

# THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH AND TRAINING TO THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT



United Nations International Research  
and Training Institute  
for the Advancement of Women  
(INSTRAW)

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Prepared by Dr. Wafaa Marei,  
upon the request of INSTRAW



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INSTRAW'S Headquarters:

Avenida César Nicolás Penson 102-A  
P.O. Box 21747  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic  
Telephone (809) 685-2111  
Telex (326) 4280 WRA SD

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is the importance of undertaking research and training activities for the process of integration of women in development. Research can be defined as the threshold to knowledge. It is the process of inquiry that focuses and sustains attempts at uncovering information and explanations. The information may exist, it may be scattered or unnoticed but it is through research activities that such information can become organized in a systematic and orderly manner to enable its use. The knowledge acquired through the research undertaking depends on the questions raised, the methods of inquiry, and the objectives of the research. Yet, the exercise uncovers the existence or non existence of particular information, issues, and problems associated with it that were not visible before the research was undertaken.

Research is always purposeful, depending on its objectives which may be an intellectual pursuit of knowledge, an academic exercise that would also add to the existing body of knowledge on a particular subject, or it may have some operational objectives, i.e. action oriented. Since understanding is a precondition for action, research findings can stimulate activities that otherwise would not be undertaken. Therefore, it is an instrumental link between existing body of knowledge and a practical course of necessary action. Research provides decision makers with supportive information that justifies future action. Among the actions that can be generated by research findings is training. Training can be defined as a tool, a strategy for "selective intervention" for the development of human resources to meet the challenges of an ever changing environment. As an inseparable component of the educational process, it provides the practical knowledge—the know how—that contributes to improving human activities and skills, like research, training is always purposeful whether undertaken within the formal or informal educational structures. Training has always been utilized as a method of increasing human productivity, either by introducing new skills, as by further developing old ones. It is a flexible instrument of learning since it can be adapted to different environmental and human needs, it can be used at different levels of intervention.

Both research and training efforts are particularly relevant to the issue of integration of women in development since they offer pragmatic as well as



constructive actions for the incorporation of women: research undertakings and findings on women can contribute to bring back, into the mainstream of development, major portions of the world human resources that have been overlooked by development planning in almost all societies. The literature refers to the "invisible" role of women which in reality meant that information on women was not included in the body of knowledge utilized in national development planning. Training offers a dynamic tool particularly suited for women to increase their level of participation in development effort while improving their opportunities to allow self-reliance. As an instrument of implementation for the research finding it should be incorporated into planning for the changing needs of women, society and the development processes. While there is no question that in the past decade considerable interest has been generated on the subject of integration of women in development, such interest has been accompanied by a broader understanding that national development cannot be limited in definition to economic growth, a model borrowed from Western experiences, and that the population components as well as issues of social equity, productivity, etc., are as important to the process. Equally important is the interdependence of the role of women and the impact of the development process. The assumption that development undertakings will directly or indirectly benefit women, has been replaced by a better understanding that women, as human beings, are no objects to "be developed", but must become initiators, participants as well as beneficiary recipients to develop themselves and their societies.

Such new conceptualization of the issue of women and development filled a theoretical gap in accepting and understanding the differential impact of earlier development efforts on women particularly in developing countries. Having been interpreted mainly in economic terms, development has not always been interpreted mainly in economic terms, development has not always been beneficial to women. Industrialization was generally seen as the means for rapid development in developing countries. This led to a concentration of efforts and resources in the industrial and monetized spheres of society, spheres that were mostly dominated by men. Agricultural mechanization replaced women, workers and rendered women's traditional productive activities uneconomic, left them outside the mainstream of development, and without alternate new skills for productive activities. Thus, indirectly and unintentionally, many development efforts resulted in increasing the inequalities between men and women.

The economic growth approach to development gave rise to a multitude of welfare programmes, women-specific projects as well as women interest groups and organizations that focused their attention on providing services for women at different local and national levels. Such programmes mainly provided short term skill development for income generating and survival purposes, and a variety of health related, educational or social services. As a strategy, the women-specific programmes helped redress some of the inequalities and neglect suffered by women in the process of development. Yet in the long-term, this approach did not promote the integration of women, nor did it address the multi-sectorial problems of women in developing nations. It also tended to segregate and isolate women's issues and women's programmes to the peripheries of national develop-

ment programmes and more importantly from national resources directed at development endeavours.

Separate programmes exclusively for women may be useful as an initial step or an intermediate measure to the process of full integration especially where women's status or capabilities are particularly low. But indications are that such programmes have not significantly contributed to the process of integration since they have not been followed up by activities that involved women and fully utilized their potentials. Many such programmes lacked adequate planning or coordination with overall development needs, but were rather an expedient response to the many needs of women at all levels of society.

It is now fully accepted that women are an essential human potential force of the development process, that involving them is not just a question of equity but one of necessity for national and international development, and that the overall success of development is dependent on the full utilization of human resources and popular participation of men and women as partners.

But difficulties in planning and programming for proper integration arise from the lack of information, data and statistical indicators on the female populations in most society. Lack of research on sectorial economic activities of women and the evaluation of this role as it relates to development strategies, invariably results in the under-utilization of female human resources. It is in this respect that the importance of research on women, the collection of relevant data, and the assessment and design of appropriate training programmes become necessary tools for successful development planning, and implementation of strategies and programmes of action geared to integration of women into national development goals.

Development is a multifold process that embraces all aspects of human life and activities. The problems of development are formulated in terms of how to transform a system, a sector or an activity from one state to another that is deemed more beneficial for the wellbeing of the community or the group. One of the major changes in development theory is the acceptance by responsible officials, at different levels, of the need for deliberate intervention in the course of change. National governments continue to be in a better position to initiate and promote certain policies and activities for development. Yet, in an increasingly interdependent world, the problems of development have expanded beyond national boundaries and capabilities. This is particularly true of developing nations that are undergoing rapid pace of change. Therefore, there is a greater demand on the international system to cooperate in search of models and programmes of development. Development decades, international conferences and forums are examples of the endeavours of the international community to respond to those needs.

Development is deemed necessary to improve the quality of life of the world population. The 1970's have witnessed a growing awareness by the international community that neglecting women's role and activities in development

resulted in overlooking a significant factor that should enhance development efforts. Within and outside the U.N. system there was a growing recognition of this relationship: the international development strategy for the Second U.N. development Decade stated that "the full integration of women in total development efforts should be encouraged". 1975 was designated International Women's Year and its resolutions revolved around three basic themes: Promotion of the equality of men and women, Increasing the contribution of women to strengthening of world peace (Peace) and the Integration of women in total development efforts (Development). Development continues to receive considerable attention in the efforts to understand the relationship between the situation of women and the crucial issues of food shortage, production, agriculture, demographic changes, etc., as faced by developing countries.

The events of the I.W.Y. and the designation of 1976-1985 as the International Decade for Women helped to raise concern of national and international communities with the situation of women as well as the contribution women can make to achieving development goals in their societies. The Mexico Declaration explicitly linked the importance of total development to the realization of individual human rights.

The Mid-Decade Conference held in Copenhagen, in 1980 reiterated the principles proclaimed in Mexico and also stressed the importance of achieving "equality of rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for the participation of women, both as beneficiaries and as active agents". Both conferences produced substantial recommendations on policies and principles that related the disadvantage of women's position to underdevelopment.

The conferences, the World Plan of Action, General Assembly resolutions generated policies, activities and programmes at the national and international levels that would have as a goal to increase the participation of women, understand the causes of inequality and remedy the situation so that women can become equal partners.

Also emphasized were the needs for the collection and analysis of data on all aspects of women's status. Such data is essential for policy formulation for economic and social planning. It is recommended that such research activities be undertaken at the national, regional and international levels on a continuous basis to maintain references and information on women for planning and development planning at all levels.

In order to improve data base, it was recommended that the concept and analytical tools of research be reexamined to improve conceptualization of the economic and social productivity of women within the home and outside, and that current statistical practices be reviewed to ensure that they are free from sex based stereotypes.

The recommendations emphasized that priority be given to cross-cultural studies particularly on the causes of discrimination customs and beliefs that



impeded women's contribution to development. Based on the Mexico resolutions, the General Assembly Resolution 3520 (XXX) endorsed the establishment of an International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

The recommendation for the establishment of INSTRAW is in keeping with Resolution 26 of the World Conference which noted that the "inadequacies or research data and information was an impediment to the formulation of development strategies and programmes for furthering the advancement of women. It stressed the need to provide training opportunities to enhance the effective participation of women\*.

INSTRAW was established as the U.N. organ mainly responsible for co-ordination, and dissemination of information, of activities relating to research and training for women with particular emphasis on such activities to be geared for the needs of developing nations. Further recommendations of the Mid-Decade Conference emphasized the importance of the role of research and data collection and analyses on women as part of the international policies and programmes to promote the participation of women. It goes on to emphasize the research needs for development of research methodologies of planning for women's activities, and the importance of cooperation of INSTRAW and U.N. specialized agencies and regional commissions to "undertake multisectorial and interdisciplinary action-oriented research in relevant and important areas in development, with a view to formulate development objectives, strategies, and policy measures responsive to the needs of women and men.

Emerging as a major recommendation of the U.N. Decade for Women Conference in Mexico, the Institute is mandated "to promote the advancement of women through research, training, and dissemination of information. Its mandate also specified that it should give special attention to women in developing countries while emphasizing the principle of individual and collective self-reliance of developing countries. Thus of primary concern to serve its target population the Institute must develop models appropriate for developing countries by utilizing factors that are relevant to their cultures and appropriate for cross cultural analyses. In so doing the Institute will promote the incorporation of women into cooperative endeavours among developing countries.

The primary objective of INSTRAW is to "ensure that sustained attention is given to the integration of women into development activities at all levels". Thus, it needs to enhance women's abilities to participate through effective programming that FOCUS on women without isolating them from mainstream development programmes. This requires an extremely delicate balance and coordination at many levels of operation.

As a catalyst of change, the Institute coordinates its activities with a variety of institutions: governmental, non governmental, research, academic, etc.

\*) Report of the World Conference of International Women Year, U.N. Publication (Sale E76.IV.1), Ch. III.

Through building and utilizing a network of concerned organizations, INSTRAW can implement its research and training activities at multi-level of operation from local to global.

The Institute is also instrumental for the exchange of information and research findings for maximum use by concerned institutions. Thus, it would act as a clearing-house for information on women which would foster coordination of efforts, and assist in development of theories and models for research and training, projecting strategies, generating and sponsoring programmes at the national and regional levels.

The programme of the Institute indicates its basic role in undertaking research activities that respond to the existing gaps in research on women particularly in the area of socioeconomic development: the preparation of two technical publications on indicators and related basic statistics on women in cooperation with various U.N. bodies with follow-up research and training activities related to statistical data collection and analyses at regional levels; expert group interregional seminars were organized on development issues of wide scope such as women's role in development planning, women in the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, role of women in International Economic Relations, in implementation of developing countries individual and collective self reliance, and the role of women in new and renewable sources of energy; and the series of research studies on the role of women in international economic relations, focusing particularly on the interlinkages between the macro and micro levels of the economy and their impact on the role and status of women to mention only a few of the research activities of the Insitute that also generated a number of publications and training programmes relevant to the respective issue.

## II. RESEARCH

Early research on women, while parallel to research on development, was separate from it, with its own focuses, interests and methods. Those research efforts were very limited and specific, anthropologically oriented, or centered around the traditional tasks of women in their family roles. A critique of the research interests and objectives of researchers from outside developing areas, or the continent is particularly leveled by African researchers pointing to outside emphasis on studying tribal life, kinship, marriage, etc., more often than being concerned about the quality of life of local women. The consensus is the conceptual and methodological frameworks used were not applicable to third world cultures, an most studies tended to be descriptive instead of analytical, while lacking policy orientation. In general these research undertakings failed to offer

an adequate conceptual framework for dealing with women's issues as they relate to culture, society and development. Such research orientation is not just an intellectual approach, because it is necessary to understand the processes at hand in order to identify the proper means of intervention to produce positive results so as to enhance the status of women.

Although a lot of early research on women in developing countries did not directly deal with the development process, such research later provided a framework of the social and normative factors affecting women historically and culturally, and in turn it indicated some of the factors that influences their past, present and future participation.

The emphasis in women's studies passed through several stages that can be delineated from reviewing the literature. In the early stage, studies revolved around the theme of women's position in the family. Description of female activities and lifestyles, traditional and specific roles in the family and the analysis of the position of women in relation to men within the context of the family, dominated the literature on women. Such research proved an insight into the perception of women's role in society, women's own self-image, as well as linking women's economic position to their social status.

In another stage, over the 60's and into the 70's, more interest was generated in women's issues, and, in general, their rights and responsibilities in society. Accompanied by greater concern for the role of women in development, the literature reflects a shift of emphasis from studying women in the context of family and family roles to a study of women outside her family roles, i.e. in the public sphere. Thus we find that research explored the relation of women to society and policy through dealing with women civil rights, legal status, legislation, suffrage, voting behavior, political participation and attitudes and general involvement in "modern" public roles. The emphasis was on status and equality from a legal perspective. Research efforts revolved around equal access and opportunities in education, employment, services, etc...

In relating women to development, the literature dealt with the impact of various development factors such as education on women and the extent that women as a group are receiving benefits from the educational opportunities. Over the years, there was a shift in focus from research on formal education, enrollment, and the levels of educational attainment of women to an emphasis on informal education, literacy and functional activities and community development programmes which gained importance in the 70's thus also shifting the focus of research from urban women to rural women.

More studies on women concentrated on their employment and participation in labour force than in other areas, of involvement. This emphasis results from the role accorded to economic activities in the study of development. Studies on women dealt with the participation of women in the formal and informal sector of the economy, participation in labour force, effects of industrialization, access to professions and the social and educational factors affecting

women's participation. The abundance of these studies, nevertheless, does not overcome the conceptualization problem of what constitutes work, and what is an economic activity.

More general topics in the literature include the effect of changes in the environment on women's participation, the role conflicts resulting from imposed changes as opposed to adaptive social change. The focus of these studies is on the factors that facilitate or hinder change, and the adaptation to new values and ideals. Thus, some references also deal with the decline in women's status as a consequence of new role concepts introduced into a traditional community. Most studies though deal with women as passive recipients of changes rather than active agents of change.

Third World independent movements and feminists movements also generated studies with cross-cultural perspectives of women's liberation, the relationship between women's liberation and class struggle, etc. A cross-cultural approach has also been used in more recent research on women's status comparing experiences, and sexual division of labour and variation of sex roles. The approach failed to offer though a better comprehension of how women cross-culturally are interdependent. Bull comparative studies can show the differences in the conditions of women in different cultures, and can help in an understanding of which aspects of women's position in respective societies are culturally defined. They also point out to the spheres of primary responsibilities of women which can define the extent of their integration into public life. The interrelationship of public and private spheres, family/home and work is at the thrust of understanding the issue of integration of women in development.

At the international level, the early preoccupation with the legal status of women, the emphasis generated by the adoption of legal instruments, conventions, etc., to promote the equality of women, produced substantial research activities on the subject of the changing status of women in the family and society.

In other areas, comparative cross-cultural studies focused on education of women as an aspect of development, and the interrelation of education with demographic changes, and consequently to the status of women. Other research on women, undertaken by different U.N. bodies and agencies, indicated that the nature of certain activities such as family planning, mother and child care, nutrition, etc., generated research that focused on women, their needs, their roles, etc., but that since most U.N. activities are operation and service-oriented, research on women was not the primary focus, but a part, or by-product, of other activities. Some studies are available on the relations of employment to the status of women, but little is available on home-based economic activities and, in general, informal sector activities of women.

Research on development long preceeded the concern with women's integration in development. Issues and concerns of development appeared in the literature of several disciplines of academic interest such as economics, sociology, political science, and simultaneously in policy-oriented research of national and

international concern. Earlier development research drew on the theories and models derived from western societies and experiences. Development was described in terms of stages through which a society passes. The process was usually described in form of structural changes, components, indicators that were supposed to move in a linear, evolutionary direction.

The literature also indicates that greater emphasis was placed in this approach on the economic sphere, capital formation, industrialization, etc. The underlying assumption was that economic development will trigger changes in other social, political, and cultural institutions as they become necessary. It is now generally acknowledged that the development is not so orderly, nor are all its impacts and outcomes positive for all segments of society, and that as much as the processes create a need for continuous equilibrium of the system, development can also be the cause of disequilibrium.

Another approach to the study of development was using the comparative theory which focused on similarities and differences generated by the processes of development in a broad range of societies. By so doing, it aimed at identifying common variables to arrive at generalizations and approximations.

The modernization theory of development attempted to combine the comparative and developmental approaches, but also drew from the western modernization models with its progressive and inevitable movement from the "traditional" to the "modern", and therefore, suffered the same biases as the other theories.

A systems approach to development led to different types of research problems and concerns. While it increased the awareness of the researchers of the functional interdependence of the factors of development, it emphasized a center-periphery systems analysis.

The preceding discussion of research on development is by no means comprehensive. It is meant to identify the characteristics of research undertaken in earlier work: a) while development is a comprehensive process, most theories had a tendency to select a single correlate as the prime method of development, and most of them suffered from ethnocentric perspectives; b) most early theories of development had little or nothing to say about women, neither as recipient or participants in the process; c) early theories also neglected the problems of equity although a major focus was poverty. But poverty, illiteracy and other issues were treated as given factors of underdevelopment, ones which will be remedied in the process of development. Human resources were generally treated as beneficiaries rather than contributors to the processes, and even when discussed, the emphasis centered on male concepts like manpower, labor force, etc., that tended to exclude women.

Other biases in development research such as the emphasis on industrialization, economic activities, technology, etc., also resulted in women being absent from research on these topics. Similarly, early studies on agricultural



economics and rural development blurred the contribution of women by not distinguishing the role of women agricultural workers and by mostly concentrating on the division of labour within the family economy.

The above review of literature on the type of research conducted both on women and development indicates that gaps exist in research that are vital for the practical integration of women in development such as in the area of vocational education and training of women, the actual and potential contribution of women to decision-making bodies that would also lead to comparing the levels of development to the dynamics of the status of women and their participation. The absence of research on women in business, skilled labour, and among entrepreneurs should not be simply attributed to biological or cultural constraints.

Since traditionally women played a less important role in scientific and technological activities, studies in technological changes do not address women's participation. Studies are also lacking on the effect of cultural stereotyping, that discouraged women from participating, and on the psychological effects of such acculturation perpetuating in women an acceptance of the unsuitability of the area of technologies for them. Research on how to increase women's representation in the industries as well as in decision making bodies that determine the application of science and technology is also absent from the literature.

There is little or no research dealing with under employment and unemployment among women. Although it is evident that technological advances and innovations have resulted in displacing women particularly in rural areas, industrialization has directly resulted in reduction of income.

The absence of research data and proper measurements of women's actual and potential contribution to industrialization adversely affect planning of industrialization programmes to fully utilize their potentials in developing countries.

The trend in the international economic system has been toward relocation of industrial production and manufacturing of multinational corporations to developing countries. Such moves are undertaken to seek cheaper labour cost. Some particularly sought female labour because it was the cheapest and least organized, yet, the research on women does not explore the impact of this move on women's lives, employment patterns, etc.

The review of research also points to a problem common to developing nations namely the shortage or lack of a demographic data base that focuses on women, and allows for establishing sound programmes for the integration of women. Socialization, traditional division of labour between the sexes and stereotyping produced a kind of systematic bias in statistical data that confined attention and directed inquiries to men's activities. Because of the multiple roles of women, their representation in statistical data varies with the definitions and interpretation biases: women being excluded from consideration in the active

labour force because of traditional definitions of what constitutes work, and economic activities. Unpaid agricultural work of women is not counted although the boundaries between economic and non-economic activities in rural areas are highly arbitrary. Statistical discrepancies also exist in part because traditionally the entire informal market system is excluded from "economic activities", and it is in this sector that more women are economically active. Women who are "unemployed" are listed as housewives instead of being counted as an inactive labour force, etc. Although quantitative methods do not provide answers or action by themselves, including women in this data is important to planning. The value of women's contribution to the economy has been frustrated by several problems, socio-cultural, statistical and conceptual. The lack of consensus over what constitutes a household, and the definition of head of household, as well as other techniques of measurement present basic methodological problems that adversely affect research focusing on women's needs and contributions.

Other methodological problems involve the utilization of descriptive case studies on discrimination and equality issues rather than the use of an analytical research approach that would uncover the causes of such discrimination. This produced fragmented studies that did not link the problems to the issues of development.

Many questions have been raised about the reliability and validity of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies: social science research has moved from systematic set of observations to increasingly technical interpretation with technical skills. Survey methods, case studies, data collection and analysis, etc., tended separate the researcher from the subject of research. The departure from purely objective, hard fact research and more into participant observation with its combination of methods and techniques depends on the degrees of consciousness of the participant observer. But new methodologies, more particularly relevant to research on women, are evolving; action-oriented research is becoming a more acceptable method that does not concentrate on creating new theories, but, rather, tackles the problems facing women in their daily life.

## Some New Trends

A major new trend in research on women is the application of a participatory research approach. Participatory research arose as a reaction to the lack of tangible results in traditional social science research approaches. It redefines the relationship between theory and practice by making the research itself action-producing. That is, research is not merely an academic exercise, where the researcher is a data collector and the people researched are indices. Rather, participatory research calls for the interaction of researchers with those among whom the research is being conducted making the research undertaking an educational process for the people involved. It can offer skills as well as services that may be needed by the group.

The major components of participatory research are:

- a) that it promotes the active participation of the constituents in the collective investigation as well as a collective action;
- b) that it is problem-centered, "thematic investigation", and therefore is goal-oriented and action oriented;
- c) that it has the advantage of being applicable to small groups or to a whole community; and
- d) that it develops a sense of social responsibility and shows the participants the link between discussion, research and identification of solutions.

What this approach brings into research is the concept of "conscientization" of local people by using a variety of group involvement methods such as public meetings, group discussions, etc., to complement indigenous forms of communication and decision-making. Thus, it provides a major departure from the top-down approach to research. Participatory research provides the methodology for individuals to become active agents in their environment rather than be passive objects to be investigated by researchers.

A most important new trend in treating the integration of women in development is the focus of attention which has been shifted from an emphasis on the process of development with women as observers or recipients, to emphasis on women as the active participants, and the development plans benefiting from their participation.

Thus gradually, the emphasis is shifting to the human component of the development efforts — the women. The scope of research on "issues" of concern to women has greatly expanded from looking at women in traditional roles of homemakers and mothers to their roles in industrial development, women and food production, women and national planning, etc..., issues of national and global concern\*. The result of this broadening of scope will bring women back from the peripheries into the center of national activities, will "demarginalize" women's concerns.

This broadening of scope has also highlighted the need for further research on the actual and potential role of women in the various sectors of economic activity. This requires first further analyses of the present model of development and the different approaches and concepts so far used in the development strategies\*\*.

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\*) INSTRAW has stimulated research activities on similar issues of international concern by holding interregional seminars in which experts from various regions exchange ideas and experience on how to involve women in such wider issues as Development Planning, the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, Energy, Statistics, Industrial Development, Food Systems, Trade, Finance, etc...

\*\*) Many of these new research areas have been addressed in INSTRAW's series of research studies on the role of women in international economic relations.

In the area of agriculture, more research is required on the role of women. This is exemplified by the African situation where perhaps more than in any other region of the world, women have traditionally been the backbone of agriculture. Yet, inadequate attention has been paid to the role of women in the search for solutions to Africa's "food problem". Women's productivity in agriculture has increasingly stagnated or become weakened by transformative market forces, which, over the years, means *decreasing* productivity in the agriculture and food production. This is especially critical as women are traditionally responsible for the subsistence crops which supply basic nutritional needs. Therefore, there is a need for further research to focus on the possibilities for women's involvement and/or interest in cash crops; appropriate and labour-saving technology; improving the data base on women; long-range basic research in order to rectify biases in the assessment of women's changing role; women's access to land and the impact of agrarian reform on women's productive roles; emerging rural landlessness and its effect on women; greater participation of women in agricultural production, distribution and marketing through landownership; strengthening the role of women in post-harvest conservation strategies; and female rural-urban migration.

In the industrial sector there is a need to explore the relationship between the new international division of labour and the internationalization of industry and women's work and condition in industries which are more sensitive to price fluctuations and protectionist measures, such as the textile, garment industries and electronics. Analyses are also required of how abrupt changes in labour market conditions due to restructuring and modernization of industry affect women's employment; the ability of women to adapt to technological innovations in industry; the industries and groups of women affected by these innovations; and the conditions required for women to benefit from these innovations on equal terms with men; women's migration within countries and across borders where industry provides job opportunities.

The influence of the unequal terms of trade among nations, the fluctuation of prices of primary commodities and the impact of tariffs and quotas on manufacturing and products from developing countries on the employment, working and living conditions and general well-being of women in the developing and developed countries in light of the rapid change in today's society is also an area for further research. More data is required for a comprehensive analysis of the female labour force participation in the formal and informal sectors. Moreover, further analyses of the constraints faced by women traders, and the major obstacles that women traders experience market infrastructures and operations are required.

The transfer and development of technology, including the choice of technology and their impact on the position and work of women can also be subjects of further research. Research should focus on the effects of new technologies in agriculture, industry and employment; the rapid advances in electronics and its effect on traditional female jobs, mainly those in textile manufactures and offices; the choice of technology and the gender-specific charac-

teristics of technological change; development of technologies that take into consideration women's needs; survey of existing technologies; and the assessment of the impact of increased job opportunities as a result of technological development on perceptions of the role of women.

Research could also explore the impact of the existing patterns of international trade on the agricultural production and food systems and its consequences for women. Specific areas for further study are women's role in financial institutions, indicated by female employment and occupational status; the impact of macro-economic monetary and fiscal policies on women; the impact of monetary and budgetary policies due to the recent international economic policies; elaboration of specific policy measures for social development in the process of reform of the international monetary system and in the new approaches to international finance in order for women to be considered; identification of self-reliant productive activities and the development of alternative sources of finance for women in development programmes particularly for periods when restrictive macro-economic policies are adopted; and the financial requirements for removing poverty among women.

Further research is also required on women's role in energy consumption and production. Thus examinations of energy consumptions in terms of women's household needs should be undertaken. Moreover, the possibilities for new technologies which would respond to the needs of rural and urban women should be assessed. Lastly, research should focus on data collection which reflects the nature of the use, development and conservation of energy by women and propose energy systems that address the particular needs of women as well as society as a whole.

With the international community increasingly being sensitized to the importance of women's integration in development, new orientations appear in the literature on women emphasizing the role of women as leaders, initiators, motivators. It also deals with the role of women in enhancing the process of development, and the detrimental effects of excluding women, on both national development goals as well as on the status of women. Yet, great need exists to develop data banks and bibliographies on women active in different areas, on directories or listings of institutions involved in research and women's studies, as well as other resources that focus on women.

It is apparent that throughout the world, there are many research activities and projects relating to women. It is also observed from literature and bibliographies that there are duplications of research efforts because research is being undertaken at different levels, by a multiplicity of organization and for a number of purposes.

In addition, to conduct development research on women requires a more interdisciplinary team approach which, in turn, requires that planning for research activities should be conducted in larger units and not in isolated, piecemeal projects. As a research and training Institute at the international level,



INSTRAW can, through its catalytic role, coordinate with other agencies, stimulate the research activities that are indispensable for the creation of viable and practical policies and programmes for the integration of women in the development process.

As stated in the Introduction, the World Plan of Action for the implementation of the objectives of the International Women's Year placed special emphasis on the importance of research, data collection and analyses on all aspects of the situation of women, and on the necessity to conduct research at local, national, regional and international levels (para. 161). It also recommended that efforts be made to collect data that measures the participation of women in different sectors of national activities. While the information may be available there is need to establish suitable indicators<sup>1</sup> that are particularly sensitive to women's needs. Recognizing the limitations of available data of women, the Mid-Decade conference recommendations also reiterated the need for U.N. agencies to collaborate with INSTRAW in updating data on women with particular emphasis on development evaluation, and projection of potential participation of women in all areas of national life. It also recommended that statistical information be expanded to include relevant information on women that is free of sex-based stereotyping and promote equality<sup>2</sup>. In general, international agencies are moving towards meeting these needs and applying methodologies that would correct these biases and underestimation of women's involvement<sup>3</sup>.

This is necessary in order to assess future needs and identify gaps in available information. Such needs assessment is a prerequisite to planning future research activities, as well as for developing a data bank for storage and retrieval of information to facilitate circulation and exchange of information, as well as to control and eventually avoid duplication.

In order to promote research activities relevant to women in developing countries, and that can be applied in a comparative framework, INSTRAW is developing conceptual models, and methodologies that allow comparisons in experiences and projects of different women groups in developing regions. This will facilitate the exchange of information and promote technical cooperation on women's research in all countries. It is also engaged in the development of techniques for information and data collection on women at different levels. Some of the action generated by the development of these techniques is in form of preparation of handbooks and manuals to be used in training researchers in data gathering.

Through its cooperation activities with regional and national institutions,

- 1) See INSTRAW publications on Indicators and Basic statistics on Women.
- 2) Paragraph 261, & par. 259 of Mid Decade Conference Report.
- 3) One of the earliest research activities undertaken by INSTRAW is a project on statistical indicators and related basic statistics on women undertaken in cooperation with the U.N. Statistical Office and follow up activities in research and training in cooperation with other U.N. agencies and organizations.

INSTRAW encourages the development of research strategies promoting women's involvement and community self-reliance in undertaking collection of data and identifying research needs. It promotes the application of participatory research approach, group cooperation of local women participants with emphasis on development of action-oriented research that can benefit the women and their communities.

As specified in its mandate, the research and supporting activities of the Institute are to be directed and guided by the special needs of women in developing countries. Therefore, its research efforts are directed to have practical outcome of value to women, to planners and governments. The research activities must be geared to increase the awareness of women and policy-makers of the implications of development issues and the mutual benefits, for communities and women alike, that can be derived from the participation of women.

The scope of research activities of the Institute, and the intended target countries and women groups are too extensive to be undertaken by any single agency. Neither the physical, the financial or human capacities of any research institution can singularly fulfill those needs. In acting as a catalytic institution, INSTRAW pursues research objective for the integration of women through a) supporting and coordinating activities between institutions of research at different levels of operation, by providing staff training research guides, methodologies and exchange of information on research in general; b) through assisting in the creation or strengthening of institutional, staffing and other capabilities of the machinery undertaking research at national, regional or local levels, as well as through coordinating with other U.N. organizations by pooling resources, etc.; c) through implementing its own research programme that addresses research issues and concern of international scope that may be complementary to existing undertakings, or that may stimulate new interests and programmes.

INSTRAW's activities in research reflect the new orientation on the role of women in development programmes. They reflect the widening of scope of what constitutes women's activities in development. The research programme is in line with the previous decisions of various U.N. organizations to provide better understanding of the impact of development issues on patterns of women's involvement, as well as future role of women as active agents in their environment.

The basic objectives of INSTRAW's research programme are to generate knowledge that are beneficial to women, that focus on how to increase their participation in the social and economic life of society and the ultimate goal of creating linkage of women's concerns to central questions and issues of development. Although extensive research activities have been started, knowledge remains unsystematic. Therefore, there is a continuous need for more direct and action-oriented research that would lead to practical programmes, training and to more research interests. Since the task is of great magnitude, it requires concerted efforts and cooperations of all levels: national, regional and international. Most important is the recognition that any research on women should be undertaken within the perspective of society, and not as a separate issue.

### III. TRAINING

Training has always been linked to education as part of the educational process that complements theoretical learning, or as an educational tool for transmitting knowledge and the "know how" in a particular area. In a rapidly changing world, and with technological advancement, training, more than formal education, can provide the means to expand the knowledge of people, and bring their knowledge and activities to the necessary level required. It is deemed necessary in areas of activity and productivity that require constant updating of skills to ensure the efficient use of human resources.

Training is both a dynamic and an adaptable tool of intervention; its methods, techniques and content can be changed to fit the needs of the trainees, the programmes and the objectives. It also has the advantage of being applicable at a multi-level of intervention.

Above all, it is an important element in attaining self-reliance, and as such it is an excellent intervention tool that is most appropriate to bring women into development activities at all levels. Training components are essential integrative mechanisms to facilitate women's participation. It has always been used to increase the skills of the workforce, with priority given traditionally to male members of a community or group. Increasingly, and with the attention generated to the necessity of involving women, there is a greater realization that women constitute a considerable human resource that has been left virtually untapped in the development process, and particularly in increasing the industrial skills in developing countries. Although in developing societies women have always worked, both at home and outside, most of their activities have generally been classified as non-economic, and women as economically inactive. Misrepresentation in data, sex-biased classification, and definition of work resulted in historical neglect of women as a potential resource to be developed through training.

Sex role differentials are basically affected by the reproductive roles of women. Marriage, child-rearing are defined in almost all societies as the primary, if not the only, life-long activity for women. Such role expectations, color the attitudes of men and women towards the value of education, training and employment of men and women. While for men training for a skill is expected to lead to a life-long occupation and "making a living"; for women in many societies, education, training and employment are only temporary undertakings until marriage.

Such perceptions affected women's own aspirations, motivation and judgement as to their abilities by conditioning their expectations. It also colored the decision of planners, decision-makers, and different organizations engaged in training to perceive male training as an investment of greater return than female training since training is a costly undertaking and both resources and opportunities are limited.

But structural shifts in developing economies, migration, population trends,

coupled with efforts to industrialize, mechanization of agricultural economies, where technologies displaced women because they lacked the skills needed, and overall development efforts create new needs for women:

- 1) That more women will need to join the formal labour force to become self-supporting, less dependent, or to increase family earning due to economic need or due to the increase of percentage of women head of household or the main breadwinner of the family;

- 2) that for women to become active and to explore non-traditional areas of activities, they need extensive training and a variety of skills;

- 3) training activities are crucial, by ending the isolation of women, for a more comprehensive approach to development that requires the full utilization of human resources in planning of manpower policies.

In most countries, there are no major legal barriers preventing women from educational or training programmes. But the *de jure* situation is different from the *de facto* access and often special action is needed to increase opportunities. In practice though, customs, and division of labour tasks by sex all tilt to priority being directed at training male members of society, limiting women's option to training for skills that are an extension of their traditional roles at home. Those skills usually lead to occupations that are narrow in range, with low educational, low pay and responsibility.

Non-governmental organizations have long been active in providing training programmes for women particularly in remote areas and in poor urban areas. Most of these programmes though are service-oriented. However, there is a need for training to increase the efficiency and productivity of human resources men and women. Vocational training provides women with skills and the nation with a trained labour force. But opportunities for female vocational training, particularly specialized and technical, is a major gap in most developing countries. Formal channels to vocational education for women may exist, but most programmes are not geared, nor are accommodating to women's needs. They should be adapted to upgrading and updating women's skills and to offer women wider alternatives.

The extent and attention given to training of women as well as other activities in planning and formal government policies can sometimes be enhanced by proclaimed economic policies. It can also be stimulated by the presence and activities of a women's bureau, or women's affairs coordinator. Such a unit, depending on its level in government acts as a promoter or initiator as well as monitor for women-related programmes, and it can assist in creating new training opportunities for women.

There have also been diverse efforts at different levels to provide women with better opportunities and programmes. Training in women-oriented areas are intended to improve the level of skill of women in areas that they are most

familiar with or that they have been practicing without undergoing formal training. Examples of such activities are particularly evident in the training of birth-attendants, midwives and similar occupations. In this case the training is conducted for already practicing women, and to horizontally extend the skill to more young women, mostly in rural and remote areas. A similar form of training is provided in cottage industries, handicrafts, weaving, etc., that serve to receive traditional crafts or skills in simple or non industrial economies. A number of non governmental, women's organizations, as well as several international organizations are promoting revival of such activities as a more direct, less demanding approach to improve the income earning capabilities of rural women. Other international organizations utilize the income-generating training as an indirect support programme to attract women to other service or educational programmes.

A review of training activities by U.N. agencies and international organizations reveals a variety of areas of training of women that are undertaken for the purpose of turning or in conjunction with other services provided by the organization. Technical cooperation projects and community development activities have generated numerous training activities geared towards women or included a women's component in development projects. Similarly, agricultural-oriented and related projects often include women's activities and training programmes. Programmes report that extending training activities for women in health-related activities are becoming integral parts of most programmes. Similar concerns are reported by other agencies that provide training in family planning, mother and child care activities, and family health and welfare related activities.

Other programmes provide training activities for education personnel, and those responsible for both formal and informal education activities for women. Education, literacy, teachers training, political education, and training in mass communication and audio-visual equipment training are reported among the activities that provide training for women in various projects in developing countries. This is a new and important area where training programmes should focus to meet international development needs.

Training programmes are directed to provide women with employment skills, increasing their self-reliance and promoting equality of opportunity and treatment in work-related activities. Findings on training needs for women point to the variation in needs in accordance to educational and skills levels and to employment patterns. It is also evident that availability of training influences women's employment patterns, and that training can be a necessary factor to widen the occupational range available to women.

Some projects undertaken by regional commissions are responding to particular regional or national needs, targeted to specific groups of women, and are shorter in duration.

The activities of the Decade focused attention on the need for special remedial measures to bring women into mainstream development. Most of the training programmes reported by the agencies emphasized that type of training



as a transitional strategy, and training is directed at the intermediate level or at the most disadvantaged groups of women who are least educated, lack alternatives and who suffer high levels of poverty. Most programmes were directed at rural women, and though non-vocational in nature, the training provided an improvement of skill conducive to some income-related activity. Another important feature of many of these projects is that they provided on-the-job training in field operation, learning and communication techniques to local women.

While many training activities are on-going at all levels of developing societies, there are general problems and obstacles: a major and most common is the lack of trained staff and trainers in the various areas of training needed for women. More women are receiving minimum training skills, but the number of women receiving training in planning, decision-making, technical areas, or in new applied technologies and science, and leadership training are insignificant in relations to the needs and the potentials.

Regardless of the type or sector of industry, there are indications that women's participation in production is almost always at the lowest level of skill requirements, and consequently received lower salaries. Besides, at times of unemployment, women find it harder to reenter the job market for lack of appropriate skills. This cycle of low skills, low job, low pay, can only be broken through training supplementing governmental programmes. Of these organizations, women's voluntary organizations are usually in a better position to provide more specialized training for women by virtue of their concerns. Thus we find, that many small-scale projects in rural areas as well as vocational and training classes or workshops in urban areas are undertaken by such organizations. Because of limited resources and limited scope, these organizations limit their training programs to traditional activities, sewing, handicraft, food processing and the like. Generally, they do not have the capabilities to provide higher level technical training.

Working with and through women's groups and indigenous non-governmental organizations is a valuable mechanism; a channel through which more local women can be reached, and is a necessary action to increase their actual participation in development. While they are not an exclusive answer to the problems of women, these organizations are part of an overall strategy.

The role of government is always instrumental in directing attention and policies to the issues of importance to national development. The role of government in developing nations is even greater because it is the largest of institutions, has more resources under its disposal, and can take initiative through formal plans to regulate actions and activities toward specific goals. It can and should intervene with necessary action to promote equal treatment and equal opportunities for women.

Women's needs are not different from society's needs and while training may not be the sufficient condition for change, it is certainly a necessary one. There is a tremendous need for changes in attitudes towards the value of train-

ing women in different capacities. There is a great need for allocation of resources at different levels for training of women; and most importantly, a need for planning and coordinating mechanisms and exchange of experiences on the training of women.

As developing countries undergo economic and social development, more opportunities are created, which in turn generate needs for more trained manpower. But at times of constant technological changes, it is not sufficient to provide women with training that only breaks the employment barrier. Future efforts in the area of training should be part of a fully integrated system of training having direct linkages with employment needs ought to be developed.

In general, women require training in leadership, administration, finance and management in all sectors. Training is also required in specialized skills in order for women to participate equally with men in all sectors of economic activity.

Due to rapid change in the field of technology, women's capacities in this field need to be developed by promoting their educational opportunities particularly in science, mathematics and engineering. A removal of remaining barriers to higher education through short-term courses, apprenticeships seminars or other arrangements is one method that can achieve this. Extension services and demonstration centres can also be introduced to popularize new technologies among women.

Through training, women's industrial skills could be synchronized with modern day industrial priorities, enabling them to both enter new industrial pursuits and acquire more "transferable skills" for use in higher-level branches of industry, i.e. quality control and maintenance in electronics, microelectronics, telecommunications, etc.

In the agricultural sector, it is also evident that existing extension training programmes should attempt to increase women's agricultural productive abilities by providing integrated extension systems instead of directing women's training only to homebound activities. Training in modernized agricultural techniques is required particularly for women small farmers and labourers on larger farms. Training in management, finance and entrepreneurship are areas that need more attention.

The overall objective of INSTRAW's training programme is to use training of women as a practical instrument to full integration into development activities. It will do so by improving skills, the productivity and the general activities of women and by increasing their self-reliance. Therefore, it is basic that programmes be action-oriented and be conducive to increasing actual participation of women in the training activities.

The methodological objective of the programme is to design innovative strategies and techniques for training women, that would be applicable to cross-cultural programmes.

Due to magnitude of tasks involved in the training of women at different levels, different sectors, different cultural, educational backgrounds, etc., training cannot be prescribed in a particular method or approach. Different needs will require different approach, but the general strategies of the training programmes promote a) utilization of research finding as the basis for training programmes. Thus approaching training as the practical interpretation and implementation of those findings; b) encouragement of local women to participate and have an input in the design of the appropriate training programmes; c) maximum utilization of existing training, institutional capabilities, strengthening and supporting them through training activities; d) training *in situ* which ensures greater participation of local women, utilizes human and organizational resources and stimulates development of programmes and methods more appropriate to local needs and therefore more effective; e) training the trainers-men and women to become sensitized to special training and other needs of women; and training women trainers to respond to the shortage in trainers, and to provide role models for other women (multiplier factor); f) having training components and activities attached as part of projects and programmes undertaken by agencies within and outside the U.N. system; g) continuous review and development of training methods and the exchange of information and experiences to develop more flexible and adaptable modules.

The variation in women's groups, backgrounds and resources coupled with the particular training needs determine the approach to training: emphasis on acquiring special skills and occupational-related skills may require a conventional or traditional approach that is goal-specific, short in duration, and expedient.

On the other hand, utilization of a more interactive approach as participatory training though time-consuming is more appropriate for long term effect in a variety of training situations in both vocational and non-vocational activities. Participatory training may not be applicable to highly technical areas, but it is an approach that is particularly suited to incorporate more women into various activities through learning by doing.

Participatory training may not be a panacea, but it has its definite merits when applied to train women, combining participatory training with the utilization of new communication technology, emphasizes the importance of interaction of women as learners-participants-with women as trainers.

INSTRAW's training programme is also geared to respond to the needs of women at all levels of training and to directing its attention to new areas where women's training has been neglected such as management programmes and development planning, as well as new technologies and communication media. Its training activities are action-oriented and closely linked to research findings in an effort to fill existing training gaps. These programmes are implemented by applying the network concept and by lending support to institutions at all levels to develop innovative training programmes and capabilities. INSTRAW also promotes training of women through their participation in expert group meetings, through promotion of intersectorial exchange of experience on how to

train and involved women, and through workshops and seminars that bring together trainers and trainees and planners for exchange of ideas and needs.

Training programmes and materials have been generated as a result of such meetings. Among its innovative techniques are the development and use of micro-computer packages and appropriate software for training modules as well as the use of audio visuals for outreach training programmes to make training available and accessible to women and localities that may be otherwise inaccessible.

Besides providing fellowships and internship programmes to help women upgrade their training and to participate in projects, the Institute will establish a network of specialists on women in development to assist in assessing training needs, advise on the design and evaluation of training programmes at all levels of implementations.

The flexibility of training as a tool to bring women into development processes makes it more powerful; and it can always be modified and redesigned to meet new demands, and, therefore, it must be well-planned, linked to overall development needs and also linked to ever-changing research findings.

## IV. CONCLUSION

It is evident from this study that there is a growing awareness that the situation and role of women are no more isolated issues peripheral to the important national and international concerns. Experiences with past development efforts indicate that there is greater understanding of the interdependence of women's issues to societal and world problems of poverty, underdevelopment, food production and demographic changes. There is also a growing consensus that women's contributions are important in order for society to achieve its development objectives.

In order to focus attention on the role of women in development policy-makers and planners need basic information on women and also need to establish mechanisms for channeling information and linking programmes that would enhance the integration of women into development policy formulation and planning.

These needs point to the importance of research and training activities that are purposeful and would generate practical changes. But it is imperative that research and training activities be based on the experiences and be derived from the environments of developing nations in order that they address the needs of women in these societies. It is also important to link the research and training

activities to mainstream development activities to maintain an action-oriented perspective, and produce activities that respond to the overall development plan. This requires close cooperation with national planning institutions to formulate research and training programmes that are congruent to national development plans.

This study shows that there are many undertakings in both research and training activities that are occurring at all levels of operations and institutions, yet there is need for more linkage between various groups to create a worldwide network. It indicates a need to treat research and training on women as a continuous process whose complementary components continuously feed back new concepts, models and ideas that generate cycles of new activities. Research and training need to be interactive with development programmes and policies in order to produce action that would enhance the access of women to development activities and respond to the changes occurring in the process.

It is ultimately the responsibility of national governments to re-orient development policies and programmes to incorporate women's concerns into development and provide women with access to resources and to decision-making, pertaining to the development of projects. This points to the importance of research and training as tools to strengthen the role of women. Research, as a pre-condition to planning, identifies needs, and training as part of planning will respond to the needs.

It is evident that no one model can produce action applicable everywhere. But the major objective is to promote practical, cross-cultural research and training activities. The magnitude of the tasks, the multi-level operation requires the collaboration of many institutions which in turn creates a need for networking that allows cooperation, the exchange of information and experiences between and among developing countries. As stated in the Report of the World Conference of the U.N. Decade for Women,

*"These programmes at the international level should take into full consideration the essential linkages in the development process at national, sub-regional and international levels, and with adequate communication between institutions and machineries related to women and major planning unit at all these levels".*

To facilitate a comprehensive approach to promote participation of women in development, INSTRAW has the instrumental role of leading this interagency cooperation.

There is much to be done yet although national and international concerns focus on efforts to strengthen the integration of women in development. In earlier phases of development, the strategies emphasized the utilization of all resources, natural and human to achieve a "state" of development that mainly centered around economic growth and particularly promoted industrial development. Decisions and priorities that focused on the goal of development often



resulted in detrimental repercussions to the environmental or human resources. This state required the reexamination of the relationship of human components to the process of development. It produced higher concern with the human element as a component of the development process, yet mostly as an instrument of the process.

For women, it resulted in many steps being taken towards achieving equality at national and international level. Though full equality in term of equal distribution and in terms of equal productivity is not yet achieved, more than ever before, women are taken into account as an integral component of development efforts.

The evolution of development strategies points to positive change in the direction of focus; yet, a new understanding of development must be developed as a means and not as a goal in itself. The goal should be redirected and defined in terms of achieving the well-being of men and women, and development should become an instrument to reach that goal. This will require not only reexamining development concepts, but it may be necessary to rethink and reformulate development models and objectives. The move should be from concern with a system, while utilizing human elements, towards a concern with the human element while utilizing the system, "submitting" it to serve human needs. Thus, with respect to the relation of women to development, the objectives should be formulated with regards to women and their aspiration as one of the goals of development planning.

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INSTRAW is an autonomous institution  
within the framework of the United Nations  
to serve as a vehicle at the international level for the purpose  
of undertaking research and establishing training programmes  
to contribute to the integration  
and participation of women in development.

In pursuit of its objectives, the Institute acts in close co-ordination  
with institutions and other bodies within  
and outside the United Nations system.



Published by the United Nations International Research  
and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women  
(INSTRAW)

Printed in the Dominican  
Republic

Research Study No. 2 - 1500  
English - June 1985