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A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF THE
AVENUES FOR AND CONSTRAINTS
ON WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT
PROCESS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to review the social conditions of women in Kenya with specific reference to the position of women in the rural areas.

The main purpose of the paper is to present information on factors which facilitate the participation of women in the national economy and others which act as constraints on their full involvement in development in Kenya.

Of special significance are levels of literacy and access to educational facilities and the degree to which these constrain women's entry into formal employment; the legal position of women with regard to marriage, divorce and land holding and how this affects the management of resources at the farm level; government assistance for women; and questions concerning the use of time by rural women.

The findings emerging from this research, as well as from secondary source material, suggest that the present conditions of rural women are inadequate. In the face of a narrowing land base and a rising population, women in the rural areas of Kenya have to be enabled through legislation, education and training to channel their potential into development efforts more effectively. They form a majority in the rural areas and are responsible for most of the agricultural work. The success of agricultural improvement in the rural areas requires that women be educated, that certain institutional structures be relaxed which have discouraged the full involvement of women in rural change and that women achieve recognition for the part they have played so far.

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WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR FORCE

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About 90 per cent of Kenya's population draws its livelihood from the land. There is a wide ranging interaction between agriculture and animal husbandry, and these occupations show great differences in productivity per unit of land, depending on ecological conditions, technology and availability of different types of labour.

The preponderance of women in the rural areas of Kenya has long been recognised. In the 1969 Kenya Census, 1.7 million rural households¹ were enumerated with an adult population of 4.4 million and a female majority of 2.3 million. It was further indicated that of the total 1,938,186 households in the urban and rural areas, 571,385 had females as head of household. (Table 2, Vol. III, p. 50) Of the households with female heads, only 46,029 were to be found in urban centres with a population of 2,000 or more, so that at least 525,000 households in the rural areas of Kenya were headed by women. (See 20 p. 6.)

National statistics provide a partial indication of female participation in the labour force, but they have to be supplemented quite considerably by field research on farm level activities in order to show the structure and dynamics of the contribution of men and women to agricultural production in the rural areas. There is a basic inadequacy with regard to national statistics because they refer only to formal wage employment registered and reported by large industrial concerns which employ over 50 people. This means that all of those who are gainfully employed in the informal sector in the urban, peri-urban and rural areas, including a large number of women, are excluded from enumeration.

National statistics on formal-sector employment between 1963 and 1971 indicate a very low percentage of female enrollment in formal employment. The figures indicate that 11 per cent to 15 per cent of those engaged in formal employment are women, compared to 85 per cent to 87 per cent who are men. (See 7, 8 and 4, table 47, p. 297.) A large part of this disparity is attributable to the unequal access to educational

1. Households are defined in the census by common living quarters and/or compounds and the sharing of principal meals of the day.

facilities experienced by women all over the country. It is distressing to note for instance that as of 1969 over 90 per cent of women above 40 and over 75 per cent of those between the ages of 25 and 40 had not been to school; that less than 50 per cent of females had any schooling and less than 25 per cent had completed more than standard four. (4, p. 296)

There is also an additional implication of high male participation in formal sector employment: men will tend to leave the rural areas (especially those with poor agricultural and commercial potential) to go to town in search of a job and failing to get a job will stay in town because for men the mark of 'success' will continue to be to appear to be able to hold a formal-sector job.

Winans (20) makes a number of observations about women's work in the rural areas:

- (1) Women are found to carry greater work loads particularly with food crops in areas where land holdings are small and where agricultural production is small-scale and generally unsuccessful.
- (2) As tasks traditionally done by men (e.g. fishing, hunting, clearing forest, etc.) change or are eliminated by technological innovations or such changes as cutting back the forest reserves and new game laws, the result may be "a stable or rising demand on female labour with low income". In other words, the shift in the division of labour results in women expending a great deal of labour on economically unrewarding tasks while men tend to shift to higher income farming or migrate elsewhere to take up non-farm work.
- (3) This decline in participation of men in rural economic activities accompanies the shift from local community based political power and decision making to that based on the central government and from production relations based on the household to those based on the firm.

One policy implication arising from this last observation is the advisability of local level participation in decisions concerning rural development, including the participation of local peasant women.

Let us now turn to a brief outline of the economic activities of women in the rural areas of Kenya in order to show what women are engaged in outside formal employment. (See also 11.)

Agriculture: Women participate in all aspects of agricultural work. Thirty to fifty years ago, clearing bush in virgin land, ploughing and erecting temporary hedges were considered men's jobs. But changes in the local economies, particularly the introduction of cash crops and the demand for male labour on large farms in the white settled areas of Kenya, the recruitment of men to fight in imperialist wars, especially World War II, and the introduction of school education, have all increasingly forced women to take on the tasks formerly done by men. In addition, women do the hoeing, sowing, weeding, scaring birds and harvesting of all food crops as well as crops grown primarily for sale. They are also responsible for transporting and storing the crops as well as preparing food.

Animal Husbandry: In the pastoral communities, which in 1969 comprised 12 per cent of all rural households (See 4.), men generally take care of cows and other animals while women milk the animals and take care of goats and sheep as well. Yet as in the agricultural communities, various adjustments have taken place as a result of the demands for male labour. Thus in areas where animals are kept in smaller numbers than among the pastoral Masai or Pokot, girls and boys share the tending of cattle, sheep and goats. In families where boys are absent or fewer than girls, the women and girls take a larger responsibility for cattle. And in places where stall feeding is practised, women generally have the responsibility for this job.

Caring for Children: As far as can be reasonably ascertained, women take a great responsibility for child care and supervision. They nurse the babies and handle them for the larger part of infancy. Usually they are assisted by little girls or boys who hold the baby while the mother works, but in some cases a mother will be seen fetching water, cooking or washing with a young baby strapped on her back. They also supervise the care of children even when they have another person to wash and feed the baby while they are on the farm or at the market. The sole responsibility for the child's health, food and clothing tends to rest with the mother, even though her husband or male relative may assist her with hospital fees whenever the need arises. Women also know and use native herbs and medicines for children.

Providing Water and Fuel: Women have the sole responsibility for obtaining water and fuel for their families. In most parts of the country the water supply is not developed, and women have to travel quite long distances to fetch water, and they select what is good for drinking and what can be used for other purposes and try to store it.

The fuel supply is dwindling as people cut back forests and bush reserves. The more prosperous households may supplement this shortage by buying charcoal. In the forested areas, such as Nyeri District, wood is still relatively easy to obtain and does not present a very great problem for women, but in many other areas finding adequate fuel is a very difficult task. In many areas, cow dung, tree bark, dry maize or millet stalks are the main forms of fuel gathered and used by women.

Handicrafts and Pottery: Among the Luo, Luyia and Gusii in Nyanza and Western Provinces, women specialise in pottery making, while men tend to make baskets. Among the Kikuyu, however, women make the kyondo baskets which are widely used in the countryside. Pots and baskets are sold locally, although a number of them find their way to Nairobi for tourist consumption. Some of the handicrafts are also collected by Maendeleo ya Wanawake (a national women's organisation) for sale and display in their shops in Nairobi. However, many women's self help groups report great difficulty in marketing their products because of inadequate transport to marketing centres and inadequate information about prospective buyers.

Marketing of Food Crops: Although women do not specialise in marketing in East Africa on the same scale as they do in West Africa, they do play an important role especially in marketing food crops. They travel quite long distances (up to 100 miles a day) to collect produce from various markets and sell it at other markets where demand is high. In the high potential areas they tend to sell their own home-grown vegetables and grains, while in the low and medium potential areas they play the important role of intermediaries who supply areas of high demand from areas which have surpluses of grains, vegetables and fish. They also prepare and sell beer and milk products such as ghee and sour milk. In the residential areas of Nairobi, a number of Kikuyu women are seen vending vegetables and fruits. They travel on foot and bus carrying large baskets strapped to their heads, and they sell from door to door. This role goes back to the precolonial days when women played an important part in bartering on the border areas between two or more ethnic groups. They also accompanied men to find grain in periods of famine

or war. **Nowadays**, women in many urban centres prepare inexpensive food to sell to travellers at bus stops and men who work as casual labourers in construction and industry. They set up small stalls and sell porridge, maize and beans, and fruit to men whose employers provide them no eating facilities.

A Case Study of Women's Work in Kisumu District

Estimates of time spent at different kinds of work were collected from ten women in Kisumu District. It was learned that in the agricultural cycle weeding takes between three and eight hours a day. The time spent looking after cattle also varies: sometimes a woman looks after cattle for only three hours a day and at other times for nine hours a day. This depends on whether or not this work is shared with another household. Child care and supervision takes more time for infants than for older children. Most mothers have some adult in charge of the children when they are away. Children under three demand a lot of their mothers' time, but after this age they can be entrusted to a girl between ten and fourteen years old. Working mothers such as teachers and traders have nurses for children as young as one month old, but the mother may come in at lunch time to feed the baby and supervise its care. There is an overlap in tasks so that child care and cooking or housework can be done at the same time. On the whole, there is very little time spent resting or socialising.

There were one or two adult women in each household interviewed. They were either a mother and an unmarried or separated daughter or a mother and daughter-in-law who worked and ate together, but slept in separate houses. In households where one woman was much older than the other, the younger woman did most of the really arduous work such as fetching water and wood. The older woman would be in charge of cooking and some of the housework, for example cleaning the kitchen and washing dishes as well as child supervision when the younger woman was away. Children also help with child care, fetching wood and water and looking after cattle. Where the women sleep in different houses each is responsible for cleaning her own house, and the younger woman will tend to wash her own clothes and iron them. Both women, unless one is very old, will do agricultural work on their own land parcels and will usually assist each other at peak seasons such as at weeding and harvesting times.

Table 1. Time Budgeting of Ten Women in Kisumu District.

	hours per	
	Day	Week
Cooking	4 - 7	
Housework		
Cleaning, washing dishes and clothes	4 - 10	
Child supervision	5 - 10	
Child care	5 - 10	
Fetching water	2 - 4	
Handicrafts for sale (pottery)	6	
Agricultural work	3 - 8	
Community affairs:		
Church		3
Harambee projects		2
Looking after cattle	3 - 9	
Resting	1 - 2	
Visiting		6
Fetching wood		5 - 10

There is bound to be variation in time budgeting around the country. While household tasks such as child care, fetching fuel and water, cooking and feeding the family are expected to be fairly standard everywhere, time spent on agriculture, fishing or fish mongering, animal husbandry and trade would vary with ecological conditions as well as levels of development of productive forces within each particular society.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING IN THE RURAL SECTOR

This section will be drawn mainly from my research findings in Kisumu, South Nyanza and may be seen as case material which waits to be confirmed by findings from other parts of the country.

Health and Nutrition

Women play an important role in these two areas because in an average rural household the woman spends more time than does the man (even when he is at home) caring for and supervising the children. Women take children on their backs or by bus to hospital and generally consider themselves to blame when a child looks undernourished or sick. For this

reason women take the initiative in reminding their husbands to produce money or perhaps borrow it to take a child to hospital. Women say that it is the mother who misses her sleep at night when a child is sick or hungry.

Number and Spacing of Children

Kenya's population is estimated to be rising at the rate of 3.3 per cent a year. This rise is attributed to a high fertility rate (crude annual birth rate of 50 per thousand) and a declining mortality rate (crude annual death rate of 17 per thousand). The 1969 census figures yielded a life expectancy of 47 and 51 years for males and females respectively, with an average of 49 years for both sexes. This is an improvement on the average life expectancy of 40 to 45 years for both sexes, derived from 1962 figures. By the year 2,000, life expectancy for both sexes is projected at 60 years. Infant mortality rates are estimated to be 126 and 112 per 1,000 for males and females respectively.(5) This rate of population growth indicates a need to limit fertility among men and women and to increase food production and ensure an effective mechanism for food distribution throughout the country. Unfortunately, the family planning campaign in Kenya is largely directed to women, with the result that the decisions concerning fertility which in reality involve both men and women, the men having quite a strong say, are made to appear as if they are the entire responsibility of women. This approach is bound to be frustrated by attitudinal and economic constraints pertaining to women and their social environment.

In my own field research in Kisumu District, I have arrived at the estimate that women in the rural areas usually marry by 18 or at any rate before they are 21, and sometimes as early as 15 or 16. Subsequently they spend from 6 to 10 years of their lives pregnant. Furthermore, there appears to be a decline in the average marriage age which I was told used to be two or three years later than it is now.

As a woman's child bearing years are between 19 and 49, with the highest fertility between 20 and 39, it could be said that the drop in marriage age has worked to increase the number of children in the rural areas who have to be supported by women in addition to their regular contribution to agricultural work.

Although there is variation among different couples, on the whole rural women tend to have little say in the number of children they bear. In fact, they tend to prefer large numbers of children as insurance against child mortality, and their husbands tend to want many children as well. The need for male children can also distort family size because in some cases to be without a son is treated almost the same as having no children at all. In a study done in 1967, Heisel found that rural women in Kenya preferred 6.03 children as an ideal family size. The reasons cited frequently for preferring large families were security for the parents' old age and help with house and farm work. (3)

Education of Children

Women play a very important part in decisions about sending children to school, especially where the education of girls is concerned. It appears that women are more willing to invest in the education of girls, while men tend to keep only boys in school when money is scarce and to enrol girls only when they have extra money. Many rural mothers, even those who are themselves illiterate or barely literate, encourage their school age children to do their homework and make sure they have enough time free from household tasks to do it, either just after school before it gets dark, since lighting is usually poor, or on the weekends.

Sale of Family Produce and Use of Income

Most rural families in low potential areas such as that surrounding the Nyanza Gulf on Lake Victoria do not have very much of what could be called disposable income. They consume most of the food they produce, and food shortages are common. Land holdings are too small, averaging from three to four acres, to qualify for credit, and very little money can be saved.

A woman can sell farm produce in small quantities freely without consulting her husband, and she generally decides on how to spend any income accruing from her own efforts, especially from the sale of produce from her own fields. She has to consult her husband when large sales are concerned, and if he plays an active role in farming, she probably has to consult him on the sale of produce they have farmed together. If a woman is a trader and raises substantial sums of money in this way, her husband expects to be consulted about how this money is spent and to be assisted with important expenditures such as school and hospital fees and any emergencies.

There are cases where a woman is either lazy and does not tend her fields properly or is not frugal and allows a large part of the family produce to be consumed while still green and not ready for storage. In these situations, if the man is the more active farmer and the more frugal of the two, he tends to have greater control over the marketing of disposable farm produce. A woman who allows herself to be dependent on her husband in this way is often scorned by the community and does not have a strong say in community affairs.

A woman cannot sell cattle, sheep or goats without consulting her husband ~~or~~ his next male kinsman, even when she bought the animals herself from her own resources. However, the husband would generally never sell an animal himself for a selfish or trivial reason. A woman is free to sell the chickens which belong to her whenever she wishes.

Agricultural Production and Land Use

In the area of agricultural production, women make basic decisions concerning the planting and cultivation of the crops until harvest time. One significant outcome is that in situations where a cash crop such as cotton competes for labour with food crops, the cash crop tends to be neglected until work on the food crops is finished. Thus late weeding and failure to apply fertilisers have caused a reduction in cotton yields from time to time. In many cases too, I found that women would refuse to work on a crop such as tobacco when they knew that they would receive no share of the income earned by the crop.

Savings and investment in agricultural innovations are largely constrained by lack of capital, but there is no indication that men and women in the rural areas differ in their willingness to take risks. In different ways men and women experiment with seeds of different varieties until they produce a successful crop.

A woman can decide on her own to rent land for a season with her own money or through some reciprocal arrangement with the land owner. However, women generally cannot decide independently on the purchase or sale of land. Land transactions in general are carried out by men. Similarly, relocation or migration of the family is a man's decision, although a woman can put pressure on her husband if she feels strongly that the family should move.

In many parts of the country men began to use the plough before women and were able to continue to do so for a long time, but as more men moved out into urban employment or other cash-earning jobs, women began to use ploughs themselves or to have their fields ploughed for a small fee. Today if a plough or a tractor is available, local women will be eager to use them to prepare the soil before planting in order to save the long drawn out drudgery of hand digging, especially now that the greater load of farm work has fallen to them.

Community Participation

In low potential areas, farmers' associations and cooperatives, including credit cooperatives, are uncommon, but community self-help projects are widespread. In Kisumu and South Nyanza Districts, as well as in Nyeri, women's participation in such community projects is active and sustained. Women often join each other to contribute to self-help projects such as schools, churches and water projects. Experience from Nyeri suggests that women over fifty years old are not very interested in receiving credit from government agencies but will join with other farmers to raise money for each other's needs. Cooperation with government development projects depends on the women's assessment of the attitudes of the managers and how the project fits in with their own work schedule. If the project demands too much time, in the case of cooperatives for example, the tendency is for women to drop out because they do not have the time to spare for long hours of deliberation.

On the other hand, women generally show more sustained efforts in Harambee projects than men do; perhaps their interest and determination stems from the fact that men own most of the land and other assets so that self-help projects are one of the few ways in which women as a marginal group are able to join together and raise money which they can call their own.

Many rural men and women are reluctant to accept government loans for fear of losing the land or houses required as security in case of default. However, many have indicated interest in development assistance which does not jeopardise the land, cattle or houses which are so important to them. Perhaps a new type of credit system would be desirable which does not require a family's most valuable asset such as land or a house to guarantee a loan and which might offer credit to the majority of women who do not have land or houses.

LIMITATIONS ON WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE ECONOMY

Land Holding and Property Control²

Land holding in Kenya is to a very large extent still determined by principles of customary law according to which women, generally speaking, do not hold land. However, they have well defined rights of access³ over land held or controlled by their male kin as long as they remain associated with their kin-based families of origin and/or procreation. Where kinship structure and ideology still inform decision making concerning resource allocation, appropriate social sanctions are applied against male kin who seek to interfere with women's rights of access. There is some optimism that a new Succession Act (See 9g.) will, if and when it comes into operation, improve the position of widows by giving them wide ranging control over their life interests.

Rural Land Holding: Recent changes in land tenure brought about by individualisation of title in land through the registration and consolidation of parcels of land in the rural areas are beginning to alter the general position stated above. On the positive side a number of married, unmarried and widowed women have become registered holders of title or licence to land. Many of these titles accrued to women through the sub-division of existing family holdings by husbands to their wives. A land market has also been generated by these tenure changes thereby enabling a few women, particularly widows and unmarried mothers, to purchase land in their own names. It is estimated that outside Central, North-Eastern, Eastern and Rift Valley Provinces between four and five per cent of farm land is registered in the name of women (estimate based on current research in South Nyanza and Kisii Districts). Further investigations may reveal a higher figure for Central Province, since there the individualisation process was completed as early as 1960 and was carried out at a time when many of the men were in the forests or in detention during the so-called

2. This section was prepared in consultation with a colleague, H.W.O. Okoth-Ogendo.

3. These rights of access can be equated with what in Anglo-American law is called a life interest, except they are not transferable or chargeable.

emergency period at the end of overt British Colonial rule.

While it is still unclear what the consequences are of group title registration encouraged in the pastoral areas since 1968 (See 9h.), some negative long-term implications of the individualisation process can be suggested here. It is possible that the transition to individualised land tenure may eventually lead to situations where widows, childless women and women whose surviving children are all female become marginal in relation to land. One could hypothesise that these categories of women may have recourse only to wage labour or a client relationship to land holders. Such a development is even less attractive when viewed in the light of the narrowness of employment opportunities and differential returns per unit of land in different ecological zones of the country.

Urban Land Holding: Many urban properties consist of long leases rather than absolute title. Since the country gained independence, there has been a considerable increase in the acquisition of urban properties - particularly residential and business premises - by indigenous Africans. The government has encouraged this development by making financial assistance available to the new entrepreneurs channelled through such government agencies as the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (I.C.D.C.) and the National Housing Corporation (N.H.C.), private finance institutions such as the Housing Finance Company of Kenya and the East African Building Society, and private individuals. No systematic information is available regarding the distribution of these properties by sex, but there are indications that a substantial number of women hold property individually or jointly with their husbands and play an active role in decision making relating to the conduct of business and disbursement of resources accruing from them.⁴

Income and Wealth

Information regarding asset holding and income received by sex is somewhat difficult to gather as a separate category. However, inferences

4. This assessment is made on the basis of a study I am currently conducting on The Contribution of African Women to Economic Development in Kenya with reference to Nairobi. The research is being supported by a grant from the African-American Scholars Council, Inc., based in Washington D.C.

can be drawn from the discussion on land holding. In certain ways such as through petty trade in the countryside and business opportunities opening up in the urban and peri-urban areas, women are gaining access to cash and other assets. A considerable number of women are also becoming involved in real estate and manufacturing.

Education

Education of Africans was restricted by the discriminatory policies of the colonial regime which particularly retarded women's access to training and entry into paid employment. Significant changes in this situation have come about since 1964 soon after Kenya gained independence.

While there has been an overall increase in primary and secondary school enrollment, there have been greater numbers of boys entering all levels of schooling from primary through university. Several factors can be adduced to explain the paucity of female initial enrollment and leavers at different educational levels. In the first place a historical precedent was set of males being favoured for school attendance. This trend no doubt was supported by the emphasis on marriage as early as possible for girls in indigenous African societies and the lack of alternative role models to which girls could aspire. Secondly, because boys were favoured by the educational system, there were fewer educational facilities for girls, which restricted the number of girls in school even when they were willing to enrol. Thirdly, among students attending day schools, girls usually had to do more time-consuming housework after school while boys tended to have more time to devote to their studies. Fourthly, changes in sexual mores without corresponding instruction about contraception have led to pre-marital pregnancies which in turn lead to a high drop-out rate for girls at various levels of education while the boys are able to continue school unaffected. Finally, even though graduate enrollment is fairly low for both sexes, not as many women as men go to graduate school because of the pressure on them to marry and their apparent inability to assert themselves.

This set of factors affects the enrollment of women in technical and vocational training schools as well. Historically, the British did not encourage technical training for Africans for fear that this would interfere with the supply of unskilled labourers on European estates and plantations, since this pattern of agricultural production was deemed the

best way for the colony to pay for its own development. Very much in line with opportunities available to English women in England, Kenyan African women were employed in nursing, teaching and typing, and even then in quite restricted numbers. Today women are employed in these areas in much larger numbers, but men who worked as typists have moved up to more prestigious jobs.

Legal Position of Women in the Economy

At present the legal position of women in Kenya is still a very insecure one. Part of this insecurity derives from the persistence of discriminatory laws inherited from the colonial regime, and part derives from the social conditioning of women. Rapid changes are taking place, however, particularly in the area of property and employment laws as well as within the structural arrangements of indigenous social institutions. These should in turn lead to a wider range of opportunities for women within the economic system. The Law of Contract Act for instance, passed in 1963 (9f), now gives married women the same right to make contracts as men.

Employment Law: The basic obstacle to women's employment is in the field of wages and conditions of work. The Regulation of Wages and Conditions of Employment Act (91) is still being used to fix lower minimum wage levels for women than for men in similar job situations. The Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children's Act (9c) still prohibits the employment of women in certain industrial undertakings, such as mining and quarrying, except in managerial positions not involving manual labour. Women also may not be employed in such undertakings between 6:30 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. except in very special cases or on written authority from the Minister of Labour. Needless to say, the grouping of women with children and young persons in employment considerations imputes a juvenile status to women.⁵

Matrimonial Property, Individual and Joint Ownership: It is not clear what Kenyan women's legal position is regarding property rights during

5. This type of legislation may also be responsible for the not uncommon police practice in urban areas of stopping and questioning women in the evening hours demanding information on where they work, where they are going, etc. The implication is that a woman walking alone after dark must be a prostitute. This is an area which requires urgent change so that women can have their rightful freedom of movement.

marriage. According to customary law, a married woman could retain property acquired before marriage although acquisitions after marriage were generally considered part of her husband's estate. The situation would vary according to the relative leverage women exercised individually or as a group in different indigenous societies. But as more women enter into salaried jobs and tend to contract statutory marriages this position has become unsatisfactory. Although there has been no judicial pronouncement to that effect, it is generally accepted that the English Married Women's Property Act of 1882 (17) applies to this country as a statute of general application under Section 3 (1) (c) of the Judicature Act. (9e)

According to this, a married woman has the right to acquire property after marriage and to retain and freely dispose of it as her own property unless there is evidence of agreement to the contrary. This is also the position of Islamic Law which governs a substantial section of the Kenya population. A commission on the Law of Marriage and Divorce which made its report in 1968 has recommended that a law be passed putting married women in exactly the same position as men and unmarried women with regard to the right to acquire and hold property. This notion is already beginning to be accepted with regard to ownership of land, as discussed above.

Section 102 of the Registered Land Act (9k) presents an opportunity for joint ownership of property. This should facilitate in practice as well as in law an equal share in benefits for each party and an equal say in regard to transactions involving the property under joint ownership. It appears, however, that many people have not as yet taken advantage of this provision or that when they do they fail to appreciate its full implications. In a case currently before the courts, a husband has argued that his and his wife's rights to a property (in this case a house) must be decided by customary law even though his wife is a joint owner in terms of the Registered Land Act.

Marriage and Divorce: In Kenya the contracting and dissolution of marriage and related matters are governed by four legal regimes:

- (a) Customary Law,
- (b) Statutory or Civil Law,
- (c) Islamic Law and
- (d) Hindu Law.

The Commission on **Marriage and Divorce** referred to above has recommended a single legal regime on all these matters. This, however, is unlikely to be accepted owing to resistance by a large section of the Muslim population and other Africans who are generally polygamous and who are reluctant to give up this practice.

(a) Customary Marriage: Under this regime, marriages are generally polygamous or potentially polygamous, and arbitration and conciliation principles are used in questions of the termination of a marriage. There is no divorce as such, although desertions become prevalent at some times. Today a woman can petition before the District Magistrate's court for the dissolution of a marriage contracted under customary law.

As long as she was married, a woman was reasonably secure within this system. There is little protection for the woman, however, in the event of termination of a marriage since customary law does not in such cases award maintenance to women. It is assumed that the woman can obtain assistance from her own family of origin as she awaits the possibility of a remarriage. Today more and more of these cases go to subordinate courts which apply customary law but sometimes claim a wide measure of discretion in matters concerning property.

(b) Statutory Marriage: Statutory or civil marriage laws derive from English principles of marriage and divorce. Marriages are monogamous and either a woman or a man may initiate divorce on proof of 'grounds', provided both parties are domiciled or in the case of a wife she has been resident within the jurisdiction for at least three years. If the parties are African Christians, the wife will on the death of her husband, enjoy all the customary rights free of the levirate and concomitant obligations. This provision is made in the African Christian Marriage and Divorce Act. (9a) In all cases, a wife is in appropriate cases entitled to maintenance or alimony on separation and/or divorce. These rights are spelled out in the Subordinate Courts (Separation and Maintenance) Act (9m) and the Matrimonial Causes Act. (9n) It would appear that women who have been able to acquire some income in their own name, either through commerce or a job, are more able to utilise these legal provisions, especially those regarding the termination of a marriage. Taking Nairobi as a case in point, it can be shown that separation is becoming a very common thing, particularly among the higher income groups, and it can be explained at least in part by conflicts arising out of the difficulty of managing jointly owned property as well as

the economic pressures of an urban area which is beleaguered by many international standards and activities.

(c) Islamic Marriage: This regime is entirely religious in nature, and all the rights and obligations of the spouses are controlled by the Quran. Generally speaking, a wife cannot initiate divorce. Only the man, in circumstances he deems appropriate, can unilaterally terminate the marriage relationship by pronouncing 'Talaka' (meaning 'I divorce thee') three times. The Commission on Marriage and Divorce referred to above has recommended the removal of this male prerogative so that 'Talaka' should become merely evidence tending towards proof of the irretrievable breakdown of a particular marriage. However, there has been some resistance from the Muslim community on constitutional grounds that any change in the marriage and divorce laws would contravene the Quranic code and interfere with their freedom of conscience.

(d) Hindu Marriage: This regime is in many practical aspects similar to the civil regime in that marriages are monogamous, and the Matrimonial Causes Act applies to marriages contracted in this way.

Other Legal Constraints on Women's Participation in the Economy: One particular constraint on women's economic activities has emerged from my current research in Kisumu and South Nyanza Districts regarding permission for the movement of produce within and between districts. All sixty women interviewed indicated that they have either been arrested or fined and in rare cases incarcerated for contravening some legal rule governing the movement of produce. It is also fairly clear that these women do not have the proper information regarding these legal prescriptions nor where to look for this information.

For small scale traders who are mainly women, to move produce for sale from one district to another requires a permit. At present it appears that either it is too expensive to purchase the permit or that the women do not know how to go about obtaining a permit, with the result that a number of them trade without permits and suffer the consequences of sanctions applied by the police.

The women feel that many of them would be able to engage in cash-generating activities without fear if the permit were easier to obtain and less expensive. There is evidence that these women do not have alternative means of support and must risk penalties every day on which they travel to trade.

There is another constraint concerning membership in cooperative ventures which deal mainly in heavily serviced cash crops such as coffee, cotton and tea. The main complaint expressed by women in my case study areas is that although they contribute considerably toward the production and preparation of these cash crops, the person who has title to the land on which the crops are grown, usually a man, is the cooperative member and receives the cash payments. Most families are able to work out how such income should be spent with reasonable ease, but a number of women would prefer a formal arrangement where the person who actually produces the crop is paid rather than the registered land holder. I understand that new cooperative laws are being introduced which should improve this situation.

Further Constraints on Women's Involvement in the Economy

It can no longer be said that there are any widespread religious constraints on women's economic activities in Kenya. However, there are a few exceptions. For one thing, although I have not been able to ascertain the divorce rate among the Muslim population, it could be argued that the Quranic code which allows men to make unilateral pronouncements of divorce puts Muslim women in an insecure position which might discourage them from generating income in marriage. As for most African Christians, the syncretic nature of their commitment to both Christian doctrine and indigenous belief systems reduces any constraints which might come from Christian teaching. However, in the informal sector in rural areas a large number of women generate cash incomes by brewing beer, selling crude nubian gin and making beer strainers. Women who are regular church goers seem to be constrained to avoid these activities, though more suitable alternatives for generating income are rarely found.

In the social sphere, there are various constraints on women's economic activities in matters relating to decision making at the household level. In many cases, a woman may be for many purposes the head of a household because her husband spends much of his time away from home working in town or elsewhere. However, she may be unable to make certain important decisions, such as planting permanent crops on land which is registered in her husband's name. A woman's economic activities may be hindered by having to care for a large number of children, and there may be tensions and rivalry in a polygynous household, especially where customs concerning land operate in favour of wives with sons, as opposed to wives without children or with only daughters. Women are also hindered by the inadequacy of the agricultural extension

services and training directed towards women and by a general lack of support from local government administration.

Perhaps the major economic constraint for most rural Kenyans, both men and women, is land shortage - more specifically shortage of farm land and pasture. Along with this comes the problem of inadequate and unreliable water supplies which affect both crops and livestock. Further research is needed to better understand how these factors affect rural women and to discover further obstacles which are limiting the opportunities of women to produce more food and generate more cash income for themselves and their families.

The Special Case of Women as Heads of Households

A woman head of household who is a land owner with substantial acreage can make independent decisions concerning land use, can use the income deriving from her land as she sees fit and can receive credit from government agencies. However, in situations where a woman is de facto head of household but not a land owner, she tends to be bound to a large degree by the decisions of the man who has title to the land. A woman head of household who is childless, widowed, divorced or at least without a surviving male child has a much more insecure status with regard to land questions.

Socially the most difficult situation is that of a divorced woman. In the rural areas where there are often very few employment opportunities, divorced women have to depend on their families for food and support. Among some ethnic groups it is a social stigma for a family if their daughter does not stay in her marriage, and their attitude tends to be to marry a divorced daughter off to someone else as soon as possible.

GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGEMENT OF ACTIVE ROLES FOR WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

From time to time government has encouraged, through the Ministry of Housing and Social Services and the home economics extension service as well as the Family Planning Association of Kenya, a number of programmes directed primarily at women. Existing women's groups have been identified and new ones formed, and they have been encouraged with the self-help projects they have initiated for themselves. They have also been assisted in the articulation of their needs and the development of the organisational skills of their members.

Activities of these groups are coordinated through the locally based Community Development Offices, but they also benefit from the specific services of other ministries in the Districts as follows:

Ministry of Health (nutrition programmes);
Ministry of Agriculture (home economics and agricultural extension services);⁶
Ministry of Cooperatives (cooperative training).

However, since the local Community Development Assistants (C.D.A.s) work most closely with women's groups, the recent failure of local government authorities to pay locational C.D.A.s and the subsequent termination of their services has meant a heavy blow for these local level women's programmes.⁷

It can be said that there are two general types of local women's groups: (1) family welfare groups (e.g. mabati groups) whose primary concern is to improve the living conditions of their members by helping to replace thatch with iron roofs and develop water supplies; and (2) the more commercially oriented groups which are interested in investment and income generation: they buy something like a bus or a posho mill which they operate for profit. But it is perhaps more correct to see these two types of groups as phases of a continuous and dynamic process of change: the initial family welfare stage is used to get the group together and create a basis for further commercial activities when membership is more stable. Experience in Nyeri shows that a group which starts off as a mabati group does not disband when all the members' houses have iron roofs, but rather members turn their attention to various specialisations usually based on age and/or skills. Smaller groups within the original group specialise in such activities as pullover knitting, raising money for children's school fees or buying grade cattle. Each of the smaller groups is then able to recruit new members, usually younger women who then become members of the original group.

6. It is, however, widely known that agricultural extension workers who are usually men have the tendency to ignore women in the rural areas.

7. Some of the districts most affected by this are Embu, Meru, Kericho, Kisii, South Nyanza, Kisumu, Siaya, Busia, Bungoma, Tana River and Lamu. It is said that there are plans to hold discussions between the Ministry of Social Services and Office of the President to reinstate the C.D.A.s as their work is vital at the local level, but the results are not yet known.

On a number of occasions such groups have been able to obtain government subsidies to help support their projects. For instance in 1974, the Mraru Bus Group and the Grinding Machine Group in Taita/Taveta District both raised shs. 17,000 on their own, and they were then able to secure two loans of shs. 10,000 each from the District Loan Development Officer.

In addition to government support of locally initiated women's groups, three government programmes have had considerable impact on the welfare of rural women.

These are the Women's Programme, the literacy campaign (Functional/Adult Literacy Programme), and the family planning programme.

The Women's Programme⁸

The programme is coordinated and supervised by the Department of Community Development in the Ministry of Housing and Social Services along with Planning for Better Family Living,⁹ an F.A.O. programme, and UNICEF. The main aim of this programme is to strengthen women's groups, offer some leadership skills and use the trained leaders as agents of change among women in the rural areas. It was sparked off by a recommendation made at a national Special Rural Development Programme Staff Conference held at Nyeri in 1971, which reached the conclusion that for women's groups to be revived and revitalised their leaders needed to be trained in skills such as group management, programme planning and ways to find independent channels of income. The programme has been started as a pilot project in the six S.R.D.P. areas of Kenya (Mbere, Tetu, Kwale, Migori, Vihiga and Kapenguria), and if the experiment is successful it can be replicated nationally.

UNICEF has been responsible for implementing some of the Nyeri conference recommendations by financially assisting the development of day care centres including training programmes for nursery teachers, training women's group leaders including covering the costs of the trainers and supervisors, and helping groups whose leaders have been trained to

8. See a further discussion of this programme in (15).

9. P.B.F.L. is an F.A.O. programme which is supported by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and works through the Ministry of Finance and Planning to improve family life and population education among rural families. (See 12, p. 3; 13 and 14.)

purchase equipment for economic activities they wish to engage in such as poultry keeping, buying a bus or posho mill, pottery making, etc.

Table 2 shows UNICEF's contribution for the training of women's group leaders since 1973, one year after the Special Rural Development Programme was initiated in the six different pilot areas.¹⁰

Table 2. UNICEF Budget for Women's Group Programmes (U.S. dollars).

<u>Transport, Supply and Equipment</u>	<u>BUDGETED</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>ACTUALLY EXPENDED</u>	<u>BALANCE NOT SPENT</u>
	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>73/75</u>		
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Equipment for Trained Women's Group	-	3,900	7,800	11,700	Nil	11,700
Field Supervisors (1 Land Rover)	-	4,000	-	4,000	Nil	4,000
<u>Non-Supply</u>						
Women's Leaders Basic Course	500	20,000	5,400	25,900	3,882	22,018
Seminars & Conferences	2,600	20,000	17,900	40,500	4,402	36,098
Community Develop- ment Assistants & Youth Leaders Course	7,300	-	-	7,300	7,300	Nil
	10,400	47,900	31,100	89,400	15,584	73,816
Freight	-	580	-	500		
	<u>10,400</u>	<u>48,400</u>	<u>31,100</u>	<u>89,900</u>		

10. I am grateful to Ms. Virginia Hazzard, Programme Officer for Eastern Africa, UNICEF Regional Office, Nairobi; for providing these figures and this discussion of the Women's Programme.

Table 3 shows UNICEF's financial contribution towards the support of rural day care centres.

Table 3. UNICEF Budget for Support of Day Care Centres (U.S. dollars).

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Amount Disbursed</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>
Transport Supplies & Equipment for Teachers & Supervisors	1700	1400	1500	4600	15085	3015
Model Day Care Centre	5700	7200	8600	21500	5400	16100
Bicycles for Supervisors	900	Nil	Nil	900	Nil	900
Teacher Training	23600*	13900	13900	51400	will be spent in 1975	will be none
Evaluation Staff Workshop	1400	1400	1500	4300	1300	3000
Supervisors' Training	9700	7700	7700	25100	1705	23295

* Includes estimate for 1972.

According to Ms. Hazzard equipment for day care centres is no longer financed because after discussion with the Ministry of Housing and Social Services it was concluded that the equipment was too expensive for rural centres to replicate. Consequently, the balance under equipment for model day care centres and bicycles was diverted to training expenses which had increased as a result of the rising costs of maintaining staff. This money covered nine months of teacher training at shs. 3/- and 6/- per day for Kabuji and Kisii respectively,¹¹ and six months of supervisors' training at shs. 10/- per day per person. It is estimated that the money allocated for teachers' training and the evaluation staff workshop will be spent by 1975 as planned.

There appears to be some difficulty at the moment in facilitating the release of money budgeted by UNICEF to provide equipment to women's groups whose leaders have completed the training programme. The procedure

11. The per diem rates for Kabuji and Kisii have since been raised to shs. 5/- and 8/- respectively. The rate for Embu is shs. 6/- per day.

is that the Ministry of Housing and Social Services should advance the money for women's groups' projects on the advice of field staff and then ask for reimbursement from UNICEF. However, the money allocated by UNICEF for 1974 and 1975 has not been disbursed, and UNICEF has had to reduce the estimates for 1976. If by June 1975 this allocation (\$11,700) is still not committed, it will be withdrawn!

According to a spokesperson from the Ministry of Housing and Social Services, the money allocated for equipment was not disbursed because previous experience had shown that when equipment was allocated to a group just as it was started, the equipment was often wasted or fell into the hands of outsiders and did not serve its proper function for the group that put in a request.

It would be a great pity if money allocated by UNICEF to provide equipment for women's groups is not actually spent, because many groups I have visited recently are greatly in need of this sort of financial support and their Divisional Community Development Officers do not appear to know that this money exists. The general problem was identified at the S.R.D.P. Staff Conference held at the Kenya Institute of Administration on January 6, 1975: namely that the existing system for disbursing money from ministries in Nairobi to divisional and district offices is excessively cumbersome and makes local level planning unnecessarily difficult.

Three recommendations need to be made at this point. First, the Ministry of Housing and Social Services needs to inform its field staff, particularly the Community Development Officers, how much money is available and for what purposes, so that women's groups can apply in good time for necessary equipment. Further, better records should be kept of which women's groups have received what funds, so that existing funds can be disbursed equitably among different groups. Finally, communication between the Ministry and UNICEF should be strengthened so that the reasons for not disbursing certain funds can be made clear soon enough so that UNICEF's future budgets will not be affected.

The Literacy Campaign

The literacy campaign has met with varying degrees of success in different parts of the country, but everywhere attendance by women in Adult or Functional Literacy Classes is very high. In view of the lack of formal

schooling among rural women, it is encouraging to note that women are making use of this opportunity to become literate. While the campaign has enabled many women to learn to read and write, the written material which is available to them is not very functional in that it is not generally relevant to subsistence farming or other women's activities.

The Family Planning Programme

The Family Planning Association of Kenya, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, has been carrying out a national campaign aimed at child spacing rather than population control as such.

The family planning programme is supported by the government and is administered mainly through registered nurses and midwives at government clinics in the countryside and in urban centres. A pilot project is being tried out in the Vihiga/Hamisi S.R.D.P. area which is aimed at improving publicity campaigns, motivating **clients** and educating men and women concerning the medical as well as economic rationale for child spacing. The real limitation of family planning programmes is that family welfare is not only related to number of children but also to the uneven access to educational and economic benefits which exists in different parts of the country. Unless it can be demonstrated to people in rural areas that it is the number of children they have which makes them poor, rather than just the lack of agricultural inputs and tools, they will be reluctant to adopt the idea and practise of family planning. (See 15 for further details on the family planning programme.)

Conclusion

On the whole, the attitudes of many government workers directly responsible for programmes affecting women seem to be encouraging. Community Development Officers and Assistants have shown a good deal of willingness to help women's groups, and, particularly where these officials are women, communication with local women seems to be good. There is still a tendency, however, for women's programmes to suffer neglect whenever there are staff shortages or transport problems. It seems that where there are a number of well-organised local women's groups working together with a government official, the women tend to generate a great deal of initiative and continuity themselves.

This leads to the impression that one of the best ways for government agencies to assist women is to encourage existing women's groups and to promote the formation of new groups. Apart from the economic advances which these groups can achieve, they also offer their members a heightened sense of self-esteem.

REACTIONS OF WOMEN TO SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

In this section I shall discuss briefly how rural women in Kenya have reacted to social transformation which during their lifetime has changed many of their activities and ideas. Kenya has experienced a profoundly uneven social transformation both during the colonial and contemporary period. It follows that people's attitudes toward change vary considerably among different parts of the country, among different economic levels, among different age groups and between men and women. Thus any local person's or group's attitude towards change depends on a multiplicity of factors.

A view most often expressed by government officials, who tend to be men, is also often levelled at pastoral communities. It merely underlines the constant misreading of history and the socio-economic and ideological biases under which different sections of the Kenyan population operate.

Both women and pastoral communities have had to experiment and change continually, for example with different seeds and strains of livestock, without benefit of outside assistance. Experience in Kenya has shown (and many government officials agree) that women's participation in functional literacy classes and self-help projects is very high and that women contribute considerable labour and money to various types of collective projects both in town and in the countryside. Such activities clearly show that women are not resistant to development and new ideas. However, on many occasions women will choose, not out of ignorance or any special resistance to technological change, not to participate in particular development projects when they judge that the disadvantages to them outweigh the advantages. A few illustrative cases may be in order here:-

- (1) In Central Province women have grown pyrethrum, harvested it and sold it to the Marketing Board. A new scheme, the Million Acre Settlement Scheme, allowed only men to become land holders and members of the co-operatives, and with this new scheme pyrethrum production fell. It was subsequently learned that the women who were still responsible for

most of the work involved in the production of pyrethrum had decided to go slow because unlike the Marketing Board, the new co-operatives retained a certain portion of the income from pyrethrum. This money was passed on to the men, not to the women who had done most of the work. (Apthorpe, quoted in 19, p. 9)

- (2) In my interviews with women members of mabati groups in Nyeri District, I was often told that they did not wish to take out agricultural credit because the security which was needed to guarantee such a loan (i.e. a house or farm) was much too valuable and involved too many social complications to be worth the risk. A house and or a farm is shared by many people so that a woman taking out a loan would be pledging the whole family. Furthermore, the husband would have to agree to offer a farm or a house as security, and this necessity reduced the number of women who could participate in such a loan scheme.
- (3) In South Nyanza District, I found that women had from time to time failed to weed cotton or tobacco on schedule as advised by the Agricultural Officer. When I made further inquiries it became evident that the women invested time and labour on food crops first before they would work on cotton or tobacco since the cash income generated by these crops was often paid out through cooperatives to men, not women, since men are the registered land holders.¹²

These instances show that various innovations and ideas about rural development are weighed carefully **by** women before they make a decision, and that whenever women or any other group of people (e.g. pastoral communities) appear hostile, uninterested or resistant to a new idea they might be doing so for a good reason. Their reasons should be considered by government agents, rather than merely writing off whole groups as unreachable.

12. Fearn notes that the British colonial government complained about low yields of cotton in Nyanza and blamed it on the inability of the farmers to use improved methods of farming the crop. However the government neglected to consider the fact that women are the major agricultural producers, and because cotton competed with food production and ill fitted their pattern of subsistence farming, they decided to give food production precedence over cotton growing. This fact had escaped the notice of government agricultural officers and accounted for the failure of their inadequately planned programme for increased cotton production. (2, p. 77)

Two important factors which lead to uneven social transformation should be stressed. One is occupational socialisation which means that a particular occupation or economic pursuit only becomes acceptable for a particular age group or sex through the demonstration of a precedent.

The fact, for instance, that a local woman through her own initiative, family history or some other means has become a successful agricultural instructor would mean that other girls in the areas will have a role model to help explain their choice of training. The second factor is replicability of experience, which refers to the possibility of using experience gained away from home, for example in an urban job, in the army or as a farm worker, in one's own home area on return. It seems that the replicability of agricultural or commercial experience in such high potential areas as Nyeri, Kericho, Kisii and Kiambu is far greater than in the dry land areas, so that those who once worked on or next to European farms have since been able to use the knowledge they gained to develop their own farms. They observed Europeans becoming wealthy on land they themselves had formerly held by using particular farming techniques, and they learned to do the same. In low potential areas techniques learned from the colonialists are inappropriate due to unstable rainfall, poor soils and bad drainage. Crops such as coffee, tea, pyrethrum and wattle on which much research and experimentation have taken place are not suitable to these areas. This applies to workers who came from parts of Nyanza and Western Provinces as well as dry pastoral areas.

In my own research I have identified the above two factors and another four that affect men and women differently in various parts of the country and determine how they will react to particular types of transformations and innovations.

These are:

- (1) Occupational socialisation;
- (2) Replicability of experiences;
- (3) Literacy level as an index of employment opportunities;
- (4) Level and type of technical training available, especially in agriculture and animal husbandry;
- (5) Level of leadership or organisational capacity to coordinate group efforts on a long term basis; and
- (6) Availability of potential or actual capital or known availability of relatively relaxed access to credit.

WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR RURAL WOMEN

Among the many programmes which could be initiated to benefit rural women, new loan schemes could be set up which do not depend on land ownership or holding large assets as security. If this were made a special programme within a central or local government department and women encouraged to come forward and utilise the opportunity, there should be great response in many parts of the country.

Functional literacy programmes attract many women participants and have proven successful in areas where they have been introduced. Expansion of these programmes, with an improvement in the usefulness of the material which participants are given to read, would be beneficial to many women as well as men. An official of the Adult Education Programme, interviewed in September 1974, referred specifically to the Migori Special Rural Development Programme where a functional literacy campaign has had an encouraging start. Women were taught to read, and at the same time were taught new methods for growing vegetables and other crops, the use of fertilisers and the monitoring of the crop from the seed or seedling stage until harvest time. It was observed that the motivation of the women increased with the usefulness of the knowledge imparted. This type of programme has great chances for replication elsewhere in the country.

Women's non-consumer cooperative societies, such as societies formed to buy a bus, to set up an automated water-generator, to operate a flour mill or a children's food store in a local area should receive greater encouragement. Special attempts should be made to encourage cooperative ventures in areas where local initiative is low. The official from the Adult Education Programme felt that women in the rural areas have too much work to do and cannot spare enough time to go to cooperative meetings. However, an additional cause for their low attendance may be disenchantment with cooperatives in which men as registered land holders make the major decisions. A major breakthrough might be made in rural development if more women participate in cooperatives.

In less wealthy rural areas government should increase its provision of initial capital to women's groups who wish to start Harambee projects, since such activities have proven so successful in high potential areas such as Nyeri and other parts of Central Province. Agencies prepared to donate capital to these Harambee groups should insist that the group

members collect a quarter to a half of the necessary funds themselves, depending on the size and type of project.

Some Long and Short Term Recommendations

The following long range recommendations which have been made by Winans (20) are also important:-

- (1) Intensification of the family planning component of health and homecraft programmes, with more instruction and counselling for rural mothers as a measure against increasing pressure on the land;
- (2) On a more general plane, development of small scale high density settlement schemes with increased productivity per unit of land;
- (3) More direct attention to rural women by means of health, agriculture and agricultural extension programmes more relevant for women, greater attention in research on food crops as a basis of contact with rural women and training more women extension workers to work with women on small farms;
- (4) Development of formal and informal programmes for young women to increase their chances for wage employment or self employment so that more women can leave the too small or marginal farms which could then be consolidated into larger, more economic sizes;
- (5) Experimentation with agricultural extension work in towns to enable men to make decisions related to the farm and communicate with their families in a more realistic way, since men who live in towns do make decisions affecting the farms where their wives live.

Winans also suggests the following short run measures:-

- (1) Increased enrollment of women in village polytechnics;
- (2) Community development advice and assistance in organising women's work groups, especially encouraging women in poultry keeping and small commercial enterprises as I have also suggested above. This has already been started, but needs to be intensified and expanded;
- (3) Encouraging the marketing of agriculture inputs to very small farmers more effectively by preparing smaller packages and directing advertising toward poorer farmers and especially women, who usually have little cash to spend on fertilisers and little freedom to make decisions regarding cash expenditures; and

- (4) Easier licensing requirements so that small enterprises can operate in market centres away from towns.

Although many pronouncements have been made in the newspapers regarding women's potential in development, a more intensive campaign is also needed at the district and location level to bring these matters to the notice of local level government servants and the general public. More particularly, greater structural flexibility is called for in government departments if they are to reach women effectively. It must be remembered that in an African country based on an agricultural economy in which women are the major participants, development is bound to fail so long as popular attitudes and institutional structures discriminate against women. 1975 has been labelled International Women's Year, and this emphasis must be taken up by those concerned with programmes affecting women.

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