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THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRIALIZATION

Country Paper on Ghana *

prepared by

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Ghana is a country which is of the same size as the United Kingdom. It has a population of 10 million and women form 54% of this. Ghana shares boundary with countries like Togo on the east, Ivory Coast on the west and Upper Volta on the north and the southern part lies along the Atlantic Ocean. It lies about 5° north of the equator.

Before the attainment of self-Government (independence of Ghana) in the year 1957, Ghana had very few industries and the majority of these belonged to foreigners. Soon after political independence, the Government realized that unless the political independence was backed by an economic one the former would land on the rocks, and also the country might not be able to become economically self-reliant. For this reason an Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) was formed for the promotion and development of industries. Like many other newly independent African States, Ghana did not have enough professional personnels - like experienced technologists, engineers, architects, economists, designers etc. to run the Corporation, it died a premature death, costing the Government a very huge sum of money. This came about because of two main reasons, firstly, the colonials who handed power over to these countries did not gear the education of the natives towards economic independence, so the countries had no choice except to depend on foreign experts whose interests were mainly in selling of their machines more than helping the countries to industrialize. The result was that many industries were set up by the governments themselves upon the advice of some foreign countries with big and expensive machineries depending more on imported raw materials than local ones. Secondly, even where the appropriate type of industries were set up they were not trained, and experienced technical local people to man them. The failure of the IDC was a great draw back to Ghana in industrialization to begin with, but then, I am happy to say that Ghana can now boast of having about one thousand and ninety (1,090) of both servicing and manufacturing industries. There exist in Ghana an organization called Ghana Manufacturers' Association. It

is a voluntary organization, which tries to fight for the right of the manufacturing industries. It has a membership of 600 manufacturing industries, comprising of both small and big industries. The Government has accorded recognition to this body and so it serves as an advisory body to it, having its members serving on many national committees and boards which deal with economic planning, industrial promotion and manpower.

West African women are known all over the world as traders. In Ghana until five years ago women were mainly in control of the retail trade and they are an economic force to reckon with. They sell anything you can find in supermarkets or departmental stores. During the recent seminar held in Accra, the capital of Ghana, jointly by FAO and Council on Women and Development for English speaking countries in West Africa, with the theme "The Role of Women in Marketing of Agriculture and Marine Produce" it was concluded that women traders are the dominant link between food producers and consumers in West Africa. The experience, skills, courage and perseverance, and a hardworking, dependable professional attitude are all characteristics of women traders which make a considerable economic force. What is more interesting about these women is the fact that majority of say 90% of them cannot read or write not even in their mother tongue.

Since the call by the Government of Ghana to the indigenous Ghanaians to catch the commanding height of the country's economy through industrialization, the women also accepted the challenge, and as such now we have got women who own their own industries, both manufacturing and servicing industries, playing the role of managing directors efficiently. These women are found in the fields of garment manufacture, knitting and textiles, leather industries, (manufacturing bags and shoes), food processing, catering, building, road construction, etc. The Ghanaian Women Contractors' Association is quite a force. Although some of these women are not architects or engineers they pay for the services of such qualified and experienced personnel, and manage to get big contracts from the government and other big firms. There is a general observation by the financial institutions, the Government and the firms which award contracts to these women or help them financially that women can often be more reliable than most men. This is

indeed a credit to Ghanaian business women.

Since the International Women's Year in 1975, involvement of women in industries and agriculture has been intensified by the Ghana National Council on Women and Development (NCWD). This body is a Government Agency formed upon recommendation by the United Nations to all Governments as the follow up of the International Women's Year. The councils or the commissions are to implement the recommendations of the conference in Mexico. The NCWD is advisory as well as functional in the sense that it advises the Government on all matters affecting women and it is also helping, especially the rural women, to have money in their pockets.

The Council which was inaugurated by the Head of State in the year 1976 is composed of 15 members of which five are men. Majority of the members were appointed because of their special qualification or contribution to National Development. In doing this, account is taken of every region's representation on the Council. The ministries of Finance and Economic Planning, Education, Agriculture, Health and Social Welfare are also represented. The NCWD has secretariats in all the nine regions of Ghana, and all these secretariats have regional advisory committees. The headquarters has four main departments namely, Administration, Research, Counselling department, and a Technical and Economic Unit. The Council has six committees namely Education Committee, Women in employment Committee, the Home Committee, the Legal Committee and Projects Committee, and each of these committees has drawn up programmes for short and long term projects. The council works with all the existing Government departments and institutions which deal with women affairs. This helps to avoid duplication. A committee has recently been formed to co-ordinate the programmes of all the voluntary women organisations.

Soon after the inauguration of the Council, a national seminar was organised for two weeks involving the leaders of the voluntary women organizations, on the development of small and cottage industries. Apart from talks from experts on how to start and run an industry, costing, simple accounts

keeping etc. there were practical demonstrations on tie-dye and hand printing of textiles, production of potash for the use of indigenous soap manufacture, washing soap manufacture and some handicrafts. The women were informed of the resolutions passed at the Mexico conference and the plan of action. The women were highly motivated and expressed their sincere gratitude to the organizers of the seminar.

As a follow up of the seminar all the regional secretaries were asked to go into the towns and villages to identify any existing cottage industry or crafts which require assistance for development. Appendix 4 shows some of the projects which the NCWD is assisting. The Council's Project Committee who are experts in various fields go out to the regions to assess the viability of the projects before recommending them to the council. Some of these projects are farming and food processing, pottery, weaving of baskets, oil extraction from either coconut, palm kernel or shear butter nuts, baking, beads work, soap manufacture etc. In order to qualify for foreign financial assistance the women re organized into co-operatives. You would be pleased to hear that some women groups are now receiving assistance from USAID and IPPF, the former is for farming and processing of "gari" (this is a local instant food prepared from cassava) and potash for the manufacture of indigenous soap using palm kernel oil. This is very popular toilet soap in West Africa. It is black in colour. The total amount of money being invested by USAID is \$300,000.00. This money will be used in the purchasing of, tractors, vehicles, machinery and building of common service centres. These common service centres are not only meant for processing gari; the building will have a lecture hall for the teaching of family planning, nutrition, literacy, better ways of farming by qualified agriculture extension officers, home science, food preservation and the use of appropriate technology. The building will also have facilities for the storage of raw materials and finished products, as well as a marketing office. The lecture halls are being attached to the processing units in order to overcome the problem being faced now in getting especially the rural women, to be taught these things.

The fund given by the IPPF has been used for the renovation of basket weaving factory abandon the Chinese after the fall of the first Republic, and it is being used both as

a production and training centre for rural women in basket weaving. The NCWD is now negotiating for the employment of a highly qualified crafts designer to come over to Ghana to help with development of the crafts the women are engaged in. This man will help in producing high quality utility and decorative crafts for export. He would also be responsible for making contacts over seas for the exportation of these products. As you would see in appendix I, the women are already in production and the NCWD is arranging for stores in the regions to sell these women's products locally.

Funding of projects: One of the constraints encountered by these women in development of their industries is finance. These rural women are not considered credit worthy, but the NCWD is helping the women to overcome this by guaranteeing loans for them or having grants from overseas agencies. The ownership of these projects belong to the women groups, but at the beginning after NCWD has managed to get funds for a group either from the financial institutions or overseas agencies it holds itself responsible for the success of the project by giving technical assistance and supervision until the group finishes paying for the investment when the project is handed over to the group. Where it is a loan from the financial institutions the money goes back to them, but where it is a grant, the money becomes a revolving fund held by the NCWD to be used for new viable projects for women.

The problems facing the NCWD in spear heading this industrial development for women are many but the major ones are finance, transport and personnel.

Recommendations: To overcome these problems there is need for the United Nation Agencies charged with the responsibility of the role of women in industrialization, to pull up their resources together. They should have an office with qualified personnel for the development and promotion of industries for women especially in the developing countries where industrialization is now beginning. This will enable the women to take advantage of the situation and get involved along side with the men. To achieve this it would mean training programmes geared towards attainment of practical results. Here I would like

attention to be drawn to what Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is already doing in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. The need to get qualified personnel to run the international office as well as those who will work on the development and promotion of industries in the countries cannot be over emphasized.

For funding, I would also like to draw attention to the effort being made, (as one of the recommendations in Mexico) to set up Women World Banking by a group of some dedicated women with the office presently in New York.

In conclusion, I would say that with availability of funds and qualified technical personnel it would not be difficult to achieve the goal which has been set to involve women in industrialization, whether it is in developed or under-developed countries of the world.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
ON GOING PROJECTS 1978
BONG HAPU REGION.

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|---|--------------|---|--|--|
| 1. Gari Production | Berekum | Gari is being sold to workers on Co-operative basis | Capital raised by members themselves. | Grating machine is needed. |
| 2. Palm Oil Extraction | Kenyase | The women's group extract palm oil and kernel oil for sale Co-operative basis | Capital raised by members themselves. | More Funds are needed to buy caustic soap for the preparation of soap. |
| 3. Gari making | Techinan | Women work on Co-operative basis | Funds raised by individual women. \$300.00 loan from the Bank. | Project is recommended for USAID assistance. Funds needed to make co-operative farm. |
| 4. Canteen Services | Berekum | The women's group work on co-operative basis. | Capital raised by individuals. | Funds are needed for equipment. |
| 5. Bakery Project | Berekum | The women's Group work on co-operative basis. | 5,000.00 loan from Ghana Commercial Bank | Supply of flour should be regular. |
| 6. Cassava and vegetables farming project | Berekum | The Women's Group work on Co-operative basis. | 5,000.00 loan from Ghana Commercial Bank | A tractor is needed. |
| 7. Soap making | Benkasa | Women's Group work on Co-operative basis. | Capital raised by members. | Funds are needed to increase production |
| 8. Vegetable Farming | Abesin | Women's Group on Co-operative basis. | Capital raised by members. | Funds are needed to expand farm. |

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Crafts and Food Preservation | Sunyani | Women's Group on Co-operative basis | Women's own contribution | Funds are needed to increase production. |
| 10. Maize and cassava Farming | Kintampo | Women's Group on Co-operative basis. | Women's own contribution | A tractor is needed. |
| 11. Soap Making | Kintampo | Women's Group is organised on Co-operative basis. | Women's own contribution | |
| 12. Bakery and Canteen | Kintampo | Women's Group is organised on Co-operative basis. | Women's own contribution | There should be regular supply of raw materials. |
| 13. Cassava Processing | Mtankro/ Kintampo | Women's Group is organised on Co-operative basis. | Women's own contribution | |
| 14. Charcoal Burning | Kintampo | Women's Group is organised on Co-operative | Women's own contribution | Needs funds and tractor to cart charcoal |
| 15. Charcoal Burning | Dornas | Women's Group is organised on Co-operative basis. | Women's own contribution | Funds needed to increase production |
| 16. Bakery | Techniman | Women's Group is organised on Co-operative basis. | Women's own contribution | Needs regular supply of Flour. |

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
ON GOING PROJECTS 1978

VOLTA REGION

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Pottery Project | Kpandu | Women's Association, NCWD sponsorship | Loan from O.G.E.C. Ø500.00 | There is transportation problem. |
| 2. Debala basket Project | Dabala | Common Service Centre-Joint sponsorship by NCWD and IPPF | Loan from I.P.P.F. | Production should be increased. |
| 3. Vegetable Farming | Liati | Co-operative basis | Loan from NC D. Ø500.00 | |
| 4. Vegetable Farming | Anyirawase | Co-operative basis | Ø500.00 Loan from NC D | |
| 5. Cassava Farming | Avenui | Co-operative basis | Ø25.00 Loan from NC D | |
| 6. Cassava Farming | Sokode Begble | Bible class women's group. | Ø35.00 loan from NCWD. | |
| 7. Cassava Processing Project. | Meafi-Kumasi | Co-operative basis NC D and USAID Joint sponsorship | Funding to be done by USAID. | Project at Planning stage. |
| 8. Mat and Hat weaving | Agbakfe | Broad mat and hat weaving by individual women. NCWD sponsorship | Funds raised by individuals. | The women are being organised to form a co-operative society |

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|----------------------|--------------|---|--|--|
| 9. Groundnut farming | Burada | Co-operative basis. NCWD SPONSORSHIP | Capital raised from individual contributions | Tractor services are needed. |
| 10. Mat weaving | Akcofe | Individual basis. NCWD sponsorship | Capital raised by individuals. | Funds needed for expansion |
| 11. Pottery | Apoviadzi | Pots making by women potters. NCWD sponsorship. | Capital raised by individuals. | Funds needed for the purchase of clay. |
| 12. Bags weaving | Hohce | Individual workers - NCWD sponsorship. | Funds raised by individuals. | |

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
ON GOING PROJECTS 1978.

ASHANTI REGION

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Course of Funds | Remarks |
|--|-----------------|---|---|-------------------|
| 1. Aboabogya Cassava Farming | Aboabogya | NCWD Co-operative Farming | Funds from the Ashanti Regional Secretariat. | |
| 2. Women's Co-operative Farming (cassava and corn) | Buabang | Co-operative farming-NCWD | Ø800.00 Loan from the Ashanti Regional Secretariat. | |
| 3. Cassava Farming | Daaba | " " NCWD | Ø1000.00 from NCWD Funds-Ashanti Secretariat | |
| 4. Bead manufacturing | Daabaa | On Co-operative basis NCWD sponsorship. | Funds from small Business loan.Schene. Ø5000.00 | |
| 5. Maize Farming | Ashanti-Mampong | Co-operative basis NCWD sponsorship | Ø1000.00 from NCWD Funds-Ashanti Secretariat | |
| 6. Aseamang Nkonya soap project. | Aseamang-Nkonya | Co-operative basis NCWD sponsorship. | Funds from Regional Secretariat-Ashanti. | Ø1000.00 invested |
| 7. Pottery Project | Aseamang-Nkonya | Co-operative basis NCWD sponsorship | Funds from NCWD Ashanti. | |

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8. Pottery Project | Afar | Co-operative basis NCWD Sponsorship | Funds from NCWD Ashanti | \$500.00 to be invested. |
| 9. Co-op. Multi-Purpose shop | Kunasi Asafo Market | Co-operative basis NCWD sponsorship | Members' contribution of \$2,500.00 | |

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS
REPORT ON GOING PROJECTS 1978.
GREATER ACCRA REGION.

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|----------------------------------|--------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| 1) Fish Processing | Kokrobite | Fish women's Co-operative | Funds raised by the women. | Fisheries Department sold ovens to the women on hire purchase system. |
| 2) Vegetable Farming | Oyibi | Vegetable production by Women's Curatorial Co-operative Group | Capital provided by the women. | Land clearing was arranged with Ministry of Agriculture. |
| 3) Bakers Co-operative society | Labadi | Bakery - women's co-operative group | Capital provided by the women. | |
| 4) Bakers Co-operative society | Osu | Bakery Women work on co-operative basis. | Funds provided by the women. | |
| 5) Sege cassava Processing Group | Sege | Women are being organised to work on co-operative basis. | | |

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
ON GOING PROJECTS - 1978
CENTRAL REGION

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---|--|---|
| 1. Oil extraction and Kenkey Project | Akobina | Members of the Akobina concert Party process palm oil and kernel oil and make kenkey for sale | Proceeds from concerts. \$500.00 loan from NCWD. | |
| 2. Soap Making | Saltpend | Catholic Mothers' association work on Co-operative basis. | contribution from members. \$500.00 from NCWD | NCWD has given practical training in soap making. |
| 3. Vegetable Farming | Ekumfi Eyisan | Methodist Women's Fellowship | Funds raised from Association coffers | NCWD to organize women to work on co-op. basis. |
| 4. Coconut oil Extraction | Komenda | Women's Group | Funds by individuals | Project needs proper organization to work properly. |

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
ON GOING PROJECTS - 1978
EASTERN REGION

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1. Potash Project | Kwamoso | Potash production for local soap making by NCWD employees | Funds provided by NCWD. | USAID is processing this project for technical assistance |
| 2. Local Soap making | Mankese | Local soap making by the P.E.A. Women's Group. | Funds raised by members. Loan from NCWD. | Progress impeded by oil shortage. School canteen services is being tried. |
| 3. Palm oil Extraction. | Osiem | Oil processing by Co-operative group. | Members' contribution | No progress due to shortage of oil |
| 3. Bead manufacturing | Aboabo near Koforidua. | Individual workers | Funds provided on individual basis | Attempt is being made to form a Co-operative society. |

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
OF GOING PROJECTS - 1978

WESTERN REGION

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|--|------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Potash Project | Pretsea Oil Mill | Production of Potash from palm bunch waste. NCWD has employed labourers to work on the project | Funds has been provided by NCWD | The produce will be sold to local soap makers. |
| 2. Kernel oil extraction and soap project. | Takrami | Cracked palm kernels are bought from Pretsea oil Mill. NCWD has employed labourers to start the project. | Funds provided by NCWD. | Some interested women should be organised to take over the project if shed as needed |
| 3. Coconut oil extraction | Usein near Axis | Oil extraction is carried out by individual women. | Funds are provided by individuals. | The women are to be organised into proper women's group or co-operation society for effective operation. |

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
ON GOING PROJECTS - 1978

UPPER REGION.

| Type of Project | Town/Village | Activities and Project Ownership | Source of Funds | Remarks |
|---|--------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Crofts and Pottery Group | Algatanga | Co-operative basis. NCWD sponsorship | \$500.00 loan from NCWD | |
| 2. Soap making | Sirigu | Catholic Mothers' Association. NCWD sponsorship | Funds provided by members. | |
| 3. Soap making | Ma | Co-operative society. NCWD sponsorship | Funds provided by members. | |
| Maccowd Multipurpose Co-operative Project | Tanale | <u>NORTHERN REGION</u> Bread makers, kenkey sellers etc. have formed co-operative society | Capital raised by members. | The group has made profit of \$17,000.00 they are finding difficulty in obtaining flour for the bakers. |

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