation and Cooperatives. To date, only five of the established 22 positions are filled, and all at head office level. In addition to the unit, there is a Minister of State (without portfolio) for women's affairs.

As of February 1994, every ministry has a focal point officer responsible for ensuring and monitoring that sector policies are gender sensitive. They are supposed to be at the levels of under-secretary and above to ensure effectiveness in decision making during policy formulation and implementation. In reality, some focal points are at assistant secretary levels or lower.

Non-governmental organizations

Zimbabwe has over 700 NGOs of which at least 100 have programmes on women's advancement and over 50 have women specific programmes. The National Association of NGOs (NANGO) is the umbrella organization which provides an interface between the Government and NGOs and operates throughout the country. NGO activities have shifted from the traditional welfare women programmes to a wider variety encompassing many sectors (e.g., legal research, counselling services, networking women's enterprises, AIDS, violence). Their major achievements have been in the areas of legal research, advocacy and aid, counselling on AIDS and violence victims.

Women's legal rights

Emphasis on human rights issues has been mainly on civil and political rights and women rights have not been sufficiently visible in human rights discourse, institutions and practices. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was ratified in May 1991.

Section 23 of the Zimbabwe Constitution does not include the word "sex" as one of the grounds on which people should not be discriminated and in spite of many amendments to the Constitution, the Government has not amended it to remove gender discrimination and give constitutional guarantees for equality between the sexes.

By The Citizen Act and the Immigration Act, foreign spouses married to female Zimbabwean citizens and the children of such marriages can never be Zimbabwean citizens neither can they be allowed to reside permanently in Zimbabwe; this does not hold true for male Zimbabwe citizens married to foreign spouses.

The Government's "clean up" exercise that precedes any major International event, meant to rid the streets of undesirable elements including prostitutes, usually amounts to indiscriminate rounding up of women caught walking on their own or in company with other women at night. This severely restricts a woman's freedom to move where, when and with whom she likes.

There have been legislative provisions on women's rights (including proposed legislation) between 1987-1993 in respect of deceased persons, family maintenance, Deed Registers Amendment, Marriage and Inheritance, etc.

NGOs have taken the lead in education and information campaigns to increase awareness among women and men of women's rights. Among the problems and constraints in the area of the legal rights of women are the inadequate and over-loaded legal institutions, negative and biased attitudes towards women, i.e., gender insensitivity, women's lack of information, knowledge of their rights and how to claim them and gender neutral laws that work or are interpreted against women.

Violence against women: Violence against women and girl children has always existed in the country; it was sanctioned by some traditional customs that considered that a wife was the property of the husband who therefore had the right to chastise her in any way he deemed fit.

Domestic violence is said to account for more than 60 per cent of murder cases that go through the Zimbabwean courts. Although in Zimbabwe domestic violence is legally considered assault whether it happens within the confines of the home or outside it, in practice the courts do not treat cases of domestic violence like any other assault because of the customary attitudes towards the wife. In cases where charges were taken to court the sentences for the offenders were very minor and therefore not deterrent. At work places, cases of sexual harassment were reported but not much was done to punish the offenders.

After the Women's Decade, some changes have taken place. These include the recognition of the Labour Relations Act which recognizes the existence of sexual harassment, NGOs have been formed specifically to deal with issues of gender violence; police are now more sympathetic to survivors of gender violence; and shelters and training centres have been built up by NGOs for women in trouble. Teachers in primary schools have also been taught to spot cases of suspected abuse and report them to the authorities.

Constraints: Cases of sexual abuse and incest are on the increase as men are frightened of being infected with AIDS. In general, the judicial system does not give different sentences for cases of violence against women. The sentence for stealing a car is stiffer than that for rape or sexual abuse. The procedures that women go through to prove violence are strenuous and many women give up to protect their sanity. Due to increased poverty, many women and children are homeless and on the streets, thus becoming vulnerable to violence.

Poverty

After independence (1980), the Zimbabwe Government adopted policies to arrest poverty and uplift the standards of living of the majority, and black people in particular in the rural areas.

The resettlement programme (to reduce pressure on land) introduced by the Government to ensure greater access to land for agriculture could not directly benefit women as deeds were registered in the name of husbands. Unmarried women, divorcees and widows, however, could be issued with permits.

The poverty situation in the country has been worsened by the introduction of the ESAP and the 1991/1992 drought. Women tend to constitute the majority of the poor because of constraints arising from their socio-economic and cultural status and position - they lack access and/or control of the means of production.

The Government's social dimensions of SAPs programme, adopted in 1991 to mitigate the social costs of adjustment, is aimed at reducing unemployment among youth, women and unemployed adults to accelerate the pace of new enterprise creation and facilitate the redeployment of those displaced from urban and growth area employment.

There have, however, been several problems experienced in the implementation among which are:

(a) Over 95 per cent of the beneficiaries of the SDA are male because they are the majority of retrenchees from the formal sector;

(b) Due to lack of proper planning and allocation of adequate resources the resettlement programme has not taken off;

(c) The absence of policies promoting sustainable agricultural practices have resulted in a vicious circle of poverty i.e failure to honour loan repayment because of poor harvest has led to an increase in street kids, homelessness and squatter settlement; poverty has led to increase in crime rates prostitution and children on the streets;

(d) The AIDS epidemic has resulted in the increase of poor people who cannot cater for their families;

(e) Women's representation in decision making positions has decreased steadily resulting in policies and plans not taking the needs of women into account.