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**REGIONAL AFRICA
LEATHER AND FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY SCHEME**

US/RAF/92/200/11-10

REPORT*

on the

***Workshop on Strategies for Enhancing the Status of
Women in the Leather Industry***

**Kampala, Uganda
12 September 1994**

*based on the work of Ms. Hope Chigudu
Women-in-Development Expert*

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INTRODUCTION

The programme US/RAF/88/100, Regional Hides and Skins, Leather and Leather Products Improvement Scheme and US/RAF/92/100, Regional Africa Leather and Footwear Scheme are under implementation in 10 associated country project.

One of the objectives of the scheme is the enhancement of the status of women in the leather sector.

The Women-in-Development Expert was recruited in 1991, and was attached to the Africa programme. Her first task was to analyze women's employment patterns in the leather industry in the countries participating in the programmes. She then identified constraints to the employment of women in the leather industry and women's training needs.

The project continues to address women's training needs by organising training courses for them and creating gender awareness in the leather industry.

It has been realised however, that women's constraints in the leather industry are diverse and interrelated and the solutions need to be multifaceted. In this respect, an approach which combines different methodologies, instruments, means and attitudes is likely to bring about changes. This is important especially as most planners, industrialists and policy makers are not gender sensitive and are thus not able to incorporate gender into some of their activities. The situation is exacerbated by cultural biases which in effect bar thinking and planning with a gender perspective. It can therefore, never be the responsibility of a single agency to tackle the problems of inequality in the leather industry.

The Uganda workshop was organised to engage across section of relevant development agencies in a discussion aimed at devising strategies for enhancing the status of women in the leather industry.

The venue of the workshop was *Hotel Equatorial*, situated at the heart of Kampala city.

The Women-in-Development Expert, Hope Chigudu, welcomed all participants to the workshop. She then introduced the Assistant Resident representative, Mr. H. Kyamanywa who later opened the workshop officially.

Other participants introduced themselves after which Ms. Chigudu was chosen as the chairperson for the workshop. The workshop participants did not make any alterations to the programme. (see annex 1)

The workshop was attended by 13 participants drawn from various organisations and government ministries. (see annex 4 for the list of participants.)

THE WORKSHOP

The workshop was officially opened by the UNDP Assistant Resident Representative Mr. Kyamanywa. In his opening remarks he called upon the people of Uganda to take advantage of the project to revive the leather industry in the country. He enumerated the objectives of the UNIDO leather project which he said included the enhancement of the status of women. The enhancement of the status of women in the leather sector, he noted, is in line with UNIDO's medium term plan of 1994-99.

Mr. Kyamanywa informed the participants that the aim of the workshop was to brainstorm and discuss strategies for enhancing the status of women in the leather industry.

He emphasized the role of women in development and hence the need to develop the capabilities of both men and women as inseparable and integral parts of the human resource base of the industry.

He wished the participants fruitful deliberations and declared the workshop officially open.

SUMMARY OF PAPERS PRESENTED

A paper presented by Mr. Mwebe, National Expert, UNIDO leather project

Mr. Mwebe's paper provided a context for discussion by summarizing different leather processes since some of the participants were not really familiar with the leather sector.

He explained the activities covered by the UNIDO leather project.

It was hoped, said Mr. Mwebe, that during the life of the project (and beyond) women would be involved in all the activities of the sub-sectors of the leather industry (please refer to the full text in annex 3).

A paper presented by H. Chigudu, Women-in-Development Expert, UNIDO leather project

The paper summarised government initiatives taken to address both men and women in the country. Ms. Chigudu said that the leather project should take advantage of the current positive environment in Uganda.

The paper discussed gender perspectives in the leather industry in Eastern and Southern Africa. Ms. Chigudu noted that labour market inequalities and segregation tend to reflect cultural labour market patterns and stereotypes which are present in a given society. She said that in an attempt to redress women's constraints, most development agencies have continued to take a welfare approach. At the worst some programmes are completely gender blind, she said. The leather project, she emphasized, aimed at involving women in the main stream of industrial activities.

Ms. Chigudu summarised the situation of women in the three sub-sectors of the leather sector in selected countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

The last section of the paper discussed attempts that have been made to address gender issues in the leather industry in Zimbabwe (please refer to the full text in annex 3).

Paper presented by Ms. S. Kayonga, Ministry of Women In Development (WID)

Ms. Kayonga discussed the role of her Ministry in the promotion of women in industry. She disclosed that the Ministry has set guidelines for gender oriented policy development. In addition the Ministry of WID appointed focal point officers based on sectoral Ministries to ensure that WID issues are not sidelined. She, however, noted that the Ministry does not provide mechanisms for ensuring that policies agreed upon are followed.

She enumerated gender based constraints faced by women in the manufacturing industry. In conclusion she invited the project to work with the Ministry of VMD to enhance the status of women in the leather industry.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

After the papers were presented, a general discussion followed. Some of the major issues raised during the discussions are summarised in annex 2.

CLOSING

The chairperson Ms. Chigudu, summarised the major points raised. She thanked everybody for participating. She hoped that gender issues in the leather sector would continue to get serious attention especially in the Ministries of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, and Industry and Cooperatives.

Ms. Chigudu, on behalf of UNIDO, thanked all the participants for their contribution to the workshop. She, in particular, thanked participants who had travelled all the way from *Jinja* to attend the meeting. She said that the exchange of information and views at the workshop would help all concerned to incorporate gender in their programmes. She thanked the UNIDO Programme Officer, Ms. Theresa Stenhammer and the National Expert Mr. Mwebe for the preparatory work in organising the workshop. She also thanked the UNDP Assistant Resident Representative for his introductory remarks. Ms. Chigudu observed that most of the recommendations were of practical nature and could actually be implemented immediately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- * Industrialists and planners need technical know-how in gender analysis. More workshops are therefore needed to continue to discuss cultural barriers which halt the advancement of women and which keep policy makers unaware of the vital need for gender analysis.
- * A similar workshop involving more people should be organised.
- * The project should use existing women's organisations such as the Women Entrepreneurs Association to train women entrepreneurs in the leather industry and to disseminate information about the project.
- * Encourage women in the leather industry to form themselves into an association so as to make their voices heard. Such an association would enable women to organise to import leather in bulk and this would ease the workload of women working on their own. Forming their association does not mean that women will not be part of the Leather Association.
- * Form a steering committee composed of relevant organisations to monitor the progress of the project.
- * The project should take advantage of the U.N Information Officer to disseminate information on its activities.

- * The Uganda Manufacturing Association (UMA) can assist the project to reach a wider section of women in the leather industry. The project should take advantage of the facilities provided by UMA.
- * The National Expert should ensure that the project takes off with the women, the women should not be left behind. In this respect deliberate efforts should be taken to ensure that women are part and parcel of each and every activity carried out by the project.
- * Effort should be made to promote women who have the ability and capacity to make it so that they can act as role models for other women. The project should therefore, give simple equipment to promising women in the sector and intensive training. The training should not be limited to technical training but should encompass other aspects such as assertiveness and confidence building.

PROGRAMME

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Opening Remarks | H. Kyamanywa |
| 2. | The Leather Project in Uganda | E. Mwebe |
| | <i>Discussion</i> | |
| 3. | Women in the Leather Industry in Eastern and Southern Africa | H. Chigudu |
| | <i>Discussion</i> | |
| 4. | The situation of women in the Manufacturing Industry in Uganda | S. Kayonga |
| 5. | <i>Discussion</i> | |
| 6. | Lunch | |
| 7. | Summary and Recommendations | H.Chigudu |

ISSUES RAISED

- What is the National Expert doing to encourage the participation of women in hides and skins improvement programmes?
- What is the role of the National Expert with regard to the enhancement of the situation of women in the leather industry.? Is enhancement of the situation of women in the leather industry part of the job description of the National Expert? Is it clearly spelt out? If not there is a danger that women will always be addressed as an afterthought.
- Why were women entrepreneurs in the leather industry not invited to attend the meeting?
- What strategy has been devised to reach women who are already in the leather industry?
- Most women in the leather industry are not well educated, what efforts will be made to ensure that their interests will be represented in the leather association, especially as communication in Uganda is rather difficult? How will the National Expert ensure that women in the leather industry who are not based in the city are not marginalized?
- In view of the forthcoming training in the footwear technology, what criteria will be used to select participants? What levels of education will be required?
- With gender training it should not be difficult for decision makers to incorporate gender in their programmes. Yet very few policy makers are represented in the workshop, how will the project managers ensure that decision makers have access to gender training?

PAPERS PRESENTED

THE LEATHER PROJECT IN UGANDA: A PAPER PRESENTED AT A ONE DAY WORKSHOP TO SENSITIZE ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WITH WOMEN-IN-DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO JOIN THE LEATHER AND LEATHER PRODUCTS INDUSTRY SECTOR WHICH IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED IN AFRICA AS A "MALE DOMAIN", AT HOTEL EQUATORIAL ON 12 SEPTEMBER 1994, KAMPALA

1.0 BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The project is part of the Regional Africa Leather and Footwear Industry Scheme (RALFIS) and is designed to reinforce the capabilities of the Uganda hides and skins, leather and leather products sub sectors. Specifically, the project is meant to promote and establish hides and skins improvement activities in Jinja and Masaka districts and to assist a local tannery. Training in footwear manufacture will be provided. Leather goods footwear production plants with commercial capacity are to be assisted. Special attention will be paid to the leather goods enterprises owned by women as part of the gender development efforts. The plants are to be upgraded to "model" enterprises. The assistance in capital equipment will be provided with payback arrangements to the revolving fund.

2.0 HOW HIDES AND SKINS ARE PREPARED

Hides and skins are by-products of the meat industry. Whether a hide or skin is derived from a human being, a mammal the size of an elephant or a Nile perch, a mouse, a bird like an ostrich, a lizard or a snake, its structure will be found to have certain features in common. The only difference is that hides and skins vary in thickness and have a very good thickness which attracts a very high demand on the world market. However, if these hides are not well prepared and preserved, they will fetch a lower value. Normally damage to hides occurs during killing and flaying, bruising, incomplete bleeding, contamination during flaying, knife cut by use of a wrong knife, and poor flaying techniques can cause damages.

2.1 CORRECT FLAYING

This is done with a suitable sharp knife but not pointed. Flaying should be done by pulling off rather than cutting off.

2.2 After flaying, the hide or skin should be well washed and any remaining flesh removed and trimmed.

2.3 METHODS OF CURING HIDES AND SKINS

There are two methods to curing hides and skins:

- Open air drying or shade drying,
- and salting.

Grounding, drying, pole drying should be avoided as these methods produce the poorest grades of hides and skins.

3.0 WHAT IS LEATHER AND HOW IS LEATHER MADE?

If an animal skin or hide is not treated with "tanning" materials, it is liable to decay or putrefy. This putrefaction is due to the growth of certain bacteria which requires a certain amount of moisture. So a skin can also be protected against decay by drying it out. But the product is hard and brittle unsuitable for many uses. Moreover, if the dried skins accidentally become wet or are kept in a warm humid climate, they soon start to putrefy.

3.1 Hides and skins are converted into leather by "tanning". There are many ways of tanning, but all of them preserve raw hides or skins permanently from decay and also render it more or less pliable for various uses. In tanning humankind has found a good method of making hides and skins useful.

3.2 Leather has been used for making shoes and every possible article of clothing, bags, upholstery, harness and saddles, belting and so many other articles of human use. Leather having so many various uses is, therefore, of inestimable value to the human race. However, these uses demand many different properties in the leather. These properties are obtained by choice of raw materials or a variation of a sequence of processes.

3.3 The art of leather making is a very old one. It goes back to the prehistoric times when human beings lived mainly by hunting and by using animal skins for clothing, bedding or making tents or as containers. But today's tanners are capable of making any desired effect on leather by the use of modern technology.

3.4 TANNING:

Originally, the word tanning came from the word tan or tannic acid, which is found in many parts of the vegetable kingdom on barks, wood, fruits, etc. Tanning involves: soaking the hides and skins, removal of hair, removal of excess flesh, tanning, drying and finishing.

4.0 WHAT THE PROJECT INTENDS TO DO

4.1 The target beneficiaries of this project are grouped as follows:

Industry sub-sector

- (a) Improvement of raw hides and skins will benefit primary producers, middle traders and focal collectors in Jinja and Masaka target areas as well as hides and skins collection points.
- (b) Leather tanners will gain through increased capacity utilisation and financial returns of higher value-added product mix.
- (c) Footwear manufactures will profit from higher productivity and upgraded quality and the domestic market will have an increased supply.
- (d) Business opportunities will be created for small and medium-manufacturing units.

The benefits to all sub-sectors will be achieved through the provision of machinery and equipment, introduction of new and improved technologies, skills upgrading and

technical expertise of male/female humanpower through training and study tours, as well as foreign exchange earnings via a systematic export marketing approach.

Programmes

- (a) Gender development through increased participation of women in the sector's various activities at different levels.
- (b) Private sector development activities, through assistance to the private manufacturing units and an integrated role of the industry association.
- (c) Investment through expanded industrial activities for finished products, creation of business opportunities and national/ foreign joint ventures.

In general terms, the various levels of the leather industry, particularly in the area of leather finishing and added value upgraded, from the raw material source (hides and skins) to the marketing of goods. It is hoped that in all stages of leather processes, women's status will be enhanced.

GENDER DEVELOPMENT IN THE LEATHER INDUSTRY: THE ZIMBABWE CASE STUDY. PAPER PRESENTED AT A WORKSHOP ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE LEATHER INDUSTRY Sept. 94 BY HOPE CHIGUDU

1. INTRODUCTION

In Uganda up to 1980s little attention was given to women's issues and activities by planners in the various government ministries and agencies.

The change came with the creation of the Ministry of Women in Development (WID) in 1988. When announcing the creation of the WID ministry, the President of Uganda stated that government policy aims at strengthening the position of women in the economy by raising the value and productivity of their labour and by giving them access to and control over productive resources.

The Minister of State for WID then summarised the functions of the Ministry as:

to coordinate with sectoral ministries and relevant NGOs to ensure that women are accorded their rightful place in the National development process; to cooperate in the planning of projects and programmes to benefit women, to provide relevant and appropriate data and documentation for planning and policy purposes; to mobilise women to participate in and benefit from development activities by improving their economic position, their skills through education and training and their political and legal status and awareness.

Among other activities, the Ministry is working with teams at sectoral Ministries to agree on their own specific gender related policies. In this context, the process has been started with the Ministry of Industry and Cooperatives. The WID ministry ensures that new changes are not just discussing women-only projects or interventions, and that the suggested policies are within the general government planning framework, according to the official Rehabilitation and Development Plans of the day. Therefore, the change now is to look at all planning issues with a gender perspective in each Ministry, as opposed to the earlier practice where women's issues were relegated to a small, underfunded government department.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperative has got a gender oriented policy formulated in May 1993. The Ministry reassessed its objectives and recorded them in such a way that they are now gender sensitive, taking into account the needs of men and women. Each of the major departments has been analyzed and plans outlined to remove disadvantages which women face in cooperatives, marketing, trade, industry, technology etc.

The positive changes are still new. However, the leather project should take advantage of the enabling environment to enhance the status of women in the country.

WOMEN IN THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

In the last two decades the proportion of women in the manufacturing industry has increased. With the implementation of structural adjustment programmes, increase in poverty, land degradation etc. more and more women in Africa are looking for paid employment in the manufacturing industry. For most women such an employment has ceased to be a matter of choice, rather is a strategy for survival.

Working in industry in a formal sector is perceived by women as a better alternative than say working in domestic service or the informal sector. Income and job opportunities are often better in established industries.

Despite women's contribution to development, most development agencies have continued to take a welfare approach in tackling women's problems. The approaches have failed to address the patriarchal and social structures that perpetuate the subordination of women both in the public and private domains.

As Africans prepare for yet another women's decade meeting, this time in Beijing, it is still clear that most of the programmes remain gender blind. There is hardly any data on the actual situation of women in the manufacturing industry. The leather project is thus significant in the sense that it is one of the few that have examined the situation of women in the manufacturing industry.

1.1 Gender Perspectives

Before discussing the situation of women in the leather industry, it is important to discuss the importance of gender perspectives in the labour market. Labour market inequalities and segregation tend to reflect cultural labour market patterns and stereotype which are present in a given society.

Historically, the concern of women in development was based on the realisation of the heavy cost of neglecting or even undermining women's roles in the development process. Women comprise the majority of the poor and the economically and socially disadvantaged in most societies. They also suffer from gender based hierarchies and subordination. Yet women in most societies are responsible for nutrition and health of their families.

Thus, if planners do not have a clear understanding of gender differences in a given society, development programmes may have unexpected results.

For example, there is an assumption that a man is always the bread winner in a home. Apart from this statement being inarticulate, in the sense that there are many women headed households, few men make enough money to provide enough bread for wives and children. Women and children therefore continue to survive by trying to scratch out an existence in the country side. This keeps women impoverished and powerless.

Thus gender roles are those which are ascribed to a particular sex by custom and tradition, although the roles could be performed by either sex. On the other hand, sex roles are biological, this would include functions like breast feeding and child rearing.

Engendering, therefore, means accepting a perspective which recognises that if gender is socially constructed it can also be deconstructed. There are many examples of women taking over jobs in factories during the second world war when the men had gone to fight in the war and so radically changing the gender roles, in their societies.

Women's sex and reproductive roles mean that their participation in the labour market is often volatile and interrupted by responsibilities of child rearing, attending to sick family and so on. But as family patterns change with more and more families being female headed households, there is a growing need for women to enter the labour market in order to meet their cash needs.

As many employers in the leather industry indicate, some women employees are constrained in various ways on account of their productive and reproductive roles. However, a manager who ignores the fact that men and women may bring different constraints and skills to their work situation as a result of gender roles that they play in the wider society will be missing a very critical variable in his/her production related programmes.

2.0 WOMEN IN THE LEATHER INDUSTRY

2.1 General information

According to UNIDO medium term plan, 1994-1999:

"Any policies and measures addressing the development of the manufacturing sector must take into account the crucial role that the female industrial work force assumes both for economic and industrial progress for the achievement of social development objectives.

The objective of the UNIDO programme for the integration of women in industrial development is to enhance the contribution of women to the industrialisation process of developing countries, and enable them to participate on an equal basis in industrial decision making and the benefits of development.

During the period, UNIDO will ensure that women are fully integrated in technical cooperation and promotional activities as well as in policy study and research programmes and that they are equal beneficiaries especially in projects related to small scale and agro-based industries as well as development of appropriate technologies and human resources."

In keeping with the UNIDO gender plan, the UNIDO leather Unit in its programme, *Hides and Skins, Leather and Leather Products Improvement Scheme, and Regional Africa Leather and Footwear Industry scheme, and National Country projects* include the integration of women in the leather industry as one of the objectives. The programme covers ten countries, Uganda included.

The leather industry is composed of several sub-sectors namely;

- hides and skins production
- tanneries
- footwear and leather goods construction

Below is a summary of women's participation in each of these sub-sectors.

(a) Hides and Skins production:

Slaughter, removal of hides and skins, fleshing and preparation of raw materials for cure is heavy work generally. In most abattoirs in Zimbabwe this work is done by men. It is claimed that it is heavy work which requires male muscles. Anyone who has observed African women on lengthy tracks carrying heavy loads of firewood can not help seeing how arbitrary the indicators of strength are. In the rural areas in Zimbabwe, where in most cases, men have migrated to towns, women do assist particularly during fleshing. It has been observed that women tend to be more careful and thorough during hides removal and fleshing operations, and in the application of salt to the surface of prepared hides. As a result raw materials suffer less damage from through cuts. Penetration of preserving salt tends to be more uniform with better quality hides production and increased hide value.

Both private merchants who buy hides in the communal lands, and the major urban abattoirs, preserve hides in a shed prior to sale to tanners. Tanners again store bought hides until they are needed for production. Work in hides sheds is male dominated. However, there are some hide merchants in Botswana who employ only women with success. According to one merchant, women do not get drunk and hence do not absent themselves as often as men.

(b) Tanneries

Few women are employed in tanneries in tasks from soaking through to finished leather. However, in Zimbabwe, in one tannery, a woman was employed in the wet section responsible for soaking, liming and wet blue operation. All these involve heavy manual work. The woman in question has now won a scholarship to study leather science in Britain.

In the Sudan, one of the few tanneries employs 143 women and 57 men. The manager in this tannery had no problems concerning the women's efficiency.

In Zambia, the Small Enterprise Development Corporation employs a woman professional tanner.

There is then no reason why women should not be employed in tanneries and particularly so in drying and finishing sections where the work calls for care and attention to detail rather than muscle. Also education and academic/technical training-areas in which women have long suffered disabilities, are not essential requirements: practical experience and care are the criteria.

(c) Footwear and leather Goods Construction

In this sub-sector there is a reasonable number of women employees. For example in Ethiopia, in six footwear factories, there's a total of 2314 male employees and 1742 female employees. In the Sudan, there is a footwear plant which employs only women in sewing and closing sections. On the other hand in Malawi, in footwear factories, there is a total of 318 male employees and only 8 women employees.

In the leather goods subsector, in Ethiopia, women predominate at least in number. In one leather goods subsector, there were 204 women employees and only 44 men. On the other hand in all the leather goods factories visited in Malawi, until two years ago, there were no women. The most recent development in Malawi was the setting up of a leather goods manufacturing factory where 50% of the employees are women, thanks to the UNIDO leather project. The factory obtained equipment with the assistance of UNIDO on condition that it would employ at least this proportion of women.

In Zimbabwe, in eight leather goods and footwear factories, there was a total of 1116 men and only 24 women a year ago. The situation has now changed as is explained below.

Much as it is true that there are very few women with technical skills, that does not explain why so few women are employed at the shop floor. Work such as pattern cutting, sewing and stitching, attachment of soles and heels and many other routine tasks can be performed by women if they were trained on the job. After all most men are trained on the job.

The footwear and leather goods sub-sectors at production floor level could be opened to women workers. Many operations in the footwear and leather goods sector, sewing and stitching of upper leather for example, are ones in which women probably perform better than men and learn more quickly because most have been taught to use a sewing machine at school or at home. Although work on the shop floor is not accorded high status and is not well paid, it would give women a chance to earn an income on a regular basis.

When employment patterns in the leather industry are examined, it is clear that the division of labour in the leather industry has relegated large numbers of women to poverty and have given them few options for earning a living. Even when women are employed, they are located in lower paid and less skilled jobs.

Although the above information is from a few selected factories, the situation of women in all the other leather factories in all the countries involved in the project is no better.

There are many constraints and obstacles (identified by employers) to women's employment in the leather industry but they cannot be discussed within the confines of this report. Suffice it to say that most reasons given by both employees and the women themselves indicate that attribution of specific characteristics to women and men persistently undervalue women as employees in the leather industry.

ENHANCING THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE LEATHER INDUSTRY: THE CASE OF ZIMBABWE

Mid 1993, the Royal Embassy of Denmark in Harare expressed an interest in funding the gender component of the UNIDO leather project for a period of two years. The funding started in September 1993. Overall, the project aims at uplifting the economic status of women by enhancing their status in the leather industry.

3.1 PROJECT OUTPUTS

The following are the expected outputs of the project:

1. Well informed government authorities and private sector associations and a set of guidelines and recommendations on the gender issues.

2. Qualified and well trained women with various employable skills in different sub-sectors of the leather industry
3. Up to date data on the present status of Zimbabwean women in the sector, their prospects and opportunities for further development at the national level. Information material in the form of a report summarizing the present status and actions for improvements.
4. Upgraded production facilities and improved performance of at least one leather goods factory managed by a woman.

3.2 ACHIEVEMENTS

Output number 1:

In February, a workshop was held to discuss strategies for enhancing the situation of women in the leather industry. The workshop drew participants from the University, trade unions, the leather industry, women's organisations and government ministries. The workshop came up with recommendations and guidelines for enhancing the status of women in the leather industry. These have been disseminated to all relevant organisations. Since the workshop, there has been continual dialogue with both government and leather industry representatives.

Output 2:

- (a) A leather goods construction course was held in Bulawayo, at the Leather Institute of Zimbabwe. The course was attended by twelve women and was facilitated by an international expert. Most of the women were from a women's leather cooperative in Bulawayo. The same women are to be provided with simple equipment on a revolving fund loan basis.
- (b) A Harare footwear plant agreed to train six women, most of them single mothers, in upper closing and stitching for a period of four months. The training is now finished and the women have been employed by the same company.
- (c) A Bulawayo footwear plant also agreed to train a group of women for a period of two months in footwear closing. The training is now over and plans for training in other operations are under way. The course is now complete and the same women are being sub-contracted by the same company to make shoe uppers. The women are now providing 120 pairs of stitched uppers per day for a local factory utilising the Leather Institute facilities pending arrival of their own equipment. The group is to be provided with equipment on a revolving fund loan basis by the project.

Having access to raw materials and a ready market has lessened the workload of women. It would have been difficult for them to compete for markets with well established companies.

- (d) A woman entrepreneur was sponsored for a managerial and practical training course at the Central Leather Research Institute in Madras in India. The understanding was that she would come back, train and employ some other women. She has so far trained four other women and employed them.

- (e) Two women were sent to Malawi to be apprenticed to a leather goods consultant for a period of three weeks. One of the women is being groomed as an understudy for the leather goods consultant and is supposed to provide continuity, including conducting regular courses in leather goods.

Output three

Background data on the status of the women was collected in 1991/92 and a report is available. The report indicated that the status of women in the Zimbabwe leather industry was not satisfactory and the number of women employed in the production duties was very small. The report outlined the manner in which the situation could be rectified. In December 1993, data on the status of women in the leather industry was collected again. The data collected provided a sound base for the workshop which was held in February, 1994 as already discussed. A cursory look at the leather industry indicates that as a result of the DANIDA supported project, the situation has since improved.

Output four

Equipment for a leather goods factory managed by a woman has been ordered and some of it has arrived. Arrangements have been made for an international consultant to install the equipment and supervise the training of factory employees in its use.

3.3 FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The different groups of women will be trained in simple accounting, bookkeeping and banking. Currently, they are not able to negotiate on prices when complexity of uppers is greater and more stitching per pair is needed. They are not able to manage bills and invoices for machine repairs and spares properly and many other day to day matters. The project will identify a person with production of leather goods knowledge and general administrative experience to provide on going administrative training, help and advice.

More training for women is to be provided in the following areas:

- entrepreneurship development
- supervisory and instructor training
- product design
- product marketing
- training in various areas of leather goods and garment manufacturing both on the job and at the Leather Institute of Zimbabwe,
- training in various footwear manufacturing

3.4 CONSTRAINTS

- * Traditional views are still dominant in the leather industry. Many factories are thus predisposed to engage men. There are still managers who do not want to employ women because they see them as a burden. Women themselves are still victims of their own upbringing. Many do not believe that they can work in the leather industry.

3.5 CONCLUSION

- * The pilot project demystifies the belief that women cannot work in the leather industry. The project clarifies that bias towards male employment stems more from historical practices rather than from any differences in performance, given training and facilities.

- * The pilot project is an example of how gender roles can be changed given resources and commitment on the part of those who have the power to change and those who are oppressed.
- * The project has managed to put gender on the agenda of the leather industry. As already discussed, women's employment in the public sector has been emphasised since independence but little has been done to enhance the status of women in the private sector.
- * Women have been trained and are now working in shoe and leather goods plants in the country where previously hardly any women were employed. The trained women are acting as role models for other women who would like to develop a career in the leather industry. In addition the women are forerunners to more intakes of women, an encouragement to competitive manufacturers to adopt similar policies.
- * The Leather Institute Council is now reasonably gender sensitive to the extent that the council has invited the Women-in-Development expert to attend council and executive meetings. A woman entrepreneur has also been elected to the council. This heralds a new look, by leather industry management, at the employment of women in the leather industry.
- * The project has provided women with skills, training, experience and a sense of power that they would have otherwise found difficult to obtain. To this extent, one of the objectives of the project has been partly met.
- * The project is a good case study of how women can be integrated in the manufacturing industry as a whole. It can be replicated in other countries.

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