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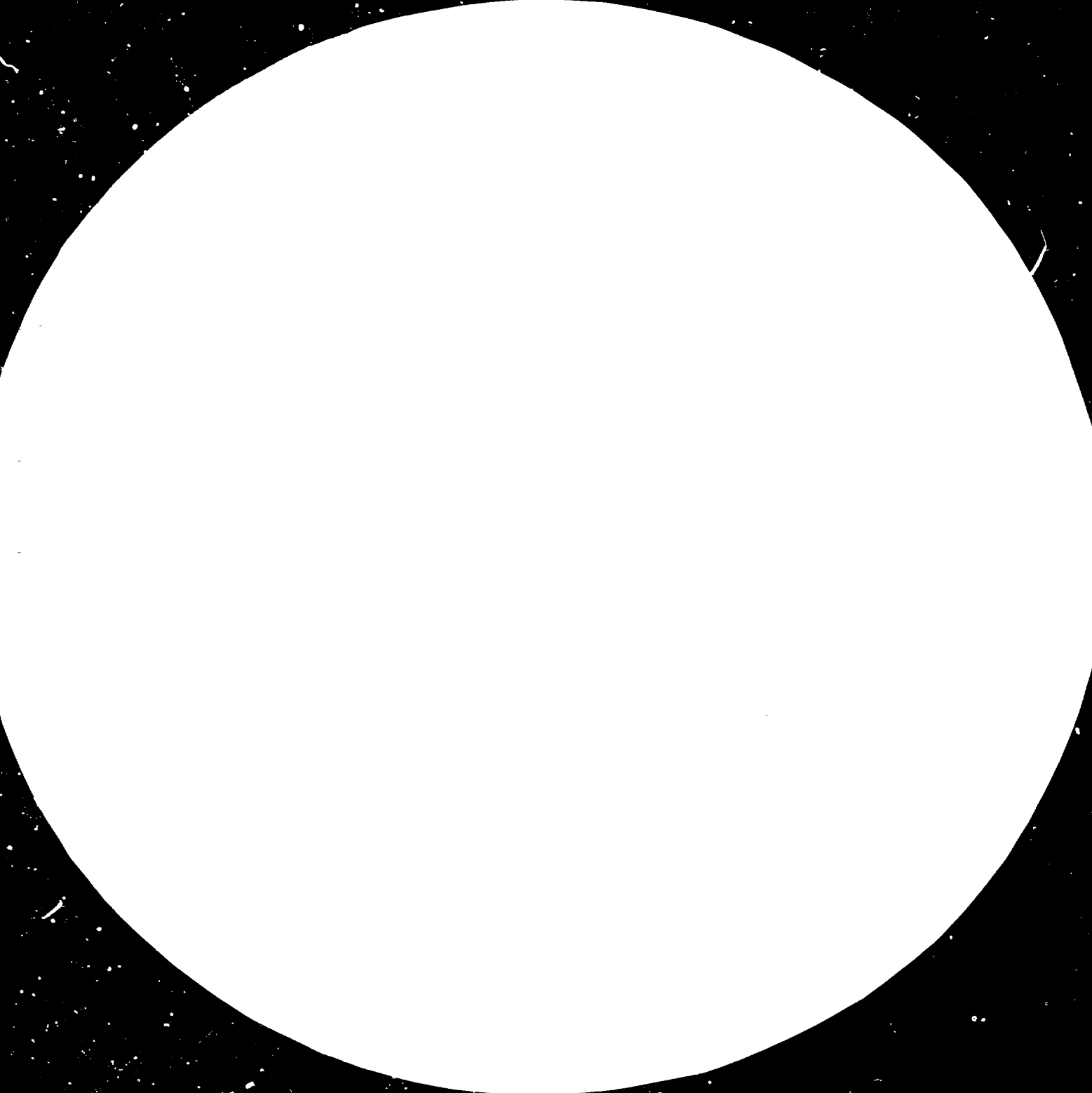
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UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

WOMEN  
AND  
INDUSTRIALIZATION  
IN  
DEVELOPING  
COUNTRIES

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UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION  
Vienna

**WOMEN AND INDUSTRIALIZATION  
IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.**



UNITED NATIONS  
New York, 1981

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

The following abbreviations of organizations are used in this publication:

ILO	International Labour Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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The views expressed in the signed articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the secretariat of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

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## *Introduction*

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Social prejudices and attitudinal barriers towards women in industrial development and employment exist throughout the world. Economic and cultural concepts tie women to the confines of the home, and they are seldom included in the planning of industrial development and formulation of policies on employment, wages and education. Women and men are treated unequally in both developing and developed countries but discrimination is more acute in the former countries, whose historical and political development has been marked by income disparities that have particularly affected women.

Although the role, and the potential, of women for increased participation in socio-economic development is generally recognized in most countries, the contribution of women to the industrialization process is still minimal. However, the full involvement of women in industrial development would ensure not only the effective utilization of all available labour but also an improvement in the quality of life of both sexes with a consequential sharing of responsibilities and benefits. Therefore, action must be taken, at an international level, to analyse the current status, and potential role, of women in the process of industrialization with a view to positive change.

The Preparatory Meeting on the Role of Women in Industrialization in Developing Countries, organized by UNIDO, was convened in Vienna from 6 to 10 November 1978. Its main purpose was to discuss the role of women in developing countries with reference to the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action which, among other things, called for the developing countries to adopt policy measures aimed at achieving the full utilization of their available human resources and creating conditions that would make possible the full integration of women in social and economic activities, in particular in the industrialization process, on the basis of equal rights (ID/CONF.3/31, chap. IV, paras. 29 and 30). Achievement of the Lima target of increasing the share of the developing countries in total world industrial production to at least 25 per cent by the year 2000 is contingent upon the full participation of women.

The Meeting was attended by 44 participants from developing and developed countries and from international organizations. All those attending did so in their individual capacity, not as representatives of Governments, organizations or institutions. A list of participants (ID/WG.283/16/Rev.1) was issued.

The Meeting served as a forum for reviewing the experiences of developing and developed countries on this subject and for establishing guidelines for an action programme at national and local levels and a programme of assistance to developing countries to be carried out by UNIDO and other international organizations concerned.

Part one of this publication contains the report of the Meeting, including the conclusions and recommendations for action at national and international



levels; annexed to part one is a list of the papers presented at the Meeting. Part two is based on an analysis of those papers; the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the secretariat of UNIDO. Part three is comprised of three selected papers at the Meeting that not only indicate the scope and complexity of the subject area, but also describe and analyse various issues.

*Part one*

**Preparatory Meeting on the  
Role of Women in  
Industrialization  
in Developing Countries**



# I. Summary of discussions

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The Meeting noted that, depending upon the level of industrial development and cultural characteristics, women were already participating, mostly at subordinate levels, in industrial production, especially in certain sectors and types of industry. It was agreed that a fundamental change was needed in the nature and structure of such participation.

The Meeting noted that a significant number of women were already engaged in industry in the developing countries. However, on a country-to-country basis, the participation of women in the industrial labour force in developing countries was only a very small percentage of the total.

Different country studies presented at the Meeting indicated a number of important production lines that more commonly involved women such as food processing, textiles, animal products, household equipment manufacturing, plastic materials, pharmaceutical and medical products, paper and cardboard, electronics, building materials and standardized handicrafts. However, for the most part, women's participation in industrial production was confined to (a) industries with low technology, low capital requirements and low productivity; or (b) industries that, in spite of high capital requirements and sophisticated technologies, were highly labour-intensive. The common factors for women workers in those two types of industries were low wages and poor working conditions.

Women's industrial involvement might take various forms ranging from participation in large industrial firms to cottage industry. However, it was considered by the Meeting that special efforts were needed to avoid stereotyping or limiting the type of work women should be engaged in, thereby ensuring that all jobs related to industrial production were accessible to women.

The Meeting recognized that in many developing countries women had substantially contributed to the development of traditional small- and medium-scale industries that still accounted for major industrial production and that, in some cases, had provided for the countries' entry into the world market.

It was noted, however, that, in the current situation, regardless of the sector and type of industry, women mostly participated in the production process at the lowest level of skill requirements and consequently obtained marginal remuneration.

It was also recognized that the pattern of industrial growth in developing countries had tended to favour only a small part of the population, often those living in urban rather than rural areas, which called for increased efforts to develop industry in rural areas on a greater scale. For that to be achieved, there was a need for women in the rural areas to participate in the industrialization process.

A number of constraints to a fuller participation of women in the industrialization process of developing countries was noted by the Meeting.

Those were mainly of an economic, political, social, legal and psychological nature. The Meeting considered the following specific constraints of primary importance:

#### *Social, attitudinal and institutional barriers*

Centuries-old traditions and the resistance of conservative circles had retarded the emancipation of women and their full and equal participation with men in economic development. The legacy of colonial structures had also played a major role in the exploitation of women. Social and attitudinal barriers were reflected in such discriminatory practices as unequal wages, reluctance to employ women at higher echelons of industry, and lack of facilities for assisting women to set up their own enterprises. In certain countries, social and attitudinal aspects of discrimination towards women had been legally institutionalized, for instance, in legislation that required male authorization for women, below a certain age or married, to participate in organized labour, engage in business, obtain credit or benefit from tax incentives.

#### *Insufficient employment opportunities for women*

The Meeting observed that the existing division of the labour market along sex lines was a cause of prohibiting women's entrance to new lines of production and to their promotion to higher levels of employment. It had been demonstrated that during national emergencies and independence movements women had been mobilized to assume important roles at all levels; however, owing to the non-existence of institutional mechanisms, those efforts were not subsequently channelled into development. On the other hand, at times of acute unemployment and under-employment, the promotion of women's employment was considered as depriving men of their right to work, and women found it particularly hard to find work in industry. It was thus obvious that general unemployment and under-employment were two of the main reasons for the low percentage of working women in developing countries.

The Meeting noted the inadequate industrial capacity of developing countries as a major constraint to creating increased employment opportunities.

Moreover, the Meeting was of the opinion that no special consideration was being given in the developing countries to the promotion and development of industrial projects that women could initiate. Lack of effort in that regard was most apparent in small-scale industry and in the rural regions where, it was felt, women had the potential to play a significant role in industrial development. Before that could happen, however, special measures were needed to remove a number of constraints such as: (a) lack of information on investment opportunities; (b) lack of available finance—rural women in particular do not appear to be considered credit-worthy; (c) lack of entrepreneurial, managerial and technical skills, particularly among rural women; (d) lack of sufficient training and skill improvement facilities, particularly those leading to overall entrepreneurship development such as marketing, credit and production management; and (e) lack of information for women on existing facilities and programmes related to industrial development.

### *Education and training*

It was stated that a high illiteracy rate was one of the major obstacles preventing women from participating in active production and public life. In certain developing countries, particularly in rural areas, female illiteracy exceeded 90 per cent.

Furthermore, concerning industrial production, few women had the minimum technical skills required in industry, particularly those required by modern and advanced technologies. That problem was compounded by the fact that there appeared to be discrimination against women when it came to placement in existing industrial training programmes including on-the-job training. In fact, technological advancements in industry were often used as a pretext for excluding women from high-paying positions in industry, while little was done to upgrade women's skills to correspond to such technological changes.

A further constraint noted by the Meeting, both for the integration of women in industry and for general industrial development in developing countries, was that a number of women who were adequately trained to undertake industrial activities were being left idle, or were performing tasks at lower levels than their qualifications warranted—such inadequate utilization of qualified women should be avoided if maximum human resources were to be mobilized to implement the industrialization targets set by the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action.

### *Employment conditions and environment*

Women were often relegated to low-productivity jobs requiring low skills, which therefore had lower salaries. Furthermore, even when occupying higher ranks, women's salaries were considered as complementary income, and thus put at a lower level than men's. That fact had led to an inequitable distribution within the economy in favour of men.

Women's effective contribution to the industrialization process was further limited by the fact that whenever women entered the industrial labour force they remained responsible for the household and the care of the family group. The lack, or the ineffectiveness, of legislation for social facilities, maternity and social security benefits was underlined by the Meeting. Likewise, the inadequate administrative regulations on working hours, organization of shifts and lack of health and safety regulations and facilities for women hampered their involvement in industry.

It was further noted by the Meeting that women's possibility of advancement, particularly in large-scale industries, was impeded by the lack of on-the-job training programmes to upgrade skills.

It was also observed that under the present international economic system, most transnational corporations located industries in developing countries in order to exploit cheap and relatively unorganized labour. Some enterprises particularly sought female labour because it was the most easily exploited in industries such as electronics, textiles, food-processing industries. Some transnational corporations were, in effect, often exporting to the developing countries a part of the production process that was labour-intensive, in which adverse employment conditions for women were created, while maintaining capital-intensive, highly-skilled and more productive stages of the labour

process in the industrialized countries, thereby inhibiting the transfer of technology to the developing countries.

Another aspect of the existing inequitable international economic system that was pointed out was that many industrialized countries import cheap migrant labour to do work in areas of industry that workers in the developed countries were unwilling to accept. That sometimes involved migrant women workers, but where it involved men, women were also adversely affected because families were split up and women were left with a heavy burden of responsibility for the maintenance of the family, without opportunities to acquire jobs and skills in the domestic economy.

#### *Lack of participation in decision-making and planning bodies*

Women's interests were usually excluded from the decision-making and planning bodies involved in the industrialization process, with the results that project ideas developed by women for their own benefit often never reached the decision level and that industrialization plans with adverse effects on women might easily be approved and implemented. The Meeting was of the opinion that there was a lack of women's involvement at all decision-making levels of formulation of industrialization strategies and plans as well as in development and execution of specific industrial development projects. It was felt that until a significant degree of involvement of women in decision-making could be secured, discrimination against women in industry would continue. To bring that about, special measures should be called for, as below.

##### *National level*

Women should be associated with the decisions at all stages of formulation, planning and implementation of industries, including designing, planning of pre-investment and operations at all levels:

- (a) Executive, including public service;
- (b) Judicial, including industrial tribunals and quasi-judicial bodies;
- (c) Legislative;
- (d) Industrial boards and boards of directors of state-owned enterprises.

##### *Local level*

Women should be encouraged to participate in local councils and appropriate municipal boards.

##### *Enterprise level*

Women should be encouraged to participate in planning, decision-making and management in industrial enterprises, chambers of commerce and industry, professional bodies and unions. Where there were no unions, women should participate in unionization.

#### *Lack of organization and participation of women in trade unions*

The lack of proper organization among women is one of the major weaknesses in promoting the integration of women in development in general and in industrial development in particular. In the latter case, the Meeting

noted the lack of organization and effective participation of women in trade unions at the level of members and administrators as well as lack of participation in international organizations involving labour. Where women had attempted to start small industrial units, they had run into constraints that might have been avoided had they been organized into economically and legally viable groups such as industrial co-operatives.

### *Information*

Women were not properly informed of the opportunities available concerning their potential involvement in the industrialization process or of the possibilities of improving their skill capabilities to meet the needs of industry.

### *Data and methodology on women's contributions*

Data and proper methodology for measuring women's existing and potential contributions to industrialization were crucial to effective planning of industrialization programmes aimed at fully utilizing available human resources in developing countries. In most developing countries, however, the research required to develop such data and methodology was still to be undertaken.



## II. Recommendations

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### *At the national and local levels*

1. Developing countries should create or strengthen national commissions or any other appropriate machinery at the planning, institutional and operational levels to generally promote and co-ordinate the integration of women into the industrialization process, and specifically to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of this Meeting.

2. National legislation should be reviewed with a view to abolishing all forms of discrimination, and promoting equality of opportunity and treatment, for men and women.

3. Developing countries should ensure the effective implementation of conventions and recommendations approved in international forums, particularly ILO, to prevent discrimination against women in employment.

4. Governments of developing countries should adopt policies and introduce incentives to eliminate discrimination against women in recruitment practices, career development, on-the-job training and job security, and also against employed women, especially when they need maternity leave.

5. Governments should organize media campaigns at the national and local levels to break down prejudice against women and disseminate information on women's potential in industrialization. Campaigns should also be organized to encourage men to share equally the responsibilities of the household and family, thereby providing women with sufficient time to be actively engaged in industry.

6. In the identification of national priority industries—small-, medium- and large-scale—Governments should examine their present criteria to select projects that will encourage women's employment, both in rural and urban sectors, taking into account technology, product design and marketing organization. Industries oriented to household labour-saving devices and infrastructure projects that would increase women's free time and facilitate their entry into the job market should be given high priority.

7. When considering foreign investment requests, Governments should examine the existing policies of foreign enterprises, i.e. transnational corporations, that affect women workers, particularly in large-scale industries, to rectify any discriminatory practices.

8. Measures should be taken at all levels to ensure the effective participation of women in all decision-making/planning bodies and in unions.

9. Governments should adopt policy measures to improve the working and living conditions of women workers, including those dealing with out-work and piece-work, and to ensure equal remuneration for work of equal value

(including wage supplements for jobs of low satisfaction), equal access to industrial occupations and improved working facilities such as children's day-care centres and rest areas.

10. Banking regulations and policies concerning industrial credit should be reviewed with the objective of modifying them to facilitate the financing of women's industrial projects.

11. Governments should adopt measures to ensure equal access by women to all forms and levels of education and training, and in particular:

(a) To review basic educational systems to ensure, among other things, that:

- (i) An educational system is introduced that aims at combining educational with job opportunities;
- (ii) Technical education, including that directed towards industrial employment, is offered;
- (iii) Technical education is offered to girls;
- (iv) Educational materials are prepared to change the attitudes towards traditional sex roles;
- (v) Career guidance is provided based on information on available educational offers and job opportunities;
- (vi) Reorientation courses are arranged for teachers to ensure implementation of the above reforms;

(b) To provide extramural education, duly co-ordinated with the private sector, for the formation and upgrading of skills including scientific, technical, administrative and managerial ones. The timing of the programmes should be suitable for working women;

(c) To increase women's participation in training programmes. For this purpose, studies should be conducted on the desirability of legislation requiring enterprises and government training institutions to allocate a percentage of their training resources for women.

12. Governments should give priority to developing industrial projects in the rural areas to benefit the poorer sections of the population. In the formulation and execution of these projects, attention should be given to the possibilities of employing women.

13. Governments should create or strengthen special assistance units for women industrialists and entrepreneurs, particularly in small- and medium-scale industries. Such units would assist women in the selection of technology appropriate to local conditions and in the preparation of projects for loan applications. The units should also undertake continuing studies of measures designed to improve productivity and working conditions.

14. Governments and responsible non-governmental organizations should promote the organization of women into co-operatives and other industrially registered organizations to enable them to undertake viable industrial projects, particularly in small- and medium-scale industries.

15. For proper industrial planning, data should be extracted on the actual contribution of women in the production process (including work done at home).

*At the international level*

The recommendations were made that UNIDO should:

1. Create institutional machinery, such as an interdivisional working group on women in industry, to implement and follow up the relevant recommendations and resolutions adopted in various forums of the United Nations system related to the integration of women in development as well as the recommendations below.

2. Make concrete efforts to have women included in international conferences, workshops and training programmes organized by UNIDO. In particular, special efforts should be made to have women workers at the grass-roots level represented at meetings on industrialization.

3. Develop project concepts and proposals for the involvement of women in industry and provide assistance in implementing these programmes when so requested by Governments.

4. Undertake studies related to selected industries, such as electronics, food processing and the pharmaceutical and textile industries, and their impact on women, taking into account reports on these subjects by other agencies such as FAO, ILO and WHO. Any preliminary results of such studies should be included in the documentation for the Third General Conference of UNIDO in 1980 and submitted to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in 1980.

5. Take into account factors that are likely to adversely affect women in the production process when technical assistance is provided to project feasibility studies or when technologies are selected.

6. Undertake intensive research on the type of technologies that aid women in existing jobs.

7. Undertake studies on the experience of women already active in small- and medium-scale industries both in rural and urban areas for subsequent dissemination to all developing countries.

8. Take into consideration the possible impact of industrial redeployment on women in the consolidated report<sup>1</sup> that the secretariat is preparing on the subject for submission to the Third General Conference of UNIDO.

9. Formulate, at the request of Governments, projects in areas of rural industrialization where women can be employed, such as agricultural modernization, raw material and agricultural processing, and construction materials. Special funds for this purpose might be allocated from the UNIDO Industrial Development Fund.

10. Improve data collection and research methodology for better industrial planning by extracting data on the actual contribution of women in the production process (including taking measures to quantify goods produced and consumed in the household).

11. Take special measures to increase the participation of women in the training programmes of UNIDO, in particular:

(a) To reorient the UNIDO training and fellowship programmes at the managerial and technical levels to ensure a greater participation of women. In

<sup>1</sup>See "Industrial redeployment in favour of developing countries" (A/33/182), para. 37.

reorienting the training programmes. UNIDO should emphasize developing training programmes for women trainers, and strengthening existing national centres or institutions for that purpose. In carrying out this task, UNIDO should consult with other United Nations agencies that are involved in vocational training and education, such as ILO and UNESCO;

(b) To organize special subregional training programmes for women, particularly in industries already planned for the subregion;

(c) To organize meetings of experts to exchange experience concerning training of women, especially for existing industries with a good potential for participation of women;

(d) To revise the suggestions of UNIDO to Governments for the nomination of female candidates for UNIDO training and fellowship programmes;

(e) To design managerial and training programmes in order for women to keep up to date with the latest technological developments in industry;

(f) To allocate resources from the UNIDO budget for technical co-operation among developing countries to give women the opportunity to upgrade their technical skills through personnel exchange programmes;

(g) As a follow-up to resolution 44 (IX) on the integration of women in development adopted by the Industrial Development Board in 1975<sup>2</sup> and the recommendations of that meeting, the Board may wish to consider (a) requesting the secretariat of UNIDO to design and execute projects for training of women at higher technological and managerial levels; and (b) allocating a portion of the funds available for training under the Regular Programme of Technical Assistance and allocating other funds specifically for this purpose.

12. Include qualified women at the managerial, administrative and technical levels both in the secretariat and in projects at the country level.

13. Take into consideration in the work programme of UNIDO the ideas expressed in the discussions and documentation of this Meeting.

14. Submit the report of this Meeting to the Industrial Development Board at its next session and use it as a UNIDO input to the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development under the relevant agenda item.

The following recommendations were made to UNIDO in co-operation with other United Nations agencies:

1. Appropriate United Nations agencies and organizations should include women's interests in the codes of conduct currently under negotiation relating to transfer of technology and transnational corporations.

2. In the light of the decentralized nature of UNDP operations, UNIDO and other United Nations organizations responsible for the promotion of women's participation in industrial development should provide appropriate instructions and guidelines to their field staff and to the UNDP resident representatives. Such guidelines should also be available to government officials and interested non-governmental organizations in the relevant working languages.

<sup>2</sup>Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 16, annex I.

3. Women workers should be properly represented at any future meetings organized by the United Nations on the subject of participation of women in development. The United Nations should encourage Governments to invite women workers from both rural and urban areas to participate actively in the policy-making decisions at all meetings related to industrialization, technology transfer, technical training and programme evaluations, so that the actual needs of women can be taken into consideration with first-hand knowledge.

4. UNESCO, ILO and UNIDO should provide assistance to Governments in connection with educational reforms to improve women's technological and scientific skills.

5. An interagency task force on technical co-operation between developing countries in industrial development should be established under the leadership of UNIDO to deal particularly with the transfer of technology and entrepreneurship development programmes for women.

6. All interagency reports prepared by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination of the United Nations concerning women in development should include the topic of women in industry. The topic should also be covered in the regional reports to be prepared for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, which are provided for in paragraph 9 of the Economic and Social Council resolution 1978/32/Rev. 1.

*Annex*

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

- ID/WG.283/1 Women, industrialization and underdevelopment  
E. Flegg
- ID/WG.283/2 FAO approach to enhancing the role of women in rural economies  
Home Economics and Social Programmes Service
- ID/WG.283/3 Note on the role of women in industrialization in developing countries  
United Nations Development Programme
- ID/WG.283/4 Note on the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development relevant to the role of women in industrialization in developing countries  
Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development, ESCAP
- ID/WG.283/5 The role of women in industrialization in developing countries  
D. Gaudart (Austria)
- ID/WG.283/6 Note for the preparatory meeting on the role of women in industrialization in developing countries  
Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs
- ID/WG.283/7 The role of women in industrialization in Sri Lanka  
N. Fernando
- ID/WG.283/8 Note on activities of ESCAP related to women in industry  
ESCAP
- ID/WG.283/9 Women and industrial development  
M. Boesveld (Netherlands)
- ID/WG.283/10 UNESCO activities relevant to the role of women in industrialization in developing countries  
UNESCO
- ID/WG.283/11 Note on some activities of the World Bank related to women in industry  
World Bank
- ID/WG.283/12 The role of women in the industrial development of the Philippines  
L. R. Bautista
- ID/WG.283/13 The role of women in industrialization. Country paper on Ghana  
E. Ocloo
- ID/WG.283/14 Women in industrial development — India  
L. D. Menon

- ID/WG.283/15 The Soviet Union and the role of women in industrialization in developing countries  
Ye. A. Bragina
- ID/WG.283/16/Rev.1 List of participants
- ID/WG.283/17 The role of women in industrialization in developing countries. Country paper on Tanzania  
K. T. Mtenga
- ID/WG.283/18 Role of women in industrialization. The Turkish case  
A. Kudat
- ID/WG.283/19 The role of women in industrialization in Thailand  
M. Sundhagul and O. Tanskul
- ID/WG.283/20 The role of women in industrialization in developing countries. Country paper on Nigeria  
B. Awe
- ID/WG.283/21 Provisional agenda and work programme
- ID/WG.283/22 Issues to be considered by the UNIDO Meeting on the Role of Women in Industrialization in Developing Countries  
UNIDO secretariat
- ID/WG.283/24 The role of women in industrialization; Country study on Peru  
M. Salazar
- ID/WG.283/25 The role of women in industrialization; Country paper on Morocco  
F. Z. Bennani-Baïti
- ID/WG.283/26 The role of women in industrialization in Egypt  
S. El-Shamy
- ID/WG.283/27 The role of women in industrial development; Country paper on Pakistan  
B. Nasim Jehan
- ID/WG.283/28 The role of women in the industrial development in Romania  
M. Groza
- ID/WG.283/29 Activities of the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) relating to the role of women in the industrialization of developing countries  
J. Kann
- ID/WG.283/30 The status of women, fertility patterns and industrialization in developing countries  
I. A. Subramaniam
- ID/WG.283/31 The role of women in industrialization in Brazil  
M. Souto Machado
- ID/WG.283/32 A brief summary of ECA involvement and programme for women in industry  
J. Dhamija
- ID/WG.283/33 Women and development  
M. C. Uribe (Colombia)
- ID/WG.283/34 (ILO/W.6/1978) Women in industry in developing countries; an ILO research note  
ILO, Office for Women Workers' Questions
- ID/WG.283/35 Employment situation and outlook-women; Excerpt from draft five-year plan of India for 1978-1983

*Part two*

**Women in the  
industrialization process:  
an analysis of the papers  
presented at the Preparatory Meeting**





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*The papers presented at the Preparatory Meeting on the Role of Women in Industrialization in Developing Countries provided the basis for an exchange of views on the major constraints inhibiting the effective participation of women in industrial development, and the occupational areas in which women can and do contribute to industrial development.*

*Part two consists of an analysis of those papers. It should be kept in mind that the papers were on a limited number of developing countries; therefore, the conclusions arrived at here are not necessarily applicable in all cases. However, the experiences reflected in the papers were so important and, in some cases, so universal, that they provided a valid basis for the discussions that led to the recommendations made by the Meeting (part one).*

*Among the major constraints to women's participation in industrialization on an equal basis with men are rapid population growth; obstructive social and cultural traditions; lack of education and training; lack of representation in the policy-making areas of the occupational hierarchy; inadequate or non-supportive legislation; lack of credit availability; and lack of unionization. Each of these factors is analysed in socio-economic terms, and specific measures and mechanisms to reduce or eliminate their effects are identified for use in regional and international programmes.*

*The issue of job creation and employment for women is then discussed.*

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# I. Constraints

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## Rapid population growth

Rapid population growth is the greatest single factor inhibiting economic and social advancement in developing countries. It exacerbates the problems of unemployment, poverty, congestion, and unequal distribution of food and income. Women, particularly, are made vulnerable by this factor as it perpetuates an environment unfavourable to the entry of women into the economic development process.

From 1950 to 1975, rapid population growth has resulted in the number of working women being more than doubled. By the year 2000, there will be more than 800 million women workers, more than half the increase occurring in Asia (ID/WG.283/34).<sup>1</sup>

The reason for the rapid growth of population is declining death rates rather than increasing birth rates. Improved medical knowledge has reduced deaths by disease and infection and increased the survival rate of children. However, traditional attitudes towards childbearing persist; women as well as men regard children, especially sons, as status symbols and as security in old age, particularly in societies where social security, old-age benefits and savings are virtually unknown. Thus children are still produced at the rate they were when it was expected that only a few out of the many would survive.

Rapid population growth creates a surplus labour force that raises unemployment levels and reduces work opportunities available to the individual. Also, as economic growth cannot keep pace with rapid population growth, all too often scarce benefits are unequally distributed, going to affluent small segments of the population while large segments continue in poverty. Large families therefore help to perpetuate poverty and inequality in many societies.

In addition, high fertility removes women from direct economic production as it prevents them from entering the labour force due to the excessive burden of familial responsibilities. Limited familial resources are utilized for males in preference to females as the former are expected to become major supporters of families, while female children are kept at home to help already overburdened mothers and thereby prevented from acquiring education or skills. Lack of such education, early marriages, and familial, religious and community pressures perpetuate the *status quo*.

The more-affluent developed countries have lower birth rates than the poorer developing countries, and the élites of developing countries have lower rates than the poor of those countries. As birth rates decline, female health and longevity improve, the ages at marriage rise and educational levels rise — all of which are conducive to women undertaking non-domestic economic activities.

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<sup>1</sup>All ID/WG.283 documents are listed in the annex to part one.

Women need to be provided with rewarding alternatives to reproduction in the form of employment and incomes. That alternatives to childbearing are available stemming from remunerative, non-domestic employment is unknown to many of the illiterate, urban and rural poor. Even when women are able and willing to work, the existing economic, occupational and industrial structures are geared to benefit males, and severely limit available opportunities for women who are therefore driven, by economic necessity, to undertake unrewarding and exploitative work.

Increasing numbers of women entering the labour force will increase real earned income of households and lead to economic and social changes such as increased consumption and improved standards of living, increased economic production to satisfy demand, and reduced competition in the industrial market-place as surplus labour-force numbers decline — all of which increase the need for economic opportunities for women. The argument that when a surplus population, and consequently a surplus labour force, exists, the priority for employment should be given to men is simplistic as it attempts to solve a fundamental problem with a temporary measure that protects the interests of those in power. Nor does this argument take into consideration the long-term disadvantages of a purely male orientation that relegates women (often more than 50 per cent of a national population) to a secondary position, thereby perpetuating all the factors that create rapid population growth, i.e. lack of education, lack of economic opportunity, detrimental attitudes etc. These, in turn, perpetuate poverty and unemployment.

The growth of population, which affects the economic and social position of women, must be taken into account in all industrial development planning. Economic growth and development cannot be obtained until women have equal access to education, work, income and leisure.

### **Social and cultural traditions**

Social inequality is reflected in the differential distribution of economic, social and political power between women and men, the consequences of which are more apparent in the developing nations. Many of these disparities stem from social traditions and cultural beliefs that have influenced the employment of women outside the domestic sphere by creating obstacles to their participation in economic production. The persistence of outmoded cultural traditions influences two major issues related to the participation of women in economic development: sex-segregation of work and the dual responsibilities of women workers as home-makers and earners.

### ***Sex-segregation***

Regardless of the economic structure of a society or its level of development, there is an unequal division of labour between the sexes based upon sex-segregation and sex-typification of jobs. While these discriminatory tendencies are social and psychological, their origins are to be found in cultural tradition, historical experience, economic rationalization and legal justification. For example, women throughout the world are forbidden by law to undertake jobs that are "unhealthy, arduous or immoral . . ." (ID/WG.283/34). On the other hand, there are no laws that justify the fact that supervisory positions

requiring higher qualifications are filled mainly by men, while women with similar qualifications perform less skilled jobs.

In most societies the dominant traditional occupation of women has been that of home-maker, and remains so. Many people, including women, disapprove of women working outside the home especially if they are wives and mothers. The acceptance of unmarried adult females in the work world is somewhat better because it is believed to be temporary, until they marry.

Most women fill low-skilled jobs with low productivity generating low income. These are often dead-end jobs, physically hard and exploitative with no job security, requiring long hours of work and with hazardous working conditions. Sex-segregation is common and most women work in occupations dominated by women. Educated women play an insignificant role in industry as their proportions in managerial and technical positions are negligible; they often refuse to undertake lower-level jobs and thus remain under-utilized.

Women are believed to possess aptitudes for certain types of work. Many employers and policy-makers believe that women are particularly suited for jobs requiring higher levels of manual dexterity and utilize them in electronics assembly, ignoring the fact that some of the world's best surgeons and technicians are men who require as much, if not more, manual dexterity than women for the jobs they perform. However, given similar aptitudes, most of the higher status jobs are filled by men and the lower ones by women. Most of the jobs filled by women are highly repetitive, monotonous, unskilled and ill-paid. The belief that women are better able to cope with these conditions is erroneous according to the findings of numerous research studies on this subject undertaken in developed countries. Women suffer boredom, frustration and dissatisfaction as much as men, their productivity declines due to errors from repetition or monotony as it does among men, but they are unable to complain as much because they are working out of necessity and often have no support from unions, employers, husbands or families because of their subservient position.

An additional disparity between women and men is that women often receive lower wages than men for work of equal skill levels and importance. For example, there are wide disparities in salaries paid to women and men for identical work. Even though the principle of equal pay for equal work exists in the legislation of most countries, its application is not easily enforceable because of loopholes in the legislation. Furthermore, the institutional structure that should provide women with access to all jobs and with adequate wages is often lacking.

Women, therefore, remain a vulnerable segment of the labour force. They are economically unstable due to lack of skills and education, lack of job security, and low levels of unionization in most developing countries. This is due in part to their familial responsibilities that influence their work histories adding to stereotypes of absenteeism, high turn-over rates and general unreliability as industrial workers. Women are particularly vulnerable to changes in economic conditions as they are considered expendable in times of recession and as a "labour reservoir" in times of economic expansion or social and political upheaval such as war. This is based on the fallacious argument that women can be reabsorbed into the family if laid-off, while men are the supporters of the family and therefore require continuous employment. That increasing numbers of women are heads of households because of rural-urban migration (of males as in Asia or of females as in Latin America), with the

resulting break-up of the family unit, or because of death, divorce or desertion of supporting males, is often not taken into account

Social attitudes that differentiate men's work from women's work are based on traditional agrarian, economic and social conditions, which, however, sometimes change. For example, in the post-colonial period, higher echelon jobs originally filled by colonizers became available to the indigenous population. These positions were generally filled by men who moved up the educational ladder to enter positions previously beyond their reach. Women then experienced some improvement in access to lower and middle echelon jobs along with men and started entering the labour force in increasing numbers. This sometimes resulted in the proportions of women and men in certain job sectors being reversed, e.g. in manufacturing, manual labour, some clerical areas etc., and predominantly male jobs became either more balanced in their sexual component or predominantly female. This demonstrates that with the proper impetus, changes can and do take place.

### *Dual responsibilities of women*

While developed countries are still in the throes of creating and expanding supporting services for working women, the developing countries have little or no built-in infrastructure to assist and encourage women to undertake work outside the home.

This lack of supportive social services is generally recognized. It is indicated in an ILO survey that "... the basic needs in these countries are often so serious that any measures taken for women workers tend to be purely protective and concentrate on the more general aspects of their conditions of work and life" (ID/WG.283/34).

The debate on whether it is better for women to work or be housewives and mothers is meaningless in the case of most women in developing countries who are compelled to work by economic necessity.

The care of children and households in developing countries are burdens often carried solely by women without the institutional, marital or technological support that are more easily available in the developed countries. Paradoxically, women from extended families where household assistance is available in the form of resident unemployed older females usually do not work outside the home, owing to traditional antipathy to such work, while women from nuclear family units where kin are not readily available to fill domestic roles work outside the home. Developing countries have few organized child-care services, health care facilities or other facilities whereby women can obtain some assistance to free them for work. Factories often do not maintain such facilities or services or even involve themselves with these issues by providing financial assistance to women requiring such services. Tradition and custom keep husbands unaware of the help that their working wives need with child-care and other domestic activities. Added to this is the lack of labour-saving devices for the poorer working woman, which increases her burden and reduces her free time to almost nothing. Combined, these factors make the lot of working women almost unbearable and effectively discourage many from undertaking full-time remunerative employment.

Legislation exists to protect women but often serves to reinforce familial, traditional roles and perpetuate inequality with men. For example, some countries still dismiss women in the event of pregnancy. Women are not

provided with the option to work given certain circumstances and yet should be able to make their own decisions as men do. Protection helps to increase exploitation of women if geared only to women and not to all workers.

Poor health, household responsibilities and child-care are basic impediments to women performing effectively on the job. Women need to be freed from time- and energy-consuming tasks that prevent them from taking advantage of education, training and gainful employment. An increase of two-earner-households in economies with high dependency ratios would undoubtedly assist in improving standards of living.

All too often, working women are viewed as supplementary wage-earners and are considered relatively unimportant when it comes to planning for the satisfaction of needs. Working women, it is often argued, lead to instability of the family as work, money and status make a woman too independent, and men often see this as a threat to domestic dominance and as a negative reflection of their ability to provide for the family. Such illogical rationalizations are particularly prevalent among the poor, where men would rather keep their women pregnant than working in order to maintain their position in the eyes of their peers as successful providers of large families. However, this attitude only serves to perpetuate their poverty.

The neglect by national agencies to consider and analyse the current position of women in the family, at work and in society stems from an institutionalized bias in favour of men that pervades all areas of planning and policy-making. Even if policies are formulated that are conducive to women's needs and goals, and even if appropriate legislation exists, there continues to be a large gap between policy and legislation on the one hand and enforcement on the other, and this perpetuates the preferential treatment given to males in most societies.

There is therefore a need to change attitudes towards women and to create an awareness through education and the mass media that women do not need to be economic or social appendages of their fathers, husbands or sons, and to dispel the notion that women are ornaments, child-bearers and household managers. It should be repeatedly stressed that women are independent human beings, capable of valuable, productive work that is beneficial to the economy of the nation, and that their being involved in work and in non-domestic economic production will not adversely affect the institutions of family, marriage, community and religion.

If the traditional ideas that hamper women's participation in industrialization can be modified or eliminated, it will be possible to develop new roles for women and men in sharing responsibilities both within and outside the family; to open up new types of jobs for both women and men; to avoid those technological choices that restrict women to traditional household chores; and to create new institutions that can improve the economic condition and quality of life for women and men, adults and children, in all societies.

#### **Education and training**

Human resources help to accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, and build social, economic and political organizations necessary for economic development. A country that neglects to develop the skills and knowledge of its entire population and utilize them effectively in the national economy is unlikely, in the long run, to develop anything else.

Human resource problems in developing countries are related to under-development and under-utilization of skills stemming from historical and traditional constraints and the resulting economic, social and legal policies. Human resource policies should be aimed at maximum feasible development of work-oriented and skill-related capacities of people including a relationship between overall economic and educational policies. Human capital formation is not only a continuing but also a lifetime process. However, development of skills is an insufficient condition for economic progress as there is an urgent need as well to create complementary opportunities for the population.

High illiteracy rates for women are a major obstacle to their effective participation in the industrialization process; in some countries, particularly in rural areas, female illiteracy exceeds 90 per cent. Modern technology not only reduces the number of jobs but also requires higher levels of skill to fill the ones that are available. More men than women possess these skills as few women have the opportunity to acquire them.

Education and training in developing countries consist of formal education, which takes place in schools and is geared to training students for urban jobs; informal education or on-the-job training, which takes place outside of school, at home, on farms and in factories and in which learning by doing is an important element; and non-formal education, which is organized learning outside of school, such as agricultural extension courses and adult training classes. The latter two methods are often neglected or are considered less prestigious than formal education.

Some developing countries have focused on formal education, which has produced a high proportion of high school and university graduates that local economies often cannot absorb or utilize effectively. On the other hand, other segments of the population, particularly women and the poor, have been neglected. Therefore, despite an urban surplus of educated people and a rural surplus of semi-skilled and unskilled people, there is a shortage of highly skilled labour. Other countries have focused on non-formal education and training, attempting to incorporate larger segments of the population into the industrial work force by raising basic skill levels. This has led to a shortage of highly skilled labour.

Education and training are often determined by political and economic institutions and are, in some cases, instruments of economic and social stratification rather than mechanisms for increasing equality. In most developing countries education and training are not geared to the interests of the disadvantaged and the poor, and women are often the most adversely affected. Outmoded academic curricula persist as they were originally set up by colonial regimes to reinforce the existing power structures; vocational training is ignored because it does not directly affect the interests of small élite groups. In a few countries, education and training policies are geared to the elimination of poverty. However, even in these countries, male interests still predominate. Thus, attitudinal, ideological and structural transformations are required at economic, social and legal levels if changes in this area are to be effective. Teachers, planners and policy-makers are all part of this scheme of things and radical restructuring and reorientation is also required among these groups in order to effect changes.

If women are to improve their position in the industrial work force, they require easier access to all forms of education and training. At present, they face discrimination by circumstance or intent and this perpetuates sexual inequalities in jobs, power and personal relations. The scarcity of resources



among the rural and urban poor often involves a choice of providing an education for boys as opposed to girls. Boys get priority since they are believed to be better investments, while girls are kept at home to assist mothers who work and married off at the earliest possible time.

Expansion and restructuring of the educational system must occur within the overall national economic framework. In Colombia, for example, some schools offer a new programme with options in industrial, agricultural and commercial subjects that are geared to economic needs. Students have the choice of being prepared for employment, further technical training or university (ID/WG.283/33).

Women who gain access to education are more frequently from the élites and the middle classes of developing countries. For example, in Peru the limitations imposed on women are disappearing, breaking the traditional psychological mould of dependency and allowing women to enter the centres of higher education and technical training generally reserved for men. Thus, increasing numbers of women are being prepared for technical careers in engineering, social and economic sciences, administration and research. At medium levels there is also some attempt to provide training for instructors, small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs etc. through participation in the National Services of Industrial Technology. These women, however, still do not have access to commensurate jobs and are usually relegated to subordinate positions or remain unemployed (ID/WG.283/24). This is not uncommon throughout the developing world, for instance, in Sri Lanka free education has led to a 72 per cent literacy rate for women compared to 85 per cent for men, yet the ever-increasing unemployment of educated young people has a retrograde and undesirable effect on job opportunities for women in a shrinking labour market (ID/WG.283/7).

Nevertheless, education is one of the principal mechanisms by which women's inequality can be reduced. From the earliest preschool years, females and males need to be instructed on equality of the sexes, the role women can play in the industrial development process, the economic and social benefits that accrue to households where women work, women as family and nation builders, viable alternatives to childbearing for women, health, nutrition and fertility, and the place of women in the community, society and world. Education can serve to dispel myths about women, thereby reducing the negative influence of traditions.

Educational reform can also include designing curricula to promote the equal development of skills of women and men; educating parents as well as children and husbands as well as wives to bridge the generation gap and reduce sexual inequalities; developing rationality in attitudes towards sex and procreation; informing women and men of laws and opportunities that affect them in various ways; developing leadership abilities in both girls and boys; and creating awareness of the role of both women and men in the overall national economic development plan.

If the limitations affecting women are to be overcome, women themselves must be informed through the creation of a system for the dissemination of relevant economic and industrial, financial and vocational information to expand the career prospects of the female population and assist women to know their rights and their obligations relating to work and society (ID/WG.283/24). Education therefore acts as a consciousness-raising mechanism that affects public opinion and exerts far-reaching beneficial influences upon attitudes towards women.

National policies relating to the education of both women and men should be concerned with the correction of the imbalance between the educational levels of women and men. The high illiteracy rates of women need to be reduced to enable women to acquire usable skills for industrial work at all levels. Increased and expanded non-formal training programmes are required to develop and upgrade the skills of women, including non-traditional middle-level skills. Women, particularly in rural areas, need to be educated on how to use existing skills to generate income and develop the self-reliance that would be beneficial to themselves and their families, and to be informed of the effects of new technologies and provided with the retraining necessary to adjust to these changes.

Curricula should be reviewed and irrelevant or outmoded segments replaced by new, practical and usable areas including scientific and technical subjects that would benefit both women and men and would reduce disparities between education and employment by matching skills and knowledge to available or projected jobs. To achieve this, educational planning requires the training or retraining of qualified instructors to cope with the new systems. Also, educational facilities are urgently needed in rural areas and adequate incentives should be provided to urban middle-class teachers, especially females, to teach in remote places. If there is a shortage of qualified teachers, trained workers, particularly in rural areas, could be provided with incentives to share experiences and commence basic levels of training for rural populations until instructors became available.

Additionally, facilities and opportunities for retraining workers, both female and male, should be provided in order for workers to function as effectively as possible. Innovations and progress in technology are important aspects of industrial development. However, any introduction or evolution of new appropriate technologies in developing countries must take into account the adaptation of workers to technological developments. Women, particularly, should have access to these retraining facilities in order to keep abreast of developments and avoid reversion to unemployment or deficient production by becoming victims of technological obsolescence.

In formal education, steps should be taken to reduce drop-out rates of females at the primary level through various financial incentives to parents, spouses or guardians; to make education more accessible to females by provision of adequate transportation and protection, and by creating segregated schools in societies with strong traditions that discourage integration of the sexes; to make school hours flexible and school locations convenient; to provide earning and learning opportunities; to make curricula relevant to local needs; to subsidize educational costs; to develop supportive legislation etc. so that women are encouraged to obtain education valuable to them, their communities and society.

By being provided with education, skills and an attitudinal framework, women can be given an opportunity to become independent entrepreneurs or self-employed. Self-employment is a major potential and existing source of income and economic productivity for women in many developing countries. In order to undertake this type of economic activity, women must be not only literate but also instructed in basic management, marketing, financing, consumption patterns and technical training related to their product or service.

Thus, a variety of educational and training programmes and job-orientation courses for women need to be established in rural and depressed areas, while in urban areas expansion of vocational, managerial and production

training is required for entrepreneurs and personnel at all levels in large-scale industrial concerns. International agencies and Governments can assist by creating special funds or setting aside proportions of their budgets for education and training for the development of disadvantaged populations. International agencies could provide support for national education policies and programmes beneficial to women by undertaking research and providing interested developing countries with relevant data and even audio-visual materials for improving training techniques for industrial jobs. They could also set up forums where women could provide input into policy-making and planning relating to training in co-operatives, entrepreneurship, skills for refugees and migrants etc. in conjunction with the creation of job opportunities. The relationship between education, population and employment must be considered if educational programmes are to contribute to economic development programmes.

### Women in the occupational hierarchy

The process of industrialization in both public and private sectors in rural and urban areas involves the following: (a) policy-makers, decision-makers, planners and entrepreneurs at the apex of the occupational hierarchy; (b) implementors, generally in the middle levels, such as civil service administrators, managers and group leaders, who implement policies, devise strategies to achieve goals and provide feedback to the policy-makers with the aid of experts including scientists, engineers, economists, educators, technicians, social scientists, social workers etc; and (c) skilled and unskilled workers.

The various levels are interdependent but are also important in their own right.

Ways and means have to be devised by legislation to involve women at all levels of the socio-economic and occupational structure in matters that directly affect them (ID/WG.283/7). They should have the dual task of performing their work and assisting and increasing, wherever and whenever possible, the effective participation of women in industrial development. It is therefore necessary for all national programmes and economic plans to be evaluated and reviewed by women's groups, women's leaders, women's commissions etc. If these do not exist, they should be created in order to provide advice to the incumbent male administrators and government decision-makers who may not be aware of the needs of women workers and their problems in the industrial labour force.

Women's groups or influential and knowledgeable women are necessary to provide crucial data to Governments and international organizations on the achievements, capabilities and aspirations of women as well as to identify the major obstacles that prevent women from being effectively utilized in industrial development. They can strengthen the position of women by unity and organization, and act as consciousness-raising mechanisms and pressure groups. Women's groups should also be available to educate various community groups, by informal means, on the possible roles of women in the industrialization process and the economic and social benefits that could accrue from their participation in non-domestic or non-agricultural work. Influential women, opinion leaders and representatives of women workers' groups can advocate and lobby for amendments to legislation beneficial to women, particularly in the areas of financing and credit availability.

Decision-makers at the national level should be encouraged to identify resources and formulate programmes geared to the integration of women into the industrial development process. Inducements should be offered to policy-makers to persuade them to overcome biases and integrate women into the industrialization process at their own level. If possible, the proportion of women at this level should be increased so that a positive influence can be exerted upon all policy-makers. International agencies could assist by preparing relevant studies and holding international seminars at which a direct exchange of information between developing countries and between developed and developing countries could take place. This would serve to sensitize policy-makers to the magnitude and ramifications of the entire issue. In addition, international agencies themselves would be more effective if they increased the proportion of women in senior positions within their own organizations.

### *Policy level*

The inadequate representation of women in the upper echelons of the occupational structure is virtually universal and is one of the major constraints on changes that would improve the position of women at all levels of industrial work. Even developed countries have not succeeded in alleviating this situation; for example, the Bill on the Equal Rights Amendment is still not ratified by the United States Congress, and the Equal Employment Opportunities Act is not easily enforceable. Generally, men continue to retain their positions of power often using such rationalizations to support their position as calling women "unqualified", "inexperienced", "unreliable", "emotional" and therefore "unsuited for decision-making positions". Women are often ignorant of available opportunities and are shuttled about in various jobs, effectively side-tracked into positions with status but no power or are kept out of the informal power structures of an organization where many decisions are made. Women are expected to care for families instead of "meddling in affairs that do not concern them". In developing countries any changes required should be effected during the initial stages of industrialization when related social and economic structures and psychological or cultural attitudes are also changing.

The representation of women at the policy-making level is crucial as such women can engender changes in social and economic policies involving legislation, restructuring of industry or management, choice of appropriate technologies, development of entrepreneurship, training and education for industrial occupations, programme development for rural industrialization etc. (ID/WG.283/12). Policy-making positions available to women in urban, large-scale industries are virtually non-existent. Even though educated and trained women are available, they are either unutilized or under-utilized in the labour force. The opportunities for women at this level are much better in small- and medium-scale industries, especially in rural areas, which are able to utilize women more effectively.

The primary sources from which women can be drawn for policy-making positions are universities, colleges and vocational schools, since there is usually a direct link between educational achievement of women and the desire for access to these positions.

Access to privileged positions and upward mobility for women is extremely difficult to achieve despite the removal of legislative and cultural constraints. There is often no question of competence for women have proved themselves

repeatedly, yet traditional biases and attitudes continue to present obstacles (ID/WG.283/14). In some of the more traditional societies where educational achievement of women is generally much lower than that of men, and where social legislation often requires male authorization for women to work outside the home, almost no women are represented in the policy-making echelons of industry. Even in societies such as India, where there are a relatively large number of women with appropriate qualifications to fill these positions, only 0.1 per cent of upper-level managerial posts in the public and private sectors are filled by women, while 48 per cent of the unskilled jobs are filled by them (ID/WG.283/14). However, in some developing countries, such as the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania, there is evidence that the number of women in policy-making areas is increasing in both the rural and urban sectors because of the sustained efforts of women's groups and influential women (ID/WG.283/12; ID/WG.283/17).

### *Implementation level*

The representation of women at middle and senior management and administration levels is most necessary as they are sensitive to, and knowledgeable of, the needs of women workers, types of training required for industrial work, and the cultural, economic, social and psychological supports and constraints that affect women. They are needed to play the roles of advisers to policy-makers by suggesting innovative strategies for the creation of new jobs or the development of appropriate supportive institutional or legislative mechanisms to assist women to enter the work world, or by helping to implement the development of industrial co-operatives to improve the economic position of rural women; they could also suggest the types of technology, industry or product most beneficial to the local economy and to women. Input by women for women is fundamental to the development of balanced and equitable policies and practices.

The women in middle-echelon roles are also potential candidates for the upper levels. Thus the relationship between women at the top and middle levels should be close and the channels of communication should remain open. Women can gain experience in both the public and private sectors of domestic economies as well as at the international level.

### *Worker level*

At the skilled and unskilled worker level, women need to be organized into a collective force that will voice the needs of women workers and support and implement beneficial social and economic policies. Female leaders, such as factory managers, technicians and union leaders, are necessary to educate and inform fellow women workers of opportunities and changes in legislation affecting their rights and privileges, and to make them aware of the need for reform in the work environment. It is unlikely that existing male-oriented unions or male factory managers are familiar or deeply concerned with the needs of female workers. The largest proportion of all women involved in industry is at the lowest levels and their strength should lie in their unity. Leaders that emerge from the ranks of women workers are particularly sensitive to the psychological, social and cultural problems of these women,

their physical capabilities and occupational aspirations and the barriers they face.

Because of their knowledge and experience of local conditions, women can contribute to industrialization at all levels, for example, as advisers, consultants and participants in project planning and design. They can participate in chambers of commerce, federations of industries, trade unions and the national civil service to bring about social and economic change. Women can also participate in national, regional and international activities related to industrial development in the form of conferences, publications, forums, research, training and exchange programmes etc. on which the interests of women are focused. Women workers who influence policy-making should be particularly well informed if they are to be effective. Workers should be included in all project and development planning activities, and their views must be expressed, heard and acted upon if projects and programmes are to be successful. Yet women should not work alone. Most of what has been achieved for working women is a product of legislation designed by men (ID/WG.283/18) and co-ordination with men is essential not only to achieve desired goals but also to avoid creating an economic and social backlash.

### Legislation

Much industrial legislation in developing countries is borrowed directly from that of countries that are highly industrialized. In many instances, this legislation is totally inappropriate or inadequate to cope with the cultural traditions and economic framework of developing countries. While the law is generally believed to be objective and a major instrument of social change, particularly in areas where tradition and ideology perpetuate societal inequities, there are numerous factors that prevent it from becoming a potent force in improving the position of women in society. Also, contradictory legislation often exists concurrently, thereby reducing or negating any positive effects that progressive legislation may generate.

A crucial issue is equal pay for equal work. When there is a high level of male unemployment and severe job competition, this aspect of the law tends to be set aside by the argument that it is difficult to evaluate jobs, i.e. define equal work. The fact that women most often work in totally "feminized" sectors removes them from sexually integrated work making the issue even more complex in terms of legal interpretation. Other problems are to determine whether women are relatively or absolutely underpaid, how comparisons of jobs between men and women are to be undertaken and whether such criteria as skill, social and economic value and intensity of work can be justified as measures of work. Women generally receive less pay than men and their access to the higher echelons of the industrial occupational structure is still severely limited despite legislation of equality of opportunity. Therefore, it is logical to assume that social, economic and industrial legislation relating to women in most countries is non-existent, inadequate, conflicting or unenforceable.

Legislation to protect women in their roles as wives, mothers and home-makers exists, but it is a controversial issue and agreement is difficult to reach on what it really means for women. It protects them as "weaker", sensitive beings by prohibiting them, for example, from undertaking night-work. This type of legislation in effect prevents women from undertaking

economically rewarding labour even if they are ready, willing and able to do so, and it is therefore more repressive than protective.

Protective legislation should be amended and expanded to include not only employment and work-related areas but also associated community- and family-related issues such as housing, social services, access to ownership, voting, membership in organizations, health, birth control, rehabilitative assistance for widows and protection and aid for single women or female heads of households. There is little protection against desertion, divorce or assault by kin, and no guarantees of access to rightful inheritance, social independence and economic independence whereby wages and income do not automatically fall into the hands of male heads of the households in which women live. Protective legislation should not be limited to women, but should include, where applicable, the protection of men.

Supportive legislation for women that reduces discriminatory practices against them in employment, wages, availability of credit, career mobility, access to education and training is inadequate, as is provision of social welfare facilities for women and social security. Women receive no support from the institutionalized segments of a society, i.e. the Governments, unions or community, on the enforcement of existing laws beneficial to them. Employment and industrial legislation geared to the needs of women workers is underdeveloped in relation to foreign investment and transnational corporations, and to the role these should be required to play in terms not only of employment but also of training women on a long-term basis for incorporation into the industrialization process. Women workers in the third world have specific problems in the societies in which they live and the ethnic groups to which they belong, and yet they have little or no input into legislative decisions that affect them. Women are generally ignorant of the laws that affect them, how they affect them and the need for changing these laws. Women therefore need to be counselled on their rights and privileges as well as their responsibilities to the community and the country under the law. Employers and guardians also need to be educated on progressive legislation that would result in the improved status of women in society.

International agencies can provide valuable assistance in legislative change by making recommendations to Governments on the basis of their own research and expertise. Proposals for various types of legislation based upon individual country needs could be presented upon request. Seminars and workshops could be arranged to provide vital interaction between policy-makers, law-makers and women and international experts so that legal, social and economic problems affecting women can be identified and reviewed.

Legislative reform is necessary in order to include provisions for the enforcement of laws through the economic and psychological reward and punishment mechanisms that are brought to bear on individuals, groups or agencies that practise discrimination against women. Whenever possible, laws that conflict with tradition should be incorporated gradually but firmly together with the continuing education and consciousness-raising of the population. Aside from enforcement, those involved in the interpretation of the law and dispensation of justice should be made aware of the problems that face women so that they may alleviate the situation through the medium of court decisions and the setting of precedents, through investigation and research of existing laws, and through recommending the repeal of discriminatory or conflicting laws.

Although legislation alone cannot induce attitudinal changes in a population, it is a first step towards equality for women both socially and economically, and is a necessary condition for increasing their role in the industrialization process.

### Credit availability

One of the main constraints encountered by women in their attempt to develop their own industries and employment as a response to the lack of adequate opportunities in the existing occupational structure is the lack of adequate financing. Rural women, particularly, suffer discrimination in this area. Financing for various enterprises is available in many developing countries but in limited amounts from sources such as money-lenders, local commercial banks, agricultural credit, and Government. It often calls for the credit-worthiness of borrowers, which is appraised in terms of available collateral. Women often cannot provide sufficient collateral for these types of loans due to existing social legislation that keeps property in the name of husbands or fathers, or inheritance laws that discriminate against women. Also, many loans are short-term and new entrepreneurs often require longer periods to make their investments pay off. Financing therefore should be made available not only in greater amounts but also in more flexible terms, including longer repayment periods than have traditionally been required, if it is to assist women.

Agro-business projects, particularly, require longer repayment periods and some credit institutions are indicating an increasing awareness of the situation by providing medium-term financing, but the higher security required by them makes these loans unavailable to women. Women therefore are dependent upon sponsors or guarantors who may be governmental agencies, private individuals or groups who will guarantee their venture and cover the risks of failure, thereby encouraging relaxation of stringent credit terms. Short-term loans are impractical because initial start-up losses are not conducive to repayment and require higher cash generation.

Low-cost, effective credit programmes are urgently needed in most developing countries for use by potential women entrepreneurs. Lending to large-scale producers has always been more attractive and less costly than lending to small-scale producers, as most women are. The unit costs of the loans may be the same but the returns are much higher on larger loans than on smaller ones. It is estimated that processing costs connected with administering loans to large producers amount to less than 5 per cent of the loans while the costs that are involved in financing provided by Governments, through the medium of co-operatives, to small producers may be over 20 per cent of the loan. In any event, by the time the small entrepreneur receives a loan the interest rates could rise to as high as 30 per cent to cover processing and capital costs, thus making it out of reach for many women. This is a tremendous factor preventing women from undertaking independent business activities and some forms of government subsidy are necessary if small producers are to benefit, at least until they are able to stabilize their business.

In some developing countries, innovative schemes are being developed to favour small producers. Some banks are easing their requirements for small borrowers, basing credit-worthiness upon reputation rather than available collateral, yet this is still in favour of men. In some cases, credit is provided to



villages as units and the villages become responsible for repaying the loan. In both instances, however, community pressures and attitudes can make or break a woman's efforts, and generally women suffer in favour of men when credit is limited. Banks and financial agencies require reorientation in order to change their attitudes towards loan applicants and establish closer relationships with female clients so as to be able to monitor the uses to which monies are put.

Most Governments have no long-term detailed plans and forecasts of activities and budgetary requirements, including subsidies, for agro-business development and small-scale urban industrial development. When plans exist, they are not sufficiently co-ordinated with other aspects of the economic development process and the result is a general reduction in effectiveness and continuing waste of human resources.

In order to alleviate this situation, it is necessary first of all for women to become involved in income-generating activities i.e. the production of marketable goods or services that will then be used to repay loans and credit. Women involved in productive enterprises at the small-scale, rural or urban industrial levels are in greatest need of credit. For example, the Experimental Credit to Ujamaa Village in the United Republic of Tanzania aims at the diversification of the village economy whereby women are encouraged to save a portion of their incomes from production activities for reinvestment. In India, there are projects with similar goals where both urban and rural women participate in income-generating activities with the guidance and advice of banks and other governmental or financial institutions. In some West African countries, project proposals have been made to assist existing agricultural credit institutions to formulate practical projects or programmes that would qualify larger numbers of the rural populations, especially women, for access to institutional credit and savings facilities. These credit institutions need to be encouraged by provision of governmental supporting services to make them amenable to providing favourable credit and banking facilities for women. It is believed that viable credit schemes tested in these countries could then be introduced to other countries (ID/WG.283/2).

In Botswana, the establishment of small-scale enterprises and employment of women and the poor are factors by which loan applications are judged with a view to raising incomes and generating employment. The relationship between women and small-scale informal sector entrepreneurship is shown in El Salvador where a revolving line of credit along with technical assistance and training has been established; in the very first year of activity over 80 per cent of the loans were made to women (ID/WG.283/11).

A study should be made of the characteristics of female entrepreneurs, their enterprises, need for technical assistance, and strengths and weaknesses in order to determine the efficiency of their activities. Based upon this information, credit institutions would be able to reduce their discriminatory practices and increase the availability of credit to women and all small entrepreneurs without requiring unrealistic collaterals or creating unnecessary paperwork.

Tied to this whole issue is the fact that legal constraints on women owning property must be removed or relaxed to enable them to borrow. Also, women must be able to keep records and must therefore be literate if they are to be successful in their entrepreneurship and in the acquisition of loans. Finally, women must be mobile, self-reliant and knowledgeable of their endeavours. The links between education and training, entrepreneurship and legislation become increasingly apparent in this area.

International organizations can provide funding for training, creation of employment, purchase of raw materials and equipment, and repayment of loans for women who endeavour to be independent entrepreneurs. These organizations can also provide technical expertise and advice to women, credit institutions and Governments. They can also assist in the training of women credit officers who would be more sympathetic, knowledgeable and sensitive to the needs of women applicants and who could advise them on financing as well as act as co-ordinators by introducing women to experts who could provide technical and economic guidance.

### Unionization

The vulnerability of women in the economic and social structure of society is compounded by their lack of organization. Women are either reluctant or unable to actively participate in trade unions and, through them, demand better treatment from employers or improved access to jobs (ID/WG.283/3).

In most cases, not only are women ignorant of the benefits of unionization, but unions in developing countries have focused primarily on males. Employers of women workers, such as manufacturers, transnational corporations and governmental agencies, discourage unionization among women to maintain competitive labour markets and increase profits, and the fact that some women undertake piece-work at home in order to take care of family responsibilities as well tends to militate against unionization because of lack of time and opportunity. The high unemployment rates and limited number of jobs have also been partly responsible for male resistance to women's participation in union management and for the general neglect of women's labour-related interests; this has been reinforced by the lack of initiative and persistence on the part of women. Even unions that are geared to the needs and rights of women are usually separate from male unions and are generally more active in urban areas than in the rural areas where the greater number of women actually live and work. The result is a weakness of women workers in terms of bargaining power with employers, thereby exposing them to various forms of exploitation such as low wages, poor working conditions, overwork, poor guidance and supervision, job insecurity, lack of career mobility and general discriminatory practices.

As already pointed out, existing industrial legislation is geared to the needs of male workers, and little protective economic, social or industrial legislation has been developed to cater to the needs of women workers. The lack of organization among women has prevented them from developing into a powerful group that could lobby for the best interests of its own members, and even provide input for new and necessary industrial legislation pertaining to women. It has also resulted in the deplorable paucity of women in decision-making positions, and to the lack of leaders who could identify the problems of, and issues relative to, women workers, and who could implement changes through the development of appropriate new policies.

The role of unions in developing countries differs from that of unions in developed countries because of differences in economic and social conditions, work histories and life cycles of workers. Unions in developing countries have to be responsible for advocating and pioneering changes in industrial and labour legislation, e.g. for organizing women. Thus, the focus on wage increases may be replaced by one on job creation; sophisticated benefits packages may

give way to identification of the basic needs of particular segments of workers, e.g. women; definitions of minimum acceptable limits of productivity may have to be revised given infrastructural and technological deficiencies etc.

Women need to be educated and motivated to join existing unions or to form new ones. Union leaders need to be educated about working women and their problems and needs, which differ, in some cases, from those of men. Husbands and fathers of women need to be educated in terms of the benefits that accrue to women by joining such organizations. Social legislation in some countries needs to be amended so that women no longer require male authorization to join organizations.

The participation of women in unions would assist in bringing about needed changes in social and industrial legislation, income and wage policies, working conditions and supporting services. Females in union management would provide valuable input into the selection of goals and priorities for women workers and would be influential in recruiting more women as union members.

International agencies could be of assistance by bringing together union leaders from developed and developing countries for the purpose of exchanging information necessary for the development of female-oriented unions in developing countries. By involving women in international trade union conferences, seminars and workshops oriented to the development of leadership skills related to organized labour, women can be successfully incorporated into both union and non-union management.

## II. Employment of women in industry

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If developing countries are to progress they must increase their productive capacity and employment for all segments of the population fast enough to absorb the rapidly increasing labour force. Employment is, perhaps, the main factor determining the role of women in the industrialization process.

The foregoing sections have provided an analysis of the major constraints that hamper the integration of women into this process by denying them access to jobs. It is essential that job opportunities be created in the urban and, more particularly, in the rural areas of developing countries by restructuring the economic framework and the industrial and occupational sectors, and by eliminating or reducing the constraints that prevent women from participating fully in industrial development. Women should be utilized at all levels; educated women who are under-utilized or not utilized at all must be effectively absorbed into the economic and industrial development process.

The economies of developing countries vary and therefore a single universal blueprint for the incorporation of women into industrial development cannot be created and different methods need to be devised. Nevertheless, whatever the strategy, a change of attitudes is required among women and men, decision-makers, implementors and workers. This is possible because attitudes are not inherited, they are learned and are therefore subject to change. To change attitudes means changing the social and cultural environment, which is only possible through education. For example, there is a need to eliminate stereotypes of women workers; people need to be counselled and taught to develop not only saleable skills but also the mind-set or world-view that the industrialization process requires and this can only take place if the work-world is restructured and the aspirations of economic improvement inculcated into both women and men.

The creation of jobs that are accessible to women is of crucial importance for long-term economic growth and development. This necessitates adequate planning at all levels of the industrialization process within short-, medium- and long-term frameworks with priority given to employment generation. Short-term goals should be identified and distinguished from medium- and long-term goals involving types of technologies, remedial legislation to be enacted, industries to be supported, research to be undertaken, interim or permanent economic activities and relevant training etc. The removal or reduction of constraints will provide improved access to jobs but the jobs must also be available, and therefore their creation takes priority in economic development. A number of approaches are identified below, to which individual countries and planning agencies can add according to their own needs and goals.

The concern for women lies with their integration not only into the large-scale urban industrial sectors that are oriented to rapid economic growth and technological development, but also into the small- and medium-scale industries in both rural and urban areas that contribute to long-term economic growth. If the large-scale modern sector does not generate jobs, the small- and medium-scale, labour-intensive sectors that utilize appropriate rather than high technologies must be relied upon.

The introduction of new technologies in industry has in many cases had negative implications for women. Automation has been a prime factor in increasing unemployment in some instances and women previously employed in labour-intensive production are often displaced. This is particularly noticeable in the textile and electronics industries of both developed and developing countries, and in agricultural activities such as planting and harvesting in almost all countries. Thus, while technological development is positive in the long run, during transitional stages it adversely affects women because of the failure to create, on a concurrent basis, new alternative sources of employment to absorb displaced workers or new entrants into the labour force. The introduction of new improved technologies requires careful planning within the larger national economic framework; erratic haphazard development tends to reduce the overall economic benefits to be reaped by a nation.

Development of the agricultural sector aims at increasing productivity through the application of advanced technologies. Attention should be given to the types of technology applied, since the adoption of inappropriate technologies causes unemployment in rural areas, which in turn leads to heavy migration to urban areas. A more balanced way of developing rural areas and minimizing social disruption would be to have the choice of appropriate technologies in terms of capital and labour, and to locate small- and medium-scale industries in rural areas. This would prevent unemployment and migration and improve income distribution.

At policy-making levels, jobs may be increased by supporting labour-intensive, appropriate intermediate technologies in selected instances rather than only capital-intensive high technologies, particularly in the manufacturing area. Even the products selected for production should be geared to labour-intensive methods of production, at least on a short- or medium-term basis, until women have equal options. Once the labour force is better utilized, better trained and reduced in volume, the next stage of industrial development becomes possible and further changes can be effected.

The modern industrial sector absorbs only a very small proportion of the total labour force of developing nations; the percentage of women employed is extremely low. The lack of development of agricultural industries and associated infrastructural needs, e.g., irrigation and transportation in the rural sector, has perpetuated poverty, which remains a major problem in many developing countries. The rural poor, of whom women comprise at least 50 per cent, have remained unused and have been left out of the mainstream of economic development. Increased productivity and incomes for this group are dependent upon increased job opportunities for all segments of the adult population in both urban and rural sectors.

Furthermore, women in industry are utilized in only a few industrial sectors. The chief sector that attracts women workers is manufacturing, whether large- or small-scale and, particularly, low technology, labour-intensive consumer goods industries. Female labour also predominates in textiles and apparel, electronics, handicrafts and agricultural industries related to forestry,

fishing and food-processing. Retail trade provides some scope for women. In some parts of West Africa, for example, women have been traditionally dominant in all aspects of retail trade (ID/WG.283/13). Building and construction industries also utilize women in varying capacities. As far as service industries are concerned, in some countries women have few or no opportunities to enter this sector owing to cultural traditions, but in some Asian and Latin American countries the recreational industries and retail sales sectors have absorbed large numbers of women workers in the lower-level white-collar sector.

The industries in which women are employed are either low technology industries requiring low capital investment and having low productivity or high technology industries with high capital investment, but also highly labour-intensive. In both cases, women workers receive marginal remuneration and experience poor and often exploitative working conditions. Women are also involved in industry through independent entrepreneurship where they manage and direct manufacturing or service activities, e.g. in Ghana and the Philippines (ID/WG.283/13, ID/WG.283/12). Self-employment is one of the most promising aspects of employment for women, but as has been indicated above, there are social and economic barriers preventing faster development in this area in many developing countries.

In spite of their subordinate roles in industry, women have contributed substantially to the development, success and growth of traditional lines of small- and medium-scale industries that still represent a major part of industrial production in developing countries; in some cases they have actually been responsible for propelling countries into the world markets.

While not considered industrial workers, female domestic labour contributes indirectly to economic development as the availability of these women enables the more educated women to undertake employment at higher echelons of industry and Government by freeing them from domestic responsibilities.

In developing countries, as educational levels are raised, more women attempt to enter higher-level jobs without the accompanying benefits of labour-saving devices that would free them from their household duties. The poorer, unskilled women therefore fill the gap left by undeveloped technology. Opportunities should be provided for these women to upgrade their skills so as to increase their contribution to the economy, and care should be taken to prevent the institutionalization of this role as a permanent part of the occupational opportunity structure for women.

Rural-urban migration, temporary and permanent, is ubiquitous throughout the third world and, whether it is generally female as in Latin America or male as in Africa and Asia, women are disadvantaged by it. Females who migrate to urban areas are usually accompanied by, and become sole supporters of, their children. The women face serious competition from males, who generally have higher skill levels, for already scarce urban industrial jobs. Often, the only opportunities open to these women are petty trading, food preparation, general domestic labour and prostitution otherwise they join the ranks of the destitute, contributing to the chronic problem of urban poverty. When males migrate, females are left behind to care for families and take over subsistence production from which they receive no economic or social benefits; they often suffer from the effects of malnutrition, poor health and even famine, which contributes to declining productivity in rural areas.

Urban growth through migration is a serious problem in developing countries as it leads to massive urban poverty and alienation, on the one hand,

and the creation of an artificial need to import increasing quantities of staple foods due to neglect of the rural sectors on the other. Rapid urbanization also affects the age and sex structures of the labour force and determines to some extent whether representation of females improves in certain sectors of employment depending upon the supply of, and demand for, labour in particular occupational areas.

Given this situation, it becomes necessary to identify all the existing methods, and to devise new ones, of creating jobs, particularly those accessible to women. Among other strategies to create jobs, it may be practical to identify existing industries in urban and rural areas that are conducive to the employment of women and to analyse the common characteristics, economic roles and specific needs of these industries within the national or regional development plan. By upgrading, financing, developing and expanding these industries, more jobs become available for greater numbers of women. The types of raw materials and technologies that would favour women's participation should be studied and then made available and modifications recommended in existing production methods that would be beneficial to women. Industries that are geared to the production of labour-saving devices that assist women to enter the labour force should be identified, encouraged and developed. These industries could not only use women at the production level, but also as advisers and consultants to provide crucial information regarding the specific needs of women in urban and rural sectors.

### **Rural industrialization**

In most developing countries, significant proportions of women are still involved in agriculture, which remains at a low productive level. Whether the industrialization process as it currently operates can provide adequate employment opportunities for these women is questionable. It appears that the development of the agro-industrial sector and the efficient use of rural labour is a priority as it also becomes a major market for domestic industrial output. From another standpoint, development of the rural sector and the resulting increase of job opportunities can reduce the rate of urbanization thereby creating a more balanced growth in the face of rapid population expansion. This alleviates, to some extent, the problems faced by women in being integrated into the economic development process.

Industrialization of the rural sectors of developing countries, where the largest proportions of populations still reside and where women live in the greatest numbers, will take jobs and services to where the people are, in their communities, thereby increasing non-agricultural employment. Rural industrialization requires careful planning involving the upgrading of existing industries so that not only productivity but also product quality is improved thereby ensuring the marketability of goods produced. In addition, new industries, particularly agro-based, that can absorb women workers effectively should be established with technical assistance from international agencies or other developing countries with similar economic problems and experiences.

A restructuring of the agricultural sector in order to integrate women into industry is possible by, among other things, the formation of co-operatives that facilitate and encourage the use of women for economic and industrial development, protect women producers, and assist in teaching and training

them and providing them with experience and increased employment and income.

Focus should be on the development and support of small- and medium-scale industries that are the main sources for the generation of jobs. Given adequate support, the right product and aggressive entrepreneurship, these industries could become exporters and could generate even more employment for both women and men than large-scale industries. Women in areas that are oriented at present to small-scale industries should be instructed in the use of appropriate technologies and machines relevant to their local economies, such as mills, pumps and carts, and taught to make optimal use of local resources. However, caution should be exercised with regard to automation or mechanization of agro-based industries as, in most instances, the displacement effects are worse for women than men.

Women should be involved in any matters concerning improvements in the infrastructure, e.g. the water supply, that would permit them more free time to develop and utilize opportunities for their own employment, advancement through education, improved health practices etc.

Rural industrialization need not be responsible for eliminating cottage industries or handicraft production, in which women are traditionally involved, if women develop these areas to produce marketable goods. Rural crafts and manufacturing can be expanded, supported and encouraged as can rural services utilizing female workers such as the establishment of village stores and retail outlets and other social support services.

Rural industrialization planning should therefore take into account the following requirements of women:

- (a) Full-time, part-time or seasonal employment that would assist women to perform their dual functions of home-makers and workers;
- (b) Jobs within a flexible time-frame;
- (c) Low-capital, labour-intensive investments that utilize all available local skills and locally available raw materials and appropriate technologies;
- (d) Social support facilities and services, e.g. child-care, health-care, training, housing and transportation, that would be instrumental in reducing the rural-urban migration detrimental to women;
- (e) Community development service centres to act as information centres and as co-ordinating agencies to keep women abreast of development projects that provide opportunities for them.

### **Self-employment**

Projects for self-employment for women are feasible if women can be assured that they will not be exploited and that they will receive managerial and technical advice, credit at reasonable rates of interest, assistance in marketing their goods and, when they employ others, particularly women, that they will receive housing, transportation and other infrastructural services. Raw materials must be made available to them and they must be responsible for determining their own policies and practices. Also, to reduce the burden of the dual responsibilities of home-maker and entrepreneur, support services must be made available. Self-employment becomes especially attractive and feasible if the products are fed into the operations of larger industrial projects.



## Transnational corporations

The impact of transnational corporations upon the employment of urban women in developing countries has become increasingly controversial during the past decade. Transnationals from developed countries have sought bases in the developing world for their export manufacturing enterprises because of increasing labour costs, capital outlay and cost competition in their own countries compounded by added costs resulting from the tightening of controls related to environmental protection, safety standards etc.

Transnationals are looked upon by the developing countries as a major source for the acquisition of foreign capital, technology, management, employment and access to international markets. Developing countries are therefore offering various types of incentives and regulations for attracting and controlling the investments and operations of the transnational corporations. There is even a tendency to a certain competition between developing countries in providing incentives to attract the transnationals. However, while they are economic producers and job-generators, transnationals may not be committed to the host country's long-term economic development, and therefore they seldom become an integral part of the domestic economy of a developing country. No serious cost-benefit analyses have been undertaken to assess their true role in the economic development process of these countries, and very few studies have been made to determine the positive or negative socio-economic impact on labour of large wholly-owned subsidiaries of developed country corporate giants as opposed to the relatively small- or medium-scale manufacturing undertaken by independent businessmen from developed countries or local manufacturers who receive subcontracts from large multinational corporations. It is important to know in which form transnationals should operate in developing countries, and to what extent the exploitation of developing country resources, including female labour, should be regulated to maintain the long-term socio-economic objectives of the host country.

A major problem is that little is known by the host developing country of the internal policies and corporate behaviour of transnationals. In certain cases, the combination of foreign investment and unenlightened governmental policies has resulted in the premature introduction of high technology, which has replaced job-generating industries or activities, thereby displacing workers.

Because of the importance to them of low-production costs, some transnationals tend to utilize unskilled and less-skilled labour who are generally not utilized and therefore willing to work for low wages in often unsatisfactory working environments. It is in this context that the generation of jobs for women by transnationals should be regarded. While providing job opportunities for women, transnationals tend to have an adverse effect on women's socio-economic status. In some instances the workers are paid a subsistence wage with little hope of a raise; sometimes institutional pressures are exerted to prevent the organization of unions so as not to discourage foreign investment. The skills taught in most of these industries are not transferable, thus increasing the insecurity of the workers in a situation where employment is highly dependent on fluctuations in the world market (ID/WG.283/6).

Part of the issue concerns the attitudes of the Governments of developing countries towards women. Pressures are being exerted both nationally and internationally by various interested groups to increase the integration of women into the industrialization process; decision-makers and planners may see the employment of women by transnationals as a way to reach this goal.

Since women are disadvantaged in these societies anyway, there is less interest on the part of their Governments to exert pressure on transnationals to improve conditions or participate in long-term economic and human resource development plans, especially if the foreign investment is seen as something desirable by the minority élite recipients of benefits.

Transnationals need not be totally exploitative; they can and should be required to make a commitment to the local economy. Developing countries that provide incentives to transnationals should consider the adverse impact these can have on the labour employed by transnationals, most of which is female. It is imperative that, in return for reduced costs of production, transnationals be required to provide long-term benefits in the form of training, appropriate technology and better working conditions.

### Strategies

Increasing the number of women in the industrialization process does not mean more women should gain access to positions held by men but implies a total restructuring of all economic, social, educational and legal structures whereby both women and men are equally able to participate in the total economic development process that provides increasing opportunities for all.

To include women in the industrial labour force it would be necessary, at the planning level, to introduce both labour-intensive and capital-intensive patterns of economic growth resulting in a more balanced distribution of income; to increase purchasing power resulting in increased consumption; to introduce and use appropriate technologies wherever possible; to develop concurrently the rural and urban sectors to reduce imbalances of development; to expand the public services sector in health, education and welfare; to increase productivity; and to focus on women as a major disadvantaged group.

Governments should undertake research with the assistance of international agencies to create a data base to determine the existing and projected proportions of women in the labour force, the best types of technology to be acquired or developed, the types of job to be created, the types of product to be produced and the types of market to be sought so that employment for women can be increased. These data should be incorporated into all national development plans and co-ordinated with actual training programmes.

Governments should also study trends and policies related to women, undertake national surveys on the status of women in the basic sectors of the economy, develop inventories of female skills and resources, study the possibilities for increasing female employment and devise methods for improving working conditions. National policies on employment should undertake research to devise labour-saving technology and develop supporting social structures and services to release working women from time-consuming household duties and provide more leisure in which they can recuperate from their dual tasks of home-maker and worker. Research activities should be co-ordinated between various public and private sectors and between national and international bodies to identify new areas of industry where the involvement of women will be possible.

Another important area that needs to be dealt with by Governments is health and fertility control. Women with large families tend to refrain from working, while women who work tend to have smaller families; this is an important factor for the economic improvement of women's status and women

and men need to be educated on the economic, social, psychological and physical benefits of smaller families. While population control is a sensitive issue, the mass media, and women's organizations particularly, can be used to promote this concept in relation to the issue of employment and economic progress. Progressive, influential women can act as opinion leaders within various communities to provide much-needed information.

The mass media are essential to propagate progressive measures that will benefit both women and men in the long run. They are useful in educating women on their rights and privileges, forms of discrimination and how to overcome them, available opportunities in work and education, and so forth. The mass media can be used at a local level for the exchange of ideas and dissemination of useful information.

International agencies can assist the entire process by establishing committees that would interact with national committees that have been set up for the specific purpose of dealing with questions relating to women. They could exchange information, ideas, and co-ordinate research for the purpose of developing policies geared to the needs of individual countries. These agencies already possess the bases for the creation of departments that would focus on the development and promotion of industries that would absorb women workers. Such departments could act as data sources, and as advisers to countries where the process of industrial development is in its initial stages. Finally, international agencies should employ greater numbers of women within their own staffs at senior levels to provide valuable input and assist in directing policies relating to women in economic development.

Together, Governments, regional agencies and international bodies should be able to devise innovations for the increased role of women in industrialization once the traditional barriers to this have been removed.

*Part three*

**Selected papers**

# Women and Industrial Development

by Mary Boesveld

Since the Second World War the world economy has experienced rapid growth and development, yet the benefits of this growth have accrued primarily to Western developed nations and to small élite groups in the developing countries. The disproportionate distribution of economic and political power is particularly reflected in the socio-economic disparities that exist between the ruling élites and the masses in developing countries. The growing differences in power and income among population groups are coupled with increasing inequality between the sexes [1, 2].

The economic development strategies pursued by developing countries so far have not only been unable to reduce poverty, but also have contributed to a general deterioration in living standards of a large proportion of the world's population.

The solution of development problems requires that economic growth take place within the framework of a just and equitable distribution of economic rewards and social benefits among all segments of the population. This, in turn, requires equal access to income, knowledge and power for all groups, including women.

The Lima Declaration and Plan of Action gave special attention to women's participation in the industrial development process, which was laid down in the Industrial Development Board resolution 44 (IX), as follows:

- (a) The importance of securing for women, regardless of their marital status, the same opportunities as are available to men for gainful employment, and the importance of the economic independence derived from such employment for the promotion of the status of women in society;
- (b) Ensuring the fullest possible use of available human resources by incorporating women into training activities linked to industrial development at all levels and for all professional specializations from management to shop floor;
- (c) Equal remuneration with men and equality of treatment, in respect of work of equal value, for women in industry;
- (d) The promotion in rural areas of the processing of agricultural products and manufacturing industries, particularly small-scale industries, which will provide regular employment for women in such areas.

To translate these principles into practical measures it is necessary to examine the problems that women encounter as they try to participate in development processes. In this paper, first the situation of women in industry and in the modernization process in rural areas is described. Then attention is given to education as an important condition for the creation of better opportunities. Subsequently are considered the particular impediments that women, in comparison to men, encounter in their participation in the development and industrialization processes and in education. Finally, a

number of broad recommendations are made on ways in which the participation of women in the modernization and industrialization processes might be stimulated.

### Women in industry

The modern industrial sectors of almost all developing countries are able to utilize only a very small proportion of the available labour force. The percentage of women in this proportion is minimal: of the world's employed industrial labour force only 15.3 per cent are women, which represents 18.7 per cent of all registered working women [3].

The distribution of women in industrial sectors is highly disproportionate. Irrespective of the stage of economic development or the pattern of industrialization of the country, most women industrial workers are employed in a narrow range of low-income, low-skilled and low-productivity jobs. They are found in particular in sectors that are labour-intensive, sensitive to market fluctuations, have a low level of technology, poor working conditions and safety measures, and little security of employment.

The place of women on the labour market is thus usually inferior to that of men. They have fewer opportunities of employment because fewer jobs are open to them; they usually occupy less-appreciated positions and receive lower wages than males. On a global basis, average wages for men and for women show a difference of 27 per cent; in some countries and in certain branches of industry the difference is more than 50 per cent [4]. Moreover, it is extremely rare to find a woman in a supervisory or a managerial position.

Various justifications are attempted for employment discrimination on the basis of sex. One of the most common is the biological one that gives "natural" characteristics as the reason that one sex or the other is the more suited to a particular type of work. Even were this true, and it has already been proven that it applies in only a very few cases, it does not explain why females should receive lower wages than males.

Protective legislation designed for the benefit of women workers (e.g. maternity leave and prohibition of night-work) is sometimes blamed for job segregation. Special rights and protection for women workers are said to make them too expensive for employment in certain jobs or industries. In practice, however, these regulations are frequently circumvented and even quashed if sufficient demand arises for cheap labour. In Malaysia and Singapore, for example, the authorities have dispensed with the prohibition of night-work in factories producing electronic equipment that employ young girls in three eight-hour shifts, seven days a week, with only a few days off in a year [5].

Another argument is that women do not usually need an income of their own because they are maintained by a male breadwinner. Women who work outside the home are said to do so for their own diversion, to earn pocket-money. Moreover, it is argued, women are often only temporarily in the labour process, and have little hesitation in leaving their employment when they marry or become pregnant. In this way, not only is lower pay for women justified, but employment, wage and tax policies are based almost universally on the male breadwinner who has to support his wife.

Analyses of the situation in developing countries have mostly utilized the Western model of the nuclear family with a male breadwinner and a "non-working" housewife, totally ignoring the fact that large numbers of women are

responsible for their own upkeep and for that of their children with little, if any, help from their husbands.

In some countries, notably in West Africa, it is the tradition that women should be responsible for a good part of the household expenses and for the education of the children irrespective of the husband's income. In other countries, too, women frequently provide the family income. On a global basis, the percentage of households with a female breadwinner is estimated at 38 per cent; in some countries it is higher than 50 per cent [3], and there are signs that this percentage is increasing.

Most women in developing countries who work outside the home are compelled to do so by their poverty. Necessity causes many of them to work incredibly hard, under poor conditions, for a minimum wage.

If the number of skilled and educated women in a particular country increases compared to men, the result may be a shift in the occupational structure. This is occurring in Africa, for example, where simple office jobs (typing etc.) were first held by men but are now more frequently held by women for lower pay. The men then move up the occupational ladder to better-paid jobs with chances of advancement, such as assistant bookkeeper.

The spreading of education to larger population groups and educational reforms that open up more training courses to women create better employment opportunities, but are not in themselves sufficient to improve the position of women on the job market so long as women are always placed in lower occupational categories than men with similar levels of education.

During the last few years, many countries of the third world have experienced a new development, namely, the arrival of large industries that employ predominantly, or even exclusively, women workers. Such industries are transferred to developing countries in the form of "run-away shops" or "offshore-sourcing projects". Both terms refer to American, European or Japanese multinational or transnational companies (MNCs) that transfer the labour-intensive parts of their production processes to developing countries where wages are very low. The majority produce consumer goods, import their own raw materials, and export the finished goods for sale abroad. They make toys, textiles, shoes and, increasingly, electronic equipment.

The magnitude of this development can be gauged from the fact that, at present, more than 90 per cent of the electronic equipment produced by North American industries is assembled by young women in third world countries [6]. Runaway shops are found in South-east Asia, in particular, but also in the Caribbean, North Africa and South America. Dutch textile industries, which were transferred to Tunisia under the Government's restructuring plans, also have the characteristics of runaway shops [7].

Governments of developing countries often offer important advantages to such industries: tax exemptions, exemption from labour-protecting regulations such as a fixed minimum wage, statutory holidays and the prohibition of night-work for women. Trade union representation is vetoed or subjected to government control. The monies that the MNCs have to invest in their runaway shops are more than compensated for by the low wages and other advantages. If industrial conditions deteriorate, or the host country passes through a period of recession, the MNC merely closes down its factory or moves it to a more favourable place.

The industries mostly employ young female workers who are given minimal training, if any, and are dismissed when they marry, usually after one

or two years. Older women are sometimes dismissed *en masse*, to be replaced by younger girls at a lower, so-called apprentice wage

A number of these industries in Malaysia and Singapore were studied [5] with the intention of discovering why the majority of employees are women, even in Malaysia where many men are employed, and why preference is given to young girls.

The answers given by the works managers were summarized [5] as follows: in comparison with men, female workers are more suitable for delicate work because they are more industrious, obedient, defter and patient, and have smaller fingers. They are less inclined to organize themselves in trade unions and are prepared to accept exceptionally low wages. Moreover, their recruitment is usually facilitated by the fact that other employment opportunities are almost non-existent. Young and unmarried women are the cheapest because they can be employed in shift work in factories that operate day and night.

These female characteristics are used even by Governments in their efforts to attract foreign industry. An investment pamphlet produced by the Government of Singapore, for example, waxes lyrical over the devotion and diligence of the Eastern woman, and particularly over her quick and agile little fingers exceptionally suited for the assembling of small electronic apparatus. At present, 50,000 women are employed by the electronics industry in Singapore.

Although such a development does have some favourable elements for women, such as a considerable increase in job opportunities and the temporary chance to earn money, it does not signify any effective improvement in their position. The work is extremely monotonous, there is little chance of learning a skill for later use, and there are no possibilities of advancement. Moreover, there is almost no security of employment, since the factories are kept open only as long as they can make a considerable profit.

It seems feasible that, as in many other instances, these women will lose their employment in the factories once capital-intensive methods of production replace labour-intensive methods, and that their place will then be taken by men.

Trade unions could play an important role in improving conditions for female workers and in achieving a position for women in industry equal to that of men. The literature on women's participation and struggle in the trade unions, however, shows all too clearly that men in general and male workers in particular are more concerned that women should be allocated work that is of less value and for which lower wages are paid. Men prefer to retain for themselves the more attractive work with higher wages, and they do so by showing active resistance to women in the trade unions and other organizations [8, 9, 10]. Industries in the developing countries that employ a large proportion of female labour are mostly non-unionized, with the result that women enjoy very little job security.

In times of economic crises, women are the first to be thrown out of the labour market. All over the world, not only in the developing countries where there is a high rate of unemployment, women workers constitute an industrial "labour reservoir", i.e. they are taken on in periods of economic growth, only to be cast off when the economy goes through a period of recession.

A comparison of the situation of male and female workers shows that women are generally on the lower rungs of the occupational ladder and are paid the lowest wage. In addition, they are the last to benefit from industrialization and modernization.



## Women and modernization in rural areas

In the rural areas of developing countries, development and modernization have long been directed primarily towards large-scale cash-crop farming. Far less attention has been given to subsistence farming and to the production of local food crops. The important role played by women in many countries as farmers and food producers, without the benefit of modern technology, know-how and skills, has been largely neglected.

Agricultural training programmes, cash-crop cultivation schemes and agricultural industries are usually designed and implemented by men and geared to men's requirements. In some countries, this neglect of rural women and of their task as food producers has had disastrous consequences. Poverty and starvation have been caused by the lack of land and labour for food production as a result of modern developments.

In parts of Africa, for example, a large part of the rural male population is attracted to cities to work for large foreign enterprises. The migration of males to the cities has considerably increased the workload of the women who stay behind in the villages to produce food by means of subsistence agriculture.

Male workers in rural areas are usually concerned with the production of cash crops and have the use of the most fertile land. The result has been a decline in food production and consequent food shortages leading to malnutrition and to poor health among large sections of the population [11]. In many Latin American countries, cash-crop farming is organized by large-scale enterprises that own most of the best agricultural land. Poor peasant families are employed as seasonal workers at ridiculously low wages, and are often expected to work and to live under appalling conditions [12].

Subsistence farming does not provide an adequate living for such families who are able only to squeeze a meagre harvest from their tiny plots of marginal land. As a result, they are almost forced to contract debts that they then have to repay out of their earnings from seasonal labour.

Women are particularly affected by these wretched economic conditions. They are frequently subjected to strong pressure to accept wages and working conditions that are even worse than those of men because they have their children to feed and care for — a task for which little help is forthcoming from men. There is ample evidence that men do not always devote their wages or money received from the sale of cash crops to the needs of their families, but prefer to spend it on items that give them prestige and personal gratification such as radios, wrist-watches, liquor etc. [10, 13].

In the majority of countries rural women have traditionally played a very important part in the preparation of food products, such as cheese and butter, and of consumer goods such as earthenware and textiles. The introduction of new advanced techniques was disadvantageous for them as compared to men, depriving them of the chance to earn an income with the aid of minor handicrafts and cottage industry. In general, women are far less able than men to obtain capital, and have less access to credit with which to buy better and more efficient machinery. Training courses in the new techniques are rarely open to women with the result that men gain an increasing share in the small manufacturing businesses and exercise increasing control over production and marketing.

This is the case in the rural areas of Guatemala, for example, where the traditional method of weaving with a backstrap loom has been replaced by the large Spanish foot-loom that is generally operated by men. The women have

been forced to take up the less-valued jobs such as carding and winding that need less skill and less investment in equipment. Because they no longer do the weaving, they no longer have any share in the sales of the end product. They earn far less, have lost their prestige as important artisans, and have become dependent on the earnings of the male members of the family [14].

In many developing countries, women are responsible for a very large share of cottage industry. In those countries where their freedom of movement is severely restricted, cottage industries provide the majority of women with their only means of earning a living. In doing so, however, they are often exploited by men and compelled to work for extremely low wages because men act as middlemen for the raw materials and for the finished products [15].

Even when cottage industries are organized into co-operatives, ostensibly to help their participating members, women are rarely allowed to join the board of the co-operatives and are consequently excluded from the decision-making process [16].

The introduction of large-scale manufacturing enterprises with their mass production of consumer goods threatens the existence of cottage industries and of the small artisans. As a result, many women will eventually be unable to earn a living. Men will also lose some of their traditional ways of earning, but they have more chance than women of being taken into the modern industrial sector.

The poor conditions that prevail in the agricultural sector and the declining opportunities of earning in the rural areas often force women to migrate to the towns (e.g. in Latin America). When they reach the urban areas, however, they have little chance of joining the modern industrial labour force and, as a result, fall back to the lowest rungs of the occupational ladder in the informal sector where they work as domestic servants, prostitutes, marketeers, street vendors etc. As the modern sector expands, however, they are likely to be deprived even of this sort of work (market women, for example, cannot compete with a supermarket) [17, 18].

Official labour and production statistics make no mention of the work done by women as food producers, in cottage industries and in the informal sector. Such work thus remains invisible, and development and modernization plans make no allowance for the fact that large groups of women increasingly lose control over their traditional sources of income without having any alternative means of earning a reasonable living for themselves and their children.

### Women and education

Women in the majority of developing countries, and also in the Western world, lag far behind men as regards education, a fact that is often considered to be one of the most important reasons for their inferior position on the labour market.

Their educational handicap is clearly shown by statistics: on a global basis, more than 50 per cent of women are illiterate against 28 per cent of men. In the majority of developing countries, there are three boys to two girls at the primary level, two boys to one girl at the secondary level, and more than four boys to one girl at the post-secondary level [19].

These figures are average for all developing countries; in some regions the situation is far more unfavourable for girls.

There is an inverse correlation between the segregation of the sexes, on the one hand, and the educational levels achieved by women on the other. In Islamic countries, for example, where women often experience sex segregation, the proportion of the female population that participates in the educational process is smaller than in other countries. Nevertheless, a relatively high proportion of women belonging to the Islamic élite are able to enjoy a university education [20].

The availability and nature of educational facilities is a frequent hindrance to participation. In rural areas, schools are few and far between and students have to travel long distances. This is a hindrance for both sexes, but it seems to weigh more heavily on girls since the percentage of girls who attend school in rural areas is almost everywhere lower than in the towns [19].

In addition, the educational system is rarely co-ordinated with agrarian working conditions. Primary and secondary education is usually quite formal, both in rural and urban areas; pupils are educated for white-collar jobs. Such jobs are in demand because they represent intellectual rather than manual work and are accorded greater prestige. Competition for these positions is considerable, and the developing countries are typified by a surplus of educated people who are unable to find employment because of the lack of suitable jobs. Openings for women are even more restricted than those for men because other factors impede their entry into the labour market.

The shortage of work opportunities for women is aggravated by the fact that training courses for technical professions and industrial on-the-job training programmes are rarely accessible to them. Education that is linked to technical assistance and agricultural development is also, in the majority of cases, male oriented.

Access to education is also largely determined by socio-economic status. Daughters in poor families frequently have to do the domestic chores while their mothers work, and are thus prevented from attending school. Moreover, it is a common belief that education reduces a girl's marriage prospects since the husband's authority could be threatened by a wife who knew more and could earn more. Among the better classes, on the other hand, girls are encouraged to undergo further education as a means of finding a suitable partner. The men in such circles apparently have so many advantages that they do not feel threatened by a well-educated woman.

In the majority of countries it is difficult even for well-educated women to achieve top positions; in industry, in particular, women are rarely found at the top levels. In general, however, well-educated women have less trouble in finding employment [21].

Many women do not properly utilize their education. They usually end up in typical "women's jobs" and, in comparison with men, do work that is below their educational level, even in the developing countries where there is a shortage of well-educated people. Attention ought to be given to this wastage of knowledge and skills.

Education is an important factor in improving the possibilities for people to take part in modern developments: the setting-up of good professional training courses, increasing informal education adapted to people's living conditions, opening-up all kinds of education to both sexes, encouraging girls to participate in educational programmes, particularly technical training courses — these are just a few of the conditions that could create better chances for everybody and for women in particular.

Such measures are not sufficient in themselves, however, because women's disadvantageous position compared with that of men, which is partly expressed in the educational facilities that are open to them, has deeply rooted origins.

### The vulnerability of women

The inequality between the sexes is global. In the developing countries the majority of people are poverty-stricken. Women and men share the problems of under-development that originate in the unequal division of economic and political power in the world.

On the national and local levels many problems result from the great differences in power and income between the élite and the majority of the population, both men and women.

In addition to this, women are in an especially disadvantaged position as compared with men, disadvantages that find expression particularly in the process of modernization and industrialization.

This inequality is based on the division of labour in the family, whereby women are responsible for the welfare and well-being of all family members, especially the children. This has been referred to as the "breeder-feeder" role:

From the earliest and simplest hunting and gathering folk to the most industrialized society of the twentieth century, the breeding of babies and the feeding of humans of all ages is almost exclusively the work of women, above and beyond other productive processes in which she is engaged [3].

The significant element here is women's responsibility for feeding the family. Women all over the world prepare the meals for their families, but in addition many women, especially in developing countries, produce these meals as subsistence farmers or have to find the means with which to pay for food and for their children's upbringing. This makes them far more vulnerable than men, who are able to back out of this responsibility when it gets too much for them, and frequently show no hesitation in doing so.

Women who have to earn a living in addition to doing household chores and looking after children thus have a double task, and as a result are doubly vulnerable.

This unequal division of work between men and women is supported by cultural concepts that prevail all over the world; concepts that confine women's activities to "home and hearth", while those of the men are associated with the community as a whole, the "public sphere".

Another very important factor is that this position is linked to a difference in appreciation: work in the public sphere, i.e. in general, masculine activities, is more highly valued in the form of prestige or economic advantages. The lower values given to the activities of women (in some cases no value at all) confirm and perpetuate the unequal distribution of power between men and women. In this way, women are trebly vulnerable.

The inequality of power between male and female has everywhere the same basis. The degree to which women are vulnerable, however, and the manner in which that vulnerability is expressed, can show strong regional and class differences.

These differences appear particularly in the measure in which women have the opportunity to earn their own income or the measure in which the community recognizes women's unpaid labour as a contribution to the family

income. Another important factor is the extent to which the discrimination between the men's and women's worlds is carried through. Examples of regional differences include, on the one hand, the women farmers and market women of West Africa who enjoy a high degree of economic self-sufficiency and who play a role in public life through their own clubs and organization.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the majority of those in the Islamic regions live in a women's world of household and family. They are often entirely isolated from the men's world, and are not considered to make a contribution to the family income.

In Western countries the division between a feminine, private sphere and a masculine, public sphere is strongly emphasized and has been even further stressed in the modernization process, which creates a sharp distinction between residential and work spheres and encourages the isolation of nuclear families. In the ideal image of the bourgeois Western family, the men are the breadwinners and work away from home while the women "don't work" but nevertheless are responsible for the well-being of the members of the family. This concept has now lost some of its validity but is by no means obsolete, for example, it still helps to determine the position of women in the labour market in the Netherlands [22].

The ideal image of the Western family was first introduced into many developing countries by the missionaries and colonial Governments, to be frequently adopted by the national élites. Even today, such concepts lie at the root of many government policies and of proposals made by development experts and entrepreneurs who, in determining investment, employment, wages, and education policies, give their main attention to the male population towards whom they are biased.

These relationships in inequality in the family and on the labour market are self-reinforcing: because women are vulnerable, their position on the labour market is unfavourable. If their wage is low and their work insecure, they are not able to care properly for themselves and for their children. Their dependency on men increases, and with it their vulnerability.

The improvement and expansion of educational facilities for women is not sufficient to break this circle: women's participation in education is also strongly determined by the division of work in the family and the cultural concepts to which that is linked. Women's backwardness in education signifies a further impairment of their position.

In the modernization process women's vulnerability increases because it is mostly the men who obtain employment in the public, modern sector, while women are left behind in subsistence and marginal sectors of the economy.

Women are not only deprived of access to their traditional ways of earning a living, they have less disposal than men of new knowledge, skills and capital, and have less access to modern means of support.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

An understanding of the role of women in the modernization and industrialization processes, and attempts to improve their situation, can only be achieved in the context of the power relations that exist in the international

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<sup>1</sup>Even in West Africa, women take little part in the official processes of political decision-making; very few women occupy top positions in Government or industry.

economy, at the national level between élite groups and the masses, and between the sexes.

A more equitable distribution of income, knowledge and power at all levels calls for fundamental changes in the economic structures of developed as well as developing countries.

A development strategy cannot function properly without the direct involvement of women in the fight against hunger and poverty, giving them an equal share in prosperity and well-being. By implication, therefore, any planning of policy and action must take into account the particularly vulnerable position of women, and special attention should be given to the unequal division of work in the family and to the cultural concepts by which this inequality is endorsed and continued.

The participation of women in those sectors of society that are traditionally male-dominated should be encouraged, and it is equally necessary that the importance of women's work and life be acknowledged. Men should be encouraged to participate in sectors of society that are traditional to women, as equal partners with women.

With regard to the participation of women in the industrialization process, the following recommendations are made:

1. Policies relating to areas of expanded employment for women should focus on:

(a) The development of agro-businesses and food-processing industries, giving full attention to the role of women in food production and preparation;

(b) The promotion of small-scale industries in rural areas, giving priority to applied technology for household and agricultural use;

(c) Equal availability to men and women of employment in such industries;

(d) The creation and expansion of opportunities for the self-employment of women by the increased availability of credit, dissemination of relevant information etc.;

(e) The creation of alternative opportunities to earn an income when existing jobs are eliminated by the modernization process.

2. In the areas of industrial policy and legislation, special attention should be given to:

(a) The development of legal measures by which to reduce discrimination in employment due to sex or marital status on the basis of standards established by the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation;

(b) The development of legislative principles and guidelines for the implementation of social and economic policies intended to reduce the inequality between the sexes;

(c) The development of protective legislation relating to working conditions for both men and women.

3. To reduce or eliminate the sex-labelling of jobs and the unequal work distribution among men and women, it is necessary to:

(a) Provide access to all forms and levels of education and training for both boys and girls;

(b) Encourage girls and women to participate in technical training courses and industrial training programmes that were formerly reserved for men;

(c) Encourage boys and men to participate in programmes and courses that were formerly designed for women.

4. In decision-making functions, women should be:

(a) Involved at the national, regional and local levels, particularly when issues arise that are related to any aspect of the mechanization of traditional tasks or to the conversion of production to factory-based manufacturing processes;

(b) Involved in the development of measures with which to alleviate the double workload of job and family, and to provide opportunities for both men and women.

5. Trade union policies should include:

(a) Increased roles and participation for women at all levels of trade union work;

(b) Equal treatment of men and women at all levels, from factory floor to management;

(c) Co-operation and exchange of information and ideas between unions in developed and developing countries.

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# **The Status of Women, Fertility Patterns and Industrial Employment in Developing Countries**

*by Indira A. Subramaniam*

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The subject of the integration of women from developing countries into the industrialization process is vast, and complicated by differences between the cultural systems and traditions, religions, historical experiences, alien influences (affecting their legal and social systems), geography and economic infrastructure of these countries. Therefore, certain common characteristics need to be identified in order to form a basis for evolving solutions and making recommendations aimed at benefiting all developing countries.

The developing countries are not repeating the patterns of industrialization of developed countries; as a result, solutions to problems effective in industrialized countries are not necessarily applicable in developing countries, and the experience of the former cannot be effectively utilized to direct the progress of the latter. The technology of developed countries often absorbs too many resources and provides too few jobs. It tends to increase income inequalities, already marked in developing countries. The small élite groups in developing countries tend to use imported products, which prevents the development of the mass market for more labour-intensive simple commodities thus hampering the incorporation of women into the labour force.

In experiencing a relatively long transition from an agrarian economy to an industrialized one, production in the Western developed countries moved from home to factory and concurrently some social adjustment was made as evidenced in the gradual development of rights and privileges accorded to women and the general improvement in their education. Yet even this adjustment remains inadequate in terms of the total utilization of women in the labour force of developed nations.

In developing countries, on the other hand, the agrarian economy is often juxtaposed with high technology. There has been little or no gradual transition but superimposition of Western technology and its values upon society. The economics of under-development are linked to under-utilization of available human resources resulting from over-population and overly rapid urbanization, on the one hand, and the cultural and socio-economic imbalance on the other.

## **Women in the industrialization process in developing countries**

Two of the significant factors affecting the entry of women into the industrial labour force in developing countries are (a) cultural traditions affecting the status of women; and (b) the economic consequences of high fertility.

### *Cultural traditions affecting the status of women*

Cultural traditions, including religious and institutionalized social mores, have always been primary determinants of female roles and status. This is shown in the sexual division of labour, differential decision-making and authority patterns of men and women, attitudes of women reflected in the presence or absence of organized women's groups to protect women's rights, and the level of sophistication of social legislation affecting the status of women.

Industrialization can cause the roles, and thereby the status, of women to be redefined because it affects life styles and consumption patterns and, above all, creates occupational alternatives and opportunity structures for women that can lead to economic independence, power and prestige in society on a new basis. Yet, so far, it has not resulted in the achievement of these goals and, in fact, has brought to the surface constraints that have prevented women from participating effectively in economic development. Even in highly developed countries the integration of women into predominantly male preserves such as management, organization, and decision- and policy-making roles has not occurred to any significant extent.<sup>1</sup>

A major factor affecting women entering the labour force is the sex-typing of occupations, which is universal and inhibits the redefinition of the roles of women in industrialization. It limits employment opportunities open to women and serves to perpetuate inequalities between the sexes. Industrialization is capable of restructuring societal values, and revamping the economic infrastructure to enable a reduction in the sex-typing of occupations. This has been known to disappear temporarily when imbalances in sex ratios caused by war or economic necessity have required women to undertake jobs usually performed by men. This occurred in many countries during and after the Second World War when numerous jobs became available for women because of a shortage of males in the labour force. In times of great social upheaval (wars or revolutions) social structures and traditions are often disrupted and the chains of cultural tradition temporarily broken. Sex-typing has also disappeared when there has been considerable rural-urban migration, primarily of adult males, that has resulted in the women being left behind as heads of households to take on tasks usually undertaken by men.

Another factor affecting the participation of women in the industrial labour force is male chauvinism and institutionalized inequality of the sexes. The tradition of "machismo" is by no means relegated to Latin-America; it is universal. A majority of men in most societies have been programmed by tradition to perceive women as being useful solely in domestic and familial roles, and it is extremely difficult to effect long-lasting changes in such attitudes. The concept of women as wage-earning, economically independent, goal-oriented individuals who can interact with men as equals is alien and radical to the cultural traditions of most developing countries. The inferior position of women starts in the cradle; it is perpetuated by ignorance and lack of education and exacerbated by the traditions, religious orthodoxy and economics of family structures and systems.

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<sup>1</sup>In the United States of America, some progress has been made in terms of the Equal Rights Amendment in which women are guaranteed equality of opportunity and access to all positions in society. However, this proposed Amendment has not yet been ratified.

Strong pressure is also exerted on women to stay within the familial realm by the practice of sex-segregation as dictated by religion and tradition. This is more apparent among less educated women who face strong cultural pressures and even social stigma if they venture to work outside the home. In the Middle East generally, women are discouraged or prohibited from taking up employment outside the home, even as domestic servants.

It is obvious that the level of economic and industrial development of a country determines the prevalent family structure in a society. This, combined with poverty, affects sex-role definitions of women and their status. For example, the predominance of the extended family system in agrarian societies affects attitudes towards work outside the familial sphere. The nuclear family normally improves both male and female attitudes towards non-domestic remunerative employment as familial, traditional pressures exerted by elders, peers and the community are considerably weaker.

In many parts of the world only the poorest women work, and the ability to avoid the necessity of manual labour has been an important distinguishing sign of socio-economic status. However, only a very small proportion of upper-class, urban women utilize education and economic independence as status symbols. Caste, or the position of an individual in a tribe, clan or community, more often determines whether women work or not. Generally, the higher the social position in an agrarian society, the less the propensity to take up paid employment. The attitudes of women and their degree of participation in the industrial labour force also depend upon their ability to find ways and means to bypass traditional norms. Whenever traditional group norms, dominated by conforming males and familial and community pressures, remain in effect, the inequality of women is perpetuated, inhibiting their active and effective participation in the industrial development process. Only when individual achievement, social mobility, improved health and so on become equally important to both men and women will women be sufficiently encouraged, motivated and capable of being involved in the industrial occupational structure.

### *Economic consequences of high fertility*

The economic impact of fertility on the role of women in the industrialization process should be viewed from two levels: macro-economic and micro-economic.

#### *Macro-economic level*

At the macro-economic level high fertility and consequent over-population have a negative impact on society as a whole, as they increase unemployment and cause under-employment. Although the number of employed persons has increased in developing countries, the number of unemployed has increased progressively as well. Over-population provides a rationale for continued male dominance in the urban industrial labour force at all levels, and implies that as long as there are unemployed males in a society, the position of women will remain subservient and relegated to domesticity or subsistence agricultural pursuits.

The problems that affect women's participation in industrial development are as follows: (a) economic growth causes capital-intensive and industrial labour-saving devices to be used thereby reducing the supply of jobs; (b) high population growth rates simultaneously increase the number of people of working age and the number of dependents, and thus raise the demand for already scarce jobs; and (c) in urban areas unplanned, large-scale, rural-urban migration compounds the imbalance between jobs and people, and results in poverty. Thus, a fundamental conflict occurs between economic production output and employment objectives that arises from a shortage of capital and an abundance of labour. Urban areas need to increase their employment-generating capacity for both men and women, and rural-urban migration needs to be slowed down or discouraged by the economic development of rural areas to provide jobs for rural populations.

Rapid population growth is one of the most effective inhibitors to women entering the industrial labour force, the solution to which is more jobs rather than sheer growth in overall economic terms. Jobs provide a redistribution of income as they reduce inequalities in income and wealth, and provide wages and the eventual development of social security systems, health benefits, pension systems etc. that have been non-existent and are still unknown for the masses in most developing countries. Jobs also create a sense of self-worth and provide a shift in values and goals of individuals; the fatalism of the poor in developing countries is transformed into positive aspirations.

One of the universal consequences of a labour-surplus economy is the exploitation of women entering the labour force. The development of protective groups, such as unions and other social or governmental groups, and appropriate legislation catering to the needs of women seems premature and irrelevant to policy-makers in the face of large-scale economic problems afflicting a society. This situation could be changed by deliberate, rational, far-sighted policies and attendant legislation to support the necessary implementation. Women, as under-utilized human resources, should be looked upon as assets, not liabilities; their employment should be seen as contributing to economic growth, not stifling it. And if, in the short term, the creation of jobs and the utilization of women retards growth, the loss is negligible in comparison to the long-term, permanent, economic, social and demographic benefits.

#### *Micro-economic level*

At the micro-economic level, high fertility rates deter women from entering the industrial labour force because of childbearing and child-rearing activities. Severe pressures stem from the family and community requiring women to play the roles of wife and mother. Religion, tradition and superstition have an important impact on the lives of illiterate or semi-illiterate women and men, and the attitudes of women towards entry into the industrial labour force must be considered. Women in many countries are viewed as an economic burden, which places them at an economic, social and psychological disadvantage. The only way a woman can achieve some measure of status and influence in certain types of society is to bear sons. Women are often married young in some societies and reproduction commences early. They are therefore disadvantaged in terms of acquiring adequate skills, knowledge or education for purposes of industrial involvement. It is difficult for them to assert themselves and think independently as long as such social practices continue.

Many people see children as old-age security, especially in developing countries where old-age benefit systems are virtually non-existent for the majority. The cost of bearing and caring for children is dispersed among extended family members rather than being the sole responsibility of the parents, which in turn gives rise to the characteristically high dependency ratios prevalent in many developing countries. Where the group and tradition exert pressure on the individual to bear children, and where status adheres to reproduction, then work is not considered a viable alternative. If reasons such as social mobility, health, new goals, personality development, economic betterment etc. motivate individuals to become involved in the non-domestic occupational sphere, then status would adhere to economic production rather than reproduction. The rewards must be perceived by women themselves and should directly accrue to them, not to their husbands, fathers or the community, as a prerequisite to women being motivated to work on a continuing, career-oriented basis.

### **Women in the labour force**

Few women in developed or developing countries pursue satisfying careers as sufficient opportunities are not available. Most women enter and remain in low-status, mechanical, repetitive, routine occupations in the urban areas, or increasingly unrewarding agricultural work in the rural areas. There is no incentive for them to work except sheer economic necessity. Few work for purposes of career development, self-development or satisfaction.

Declining populations in developed countries and zero population growth have led increasing numbers of women to work. Some women work because they have small families or none; some work because they need money; and some want to work. In many developed countries, women in the labour force have increased because there are higher proportions of single women who have to support themselves; a higher number of divorcees (an increasingly significant group) are single parents and have to support themselves and their children; and widows, though their percentage is declining. While all of these factors together are not always relevant in the developing countries, the reason why women work remains much the same for the vast majority, namely, economic necessity.

Many women in developing countries are able and willing to work, but socio-economic supply and demand determine their incorporation into the industrial labour force. The availability of women to enter the labour force is contingent upon their levels of education, acquired capabilities and skills, decision-making power and independence of action, together with the characteristics of the female population itself including the attitudes of women to working outside the home.

The demand for women in the labour force depends upon the level of economic development, on the one hand, and the organization of the economic infrastructure on the other. However, in itself the level of economic development does not explain the extent to which women participate in non-agricultural work. By the same token, education, for example, in itself does not lead to greater propensities for employment. Employability increases with education, but social factors and availability of opportunities often determine whether a woman can actively participate in the industrialization process or not.

It is increasingly apparent that given continued progress along current lines, more women will be entering the labour force due to:

- (a) Longer life expectancy;
- (b) Increasing educational attainment of the female segment of the population as new methods and policies reach even the remotest villages;
- (c) Later ages at marriage as educational levels rise and more women seek work;
- (d) Declining fertility, freeing more women for non-reproductive roles and non-familial activities.

Contrary to expectations, economic development programmes have not substantially increased female employment rates in many developing countries. In fact, one consequence of economic development has been rural-urban migration, which has caused an over-abundance of males competing for scarce jobs in urban areas causing women to drop out of the labour force altogether. Unemployed husbands or the absence of male providers, due to death or divorce etc., force women to seek work in order to obtain the basic necessities of life for themselves and their families, but work is not readily available. When economic conditions improve, many of these women, if not supported by other incentives and a change in attitudes, drop out of the labour force. Compelled work therefore has little influence on traditional attitudes; the ideal is to create a continuous, permanent female labour force that can provide an effective long-term contribution to the process of industrialization.

Thus far in most countries, women have been utilized in exploitive, menial, manual, labour-intensive types of work. For example, they have been utilized in agriculture for planting and harvesting; in industry for spinning, weaving and hand-pounding; in construction as human conveyor belts for masonry and earth; and in services as domestic servants, which is often a form of exploitive indentured labour with no rights, privileges or benefits. There seems to be minimal utilization of women in the transportation industry, while female involvement in the manufacturing sector depends on the traditional sexual division of labour. In distribution and sales, women are generally grossly under-represented. Although street vendors and sidewalk hawkers are often women in many developing countries, and some serve in family-owned stores, these can hardly be defined as integral parts of an industrial labour force.

Women are relatively few in white-collar jobs, but it is one important area where they are increasingly involved. In developed countries, this area has provided the greatest opportunity for women. In the developing countries, the upwardly mobile new lower-middle classes constitute an expanding sector of population, and the growth of education and higher levels of literacy and training have begun to influence women making them important sources of labour at this level. Even so it would seem that in countries where segregation of the sexes is still practised, major obstacles prevail.

The privilege of élitist groups is reflected in the opportunities for educated women to enter professional employment in many developing countries. Yet too few women avail themselves of these advantages. No traditional patterns have been established to limit women's participation in the upper echelons of the industrial labour force. Thus, power and privilege of élitist backgrounds and the lack of precedence could enable women to enter these areas relatively easily. Specifically, women have exhibited extremely low participation levels in those areas of industry concerned with distribution, management, adminis-

tration and organization. It is here, if at all, that a breakthrough is necessary permitting women entry at the policy- and decision-making levels in order that they may work towards achieving increased participation of women at the lower echelons as well.

The true relevance of any study of the occupational patterns and preferences of women lies in defining prospects for educating and training them to achieve a degree of equitable participation in industrial jobs at all levels.

The lack of education and training among women has been a major disadvantage for them. Education and training are important for the acquisition of skills and knowledge crucial for effective participation in an industrial labour force. Women should not only be educated to reappraise their own personal worth, identify personal objectives and goals, improve family conditions and perceive alternative rewards for themselves but also be taught modern frames of reference for work habits, e.g. continuity in the labour force, regularity of attendance, commitment to work, assertiveness, awareness of rights and privileges, and concern with benefits, career planning and development.

Vocational training (either pre-job or on-the-job) provides much needed technical and manual skills for women and vastly improves their capability for increased earning capacity. A purely functional orientation would have a serious drawback in that it could perpetuate the traditional exploitation of women if not properly controlled. When effectively implemented, it can be used to incorporate women into the labour force in a beneficial and positive manner.

Social change cannot be effected quickly or easily, particularly in those areas of change that involve reassessment of power, authority, ideology and personal independence, which are important for all individuals. Personal and societal values are subjective and difficult to modify or change and yet they are particularly significant because they exert substantial pressure upon the functioning of society. It is inevitable that the law is more objective, pragmatic, and effective in bringing about desired change in the thinking of its citizens.

Women have been socially and economically disadvantaged almost everywhere in the world. They are often rated as second-class citizens. In attempting to change the attitudes of men towards women, and in order for women to change their own attitudes developed due to years of biased socialization, progressive legislation could be utilized as a first step.

Legislation infiltrates all areas of existence and can provide effective support for progressive social policies. In attempting to remove the barriers inhibiting the integration of women into the industrialization process, direct and indirect incentives and encouragement can be provided to both men and women, and to families, tribes, clans and communities.

Initial legislation would be unpopular in many instances, but it is the only means available, and it could be enforced. It is probable that out of total hostility, a certain amount of social tolerance would emerge and in time the tolerance would evolve into commitment and support for this ideal.

### **The impact of multinationals**

The 1970s were characterized by the intensive search by large manufacturing companies from developed countries for inexpensive labour to be used in labour-intensive areas of manufacturing. Wages and other costs of production have increased substantially due to strong competition, unioniza-

tion and supportive legislation resulting in the erosion of large profit margins in developed countries. Many companies from the developed countries are turning to the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America as a means of combating competitive pressures in the economic market-place. The impact of these multinationals on the economies of developing countries is controversial even though generally perceived in negative terms, they are capable of engendering economic trends beneficial not only to themselves but also to the host developing countries.

Generally, the type of industrial production introduced by these companies is female-labour-intensive. While it is acknowledged that employment opportunities are being opened up for women, they are primarily in subordinate, unskilled, or semi-skilled jobs where conditions of work are poor, opportunities for advancement non-existent and job insecurity prevalent. Women, more so than men, are often paid subsistence wages and hours of work are not specified. In addition, the skills used or learned by women are limited and non-transferable — a form of “trained incapacity”;<sup>2</sup> or they perform repetitive tasks requiring no skills and of no long-term economic value. In some cases the industries are transient and marginal “fad” industries such as those manufacturing plastic flowers, wigs, toys etc. that depend upon Western demand for their survival. When the market fails local investors go bankrupt, workers are laid off and join the ranks of the unemployed and the multinational corporation merely moves away. In many instances, these women workers are not unionized and are often discouraged from joining unions by their own Governments as this may discourage foreign investment in the country. Inflation, political instability and a host of other factors make this type of employment undesirable for women as they cannot be integrated into the industrial labour force on a continuing long-term basis.

Multinationals do not fully utilize or develop labour resources within the developing economy even though they are a part of the local economy. Their policies of employment are inadequate and their goals are usually short-term. Where long-term economic development is concerned they have no policy at all and do not necessarily concern themselves with it. In addition, the multinationals act as agents that transfer or introduce new technology in a package form that is neither adapted to local needs nor oriented towards national goals. This results in emphasis on large-scale industrial production that may generate growth but does not generate employment, and at the same time displaces small- and medium-scale enterprises that are significant sources of employment for women. Their presence also leads to the neglect of the rural infrastructure. Finally, they encourage rural-urban migration by attracting people to the cities thereby exacerbating urban employment problems. All this perpetuates the dependency of the developing country on the multinationals, which is unhealthy for long-term economic growth.

When developed countries provide economic aid, the type of industrial technology does not always assist the overall long-range plans of economic development of the developing country. Most industrial projects involving transfer of know-how and technology from developed to developing countries consider the problem of economic aid from the standpoint of experience in the donor country; therefore, many of the stereotyped notions that inhibit the participation of women in industry in developed countries are transferred by ignorance or design to the developing countries. When agreements and

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<sup>2</sup>A term by Robert Merton, sociologist, United States of America.



contracts for aid are signed between developing country Governments and developed country organizations, companies, or international agencies, there are usually no stipulations governing the use of the labour force etc. that could refer to the utilization of females along with attendant training facilities. If developed countries are attempting to assist developing countries, it is ironic that a significant part of the potential labour force is ignored.

Thus, new strategies must be planned to bring about changes not only in the planners, peoples and politicians of the developing countries, but also in those of developed countries that must redefine their scientific and technological policies, trade policies, roles as donors of aid and roles as foreign investors.

### Recommendations

1. In-depth research should be undertaken to assess the attitudes of women and the impact of familial and community pressures on them within specific cultural, national, regional and subregional contexts.

2. Dissemination of information on the benefits of women's participation in the labour force within each cultural framework should be increased at all levels of society, particularly among decision-makers and planners of industrial development and those who influence women's decisions to work. For example, the following types of benefits could be included:

- (a) Improvement in the standards of living and increased income;
- (b) Improvement in the educational attainment of the entire population;
- (c) Improvement in the utilization of human resources for the benefit of the region and nation, or even the tribal or ethnic group;
- (d) Improvement in the quality of life and achievement of personal goals for individuals, families and future generations;
- (e) Generation of economic multiplier effects at all levels of the economy to benefit individuals and communities.

3. Women must be provided with the basic skills and incentives to enter the labour force and the opportunity to enter traditionally non-female fields of work. In developing countries especially women need to be provided with motivation and scope to be removed from subsistence cultivation or other forms of unrewarding agrarian activity. Education and training facilities need to be increased and expanded at both formal and informal levels and should include girls and women at all stages. Thus, training involving the acquisition of usable skills should focus on: (a) the traditional female occupations that have been expanded and developed in scope, which should be organized and integrated into the industrial development process; and (b) the non-traditional occupations that have been part of the male domains of activity or are new occupations emerging from industrialization. In addition fundamental re-education is required for those definers of tradition, that is males and older persons who wield social authority, who strongly affect the choices of women. Re-education is also required of union personnel, particularly the leaders, who must develop empathy and sensitivity and commitment to the needs and requirements of women workers in transition. Agricultural extension courses should be made available to rural women in order to familiarize them with concepts of basic health and home economics, elementary marketing and craft skill improvement. Use can be made of multidisciplinary teams to work in

villages to make women aware of opportunities and to improve their literacy. This could very well generate further productive investment.

4. Human resource policies need to be developed as they are fundamental ingredients of the industrialization process and are linked to the incorporation of women into the industrial labour force. Four areas of policy and resultant legislation need to be focused upon with particular stress on the issue of structural unemployment as it relates to women:

Social policy, which includes all those areas relevant to the welfare, security and progress of a nation's citizens. This includes the introduction, development or modification of taxation systems, insurance, pension schemes or old-age security systems; laws on unemployment; monetary incentives for dual-income families and for small families; reassessment of the monetary value of housework (as working women usually continue to perform at two levels) etc.

Family policy, which includes areas of daily life that affect the decision and opportunity for women to take up work in the industrial labour force. For example, incentives should be provided in the form of child allowances, child care provisions, maternity leave benefits, child support, assistance for divorced or widowed women, inheritance laws, assistance with migration, provision of housing for families with working wives and mothers, health benefits; and protection should be provided against polygamy, minimal age at marriage, forced marriage etc.

Educational policy, which includes making existing and planned education and training opportunities available to men and women, taking into consideration the hitherto neglected needs of women. This includes both formal classroom and informal types of education and training, changes in examination systems to permit women entrants to participate, flexible class times to suit the needs of working or married women, subsidized training etc. Included in this area would also be changes in school curricula to reduce sex-typification of roles, interests and occupations among boys and girls, and to inculcate self-worth, aggressiveness and leadership skills in girls.

Industrial, economic, labour and market policies, which include employer behaviour and practices relating to women in the industrial labour force. The area is extremely broad and incorporates policies on equal job opportunities and equal pay; reduction of discrimination by employers by means of incentives to those who employ women in predefined proportions or quotas based on economic, cultural, educational and other factors affecting the supply of women; on-the-job provision of training for women and development of new skills; incorporation into the working conditions of such factors as working hours, flexibility of location (if and where possible), flexibility of hours, part-time job opportunities, transportation, housing, social flexibility in the industrial environment, e.g. physical segregation of sexes; career development, continuing education for women workers; introduction of special managerial and administrative leadership courses; promotional incentives for employees in managerial and administrative capacities; establishment of government and non-profit agencies with significant female participation for policy-making and implementation of legislation; dissemination of information regarding opportunities for women, economic and social benefits, union participation; incentives for self-employment for women; promotion of women in small-scale industries etc.

5. Since the major part of the solution lies in the creation of jobs for women, this should be considered a priority item. In the manufacturing sector, for example, jobs may be increased by policy decisions to initially utilize labour-intensive appropriate or intermediate technologies rather than capital-intensive high technologies, and to select products that require greater labour-intensive methods to produce. Once the labour force is better utilized, better trained and reduced in numbers, the next stage of industrial development will become possible. Small industries could follow much the same philosophy. Medium- and small-scale industries, which are less glamorous but crucial for economic development of developing countries, may select products suitable for export and with aggressive entrepreneurship could be responsible for generating much more employment.

The creation of a rural infrastructure becomes necessary to decentralize industrial activity and take jobs and services to where the people are, in their own communities and villages. Non-agricultural employment in rural areas is important, yet factory production should not too easily replace crafts activities. Women need to be provided with the information, scope, facilities and support to be self-employed in areas that feed into the operations of larger industrial projects. The displacement of cottage industries should also be very carefully assessed and should be slowed down to provide sufficient time to develop alternative jobs and sources of income for women.

Improving and utilizing conditions in the rural-agricultural sector to incorporate women into the industrial effort is possible. For example, petty trade conducted by women can be, by a pooling of resources, metamorphosed into a better planned medium-scale industry-type operation where the same women can be trained and effectively utilized. The formation of co-operatives would facilitate and encourage the use of women for purposes of greater economic and industrial development. Co-operatives would also be beneficial to women as they assist in teaching and training them, expose them to new experiences and provide increased employment opportunities and income.

The dual role of women, job and family, needs to be seriously considered. Broad social adaptations requiring fundamental changes in industrial policies are required to deal with the issues of changing roles of women and their entry into the industrialization process.

6. All development programmes should include the interests and requirements of both men and women in their planning activities. Therefore in designing projects the following elements need to be considered:

- (a) Familial structure and roles of members helping or hindering women from working;
- (b) Existing patterns of sexual division of labour in agricultural production and how the project will affect the division of labour within the family;
- (c) Types of labour-saving machinery or technology of greatest assistance to women in providing free time from domestic duties;
- (d) Needs of women workers, and needed social services;
- (e) Necessary training required etc.

7. Women should actively participate in political, economic, social and legal organizations, agencies, clubs, community groups (including unions) in order to develop awareness of their needs and goals, and encourage and receive support for the implementation of changes in policies by finding practical solutions to existing problems. Accessibility of women to higher-status,

responsible positions at professional, managerial and administrative levels should be improved.

8. Public and private sector industrial enterprises should co-ordinate their policies relating to development of employment and training programmes that include women.

9. Foreign-based multinationals should be encouraged to adopt consistent policies favourable to women employees, geared to the long-term economic and industrial needs of the countries in which they operate.

Multinationals should design their investment plans to utilize, on an initial basis, intermediate technology and labour-intensive production methods instead of importing sophisticated high technology machinery which limits local employment opportunities and displaces workers.

Countries attempting to attract multinational manufacturing industries should offer cheap labour, tax incentives, export processing zones etc. but only on condition that requirements for women workers and general labour standards and training for all workers be included in the multinational's policy for purposes of contributing to long-term economic development goals.

Stipulations and clauses regarding the training for long-term employment and participation of specified proportions or quotas of women workers at all levels could be incorporated into agreements and contracts to assist in the overall process of industrial development.

# The Role of Women in Industrialization: A Case Study of Morocco

by Fatima-Zohra Bennani-Baïti

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Education is essential, not only for women but also for men, to develop awareness of the role women can play on an equal basis with men in terms both of jobs and effectiveness in economic development.

In Morocco, the participation of women in the economy in general and in industry in particular is substantial, although it is more often than not ignored and its value remains only partially recognized. The problem is a lack of education. The national illiteracy rate is 76 per cent for all citizens, and for females it is 86 per cent at the national level, and 98 per cent in the rural areas.

Education for women in Morocco was introduced in 1943 when King Mohammed V permitted girls to enter primary school for the first time. Yet, since then, despite sizeable amounts of investment by the Government of Morocco in the field of formal education, only 44 per cent of school-age children are enrolled in primary school, while in rural areas enrolment is a mere 14 per cent. At higher ages, enrolment for girls is 15 per cent at the national level, and 5 per cent in rural areas. These statistics become all the more significant considering that 65 per cent of the Moroccan population live in the rural areas.

The development and expansion of the primary school system has been constrained by budgetary considerations and the alarming rate of population growth. The total population of Morocco in 1977 was 18.3 million, of which 45 per cent were under 15 years of age. The annual population growth rate was 3.2 per cent. As a result, the Government has barely been able to increase the number of classrooms and teachers to accommodate the annual increases in population.

The consequences of the lack of educational opportunities for women are shown in the labour market. Semi-literate or illiterate women, however intelligent, are unable to fully participate in the social and economic development of Morocco. Women are now increasingly entering the labour force as substantiated by unemployment statistics. According to official data, the number of women seeking jobs increased tenfold between 1960 and 1971.

Working women account for 25 per cent of the female population, and 37 per cent of the labour force. This female labour force is young, 44 per cent being less than 25 years old and 15 per cent less than 15. These women work in agriculture, animal husbandry, agro-industry, assembly, textile and clothing industries, electricity, electronics, radio, television, accounting etc. In addition, many of them work as civil servants (secretaries) or maids.

Despite the expansion in the formal education programme in Morocco, there is an increasing number of students who "drop out" of the educational system, either through failure to maintain required academic standards or for

other reasons. Many of these individuals, possessing some secondary school education, then enter the job market with no saleable skills, leading to unemployment or under-employment. In an effort to accelerate and expand educational and employment opportunities for women, the Government has been searching for informal approaches to education and training that would reach a large segment of the unschooled in both rural and urban areas without overtaxing the national budget. Under the Ministry of Labour, the Government has established the Office de formation professionnelle et de la promotion du travail (OFPPT), which is responsible for vocational training. Its programme is directed at both men and women between the ages of 15 and 20 who have dropped out of the formal school system.

In the summer of 1976, a team of experts from the United States Agency for International Development (AID) recommended that women trainers be allowed to participate in the industrial and commercial training programmes of the Ministry of Labour on an equal basis with men.<sup>1</sup> Areas designated as suitable for women workers were watchmaking, textiles, clothing, cosmetics, leather industries, assembly industries and ceramics. This demonstrates that the Government has been attempting to reduce the serious lack of opportunities for women in education, training and employment. It is assumed that these recommendations will be acted upon by the Government.

#### **Current contribution of women to industrial development in Morocco**

No accurate statistics are available on the participation of Moroccan women in industry. However, the 1971 General Census on Population and Housing gives the participation of women and men in various sectors of the economy (see annex). Since 1976, the Secrétariat d'état au plan et au développement régional and the Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie have been undertaking surveys each April on employment in the urban areas, and on processing industries, but the results of these surveys were not available when this paper was written.

The role of women in industry is exemplified by presenting the current status of women workers in four major industrial sectors where they are most represented.

#### ***Textile and clothing industry***

In Morocco, the textile and clothing industry is the most modern of all. It utilizes the most sophisticated technology in the field, and is important in the national economy. Until 1970, this industry was not even able to satisfy the demand of the domestic market; today, it has made such rapid progress that it supplies not only local market demand but is also able to export large quantities to foreign markets and there are still possibilities for expansion.

At present more than 50 per cent of employees in this sector are women (see annex). Women occupy, almost exclusively, the lower-level jobs that are manual and require continuous concentration. Their wages are from 20 to 30

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<sup>1</sup>General Census on Population and Housing (Morocco, 1971).

per cent lower than those paid to men since the income of women is considered as a supplementary financial resource for the family.

The textile industry occupies a very important place in the national economic plan. In view of its capability for export, many programmes are envisaged for increasing and diversifying production. To implement these, women will have to play a larger role and new training and vocational programmes will have to be established for them. Women will also have to overcome the social and cultural constraints preventing them from participating in the decision-making processes. This is legally possible as according to the law and Constitution, women have the right to undertake independent business activities without the permission or intervention of any man. In practice, however, this does not occur because women have been brought up to believe that they are weak, and that their principal tasks are to procreate, to care for children and to be housewives. Business is conceived as a male enterprise. These attitudes and stereotypes will have to change if production is to be increased.

Since 1971, when more women entered the textile sector, the quality of production has improved. Thus, the Government is optimistic about expanding and developing this sector, and in order to promote it further, an institutional framework has been created to train experts and favour the import of new technology. No specific programmes or plans are envisaged for women, but to develop this sector, women, who constitute more than 50 per cent of its human resources, should be deeply involved in the technological developmental areas. This can be achieved by training them, providing them with greater access to higher level jobs, creating facilities for mothers, giving them special credit facilities, and organizing their work in such a way that they benefit from the technology. They could also be encouraged to join and participate in trade unions. In Morocco, very few women participate in the unions, and even when they do they are passive members.

The strategy of the Ministry of Industry to integrate women into this sector is to create more job-producing manufacturing enterprises and to expand educational and vocational programmes for women. This would increase both supply and related investment, and would help to evolve a better strategy for industrial development.

At present, only three firms in the entire textile sector can boast women as their heads. The author interviewed one of these women, who is well aware of the problems encountered by women in her position. These problems are both economic and social and originate in the traditional, orthodox values of a developing society. The crucial problem in this firm, for example, is the lack of adequately trained people. Of the 80 persons employed, about half are women, and some of them are entrusted with responsible positions. Women have been found to be more serious about their work, sometimes more competent, and they exhibit a lower rate of absenteeism than men. They are paid on an equal basis with men.

Upon entry, all the workers receive three months of accelerated general training, and polyvalent workers receive six months of training. A minimum level of education is mandatory.

The women are between the ages of 18 and 30 and one of the major problems encountered is that they tend to leave after marriage. This turnover inhibits continuity in the work and training is wasted.

### *Food-processing industry*

Within the food-processing industry, women undertake seasonal or temporary activities particularly in the fruit, vegetable and fish-canning factories. In this sector women generally find employment more easily because (a) they are willing to accept low wages; (b) men do not like low-level jobs; and (c) men generally do not accept seasonal work. Thus sex-segregation in work applies to this sector. These activities are considered suitable for women since they are repetitive, and require patience and concentration.

Where fruits and vegetables are concerned, the workers are responsible for peeling and canning; for fish, women work in the sardine factories, and elsewhere. Thus 80 to 90 per cent of seasonal workers in canning factories are women. A high percentage of workers in the mineral water factories are also women. Conversely, mostly men are employed in the sugar industry because the work is hard and laborious.

Work in these factories is primarily manual, which does not require any special training. This encourages the use of extremely cheap labour, which lowers production costs.

The existing permanent positions are generally filled by men, though some in the lowest categories are filled by women.

At the administrative and decision-making levels of food-processing factories men predominate. Despite the fact that there are now increasing numbers of women engineers and research workers, the proportion of women at high levels remains very low.

Improvements in equipment and technology in the food-processing factories would result in all workers being permanently employed, thereby eliminating the seasonal aspect of this industry.

The people employed in the food-processing industry are forced to remain marginal as the workers do not or cannot participate in or adapt to changing technology. Moreover, the Moroccan woman worker is not aware of her participation in work being a contributory factor in the economic and social life of the country. Earning the necessary income for the family is the exclusive prerogative of men. The traditional division of labour is still maintained and defines the power relationships within the family: "He who earns the money makes the law".

### *Electrical, electronic and mechanical industries*

Generally, the mechanical areas of industry are reserved for men. These sectors do not correspond to women's activities, e.g. the steel foundry, yet there are activities even within these sectors that can be developed with the participation of women, for example small-assembly units. Small electronic industries or assembly industries for television, radio, computers, aeroplanes, cars, small electrical parts that require precision, dexterity and continuous concentration are seen as particularly suitable for women. Of the workers in industries of this kind, 80 to 90 per cent are women, most being between 18 and 24 years old.

The heads of assembly industries have found that not only is the productivity rate of women far higher than that of men, but that women learn their job very quickly and with ease. This is explained by the fact that women have more dexterity, are more dedicated to their work and are very attentive.



The rate of absenteeism, again, is lower than that of men. Women are also more meticulous in following instructions. It is believed that the progress and growth that has been achieved in the field of small electronics industries in the space of 3 years could not have been achieved in 10 years without the participation of women.

In the first six months, workers receive general training followed by six months of work under close supervision. As in other industries, the biggest problems are the difficulty of finding literate people and women leaving their jobs when they get married. An additional problem has been related to night-work. These firms have had to cease operating night-shifts because Morocco has signed the ILO convention prohibiting women from working during the night. This is believed to be a significant obstacle to the development of a number of projects in electronics in which night-work is necessary. Lack of space and time limit a discussion here of the issue of whether women should work during the night.

Despite the fact that women actively participate in this sector and produce a high output, there are no adequate, organized, specific training programmes accessible to all interested women.

### *Chemical and paramedical industries*

The participation of women in the chemical sector is virtually nil. In theory, recruiting policies are the same for women and men, but because of traditional factors and the nature and quality of the jobs, this sector is almost exclusively reserved for men. In general, whenever women are employed, their wages run 20 to 30 per cent lower than those of men.

The differential levels of participation of women in the various branches of this sector are presented below:

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Percentage of women employed</i>
Pharmaceutical	80, most of them in low categories
Paper and pasteboard	40
Matches	} Almost zero
Rubber and tyre	
Heavy chemical (fertilizers, chemical products etc.)	
Paint	
Wood	
Building equipment	

It is necessary to analyse these industries and make recommendations for more equitable participation of women in all sectors.

### **Measures to strengthen the contribution of women in industrial development in Morocco**

#### *Limitations to achieving effective participation of women in industrialization*

It is generally believed that there are sectors of industry, particularly the heavy industries, that are exclusively for men; in fact, women can participate effectively in all sectors and at all levels of industry. The expansion and spread of the total benefits of technology should be made available to women by

making their participation easier and by using innovative techniques and modified technologies to include women to a greater extent in the industrialization process.

Despite women's seemingly greater aptitude for certain types of work, e.g. electronics and clothing, their employment in industry is severely limited by (a) the lack of education; (b) the orthodox cultural attitudes and social values relating to women. Moroccan women, even though educated and heading families, are never able to reach full emancipation. They inevitably require male authorization to undertake economic activities, for example, although according to the law a woman has the right to undertake business freely without the intervention of a man, she in fact requires male authorization (her husband, brother or tutor) even to get a passport. Thus it is impossible for a woman to run an export business without male permission since this necessitates travelling abroad; and (c) the fact that their husbands may prevent them from working when they get married.

In spite of these limitations, women have, particularly in the last five years, been learning a variety of industrial jobs and trying by various means to work. The effects of inflation, the increasing needs of people and the evolution of the modern economy have resulted in women's earnings becoming a crucial contribution to the maintenance of the home and to the economic and social self-sufficiency of the family unit, which requires the consolidation and strengthening of the contribution of women in the industrial development process.

#### *National policy and planning relating to the effective role of women*

Priority in national policy and planning should be given to the education of women. The Government should provide young women with training that is geared to employment requirements in the modern sector. In particular, non-formal educational programmes and vocational and technical training for women should be developed and expanded. OFPPT is the most appropriate governmental department to promote the expansion of non-formal educational training in Morocco. It was established in 1974 when the Ministry of Labour was given the responsibility for organizing and administering vocational training programmes, recruiting and training instructors, and ascertaining labour needs in industry and commerce. This Office is assisted by a council representing employers, workers and government officials and is financed by a 1 per cent wage tax levied on industrial and commercial firms.

OFPPT should be expanded in order to design programmes and establish Centres de formation et de qualification professionnelle for women on a par with those existing for men. Such Centres should be geared to developing needed skills for employment in a rapidly expanding labour pool of men and women. The programmes should focus on providing women with increased opportunities to secure employment as skilled workers in the industrial and commercial sectors of the economy.

Currently there are 33 Centres de formation et qualification professionnelle in Morocco. They were initially the responsibility of the Chamber of Commerce, but are now co-ordinated by the Ministry of Labour. According to prospectuses issued by OFPPT, the curricula and areas of specialization provided are consonant with labour-market demands and with the structure of production in both the public and private sectors. All trainees are granted

scholarships during their training periods. In practice, OFPPT tends to discriminate against women. The following passage from an interim AID report dated 7 March 1978 on the project "Industrial and Commercial Job Training for Women" confirms that:

"Unfortunately, AID's evaluation found that in practice OFPPT discriminated against women. The training of women is restricted to the commercial sector. Women have access only to training courses in typing, shorthand, bookkeeping and accounting. In fact, commercial training in all but the last are exclusively female. Although training in accountancy is mixed, it is in fact heavily dominated by males. Other signs of male favoritism were noted in the provision of dormitory facilities and in the placement of graduates.

"The Ministry of Labour, under whose jurisdiction OFPPT falls, reacted defensively to this point in AID's evaluation. It was stated that the current sex-selective training programmes were not purposefully exclusive but resulted from a disinterest or reluctance on the part of Moroccan women themselves to seek admission to the industrial courses. In principle, the Government of Morocco is for the integration of the sexes in the training programme and also in the labour market itself.

"In spite of this protestation, however, the Labour Ministry did recognize its problem in this regard and requested AID to collaborate with OFPPT in establishing a pilot programme for the training of women in industry-related areas. This special intervention would serve as a model for the promotion of industrial training and employment for women. Eventually the replication of the pilot programme would culminate in the integration of women throughout the OFPPT system. Ultimately the objectives of this pilot effort would be to integrate women into the industrial sector and not to perpetuate a sex-segregated labour market."

This indicates that the Government is willing to integrate women in industry, and programmes should be improved and multilateral or bilateral projects redesigned in order to achieve this objective. UNIDO for example could participate by promoting similar projects in conjunction with AID or other agencies. In Casablanca the existing UNDP/UNIDO project, "Assistance à l'Institut marocain de l'emballage et du conditionnement (IMEC), Packing and Packaging Centre", could become an important pilot project if programmes for the effective participation of women were implemented. This would be particularly appropriate since the international project co-ordinator is a woman. Furthermore, it is a large-scale project that may well have a regional impact in the near future. Thus, the Institute could design women's programmes with the collaboration of surrounding developing countries. Women with higher education should be involved in the development of such programmes. One such programme could be to assist the Government in creating a women's industrial promotion and information service within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. This service would be designed and organized to provide women with access to information on existing and forthcoming industrial opportunities for them with regard to education, skill and vocational training, possibilities of employment, unions etc. This is very important because it would oblige the authorities to take into consideration women's programmes, and would make people, especially women, aware of their rights, which at present is not the case for most of them.

In addition, pamphlets or brochures publicizing basic information on the strengths of women workers, i.e. their work capacity, perseverance, concentration and dexterity, would help to reduce male prejudices and stereotypes regarding women, especially in the areas of absenteeism, pregnancy etc., and to encourage employers to employ women. Governmental incentives could include benefits to those who employ women. In the case of trade unions, women should be informed and encouraged to participate in them, and the unions should be encouraged to seek women members.

UNIDO might also consider providing high level industrial training for women abroad in a variety of industrial fields. The need for foreign training is due to the lack of sufficient training centres and the opportunity of being exposed to and informed on new technology, which does not exist in Morocco. Such training would be useful when Morocco acquires the necessary infrastructure to accommodate it.

Apart from training abroad, there are already three middle-level training institutions,<sup>2</sup> two of them created with the assistance of UNDP and ILO. These Centres train teachers in various industrial skills, and their programmes should be expanded to include women. They should also be copied throughout the whole country.

As for the non-formal educational programmes for women, Morocco has five separate types to which Moroccan women have access sponsored by nationwide centres:

- Foyers féminins } reserved exclusively for female adolescents
- Ouvroirs } reserved exclusively for female adolescents
- Handicraft training centres
- Industrial and Commercial Training Centres (OFPPT)
- Training hotel centres

These programmes, and especially the first two, should include modern industrial training for women and not limit themselves to dispensing training in home economics for women such as cooking, knitting, sewing and some superficial family planning courses.

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<sup>2</sup>The Institut national de formation des cadres techniques, the Institut national de formation des cadres en comptabilité et en secrétariat and the Institut des métiers du bâtiment.

*Annex*

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE MAIN ECONOMIC  
ACTIVITIES

<i>Economic activity</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Fishing	13 756	494	14 250
Forestry, gathering of uncultivated materials, hunting	15 420	2 882	18 302
Agriculture	1 460 631	130 893	1 591 524
Livestock production	267 048	71 685	338 733
Activities related to agriculture	44 347	6 658	51 005
Electricity, water	10 375	784	11 159
National production: oil, fuels, solid minerals	9 696	325	10 021
Mining and preparation of minerals and ores	34 509	1 495	36 004
Metal processing: manufacture of intermediate, capital and consumer goods, repairs	75 258	3 591	78 839
Construction materials, ceramics and glass, buildings and public works	181 668	3 986	185 654
Chemical, pharmaceutical and related industries, rubber and asbestos	7 068	932	8 000
Food industries, beverages, tobacco, fats industry	50 660	14 976	65 636
Textiles and apparel	75 985	78 194	154 179
Leather and footwear	33 557	1 882	35 439
Wood and furniture	31 019	4 762	35 781
Paper and cardboard, printing, press and publishing	6 815	733	7 548
Transport and communications	100 582	4 581	105 163
Trade	255 399	15 664	271 063
Hotels and restaurants	22 387	4 329	26 716
Allied trade and industrial services	1 957	676	2 633
Real estate	2 909	272	3 181
Domestic services	27 726	102 974	130 700
Health services	18 623	3 830	22 453
Other services (including youth and sports)	65 632	17 249	86 881
Administration	246 716	28 473	275 189
Other activities not elsewhere classified	166 550	57 174	223 724
Total	3 226 293	559 494	3 789 777

*Source: Based on General Census on Population and Housing (Morocco, 1971), vol. II, p. 76.*



