

Gender Sensitivity

A training manual

Literacy Section
Basic Education Division
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This Manual is a tribute to their efforts to understand and create a world where equal partnership between men and women is not only possible but necessary.

INTRODUCTION

Sexism exists in women as well as men. It has no respect for individual aspirations and to what each sex can accomplish. Yet, it influences the outcomes of a myriad life situations the world over.

The concept of gender sensitivity has developed as a way to reduce obstacles to development created by sexism. Gender sensitivity helps generate respect for the individual regardless of sex.

Being gender-sensitive does not mean pitting women against men. Education which is gender-sensitive is a winning asset for both women and men. It helps them determine which views in matters of gender are valid and which are stereotyped generalisations. Gender awareness requires not only intellectual effort but also sensitivity and open-mindedness. It opens up an area for a wide range of life options.

This Manual embodies the rich experience gained from UNESCO workshops in Asia and the Pacific and, to a lesser extent, in Africa and the Arab States. Our goal has been to elaborate guidelines to facilitate a gender-sensitive approach to education.

Started as a training plan, the programme has drawn upon the inputs of hundreds of individuals. New participants interpreted their own experiences in the light of inputs offered by the programme. Today, seven years since the start of the programme, the Manual embodies the essence of these contributions.

This Manual promotes appreciation of gender issues and the equal roles to be played by women and men in the nurturing of their families, communities and nations as a whole. The Beijing World Conference on Women has made it clear that countries only stand to gain if they are equally supportive of women and men in their quest for a fulfilling life.

The Manual can be used in activities involving policy-makers, curriculum developers and adult learners. With some adjustment, the activities may also be used with the general public.

The Manual is organized in ten sections. The first part guides through a warm-up session or *ice-breaking* to prepare participants and set the tone for the orientation programme. The next section is a drawing exercise to help participants reflect on a certain aspect of their attitudes toward women and men.

An activity entitled Agree/Disagree represents the third section which helps explore and analyze the values that society assigns to the sexes. This is followed by a reflection on the roles of the sexes in the family and the community. It emphasizes the multiple roles society assigns to women - notably the productive and reproductive dichotomy. The fifth section is a group discussion of pertinent issues in the education of women and girls, including a search for alternative approaches.

The next section offers media highlights on current issues related to today's women. Real life serves as a basis for discussion and analysis. Participants examine the contents and presentation of post-literacy materials selected in the seventh section, "*Women's work, women's worth*" - they represent some aspects of the work that women do. This section also exposes participants to alternative ways of treating the subject in reading materials. In the eighth section, participants study drawings from educational resources, using the earlier inputs as a guide.

Section 9 helps make participants aware of their changing social roles in keeping with other changes in the world. The last section summarizes the entire programme. It helps participants clarify in their minds the responsibilities of men and women in today's world. Participants will be invited to outline a profile of the women after education has transformed them.

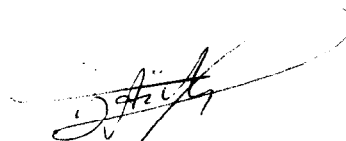
It will become clear that participation is the key to activities contained in this Manual. Participants will soon feel that their entire life experience is relevant as raw material for analysis. They will find themselves staring at their own attitudes, questioning reality as they know it. It is for them to imagine women and men acting differently towards each other.

When this happens, the training will have been successful.

Varying the activities that encourage relaxation and stimulation for learning is important to the success of the Programme. These include songs, dances, games and story telling, reflection and establishing norms, creative work, including drawing in response to stimuli, writing captions for photographs, games involving physical movement, small group discussion, plenary presentation and discussion, brainstorming, individual writing on a given subject, working in pairs, presentation of personal experience related to adult education programmes, consultation with resource persons, artists and peers and individual curricular unit development.

At each step, participants will find themselves in the centre of the stage. The success of the activities will depend on them. Once they understand this, they are determined to do their best. By way of paying tribute to all involved, the Manual describes some of their work.

This Manual is about changing behaviour and instilling empathy in the views that we hold about our own and the other sex. It is a lesson in being alive, in relating to others. More importantly, we hope it will allow one to see our fellow humans with more compassion, regardless of their sex.



Aicha Bah Diallo

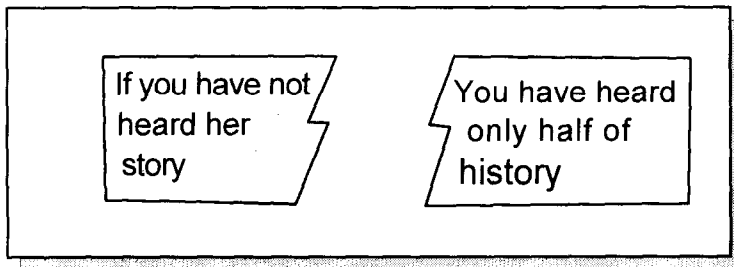
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Section 1

Breaking the Ice

- Getting to know each other

1. **Aim.** To allow participants the opportunity to get to know each other and to break down initial interpersonal communication barriers.
2. **Objectives.** Following this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) address each other by their preferred name;
 - b) describe basic characteristics of at least one person (their partner) in the group;
 - c) express positive feelings about the commencement of the Workshop.
3. **Total duration:** One hour thirty-five minutes
4. **Sequencing of activities**
 - a) The **first activity** comprises the distribution of paper slips which have been cut into halves containing statements on women's issues, e.g.



Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Paper strips with statements cut in half

- b) In the **second activity** each participant is asked to match her or his half of the saying. Each strip is cut differently and must fit its matching half on the outside. The statements to be matched are as follows.
 - Men can take care of children as well as women.
 - Technical skills can place men and women on an equal footing.
 - If we want society to view us differently, we must first view ourselves differently.
 - Women do two-thirds of the work but receive only one-tenth of the total income.

- If you have not heard her story, you have heard only half of history.
- Women can work as hard as men.
- Educate a woman, educate a nation.
- When one thinks of an engineer, one hardly ever thinks of a woman.
- Women need skills that will allow them to earn more money, to better address survival needs, and to become autonomous.
- The role of women is viewed as limited to that of housewives, mothers and unpaid family labour in our society.

Duration: Ten minutes

- c) In the **third activity**, participants are told that when attempting to match their slip of paper, they must salute each individual they address with their national greeting. Once their piece of paper successfully finds the match, they form pairs with the person holding the matching piece. Following this, each person in the pair should interview the other and establish answers to the following questions:
- i. What is your name?
What is its meaning?
Who gave it to you?
What name do you prefer to be called?
 - ii. What work do you do?
Do you have a hobby?
 - iii. Why are you at this Workshop?

Duration: Twenty minutes

- d) **Fourth activity** - each person in each pair introduces his/her partner to the group.
- e) In the **fifth activity** facilitator summarizes each pair's report and emphasizes the importance of participants remembering each other's names.

Point out that names are generally chosen by people of dignity, such as a priest, a monk, parent or close relatives. Although most of those who name people are male, some names are given by women.

Duration for both d) and e): Fifty minutes

- f) The **sixth activity** involves asking each participant her or his view of the first exercise.

Hold out three cardboard cutouts with:

- i) a smiling face;
- ii) a frowning face;
- iii) a neutral face.

Ask participants to match their feelings about the Workshop to one of the faces.

Duration: Five minutes

Materials: Cut-out cardboard faces

Alternatives

Alternatively, participants may be asked to form two circles, one inside the other. The circles must move in opposite directions to the rhythm of either music or songs. When asked to stop, everyone should pair off with the person in front.

Duration: Five minutes

Materials: Music

The facilitator asks participants the following question: *"If you know you have only three days left of your life, what are the most important things you would do?"*

Duration: Five minutes

Participants give their answers to their partner.

Duration: Five minutes

The partner, in turn, announces the other's answer to the entire group. This ensures that no individual gives her or his own answer directly. The exercise is completed when everybody's answers have been announced.

Duration: Fifteen minutes

Sample answers follow:

- ♦ *I'll have big parties with my friends;*
- ♦ *I'll spend time with my family;*
- ♦ *I'll meditate;*
- ♦ *I'll finish my work.*

Conclude by saying that all the answers are interesting; however no particular answer is better than the other. This exercise allows us to say what we want without being judged. There is no RIGHT or WRONG answer.

Thank those present for participation. Remind them that by the next day, it would be good if they remembered everybody's names.

5. Evaluation

Were all the participants actively involved?

Did they match their feeling about the Workshop with a smiling face, a frowning face or neutral face?

Hopes and Fears

1. **Aim.** To allow participants and Workshop organizers the opportunity to share their hopes and fears about the Workshop.
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) express their individual hopes and fears;
 - b) collectively identify each other's hopes and fears;
 - c) work together to build group identity; and
 - d) identify the objectives and scope of the Workshop.

3. **Duration:** One hour thirty minutes

4. **Sequencing of activities**

- a) In the **first activity** participants write the word *Hopes* on one sheet of newsprint and *Fears* on another. Ask them to write about their hopes and fears in short phrases or sentences.

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Newsprint

- b) In the **second activity** ask participants to rank their *hopes* and *fears* in order of importance.

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Newsprint

- c) In the **third activity** selected participants are asked to describe their first *hope* and to write it on newsprint. Invite a few other participants to follow with their descriptions. Finally lead the entire group to indicate whether they have similar *hopes* to those already mentioned. The exercise concludes once all *hopes* are listed.

Duration: Thirty minutes

- d) The **fourth activity** follows the same sequence (above), but relates to the discussion of *fears*.

Duration: Twenty minutes

- e) The **fifth exercise** consists in an open discussion on how *hopes* can be realized both within the Workshop and in extracurricular activities. Workshop organizers lead the discussion sharing Workshop objectives and the work schedule.

Duration: Twenty minutes

Materials: Transparency outlining the objectives of the Workshop.

- f) The **sixth activity** is an open discussion on *fears* and how these can be overcome. Take care to ensure that discussion remains objective (below please find anticipated responses to both exercises).

5. Evaluation

Observe the degree of involvement of participants and Workshop organizers.

Examples of responses to the Hopes and Fears exercise

Hopes

- To learn how to develop literacy curricula and materials.
- To learn better strategies to eradicate illiteracy among women and girls.
- To have a relaxed timetable.
- To share experiences in working with women.
- To produce materials for use at home.
- To learn about the experience of other countries in combating illiteracy.
- To obtain as much information as possible about literacy programmes for women.
- To be efficient and not take oneself too seriously.
- To enjoy, relax and learn together.
- To create opportunities to interact with resource people and friends.
- To have more friends from other countries.
- To set aside time for amusement.
- To learn happily during the day and sleep well at night.
- To obtain additional reference material on women.
- To learn more about women's difficulties.
- To learn ways to help women.
- To make sure that our product is best.
- To apply in real life what one learns here.
- To be proud of women's support to the world.
- To help men recognize the importance of women in society.

Fears

- I will not be able to understand all the information presented in the Workshop because of language problems.
- May not be able to communicate well because of background and language barriers.
- May not be able to do a good job of the literacy curriculum because of inadequate background and experience.
- Not remaining in good health.
- Of offending and confusing others.
- There will not be enough time to work.
- Little knowledge about women.
- Lack of drawing skills.
- There will be too much work.
- Of offending others through lack of knowledge of their cultures.
- Of being too aggressive.
- Not having enough reading materials.
- Not being able to remember or pronounce friends' names correctly.

Transparency

Objectives of the Workshop

- 1 Familiarise participants with gender issues.
- 2 Expose them to the principles of curriculum development.
- 3 Let them try their hand at preparing a good curricular unit.

Section 2
Women and Farmwork
A reflection on values¹

1. **Aim.** To encourage participants to question their own beliefs regarding the division of work between men and women and equality of access to work.
2. **Objectives.** Following this session, participants will be able to express, through illustrations, their opinions on the role of men and women in farming.
3. **Total duration:** Forty-five minutes
4. **Sequencing of activities**
 - a) For the **first activity**, inform participants that it is time for a drawing game.

Duration: Five minutes

- b) **Second**, give them a written instruction which they must read silently about the required illustration. They are **not** allowed to ask questions.

Duration: Twenty minutes

Materials: Sheets of paper and pencils.

Suggested written instruction follows.

Think of a farming community you know, perhaps, your favourite countryside, maybe your own village.

Now, imagine a farmer working in a farm or field. Draw that farmer with the background scenery as you like. Try to be as realistic as you can in illustrating clothing, hats, farming implements, activities, etc. After finishing the picture, please write down the farmer's name and your name.

Note: The facilitator must always make sure to refer to the person to be drawn as "the farmer." Never should the farmer be referred to as *he* or *she* or by any other pronoun or word which might imply the sex of the farmer.

¹ This activity must be kept as the **first** activity of the Section before any discussion on gender issues takes place.

- c) In the **third activity**, participants are invited to show their complete drawings on the walls using masking tape, to view the drawings of others and interact with each other.
Duration: Ten minutes

- d) In the **fourth activity** the facilitator announces the winner or winners and presents her, him or them with a token prize or prizes. Count and announce the number of female and male farmers. Conclude by saying that the drawings represent the subconscious views of the participants about farm work and farmers (normally there will be a much higher percentage of men than women). Drawings should be kept on the wall until the end of the Workshop.

Duration: Five minutes

Materials: Masking tape

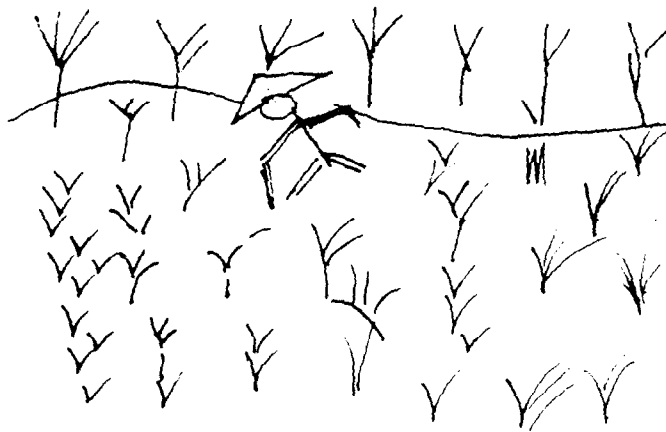
Note the exact percentage of women and men farmers.¹

5. Evaluation

Observe the reaction of participants when faced with their own deep-rooted attitudes about farmers and their surprise or even shock when they find that they, too, have gender-biased views.

¹ This information will be useful when introducing *The multiple roles of women*, notably their productive role.

Sample drawings of Farmers



Sample Drawings of Farmers



Sample Drawings of Farmers



Section 3

Reflection on Societal Views about Women

1. **Aim.** To help participants clarify their own beliefs about the roles of women.
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) clearly state their opinions on various statements about women's roles;
 - b) question their own and each other's views regarding the roles of women and men in society.
3. **Total duration:** One hour thirty minutes
4. **Sequencing of activities**
 - a) In the **first activity** a piece of paper marked *AGREE* is taped on one wall while on the opposite wall another piece marked *DISAGREE* is taped.

Duration: Five minutes

Materials: Paper, pencils and masking tape

- b) **Second**, the facilitator explains to the participants that he/she will read aloud a statement regarding the roles and status of women; each must decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement. They are then to run quickly to the wall which indicates the opinion (*agree* or *disagree*) they favour. Those grouped together under the same sign must announce their reasons for agreeing or disagreeing. Each group must then appoint a reporter to state their reasons to the other group.

Duration: Five minutes

- c) **Third**, the facilitator reads out each statement twice and points to it on the transparency. The participants must decide quickly and move to the appropriate wall to which the sign of their choice is taped. They should report their reasons in support of their choice through the appointed reporter. For sample statements and arguments for and against, see A, B, C and D below.

Duration: Fifteen minutes

Materials: Transparency - see A, B, C and D

- d) **Fourth**, the reporter from each group should present the reasons in support of its position. A debate of about 6-8 minutes should follow.

Duration: Ten minutes

- e) The **fifth activity**, the conclusion, involves the facilitator who points out that the statements reflect the beliefs of the participants about the roles and status of women, which are generally influenced by traditional societal view of women. However, society is constantly changing, and the roles and status of women are also changing. When talking about women it should always be remembered that women are people with the same potential and limitations as men. It's time to pause and reconsider the value assigned to the roles of women and men as well as their status. (Details about each statement, see below.)

Duration: Five minutes

- f) In the **sixth activity**, to reinforce the message of the exercise, items c) to e) may be repeated.

Duration: Fifty minutes

Materials: A, B, C and D

5. **Evaluation**

Participants must be involved in the activity and openly discuss their beliefs.

A. Women are flowers of the world

Agree

- Women are beautiful in every way
- Women are like flowers. They attract many people by their different styles of dressing like flowers with their different forms and colours.
- Women play important reproductive roles like flowers.
- Without women, the world would be a very dull place.
- Women make life pleasant for the family as do flowers which bring pleasure to those who see them.

Disagree

- By saying women are flowers, we reduce them to mere decorations with no real value, except to be seen and admired.
- Women have multifaceted roles to perform. These roles are very important for the survival of family and society. They must not be ignored.
- Women are multi-talented, they can be roots, stems, leaves, branches, etc. not only flowers.
- Women also have a productive role and support the family economically.
- If women were flowers, they would be put on a pedestal, be confined and fade away. They would not have a chance to grow.

Hints for the conclusion

Thank you for your frank discussions. This exercise is about our own opinions. There is no RIGHT or WRONG answer. One thing to remember, however, is that when we refer to women as *flowers*, we are only talking about one of women's multifaceted roles. By ignoring women's role as producers we may be perpetuating the view that devalues women's contribution.

B. Women can be as good engineers as men

Agree

- Women are careful and good at detailed work
- In some countries, women make up almost half of the total number of engineers
- Given proper education and training opportunities, women can be as successful as men
- Some women are engineers and functioning well. There is no reason to believe that this job is "unnatural" to women
- Given enough role models for women, there will surely be more women engineers.

Disagree

- Women, by nature, are not technologically-oriented
- Engineering takes a lot of intelligence and concentration. It is too complicated for women
- The work is too hard, and women are physically weaker than men
- Women's nature is not conducive to engineering work. That's why there are not many women engineers

Hints for the conclusion

Sex should not be a determining factor of a person's ability to function well in a job. Except for few tasks that require especially hard physical labour, there is no proven physical reason why women cannot be good engineers.

Similarly, there is no reason to believe that certain jobs or tasks should be reserved for women, e.g., dressmaking, artificial flower making. On the contrary, if these tasks all go to women, some men who could excel in them would be deprived of the opportunity to do so.

C. Men can take care of babies as well as women

Agree

- When men want to and get an opportunity to learn to raise babies, they can be good at it
- Men have not and cannot develop the gentleness and sensitivity required in raising children
- More and more men take good care of young children. This can be done
- As more women work outside the home, it will become necessary for more men to help rear children. Intensive involvement of men in child rearing will help children become more balanced.

Disagree

- Women have natural maternal instincts
- Only women can breastfeed
- By carrying the baby for nine months, mothers have a closer natural link with the baby
- Women are good at childcare because they have so much experience caring for other people's children before they have their own. Men do not have that opportunity.

Hints for the conclusion

Women are childbearers and breastfeeders. Their natural parenting skills stop there. Skills are acquired early in life, e.g. through looking after siblings, nieces, nephews, etc. Therefore, to say that only women can look after children would be misleading.

In fact, women who take good care of children do so because they have had a lot of "training" since their early age. Boys could also benefit from participation in caring for younger children. Most importantly, when men take an active part in childcare they develop good qualities, such as tenderness and patience, and experience the real joy of fatherhood.

D. Men are the elephant's front legs, and women are its hind legs

Agree

- Men are heads of their families. They earn income to support their families.
- Men are better at making decisions
- Women are weaker, so men should take a lead to protect them.
- Men are freer to go around and therefore more equipped to lead.
- Men are stronger physically.

Disagree

- Nowadays, more and more women earn their own income and support families. Their contribution to the well-being of the family is as important as that of men. Fathers and mothers need mutual support like an elephant that cannot walk on its front or hind legs alone.
- Women have been prime ministers of nations and good leaders in many other areas but there are not enough of them.
- If women were inherently inferior, we would never have examples of women with initiative and courage
- Limited mobility of women comes with culture. In many societies, this limitation has decreased. Women have shown they can be in control of their movement and available to perform their tasks.
- Some tasks are too demanding for women, physically. But women have been active in wars, alongside men.

Hints for the conclusion

Experience has shown that in families where women and men respect each other and share leadership, mutual respect and happy family life result. Some women excel in traditionally male domains. And the same is true for men. It seems reasonable to assume that it would be advantageous to train women to be leaders to enable them to share this important responsibility with men.

Section 4

The Multiple Roles of Women in Society

1. **Aim.** To give participants an opportunity to examine the roles of women - both productive and reproductive - and their dual responsibility.
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) describe the multiple roles performed by most women;
 - b) identify inequality between working women and men;
 - c) talk about the multiple roles of women in their own countries;
 - d) begin to identify forces which perpetuate inequality between men and women in their own countries.
3. **Total duration:** One hour forty minutes
4. **Sequencing of activities.**
 - a) In the first activity, a video, *The Impossible Dream* is introduced. It promotes awareness of the roles of women and men in society.

Duration: Five minutes

- b) **Second**, show the video and distribute questions provided as a guideline for discussion.

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Video, *The Impossible Dream*, Transparency 1 and Handout 1 below

Alternatively, hold a discussion in plenary on the video following the guidelines provided.

Duration: Forty-five minutes

- c) **Third**, present *The multiple roles of women in society* using transparencies.
 - The extent and difficulty of housework, work in the field and in the factory.
 - The excessive workload of women.
 - Technology for women - its adverse effects.
 - The changing roles of women and men in society.
 - The possibility of men and boys sharing responsibilities with women and girls.
 - Women's situation while working in all of the above.
 - Compensations and rewards.

Duration: Thirty minutes

Materials: Transparencies 2 to 26, pens;
Handout 2, *Facts and Needs*, below

- e) **Fourth**, summarize the *Multiple roles of women* using the transparencies.

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Transparencies, below

Alternative

a) Participants can be shown, instead of the video, Transparency 26, *My Wife Does Not Work* which recounts women's tasks in and outside the home - as mothers and wives and economic producers (in this case, a farmer). The chart shows a rural woman's working day to be 17 hours.

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Transparency 26, *My wife does not work*

- b) Then hand out the guiding questions for discussion

Duration: Five minutes

Materials: Handout 2

- c) Hold a discussion in plenary on the contents of the transparency.

Duration: Forty-five minutes

5. **Evaluation**

Using the responses and opinions obtained at the audiovisual presentation, conduct an informal discussion to ensure that participants have grasped the substance of the issues.

The Impossible Dream - A Summary

This is a story about women, men, boys and girls in a family.

Early in the morning the woman gets up before everyone else. She starts her daily routine by waking up her children, starting breakfast and taking care of the baby. She gets the children ready for school and prepares lunch boxes for everyone. Her only serious helper is a daughter. Her husband helps by holding the baby until it wets. He then gives up. The baby is handed to the daughter.

The father and son become impatient when their breakfast doesn't come as fast as they expect. The mother gives herself less food than the others. She has still more work to do before leaving the house for work.

The woman's work involves tedious piece-rate work - repetitive sewing of one part of a garment. She is pressurised by a supervisor - a man - to work faster. He harasses the workers.

The husband's work, on the other hand, is made easy with a big machine. He has time to chat to passersby.

When pay day comes, the woman receives only half of what her husband earns.

After work, the husband enjoys drinking with his friends in a bar - spending his earnings. His wife goes grocery shopping, fetches the baby from the nursery and returns home to start yet another round of housework - ironing, cooking and cleaning - and, as always, taking care of the baby. Her daughter helps her. They are both immersed in completing the housework. They work like machines.

When the husband comes home, he changes from his work clothes and drops them on the floor. He relaxes with a beer brought to him by his wife. From time to time, he signals to her to bring him more. The son relaxes with his father.

The husband sits in front of the television and enjoys his leisurely evening. The television shows a woman farmer working with a hoe with a baby on her back. A male farmer is shown driving a tractor - a labour-saving machine. The contrast between men and women's work is well illustrated by this example.

The wife completes her work and finally joins her husband. While watching television, she is knitting - for her son. At night, asleep, she has a dream.

She dreams that in the morning her husband wakes up at the same time as she and all the family help to get their children ready for school, and to complete the housework. Husband and wife, daughter and son, together share family responsibility. The husband and son perform the tasks traditionally reserved for females. The husband even learns to knit a sweater.

That was an impossible dream. Or ... was it?

Transparency 1

- The woman has two jobs to do - take care of her family and work outside the home.
- The woman needs the support of her husband to make changes at home.
- She needs to enjoy the fruit of her economic contribution.
- Share responsibility for housework.
- With family assistance, she could be a happy woman with a contented husband and children.

Handout 1

Prompting questions on the *Impossible dream*

- What responsibilities does the woman have at home?
- What are those of the man?
- Compare the woman's job with that of the man in terms of physical requirements, attractiveness of the job, access to machines, relationship with superiors and pay.
- Describe the woman's day. Evaluate it.
- Describe the man's day. Evaluate it.
- Why do you think the woman had a dream?
- What did she wish would happen? Why?
- In the home, what are the tasks of the woman and what are the man's?
- Who does more work? - Who helps whom and why? - What did she dream about?
- Do you think this is a possible dream? Explain your answer.
- How do children learn to behave in the family?
- Compare the way members of the family spend their leisure time?
- How does the media project the images of men and women?

Handout 2

Prompting questions on *My wife does not work*

- What responsibilities does this farm woman have at home?
- What responsibilities does she have in the field?
- Describe her day. Compare it to the day of the woman in the Impossible Dream.
- Throughout her day, who does the woman care for?
- Does she have any leisure? Why?
- What do you think of the life of this farm woman?
- Imagine what other members of her family do? Why?
- From this chart, describe what you think about women's double responsibility?
- What can be done to help every society member recognize the contributions of all members of society including women?

Transparency 2

THE MULTIPLE ROLES OF WOMEN

- Women are regarded as inferior to men. Girls are seen as temporary family members.
- How does the media project the image of women and men?
- They grow up with low self-esteem, low aspirations and end up in total self-denial.
- Men define themselves in terms of their occupation as farmers, teachers, managers or engineers.
- Women often identify themselves in terms of their relationship to a man as wives or daughters

Transparency 3

- Failures of attacks on poverty are due to neglect of the status of women at all stages of development.

Transparency 4

SOME FACTS ABOUT WOMEN'S WORK

- Women constitute half of the world's population and receive just one-tenth of the total income.
- Rural women, who contribute at least fifty percent of food production, receive little or no agricultural training.

Transparency 5

LACK OF SKILLS

- Between 85%-90% of labour in world export manufacturing zones is unskilled or semi-skilled.

Transparency 6

WORK HOURS

- Women's work day is longer than that of men -- 15 to 19 hours.
- Women care for children, cook meals, and perform the long and tiring tasks of hoeing, planting and bringing in the harvest.

Transparency 7

WOMEN'S CONDITIONS IN MOST REGIONS OF THE WORLD

- High maternal mortality rates
- Limited access to medical and health facilities
- Women suffer from chronic malnutrition
- Two-thirds of the world's women are anaemic.

Transparency 8

EXCLUSION OF WOMEN FROM OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Often, women are not counted as part of the workforce because labour statistics:

- exclude both the traditional and modern informal sectors;
- overlook the economic contribution of housework;
- consider women as "non-contributors".

Transparency 9

DISCREPANCIES ABOUT WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION

The example of Nepal. Statistics indicate 6.2% female participation in the labour force. In reality, women are the mainstay of economic subsistence. They work longer hours than men and contribute up to 59% of the household income.

Transparency 10

IN MANY COUNTRIES, WOMEN ARE CO-EARNERS, MAIN INCOME EARNERS AND EVEN PRIMARY INCOME EARNERS.

Transparency 11

WOMEN IN SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY

- In most Asian countries, women are responsible for the family and the farm.
- Even in societies where women are socially secluded, they are major contributors to post-harvest activities within the household.

Transparency 12

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN FARMERS IN AGRARIAN SOCIETIES

- In Africa, women are the biggest contributors to agriculture.
- In 1981, the percentage of female labour was 90% in Nepal, 73% in Thailand, 50% in India, and 70% in Indonesia and Sri Lanka.
- Women are the backbone of the rural economy but they enjoy few advantages inherent in this role.

Transparency 13

WOMEN ARE AGRICULTURAL LABORERS

In India:

- In the mid-1960s, 20% of rural families depended on a wage income.
- By mid-1970s, 30% of rural families depended on a wage income while the proportion of rural female workers in agricultural labour increased by 60%.

Transparency 14

WOMEN AND FARM MACHINES

- Machines have arrived in the areas of land (soil) preparation; transplanting; threshing; winnowing; harvesting; storage, food processing and preparation.
- However, mechanization has NOT reduced the drudgery of women's work.
- Women have limited access to learning skills.
- The demand for female labour has significantly declined.
- When traditional work is mechanized, men take it over.

Transparency 15

LACK OF RECOGNITION OF WOMEN

- Agricultural development policies have ignored the economic roles of women. This is reflected in the inadequate efforts to assist them to improve their skills.
- Although women produce as much as men economically, agricultural extension programmes have so far, not specifically targeted women.

Transparency 16

THE NATURE OF WOMEN'S TASKS

- Very energy-intensive with low rates of return.
- Tedious tasks.
- Longer working hours than men.
- Invisible and thankless domestic work.
- Seen as non-remunerative activity.

Transparency 17

WOMEN ARE MORE UNDERPRIVILEGED THAN MEN

- In addition to poverty and hardship, women face oppression, superstition, fatalism and die-hard stereotypes.
- They have a poor image of themselves and think nothing of their contribution to agriculture.

Transparency 18

WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

- Industrialization and technological development have not only **not** benefited women, but have also had adverse effects on them.
- In Bangladesh - 125 million women days were lost when threshers were introduced.
- In Java - Japanese hullers took away US\$ 50 million of women's yearly income.
- This amounts to the loss of income for one million women over four months, each year.

Transparency 19

WOMEN AND TECHNOLOGY

In general, it is men who benefit most from technology.

- Women do not have access to equipment used agricultural tasks assigned to them, e.g. in tilling, sowing, weeding and harvesting.
- Even when available, the technology to reduce drudgery is not accessible or is too expensive for women.

AND WHEN TECHNOLOGY IS AVAILABLE ...

- Women are often unaware of its existence and may also be unconvinced of its merits.
- They might find it unusable as they do not know how to repair or maintain the unit.

Transparency 20

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY

- Women have to work smaller plots while men find jobs in cities.
- Educational facilities lure older children away from the task of minding the younger ones.
- Deforestation causes scarcity of firewood and water.
- New crop varieties often mean more intensive weeding.
- This aggravates the burden of housework and cooking and adds to the strain of frequent pregnancies.

Transparency 21

WOMEN AND SPECIAL TECHNOLOGY

To lessen women's load:

- Technologies should be within their financial means.
- Time-saving technologies, e.g. smokeless stoves and water-powered rice pounders, should be adopted.
- Improved stoves reduce consumption of firewood and the effort to collect it.

Transparency 22

LOANS AND CREDIT

- Women need credit to invest in agricultural business.
- In most developing countries, women find it difficult to obtain credit because they lack collateral.

Transparency 23

FREEDOM TO SPEND EARNINGS

- Women often are denied control over their income.
- Whatever they earn is often used without consultation.

Transparency 24

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

- There is an urgent need "...to improve women's solidarity, bargaining power and access to resources including technology, low interest credits and marketing facilities" (Singh and Viitenen, 1987).

Transparency 25

OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

- There should be better opportunities for wage-earning.
- Reduce the traditional work burden.
- Share housework with the family, use technology and have more leisure time.

Transparency 26

MY WIFE DOES NOT WORK



Handout 2

A. FACTS and NEEDS for improvement

FACTS

- Women are economic producers in agriculture, industry and in the service sector.
- Women's roles as wives and mothers are exaggerated.

NEEDS

- To support and enhance the economic role of women and to prevent their displacement or exploitation. To increase demand for female labour.
- To provide access to basic facilities, e.g., child care, and reduce time and labour spent on household tasks. To promote sharing of tasks between family members.

B. Gender Equality

FACTS

- Excessive concentration on the domestic roles of women as wives and mothers; AND downgrading of their economic role.
- Problems, such as equal land rights, access to credits and loans, equal access to education and training opportunities, equal work for equal pay.
- Women are household managers possessing some control of resources.
- Women are individuals BUT they have been raised to accept the idea of self-sacrifice, self-negation and living for others.

NEEDS

- To facilitate women's access to assets, resources, knowledge, skills, and income that ensure equality in economic participation.
- Need to organize woman into mutual support groups and motivate them for leadership roles in development programmes within the community and politics.
- Need to equip women with managerial skills including project management and financial budgeting with access to relevant information.
- Women need opportunities to develop their potential, aptitudes, abilities and interests to gain self-fulfillment.

FACTS

Women have the right to:

- justice;
- access to education, employment and services; and
- pursuit of opportunities for upward mobility.

NEEDS

Women need:

- rights-awareness programmes; and
- guarantees of their right to control their own lives in matters of marriage, reproduction and livelihood.

(Jayaweera 1990)

Section 5

Educating Girls and Women

An overview

1. **Aim.** To provide an overview of education for girls and women the world over.
2. **Objectives.** Following this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) discuss the disadvantaged position of girls and women in education;
 - b) identify relevant statistics on the education of women and girls;
 - c) identify factors influencing the success of programmes for women;
 - d) describe how existing programmes perpetuate the subordination of women and girls.
3. **Total duration:** One hour thirty minutes
4. **Sequencing of activities**
 - a) The first activity comprises four parts.

Facilitator describes the status of education of women and girls, providing statistics on world illiteracy rates, regional differences in the educational gender gap and girls' enrolment. Essential points and materials are described below.

Materials: *Gender-sensitive Education for a Better World* (Annex I); para 4d of *Multiple roles of women* (Section 4); Transparencies 1-3

An example follows, of country-specific statistical presentation.

Materials: Transparencies and/or other material prepared in advance by a participant in collaboration with a facilitator.

Explain why many girls fail in primary education.

Materials: Transparency 4, below

Curricula that impede full involvement of girls in education.

Materials: Transparencies 5-7, below

- b) The second activity presents common features of programmes designed for women.
 - Educating women chiefly as wives and mothers.
 - Disregard for their role as economic producers.

- Overemphasis on family planning.
- Curricular content that subjugates women and prevents them from questioning their life condition.
- They ignore women's real needs.

Materials for b): Transparencies 8-9, below

Duration of a) and b): Thirty minutes

- c) For the **third activity** facilitator selects participants to present distinctive features of successful programmes for women in their countries or communities.

Factors determining success include:

- emphasis on women as economic producers, e.g. farmers, wage earners;
- inclusion of women in the planning process;
- creating a proper balance between technical and managerial skills (decision-making and accounting) and confidence-building (self-respect and self-esteem).

Duration: Forty minutes

Materials: Brief reports by selected participants on their programmes.

- d) The **fourth activity** concludes the exercise. To be successful, programmes for women must have the following common features:

- They must be closely related to the actual needs, conditions and aspirations of women;
- They must focus on relevant income-generation, especially in agriculture; confidence-building and management.
- They must not overemphasize traditional skills such as sewing. It is important that the skills provided relate to economic roles. To achieve this, the condition, capacity and limitations of potential learners must be understood. Curriculum developers must design programmes that respond directly to learners' needs.
- Emphasise spreading housework between husband and wife and other members of the family to reduce women's workload.

Duration: Twenty minutes

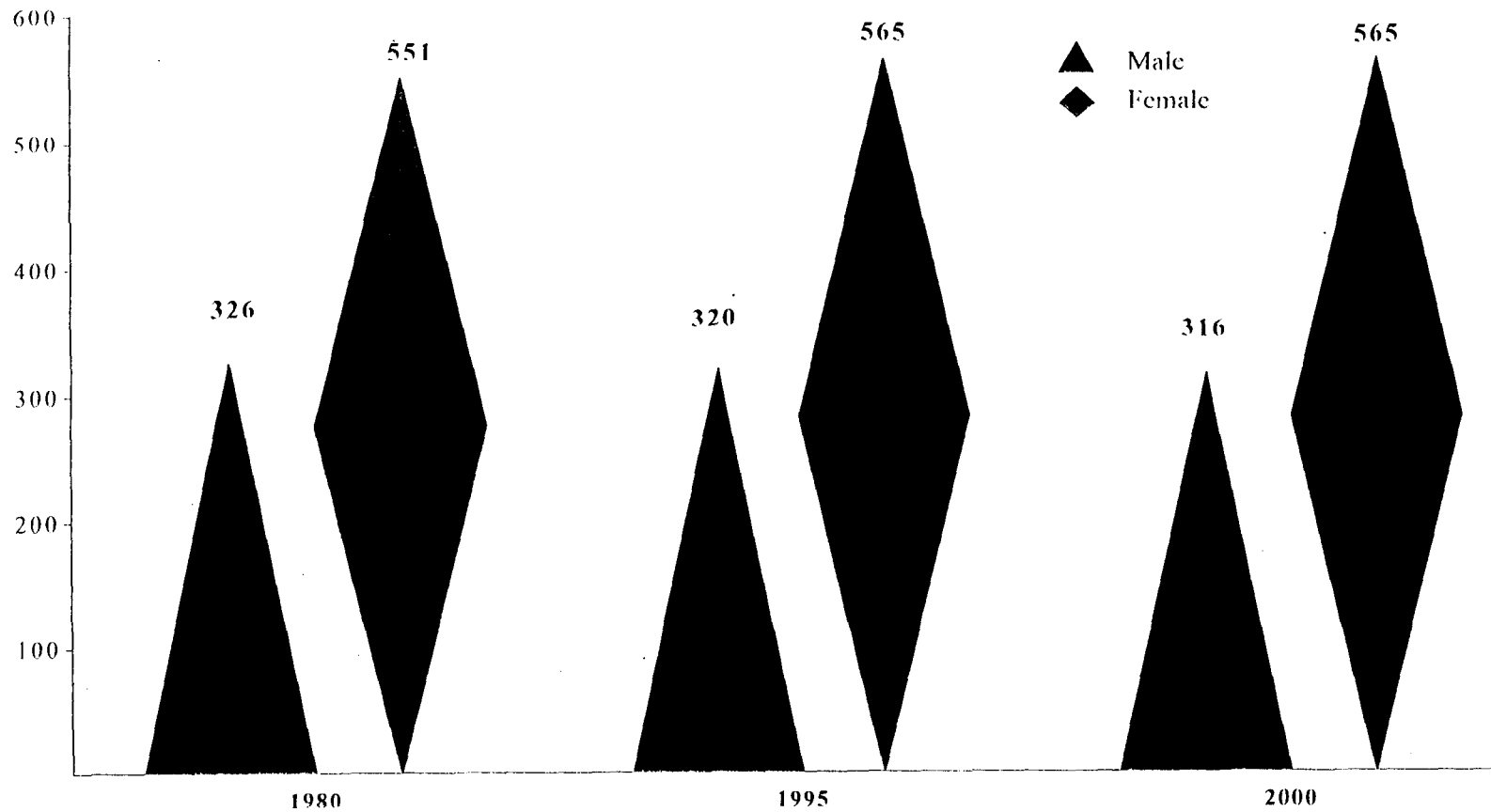
Materials: Transparencies 10-11

5. **Evaluation.**

Participants express appreciation of the importance of gender-sensitive programmes based on needs.

ESTIMATED WORLD ILLITERACY RATES

(aged 15+, in millions)

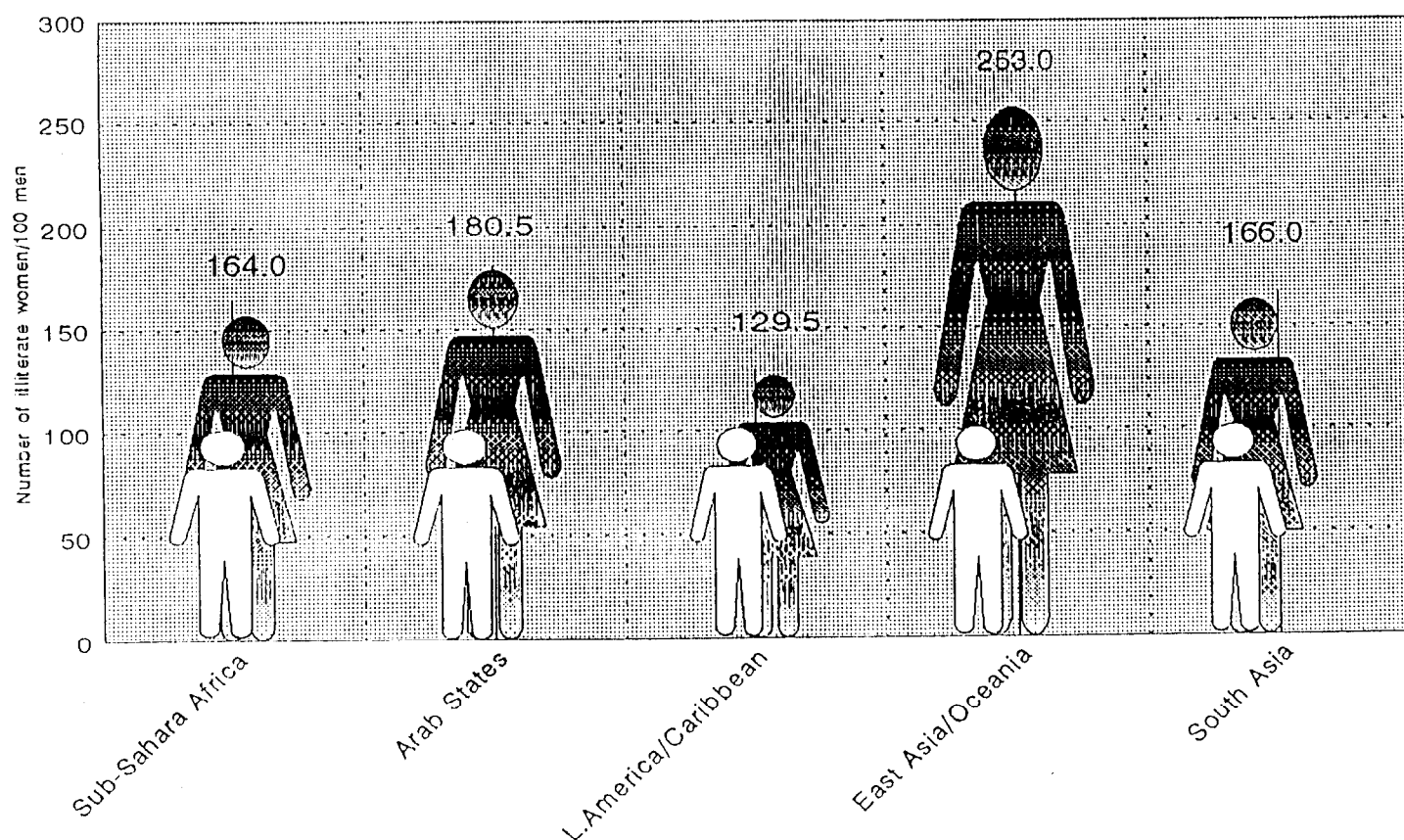


Source: Division of Statistics, UNESCO, 1994

Transparency 2

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE GENDER GAP

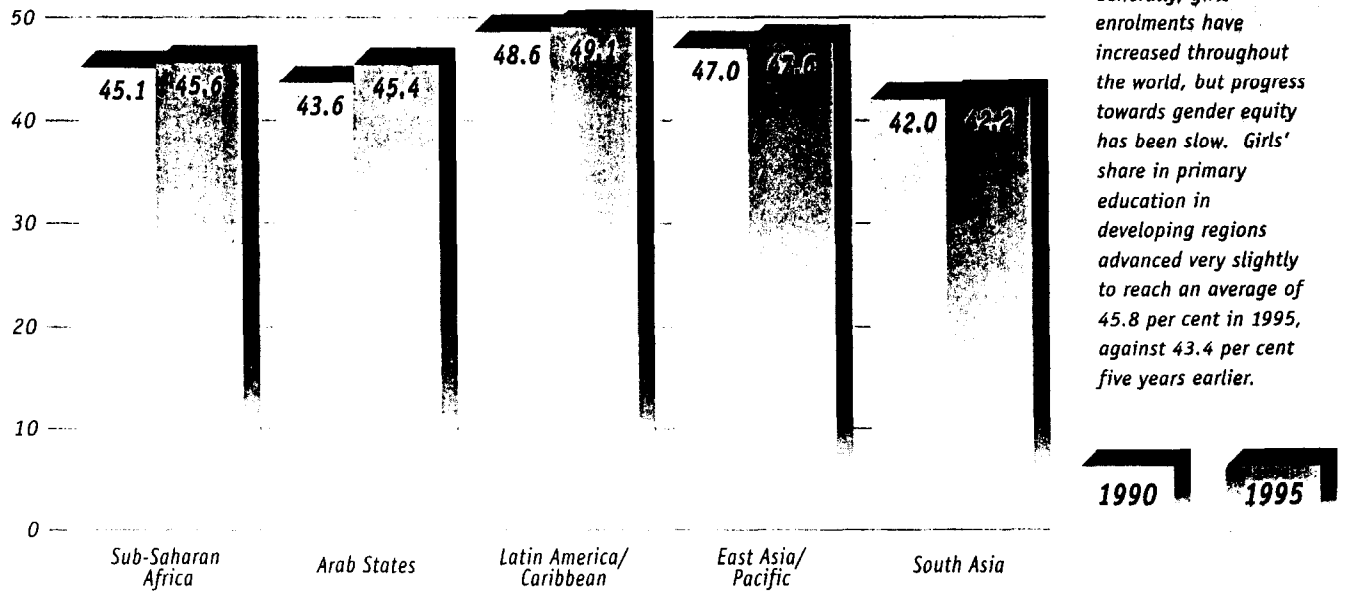
Number of illiterate women for every 100 men



Source: Status and Trends 1994, EFA Forum, UNESCO 1994

Transparency 3

PROGRESS TOWARD EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY FOR GIRLS



Generally, girls' enrolments have increased throughout the world, but progress towards gender equity has been slow. Girls' share in primary education in developing regions advanced very slightly to reach an average of 45.8 per cent in 1995, against 43.4 per cent five years earlier.

Source: Education for All - Achieving the Goal. UNESCO 1996

Transparency 4

FACTORS HAMPERING THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS

Socio-economic

- Parents and society feel negative about girls' education. Girls are "transient" members of society and have less value than boys.
- Poor recognition of the benefits of education.
- Girls are kept at home to do housework or earn income for the family. Parents feel that educated girls have smaller chances of marriage and are not adequate as wives and mothers in the traditional sense.

Transparency 5

FACTORS HAMPERING THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS

School-related factors

- Parents are reluctant to send girls to mixed schools.
- Parents do not entrust their girls to male teachers.
- Absence of schools within reasonable walking distance.
- Teachers favour boys in class.
- Access to teachers, facilities and equipment is poor.
- Curricula and materials reinforce the view of women as dependent and exclusively domestic, marginal and dispensable.

Transparency 6

SEX STEREOTYPES IN CURRICULA AND MATERIALS

- School textbooks and other educational materials.
- Pupils, teachers, administrators and parents do not perceive some images as sexist.
- Textbooks SHOULD reflect a balanced view of the real world where women succeed in nontraditional fields likefarming, engineering etc.

Transparency 7

**WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY
AS WELL AS THEIR GREATER POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION
MUST BE RECOGNIZED AND REFLECTED IN
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS.**

Transparency 8

STEREOTYPES AFFECT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF GIRLS

- Girls lack the opportunity to develop spatial skills in preschools and primary schools.
- This leads to low achievements in mathematics, sciences, and technical subjects.
- Girls are only encouraged to study languages and the arts.
- They end up with low-paying, unfulfilling jobs.

Transparency 9

STUDYING SEX STEREOTYPES

- Compare how often men and women are represented in text and illustrations.
- Compare the educational value of the episodes.
- Compare the attributes of male and female characters -- their profession, activity and behaviour.
- Reveal cases where authors ignore women's contribution in areas of intellectual pursuit, or their current and future roles in society.
- Find how often women are represented on writers' panels and as editors and illustrators.

Transparency 10

CONVENTIONAL INCOME-GENERATING PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN

Emphasis on "feminine" skills:

- tailoring - embroidery
- sewing - handicrafts

Traditional *female* skills are of little help:

- they do not meet the demands of the market;
- skills imparted to women farmers are insufficient - they need to learn technology;
- women need marketing, planning and managerial skills;
- their access to commerce and industry is inadequate;
- *"Feminine skills ... have directed women away from nontraditional and remunerative occupations in the manufacturing sector. These skills and are likely to be marginalized with industrial restructuring."* (Jayaweera 1990).

Transparency 11

THE CONTENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN

- Reading material for women reveals a tendency to perpetuate self-denial, living for others, docility and deference to men.
- Illustrations tend to display women as either cooking, serving, sewing, selling baskets, looking after children or passively listening to men.

Transparency 12

WOMEN AND AGRICULTURAL SKILLS

Skills women WANT to learn are

Agricultural:

- improved planting techniques;
- animal husbandry;
- improved knowledge and better skills in technology, e.g. machinery.

Women's role as agricultural producers is often ignored.

Modern farming technology is taught to men or through men.

Transparency 13

WOMEN AS REFLECTED IN CURRICULA AND MATERIALS

Most basic educational programmes:

take women for granted;
see women as passive consumers and beneficiaries.

Planners and programme enforcers must appreciate:

women's role as economic producers;
that women are individuals with abilities and potential.

**CURRICULA AND MATERIALS DESIGNED FOR WOMEN
MUST REFLECT THESE FACTS ADEQUATELY.**

Section 6
Current Roles of Women

1. **Aim.** To provide participants with examples of the roles women play in today's society.
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) List women's current roles and problems related to them including the fact that their work is often devalued by society;
 - b) Analyse some of women's successful efforts;
 - c) List keys for successful women's projects.
3. **Total duration:** Two hours five minutes
4. **Sequencing of activities**
 - a) The **first activity** is a case study analysis. Ask participants to organize themselves into pairs. Provide each pair with a case study.
 - b) **Second activity.** Each pair reads their case study and answers the questions at the end.

Materials: Case studies of women in positive roles, below

Duration: Sixty minutes, for both, sections a) and b)

- c) The **third activity** involves the presentation of case study analyses by participants. Each case study covers women's roles and is analysed in terms of gender issues. Following the presentations, discuss the questions provided (See below).

Duration: Forty-five minutes

- d) The **fourth activity** is a brainstorming session. Use the following or similar questions to generate discussion for the brainstorming.

- What is the significance of the roles played by women in the case studies?
- What common problems did they face?
- What are the elements for improving women's conditions?

Duration: Fifteen minutes

- e) The session ends with the following conclusion to be given by the facilitator:

Women everywhere are moving into areas traditionally thought to be reserved for men. Education and training have helped to prepare women for those jobs which increase their status in society. However, they still face two main problems: they are overburdened with household responsibilities in addition to their job; and they still face sex discrimination in the workplace.

To strengthen the progress made, women have to organize and work together to generate their empowerment and to ensure that their rights are respected. They also need to have access to technology relevant to their tasks in and outside the home. Family members should share housework to allow women enough time to grow and contribute to the field of their choice.

Duration: Five minutes

5. **Evaluation.**

Scrutinize the outcomes of the discussions of the case studies to establish that participants' understanding about gender roles is on the right track.

Note: If available in your locality, try to adapt *success stories* for use as case studies.

FEMALE WANTED - JOBS ON THE RISE

by
Cheong-Ja Lee

SEOUL (**Depthnews**) -- South Korea is not yet a role model as far as sexual equality on the job is concerned.

But various factors, such as the passage of the Equal Opportunity Act, are chipping away at the discrimination that has kept paid employment a male stronghold.

For example, the first hurdle women face in employment -- that of being excluded outright in advertisements for job openings - is slowly lifting.

A study by the Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI) found not only a decrease in the number of ads specifying or expressing preference for male applicants but that ads addressed to women are also on the rise.

The KWDI analysed job advertisements in a major newspaper, *Dong-A-Ilbo*, over a two-month period in late 1989. The analysis noted the form of enterprise, category, educational background required of the applicant and the method of recruitment.

For Women Only ads notched 18 per cent of all job ads put out, notes the KWDI. This stands in contrast with the 9.6 per cent in a similar KWDI study in 1988 and the 1.4 per cent registered by the Labour Ministry in a 1985 study.

The jobs advertised by such ads were as follows: clerical and related jobs, 63.5 per cent; sales, 20.7 per cent; professional and technical jobs, 5.9 per cent; production-related jobs, 2.3 per cent.

Ads which made no distinction between male and female applicants significantly increased in every employment field. Ads for professional and technical jobs went up from 11.3 per cent in 1985 to 40.3 per cent in 1989, for administrative and managerial jobs from 11.1 per cent to 50.7 per cent, and for production-related jobs from 5 per cent to 31.3 per cent.

On the other hand, employment ads aimed exclusively at men decreased from 54.3 per cent to 43.7 per cent in 1989.

Women are also being recruited for jobs in fields such as planning, design and research and development, indicating that employment fields for women are expanding.

Nonetheless, *For Men Only* ads remained dominant, and women continued to be recruited mainly for traditionally "female" jobs.

For example, professional and technical jobs for women are mostly in the fields of fashion design, education, garments and translation. Clerical and related jobs are typing, accounting, secretarial and public relations. Service jobs for women are flight attendants, cooks, cleaners, guides and beauty consultants.

Also, ads addressed to women often require a special qualification such as good looks or that one is unmarried, again pointing to discrimination.

The KWDI noted that women are being recruited by private companies more than public enterprises, and that *Women Only* ads ask for high school graduates rather than college graduates.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Act explicitly prohibits sexual discrimination in job advertising with the provision that employers have an obligation to offer equal opportunities for both sexes in recruitment and employment. Another provision penalises violations with a maximum fine of 2, 600,000 won.

Similarly, the South Korean Constitution says that women should be especially protected at work and should not be discriminated against in the area of employment, wage and working conditions. Employment is taken to include job opportunities.

The general provisions of the Labour Standard Act further forbid employers from being discriminated against on the basis of sex.

KWDI president Kim Yun-Duk believes that public watchfulness about sexist job ads and similar instances of discrimination, as well as conscientious implementation of the law by concerned Government officials is a must in achieving equality of job opportunity.

"The KWDI will continue to gather information and identify concrete cases related to sex discrimination in job advertising, to help eradicate such practices once and for all", she says.

QUESTIONS

What do Women-Only jobs mean in terms of the new law?

What type of jobs are advertised as "Women-Only"? Why?

Mention some of the jobs traditionally reserved for men.

What do you think of ads addressed to women that require special qualifications such as good looks and being unmarried? How should these ads be presented differently?

What can be done to raise public consciousness about discrimination against women in employment?

WOMEN'S BANKS: A BIG SUCCESS IN SRI LANKA

by
Mallika Wanigasundara

COLORADO (Depthnews) - The very modest house is reached by jeep down pot-holed roads. It announces itself with a sign in Sinhala: *Siribopura Janasakthi Bank*.

In the 8 by 8 metre front room is a desk, a few chairs, a small settee and a filing cabinet, as well as charts and posters on the walls. The place, rent-free, has no security guard and hardly looks like a bank.

But it is a bank, one of 20 such banks located in 20 villages in the district of Hambantota, in southern Sri Lanka. They are collectively known as "Janasakthi," "*strength of the people*" or the "*poor women's bank*."

Patterned after the Grameen Bank, or bank for the poor in Bangladesh, the Janasakthi banks were set up as an alternative to the state and commercial banks whose credit rates are beyond the reach of poor people and the village moneylender who charges a steep 240 per cent interest rate annually.

Mr. W.G. Mithraratne, the district's top official who initiated the project, said it is also intended to rescue families from the heavy indebtedness common in the villages and to stimulate savings. "*Women are the key to the development of the area and thus were made the focus of the banking system,*" he explained.

The women themselves are quick to give Mr. Mithraratne credit for the effort, but it is they who entirely own and run the banks.

Only four months old in February 1991, the 20 banks had a total capitalization of 824,451 rupees (US\$20,611) and had given out loans amounting to 335,000 rupees (US\$8,375).

Given the poverty of the villages, it is astonishing that the women were able to raise such capital. But they did -- with their savings and by buying a 10 rupee share every week for 50 weeks.

To establish the banks, the women formed Kantha Samitis (women's societies) which then formed a Women's Development Federation. The Federation set up the banks and supervises them. To date, 126 Samitis have been formed with a total membership of about 7,000.

The sense of accomplishment was expressed by Leela Suriyabandara, president of the Vi-haragala bank. "*We formed the Kantha Samitis during the most dangerous times (of terror and insurgency) in 1989. And now we have a bank. We have overcome.*"

Members of each bank, all poor people who receive food stamps and a temporary food alleviation allowance, are from six to 12 villages. They know one another and keep well abreast

of what is happening. They have an annual general meeting which the women conduct like trained troopers, while their husbands watch from the windows of the hall with infants hoisted on their shoulders.

Having no headquarters or mother bank, the Janasakthi banks are decentralized units each with its own constitution, system of checks and balances and a system for hurdling the knotty problem of guarantors and collateral.

Under the present policy, shareholders earn 8 per cent interest on their shares and 12 per cent on their savings per annum. According to Sumithra Samararatne, president of the Godawaya bank, the women make deposits of even 5 rupees. *"Some have saved as much as 2,000-3,000 rupees in four months,"* she says.

Interest on loans, at 3 per cent monthly, is higher than prevailing national bank rates. But this is the women's decision, since they want the bank to grow fast. In any case, they say, they have been paying infinitely higher rates to local moneylenders.

The banks offer five kinds of loans -- amounts of 1,000-3,000 rupees for cultivation, fisheries, small enterprises and self employment, and 500 rupees for disaster relief. These are subject to change depending on policy and prosperity.

Among those who have taken out a loan is B.A. Kanthi who started a salt packaging business with a loan from the Salt Packers Association and expanded it with 1,500 rupees from the Janasakthi bank. Making 1,000 rupees from each van load, she and her husband have been able to pay back 170 rupees to the Janasakthi bank and 236 rupees to the association.

Allan Nona borrowed 1,000 rupees to expand her curd business. *"During weekends I sell around 300 to 400 pots of curd. But I never had the money to buy the milk or the pots because I paid so much interest to the moneylender. Now I make a good profit,"* she said.

Another borrower is Samawathie who used to break stones at the quarry. With some savings and a loan of 1,500 rupees, she went into the rope-making business.

Now Samawathie makes rugs, having bought three cleaning machines and trained 13 people. She has orders for rugs to be supplied to ships.

With a loan of 3,000 rupees, Siryawathie bought fishing nets for her husband. His share of the catch was 15 per cent but as owner of some of the nets, he now gets 45 to 50 per cent of the catch. This amounts to earnings of 4,000-5,000 rupees in good months.

The banks have devised their own method of deciding credit worthiness. In each Kantha Samiti the women form into teams of five. When one team member wants a loan, the others recommend her application and guarantee her loan. If there is default on payment, the team is held responsible. It works.

At present, only women can transact business with the banks. Men are asking to be allowed at least savings accounts, but the women are wary about the possible effects of male incursion into their most precious project.

Besides the benefit of accessing loans, the women are also developing the saving habit, especially with the knowledge that they will have ready money to withdraw in case of emergencies.

Bad roads and poor transport, however, make it difficult for the women to travel to the banks.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the Janashakti bank?
2. Why is it a success?
3. Discuss B.A Kanthi's initiative? Compare it with Siryawathi's?
4. Give and discuss examples of how the women exercise control over their earnings.
5. How does group organization help to make this project work?
6. Why are men not allowed to transact business with the bank? Discuss.
7. How does this type of project help to empower women?

BREAKING GROUND, WOMEN SCIENTISTS RISE TO THE TOP

by
Zhou Meiyue

BEIJING (**Depthnews**) -- Professor Chen Zhe often feels lonely when attending conventions of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) in the United States of America.

Professor Chen, of the Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, says there are very few women among the 24,000 senior members of IEEE. Often the only other woman at IEEE conventions is her university colleague, Mao Jianqin. Both are senior members of the IEEE.

Professor Chen is proud because most of IEEE's female senior members are from China. "*We Chinese women have shown our power in the scientific world*", she says.

A scholar in robotics, she is known for her achievements in the field of automatic control and guidance. The Professor has published 30 books and 24 theses since 1986. Her paper on robot control presented at an international conference won a top prize from the International Federation of Automatic Control in 1987.

China has some 206,600 women in the natural sciences. They make up 38.4 per cent of the country's research force, according to the State Science and Technology Commission.

A number of them have accomplishments that have either been recognized as breakthroughs or have elevated China's status in particular fields.

Lin Lanying, one of the first members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and vice-chairperson of the China Association for Science and Technology, succeeded in having a single crystal of gallium arsenide manufactured in one of China's space satellites in 1987, thus acquiring the world's first such material developed in space.

She has led China's research on semiconductors, enabling China, a late starter in the field, to keep abreast of research progress in developed countries.

Prof. Zhang Yan of the Beijing Institute of Meteorology has studied disastrous weather, flood-causing torrential rain and meso-scale heavy rain for years, earning the name *conqueror of the meteorological cancer (torrential rain)*. Her name appears in the *International Who's Who of Intellectuals* published in Britain.

Women scholars have also cut paths in high technology territories. More than 400 women researchers form the backbone of astronautic experiments at the Xichang Satellite Launching Centre in Southwest China's Sichuan province. Sophisticated nuclear technology is employed by women scientists at the Chinese Atomic Energy Research Institute for fuel analysis, analysis of nuclear missile loading and radiation chemistry.

Under China's old feudal value system, a woman's virtue lay in her ignorance. So very few girls went to school. Before the founding of the new China in 1949, 90 per cent of women were illiterate. Statistics in 1931 compiled by the Civil Affairs Office in East China's Jiangsu province, a comparatively developed region, showed that women made up only 0.37 per cent of engineers, 5.1 per cent of teachers and 3.16 per cent of medical doctors.

Since 1949 about 110 million illiterate women have learned to read and write. The number of female students has gone up 53 times in high school and 29 times in college.

China's literacy rate is 73.5 per cent, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It has a 24-to-1 pupil-teacher ratio. In 1987, 7.2 per cent of high school students were enrolled in technical and vocational courses. About 190 in every 100,000 Chinese entered college.

In 1985, China's expenditure on education was 2.7 per cent of its GNP. According to UNESCO, in 1980 China allocated 6.1 per cent of its total government budget to education.

Zhao Yufen, a noted chemist and the youngest CAS member, believes that women have an edge in scientific research. *"We are more scrupulous and persevering, which often proves critical to important discoveries,"* she says.

She broke new ground when she proposed, for the first time in the world, that the phosphoryl group is the fundamental centre of all life substances. The role of the phosphoryl group had long been neglected by life chemists and is significant in both basic sciences and bio-engineering.

Because of their outstanding performance, a number of women scientists have risen to leading posts. CAS has 286 women directors of research offices. Almost half of the 112 key topics of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences are led by women. In national defence circles, hundreds of female researchers are leading officers or laboratory directors.

Zhu Lilan, an established chemist and former director of the Chemistry Institute under CAS, now supervises the major part of China's high-tech programme as deputy minister of the State Science and Technology Commission.

Like other career women, scientists are not spared the burden of attending to both job and home.

Zhu Lilan says she copes by simplifying the housework routine. Mao Jianqin calls for co-operation from other family members and, when she was working for her doctorate, relied on her husband and son to take on more household chores.

"Most women scientists enjoy a harmonious family life," says Mao. *"We would not get anywhere in our career if family life is marred. What is upsetting,"* she says, *"is invisible sex discrimination in the workplace."* She points to the pyramid shape of the numbers of female scientists at different levels ... the higher the level, the fewer the women scholars.

Although women make up about a third of CAS research personnel, they hold hardly 10 per cent of senior titles.

"But while opposing gender bias, women scientists should be more aggressive and enterprising", says Zhu Lilan. "We should first do our job well, rather than wait for someone else to liberate us."

QUESTIONS

1. According to the story, how do Chinese women's roles in today's society differ from those under China's feudal value system? What major reasons cause this difference?
2. What career are the women in the case study involved in? Give some examples of their successes.
3. What, in your opinion, are the key factors contributing to their success?
4. How do these women cope with their household burden?
5. What problems do they face in their workplaces? What, do you think, are the reasons for these problems?
6. Using examples from the story, discuss the saying, *"Women who are successful in their jobs are unsuccessful in their family life."*

TECHNOLOGY, NEW JOBS BENEFIT INDIAN WOMEN

by
Ian Gill

NEW DELHI (**Depthnews**). Multilateral lending to India's private sector is helping thousands of young Indian women to enter the skilled labour market, thereby changing their lives dramatically.

As conduit for the funds, ICICI has been giving out loans to expand and modernize existing enterprises and to set up new ventures importing new technology.

According to Bank projections, the credit line should eventually generate additional capital investments of about US\$310 million and annual foreign exchange earnings and savings of about US\$90 million. It should also create more than 5,000 jobs.

One loan recipient is Tata Telecom which manufactures automatic telephone exchange systems in collaboration with OKI Electric Industry Co. Ltd. of Japan, a leader in telecommunications technology.

Before the advent of electronic firms such as Tata Telecom, the main source of work in the area was privately-owned textile mills in and around the neighbouring city of Ahmedabad. The work involved long hours in overcrowded conditions for small remuneration. Moreover, the textile industry in Gujarat slumped from the mid-1980s.

As noted by Tata Telecom's general manager Vijay Gupta, *"the electronics industry has created a fantastic opportunity in terms of job enrichment. Young women and men are exposed to high-tech and computers - experience which they can use in many other ways. The respect they get from their social peers is also very important."*

This view is echoed among the company's 70 shopfloor workers. Dipti Maniar, 24, is a junior technician whose father worked in a textile mill. *"He is proud of me. He worked with very old machinery and I am working with the latest technology,"* she says.

Production manager Hitesh Bhatnagar says, *"Women used to get married early but now they tend to be employed first. Besides, they can continue to work even after they get married and have children. We plan to have a crèche for employees' children."*

QUESTIONS

1. What are the characteristics of the work in privately-owned textile mills?
2. What are the implications for women's work when the textile industry "slumps"?
3. What opportunities does the electronics industry provide young women and men? Why?
4. How does working with electronics improve young women's self-respect?
5. How do young women balance their *traditional role* as wives and mothers and their *economic role* as wage earners?
6. Name any support mothers must have to perform their economic roles well.
7. What do you think of women working in the electronics industry? Is this possible in your country or community?
8. What other nontraditional work do women do? Why?

WOMEN'S CO-OP CHURNS OUT PAPAD AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

by
Priya Darshini

NEW DELHI (**Depthnews**). The high quality of its papad (potato and lentil wafers) rolled by hand, has made Lijjat a household name in India.

Lijjat, a women's co-operative, also makes spices, vadi (dried lentil cakes), scented sticks and lately, a detergent which it plans to produce commercially.

Its success lies not only in its flourishing business ventures. Most of Lijjat's members are poor women whose lives have changed radically because of the co-operative.

One member, her deep-set eyes afire, is 35-year-old Laxmi. *"Today my children and I are dependent on no one. I earn my own income and we are happy with what little we have,"* she says. Laxmi has put behind her a life with a husband who drank, beat her and terrorized the children.

Another member is Meenakshi, 40, who was abandoned by her husband for another woman eight years ago. *"I could not complain because I am a woman. It's a man's world. But I never accepted defeat,"* she recalls. Instead of imposing on her parents for support, she joined Lijjat and now makes enough money to provide even for her parents.

Hundreds of illiterate, unskilled women like Laxmi and Meenakshi have found a lifeline in Lijjat.

In the Bombay suburb of Bandra, while the city sleeps, some 300 of them converge at the local co-operative office to turn in the papad they rolled and to collect their daily quota of flour. They work at home so there are no overheads. Unlike those in the unorganized sector, they do not have to sell through middlemen who take a cut in their profits.

"We are able to roll out 15 to 20 kilos of flour, with earnings of Rs. 5 (US\$0.18) per kilo. This is quite sufficient for our families," says Sarita.

The co-operative was started in 1959 by seven middle-class women who were dissatisfied with their social work. Fed up with the lip service given to women's issues, they wanted to do something concrete for their exploited and deprived sisters.

One day they gathered with several other women for a meeting. They took out flour, mixed it with water and rolled out four packets of papad, the wafer that is popular in Indian cuisine. Thus Lijjat was born.

The women received moral support from highly respected social worker Shri Chaganlal Karmasi Parekh, a member of the Servants of India Society. He taught the Lijjat women how to compete in the cutthroat business environment, coaching them to emerge from their veils and windows and their confined existence.

In 1968 Lijjat adopted a formal Constitution and registered as a cottage industry. It now counts 18,000 members from the initial bare dozen. Its sales of papad, which amounted to just a little over Rs 6,000 in the first year, have reached Rs 30 crores to date. About 30 per cent of product volume is exported to the United Kingdom, United States, Middle East and Asia.

Asked what makes Lijjat successful, its president Rukmani Pawar quips: *"Nothing but the excellent quality of the papad."* Then she points to the highly efficient way Lijjat conducts business. *"Its operations,"* she says, *"are carried out on a sound commercial footing, namely that of producing quality goods and selling them at reasonable prices."*

Moreover it does not accept charity. *"The co-operative is not a refuge for poverty-stricken women. Its objective is to erase the shame and demoralization that go with poverty and unemployment, and to remove self-pity once and for all,"* Ms. Pawar explains.

Women making papad or any other product for Lijjat automatically become members and joint owners. They stick to a code of conduct and work ethics which includes voicing opinions and grievances and respecting one another's time by visiting co-members' homes only in an emergency. Activities are undertaken on consensus. There is complete openness regarding operations of the co-operative which means its books can be examined by anyone.

But perhaps the most distinctive feature of Lijjat is that it is a big family without hierarchy. Members address one another as sister. Each branch is co-ordinated by a supervisor who comes from the ranks of the workers.

Says Kamal Bhalerani, supervisor of the Bandra unit, *"Over the years we have grown into a well knit family. Women of different castes work together under the Lijjat umbrella. For us the dignity of labour is not mere slogan."*

QUESTIONS

1. What makes Lijjat a successful income-generating project?
2. Do you think Lijjat promotes women's self-reliance and empowerment? Discuss your answers.
3. How does Lijjat promote the rights of its members?
4. Why is it good for poor women to organize themselves?
5. What do you think of Lijjat's codes of conduct?
6. Why does Lijjat reject the role of shelter for victims?
7. Why is Lijjat successful?

WOMEN KEEP PUMPS FLOWING IN MALAWI

by
Hilda Paqui

NKUMBUWA, Malawi (**Depthnews**). Margaret Chagwera, a stately mother of four, hitches up her orange wrap-around skirt, picks up a galvanized spanner, and sets to work on the nuts and bolts of an Afridev hand pump. She removes the below-ground pump parts, adjusts the position of the valve bobbins and the "O" ring, replaces the piston seal, and reassembles the pump.

Ms. Chagwera is a hand-pump caretaker in Nkumbuwa village, 130 kilometres southeast of Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi.

Malawi is turning increasingly to ground water for domestic consumption as it is cheaper and safer than surface water to extract and distribute. More than 1.5 million rural Malawians are now served by over 8,000 boreholes and shallow wells fitted with hand pumps. In the future 30,000 more pumps will be installed to serve 4.5 million additional rural dwellers.

This is why Ms. Chagwera and scores like her are playing such an important role, for the real challenge is not so much to install the pumps as to keep them flowing. Many of Malawi's traditional hand pumps are out of action for up to nine months before being repaired. Prime causes are lack of routine maintenance and a scarcity of spare parts which are imported and expensive.

Poor pump performance is not only inconvenient but an increased health hazard for users who revert to traditional sources of water which are often polluted.

But broken-down pumps will soon be just a bad memory in Malawi. Under a government project supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank which began in 1980, villagers are being trained to perform preventive maintenance of hand pumps installed under a Rural Hand pump Testing Project.

In the Livulezi District, the Project area, each pump is tended by a caretaker and two assistants, who comprise the village water committee. So far, more than 200 hand-pump caretakers like Ms. Chagwera have been trained to keep Malawi's pumps flowing.

An analysis of the experiment prepared by Malawi's Water Department revealed that community self-help in pump maintenance reduced the breakdown rate by 75 per cent, while the response time between breakdown and repair rarely exceeded two weeks.

Annual maintenance was reduced to US\$16 from US\$140 per pump. Encouraged by the results of the Livulezi project, the Government plans to install the Afridev pump nationwide

"Now that Malawi has adopted the Afridev and community-level maintenance, its picture for water supply looks bright," says Mr. Kitsiri Liyanage, a United Nations Volunteer from Sri Lanka who works with the Livulezi project.

Hand-pump caretakers like Ms. Chagwera, routinely tighten loose nuts and bolts, replace worn parts, keep the pump surroundings clean and report major breakdowns to maintenance assistants in the Livulezi district.

While the assistants are paid by Malawi's Government, their only means of transport is the bicycle. The villagers have to transport tools and spare parts to the pump themselves and the caretakers give the maintenance assistant a hand with repairs. Health and nutrition classes are another job of the caretakers, most of whom are women. *"Since they are the main drawers of water, they have a vested interest in trouble-free pumps,"* says Mr. Liyanage.

Ms. Chagwera was selected to undergo a week's course at a training centre in 1986. Today, in an impressive 25 minutes, Ms. Chagwera can dismantle and reassemble a pump, reciting as she goes the names and functions of the various parts.

"It's in my and my family's best interests to maintain the pump," she says, *"I remember too well how sick we used to get from water drawn from the polluted stream before we had the pump."*

QUESTIONS

1. How does inadequate maintenance of water pumps affect women's lives?
2. How does technology help these women take charge of their life?
3. What is required to ensure that women become self-reliant in pump maintenance?
4. What lesson, from the Malawi experience, can policy makers and planners learn in development work?

LEGAL TUSSLE PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

by
Priya Darshini

NEW DELHI (Depthnews). A landmark decision has been handed down by the High Court in Jaipur, Rajasthan, upholding the rights of small government workers.

The decision stops the government from terminating the services of five women field workers of the Rajasthan Women's Programme.

The women are frontliners in the effort to organize and involve rural women in development. Their dismissal was ordered after they attended the National Conference on Women's Movement in India held in Calicut, Kerala, in 1990.

Although the women went, not as government employees, but as members of a women's group, the government had decreed that they were civil servants who could not speak against government programmes and policy which they apparently did.

The workers, all village women themselves, did not just sit back and await their fate. They sued the government and continued working.

"They could only be dismissed", they said, "if the women they served had lost confidence in them."

In his judgment, Justice S.N. Bhargava said the order to dismiss the women arbitrarily, without a show-cause notice, violates fundamental principles of justice.

Equally significant is the interest in the Rajasthan Women's Programme that the field workers' case has stirred.

Several women's organizations including the Saheli, the Joint Women's Programme, Action India, the Nirman Mazdoor Panchayat Sangam, the Sabla Sangh and the Shaktri Salini formed a team to give the Programme closer scrutiny.

In its thirty-page report, the team praised the Programme for its ability to reach out to large numbers of rural women. However, the process of empowerment has raised its own nemesis of conflicts and contradictions.

The Rajasthan Women's Programme was set up in 1984 with the best of intentions to train women to be responsible for their own development, since, as policy-makers realized, this responsibility had always rested on men.

An entire corps of village workers, called sathins, were trained to form a women's forum, with a woman co-ordinator, in each village.

As noted by the newspaper, *Indian Express*, the work done by the sathins was exemplary. They organized women to ensure the installation of hand-pumps in low-caste Hindu settlements, protected village grazing land from encroachment and began dialogues with the medical personnel of primary health centres who only saw patients for a fee.

When the names of eleven women were removed from a list of workers because they refused sterilization, the sathins of Kalesara village intervened and the women were given work.

Nevertheless, workers are manipulated by authorities to achieve family planning targets. The report said people were forcibly sterilized for the second if not third time; loans to dig wells, build houses, buy cattle were given only to those who had been sterilized; women were publicly humiliated by being asked to show the scars of their operation. Done in unsafe conditions, operations have led to complications and even death.

In March 1991 the sathins in Ajmer district had to take an oath before the district collector that they would meet their assigned family planning targets. Their salary was stopped for two months because they failed to do so.

The report also noted the miserable honorarium given the field workers of the Women's Programme, Rs. 200 (US. \$7) a month. How can a programme that has as its prime objective the empowerment of poor and backward women, undervalue and exploit its workers by defining their contribution as "non-work", the report asked.

The report accused the government of using language, idioms and symbols of people's movements to make its own plans and definition of development acceptable.

QUESTIONS

1. What happened to the five workers of the Rajasthan Women's Programme? Why?
2. How were the women workers of this programme manipulated by the authorities?
3. What do you think of the five government employees who sued the Government?
Is it easy to sue the Government?
4. If you were in the same situation as they were, would you sue the Government also?
5. From the example of this case, discuss the importance of group organization.
6. What does this story tell you about official policy statement and real development practices? What are the problems?
7. From this story, what do you think of women's empowerment?

Section 7

Women's Work, Women's Worth

-Analysis of reading materials-

1. **Aim.** To analyse reading materials using knowledge and understanding of *gender issues*.¹
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) identify positive and negative messages concerning the roles of women and men in society and comment on the way the messages are expressed;
 - b) recognize whether, and how, the materials convey women's positive images or the usual stereotypes;
 - c) recommend how the materials could be used in participants' own programmes for the promotion of women's status in society.
3. **Total duration:** Three hours
4. **Sequencing of activities**
 - a) In the first activity participants are asked to form pairs.
 - b) **Second**, each pair is given a booklet to analyse according to prescribed guidelines.

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Transparency 1 and the following booklets

- *We are Equals*
- *The Dark Shadow*
- *The Enlightened Man*
- *The Changing of A Girl's Life*
- *Manee's Struggle*
- *Work Together and Share*
- *A-sa-ma's Broken Dream*
- *Two in One*
- *Women's Work, Women's Worth*

Any other relevant material may be included at the discretion of the facilitator.

¹ The reading materials were produced at the UNESCO Regional and National Workshops, *Development of Reading Materials for Women's Self-reliance*. Copies are available at the UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok.

- c) In the **third activity** the facilitator introduces booklets which form part of a series developed at UNESCO's regional and national workshops to develop reading materials for Self-reliance (See a summary of the booklets below).

Duration: Ten minutes

- d) In the **fourth exercise** participants read and analyse the booklets following the guidelines.

Duration: Eighty minutes

Materials: Transparency 1, the booklets and guidelines

- e) In the **fifth exercise** one participant of each pair presents their combined analysis.

Duration: Fifty minutes

Materials: A list of all available booklets

- f) The facilitator concludes that the booklets chosen to be analysed here were designed to promote women's empowerment. Each booklet covers one or more issues pertinent to the roles of women and men in society. The issues include:

- the multiple roles of women;
- women taking the initiative in controlling their own lives;
- women questioning their existing conditions;
- women in leadership roles (e.g. as lawyers helping other women in need);
- women as men's equal partners;
- women engaged in nontraditional employment.

5. **Evaluation.**

Scrutinize participants' presentations to establish whether their analysis of the roles of women and men as reflected in the materials, is accurate.

Transparency 1

Guidelines for Analysing Booklets

1. Summarize the story.
2. Does the booklet promote women's self-reliance? What issues are prominent?
 - the multiple roles of women;
 - women taking initiative to control their lives;
 - women questioning their life conditions;
 - women leaders;
 - women as equal partners of men;
 - women in nontraditional employment.
3. Is the content realistic?
4. Does the booklet reinforce sex stereotypes? If so, in what way?
5. How are women and men portrayed ?
 - as nurturers,
 - as economic producers, or
 - as leaders?
6. Can you see any change in the respective roles of women and men in society? In what ways? Discuss whether the same changes will be possible in your own community.
7. Is this booklet easy to read?
8. Are the illustrations attractive and appropriate?
9. Do they portray women and men positively?
10. Is there anything you would like to improve in your booklet?
11. How does this booklet promote the equal partnership between women and men?
12. Do you like the booklet? Discuss your feelings.

A summary of some of the booklets

WE ARE EQUALS

This booklet is about a young widow, Geeta, who is left with a child. She works hard and diligently in a construction job. When she finds that she is paid less than a man who does similar work, she starts asking herself how to correct the situation. After all, the law says that people doing the same work should get the same pay.

Geeta started to talk with other women in her job about this. And the men supported them, too. In this way, Geeta's negotiation with the contractor was successful. Because of their collective organization, the women now get equal pay.

THE DARK SHADOW

This booklet is about Seema, a young Pakistani girl from a small village. Her parents arranged her marriage. She didn't know the man but she learnt that he was young and handsome.

Some time after they were married, Seema became concerned that her husband never worked. He used to sleep all the time and smoked a lot. Seema noticed the smell of the smoke which was different from her father's who was a smoker.

Sometimes her husband became really moody. Gradually, he took all of Seema's jewellery and sold it. It became clear to Seema that her husband was a drug addict.

Without jewellery, Seema had no more value to her husband. He hit, kicked, and abused her. One day, he wanted to sell Seema. When she found that out, she ran away.

Her father asked her to go back to her husband, but she refused. Her husband filed a suit against her for allegedly stealing money and jewellery from his house.

Her girl friend's father knew a woman lawyer in the city. This lawyer fights for women's rights. She represented Seema in court. It took a year but at last Seema obtained her freedom. Her divorce came through and she was awarded compensation of 10,000 rupees.

THE ENLIGHTENED MAN

This is a story of Sonam and Karma, a couple with no children. They grow potatoes. Karma carries manure to the field because Sonam adheres to the old belief that it is not a man's job. He thinks that it would bring bad luck if he does. Once, they had a poor harvest. Karma blamed his wife for this.

He has a friend, Dawa, who criticizes Sonam's superstitious beliefs and his behaviour. Finally he realizes he has been unfair to his wife. He apologizes to Karma and from that time on, they work together.

THE CHANGING OF A GIRL'S LIFE

This is a story about a little girl called Xi Mei who lived in a far away village in Hunan Province, China. There, tradition dictates that girls do not go to school. But Xi Mei was determined to fight this custom. She negotiated with her parents and a teacher. She did not only have the chance to attend school but also continued at a technical-vocational school and learned various agro-techniques. With her knowledge, she improved the financial condition of her family. She became the first woman technician of her county. She won awards and recognition from her community. She broke the traditional barrier which kept young girls from school.

MANEE'S STRUGGLE

This story is about Manee. She has big problems in her family. Their farm does not produce crops and her husband wants to go to Bangkok to work.

A friend encourages them to take jobs in a brick factory in a nearby town. The family moves, works hard and saves some money. Unexpectedly Manee's husband takes to drinking; her daughter starts paying more attention to boys than to studying.

Using clever tactics to involve her husband in solving this family problem, she manages to wean him away from drinking and builds the family spirit of sharing responsibilities. Manee manages to save the family. She hopes her way of managing a family crisis will be a good example to her children.

WORK TOGETHER AND SHARE

This booklet is about a couple named Dechen and Dorjee. In winter they find it difficult to feed the cows at home so they discuss the matter together and the husband takes them away to pasture.

The wife remains at home and does all the work including feeding the remaining cows. Both husband and wife work hard at their respective roles. When the husband returns they continue to work hard together. After some time they overcome hardships and their lives become more bearable.

A-SA-MA'S BROKEN DREAM

A-sa-ma is a tribal girl from a remote mountain village in northern Thailand. She wants to find work in the city believing that the bright lights symbolize all the good things she dreams of. Slowly, she is forced into prostitution. When she falls ill, she finds herself totally alone and homesick. She realizes her mistake and decides to return to work on her farm with her parents.

TWO IN ONE

Raisa is married to Alam. They have three children. Alam and their children never help her with housework. She has lots to do such as washing, feeding chickens, cooking, and getting the children ready for school. Raisa also works in a garment factory and Alam as a watchman from 8.30 am until 4.00 p.m. After her day's work, Raisa goes directly to the market and Alam goes to rest and visit his friends. One day Alam's friends came to visit him. They were shocked to see Raisa working alone. The friends advised Alam to change his attitude and help his wife. Insulted, Alam refused to help. But after long discussions with his friend, Alam slowly changed. He is now a helpmate to his wife.

WOMEN'S WORK, WOMEN'S WORTH

This booklet discusses the multifaceted roles of women in modern Australia. It shows women shouldering dual responsibility - working in the home and outside to earn an income.

It discusses three women from various background and life situations, their problems at home and at work. Each woman has their way of coping with adversity. Those who are better prepared are most likely to succeed.

The booklet also discusses women in technical, nontraditional professions, such as computer programming and administration. It helps readers raise some questions about themselves, their work and their worth.

Section 8

Analysis of Drawings from Educational Materials

1. **Aim.** To assist participants to become more aware of existing stereotypes and to help them analyse illustrations of educational materials.
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to explain if a drawing is reinforcing the traditional stereotype of women or encouraging new role models for women and men.
3. **Total duration:** One hour thirty minutes
4. **Sequencing of activities**

For the first activity, distribute to each participant a drawing from educational materials depicting people of both sexes and their interaction in positive or negative ways.

Positive portrayal

- Girls and boys playing together.
- A woman pilot.
- A boy and a girl sewing together.
- Women and men working together in a laboratory.
- Mother and father share responsibility in looking after the education of their children.
- Family members share responsibilities in housework.
- A girl and a boy cook together.

Duration: Five minutes

Materials: Sample drawings from *Down with Stereotypes! Eliminating sexism from children's literature and school textbooks*, (UNESCO 1986). Illustrations from selected local textbooks and instruction material in non-formal education programmes can also be used.

Stereotyped portrayal

- A mother sews with a daughter while the father reads a book to the three sons.
- A boy rows while a girl gazes around in a boat.
- A group of men talk about village affairs while a woman waits outside.
- Men attend a village meeting without the participation of a single woman.
- A couple, husband and wife, go to work with the man leading.
- A man lectures his wife on the topic "Democracy in the family."
- A girl plays with a doll; a boy, with building blocks.

For the **second activity**, ask participants to write comments on the illustrations; explain roles and ask the following questions:

- Does the picture reinforce the traditional stereotype or create a new role for women?
- Should the illustrations which are meant to promote the status of women in society be improved? If yes, how?

Duration: Twenty minutes

Materials: Handout provided in exercise a) above

In the **third activity**, ask participants to present their responses to the illustrations.

Duration: Forty-five minutes

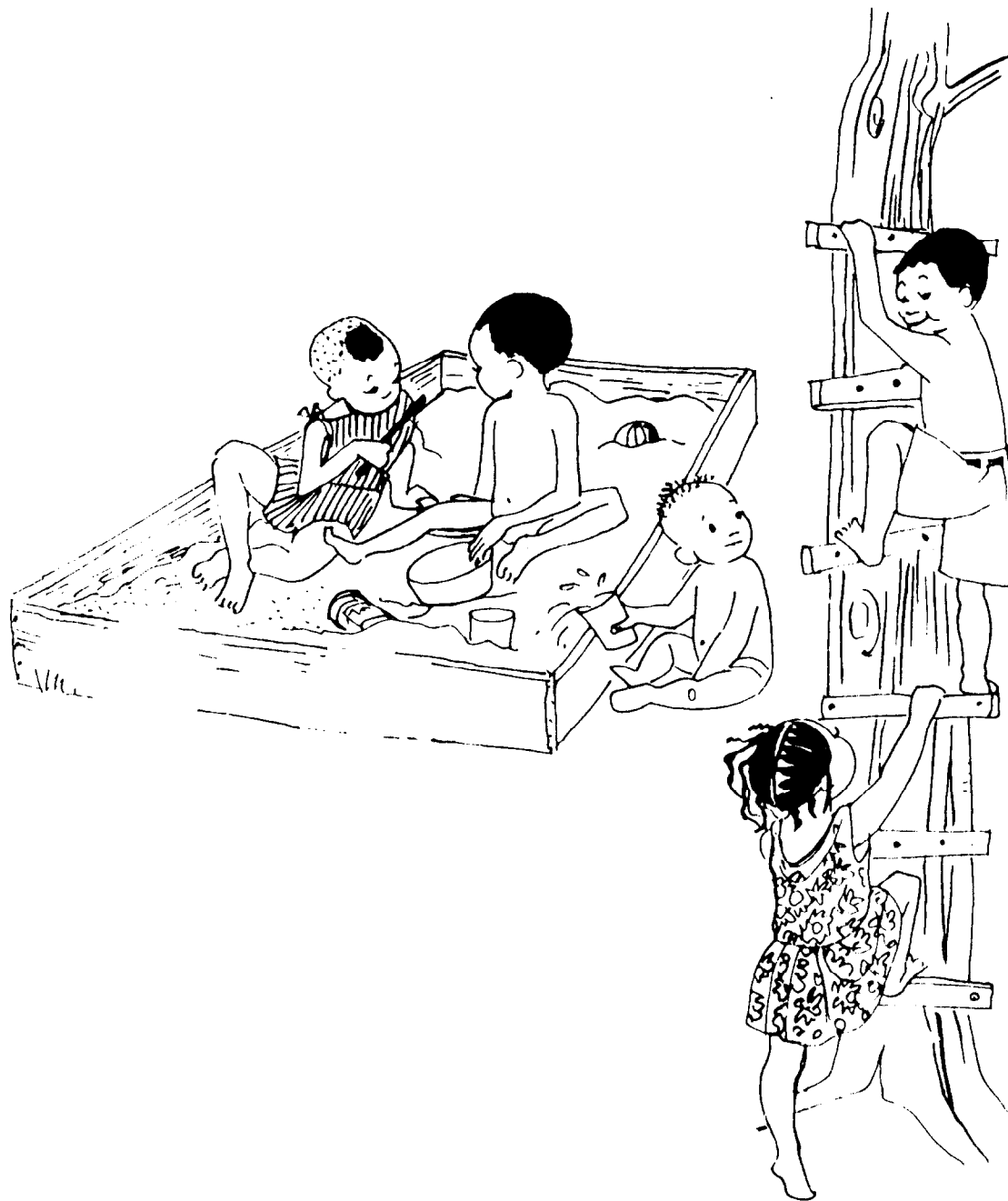
Conclude by commenting on the importance of visual messages (80% of the information learning of human beings comes from visual messages). Therefore, educational materials for illiterate or semiliterate women should be examined for the messages they send to readers in terms of the equality of the sexes. Examples of the illustrations and participants' comments are found below .

Duration: Twenty minutes

5. **Evaluation**

Assess participants' ability to correctly identify illustrations as projecting negative stereotypes of the sexes or promoting changing and positive roles for women.

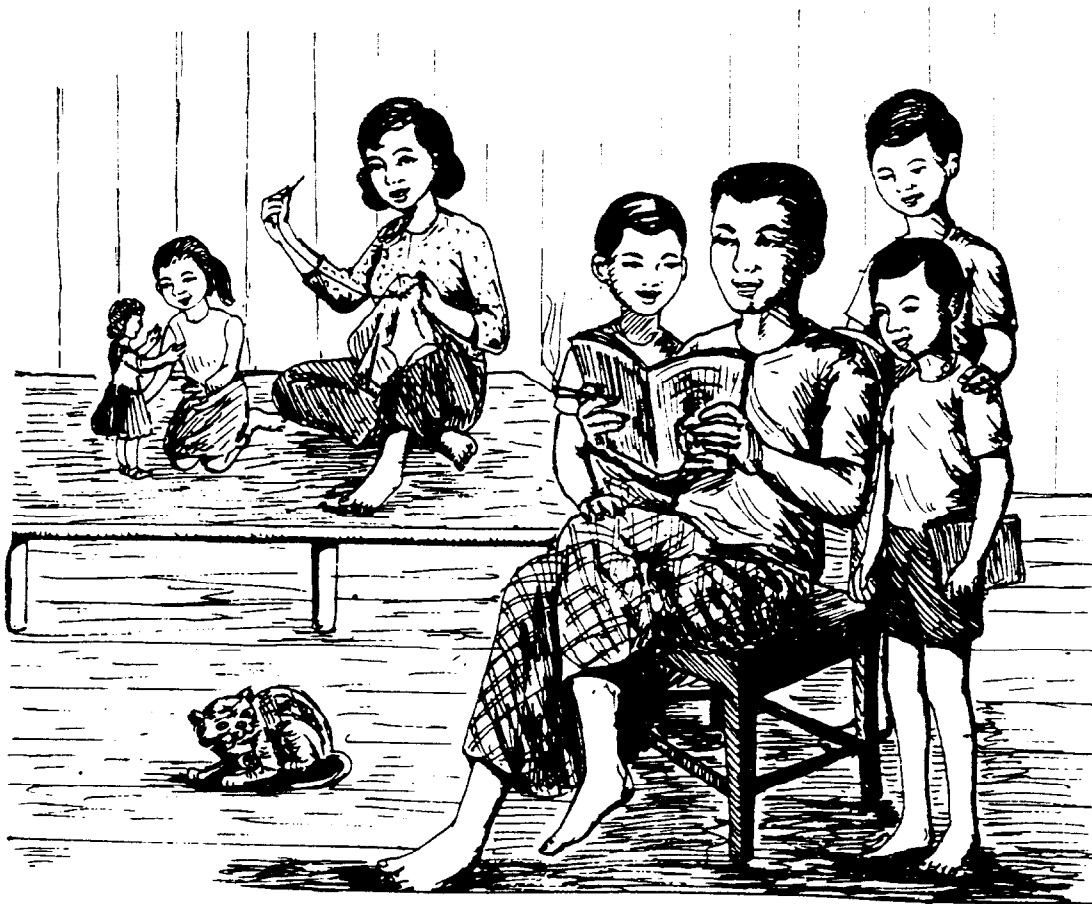
Examples of learning materials projecting various images of people



Boys and girls at play

This picture portrays a positive image of girls and boys who are playing actively and together. Girls in this picture have stepped out of the tradition in which boys only play with boys and girls with girls. Girls are, here, involved in adventurous play such as tree climbing.

The picture could even be better if it showed the girl climbing up the tree first, and not just following the boy's lead.



Family leisure time

This picture shows the woman (wife) knitting and the girls are playing with dolls. The man (husband) is reading books and the boys are trying to read with their father.

The picture shows a stereotyped view of women and men. Women and girls are grouped together and engaged in so-called feminine skills. The male group is projected as an educated one. If this is put in educational materials, it will inculcate or reinforce sex-stereotyping in children.

This picture should be improved. The wife and the husband should read the book together. The boys and the girls should be playing together. The wife and the husband can be shown working together in the kitchen and all the boys and girls reading together.



Boating

The picture shows a little boy and a girl in a boat. The boy is actively rowing while the girl sits there passively looking content. She simply "looks pretty". This picture reinforces sex-stereotypes.

The illustration could be improved if the girl and the boy are shown rowing together; or if it could add a text to show the girl offering to take turn rowing when the boy is tired. This will also show female involvement in sporting or physical activities.



A woman pilot

The picture shows a woman as a pilot. It shows her involvement in non-traditional skills for women and reflects the reality that nowadays, more and more women are getting into this field. It shows that women can participate in activities known to be for men only if the opportunity is open to them.

It is important that women, no matter how few, who would like to be pilots, have an opportunity to try to realize their potential.



Each one mends his or her own clothes

A boy and a girl are shown mending their clothes. The girl seems to be engaged in some conversation with the boy. She looks active. They both seem content with what they are doing.

Acquiring a skill that was once considered only limited to girls and women has freed this boy from depending on other persons to mend his clothes.



In a science laboratory

The illustration shows women and men working together as lab technicians. This is a positive departure from stereotyped view of women. This illustration could be improved in the following ways:

1. Women should have face, hence their individual identity. Since the illustration is showing men with their face, it could equally let women have their face, too.
2. While the man in the foreground is in central position and with his front to the readers, both women are having their back towards the readers. At least one of the women should be repositioned to work alongside the man. Their activity should also be adjusted to show equal sharing of workload and leadership in their work.
3. The woman standing in the background with the man is also not shown a face although the man is positioned sideways so his face is showing.

It would be better if the women is also positioned so her face can be seen.



Child care

This illustration shows a woman and a man sharing child care responsibilities. It represents the changing roles of men in modern time when women may be engaged in work outside the house.

Hence, the woman's traditional and "motherly" role is shared with their husbands who are obviously reaping rewards from his "fatherly" activities by getting more love and affection from their children on par with their wives.

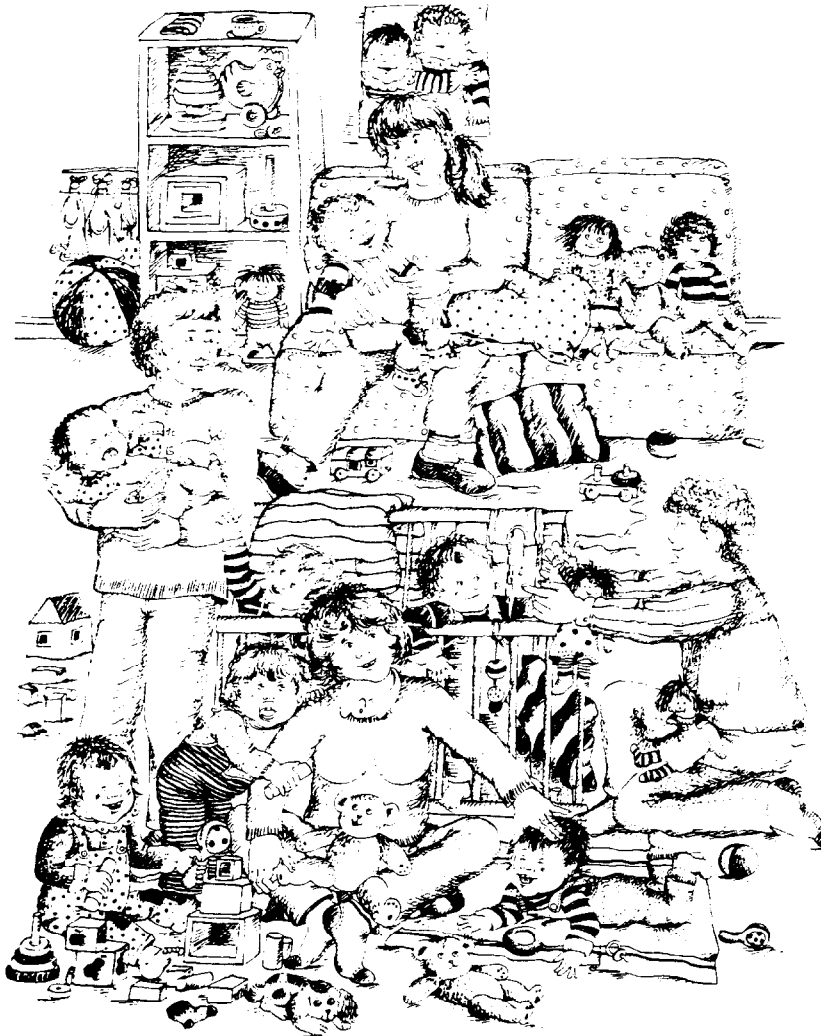


Participation in community affairs

This illustration shows a village / community meeting on how to improve their community.

All participants are men. This illustration projects men as leaders and the only active participants in development. The fact that women are not included in the picture can be interpreted to mean that women's participation is not important in development. This should not be the idea projected by a well-balanced development programme.

This illustration can be improved by putting women as active participants in the discussion and in playing a leadership role.



Sharing household responsibilities

The picture shows the family consisting of the father, the mother and nine children. The elder daughter is looking after one child and the elder son is playing with two other children. The mother is looking after three children while they are playing. The father is holding a baby who is crying.

In the picture, the father, the mother, the daughter and the son are sharing their household duties in taking care of younger children. They are performing their work very happily.

This picture does not present a traditional family. The father helps the mother and the other two grown children help her in their own ways. They are doing their respective duties. The family seems happy.



Cooking together

The picture shows the girl cooking with the materials that the boy prepares. Each one's role complements the other's. In that way, the girl's job is not too much. And besides, cooking with another person can be enjoyable.

This boy is doing a non-traditional task for the male sex. However, in engaging in this task at an early age, he will grown up to be a self-reliant man who could cook for himself and others in ways that he chooses. Besides, he will share cooking responsibilities with this wife which will help them appreciate each other and leads to a healthier and happier marriage.



Farm work

The man and the women are going to work in the field.

The illustration recognizes the role of the woman as an economic producer, i.e. a farmer.

The man walks ahead and he is talking to the woman, giving the impression that he is the leader. The woman is looking downcast. While the man emanates confidence and a sense of adventure, the woman is giving the impression that she is passive.

The illustration could improve if the woman and the man were shown walking side by side and discussing their work. The woman should be looking straight with more self-confidence.



Children at play

A girl is playing with a doll on one side and a boy playing with wooden blocks on the other.

The toys these children play with may have a negative effect on roles they are going to play when they grow up. For example, they may take it for granted that only women do baby-sitting and raising children, while men will be engineers or architects. The fact that they are placed separately may give them the idea that women and men are to be fixed in prescribed roles and functions.

The picture should be changed in the following ways. They should be building a house together using blocks. This can create a kind of friendly atmosphere and inculcate the spirits of co-operation between the two sexes at an early age.

Section 9

Women - Key to the Future

1. **Aim.** To make participants more aware of women's changing roles in keeping with other changes in the world.
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to:
 - a) Identify some of the common problems women encounter in developing countries;
 - b) Explain, with examples from a video presentation, how women's roles are changing with other world changes.

3. **Total duration:** One hour thirty minutes

4. **Sequencing of activities**

- a) The **first activity** involves introducing the video, *Women - Key to the Future*. Explain in your own words, that the video, with examples from Mexico, Zimbabwe and Thailand, shows how women are developing as prime contributors to the growth of their countries.

Duration: Five minutes

Materials: A summary of the video, *Women - Key to the Future*.

- b) For the **second activity** hand out a list of questions to each participant mentioning that they will be used in a discussion following a viewing of the video. Provide enough time for them to go over the questions.

Duration: Fifteen minutes

Materials: Handout 1 containing a list of questions, below

- c) The **third activity** involves showing the video. Warn participants that they will have to answer questions from the handout after the viewing. If they need to watch it again, replay the video.

Duration: Twenty minutes

Materials: Video, *Women - Key to the future*

- d) The **fourth activity** involves asking any one of the participants to summarise the main theme of the video and to give her or his general reactions to it. Follow up with a question and answer session ensuring that participants relate their answers to their own circumstances (below).

- Are the problems of women in the video similar to those of women in your country?
- Are the roles of women in your country changing? How?

- Are the changes viewed as positive by most people in the country?
- Are women equal partners with men in the development of your country?

Duration: Fifty minutes

5. Evaluation.

- a) The level of interest demonstrated by the participants.
- b) The level of participation in the general discussion.

Handout

WOMEN - KEY TO THE FUTURE

Ask participants to describe:

- some outstanding facts and figures presented in the film in relation to:
 - population;
 - education;
 - the status of women.
- Some of the tasks or functions women are performing. How are their roles changing in keeping with other changes in the world?
- *"Women are at the heart of development."* Do you agree with this statement? Give your reasons with examples from your own countries and/or communities.
- What are some of the common problems women face in developing countries? Provide examples drawing from your own context whenever possible.
- Thai women have begun to break away from traditional limitations. How?
- Can you identify any common characteristics of this trend within your own countries?
- *"Women are the key to the future."* Do you agree with this statement? Why?

Section 10

Gender Analysis - Summing Up

1. **Aim.** To conclude the preceding sessions on issues related to the roles of women and men.
2. **Objectives.** After this session, participants will be able to:
 - a identify and personally reject negative sayings about women;
 - b define *gender analysis*;
 - c list important elements in gender analysis;
 - d explain how gender analysis may be useful in developing skills-based literacy programmes;
 - e) list the important characteristics of self-reliance in women.

3. **Total duration:** Three hours fifteen minutes

4. **Sequencing of activities**

a) The first activity involves presenting some examples of sayings that are derogatory to women.

- Having daughters is like constructing toilets in front of one's house (Thailand).
- Long hair, short mind (Russia)
- Women are weak furniture (Madagascar)

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Transparency 1, below

b) For the second activity ask participants to write down one or two well known sayings from their countries or communities which reflect negative societal attitudes towards women.

Duration: Fifteen minutes

Materials: Notepaper and felt-tip pens

c) The third activity involves collecting all the sayings and passing them around the room. Participants mingle to read them.

Duration: Ten minutes

Materials: Masking tape

- d) The **fourth activity**, in plenary, involves the facilitator who asks participants for their reactions to the sayings from countries not their own.

Duration: Ten minutes

- e) For the **fifth activity**, ask participants to group the sayings into categories which describe:

- men's superiority and women's inferiority;
- the value of daughters and sons;
- confining women to domestic work;
- the negation of women.

Duration: Twenty minutes

Materials: Paper and pens. See Transparencies 2, 3 and 4, below, for the sayings

- f) For the **sixth activity** nominate a participant to present the sayings to the plenary. Seek the group's reactions to the sayings.

Duration: Fifteen minutes

Materials: Transparencies 2-4

- g) In the **seventh activity** one or two participants are requested to draw a large rubbish bin into which to throw away placards containing derogatory sayings.

Duration: Twenty minutes

Materials: Newsprint

TRY TO PLACE NEGATIVE SAYINGS ON AS MANY THROWAWAY PLACARDS AS POSSIBLE.

Alternatively, participants may draw a pile of placards being burnt (sample drawings, below).

- h) For the **eighth activity**, introduce the video, *Gender Analysis*, which examines the role of women and men in development.

- i) The videotape is shown as the **ninth activity**.

Duration: Seven minutes

Materials: Video: *Gender Analysis*; synopsis, below

- j) For the **tenth activity** ask participants to form two groups and nominate participants to work at the easel holding the newsprint with questions for their particular group. They must take turns in answering questions. A point is awarded for each correct answer. The game ends when all the questions have been answered.

Duration: Fifteen minutes

Materials: Transparency 5 - List of questions, below

- k) In the **eleventh activity**, correct answers are announced. Points won by each group are added and the winning group declared.

Duration: Five minutes

- l) The **twelfth activity** comprises a repeat showing of the video. This time, select a participant to prepare a summary for presentation to the group.

Duration: Seven minutes

Materials: Transparency 5; video, *Gender Analysis*

- m) In the **thirteenth activity**, participants are asked to note that in preparing educational programmes for any target group, programme developers must first think of the overall desirable qualities or characteristics of that target group.

In this case, the target group must emerge as **empowered women**. It is therefore necessary to develop a profile of the empowered woman. Transparency 6 provides some responses that may emerge when referring to desired qualities.

Duration: One minute

Materials: Transparency 6

- n) The **fourteenth activity** is a brainstorming session on the characteristics of the empowered woman. Remind participants that brainstorming requires quick responses which will be listed. No discussions or elaboration will be entertained at this stage.

Participants proceed to give their characteristics of the empowered woman. All points should be recorded for classification and synthesis (for examples of classification and synthesis, see Transparency 7).

Duration: Twenty minutes

Materials: Newsprint and pens, Transparency 7

- o) For the **fifteenth activity**, ask a participant to write a brief essay describing the empowered woman, based on the list of characteristics offered by participants. Classify the answers. Conclude by listing the characteristics.

Duration: Forty minutes

Materials: Transparencies of characteristics indicated by participants

- p) The **sixteenth activity** concludes the session. Distribute a copy of the essay to each participant.

Materials: The essay - *Description of the empowered woman*

5. **Evaluation.**

Look out for participants who share and accept negative sayings which, in general, reflect society's view of women. Note any interest shown in changing the sayings.

Transparency 1

**NEGATIVE SAYINGS REFLECTING THE TRADITION OF
SUPPRESSING WOMEN.**

Men are Superior, Women are Inferior

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Women in the field damage the crop. | Bangladesh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | It is bad luck to have a daughter. | Myanmar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Men are the front legs, women hind legs of elephants. | Thailand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A woman has to live nine lives to be born a man. | Bhutan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Behind a loser stands a woman. | Philippines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Women are incapable. They can't even circle a stove. | Pakistan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Women gave life to men. Men sold them in bazaars. | Pakistan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Respect men, degrade women. | Japan, Viet Nam |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Without a man, the family is a house with no roof. | Viet Nam |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Married daughters are water thrown out of the house. | India |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Women, drums, illiterates, and animals need beating. | India |

Transparency 2

WORTHLESS DAUGHTERS AND DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW

- A boy inherits my name. A girl has no name. Papua New Guinea
- Parents of a son in monkhood gain merit. Myanmar
- Find me a woman and I'll find you a snake. Philippines
- Daughters-in-law feel like ghosts in the house. Laos
- Having a baby boy brings more joy than having a horse. Bhutan
- Daughters are temporary in the house. Sons are its honour. Pakistan
- Daughters grow up for others, and sons for his family. China
- A boy inherits my land. A girl becomes another man's wife. Papua New Guinea
- A hundred sons are not a burden but one daughter bows our heads. Pakistan

Transparency 3

Male Superiority

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Men are rice grains and women are cooked rice. | Thailand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't trust elephants, cobras, servants and your wife. | Thailand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Women are vines -- they cling to whatever they reach, are capricious and untrustworthy. | Thailand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sons open the doors of heaven. Daughters open the doors of trouble. | Nepal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A stick controls a wife. | Bangladesh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A daughter who looks like her father is rich but a son who looks like his mother is unhappy. | Viet Nam |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Three steps out of the house the man is a bachelor. | Myanmar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A son is a master; a husband, a God. | Myanmar |

Transparency 4

CONFINING WOMEN TO THE HOUSE

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | An ideal woman is a good wife and a wise mother. | Japan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Women should be barefoot in winter and pregnant in summer. | USA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A barren woman is like a stone in a river. | Philippines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A man is the master in the house. | Japan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A woman's place is in the kitchen. | Papua New Guinea |

Video - GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender analysis is a methodology to identify the specific roles of men and women in development, and determine whether available resources are fairly distributed among women and men performing different tasks. Gender analysis comprises two stages.

1. The exploratory stage.
2. The conclusion.

The **exploratory stage** outlines four relevant components:

1. Labour

- Which activity is allocated to whom? Who is responsible for a specific activity? (i.e. catering to family needs and generating income).
- The seasonality of labour should also be considered because the income of many women is seasonal.

2. Income

- Although women have been involved in production for centuries, their contribution to family and country is not reflected in the national budget.
- Sources of income need to be analysed.
- Analysis also need to be made of how accessible credit facilities are to women.

3. Gender differences in expenditure

- Men's incomes are primarily used for reinvesting into their earning activity such as purchasing machinery and agricultural goods while women's income is spent on family and household needs. That is why women need more access to credit and loans for reinvesting into their own productive activity.

4. Access to, and control of resources

- Women's access to information and technology and their control of resources, e.g., land, farm tools and equipment is very limited and, more often than not, acquired through their husbands.

Transparency 5

LIST OF QUESTIONS

1. What is gender analysis?
2. Name four components of the exploratory stage of gender analysis.
3. Why is gender analysis useful?
4. How could you use it in promoting women's education and their status in society?

Transparency 6

**POSSIBLE RESPONSES OF THE TARGET GROUP
ON THE QUALITIES OF THE EMPOWERED WOMAN**

- Strong
- Good
- Influential
- A good wife and mother
- A worker / wage-earner / owns her own business
- Organized
- Independent
- Able to cope with difficult situations
- Politically aware
- A leader - a person who believes she is equal to men and as capable.
- Knows her rights
- Conscious of her responsibility
- Recognizes her strength and weakness
- Respects others- men or women
- Understands her body
- Seeks to realize her potential
- Continues to improve herself
- Likes to learn
- Co-operates with others
- Knows how to communicate effectively
- Economically self-reliant
- Respects herself
- Healthy and takes good care of herself

Transparency 7

The empowered woman:

- believes in equality, strives to serve other women and be a positive role model;
- appreciates the value of domestic work, and does not overwork;
- values herself; is open minded and appreciates others;
- is conscious of her contribution to her home, her family and her country;
- controls her life and questions negative attitudes, customs and superstitions which adversely affect her;
- finds time for group activities and recognizes her potential for leadership and organization;
- seeks to improve her knowledge and skills;
- enjoys life and looks forward to each new day;
- finds time for leisure and hobbies;
- knows her rights as a citizen and recognizes the laws which are unjust to women and in society;
- maintains good health, respects the dignity of women and appreciates her daughters as much as her sons.

ESSAY

Description of the Empowered Woman

The empowered woman appreciates the time spent on domestic work. She knows that overwork is harmful to her health and mental stability. She is able to question her double responsibility and seek others' help to procure enough leisure time to do things for herself, such as learning something new or participating in social activities.

The empowered woman appreciates the value of her contribution whether her work is paid or not. She understands that she has tremendous potential to contribute to the progress of her family, community and country. With that understanding, she is confident of her value as a person and is therefore open-minded and can appreciate others.

Because the empowered woman is aware of her productivity, she seeks to improve her skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis. She is aware of sources of information (such as extension services and technology) and ensures that she benefits from them. She also appreciates that there is much to be gained from reading about the world and reads regularly.

The empowered woman understands that she is an individual and in control of her life. As such, she can and will question family and social customs which negatively affect her. She seeks to understand scientific explanations behind superstitious practices and challenges those which are unjust to women.

She has freedom to move and express herself equally with men. She understands her strengths and weaknesses and seek ways to improve herself. She can lead other women and serve them as a positive role model.

She is aware of her rights as a citizen and seeks to protect them. She is convinced of her equality to men. She recognizes laws and legal processes which are unjust to women.

The empowered woman respects herself and dares to take credit and responsibility for her contribution and actions. She seeks opinions and makes informed decisions. She dares to be different and creative.

She appreciates and supports other women. She is aware that organization means strength and seeks to fortify her organizational, management and leadership skills.

The empowered woman appreciates that good health is related to having fewer children. She respects the dignity of womanhood and therefore appreciates daughters in the same way as she does sons.

The empowered woman nurtures herself. She understands that as an individual she is entitled to happiness in the same way as others.

She is full of zest for life.

Gender-Sensitive Education for a Better World

Creation of educational and social environment, in which women and men, girls and boys, are treated equally and encouraged to achieve their full potential, respecting their freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, and where educational resources promote non-stereotyped images of women and men, would be effective in the elimination of the causes of discrimination against women and inequalities between women and men.

-Platform of Action 1995

Introduction

Gender disparity in education has been well-acknowledged. It threatens to outlive the present generation and many more to come. The strong social, cultural and economic concerns nurtured by traditional societies often block the access of women and girls to education, and later weaken their participation in, and contribution to, their family and society.

This paper examines the gender disparity in both formal and nonformal education. It underlines the verdict stressed at the Mid-Decade Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (Amman 1996) that *there can be no enduring progress in Education for All (EFA) if special attention is not paid to female education.*

The paper argues that gender-sensitive education has value for all members of society - men as well as women. It is probably, the best education which can help create a learning atmosphere that is fair and sustainable for all. It promises, therefore, to be a viable alternative for the building of enduring progress in EFA.

Lack of access is only the tip of the iceberg. The paper discusses sexist curricula and contents and deterrents to the advancement of women and girls. It also shows how teachers and education managers, alike, are liable to promote sex stereotypes in learners and among themselves. Though often unintentional, this behaviour the aspirations of girls and women and their chances for success in life.

The paper also gives examples of UNESCO and other actions designed to counter stereotypes regarding access and quality of contents and methods of education. As promising as they are, these initiatives are scattered. They bring no sustainable change on a large scale and hence, they leave the global situation unchallenged.

The contents and methods of education have to be rendered gender-sensitive. Teachers and other facilitators need to be re-oriented to be more sensitive to the needs and situations of learners of both sexes, a monitoring mechanism has to be put in place to ensure that policy statements are adhered to during implementation. Finally, it will be important to render the learners' environment which are supportive to learners of both sexes, as well. This will

include not only raising the support for gender sensitive education among the learners' parents and the public but also create other support systems which will nurture both women and men in a world where equal partnership between the sexes is not only possible but necessary.

Society's preference for boys

Around the world, the female sex has always been branded as inferior to men. Newborn boys bring celebration while the birth of a girl spreads fear and anticipation of the worst. In certain parts of the Terai region of Nepal, for example, the community weeps when a girl is born (Shrestha et al., 1990). Chinese families with a feudal tradition, rank girls as low as pigs or dogs (China's Ministry of Culture, 1983).

While this traditional value is changing around the world, it is still reflected in sayings still common today:

- In Siberia - *long hair, short mind.*
- In Vietnam - *one son is children, two daughters are none.*
- In Madagascar - *women are weak furniture.*
- In China - *a married daughter is like water that has been thrown out.*

Parents in traditional societies see girls as "transient" members to be married off to another family while boys are heirs to carry the family name. This belief is universal - from Africa to Asia, from Oceania to Latin America. While men identify themselves in terms of what they do, women describe themselves as relatives of others, especially men (Bisaria, 1985).

Economic, social and cultural constraints

Economic restructuring has severely affected the education of girls, particularly in the poorest and least developed countries (LDCs) where poverty is the major obstacle to education (UNESCO *Report of the International Consultation on Education of Girls and Women in LDCs* 1995). Faced with the cost of lunches, uniforms, and learning materials, parents favour boys' schooling only. It has been documented in several countries that when parents have to choose, they prefer spending on boys. In rural Bangladeshi society, for example, people of all classes spend up to 83 per cent of their educational budget on boys. (Stromquist 1994)

There is no evidence that boys are inherently superior to girls or, indeed, no groups have superior cognitive capabilities to others. Everywhere people have the same mental 'equipment' (Kane 1996). Girls are on a par with boys in terms of learning achievement. Chinapah (1997) describes primary school test results in five countries, where girls performed better than boys but *only* in earlier grades. In subsequent grades, children who were putting in two hours, or longer, a day for household chores fared worse in tests of literacy, numeracy and life skills than those who gave housework one hour or less.

In most developing countries, girls contribute enormously to running the household. The poorer parents keep daughters as the "second mother". In conducting the World Bank - UNESCO project, Cheli Beti in Nepal, Nicholas Bennet finds that young girls work as long, if not longer, hours as adult men. The need to assign to them the chores of fetching water,

fodder and firewood and minding the younger ones precludes long-term family investment in their education. The detrimental effect of such demand on the girl's time was stressed in the 1995 *Platform of Action*:

"Girls and young women are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities... resulting in poor scholastic performance and early drop-out... This has long-lasting consequences for all aspects of women's lives."

On top of economic considerations, illiterate parents are genuinely concerned that educating daughters can be harmful. Benin's *Report to the African Conference on Empowerment - Pathway to Women's Empowerment* reflects the belief:

"For some parents, educating a daughter is synonymous with ... favouring overindulgence in sin... education risks upsetting the arranged marriages set up between families. They fear that, once educated, the girls will go against the established customs of the society. For example, they can refuse their parents' choice of husband, or discuss matters on an equal basis with a man." (1996:8)

In most traditional societies, parents see their daughters only as future mothers and wives. In these societies parents consider schools unable to prepare girls for their anticipated roles. Several country papers presented at the International Consultation on Girls and Women's Education in LDCs (Paris 1995), including Burkina Faso and Sudan, report that what school provides is irrelevant to the specific and perceived needs of girls.

A genuine concern exists that educated girls have problems finding a husband. In the communities of Papua New Guinea and Zambia - where brides carry a price - any delay in the marrying of the daughter is seen as a risk. Many people are afraid that educated girls might pose a threat to their prospective mates, a challenge to their authority. Some African societies do not welcome "men's rivalry" with their wives regarding knowledge' (*Report of the International Consultation on Girls and Women's Education in LDCs*, Paris, 1995).

In some LDCs - Cape Verde, Chad, Guinea and Niger - parents fear that daughters might fall victim to harassment (*Report of International Consultation on the Education of Girls and Women*, 1995). Exposure to life outside the home, according to parents, might lead to sexual promiscuity, early marriage and unwanted pregnancy.

In parts of Africa, school pregnancies are on the rise. AIDS pandemic compounds the threat to safety as evidence from around the world shows women contracting and dying of AIDS at a younger age than men. Girls who barely reach puberty are prime targets as they are less likely to be infected (*Countdown*, UNESCO 1997).

There are also practical reasons affecting girls' absence and/or achievement. Lacks of toilets for girls in some schools of Namibia, Sudan, Gambia and other countries forces girls to stay at home during menstruation. Long distances in the sparsely populated areas of such countries as Bhutan diminish security on the way to school. In the cold season, when classrooms are not heated, Mongolian parents keep their children at home. In Arab countries, girls withdraw from schools if their parents uphold "the importance of a safe school environment for girls, instead of one that will threaten or intimidate..." (UNESCO 1996:39)

Progress and problems

Since the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Thailand, there has been substantial progress, notably in the overall primary school enrolment. The Mid-Decade Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (Amman 1996) confirmed that fifty million more children are now in schools than in 1990 and the number of out-of-school children has decreased by 20 million.

Despite these gains, several UNESCO reports and statistical data indicate that girls constitute the majority of unenrolled children. Of the world's 129 million out-of-school children, girls make up 60 per cent, or 77 million (UNESCO 1995). Net enrolment ratios (NER) for girls stay below those for boys, especially in the Arab States and South Asia where few countries are close to the parity line, and only one is above it. In the sub-Saharan Africa only ten countries have NERs for girls equal to, or higher than, those for boys.

In the developing world as a whole, the girls' share of primary enrolment in the last five years has increased by 0.3 points only - from 45.5 in 1990 to 45.8 per cent in 1995.

By the year 2000, only one more country is likely to arrive at the EFA goal for boys - but not for girls. While nearly half of the sub-Saharan countries report a decline in girls' enrolment, Arab governments have improved primary enrolment for girls in all but three of the region's 21 countries (*Education for All Mid-Decade Meeting, Statistical Document*, Amman, Jordan, June 1996).

Women's access

Of the 885 million illiterate adults in the world, 565 million are women, against 320 million men. Half of these women live in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa where literacy rates in 1995 stood at 36 per cent and 47 per cent, respectively (UNESCO 1994).

The trend has lingered over time. In 1980-1995, when the number of male illiterates decreased by six million, the figure for women grew by 14 million. The gap persists in most regions. In the sub-Saharan Africa, the year 2000 will see the illiteracy ratio of 175 women to 100 men, a leap from 164/100 in 1990. It was also reported that an equally disturbing tendency in South Asia where the ratio grew from 166 to 175.5/100 in the same time range.

The document, *Status and Trends* (UNESCO 1994), cautions that, despite decreasing rates in some regions, the absolute numbers of illiterates will rise everywhere. Moreover, a concern has been raised that by the year 2000, illiteracy might become 'a female phenomenon'. Anita Dighe, in her paper for a UNESCO workshop, asks:

'Why is it that women are illiterate in such vast numbers? What accounts for their failure to become literate? To what extent is it the failure of the individual woman and to what degree is it the result of contextual factors? Do individuals determine their own success or do other people set deterrents to this effort?' (Dighe 1990)

The root of the problem -- sex stereotypes

It is a mistake to assume that girls' access to schools alone guarantees a proper education and a better future. In addition to the reasons mentioned above, it is the learning materials that neglects to reinforce girls' sense of self. Discouraged, many girls drop out before gaining sufficient functional literacy and other basic skills.

In most cases the unconscious or implied principle, in curricula, materials and methods, is to portray men as breadwinners and women as domesticated. They ignore the contribution that women make to the economy and the well-being of their family.

Sex stereotyping persists in many forms and in all countries regardless of the level of development (UNESCO 1985, 1989).

In textbooks, women and girls are mentioned less frequently than men and boys. The same goes for female activities, functions, concerns and aspirations. Invariably, the female face appears in a 'man's world' where girls and women are marginal and dispensable (UNESCO, 1986 and 1995). Kane (1996 :8) presents a box comparing characteristics assigned to males and females according to their sexes which are derived from one African series of primary school textbooks on English and Social Studies.

Males

- solved problems
- engaged in leadership activities
- gave orders
- invented things

Females

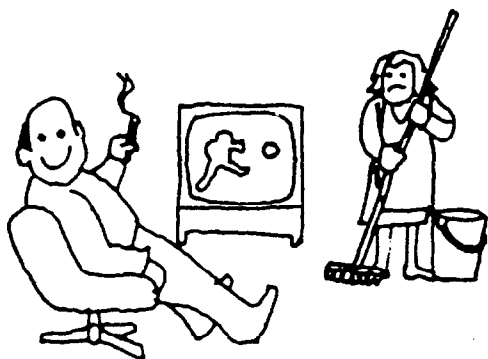
- listened to males
- were frightened
- were easily fooled
- broke things

Girls and women are projected as passive, shy, weak and overshadowed by the adventurous, active, inquisitive, courageous, strong, heroic and clever boys and men. Female preoccupations - often belonging to the world of mothers and wives - grow into jobs related to their role as nurturers, such as kindergarten teachers, cooks and nurses.

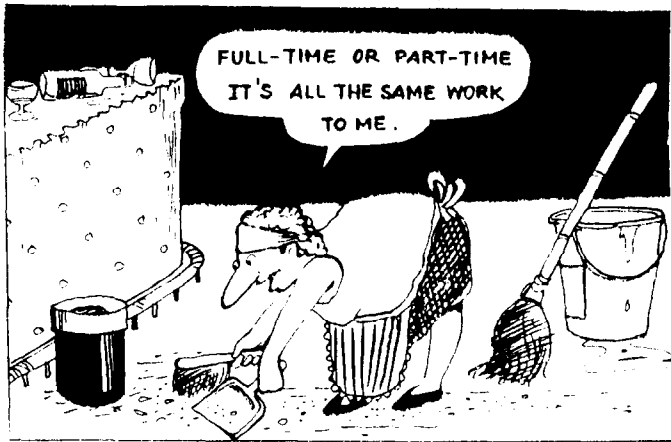
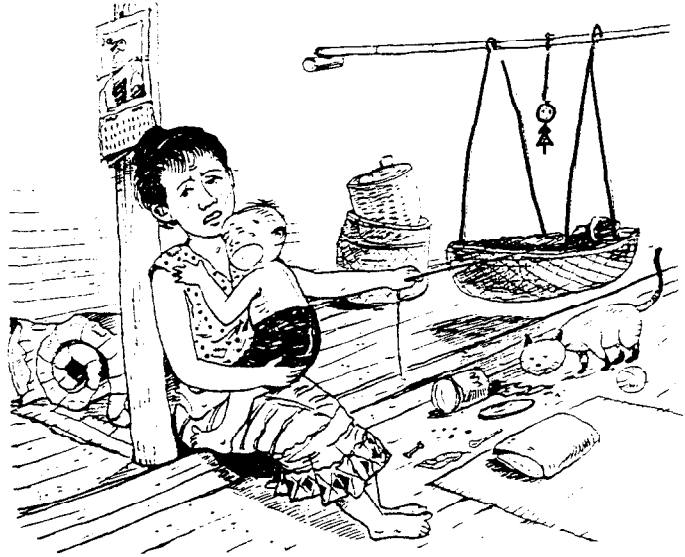
The UNESCO's analysis of post-literacy materials in 1990, finds an overwhelming emphasis on women as mothers and nurturers. Consider the following titles: *Nutrition for Mother and Child Care*, *Lectures over the Radio on Mother and Child Care*, *Oh My Dear Child*, *Loving Mothers*, *Beware of Nannies* and *Our Children*.

Sent from Bangladesh, China, Thailand, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, these brochures have had counterparts generated year in year out everywhere in the world. Pages 108 to 110 show sample illustrations from school texts and literacy readers vividly representing the unbalanced gender representation.

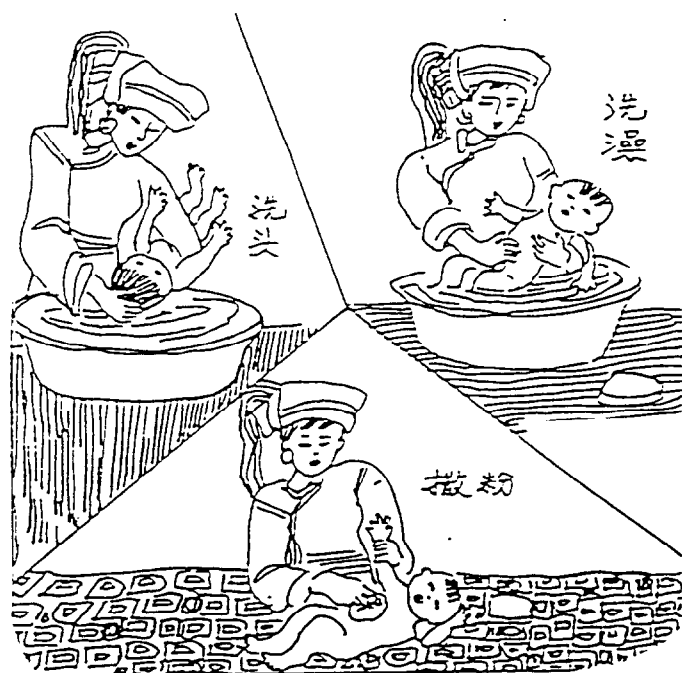
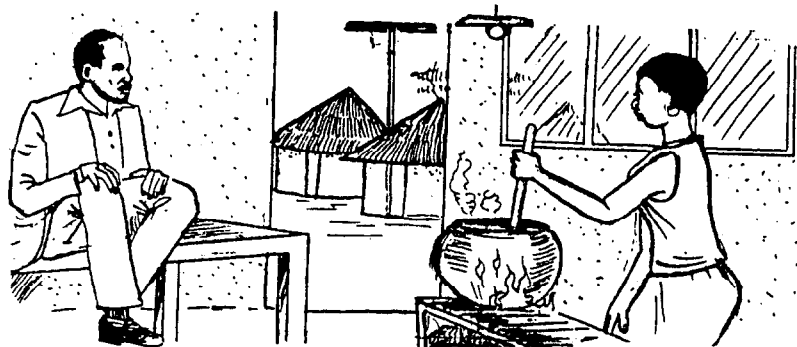
**Stereotyped roles of women
limited to mothers and wives**



**Stereotyped roles of women
limited to mothers and wives**



**Stereotyped roles of women
limited to mothers and wives**



Women's potential for excelling in different fields receives scanty mention in educational materials. Materials rarely picture women as managers, pilots, doctors, or heads of state. In writing about her country, Tanzania, Sekwao sums up:

"Most textbooks depict women as well as men in gender-typed roles. Women are shown as cooks, as patients, men as office workers, doctors; girls wash dishes, sweep the compound while boys play football or herd cattle. Such images are for men only... Any change is regarded abnormal." (1995)

At more than 20 workshops organized for the project, Skills-based literacy programmes for women, and the Special project for girls and women in Africa, most participants draw a man when asked to picture a farmer - despite the well-known fact that women constitute the majority of the farmers, in particular in Africa! Somehow, people's attitudes - *as instilled by education on the roles of the sexes* - become independent of their conscious knowledge.

The UNESCO report, *Education of Girls in Asia and the Pacific* (1986), based on views of primary education experts, concludes that curricula and materials reinforce the stereotype of dependent and exclusively domestic roles for women. This limited views assigned to the sexes have been a guiding principle in the treatment of pupils. As a result, in preschools and primary schools, girls lack opportunities to develop spatial skills and perform weakly in technical areas, mathematics and sciences.

Choosing the subject, choosing the future

In addition to contents and methods, sex stereotypes also determines how girls and boys choose their subjects and ultimately their career. While women and girls account for more than half of technical and vocational enrolment, they keep choosing "female fields", such as health and home economics. Men, on the other hand, constitute three quarters of entrants to industry, engineering and agricultural courses (UNESCO 1997). In Korea, for example, girls occupy 80 per cent of places in commerce but only 0.2 per cent are enrolled in fishery and marine sciences.

In a UNESCO study, *Current issues and trends in technical and vocational education*, several countries report the following fields to be popular among women, for example, paramedics (Benin), home economics and hotel catering (Jordan), dietetic nursing, typing and secretarial work (Italy), institutional housekeeping, food technology (Mexico), child care and nursing (Niger), dressmaking, shop assistance, hotel catering, secretarial services (Zaire), and embroidery, leatherwork, basketry (Mauritius) (Dyankov 1996). In some countries, certain areas are off-limits to girls. In Kuwait, for example, girls have no access to courses in auto mechanics.

Dyankov (1996) concludes that in several countries including Bahrain, Greece, Cyprus, Jordan, Italy and Spain, the "tradition of sex-biased technical education still exists." Such a view is more the norm than the exception. A paper presented at the UNESCO workshop on technical and vocational education for girls (Seoul 1995) indicates that stereotypes are often the guiding principle in the official policy:

"... curriculum design of vocational education for women has become more rational with more courses adapted to social needs, the quick development of the third production and women's characteristics. There are courses in secretarial work, filing, accounting, fashion, nursing, childhood education, tourism, cosmetology, textile, hotel service and administration and public relations. These are offered in girls' vocational schools and are chosen mostly by girls..." (Zu-Guang Yu 1995:4)

Slowly, people are becoming aware of the danger of limiting the choice of subjects to those traditionally assigned to their sexes regarding of their aptitudes and talents. Mishra, Khanna, Shrivastava, and Sharma (1995), for example, regret the 'home-science syndrome' in India where stereotype practices affect the placement of girls in highly demanded jobs in the technology and science sectors.

A report from Bahrain (Fakhro 1995) indicates the same trend. For many women, training, if it exists, is open only for jobs in low demand - sewing, home economics and secretarial skills. Barred from lucrative industries, options available to girls shrink to teaching, nursing and social welfare. With such training, women are unlikely to serve their countries in technical and professional jobs. Nganunu (1995) reports a study revealing that, in most cases, the separation of training areas for girls and boys is rather arbitrary and serves to maintain the status quo.

Another factor compounds the problem. In some countries, girls who enter non-traditional fields end up out of work because of employers' bias and parents' and societal views that women should not work outside their homes or in *inappropriate* fields. Intimidated, most girls shy away from science and technology (Mishra, Khanna, Shrivastava and Sharma 1995, Fakhro 1995 and Nganunu 1995).

Teachers' attitudes

The issue of young children's education goes well beyond educational resources. Teachers play a significant role in influencing the success and failure of their pupils. Their interpretation of the contents, their attention to, and interaction with, learners; the way they assign duties and homework - all are determined by the broad patriarchal vision of the universe that keeps intact the hierarchy of the sexes (Wamahiu 1996).

Different treatment of girls and boys by teachers, lack of sufficient role models for both sexes and girls' inadequate access to teachers' time, facilities and equipment contribute to their lagging behind. Some teachers do not believe in girls' intellectual capacity. A study on a sample group of Korean teachers revealed their overwhelming belief (73.6%) that boys are superior in mathematics and science (Kim 1988). Their attitudes, actions and words can discourage girls and hamper their progress in school (Niger Country Report 1996).

Boys, on the other hand, receive much more of teachers' attention as several studies on classroom observation in different parts of the world indicate. These studies also show that teachers often feel the need to pay more attention to boys for different reasons, e.g., "... in order to gain their co-operation from them, the belief that boys are better or more valued students, and the belief that girls will not object (Kane 1996)"

Two recent studies financed by UNESCO in Burkina Faso and Niger confirm that both male and female teachers prefer to encourage boys. The studies observe the ways in which teachers discipline pupils and allocate small tasks in 25 and 20 schools in Burkina Faso and Niger, respectively. Boys, according to the study, receive "the most attention during arithmetic and reading." Girls are discouraged from taking maths and science as these are considered "virile" subjects (UNESCO *Countdown* 1997). The Burkina Faso study concludes that girls are invariably asked to clean up while boys enjoy more responsible jobs, supervising classmates in teachers' absence or taking care of materials. Teachers' preference for boys continues even though teachers in the Niger study admitted to being aware of their own prejudice.

The two studies conclude that research findings such as theirs need to be considered in the adjustment of teacher training curriculum. Future teachers need to be made aware of such practice and "... redress this imbalance, identify and avoid sexist material and help girl pupils to realize the importance of education including science and maths."

Very few countries have made efforts at integrating gender-sensitive training into their teacher training courses (UNESCO 1995).

Women teachers

Lack of women teachers in some countries poses another obstacle to the enrolment of girls and hampers their selection of subjects. Few countries, particularly among the LDCs, have taken steps to recruit women teachers. Indeed, qualified women are harder to find than men, notably in technical areas (UNESCO 1995).

The presence of women teachers may encourage parents to send their girls to school. On the other hand, their presence does not automatically lead to improved performance of the girls. Wamahiu (1996) quotes studies which conclude that female as well as male teachers treat pupils with sex biases. According to a FAWE study, biased treatment by women teachers is often more blatant. Secondary school girls in Kenya, for example, reportedly feel that women teachers discriminate against them more than their male colleagues.

On the non-formal education side, husbands and fathers in several societies, e.g., Afghanistan, often refuse to let their female relatives attend classes held by men. Aware of this, programme managers in these societies seek to recruit female facilitators. In some regions, e.g. in the districts of Chinhath and Bakshi-ka-Talab, Lucknow, India, many educated women volunteer to teach because it is considered inappropriate for them to seek work outside their own villages (UNESCO 1989).

Other societies with similar beliefs report great difficulty in finding educated women to run learning centres for adults. The nature of adult education - mostly through evening classes - and the distances between centres and homes often pose a threat to women facilitators. When they do volunteer, they often do not enjoy the same access to training as their male counterparts. Fifteen years ago in training workshops for literacy workers in China, for example, there were one or two women participants as compared to eighty or one hundred men. While this might not have been a deliberate action to bypass women, it indicates that decision makers did not question the sex unbalance among the participants.

Managing fairly?

In addition to facilitators and teachers, educational administrators play a significant role in the success of learners. Women school heads and non-formal education programme administrators provide positive role models for girls. However, statistics shows that most administrators are male. The higher the level of the institution, the more serious this problem becomes. Even at the primary level, where women teachers are more abundant in several countries, the heads of schools are generally men. While in charge of the programmes, the management are often unaware of their bias. They downplay the potential role of girls without realizing the damage they inflict on the girls' psyche. This is clearly reflected in UNIFEM's video, *Pacific Women in Trade*.

Male managers are often unaware that some of their attitudes deter girls and women from taking high-status and well-paid jobs. Overwhelmingly, educational staff interviewed by Wamahiu in her study of five African countries agree that *senior policy makers and middle management and teachers need to be gender sensitised*.

Ironically, despite the urgent needs for increased sensitivity among senior policy-makers, gender workshops rarely reach them as they often regard such workshops a women's domain. Worse, many managers consider that gender training is designed to "develop confrontational attitudes towards men (Wamahiu 1996)".

There may be a need for positive discrimination to ensure that more women take on the challenge of administration. Training programmes for women professionals and their male counterparts should be *de rigueur* while the system itself must be prepared to offer them appropriate positions.

Gender-sensitivity -- not for women alone

In recent years, most societies have understood that, except for child bearing, breast feeding and some tasks requiring excessive physical exertion, women as well as men can excel in fields traditionally reserved for men and boys. The fact that there have been women scientists, electricians, automechanics, pilots, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, managers, attests to the claim that demarcation of roles along sex lines is arbitrary.

The *Platform of Action* states that in order to eliminate the cause of discrimination against women and inequalities between the sexes, it is absolutely necessary to create:

"...the educational and social environment in which women and men, girls and boys, are treated equally and are encouraged to achieve their full potential... and where educational resources promote non-stereotyped images of women and men."

As a lead United Nations Agency in education, UNESCO attempts to work with its Member States in increasing access of women and girls to nontraditional and remunerative areas of studies. It also works with curriculum and material developers to produce educational resources which are gender-sensitive and to sensitize teachers and administrators to gender issues.

Women, as well as men, can and should be able to enjoy the functions and activities which have long been off limits to them. A programme in a non-sexist school in Melbourne, Australia, for example, gave students a chance to learn both male and female skills. According to a male pupil, he had the opportunity to relinquish peer pressure and stay away from activities he normally does not enjoy - such as admiring and studying racing cars. He also strengthened his self-reliance. Today he can fix his shirts, cook his own meals. Learning about child care has helped him feel more gentle toward children and increased his sensitivity - a quality, he feels, he would otherwise have been deprived of.

Although women bear a lion's share of burden in the family and society, their multiple responsibilities might need to be seen from the male perspective as well. It has often been assumed that men like the ways things are-- to be equally confined to their roles as breadwinners. The gender perspective helps look at what men stand to gain if programmes become gender-sensitive.

Opening up opportunities for women also means increasing options for men. Once the rigid demarcation lines of tasks, roles and functions are broken down, men would be freer to take up tasks which were formerly stigmatized as being only for women.

For example, if more support is given to women to increase their earning capacity, there will be less pressure on men to make ends meet as breadwinners. If women are working outside the home, men will need to share housework -- caring for children, taking part in their education, cooking and cleaning.

Despite the time and work involved, more and more men enjoy the opportunity to be more involved in their children's lives and earn the much needed affection from their children. At the same time, they are no longer dependent on their wives in taking care of themselves. This self-reliance could be a boon to many who would have otherwise not benefited from it due to their own ignorance of the possibility to venture beyond the traditional role demarcation.

Scattered action, haphazard change

The Final Report of the Mid-Decade Meeting to the International Consultative Forum of Education for All (UNESCO 1996) condemned gender-stereotyping in curricula and materials and advocate the elimination of stereotypes from formal as well as non-formal education programmes.

But as early as 1994, Stromquist, in her studies of educational programmes funded by development agencies around the world, concluded that funding agencies concentrated their attention to access at the expense of programme contents, materials and methods. She examined a large number of programmes and discovered that sexist materials featured predominantly in them and that little, if any, efforts are made to render the material gender-sensitive.

In Africa, and other continents, the efforts to sensitise relevant personnel in matters of gender have been timid. But programme and material developers are increasingly, *albeit* slowly, realizing the importance of projecting the roles of the sexes in nonsexist ways. Stereotyped literacy programmes and school curricula is being questioned more and more insistently.

Countries are beginning to examine the extent of sex stereotyping in existing materials. In Niger, a study is under way to evaluate sexism in textbooks. Teaching aids begin to seek to correct teachers' attitudes (Benin Country Report 1996 to the African Conference on the Empowerment of Women and Girls' Education). Several countries undergoing educational reforms have attempted to remove gender bias from their materials. The Ghanaian reform has brought about textbooks and aids that are relatively free of stereotypes (Ghana Country Report 1996).

Clearly, gender sensitivity does not imply a blind push to put women and girls in places traditionally belonging to men and boys. Gender sensitive programmes seek to highlight their actual and potential roles. Learners must feel helped in their reflection on the place of men and women in society. They must be aware of a wide choice of alternatives outside those imposed by rigid beliefs.

Zambia is promoting gender-neutral material and guidelines prepared by the Curriculum Development Centre for book publishers. Namibia has acted to produce school textbooks which represent men and women in a positive light and use participatory methods when addressing customs and sexist practices. (Nghiyonanye 1995)

Functional literacy programmes should convey a sense of urgency in applying what is learned into real life. Botswana's 1994 Revised Policy on Education mandated the Non-Formal Education Department to make *extra effort* to "encourage women to engage in projects that are more profitable and have been dominated by men..." The Department is reviewing the curriculum for literacy to make it gender-sensitive and responsive to new developments. (Legwaila, M I. et al 1996).

With all the efforts to produce gender-sensitive material, its use has not been widespread and systematic. Despite frequent attempts to adjust textbooks and other resources, most countries, among them Lao PDR, Namibia, Pakistan, South Africa and Zambia, are reporting that, on a large scale, gender balance has not been a guiding principle in curricular reforms.

Changes are slow because alterations in learning material imply, among other things, the conviction on the part of *the author*. Tuli Mevava Nghiyonanye, of Namibia, laments:

"It is worth noting that, since independence, only a few gender sensitive textbooks have been written. Discussion points encouraging the learners to question their customs and traditions, hence their traditional roles, were never part of the pre-independence school curriculum. (1995)"

The efforts to produce gender-sensitive materials are still rare and their impact is weak. It would be important to raise the awareness within government agencies and NGOs of the need for preparing materials free of sex stereotypes and to build in a monitoring mechanism to ensure that sensitivity continues as a guiding principle at the implementation level.

One approach, two continents

Fourteen countries in Asia and the Pacific, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Vietnam, have taken similar steps regarding the *UNESCO-UNDP Skills-Based Literacy Programmes for Women*. Participating countries receive training and hands-on experience in preparing gender-sensitive materials. As a result, over 700 literacy and post-literacy reading and learning materials were prepared to strengthen the self-reliance and empowerment of women and girls.

The material, originally catering for adult women, soon went to the young and male learners. It covers such themes as the value of work done by women and men; nontraditional skills, among them electronics; women and men in kindergarten teaching, in leadership positions and mutually beneficial co-operation; sharing of household responsibilities; positive role models for both sexes; making informed choices in life.

Reports on implementation submitted to UNESCO indicate that the material is treated as a positive alternative and more concerted efforts will ensure its sustainable development. What is badly needed is commitment at the national level to invest in the gender adjustment of educational programs and material for the equal benefit of learners of both sexes. Extracts from these booklets are shown on pages 118 to 121.

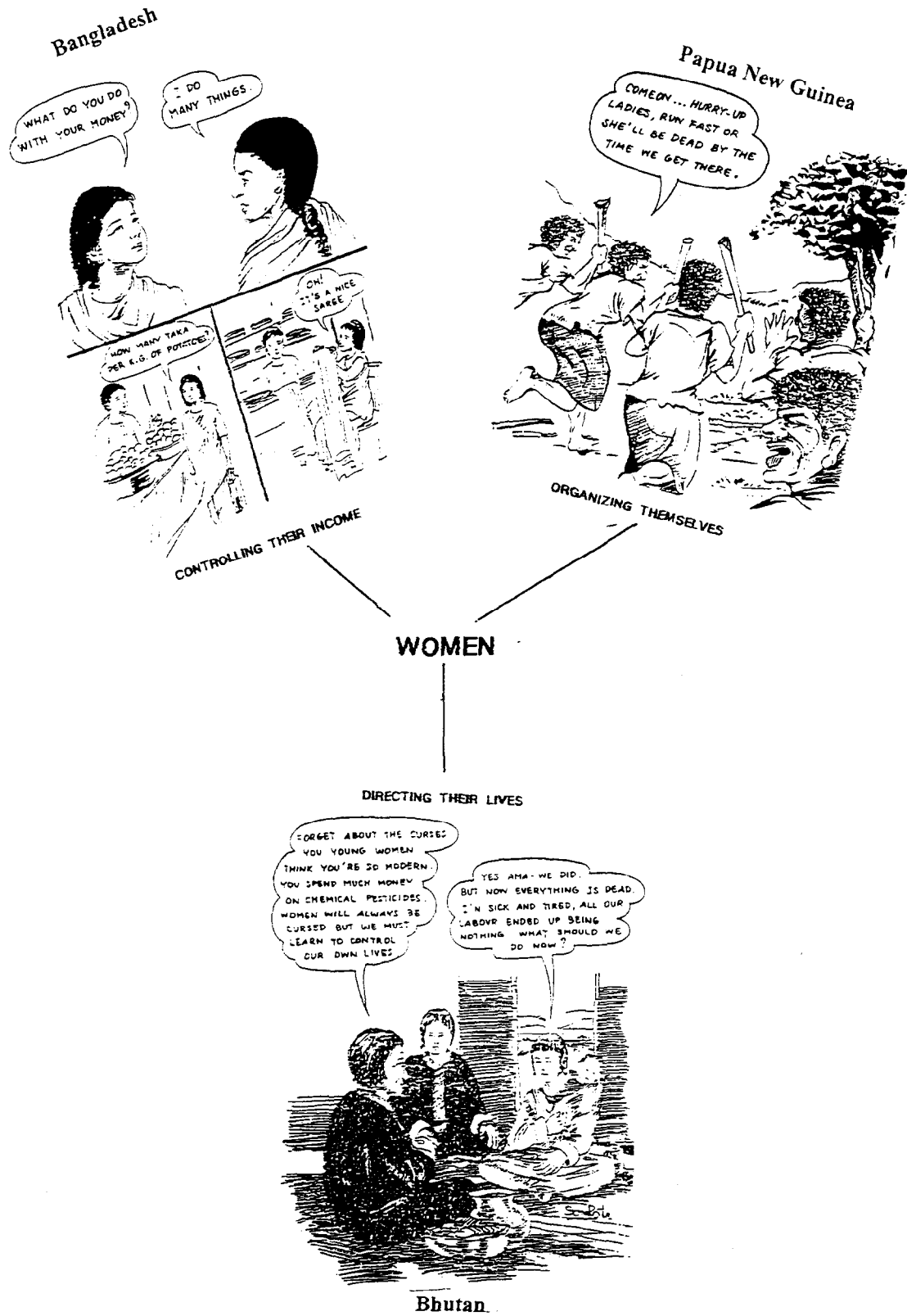
At national follow-up workshops, more materials are produced to meet local needs. The Thai Department of curriculum and material development has undertaken to be more gender-sensitive and project positive images of women and men in a similar light.

During the Workshop on material development for southern Thai women, the Department of non-formal education followed the UNESCO's training approach, *Educate to Empower*, and produced a series of 16 easy-to-read booklets suitable for both women and men. Their stories include a widow's struggle to set up a small stall selling attractively repackaged dried sea food to tourists at a popular seaside resort; a story of how a father copes with his daughter - the only child - and how he comes to terms with his previous preference for sons.

In the Thai materials, and in those produced by other countries under the same framework, each booklet covers a different aspect (or aspects) of gender relations in society. For example, Rokeya Rahman Kabir, in her booklet, *Sabina Comes out into the Light*, touches on parental prejudice against daughters, child marriage, the variety of chores facing a wife and a daughter-in-law, wife beating and abandon, gainful employment, women's participation in agricultural activities, support of women's organizations and, finally, due recognition of women's effort by the family.

This approach to gender orientation was subsequently used among African non-formal educators and radio producers in the framework of UNESCO's Special project for women's and girls' education. The first in a series of sub-regional and national workshops, this training sought to strengthen links between gender-sensitive out-of-school education and radio broadcasting in their advocacy and educational efforts.

Examples of projecting multiple roles and options



Examples of projecting various career options and roles

Australia

"Tools and Technology"

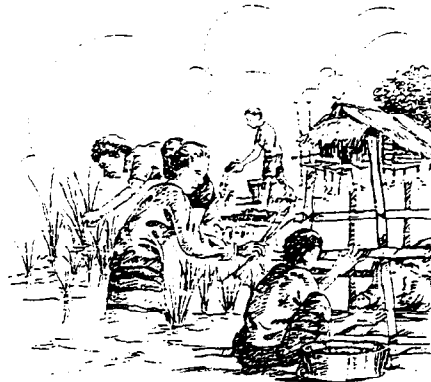


Some women risk losing their jobs because computers are taking over their work.

IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Lao PDR

Then the rainy season comes.

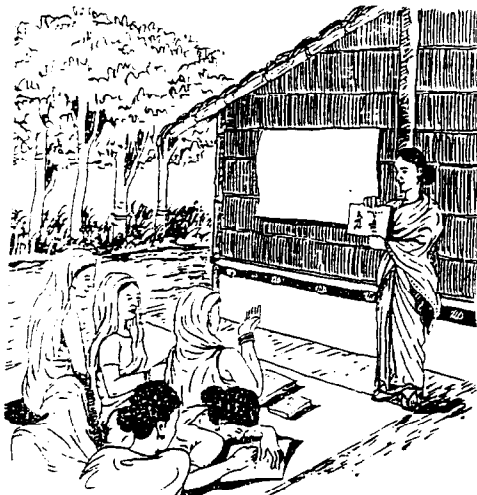


Thongchan and everyone in her family are very busy.

AS FARMERS

WOMEN

AS LEARNERS



Bangladesh

AS BUSINESS LEADERS



BU, WE HAVE A PROBLEM NOW SO MANY ORDER COME WE CANNOT KEEP UP WITH THEM

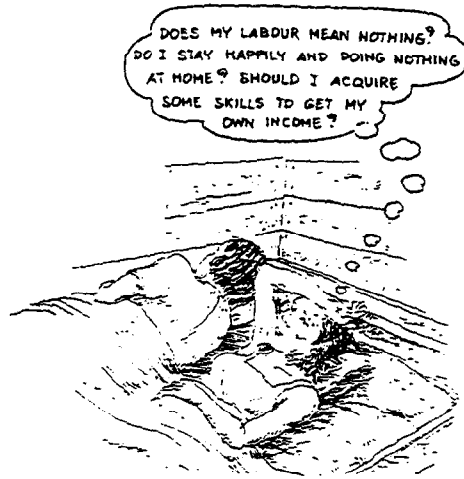
WELL, PAK WE HAVE NO CHOICE WE SHOULD HIRE SOME MORE WORKERS, BUY SOME MORE MATERIALS AND TOOLS PAK, YOU GO AND ASK PAK TOTO TO FIND THREE MORE WORKERS

Indonesia

Examples of projecting various career options and roles

Thailand

That night Wanpen thinks hard.
Some words are still in her head...
"Your wife is so lucky. She stays happily at home." "Good for being so quiet."



QUESTIONING THEIR OWN CONDITIONS

WOMEN

AS HUMAN BEINGS

Who Am I?

They say I am a woman, delicate and weak; That I am ignorant, so, I must not speak. But I am a woman, with a mind of my own. I am strong and I can think, decide, reason and be known.



Philippines

RECOGNIZING WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS



WOMEN CAN BE TECHNICIANS.

China

Examples of projecting various career options and roles

WOMEN

SHARING HOUSEWORK AND CHILDCARE



China

AS MEN'S EQUAL PARTNERS



DAY CARE CENTRE OF CALZADA

Philippines

AS CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY



Bangladesh

The workshop produced eight packages of easy-to-read illustrated materials and respective radio programmes. Among the subjects covered by the material were child marriage, dowry, small business, daughters' worth and the value of their education, sharing of household responsibilities, legal rights, earning skills, violence against women, girls' labour and child prostitution, understanding female physiology.

The project will organize and strengthen nonformal education centres for adult women and help improve the national capacity for the production and distribution of relevant learning material (printed and radio) among poor women and young girls. The material will also serve as supplementary learning materials in primary school.

Choosing subjects, choosing a future

Enrolment alone does not guarantee girls' retention and achievement. In adjusting the balance of education between the sexes, it is important to take into account the mechanism of the support system for learning. In some countries, transport and financial assistance and child care for young mothers was provided. (UNESCO 1997). These have freed women and girls, at least temporarily, to concentrate on their learning activities.

The article, "*Educating Today for Jobs Tomorrow*," in *Countdown* (UNESCO 1997) gives some examples of efforts in encouraging girls and women to enter predominantly "male areas". In Australia, a programme called, *Tradeswomen on the Move*, sends women workers to visit schools to talk about their jobs in fields such as electronics and car repairs. These women serve as positive role models for young girls and offer them wider career options.

In Guinea, a programme, *Women, Science and Technology*, offers girls and young women scholarships for studying in technical high schools and colleges. More girls are now opting for otherwise nontraditional fields such as electronics, carpentry and mechanics. There is also a programme which establishes the so-called NAFA centres which trained out-of-school boys and girls in non-formal education. In many NAFA centres, there has to be 50 per cent girls on the roster.

A UNIFEM video, *Pacific Women in Trade*, publicizes how young women in Pacific islands study the so-called nontraditional subjects such as drafting and automechanics. Their unusual choice met with ridicule from peers. It is true that, to prove themselves, they had to work much harder than the boys. Once their ability was shown, however, they earned the respect of both teachers and classmates. The reason they chose these subjects was a much better rate of return from the ensuing jobs. And do the jobs, normally a male trade, make them less of a woman? They don't think so. Life continues, and if anything, for them it has become better.

A Botswanian public campaign to promote girls in science has worked with young girls themselves addressing their possible apprehensions regarding the myth that women scientists are oddities. They produced interesting write-ups on such themes as 'Do you need to be special to become a scientist?' or 'Can women scientists find husbands?' (Nganunu 1995).

Another project promoting gender equity in education is Bangladesh's General Education Project (GEP). According to Stromquist (1994), the project adopted a thorough Women in Development (WID) strategy including curricula and textbooks revision to render them gender-sensitive, projecting positive role models for girls and strengthening recruitment of more women teachers.

A dire need exists for such programmes to multiply all around the world. As more girls and women enter nontraditional trades, their oddity will diminish. Should they excel in those fields, it will be easier for more and more women to join. At the same time, more boys might feel freer to choose careers which have been more or less taboo to them.

Positive role models

Positive role models for girls and women are among the most determining factors attracting girls into professional and technical fields traditionally reserved for men and boys.

Positive role models for boys and girls must be presented in a balanced way. Exercises need to include - for both sexes - confidence-building, the issues of self-respect, self-esteem and the need to continue with self-improvement. Above all, such materials need to evoke the fact that, except for child bearing, women and men, if nurtured and encouraged, can seek accomplishments far beyond the traditional thresholds imposed by stereotypes.

In Tanzania, for example, a series of posters was produced which present images of women in a great variety of roles: as traders, members of the police force, farmers, politicians and doctors, among others. These posters convey the message that these career options are open to women as well as men.

In another series of posters, boys are shown carrying firewood thereby suggesting that these tasks, traditionally to be for girls, are not off-limits to them.

Another example of an effort to produce gender-sensitive materials is reflected in the book, *Sara -- Un Cadeau Special*. Produced by UNICEF ESARO, this book and video series, aims at sensitizing the public on the situation of African girls, the importance of girls' education, particularly in science and mathematics and practical skills'. Although the booklet was not specifically designed to strengthen readers' literacy skills, it could additionally serve this purpose. Sara and her Mena, her Asian counterpart, offers examples of how girls could behave and aspire differently from the traditional way.

Much more needs to be done to dispel the myth that girls and women are inherently unable to do well in these fields. Many call for campaigns to draw girls into well-paid technical fields and promote appreciation of the contributions women can make (Mishra, Khanna, Shrivastava and Sharma 1995, Fakhro 1995, and Ismail 1995). In almost all countries, rigorous campaigns can be launched to sustain this gain.

Writing about Malaysia, Ismail (1995) stresses the 'continuous inculcation of the image of modern women with their multifaceted roles, with brains, career and traditional roles.' Public awards to best women managers and entrepreneurs, exemplary mothers, and women farmers

of the year have become usual in Malaysia and Thailand and bring home the fact that women can and do excel in all types of vocations and professions.

The media has been effective in raising girls' and women's and the general public awareness of the legitimacy of entering non-traditional female fields. In Zimbabwe, graduation of successful women trainees are widely publicized by national media.

China's remarkable agricultural development might be said to have played on the public recognition of the *Sisters of a Thousand Yuan*, a title bestowed on ordinary farmers who have acquired technical skills, raised their earnings considerably and helped others do the same.

Educators in key positions realise that stereotyped images and functions of women and men, long accepted as natural, should be questioned and challenged. The realization led to the exceptional establishment of the Forum of African Women Educators (FAWE) which has been successful in highlighting the importance of women's and girls' education and mobilizing resources for its support.

FAWE's members are ministers, university vice-chancellors and other celebrated personalities in education - all female. They represent a powerful block of positive role models for women and girls everywhere. FAWE insists that schools should present a balanced view of the real world, women's potential and contribution to the development of society.

Appreciating that the problem of girls' and women's education is the concern of the entire society, FAWE members welcomed associate memberships from their male counterparts.

Some key elements

Based on the experience of conducting tens of regional and national training workshops in Asia and the Pacific and, to a lesser extent in the Arab States and Africa, Aksornkool (1997) concludes that gender-sensitive materials, need to have at least four characteristics. She states:

"Certain basic principles underline the development of the learning materials and as such are central to the programme's success in the eyes of the women that participated in the project, irrespective of country of origin. The realistic portrayal of the life/environment of the learners and recognition of women's multiple responsibility, the importance of and practical methodology for enhancing economic productivity, the promotion of women's status in society and the focus on easing women's domestic work are the key factors behind the relevance of the materials and their benefit to those involved" (Aksornkool 1997:3)

Work is by far the most popular topic covering both paid and unpaid jobs in and outside the home. Technical know-how in agriculture is a favourite subject, including fertilizer and pesticides, animal feed, rice seedlings, and efficiency in cattle-raising and banana growing. Related critical areas range from co-operatives and marketing to hand pumps, electricity and do-it-yourself skills.

Literacy projects for adult women in Cape Verde, Congo, Gambia, Mali, Niger and Sierra Leone include "the spread of technology improving agricultural practices and protecting the

environment (Niyonzima 1994). Burundi and Malawi have moved to recognize the double responsibility of women and the need to address that problem. Their projects aim to "sensitize women to their double responsibility and give them the means to alleviate their workload."

"Availability of women for literacy classes is jeopardized by lack of time following the daily overload of work to which they are victims. It is dangerous to undertake literacy without promoting the means to lighten the burdens of their day." (Niyonzima 1994:17) Time and labour saving devices such as smokeless stoves and water powered rice pounders need to be promoted more rigorously.

UNESCO experiences of working with rural women confirm the great importance they attach to new agrotechnology. The skills of planting fragrant mushrooms and medicinal herbs in China, improved rice-growing, use of fertilizer and pest control in Thailand, cattle grazing in Bhutan, and pig raising in Papua New Guinea, are far more popular among farm women than sewing, tailoring and handicrafts.

Beside agricultural skills, other relevant occupational skills for poor women range from factory work, to piecework or home based employment. These areas are mostly for poor urban women. Most adult literacy programmes which target these women, rarely address the occupational needs of this growing sector.

Conclusion

Education for all will not be possible without effective provision for the education of women and girls. The world community gathered in Jomtien in 1990 and made that assertion. More recently, the Mid-Decade Review of Education for All (Amman, 1996) emphasized that despite the priority given to the education of women and girls, real progress has been far slower than expected. It has been observed that if the trend continues, illiteracy will become a female phenomenon by the 21st Century.

Analysis of past and current situations indicates that while girls' access to schooling might increase, access is but the tip of the iceberg. The nature of content, materials and methods as they are now will continue to push girls and women behind as they are insensitive to their specific conditions and needs and disadvantages.

Although policy statements abound committing countries to gender sensitive education, many observe that, at the implementation level, gender sensitive curricula, materials and methods are few and far between. While there are some excellent actions, they are but scattered and practitioners lack access to learning about others' efforts, success and problems.

The prevalent myth that responding to women's needs means 'pitting women against men', needs to be deconstructed and understood as baseless. For gender sensitive curricula and materials to be effective, its developers and users must be convinced that this offers benefits beyond the notion of education in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, it is an alternative and potent tool which could help us build a fairer and more humane world for all people of both sexes.

Women's and girls' education must now be seen as part of the overall societal issue. The definition of functional literacy needs to be sharpened and broadened to include several other pertinent areas that go well beyond income generation.

This new definition must be based on the new view of women and men and their relationship-- as equally active players in family, community and national affairs and as half of those precious resources which are human. In so doing, basic education will have to aim for an overall improvement in the quality of life. Areas such as health and nutrition, remunerative skills training, learning to learn management and decision making skills, leadership, and building up self-confidence and self-respect need to be high on the agenda.

The contents, material and methods have to be adjusted in ways that make education attractive to girls and women and, at the same time, maintain fair consideration to men and boys.

Enough lip service has been given to women's education. Now is the time for serious and drastic action. More than ever, nations can no longer afford to ignore half their potential resources. Education for All needs to be interpreted as education for all women and all men. Only when that happens will Education for All stop being a slogan and start being a reality.

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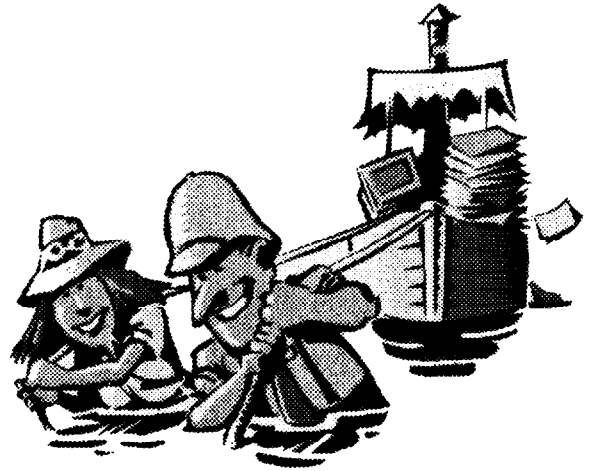
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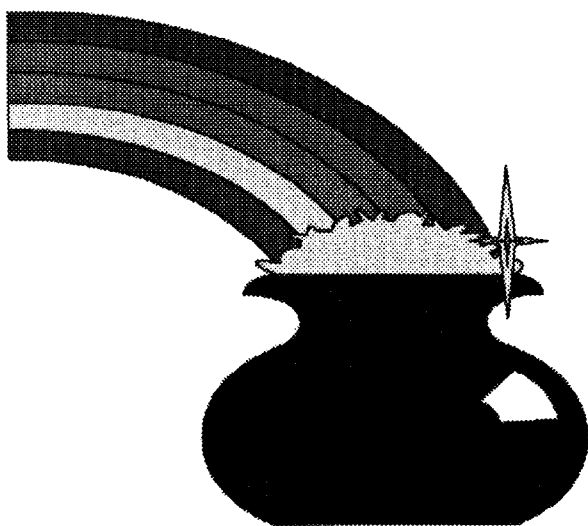
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The woman needs the
support
of her husband
to make changes at home.

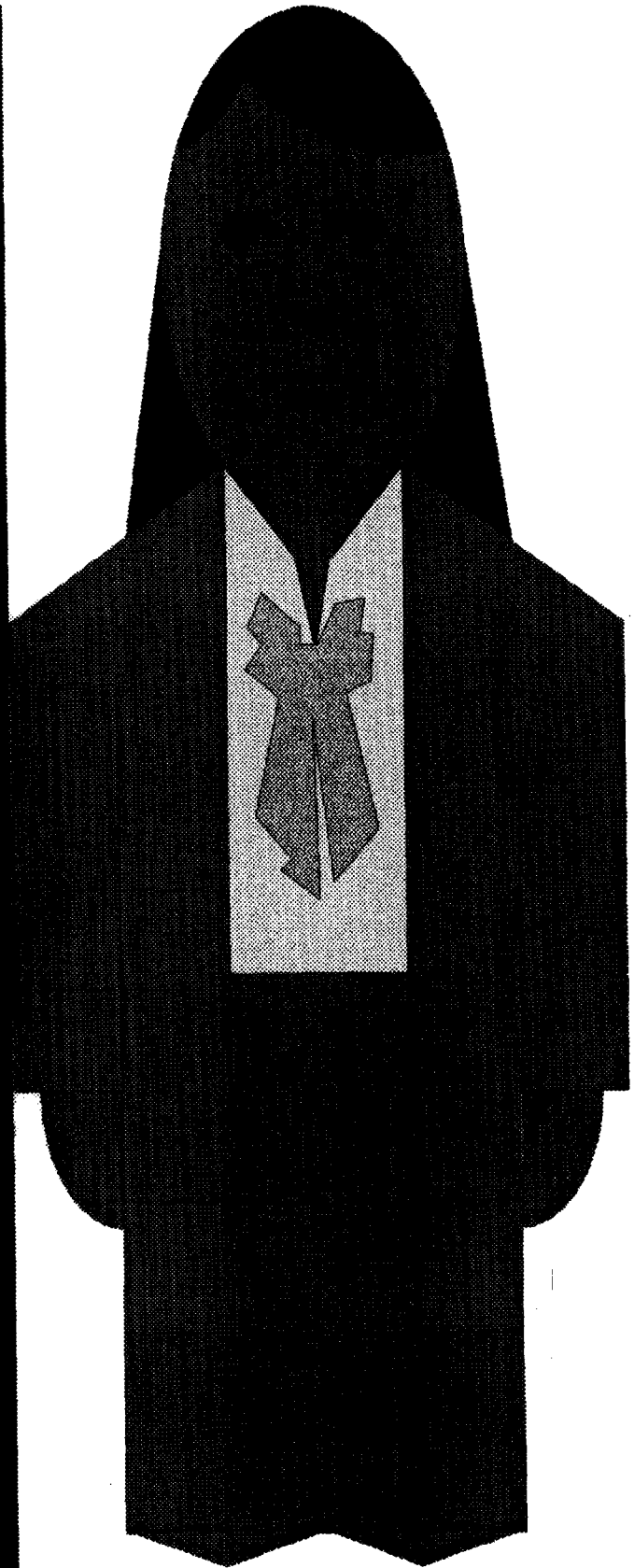


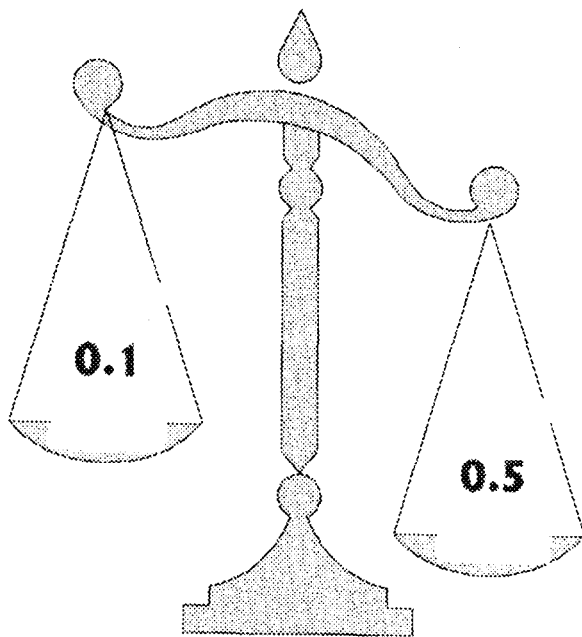
**She needs to enjoy the fruit
of her economic contribution.
Share responsibility for housework.**



With family assistance,
she could be a happy
Woman with
a contented husband
and children.

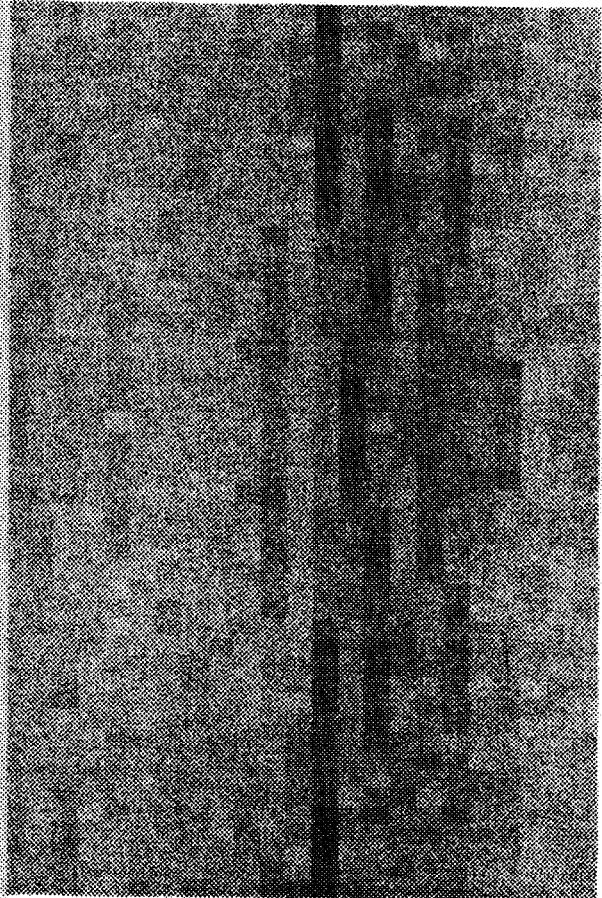
Failures in
attacks on
poverty
are due to
neglect of
women's
status
at all
stages of
development





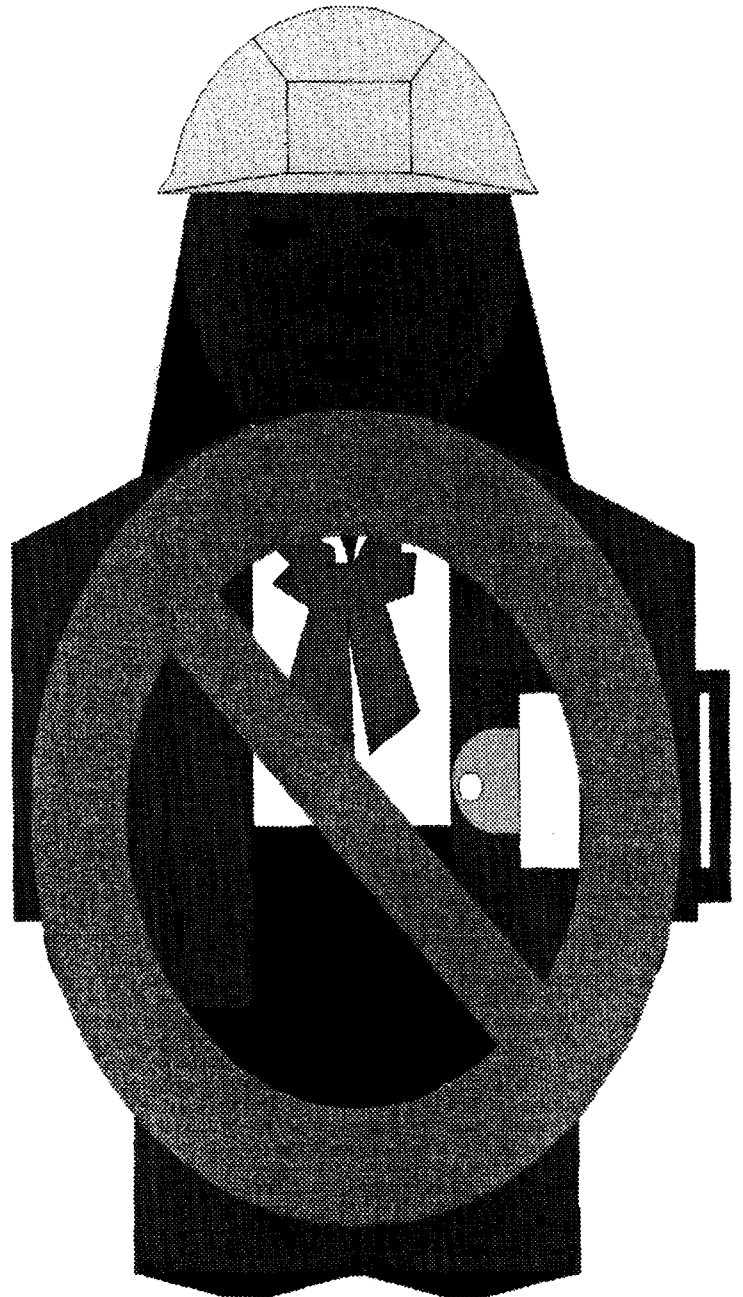
Women constitute half of the world's population and receive ONE TENTH of the total income.

Rural women who contribute at least fifty percent of food production receive little or NO agricultural training.

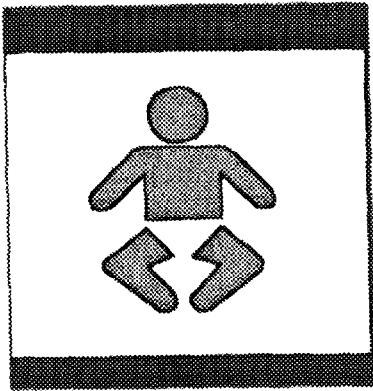


LACK OF SKILLS

85-90% of labor force in world's export manufacturing zones is unskilled or semi-skilled



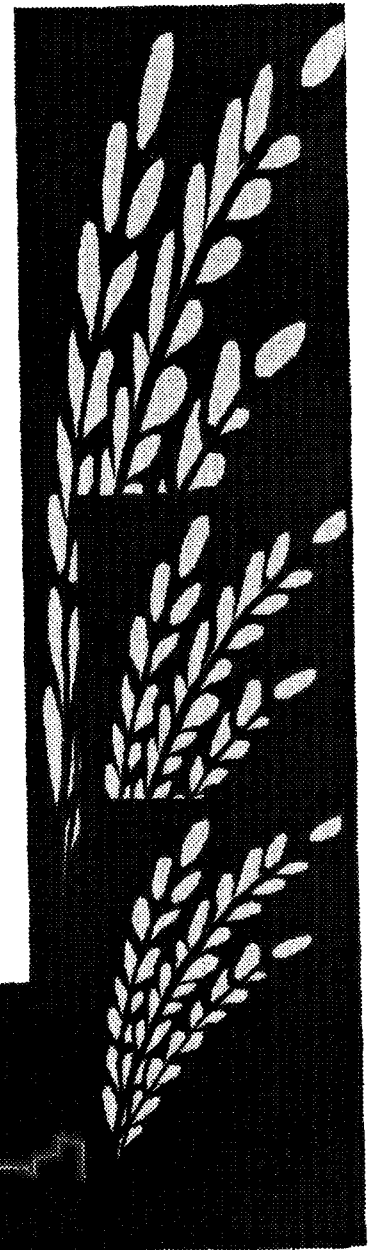
WORK HOURS



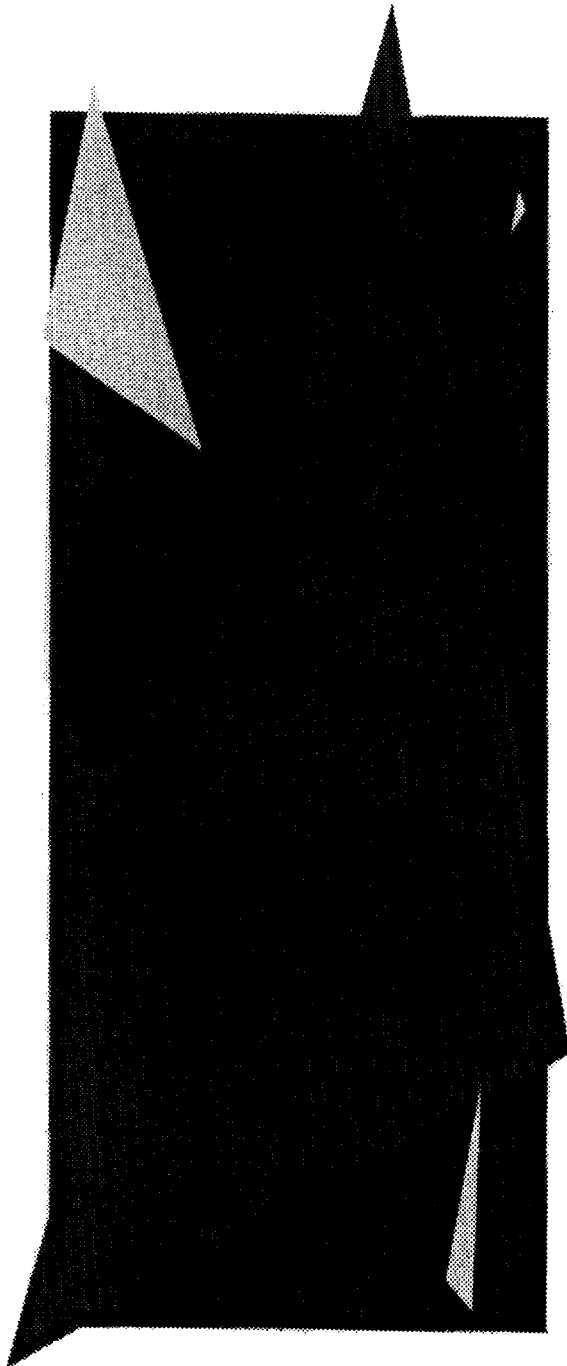
Women's work day is longer than that of men -

15 to 19 hours

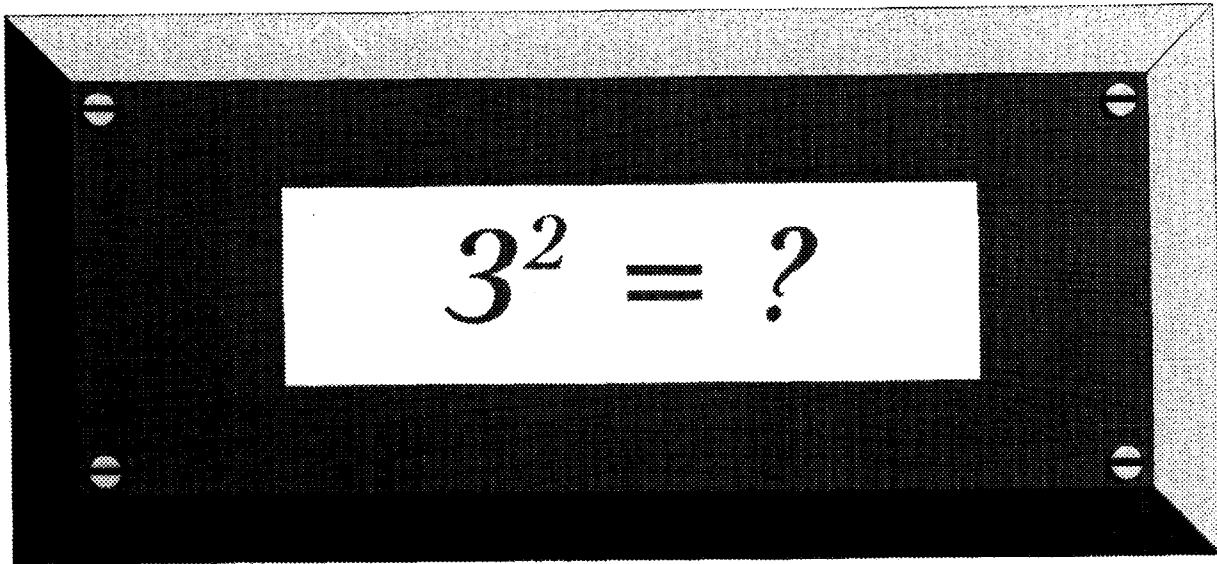
**Women care for children,
cook meals,
perform
the long and
tiring tasks of hoeing,
planting and
bringing in the harvest**



Stereotypes affect the achievements of girls



**Girls lack the
opportunity to
develop spatial
skills in
preschools and
primary schools.**



**This leads to their
under-achievement in
mathematics, sciences,
and
technical subjects.**

Girls are only encouraged to study languages and the arts.

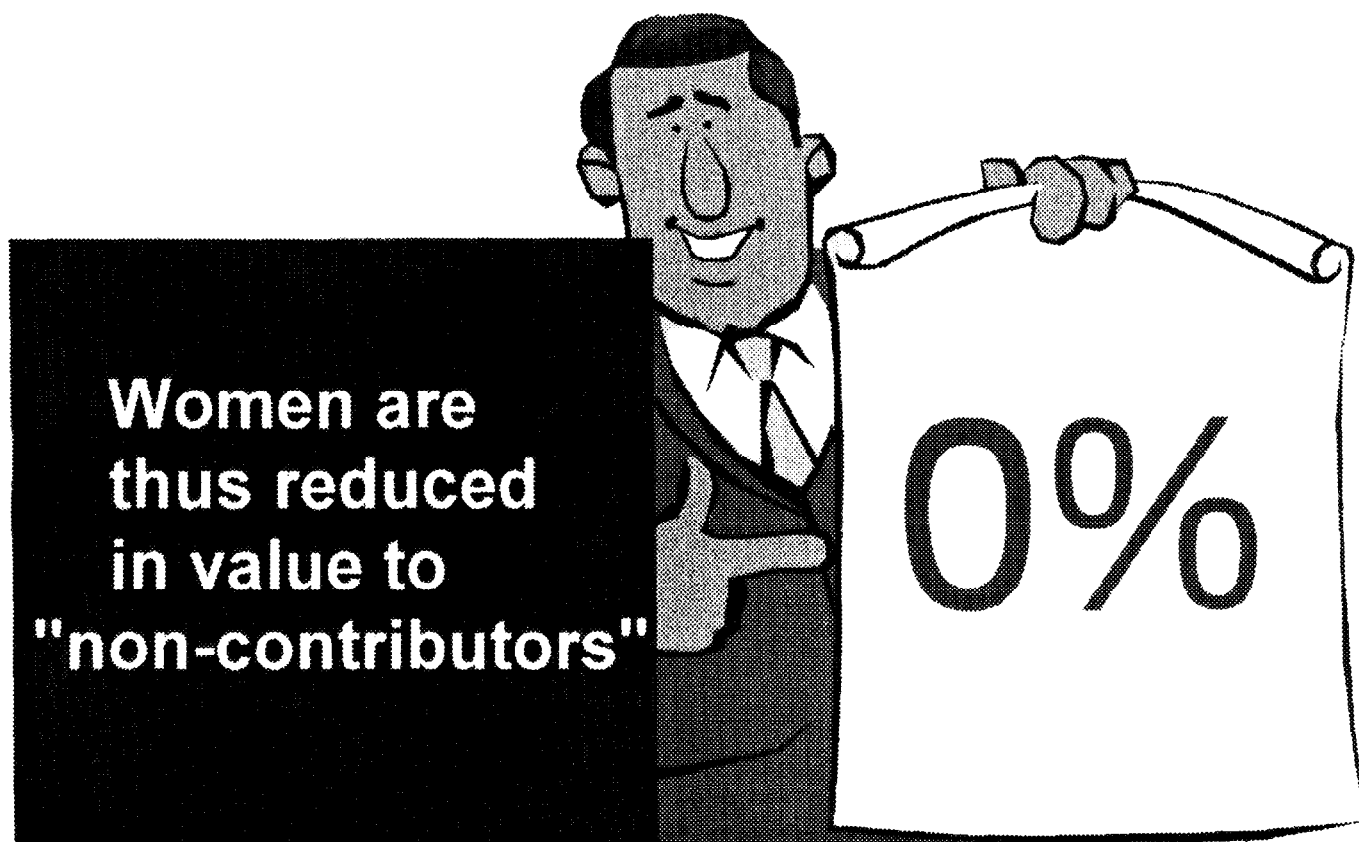


They end up with low-paying, unfulfilling jobs.

EXCLUSION OF WOMEN FROM OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Often, women's work is not counted as labor because statistics:

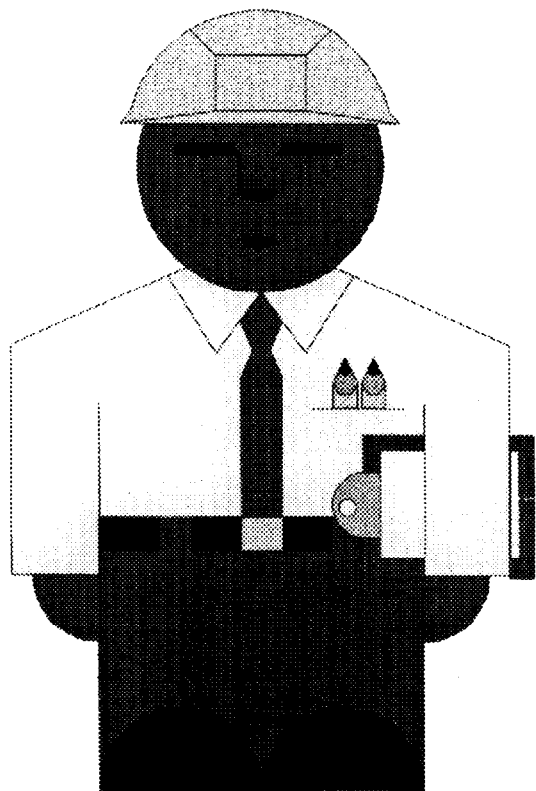
- **exclude both the traditional and modern informal sectors, and**
- **overlook the economic contribution of housework.**





Women are the *backbone* of the rural economy but they enjoy few advantages inherent in this role.

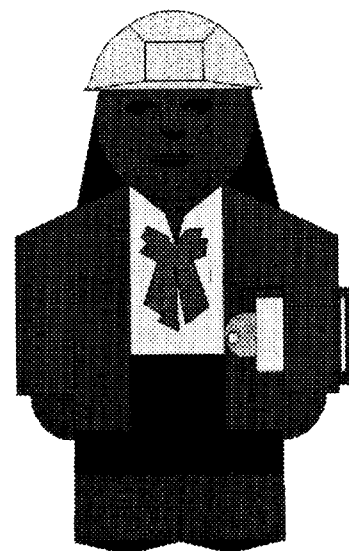
Women and Technology



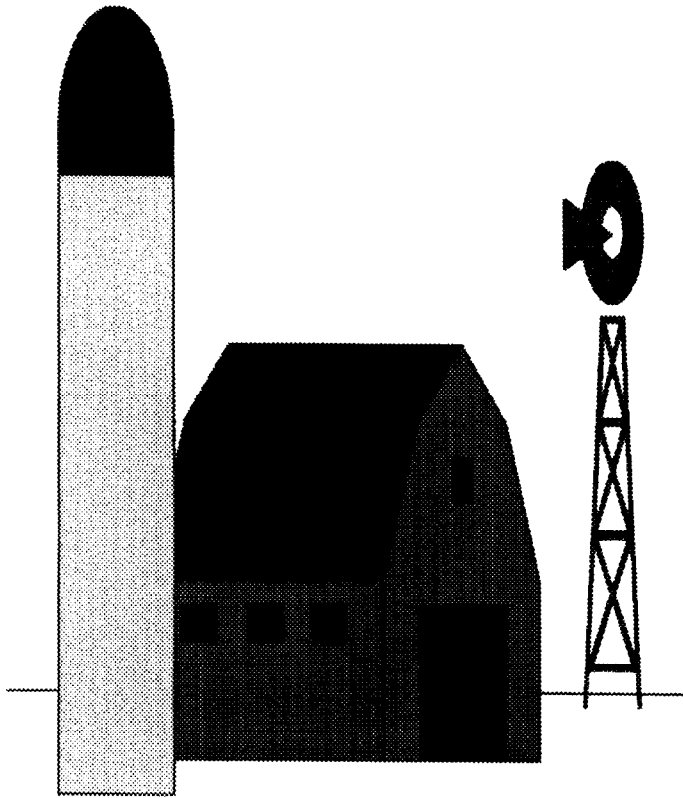
In general, it is men who benefit most from technology.

Women do not have access to equipment which helps in tilling, sowing, weeding and harvesting.

When available, the technology to reduce drudgery is not accessible or is too expensive for women.



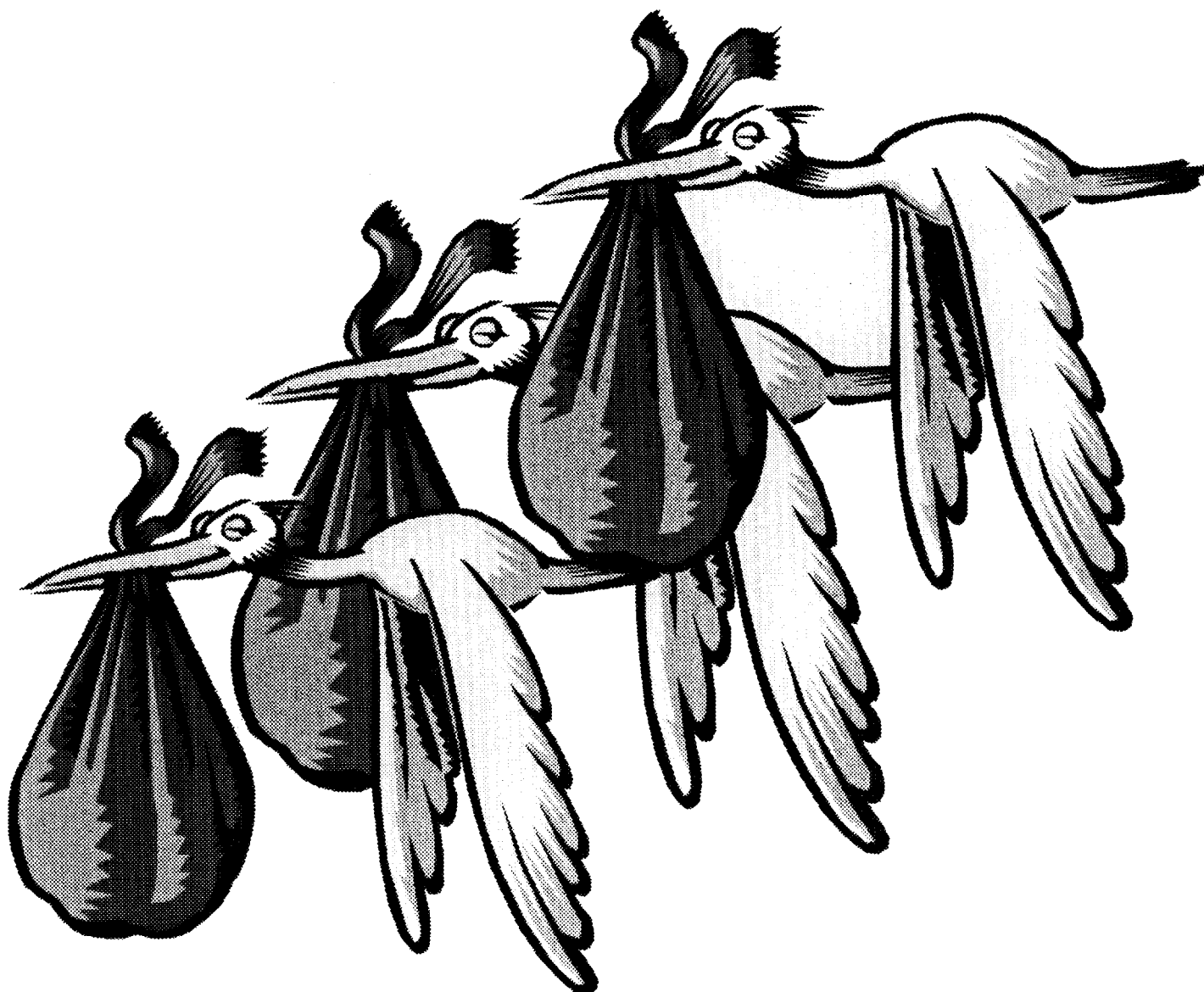
AND WHEN TECHNOLOGY IS AVAILABLE ...



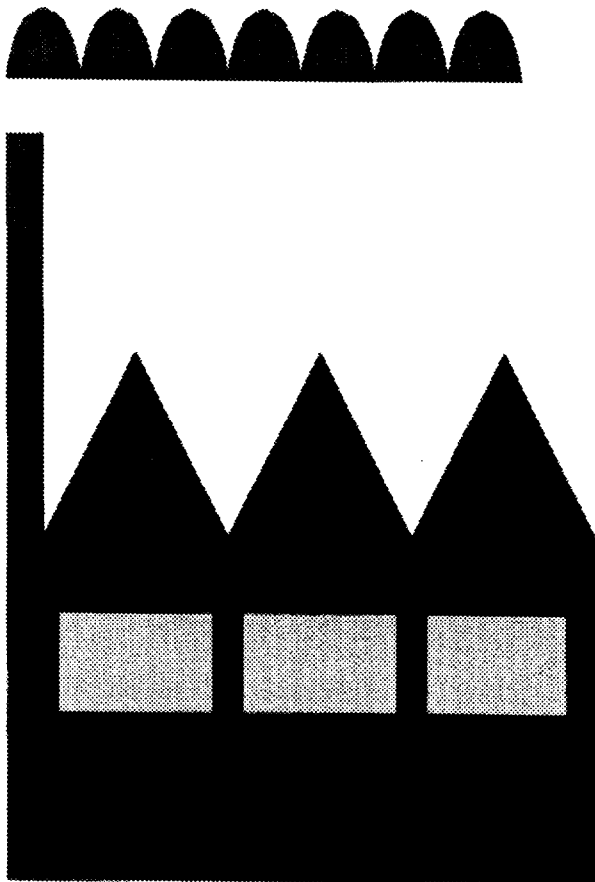
**Women are often
unaware of its
existence and may be
unconvinced of its
merits.**

**They might find it unusable
as they do not know how
to repair or maintain the unit.**

This aggravates the burden of basic housework and cooking and adds to the strain of frequent pregnancies.



WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT



Industrialization brought new
adversity to women.

In Bangladesh - 125 mln
women days were lost when
threshers were introduced.

In Java - Japanese hullers
took away US\$ 50 million of
women's yearly income.

This amounts to the loss of income for **ONE million**
women over four months
each year.

Your comments and suggestions
Gender-sensitivity, A training manual

1. Have you found *the Manual* useful?

Yes No

Please give your reasons: _____

2. How do you envisage using this manual your organization and/or country?

3. What are the strengths of the *Manual*?

4. What are the aspects that can be improved?(please give as many details as possible.)

5. Please give three names and addresses of associates who could benefit from this *Manual*.

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