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INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT:
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By Kamla Nath

The explosion of scholarly interest in the role of women in national development, particularly since the early 1970s, has produced a literature which gives interesting insights into the economic and social conditions of women in the developed and developing countries, on the changes in the conditions and on the dynamics of change.* Most of the studies show that while women have a significant role to play in economic and social development, particularly in the developing countries, they have not been fully integrated in the national development programs. This seriously flawed "design of development" not only has had an adverse effect on the conditions of women, it has also slowed the speed of development. In African countries where rural women play a significant role in food production, the growing food crisis has made the development agencies realize the important role of women in achieving the goal of national self-sufficiency in food (ILO 1984).

Some social scientists believe the reasons for the non-integration of women in national development in a number of Third World countries are political, attitudinal, and conceptual (see Papanek 1976), while others have blamed the deficiency of data on the socio-economic roles of women as the main reason for ignoring women in development planning (Ula Olin in UNDP June 1980).

The International Conference on Women in Mexico (1975) stressed, in the World Plan of Action (WPA), the need for the integration of women in national development as equal partners with men by giving them equal opportunities for education, training and employment, and equal access to other development resources. Earlier in 1970 the UN had announced the full integration of women in the total development effort as the strategy for the Second International Development Decade of the 1970s.

As a follow-up to the Second Development Decade and the World Plan of Action, a number of African countries announced the integration of women in national development

*See the excellent bibliography on the subject in Tinker et al 1976, updated by Rahini 1978, Hafkin 1977 on Africa, Saulniers and Rakawoski 1977 on Africa and Latin America and Nelson 1979 on South Asia. Some of the individual contributions on general issues and specific case studies include Dixon 1978, Chip and Green 1980, Dauber and Cain 1980, Birdsall et al. 1972, Hanger 1973, Berger 1974, Moock 1976, Oboler 1977, Pala et al. 1975 and Pala 1978, Stichter 1977, Jellicoe 1978, Fortman 1977, Bader 1975, Brain 1976, O'Barr 1975/76, Swantz 1977, and Sogaard 1975/76.

as one of the main goals of development planning. The WPA urged the member countries of the United Nations to set up national machineries that would work toward that integration. Almost all the development aid agencies - bilateral, international and NGOs - also committed themselves to give priority to projects which will benefit women directly and to include women's components in all the other development projects funded by them. In order to achieve this objective, major development aid agencies like the UN have also stressed the importance of collecting preliminary socio-economic data on the target population of every development project so that the project designs would strengthen and enhance women's position in the proposed project. As a follow-up of the above developments, the Lagos Plan of Action I elaborated on the designs for the setting-up of national machineries for integration of women in Africa.

In 1980 the International Center for Research on Women collected data on the number of countries that had set up national machineries for integration of women (United Nations 1980). It describes 140 national machineries set up in 91 countries of the world, including 44 African countries. From the data six structural types were identified: full-fledged ministries, bureaus, departments or divisions, commissions, committees or councils, political organs, and others, such as non-government organizations.

Among the African countries, Ivory Coast was one of the countries which set up a Ministry for Women's Conditions early in 1976 and then formed a National Commission for the Advancement of Women to serve as its think tank in providing the necessary linkages. The Ministry and the Commission have been instrumental in collecting data on the conditions of women and to evolve measures that will improve their social and economic conditions; of particular interest have been projects for assisting women in the processing and sale of fish, and for improvement of their health, hygiene and nutrition, and proposals to organize women traders into cooperative societies. Ghana established a National Council on Women and Development in 1975 under the Office of the President, which works through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Council consists of a national advisory board and has eight committees charged with dealing development issues relating to various sectors - such as education, employment, legal affairs, and research. In addition, it has a national secretariat and a regional secretariat in each of the nine regions of the country. The Council has evolved programs for the encouragement of handicrafts in urban and rural areas and in giving financial assistance to rural women through a revolving loan scheme. In Kenya, a National Council of Women was set up as early as 1965. Later, a Women's Bureau was set up with the Ministry of Housing and Social Services. The National Council of Women works closely with the Bureau. The Bureau consists of nine committees, each of which deals with subjects like finance, fund-

raising, evaluation and project monitoring. Through the Bureau, the Council has established contacts with some 6,000 women's groups through the country to extend financial project assistance. The Council is also trying to impress on the regional planning organizations the importance of including women in planning and policy-making. In Nigeria, on the other hand, a division within the Ministry of Social Development coordinates women's activities throughout the country

Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Tanzania, and Zambia have organized national women's sections within their political parties to organize women for political agitation and propaganda, and for the political education of women. Senegal, on the other hand, has a state secretariat for women's conditions which applies government policy with regard to women. In addition, there are two non-governmental organizations - the High Committee of Women and the National Movement of Women of the Socialist Party. There is also a voluntary women's organization, the Federation of Women's Associations of Senegal.

Very little reliable data is available, however, on the working of these national machineries created for the integration of women in development. Nor has any foolproof organizational design been evolved which could ensure the desired results. A thorough evaluation of the working of these machineries established in developing countries is imperative, however, in order to study their effectiveness in achieving the objectives of the WPA.

Since the objective of the WPA is to integrate women in the total national development effort, it is essential that women should be integrated not only in the broad national development planning exercise but in all the machineries of development planning - local, regional, and sectoral - and in designing and implementing all development projects. This is essential because while policy-makers, planners, and senior government executives in a number of countries are committed to the aim of giving women equal access to development resources, they appear to overlook the importance of implementing the national commitment in day-to-day planning and decision-making. This is partly due to learned behavior - most of the senior civil servants are trained in Western development planning models, where the contribution of women towards economic development has not been given much importance until recently. It is also partly due to the absence of structures within each ministry or department that would ensure that women's interests are secured. In order to achieve the objectives of the WPA, it is vital not only to include the importance of women in national policy announcements and in national development plans but also to create frameworks in sectoral, regional, and local planning machineries that will ensure women's integration throughout the process of development planning. Furthermore, since most of the development resources are channeled through specific development projects, it is

important to identify women's interests before the preparation of project design, so that the designs evolved would safeguard women's traditional interests and, in addition, would strengthen and enhance their socio-economic status. The shortfalls between national policy objectives and achievements as well as the need for developing strong national machineries is illustrated in this paper from data on The Gambia, West Africa.

The Gambia is a small country on the west coast of Africa with an area of 10,360 sq.km., population nearly 700,000 (1983), and GDP per capita of US \$282 (estimates for 1982/83). Some 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas, where agriculture is the main industry, but there are no enclaves of modern agricultural estates. Groundnuts - grown primarily by men - are the main cash crop of the country. Rice, sorghum, and millet are the main food crops. The country, however, is heavily dependent on imports of foodgrains; almost half of the total demand for foodgrains is met by imports, mainly rice. In the urban areas, commerce and services are the main economic activities; the industrial manufacturing sector is very small and it contributes less than 6 percent to the total GDP. Nearly 90 percent of the population is illiterate (1978).

Both rural and urban women are expected to have an independent source of cash income. In the rural areas both men and women are expected to grow food crops for domestic consumption and also to grow a cash crop. Men and women have reciprocal rights and obligations and contribute to meet the cash needs of the household. In addition, each provides for his/her personal cash needs (Nath 1983, Dey 1981 and Haswell 1963).

Economic Planning in the Gambia

In the decade following the achievement of independence in 1965, the country planned and implemented three capital expenditure programs which were not based on any comprehensive planning but were aimed at improving basic infrastructures. Preparation of the First Five-Year Plan 1975/76 - 1979/80 was the first step in comprehensive economic planning. The Plan placed great emphasis on rural development and declared self-reliance to be its declared central philosophy. Major agricultural development projects like irrigated rice and swamp development, along with modernizing the techniques of groundnut production and the production of upland cereals were introduced. No mention, however, was made of the need to ensure that these projects benefit rural women. In fact the projects were so designed and executed that they increased men's income by introducing labor-saving techniques to male cash-crop farming but introduced labor-intensive techniques in female farming. Thus males increased their income by bringing more land under cultivation and by using labor-saving devices like oxenization and the use of improved implements; females

could increase their production - not necessarily cash income - only by increasing their labor input, which has had adverse effects on their health and that of their children.

The Second Five Year-Plan (1981/82 - 1985/86) included projects specifically directed towards women - for example, projects relating to development of swamp development, vegetable gardening, modernization of the salt industry, the expansion of informal business sectors, the introduction of labor-saving techniques for the processing of food for home consumption and projects relating to nutrition and child care. It did not, however, lay down any guidelines for the development of infrastructures in various development ministries and departments for planning programs and projects that would ensure women's integration at the sectoral, regional, and local levels of development planning and would give women equal access to development resources. The total proposed funding for projects specifically aimed at women appears to be a small proportion of the total development funds needed for the execution of the plan. Action-Aid, one of the NGOs operating in Gambia had estimated that as of 1980, only 10 percent of the total rural development assistance had reached the women: the rest had been capitalized by males. In spite of its commitment to the integration of women in the total national development effort, the second Five-Year Plan may not fare any better than what had been achieved prior to 1980, unless it makes a specific effort to integrate women in all the development programs.

National Development Planning Machineries - Shortcomings and the Need for Change

The Gambia has a well-developed national planning structure which has evolved since the setting up of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development. At the apex is the National Planning Council headed by the president and consisting of all the members of his cabinet, representatives of various interest groups in the country (including the National Women's Council), and senior civil servants of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development and other development ministries. It also has sectoral committees and a project monitoring committee. Its secretariat, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development, is responsible for formulation of the national Five Year Plan and annual development plans in accordance with the objectives, priorities and policies decided by the National Planning Council, after discussions of the country's needs as expressed through the sectoral committees and based on the resources available for development planning. The secretariat coordinates external development assistance and prepares the development budget and thus works in close coordination with the Ministry of Finance and with sectoral planning committees of all the

ministries and departments of the government. The government administration, on the other hand, consists of the president and his secretariat, five regional commissioners (members of the civil service), 36 seyfos (elected members of political parties) in charge of districts, and alkalos (village chiefs) in charge of villages. The major proportion of the public investment programme is financed from external resources; 68 percent of the First Five Year Plan investment came from external aid and 80 percent of the Second Five Year Plan investment is expected to come from external sources.

In response to the UN declaration on the equality of women and the need to integrate women in national development, the Gambian Parliament established the National Women's Council and a Women's Bureau in 1980. The Council consists of 27 members, representing all the regions of the country and women's associations. Twelve of the councillors are drawn from the four provinces and primarily represent the interests of rural women; six represent Banjul and the Western Area which has a large majority of the urban population; the other nine are nominated members representing different interest groups in the country. The National Women's Council is charged with the function of advising the government on measures that would ensure the integration of Gambian women as equal partners in the economic, social and cultural development of the country. It is also supposed to collect data on the socio-economic conditions of women and to devise programs to assist government in the establishment of machineries and procedures for continuous review and evaluation of the progress made by women in national development. For administering the affairs of the Council, and for planning and carrying out its program, a Women's Bureau has been set up as a department under the Office of the President. The Bureau consists of an executive secretary, a deputy secretary, a public relations officer, and an administrative officer. The executive secretary of the Bureau is an ex-officio member of the Council and represents the NWC in the National Planning Council.

In order to decentralize the planning structure of the NWC to the district and village level and to reflect the concerns and values of women from all levels, each councillor from the provinces is expected to organize women's groups in the area she represents; a group may consist of women of one village (if it is a big village) or of a group of small villages. Furthermore, each councillor is expected to meet with the leaders of women's groups in her area, to discuss development problems and the needs of their villages, and to bring these problems for discussions at meetings of the NWC where plans and programs are evolved that would assist these women in improving their economic and social status and their health and other social needs.

The NWC has been able to mobilize the councillors to attend Council meetings regularly. The meetings are

conducted in local languages in order for the councillors to participate fully and to air problems of their area. The NWC solicits economic assistance from a number of development aid agencies in the form of money and supplies (such as improved seeds, fertilizers, fencing materials, and labor-saving food processing machines like groundnut butter grinders, sorghum and millet processing mills). After identifying the needs of rural women through the councillors, the NWC distributes these resources to the rural women. The NWC is also engaged in bringing about changes in social practices like the circumcision of women, which is harmful to their health, by bringing leaders of rural and urban women to discuss the practice, and educate them about its harmful effects and the need to introduce changes. Although the women are the target of such harmful practices, they are also the perpetrators. The NWC also organizes seminars and workshops to educate rural and urban women on improved practices relating to health and nutrition as well as the need for girls' education and training. In order to ensure rural women's participation in meetings of the NWC, the Council arranges to send information relating to its proceedings and program to the councillors and even arranges transport facilities to bring the councillors to attend its meetings in Banjul.

Since the problems faced by women at the grass-root level are solved by women who can interact at the top policy-making level, a fine meshing of top-bottom and bottom-up approaches to development planning is useful for the integration of women. The structure of the NWC, consisting of rural and urban women's representatives as well as those from professional elite women's organizations, has achieved the vertical integration of women at the policy and program planning level, and in projects specifically aimed at women.

The NWC has prepared a Policy Guideline and Programme of Action for 1983-86 which recounts the policy objectives of the national government towards the integration of women in development - education, training, and employment - and gives details of specific projects it plans to initiate and execute during the period. The projects listed in the document include labor-saving techniques for food processing (sorghum and millet processing mills, groundnut butter grinders, palm oil presses, groundnut decorticators), water pumps, improved cooking stoves, day care centers, improved rice-farming tools, well-digging, vegetable gardens, improved fish-smoking facilities, and improved techniques of salt production; they are the same projects that have been included in the Second Five Year Plan. It appears that the NWC wishes to bring under its umbrella the process of soliciting funds, and managing and executing those national projects specifically aimed at women that have been included in the Plan. This strategy would no doubt accelerate commitment from aid agencies to fund these projects, since most of the agencies are keen to include at least some

women's projects in their aid budgets in order to show their commitment to the World Plan of Action. Bringing these projects under the NWC umbrella would no doubt enhance its standing in the government bureaucracy. However, in order to be more effective the NWC and the Women's Bureau should give higher priority to the development of infrastructures that would ensure the horizontal integration of women in national development programs. This is a more complicated task, but one which if achieved would realize the aims and objectives of the WPA.

In creating infrastructures for the horizontal integration of women, the women's machineries will face opposition from a number of development ministries who may resent sharing their power to distribute development funds with the NWC and the Women's Bureau. Except for the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development (MEPID) - the main coordinating ministry for national development planning, which is keen to have a permanent representative from the Women's Bureau to assist them in integrating women's interests in national planning - other ministries might consider having to involve the Bureau in its planning exercise as a waste of time and an unnecessary intrusion in its affairs. None of the ministries have developed any modus operandi for the Bureau's participation in its planning units. There appears to be an attempt to keep the Bureau at arm's length, give it some funds and projects to play with and keep the women's organizations quiet. This attitude applies also to designing development projects in which the Bureau could perform useful service by collecting and providing basic socio-economic data on the role of women in development projects.

Most of the external aid is project-tied and flows from the President's Office and the MEPID to the various ministries and departments. The aid may be sector-tied or project-tied. In case of the former, the aid flows through the development channels of ministries, while in case of the latter specific project staff and infrastructures are created for execution of the project. In sector-tied aid, the ministries channel the aid according to the priority laid down in their sectoral development program. The ministries manage the execution of the program with the help of national staff who may or may not be assisted by expatriates. The execution is done according to stereotype procedures in which no conscious effort is made to develop designs which would ensure women's integration. Furthermore, most of the top executives in various ministries, already overburdened with red tape, may feel disinclined to add to the work required in evolving strategies that would include a women's component in their development programs and projects. In project-tied aid, although the development aid agencies are convinced in theory about the need for introducing women's components in projects funded by them, funds for technical assistance which would assist in identifying the needs of women and in developing modalities

for involving them in the projects are either not provided or are grudgingly released only after the adverse effects of project execution have been brought to light.

In the irrigated rice development schemes of the 1960s and the 1970s, Dey (1981) observed that irrigated land was allotted to the men although rice was a women's crop. The projects had increased men's income and women's dependence on men who hired women for wage work for dry season crops on their rice fields at below-market rates. Furthermore, the male rice producers got heavily subsidized inputs and were organized into rice producers' cooperative societies. No women's rice producers' societies were organized, however. In spite of the availability of the data on the above research, no attempt was made to introduce a women's component in designing the Jahaly-Pachar irrigated rice development project (phase II) which is currently being executed, until local women were organized by the National Women's Council to protest against this discrimination (conversation with the chairperson of the NWC).

In the 1970s projects for the development of swamp rice made women's rice production tasks more difficult; it involved women having to walk longer distances and work for longer hours each day. The women stay on the farms from morning until late in the evening and thus neglect the food and other needs of their children and of themselves (Weil: 1976). As a result, the maximum incidence of infant mortality occurs during the rice planting season (World Bank 1979).

Recently, results of the development of land by the Freedom from Hunger Campaign show that the developed land was distributed to the compound heads, who allocated it among women of the compound. The redistribution did not take into account the fact that women used to have their personal fields whose produce they controlled. According to a survey conducted by Freedom from Hunger Campaign (Krimpen 1983), 45 percent of the respondents said that when surplus rice from the redistributed land is sold, men will keep the cash; the other 55 percent mentioned that women will keep it. Thus the situation regarding the appropriation of cash income from rice crops on the newly distributed land remains fluid - different arrangements might emerge in different households. No modalities have been developed by the government or the Freedom from Hunger Campaign office which would ensure that women will benefit from the project.

In an Action Aid-assisted project for the development of vegetable gardens, women were organized into cooperative vegetable gardening societies for the distribution of newly developed garden plots and other inputs. Some men, who volunteered to clear the land for the project and to fence it, on a self-help basis, requested enrollment as members, and later laid claim for allotment of plots as full-fledged members. The men, however, do not grow vegetables in The Gambia, nor do they draw water from the wells for watering the gardens. The male members of one of the societies,

visited by us, ask the women members to work on their plots in turn, while they themselves supervise the women to ensure that their plots are not neglected. Some of the male members, by virtue of being the important members of the Action-Aid program committee in the village, have acquired an important position in the women's societies. They are already controlling the resources meant to be channeled to the women. In one area, the male president of the village society had assumed control over the onion storage shed constructed by Action-Aid for the storage of onions grown by the women members of the gardening society. The president had the key to the store and was using it to store his corn crop.

A project formulated for the introduction of improved techniques of salt production was so designed that the operation of the new units would require organization of labor in teams, each consisting of two or more persons. Furthermore, it would require male and female labor for construction of the units and for their operations. The project proposed that husband-wife teams should be organized for ownership of the units, assuming that incomes are pooled at the household level. In the traditional industry, however, women own their individual salt pits and receive no assistance from the husbands; nor do they share their incomes from salt production with their husbands. For some operations (like harvesting the salt and cleaning the pits after the harvest) where more than one person is required, the women get assistance from their daughters (who later inherit the pits) or from neighboring pit owners on a reciprocal basis. In a survey conducted to investigate the suitability of the project for the traditional producers, it was found that no men were involved in salt production; women salt producers were not prepared to share ownership of the new units with the husbands. The report on the survey recommended that the project should be redesigned to suit the existing socio-economic structures and to keep in mind the availability of labor - both type and quantity - for salt production from the traditional producers (Nath 1983).

Despite the keenness of donor agencies to include the study in the project budget, however, the department concerned with the execution of the project was not convinced about its usefulness. The findings of that study highlight the need to conduct such studies for as many projects as possible; they have also demonstrated the need for proper timing of studies so that data are available before projects are designed.

Although women are an important source of agricultural production, the cooperative department has no provisions for organizing women into producers' societies. While male producers of groundnuts and irrigated rice have been organized into cooperative societies in order to have access to development resources like inputs and credit, no women's producer society has been organized. All women's societies are registered under credit and thrift societies; the

societies impose heavier obligations on the members than the producers' societies, particularly regarding the compulsory deposits of savings. The procedure for getting loans against one's own savings are cumbersome in the case of credit and thrift societies, while in the case of producers' societies loans are advanced against the collateral of the forthcoming year's crop.

The Need for Strengthening the Women's Bureau

The experience of rural women with development programs described above shows the shortcomings in the existing machineries for planning and execution of rural development programs and highlights the importance of creating additional national machineries at each level of development planning as well as for strengthening the existing machineries like the Women's Bureau.

In the national planning exercise, representatives of the NWC, fortified by the trained staff of the Women's Bureau, should participate actively in meetings of the National Planning Council and those of the sectoral and regional planning committees in order to ensure that women's economic and social needs are incorporated. One of the officers of the Women's Bureau should be permanently assigned to the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development to ensure that the NWC's objectives are included in the plans.

In the execution of development plans, each ministry should investigate the needs of women and plan projects so that women's interests can be safeguarded and strengthened. In order to achieve these goals, each ministry should create (within its development planning and program execution unit) a sub-unit that is entrusted with the task of ensuring women's integration in the preparation and execution of its development programs. The unit should work in close collaboration with the Women's Bureau. The Bureau should in turn provide broad data on the economic and social roles of women and specific data relevant to each project to the sub-units created by the development ministries of the government. In addition it should cooperate with the sub-units in evolving logistics for the integration of women in each project by conducting socio-economic research on the target population of projects, to identify women's special needs prior to the preparation of project designs. In order to perform this task, the Bureau should develop a strong data collection and research unit.

The Bureau should organize rural and urban women into voluntary groups which should be used by extension agents of all development ministries for the development of local structures to funnel resources which would benefit the women as much as the men. The Bureau should be able to reach the groups through a network of field officers posted at the regional and village level and through meetings with the secretaries of voluntary urban women's groups.

The Bureau will need to manage and execute some development projects related to women's activities which are not covered by any of the existing ministries or departments of the government; a number of such projects are included in the NWC's Program for 1983-86 described above. In order to manage and execute such projects the Bureau's management capabilities should be developed. It should recruit personnel at the lower and middle level - field officers, investigators, and project management and research directors - and at the top level by procuring advisory staff. However, at the present stage of budgetary difficulties of the government of the Gambia, which has led to the imposition of a freeze on staff recruitment, the Bureau will need to scout for external assistance for funding its recruitment of local and international staff and even for acquiring much-needed administrative infrastructure and supplies. Such assistance is seldom provided by aid agencies - international, bilateral, or NGOs - whose aid is usually project-tied.

The Role of Women in Development Agencies and the NGOs

Agencies like the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and the African Training and Research Center for Women in the Economic Commission for Africa have an important role to play in strengthening the national machineries created for the integration of women in development, particularly the NWC and the Women's Bureau. The machineries in turn will ensure creation of additional structures, frameworks, and machineries in the country at national and sectoral planning levels and at the regional and local development planning and plan implementation level. The agencies should provide technical assistance and resources to the Women's Bureau for recruitment and training of lower and middle level staff and for technical assistance for the management and execution of projects as well as for the organization of a data collection and research unit. The UN Voluntary Fund and the African Training and Research Center for Women can act as catalysts in achieving the goal of the World Plan of Action by strengthening national machineries for women in development, like the Gambian NWC and the Women's Bureau.

In the Gambia a number of NGOs are engaged in the development and execution of projects which are directed specifically to benefit rural women and children. Catholic Relief Services has a program, in a large number of villages, for providing food for pre-school children and organizing mothers for the production of nutritious food as well as for increasing their cash incomes. It has also introduced labor-saving techniques for processing upland cereals for home consumption. It organizes rural women into cooperative groups for execution and management of the programs in their villages. Action-Aid similarly is engaged in promoting rural women's income-generating activities by

developing vegetable gardens for household consumption and sale. It also organizes women vegetable producers into cooperative groups for the allotment of land and delivery of other development inputs and provides agricultural extension services for teaching the women improved techniques of production, marketing, and storage. Freedom from Hunger Campaign is involved in development of swamps for rice production. The Freedom from Hunger Campaign, however, deals only with land development, while the distribution of the developed land among individual producers is done by male compound heads. It thus does not involve rural women directly in decision-making, because land distribution traditionally done by the village chief is connected with village politics in which women do not participate. Recently, however, the Freedom from Hunger Campaign has organized women's groups in eleven villages for the development of rice seed multiplication farms.

The NGOs operate on a shoe-string basis and evolve efficient methods of capital use in rural development programs. They also have well developed infrastructures to reach rural women and have developed women's groups for the execution and management of their programs. A number of NGOs can provide technical and infrastructure development assistance to the Bureau for execution of its programs, which it might undertake to manage and execute. The NGOs should also cooperate with the Bureau in designing their program, which should be in line with the programs of the NWC as outlined in its Policy Guidelines.

Conclusions

The data show that while the National Women's Council machineries for the integration of women in development, created by the government in 1980, have a significant role to play in integrating Gambian women in development, they need to be strengthened and integrated into national, sectoral and regional development machineries. Furthermore, while the NWC has developed modalities for the vertical integration of rural women, no infrastructure exists in individual development ministries to ensure their horizontal integration. The Women's Bureau, which is the secretariat of the National Women's Council, is not equipped to coordinate and execute the NWC's program for women due to the lack of sufficient manpower needed to incorporate women's priorities in the development programs and to provide links between the planning of projects and their execution - such as channeling project resources to women's groups at the local level, strengthening group organization, and imparting managerial skills. The Bureau also lacks project monitoring infrastructures as well as data collection capabilities; it needs to be strengthened on all these fronts. Only when the interest of poor rural and urban women are fully reflected in the national machineries and planning processes, and when

it is possible to move beyond relying on discrete projects, will significant progress have been made.

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