



**AN OVERVIEW
OF
GENDER INTEGRATION
AND
WOMEN IN COOPERATIVE
DEVELOPMENT IN
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**



W.U. Herath



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By
W U Herath
Advisor
Human Resource Development

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INTERNATIONAL CO-OP
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International Co-operative Alliance
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
New Delhi, India

International Co-operative Alliance

Head Office

15 Route des Morillons
CH-1218 Grand Saconnex
Geneva, Switzerland

Tel : (41) 22-7984121
Fax : (41) 22-7984122
Tlx : (45) 415620 ICA CH

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

'Bonow House'
43 Friends Colony (East)
New Delhi 110 065, India

Tel : (91) 11-6835123
Fax : (91) 11-6835568
Tlx : (81) 31-75025 DICA IN

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PREFACE

The women section of the ICA Regional Office for Asia has been terminated with the expiry of the UN Decade for Women (1975-85) with the expectation that the member countries would continue with the programme. However, the general trend of the continuity has not progressed to the expectation as revealed by many studies carried out by social agencies under the UN system.

The women co-operative leaders who associated with the ICA women's programme continued to request for women's programmes to be reviewed and also to create a forum for further progress. Therefore, the ICA ROAP decided to undertake an assessment of the current situation in regard to women's participation in co-operatives in the region in terms of concepts, strategies and activities. The study had the following objectives:

- * To assess as to what extent the gender integration has taken place for economic and social development and the activities of co-operatives of the given country,
- * To assess the level of participation of women in political, social and economic decision making and productivity,
- * To assess the level of participation of women in decision making and activities in co-operatives,
- * To compare the level of socio-economic development of a given country with gender situation,
- * To identify the socio-cultural and economic factors hindering gender integration in development with special emphasis on co-operatives,
- * To identify critical areas for future strategies for promoting gender awareness and gender participation, resulting in gender integration in co-operative development,
- * To create awareness among authorities and all concerned in gender issues on the level of development a given country and the gap which exists in co-operatives.

16 member countries agreed to participate in the study. Australia, Singapore, South Korea and Japan agreed to bear the cost of the studies. 14 reports have been received by the ICA ROAP. Practically all researchers have been experienced in the field of gender research and co-operatives.

These studies revealed existing issues in gender integration in co-operatives within a broader socio-economic environment. The studies will be of immense help for further gender planning in the region.

The Regional Overview has been prepared mainly on the basis of research work carried out by independent researchers in 14 countries. They used a format provided by the ICA ROAP. Specially, my gratitude goes to them for their laborious task, with several obstacles of not having enough data on gender issues in the co-operative sector. The conclusions and recommendations are more or less a synthesis of their labour.

In addition, many mimeographed and printed material on the subject of gender published by ILO, FAO and UNESCO have been used. They covered many topics in depth. Their contribution is also acknowledged.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The overview given in this document provides an analysis of trends of gender integration and planning issues in co-operatives of the Asia-Pacific Region. However, the experience is limited to the member countries of the ICA and the samples have been used particularly from the countries, where a study has been undertaken at the initiative of ICA ROAP. The studies have been carried out by independent researchers who consist of 90% females.

The overview also tries to reflect on the current complexity of various gender concepts used by many authorities as well as feminist groups. However, the basis of assessment has been the empowerment model rather than equality, anti-poverty and efficiency. Model of Women in Development (WID) has been widely used. The subject is under debate and mass production of literature has confused the situation more. As this is one of the few documents on the subject of gender in the context of co-operatives, some discussions have been undertaken on the concepts, plans and mechanisms in order to provide a broader environment to the discussion.

One cannot ignore the role of inter-governmental and international NGOs in the field of Women in Development. They have more influence than any other type of organisation, since the declaration of UN Decade for Women (1975-1985). The activities of such organisations have effectively influenced the country programmes in which co-operatives have played a fairly active role. The role of ICA has also been one factor in it.

The summaries of conclusions and issues have been provided without much editing or additions. In certain circumstances, sources outside the countries subjected to study have also been used to provide a holistic picture. No recommendations have been presented except the ideas given by the researchers as we treat the document as a document for discussion in a wider forum. The document would also become a part of a process of determination of gender planning concepts for co-operative policies, strategies and mechanisms which

will be determined for the Region as well as country specific gender programmes in co-operatives.

Women in Development is somewhat related to social justice and welfare of a country more than a developed resource still, due to the fact that the issue is within the socio-cultural context. Therefore, a country's human development aspect is a basis for evaluating the situation. Hence country's position in the Human Development Index of the UNDP has been taken into account, in addition to socio-economic indicators which are generally used for evaluation.

Broad achievements in women as a resource, in terms of national development, too has been considered in order to compare the macro policies, strategies and mechanisms with the co-operative as a sector within the national context. In certain countries, it has been found that there is a dichotomy between the two.

The researchers engaged by the ICA ROAP had a time frame and also financial constraints to undertake an in-depth study in to the subject. Some of the countries do not have up-to-date sectoral data. In some of the member countries, we could not get researchers through the national co-operative organisations. Therefore, in the regional review, we had to use data obtained from external authoritative sources.

The UN agencies and the World Bank have done extensive research work into general gender situation in selected countries and also have undertaken some pilot projects and programmes in the field of gender integration. Whatever possible information which we could obtain on these projects too have been used for the regional review.

Gender is a subject for research in sociology and related fields as well as economic fields by many independent researchers and authors. Vast literature is available on the issue. Some of the selected sources have been used in order to assess the validity of approaches and mechanisms.

Gender research in co-operatives is a new subject, although gender programmes have been initiated during the UN Decade for Women. Therefore, a proper data base on co-operatives is also not available for use. Hence the researchers' studies were restricted and some of the reports were biased towards general gender issues. However, we feel that this attempt itself is a beginning of the process to have a proper data base and research work in this direction.

One of the obstacles for conducting proper gender research has been the lack of data as well as the concepts and definitions used. In the current data bases in

many developing countries, unpaid family labour and household work of women are not counted. This is due to the assumption that they are not productive economic activities. Many gender researchers as well as development planners today argue that these activities should be treated as economically productive. When values are not given to these activities, naturally, the productivity of women would be treated as low. It also leads to undermining of their household role as housewives. As a result, the findings of such studies would be misleading.

2. GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND CO-OPERATIVES

2.1 Concepts

The term 'gender' has been existing since the psychologists and feminists started using it. But the new definition given provides a deeper meaning. A definition explaining the current thinking is found as follows: "gender is a 'social construct': The term is used to denote socially and culturally determined differences between women and men as opposed to biological differences determined by factors which are chromosomal, anatomical, hormonal and physiological"*. In this sense, women and men are considered to be made rather than born. The environmental conditioning determines the behaviour patterns of males and females. However, as Time magazine reports (Jan. 20, 1992), some scientists are trying to prove that gender differences have effects from the biology of the brain too. The gender is widely used to connote the social relationship between men and women. It is also said that gender differences are socially and psychologically created and situated. Gendering is also not a simple or single process but a highly complex one involving psychological events and socialisation starting almost from birth.

The struggle for bringing equality between the two sexes has been a history in itself. When the Victorian era was over, new thinking and concepts have been introduced to eliminate the imbalances. Moser has tried to analyse the evolution of these concepts and polemics in terms of strategies and emphasis. She identifies 5 phases of development:"

- Welfare approach to women in development
- Equality approach to women in development
- Anti-poverty approach to women in development
- Efficiency approach to women in development
- Empowerment approach to women in development

* Gallin & Ferguson - *The Women and International Development Annual*, Vol. 2, p.2, 1991

** *Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs*, World Development, Vol.17, No.11, 1989.

Development of gender approaches has been much influenced by the changes in the social and economic development dating from the industrial development. Women's potential as a development resource has been emphasized basically in the context of socialist countries when the perceived imbalances between the two sexes became marginal. These countries represent higher percentage of women's involvement in the development process on equal terms. A feminist argues 'Capitalism is also against feminism, for if women's consciousness change, they will no longer tolerate low paid, least skilled jobs that they are presently confined to. They will also resist becoming voracious consumers (specially of non-utility items such as cosmetics) and fight against being seen as sex objects.'"

Feminism too had different stages of development from the nineteenth century in the U.S. The fervor it had in the US has now declined during the eighties. Time/CNN poll conducted in February, 1992 reveals that 63% of American women do not consider themselves as feminists. The explanation has been not that women are free and equal but because of the backlash the feminist movement received through many campaigns. That means the strategies used for the empowerment of women have been unrealistic or inappropriate. It is also due to the positive developments for women which occurred in the society during the last two decades.

The earlier concept used from the colonial era has been the welfare approach to gender issues. The main concern being the maintenance of law and order for smooth trade, the governments, through their agencies, provided social welfare activities to people including women. Women were treated as a physically vulnerable group. They were to be passive recipients of support. Their main goal was to do housekeeping, child bearing and rearing. In this process, eradication of malnutrition and family's physical survival were considered as targets. Population control was another objective.

The USAID propagated the equity approach, popularly known as Women in Development, in the early seventies. In fact, the UN Development Decade for Women (1975-85) was aimed at equality of women as another contributor to development and peace. Declaration of Mexico on the equality of women and their contribution to development and peace in 1975, laid down the principles for the promotion of women as a resource for development and peace (see Annex 1).

* *Some Questions on Feminism and its Relevance in South Asia*, Kamla Bhasin, Nighat Said Khan, 1986

The declaration of the UN Decade for Women gives emphasis on equality of gender by taking the situation prevailing at that time. The programme of action proposed reflects on the governments taking over major part of the burden of policy adjustments, structural and legislative changes.

In spite of the efforts made by UN agencies and the governments, the UN progress report produced at the Copenhagen Conference says, "The review and appraisal of progress achieved during the past five years indicate that in many countries, the situation of women in the so-called backward sectors have worsened. In particular, it has worsened with respect to the conditions of employment and education for women in the rural and the so-called marginal urban sectors. In many countries, the actual number of female illiterates is increasing. In fact, illiteracy rates for the female population appear to have increased and are projected to increase in several countries... In many countries, transfer of inappropriate technology has worsened the employment and health conditions of women; displacement of labour occurs and foreign models of consumption accompany such transfer... Finally, the current world economic crisis has contributed to the worsening of the situation of women in general.."

The report goes on to mention that it proves that any measures for women, isolated from major priorities, strategies and sectors of development cannot result in any substantial progress towards attaining goals of the decade. Secondly, legislative and developmental action, unless accompanied by positive and concerted action to change attitudes and prejudices, cannot be fully effective. Thirdly, mere provision of equal rights, development services and opportunities will not, by themselves, help women to benefit from them without simultaneous special supportive measures.

The report of the UN Conference in Nairobi too indicated the worry about hampering whatever progress made during the Decade due to the continuing economic crisis experienced by developing countries. Cost benefits of the UN decade of women had been assessed as not that satisfactory." As mentioned in the Conferences in 1980 and 1985, the strategies employed were the main constraints. Therefore, the review of concepts and strategies is appropriate not only in terms of gender planning but also for identifying the actual issues involved in planning mechanisms. Maxine Molyneux (1985), Kate Young, (1988), Caroline Moser(1989) have contributed much to analyse the critical

* *Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen, 14-30 July, 1980, UN, New York, p.10*

** *Sen, Gita; Crown, Çaren- Development, Crisis and Alternative Visions in Third World Women's Perspective Monthly Review Press, 1987, p.28*

issues of existing conflicts in different approaches and tried to identify appropriate gender planning strategies. They, to a greater extent, agree on the gender concepts relating to social relationship between men and women and also the appropriateness of an empowering strategy for achieving better results. Moser has tried to compare the different policy approaches to Third World Women, which has direct relevance to the Asia-Pacific region (Annex 5).

This paper would not try to explain the historical evolution of various approaches. The discussion will confine to what is relevant to the existing situation to take up from the point of 1985 when the UN Decade for Women ended.

Kate Young* tried to analyse further the approaches as defined by Moser using 'condition' and the 'position' of women with specific meanings. Condition relates to material state of women, without relating to social situation and position in women's social and economic standing relative to men. Much of the development efforts have been aimed at providing resources to women for alleviation of poverty, illiteracy or relieving work stress. This has hardly any effect to the basic structure on the position of women.

Moser tried to explain this further by using strategic gender needs and practical gender needs.** Young refers them as practical needs and strategic interests.

In fulfilling these needs and interests, the role definition comes in. Unsatisfactory results during the Women's Decade have led to rethinking about the strategies used by the governments and other agencies, treating women as an isolated group. This demands the re-definition of the roles of gender and new strategies for complementing them to become integrated in the development effort. Moser has tried to provide reasons for this isolated approach by governments and non-governmental organisations as well as international organisations.*

- i. Most authorities responsible for development planning have only very reluctantly recognized gender as an important planning issue,
- ii. The primary concern of much recent feminist writing has been to highlight the complexities of gender discussion in specific socio-economic contexts, rather than to show how such complexities can be simplified so that

* *Women & Economic Development, Local, Regional and National Planning Strategies, Oxford, Berg/LUNESCO, 1988; Gender & Development, A Relational Approach, 1988.*

** *Moser, Caroline - Gender Planning in the Third World, World Development, Vol. 17, No.11, 1989*

+ *Ibid*

methodological tools may be developed enabling practitioners to translate gender awareness into practice,

- iii. For those involved in planning practice, it has proven remarkably difficult to grant gender in to existing planning disciplines.

The end result is the creation of isolated bodies as ministries, departments or bureau by the governments which are not integrated into the national planning process. If at all there was planning, it was separated from the overall national planning.

In developing the practical needs and strategic needs relating to nuclear family as the basic unit of the society, gender roles have been identified. Accordingly, women have 3 roles:

- i. Reproduction Role : Child-bearing and rearing responsibilities,
- ii. Community Managing : Basic social and economic needs to the household and neighbourhood,
- iii. Production workers: As supplementary income earners or principal earners.

Men have 2 roles:

- i. Production workers: income earners,
- ii. Community managing, community leadership and political activities.

Community managing and production roles of men and women differ from each other in the context of gender subordination.

Moser argues that the planners fail to recognize the necessity of relating planning policy to women's specific requirements and development planning based on sectoral approach. They do not provide the integrative strategies women require. As an example, social welfare planning which concentrates on the child-rearing roles of women does not adequately take account of their income generating activities.

Growing trend to have more women as heads of household has created another complex situation. Men migrating to cities, industries or other countries for employment has created this situation. It has been estimated that a third of the households are in this category. This has changed the traditional negative attitude towards women living by themselves.

For the purpose of planning, Maxine Moleneux and Moser have identified two types of needs:

i. Strategic gender needs:

These are formulated from the analysis of women subordination to men which are aimed at satisfactory organisation of a society better than at present in terms of both the structure and nature of relationships between men and women.

These include the abolition of sexual division of labour, the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and child care, the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination such as rights to own land or property or access to credit, political equality, freedom of choice over childbearing, adequate measures against male violence, etc.

These are normally identified as feminist.

ii. Practical gender needs:

These are formulated from the concrete conditions women experience in their engendered position within the social division of labour and deriving out of this, their practical gender interests for human survival. They are formulated in response to immediate problems or needs as perceived by women themselves. They do not generally help in emancipation or gender equality. The domestic cares of health, food, water, etc. are included. Sexual division of labour is reinforced.

Using the gender roles and the gender needs as a base, it is argued that a logical and realistic methodology could be adopted.

The International Co-operative Alliance itself advocates the equality between men and women in terms of development, partnership and equal rights in every respect. The uniqueness of human being has not discriminated in terms of gender. Robert Owen's philosophy and his experimental efforts in St. Lenark have shown the emphasis of integration of gender at a time the women were discriminated. Therefore, women were active since the ICA's inception in 1895. At its 24th Congress in Hamburg in 1969, a resolution was adopted to enhance the participation of women in the ICA and all co-operative movements.

The ICA became active during the UN Decade for Women with regional activities which started in 1975 with a Regional Conference on the Role of Women in Co-operative Development. The recommendations adopted at the conference dealt with strategic gender needs (Annex 3). Some of the recommendations sound a feminist approach to equality in co-operative structures in keeping with the concept of women in development. At the time one has to

realise the absence of a recognised governmental or non-governmental institution in many countries of the Region.

The following 10 years had a special women's programme under the ICA Regional Office. Two regional seminars conducted in 1980 and 1982 have assessed the progress and made recommendations for future (Annex 4 & 5).

The ILO and ESCAP too had inter-governmental consultations and conferences during 1975-1985 and also regional and country-specific programmes of action, dealing with various aspects of gender issues such as legislation, employment, education and health. A draft programme of the ESCAP in 1979 says: "Because of their independent role, these non-governmental organisations can often be more effective than the government in informing the public opinion on sensitive subjects and pressurizing new modes of social action." It has also recommended the governments to:

- a. continue to give financial support to programmes of non-governmental organisations, including those which affect women's welfare; make this support an incentive to those organisations to promote development oriented projects for women;
- b. encourage political parties and trade unions to establish women's units to focus on women issues and to establish quotas for female nominees and staff;
- c. devise strategies to increase the participation of rural women in rural non-governmental organisations;
- d. while encouraging a close relationship with non-governmental organisations, ensure their independent status."

After the Decade was over, practically every UN agency and the ICA and such large international NGOs and trade union federations have established special women cells or gender programmes in their organisations. In the Asia-Pacific Region, many UN agencies such as FAO, ILO, ESCAP, UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, etc. have their own gender programmes.

In 1985, the women's programme at the ICA Regional Office in Delhi was terminated. After a gap of 6 years, the new gender activity has resumed from 1991.

The ICA Women's Committee has issued two major policy documents in 1983, titled 'Women as Equal Partners in Third World Co-operative Develop-

* Women in Development - A Regional Programme of Action, UN-ESCAP, St/ESCAP/143, 82,p.17

ment' and in 1984, 'Educational Opportunities for Girls and Young Women - the Co-operative Contribution'. The ICA ROAP never had the advantage of having its own women's committee.

2.2 Policies and Mechanisms

The current policies of the governments in the region have been mainly influenced by UN Declaration on Women in Development and subsequent recommendations by the ESCAP. The Regional Conference held in 1979 in Delhi recommended, "...that national governments should, as a matter of policy, promote grassroot level organisations of women. Since the major part of the female population in the region lived in rural areas, the highest priority should be given to assisting rural organisations among rural women..."

The Conference recommended that the national mechanisms should have adequate human and financial resources and strive for a central institutional arrangement at the highest possible executive level in a suitable department/ ministry. Establishment of small units dealing with women's development was also recommended for especially those concerned with agriculture, industry, employment, education, health, legal reforms and legislation.

With the initiative of the inter-governmental agencies, many governments established separate ministerial subjects dealing with women in development. Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Japan are some of the countries which have made women's activities a ministerial subject. The approaches of these institutions followed the existing thinking in terms of women in development as a strategy. These approaches confined to gender strategic needs dealing with legislation and equal opportunities for employment, etc.

Many of these government institutions also catered to the practical needs through income generating activities and skill development programmes. In some of the countries where the discrimination against women is more evident, these institutions rendered a valuable service through initiating removal of constitutional and legal barriers for equal rights of women as citizens. This process still continues in many countries. India recently set up a Commission for Women in 1992, to deal with social aspects of discrimination and also to deal with violence against women. As in the case of Pakistan, however, the question of equality of women in front of judiciary even remains unsolved.

Many countries have reserved special quota in their state services for women. They have removed wage differences between men and women.

* *Women in Development : A Regional Programme of Action, UN/ESCAP-ST/ESCAP/143 P.9*

Many of the income generating activities provided by governments and co-operatives experienced problems when money earned in such programmes went into subsidizing family expenses, where traditionally the husbands and children get priority. Some times, these activities have become counter-productive in the sense that husband's bread winner's role getting into confusion. When the socially conditioned men loose the role they are supposed to play, the psychological trauma they experience affect the family as an institution.

The role of community managing by women has been related to their needs for the other roles in the household. Agriculture or community services such as water supply or health facilities have links to their reproduction and other roles. Although this has reinforced the traditional roles given to them, there are cases such as in Japan, where they would ultimately expand their perspectives to incorporate activities relating to equal partnership and even feminist activities. In Japan, the HAN groups originally aiming at joint buying activities which is a practical gender need, have developed into socio-political organisations in certain areas.

Many governments in the Region were keen of meeting practical gender needs. Equity approach did not challenge the equilibrium of the existing social and political power bases. Therefore, projects or programmes meeting strategic gender needs were hardly encouraged. Many international agencies too were contented with gender projects, meeting practical needs in order to avoid confrontation with the traditions of a country.

The policies and mechanisms of the governments in the Region did not emphasize on household economy based informal sectors, although ILO has identified it as a sector for planning 1970s. It has also been an unregulated sector in the society. In such an environment, gender oppression too go unnoticed. In the process, women's unpaid labour or family labour becomes an invisible feature as a contribution towards production. It becomes a natural division of labour by women in which a value is not fixed in spite of the assessment tools available. Women's contribution to family farming or household services are not counted. In such a 'petty commodity production approach' (Moser, 1978), survival of family industry is marginal. In early 1992, Andhra Pradesh in India reported several hundreds of starvation deaths due to the loss of market for household based textile products. One more exception of successful household economy as a separate sector is Vietnam. Here the family labour inclusive of women's contribution is valued. This could be an interim phase between socialist economy and open commodity market economy.

2.3 Survey Findings

In regard to the present status of women as found through the country studies show certain commonalities. The researchers have come out with rational conclusions. Some of them show an interesting generalization.

Where there is a higher score of Human Development Index achieved by a particular country, the situation of women is also better than other countries. However, the status may also differ from country to country depending on the cultural traditions.

Centralised economies have shown far more improvements in WID irrespective of being low income or middle income group countries. The rate of growth in industry has no relevance in their context. Vietnam scores highest not only among these countries but also among all the countries in the region. The revolutionary changes from feudal social systems to socialist system have had influence on the achievement.

The countries where the feudal systems prevail have a low status of women in terms of their participation in the development process. Some of the gulf countries and South-Asian countries are examples.

Adult literacy rate of a country has influenced the status of women in addition to cultural traditions. Islamic cultural traditions has a great influence on the passivity of women.

Wars have changed the status of women considerably to become an active productive source. In spite of being a conventional Islamic country, Iran has an active women economic force. Vietnam is another example.

Migration of labour from poor countries to other rich countries has an influence on the changes in women's roles. The family head's position has been transferred to women in such situations. Philippines and Vietnam are clear examples. Sometimes, within a country itself the changes occur between rural areas and urban areas. Thailand has more female householders in rural areas than urban areas.

In many countries, the women have equal status with men under constitutional provisions and sometimes property and personal laws, but the social system make them inactive in practice.

In many countries the women's household activities are not considered productive work. Their unpaid family labour is not counted in census and other surveys. The calculation procedure for giving values has not been incorporated in the data systems.

Many countries in the region except socialist countries have patriarchal family system, which determines the passive role of women. Inheritance laws in these countries are discriminatory.

Technological changes and the changes in the economic policies have a marginal positive influence on WID situation. Cultural traditions are more deeprooted than these material changes. Although these changes have brought in and supported the nuclear family system, within such a family itself the social traditions flow.

None of the non-socialist countries have achieved higher involvement of women in co-operatives, specially in decision making. There are exceptions confined to sub-sectors such as consumer co-operatives in Japan.

The cultural traditions, specially Islamic culture, had an influence on the formation of special women co-operatives. In addition, the not so oppressive societies too have given birth to women co-operatives. Credit co-operative type is popular among women as it conforms to the norms of traditional societies. However, it has been seen, as in the case of Japan, when the economy and the status of women improves, this diversifies to other types of co-operatives.

The co-operatives or other forms of NGOs formed by women normally reinforce or support the traditionally accepted role of women. There are few exceptions in the field of communication technology, computer technology and productive workers' co-operatives, but by and large, the picture remains the same.

3. ANALYSIS OF COUNTRY REVIEWS ON CONCEPTS AND MECHANISMS

3.1 Afghanistan

Afghanistan has been categorized as a least developed country in the UN classification of development. According to Human Development Report, 1991, it was one of the lowest ranking (157) with 0.069 score which has been taken between 0 and 1. The country has an agricultural economy, having a share of 80%. Per capita income in 1989 was US\$ 14.2.

The country has a mortality rate of 182 per 1000 births and 43% under 15 years. Life expectancy is 47 years.

The country is under civil war. The state laws are based on Islamic religious traditions. However, by constitution, both sexes have equal rights.

The country had a feudal system until the revolution. The family becomes the primary unit of the society. Women participate in agriculture more than men (Azizi, 91). They also perform household duties.

The co-operatives have been introduced to Afghanistan in 1953 with the introduction of 13 agricultural co-operatives. The women have formed co-operatives in the fields of knitting, tailoring, carpet weaving and textiles, etc. having a membership of 380. They too have formed consumer co-operatives, having a total membership of 14,258.

However, the main concern of women at present is the survival of the family and hope for peace and stability with national solidarity after sacrificing their husbands and children during the civil war (Azizi).

Out of 2.8 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan, more than 50% are women. More than one million or 9% of Afghanistan's total population have been killed. The women live in refugee camps and dominated by fundamentalist mullahs who want them to be wearing burkhas (veil) and be without education or free movement. As a result of suppression, women are undergoing psychological trauma. Kabul has a contrasting figure of 65% female population in the universities. The cities have a greater female work force out of necessity.

The Review has one quotation: "The critical problem in the future will be how Afghan women in refugee camps and the urban areas will once again form a cohesive nation."

* *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 01 Feb., 1992

3.2 Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a much discussed country among development agencies. A country suffering from frequent natural calamities such as cyclones, floods, famines, etc. has also suffered from its inception in 1971, from political instability and terrorism and refuge problems.

One of the least developed countries under UN classification, Bangladesh has a Human Development Index score of 0.188 being 136th position in the world from the total of 160 countries in 1991.

The per capita income of Bangladesh is US\$ 200 in 1991. The national development plans has a heavy dependence of 96% on the foreign assistance as indicated in 1990/91.

In 1991, agriculture accounted for 37.6% of the economy and still the major sector.

Social indicators show declining health conditions of women. Disabled female population was more than males such as blind (17.69%), deaf and dumb (20.47%) and mentally retarded (12.25%). Life expectancy rate was 55.9 years for male and 54.5 years for female. Many countries have more life expectancy rate for females. Per capita calories intake has been decreased from 2098 KCAL in 1975 to 1900 KCAL in 1990 (Kabir, 92). This is below the FAO prescription of 2332 KCAL. Per capita calorie intake for women is 20% less than that of men. Child mortality rate among female children of 1-4 years has been 14.7 per thousand and male children was 12.3 per thousand in 1988/89.

The literacy rate too shows a negative picture of women. In 1986, the male literacy was 31.0% whereas female literacy was only 16.0%. Rural female literacy was as low as 13.7%. A researcher says 'not only does the female enrolment constitute a smaller proportion in the schools compared to the school age population, there also exists an actual gender-wise imbalance in the age group participation' (Kabir, 92). The primary teachers recruitment rate of 50:50 for male and female teachers has helped in increasing female children's enrolment. However, the drop out rate of females in secondary education is as high as 86%. Female student population in 1986/87 was 17.22% of the total, whereas in medical colleges, it was 28.15% of the total. These drop out rates have been due to the poverty of parents, purdah (segregation of sexes) and low social status of women (Kabir). However, one visible factor is that there is no special arrangements for female education separately.

Out of the active labour force, only 106% are women. From the employed category, only 3.1% were women in 1985/86, whereas men were 27.4%. Household work has been 0% for men and 24.9% for women. In these data, household duties or unpaid family labour are not counted.

Normally, women receive low wages for their labour. They are 50-60% lower than men. Public services has reservation of 10% quota for women. They are as lower as 6.52%. In contradiction to this situation, the political consciousness of women in Bangladesh is very high. The present Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader are females due to special circumstances. However, the ruling party had 4.44% females in the leadership positions. The opposition party has 25%. During the last election, only 1.47% of the candidates were females.

The participation of women in trade union movement is not reported. Out of 4.85 million labour force, only 0.46 million are women (9.61%) and 0.26 million (5.39%) are children.

The constitution provides equal status to women. However, personal laws are based on shariat law (Islamic) which discriminates women on inheritance and marriage rights. Although Muslim marriage law does not permit dowry on the part of the bride, the dowry harassment is common in Bangladesh. 1980 legislation against dowry is rarely imposed.

Men are allowed to marry four wives with the early wives' consent. Muslim divorce law is applied in men's side and family courts ordinance of 1985 are women's side. Under the Islamic law, woman is not recognised as the guardian of her children. Cruelty to Women ordinance of 1983 provides for severe punishment. The law has safeguards for women but still the women have to undergo discrimination within the society. Although the labour laws too are explicit on women's rights, the unemployment and cheap labour have made employers not adhering to the rules.

The patriarchal nature of social system influences the life of Bangladesh women and determine their role within the family and society (Kabir). The discrimination starts with the birth of child. The boy's birth is celebrated by offering thanks to God but not for a female child.

Purdah has become a prison under which women are kept in isolation from the society and economic opportunities. Subordination to her husband, family and society is her virtue.

Social, cultural and religious traditions emphasize women's productive and domestic roles (Kabir, 92). In the prevailing social milieu, compared to men,

women face far more traumatic changes in their lives from desertion, divorce or widowhood. The stings of tragedies are extremely painful, much of which is beyond statistical analysis (Kabir). Although nuclear family system has grown to 60-75% in 1983, the joint or extended family system still continues which has a negative effect on women.

Housewife has a traditional stereotype role in her family, having household chores, looking after children and unpaid farm labour by them.

In joint families as well as nuclear families, the family decisions are taken by the oldest male members.

UN Decade for Women influenced the government to establish a separate women affairs division attached to President's Office in 1976. Since then, several employment creation and income generating projects for women have been launched. Along with these projects, non-formal education and functional literacy programmes too have been launched.

The fourth five-year plan of Bangladesh has a broader approach to women in development. It has categorized women into two groups - relatively poor and relatively better off - and tries to identify development needs and increase their socio-economic opportunities.

A national council for women development is in the formative period at present.

Bangladesh set up a separate ministry for women in 1982, designated as Ministry of Social Welfare and Women's Affairs. The ministry looks after the policies for women as well as development projects meant for women. Bangladesh Rural Development Board, which deals with rural development in the country has a women's co-operative programme.

Many of the NGOs out of 11,000 such organisations, deal with women and children's programme as they are priority groups in community development. 63% of women's NGOs are urban based. Most NGOs follow the conventional target group approach dealing with only limited aspects of development and that too covering a very small geographical area (Kabir).

Many of the NGOs presently deals with functional literacy programmes, part-time income generating activities, gender awareness programmes and community health programmes only. The strategy followed is a segregated approach isolating women. Some of the NGOs purely concentrate on vocational skills for women.

Grameen Bank has introduced self-help concept among women to obtain credit, without collateral so that they could use them for their income generating

activities and other needs. The Swanirvar Credit Programme too has introduced a similar approach to women. These two programmes have covered about 1 million women.

Unity for Social and Human Action is another NGO established in 1985 which is aimed at empowerment of women. This organisation works on gender relations and gender strategic needs. The programmes try to create a social awareness on gender issues and class issues through sensitization activities.

In regard to the co-operative system, two systems exist, i.e. BRDB Co-operatives and traditional co-operatives. Both systems have mixed type of co-operatives as well as special women co-operatives. In the traditional system, the participation of women in mixed type of co-operatives is 23% whereas women's co-operatives is 100%. In BRDB co-operatives, mixed type of co-operatives has 8.42% women as members. They have two types of women's co-operatives; i.e. Mohila Bittaheen Societies and Mohila Samabaya Societies. The experiences of mixed co-operatives have shown that women were only passive members.

The first women co-operative programme was started under the scheme called Development of Co-operative Union for Women Education under the extension division. These co-operatives as well as co-operatives started under BRDB confined themselves to meet the practical gender needs only. This included family health programmes, part-time income generating activities and functional literacy and vocational training programmes.

Out of 1412 primary women co-operative societies during the project period, only 651 co-operatives are active today. In addition, 16 central women co-operative societies too were formed. The Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Samabaya Samiti was formed in 1978. This national union receives small grants from the government and maintains a sales centre and a training centre for women. The union remains very weak and subject to government interference in management.

'Karika' (Handicraft) co-operative union was reorganized in 1991, where 9 of 12 members of the committee, including the chairperson and vice chairperson are women.

Women employment in co-operatives is only 2.13% in traditional co-operatives and 1.70% in BRDB co-operatives. Women management committee members in traditional co-operatives is 2.8% and BRDB co-operatives it is 8.37%.

These organisations have not been able to make an impact on policy making. Once in a way, the rallies organised by these organisations try to create a forum

for grievances of women in gender strategic issues. However, the co-operative system has been a strong tool for women to organise themselves for making their contribution towards national development within the socio-cultural context in Bangladesh.

3.3 China

China has recognised the equality in terms of rights and economic opportunities for women as in the case of many socialist countries. Socially, they are referred to as 'half of the sky' reflecting on the equality in front of legal rights.

In 1985, 84 females per 100 males had primary education and 69 females had secondary education for 100 males (WDR, 1991). Female life expectancy rate in 1989 was 71 years whereas for male, it was 69 years. Mortality rate per 1000 live births in 1989 was 31 females and 41 males. These indicators show a comparative progress of women's health in China.

New legislation formulated after 1954 constitution governing marriage, labour and land removed all feudal practices. Absorption of women to the paid labour force gave women self-reliance and advantageous position as against other male family members.

By the end of 1990s, the women's position in the total work force was 37.4%. In 1980, the employment rate of women in urban areas was 82%.

Women work force in China has less inhibitions as they are found from secretarial work to truck driving. In the country side, 50% of the work force consists of women in collective farms (later co-operatives) and livestock farming. They have taken advantage of recently introduced household plots more than men.

Women have been active in political activities and as a result, there were 150 women mayors in 454 cities.

All China Women's Federation looks after the women's interests and their needs. In addition, Chinese Trade Unions are gender conscious and ensure that equality in all spheres are maintained. These trade unions have set up 3,150,000 women workers organisations. They carry out following functions:

- Safeguard legitimate rights and interests of women workers through democratic participation and social supervision;
- Improve the ideological and ethical quality and cultural and technical quality of women workers;
- Protect women labour;

- Alleviate women workers' worries and hardships.

The trade unions and the state have set up various service centres such as nurseries, creches to look after practical gender needs.

China has several regions, some of which are called autonomous, who have differing cultures. Although the legislation and social justice want to ensure the equality of gender and their optimum participation in the national development efforts, certain remote areas still maintain certain feudal attitudes. In these areas, women are discriminated and exploited. This has resulted in preferences given to male children. The rigid family planning system encouraging one child family too have given support to this situation.

3.4 Fiji

Human Development Report , 1991 of the UNDP rates Fiji as positioned at 71 in the world in terms of human development. It shows an indicator of 0.689 between 0 and 1, ranking and one of the comparatively developed countries in the pacific islands.

Socio-economic conditions of Fijians have shown a progress during recent years, indicating low female mortality rate per 1000 births of 19 and male children as 20. Life expectancy in 1986 has been 61 for males and 65.2 for females. In comparison, the infant mortality rate for Australia is 10 per thousand and Western Samoa is 33 per thousand. Papua New Guinea is 98 per thousand. Fiji shows 17.2 per thousand.

The literacy rate has been 84% for females and 86% for males which has been a high achievement in the region.

Although the female literacy and enrolment in schools are high, the gender stereo-typing is effective in technical education. Majority of women are trained for clerical and secretarial jobs. Agriculture is pre-dominantly men dominated.

The traditional family system is dominant in Fiji, where the females are playing a subordinate role to men as housewives. 1986 census recorded 54% workers as 'own account' or 'unpaid family workers' who are mainly consisting of women. The same census reports 21% of economically active work force as women. However, 39.6% of the professional grades, 47.0% of clerical grades and 48.2% of service workers are women.

Women are not that active in gender strategic issues. For the political participation of women, the current government has 2 female ministers out of 17. However, women are becoming active in trade unions.

The constitution does not have any reference to women as a separate category but maintains about disadvantaged groups. The laws are equal to both sexes. There are safeguards on women labour in terms of night shifts and pregnancy.

Fijian patriarchal society has extended family system (toka toka) in some areas. The gender relations within this family system has been traditional. Social custom demands married women to live in the husband's household in his village.

Ethnic Indian who form 50% of the Fijian population maintain joint family system mainly due to the socio-economic reasons.

Marriage in the Fijian culture is more or less a social bond than a legal activity between the couple. Therefore, high incidence of 'never-married' category appear in census; as high as 60.6% among males and 54.4% among females.

During recent times, it has been reported that there is a growing trend to have females as head of the family as found in 1986 (12.4%). However, the housekeeping wives are categorized as not economically active. Unpaid family labour is prevalent.

In 1982, 30.5% of the female work force was in the category of lowest paid workers.

The women have been noted for securing 48% of the jobs created between 1975 and 1980, whereas men had only 10%. Therefore, Fijian women are becoming a visible economic force gradually (Vuluano, 91).

The government has given emphasis on women's participation in development by creating a Department of Women and Culture under the Ministry of Women, Culture and Social Welfare. Women's interest sections have been created in many ministries, including Education and Fijian Affairs.

An NGO named 'Sogosgo Vakaniarma' has been active in every village which has links with women interest sections in the government ministries. The National Council of Women in Fiji is the umbrella organisation for about 50 localised and national organisations for women. One of the organisations work on co-operative basis, called 'The Women Crisis Centre' providing counselling and referral services to victims of rape and domestic violence.

The Fiji Women Rights movement is a feminist organisation run by professional women.

The women are playing an active role in co-operatives. In 1984, there were 24 active consumer and marketing co-operatives. Their share from the total

turnover in co-operatives was 3.6%. The most successful ones are village stores. The definition of women co-operative is peculiar as it accommodates minority of men members and committee members. The Department of Co-operatives has women officers to look after these co-operatives. Women have salvaged some defunct co-operatives managed by men too.

However, the data concerning the participation of women in mixed co-operatives are not available. Training is also one of the problems. They are reluctant to participate in men dominated co-operatives at decision making levels.

Women interest sections and the banks have special schemes for women's co-operative projects. Other than these, no difference of gender issues are shown. Their community managing roles too is strong through voluntary social work and income generating projects.

By and large, gender stereo-typing in Fiji is lesser than many developing countries in the region. The government and the NGOs play a vital role in accelerating the process of empowering women (Vuluano, 91).

3.5 India

India has the largest population in Asia next to China. In 1991, it ranked 123 out of 160 countries in the world having a score of 0.308 on the UNDP Human Development Index. It is also categorized as a low-income group country, according to World Bank ratings. The per capita income in 1990 was US\$ 350. Agriculture has a 32.1% share of the GDP, whereas manufacturing has a share of 28.8%. Therefore, India still remains an agricultural economy.

In regard to social indicators, India has a population growth rate of 2.11% annual population growth rate during the past 10 years, which is one of the highest in the region. Considering the mean age at marriage for females is 18.32 years and males as 23.27 years, the growth rate is still difficult to manage. Life expectancy is 58.1 years for males and 59.1 years for females. Female infant mortality is higher than male mortality rate. Literacy rate as recorded by the 1991 census for males is 63.86% and females only 39.43%.

Indian constitution provides special safeguards for women. It allows the state to formulate special provisions for women and children. It also provides for equal pay for equal work for men and women. Both sexes are equal in front of law. In the criminal laws and evidence laws, it provides special provisions dealing with domestic violence (1983). However, the Committee on the Status of Women sees that "penal provisions in the law are definitely influenced by the

established patriarchal system, the dominant position of the husband and the social and economic backwardness of women". Laws of inheritance and personal laws discriminate women.

Equal Remuneration Act of 1976 guarantees payment of equal remuneration to both sexes for similar type of work. It also prevents discrimination against women in matters of employment.

Some of the State co-operative acts as in the case of Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Pondicherry have provided special reservations for women in management committees of co-operatives.

India has adopted a National Policy on Education (NPE) for the upliftment of women in functional literacy. It also recommends women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels. In addition, National Literacy Mission and Education for Women's Equality Mission too deal with female literacy programmes.

Percentages of working population in 1981 census was 52.65% males and 19.77% females from the total respective gender population. It is also reported that non-working population as 47.35% of males and 80.23% females from the total respective gender population. The definition is taken as housewives are not working. Therefore, the figures are deceptive.

An interesting revelation in 1981 Census was out of agricultural labourers 46.2% are women and 19.6% are men. In household industry too women are in majority.

In the state services, the female workers amount to 5.83% of the total work force. Percentage in defence forces is 3.16%.

Women have been more active than male voters at the last general elections in 1991. The male/female ratio of parliamentary candidates was 1960: 100. The ratio of the candidates who won the elections was 483:30. Political parties promise to reserve 30% places in the government and political organisations for women.

In India, the status of women vary from state to state, depending on their developmental level. So many cultures and small groups make the position more complicated. In India, two types of family systems exists:

- i. Patriarchal family,
- ii. Matrilineal family, e.g. Kerala

In the case of matrilineal system, one could say the household is headed by the wife and all inheritance and major decisions are taken by them. In these two

states, the male domination is confined to limited fields such as politics, defence, etc.

In the patriarchal system, male domination is visible in all spheres. Women perform traditional housekeeping chores and rearing of children. They too need to bring dowry to the husband's family.

Therefore, the typical Indian family treats female children as a burden. Widow is a social stigma. Parents make their daughters feel guilty being a girl and once this is internalized, they accept the inferior status without questioning and live in subordination (Rikky, 91).

Dowry deaths and traditions like 'Sati' and 'Devadasi' shows the oppressive social response towards women.

Technology has helped to abort female foetus once detected through ultrasonic equipment. A report to UN Population Fund by Mody Research Institute shows that the sex ratio at birth in 1990 was 156 males to 100 females. Added with increased mortality rate among female infants, the progress may create a demographic imbalance, if not stopped.

Joint family system and extended family system still prevail in some states. These systems make women's status more vulnerable for discrimination and harassment. Stereo-type role perceptions make them conditioned to such systems. Illiteracy makes them reinforced. In urban areas more nuclear families are prevalent.

India has not signed the UN Convention on discrimination against women. But following the UN Decade on Women in 1975, Committee on the Status of Women was established. It was also made a ministerial subject under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. National Commission on Women was formally established in February, 1992. In addition, Women Development Corporations are being set up in all states. Central Social Welfare Board, All India Women's Conference, Women's Development Division of the National Institute of Public Corporation and Child Development and Centre for Women Development Studies are some of the other government bodies dealing with gender issues.

In India, many elaborate perspective plans are found. 'National Perspective Plan for Women, 1988-2000 A.D.' is one of them. The government has produced an elaborate data base for women's issues as appeared in 'Women in India - A Statistical Profile-1988'.

In addition, many parastatal bodies and universities have established research centres on gender issues.

However, due to the imbalances in income distribution and low national growth rate cause drain on the resources for development. The first victims are women in the families below poverty line. The increase of prostitution (one of the largest in the world) and destitution are the consequences.

Within the co-operative sector, the number of women co-operatives in 1990 was 5641, showing a marginal growth over the years. Many of them were thrift and credit co-operatives (2279) and industrial co-operatives (1185) considering the total number of co-operatives as 474,998, having a membership of 160.245 million, the number of women co-operatives is negligible. However, no data is available about female membership in co-operatives. The participation rates greatly vary from one state to the other. Some sample surveys have revealed that the women's percentage is about 37.3%. However, their participation in co-operative activities is marginal.

Next to credit and industrial co-operatives, Dairy co-operative is the main type of co-operatives where women participate. By September, 1988, there were 205 registered dairy co-operatives having a membership of 7,443 women. These societies more or less regularised the business already carried out by women. NDDDB (National Dairy Development Board) has a special programme for promoting dairying among women as co-operatives. This includes entrepreneurship development too. Land and capital to buy cattle for women has been a problem all throughout. Although 37.7% of agricultural labour and 70% of dairying is undertaken by women, they don't own the resources. Their labour generally go as unpaid family labour. Formation of special women dairy co-operatives has been encouraged due to this reason.

Women and environment is another area women co-operatives are increasing. Women were active in environment protection organisations such as 'Chipko' movement for a long time. When the reforestation projects have been promoted by the government and co-operative federations such as IFFCO, women's groups became more active.

There are many programmes introduced by the central government and state governments for the upliftment of women:

- Mahila mandals,
- Development of women and children in rural areas,
- Integrated child development schemes,
- The minimum needs programmes,
- Training of rural youth for self-employment,
- National rural employment programme.

A sample survey conducted by the National Co-operative Union of India has shown that the women committee members consists of only 4.5% in agricultural co-operatives.

Attendance in general meetings by women members had been 2.9% in agricultural co-operatives and 3.2% in non-agricultural co-operatives in Madhya Pradesh state and 1.8% and 8.9% in Maharashtra state. Kerala has shown a better performance of 30-34% in all co-operatives.

In the co-operative banking sector, women membership has been 37.2% of the total membership in 1987-88. In consumer co-operatives, it was 21.1% in 1982-83. The agricultural co-operatives in Madhya Pradesh had 12.6% women membership and Maharashtra had 11.9% women membership in 1981-82.

One of the constraints in assessing the status of women participation in co-operatives is the lack of proper data.

3.6 Indonesia

Indonesia has been one of the fast moving countries in the region towards alleviation of poverty. By 1991, the country lowered its poverty to 16% from 22% during the previous year. However, Indonesia is still in the low income category of the world bank rankings. It has also a low ranking of 98 in the world with 0.499 score between 0 and 1 of Human Development Index of the UNDP. This, however, is due to poor income distribution and low subsidies on social welfare.

Health conditions between sexes have shown a fair picture for females. Mortality rate for 1000 live births of females was 80, whereas for males it was 95. Life expectancy of females is 63 and males 60 years. The education of females in primary grades in 1988 was 93 to 100 males and secondary education is 79 to 100 males. Indonesia is one of the few countries which has efficient family planning system. The population growth has been lowered to 1.97% in 1991.

However, adult illiteracy among women has been higher all throughout. Common percentage has been 26.9% in 1980. 30% of the females could not read or write. In some rural areas, the figure is as high as 50%. One ILO study has found that the illiteracy is one of the binding factors for women to participate in co-operatives actively in different levels. They lack confidence in attaining managerial and decision making positions.*

The women in Indonesia still live in a nuclear family. The gender roles are traditionally demarcated as gender stereo-types. Women basically are subordi-

* Ahmed, Dr. Zubeida, *Participation of Women in Management of Co-operatives in Indonesia (Mimeo)*, ILO, Geneva, 1987

nate to men, have household chores as their place in the family. Division of labour is not that evident. The official statistical figures of 26.49% women in urban areas and 40.62% in rural areas as employed are derived from the assumption that housewives are economically inactive and also without taking into consideration the unpaid family labour." The official figures of unemployment too are deceptive in this manner. The occupation of women are confined to conventional jobs in the service sector and the agricultural sector. In terms of remuneration, the women can be considered as a disadvantaged group (Hausenberger, 91).

Another phenomenon in the Indonesian society is the growing number of female headed households. In 1980, there were 15% of households headed by women. In Java, it is about 20%. The divorce rate in Indonesia is 17.05% but East and Central Java have shown about 20%. Therefore, they form an invisible sector itself, but the female head has to depend on the traditionally accepted occupations for family survival.

In spite of the present not so happy picture, women in Indonesia have been a political force as well as social force from the period of liberation struggle. Many women leaders have emerged. Budi Utomo (Noble behaviour) campaign of 1908 led to the forming of many women social and political organisations. The currently active Indonesia Women's Congress was formed in 1928. Firstly, literacy among females campaign was started. The present annual 'Women's day' was born in 1938 as Hari Ibu (Mother's day).

The first Kowani was established after the independence in 1945. These organisations were behind gender strategic campaigns to end the discriminating legal provisions on women. By 1987, more than 90% women casted their votes. However, they have not been able to become policy makers in proportion to men. Only 2 ministerial positions are given to women at present. In 1987, the representation in the parliament is only 8.3%. Even in the public institutions, only 2% of the total positions are occupied by women. The research has shown that in spite of men's discriminatory position in politics and society, few women have succeeded to become leaders due to their affiliation to rich upper class and who were devoid of housekeeping functions (Hausenberger, 91).

The UN Decade for Women has resulted in the appointment of an Associate Minister for the Role of Women. This ministry formulated development plans in line with the overall national development plans to integrate women as a resource for development.

* Ahmed, Dr.Zubeida, *Participation of Women in Management of Co-operatives in Indonesia (Mimeograph)*, ILO, Geneva, 1987

In addition, there are few NGOs recognised by the government, functioning as guidance to the government such as Kowani, Dharma Wanita and Dharma Pertiwi.

The government has also set up a parastatal body called the Indonesian National Commission on the Status of Women (Kukiwi).

Many of the national level women's organisations are dominated by upper class women leaders as the work has been of voluntary nature. many non-KUD co-operatives too are managed by women from educated middle class.

The opportunities provided through legislation cannot be exercised for the benefit of women, partly due to their illiteracy and lack of confidence to confront the traditional family system where she is assigned with subordinate roles.

In 1904, a government decree made a compulsion for all women co-operatives to link up with multi-purpose village co-operatives (KUDs) which made women becoming passive members of a large co-operative and active members of a pre-cooperative formed by themselves. Arisan (lottery) and Gotong Rayong (chit funds) are popular forms. These co-operatives are used to give additional incomes to women.

However, it has not been reported that there have been successful co-operatives for women which provide profitable full-time employment or income for members, except village level co-operatives in handicraft and agricultural co-operatives which give additional income or services to low income groups of women. In 1986, there were 666 women co-operatives with a total membership of 122,000. In addition, female membership in mixed co-operatives have been estimated at 1,006,000 (approximately 580,000 in non-KUDs and 426,000 in KUDs).

Three secondary level co-operatives have been reported (Poskowanjati in East Java, Puskowan in West Java, Puskowan in Jakarta). They have formed a national level business apex called INKOWAN, which provides funds, loans and coordinate business activities of secondary organisations.

One of the important characteristics of women co-operatives is the consistent but slow pace of development of their own co-operative movement from the pre-cooperatives or self-help groups (Usaha Barsawa) to the national level business apex. It was a natural development from the traditional informal groups in the community in contradiction to KUDs, which are artificially created by the government. These groups not only show the initiative and cohesion of women but also self-reliance and the confidence in their own environment.

A field observation has revealed that women preferred to work in small groups and separately with other women rather than mixed societies or KUDs.* This shows the cultural inhibitions confronted by women in addition to their belief in homogeneity in the groups. On the other hand, in the same field research, it was reported that male managing board members of KUDs felt some misgivings on women's insistence on autonomy to women's sub-units attached to KUDs on the basis of the Department's directive in 1987. They also felt that it is somewhat egoistic on their part to set themselves up separately from men. The underlying factor in this experience is the difference between the perceptions of men and women's roles in the community and the women's suppressed potentiality to manage community organisations. In the circumstances, women do not play active role in KUDs.

Empowerment of women in Indonesia needs an integrated approach involving men and women to pursue their roles in a changing and growing society.

3.7 Iran

In the classification by the World Bank, Islamic Republic of Iran belongs to lower middle income group of countries. Although the GNP per capita of Iran in 1990 was US\$ 2,490 (source: World Bank) in terms of Human Development Index of the UNDP, it ranks .90 out of 160 countries and has a score of 0.547 between 0 and 1. It scores lower than DPR Korea, Sri Lanka, Samoa and Jordan who has less GNP per capita. The social indicators show a lower position in comparison to GNP per capita such as the life expectancy (63 years). Infant mortality (88 per 1000) etc. Under 5 years mortality rate of female children is lesser (103) than males (122). However, the population growth is 3.2%. There are more widows and divorced females than men.

However, there has been a dramatic change of education among females from 1965 to 1989. Females per 100 males in primary education in 1965 was 46 which increased to 84 in 1989. At the secondary education level, it increased from 44 in 1965 to 71 in 1989.

Iran-Iraq war brought positive changes in the participation of women in development due to the loss of men in war and in spite of economic and social setback. The female employment is still rather low. However, the employed females represent 3.1% of the total population and 34.5% of total female population.

* *The Women of Indonesia- 1984, Dept. of Information, Rep. of Indonesia, p.9*

The wage structure shows the equality between men and women (Saleh, 92). The political participation of women is negligible.

The constitution preserves the equal rights of women as voters and maternity rights for children. However, personal laws discriminate women (Saleh, 92), e.g. evidence of a man is equal to two of women.

Labour laws have special provisions for protecting women in terms of pregnancy, shifts and hard work.

There are no special provisions for women in co-operative law.

The gender roles are defined traditionally. Men are householders and breadwinners. Women perform housewives' role (Saleh, 92).

Handicraft and sports field have separate women's directorates by the government. Women society has been able to hold few seminars and congresses concerning women's situation in Iran.

Women don't have decision making role in co-operatives but active as members, especially in handicraft co-operatives (Saleh, 92).

Women do not participate in general meetings of co-operatives but 95% of the clientele of co-operatives are women. 4% of co-operative membership consists of women. 2.5% of governmental staff engaged in co-operative promotion are women.

Within the cultural context of Iran, production workers' co-operatives such as handicraft exclusively meant for women are feasible.

The exchange of experiences of women in co-operative development with other countries is one way of enriching the attempt to enhance the status of women in Iran (Saleh, 92).

3.8 Japan

Japan has been given the ranking of World No.1 in Human Development Index of the UNDP. It has achieved 0.913 between the variables 0 to 1. It is also the second in per capita GNP in the world (US\$23810 in 1989). This shows one of the highest achievements of a country in the world in terms of economic as well as human development.

In regard to the level in gender integration, however, Japan does show as highest in the world or in the Asia-Pacific region itself. However, it shows one of the highest among developed countries in the region. In Japan itself, each co-

operative sector has varying degrees of gender integration. In general terms, in professional services, women have 42.7% of employment. They are highest in secretarial services having 58.3%. They are lowest in transport services (4.5%) and management grades (7.5%). Women in agriculture hold 47.5%, whereas sales workers women are 38.0%. Production jobs are 32.6% from the total.

Empowerment of women have taken place in Japan due to its loosening agriculture and fisheries sector and growing production and service sectors. However, being a country with a long standing homogenous family based cultural traditions, the leadership in industry or politics has not been open to women leadership still.

At present, women has become a political force in Japan. During July, 1989 elections, women were a factor in the LDP defeat by lowering the number of seats to 36 out of 126. The Japan Socialist party, chaired by a woman- Ms. Doi Takako, won 46 seats. In all 22 women were elected to the upper house from the opposition parties.

Japan ratified the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1985. Consequently, Japanese civil code, inheritance law and nationality law too have been changed. When the wages became discriminatory against women, the Equal Rights in Employment law was formulated in 1984. Under this law, the employer is obliged to make his best attempts to give equal opportunities to both men and women in recruiting, hiring, placement and promotion. Discriminatory treatment is prohibited in education and training, welfare services, retirement and dismissal. The other changes in the provisions made for women to be relaxed of over time, night shifts, etc.

However, a dichotomy exists in Japan between equality of opportunities and equality of results (to be achieved by quotas and other preferential measures). Prof. Nishikawa explains the transfer of sexual discrimination to industrial sector in South East Asia by the Japanese multi-national companies which they are unable to maintain at home in order to cut down the cost of production by paying discriminately low wages to female workers who have a large turnover.

Co-operative sector in Japan tries to develop a different model of management which observes gender equality and need for quality human life.

"Technological innovation does not necessarily contribute to social progress. It can be counter productive to the extent it lends support to inhuman production mechanisms and hampers full exercise of human rights." (Nishikawa*)

* Prof. Juan Nishikawa, *Women in a Changing World*, Asahi Shimbun, p.43, 1985

A survey conducted by the Women Advisory Body at the provincial level in 1986, has revealed that Japanese women work long hours than men. In 1988, the percentage of unpaid women family workers was 18.6%.

Consumer co-operatives have a greater popularity among women with the growth of the consumerism and purchasing power of households. However, the beginning of the consumer co-operatives had an origin by women during the first half of the century as they were housewives undertaking purchases of consumer commodities as a part of their role. These co-operatives served them to fulfill their community role too.

Han groups, formed in 1956, at Tsuruoka Co-operative, became women's neighborhood groups influencing the consumer market as well as political situation in Japan later. There are two principal factors stimulating Japanese women to become actively involved in the co-operative movement. Firstly, the rise in the intellectual level of women as a result of higher enrolment of women in colleges, high schools and universities. Secondly, the tradition of housewife taking care of the household budget (Yamauchi, 91).

The co-operatives made women to become social pressure groups. They deal with environment, peace, social justice and 'community development activities in addition to co-operative business. Specially housewives engage in these activities using their leisure time.

Women in consumer co-operatives claim 20% of part-time directors and 10% full time directors. They are engaged in policy making executive positions and managing business. The percentage of full-time female employees in consumer co-operatives in 1986 has been 28.2%.

Japan has parallel developments in sub-sectoral co-operatives. Agricultural co-operatives have their own structure from grass roots level to national level.

The National Council of Agricultural Co-operative Women's Organisations was formed in 1951 as an advisory body to Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives. In 1990, the number of affiliated women's associations was 3169 with a membership of 2.35 million.

Although these women's organisations participated in economic activities such as mobilisation of savings, build funds during the recession period of agricultural co-operatives, they are more active as community development programmes such as improving quality of life, etc. They have formulated a policy titled 'The Path for Agricultural Co-operative Women's Associations to follow to the 21st Century'.

The fisheries co-operatives too have their own women associations. They were started in 1950s. In 1988, the number of women groups in fishery co-operative sector was 1397 for 2107 fishery co-operatives. Within the fisheries co-operatives themselves, 16.7% are female members engaged in fisheries industry.

The woman group in fisheries co-operatives functions with 5 principles:

- It is a women organisation in fishing communities,
- It is an organisation of fellowship,
- It is an organisation established to help promote fishery co-operative movement,
- It is an independent entity,
- It is an organisation of political neutrality.

These women's groups function as a supportive organisation to fisheries co-operatives due to legal constraint which demands that in order to become a member of a fishery co-operative, a person should engage in fishing industry on full-time basis. However, in few co-operative societies, there are directors and chairwomen functioning.

In brief, Japan has different concepts followed on gender issues by various sub-sectors in co-operatives which show different approaches. Consumer co-operatives strongly influenced by labour movement and radical thinking has an empowerment approach to gender issues, which has facilitated women entering into community managing roles in co-operatives. Fisheries and agricultural co-operatives which are faced with legal obstacles as well as their affiliation to more conservative social groups, have a welfare approach as well as equality of women in development approach to a certain extent. The Seikatsu Club (Co-operative for Total Living) and such co-operatives are more progressive in gender issues and engaged in political issues too.

By and large, the Japanese society remains a traditional nuclear family based although things are changing very fast. Gender stereotypes are evident in the process.

3.9 Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)

When the North Korea was found as a socialist country, men and women were made equal in front of the constitution, civil and criminal laws. Labour laws stipulate equal wages for both sexes.

North Korea enjoys a high status in public health, having special arrangements for women and children. The life expectancy is 78.6 years for women and

71 years for men. It has a human development index of 0.665 and is the 74th country in the world rankings. It is reported that North Korea has no illiteracy recorded (Gung Jong OK, 91).

Women participate in all gender activities in all spheres. They represented 20.1% of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly in 1980. In 1987, there were 200 women leaders and 223 women doctors. The women technicians represented 29.9% in 1989. Out of the national manpower in 1989, women consisted of 47.65%. The constitution has special reference to the protection of marriage and family as the cell of the society. In 1970, the DPRK adopted a resolution of freeing women from household burden. In the fields of agriculture (55%), commercial and public services (74.6%), education (56.4%), public health (69.3%), and communication (55.1%) majority of women were reported in 1989.

The government has only two sectors in the economy: state and co-operative. No separate statistics are available.

3.10 Republic of Korea

South Korea is one of the developed countries in the region, having a ranking of 34 with 0.893 score of Human Development Index of the UNDP, out of 160 countries. Per capita income in 1990 was US\$5,569.

The life expectancy is 71 years. The women have a higher life expectancy rate. The literacy among rural women is 57.2% according to a survey conducted in 1989. The common literacy has increased to 98% in 1992.

In terms of the Constitution, both sexes are treated equally. However, the labour laws permit the payment of lower wages to women as it is in practice. Growing unemployment in rural areas and the literacy rate increasing among younger generation who got the benefit of compulsory schooling law in 1948, compelled young women to migrate to cities and to industries which encouraged this situation.

Korea has a nuclear family system, where woman is subordinate and functions as a housewife undertaking household work. They also supply unpaid family labour, specially in rural areas. They do not have community managing roles and confine themselves to the household.

South Korean co-operative movement has 3 major sub-sectors; agricultural co-operatives, fishery co-operatives and credit co-operatives.

The National Agricultural Co-operative Federation (NACF) covers consumer activities and processing and marketing activities as there is no law on

consumer co-operatives. However, there is an informal consumer co-operative movement in the making.

The NACF has organised a division for women guidance which looks after the women's activities at the national level. Similarly, it has an affiliation of provincial level and township level co-operatives. The primary co-operatives have organised village level women's clubs.

In 1987, there were 38,565 women's clubs. These clubs do not perform gender strategic activities. They are aimed at family health, children's education, better living, saving mobilization, farm guidance and training on farm machinery. One co-operative has about 26 clubs.

Establishment and running a retail grocery shop has become popular in these clubs. This serves not only as an economic activity but also as a social activity for women to promote socialization.

The recent trend on retailing in rural Korea shows that mobile shops are becoming popular than the shops maintained by women's clubs. Mobile shops offer variety and delivery of capital goods such as TV, Refrigerator, etc. Therefore, it is yet to be seen how women's club would react to this trend.

In terms of women's participation in national development and co-operatives, South Korea shows a poor progress in comparison to overall economic growth. There are some cases of successes of socio-economic improvements in village areas with the initiative of women under Sameul movement but they are rare.

Gender integration is a complex subject in South Korea as the society remains patriarchal and traditional in spite of its economic growth to become a high income category country.

3.11 Malaysia

Malaysia is one of the fast growing economies in the region, sharing an annual per capita income of \$5,558 in 1990. Social growth is comparative to economic growth. Females have a higher life expectancy rate of 73.3 years while males have 69.8 years. Adult literacy rate is not that low among females. Women work force constitutes 25.98% of the total population, whereas males represent 48.51%. Strangely, in comparison to many countries in the Region, the female employment in professional and technical fields, clerical services and agriculture, fishery and forestry fields are higher than men.

The wage structure still discriminates women earning low wages than men. Participation of women in politics is growing, having two ministers and 3 deputy ministers at present.

The constitution and other laws have provided equal rights to women and men. The Malaysian society has a patriarchal family. However, families show a higher percentage of widowed rate, divorced rate and separated rate.

A survey conducted in 1991 shows that traditional reproduction role and subordinated behaviour of women (Baheran, 91). 1980 Population and Housing Census showed a declining rate of unpaid family workers (18%) who mainly consist of women.

The government has high priority of gender integration in development and set up a national advisory council for the integration of women in development. In addition, there is a women affairs division in the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development.

Politically, women are also strong as in the case of Wanita UMNO, Wanita MCP, Wanita MIC, Wanita Gerean and Dewan Muslimat PAS. The National Co-operative Organisation of Malaysia (ANGKASA) has its own women functional committee.

In addition, there are several welfare organisations and clubs functioning for women in Malaysia.

In brief, the gender integration has taken an important turn in Malaysia. Strategic gender needs are progressively met in different types of organisations. The trend towards the economic self-reliance has shown that the empowerment model is becoming popular.

One of the significant changes towards gender integration is the declining number of special women co-operatives and the increase of women in membership and leadership in mixed types of co-operatives. NACIWID has come up with a 10-year action plan for the integration of women in development.

However, the women co-operatives in the field of credit and consumer activities are 30 in number. Farmers organisation Authority (FOA) has 44 women co-operatives. One of the significant features of women multi-purpose co-operatives (Air Itan) is the redemption of land mortgaged by their husbands.

One of the strategies used by the Functional Women's Committee of the ANGKASA is the setting up of women councils in mixed types of co-operatives to look after women's interests. The school co-operatives who will have impact on the future co-operative membership has achieved 50% female membership.

However, there is still a vast gap in the management levels. Only 6% of directors of co-operatives are women.

Income generating activities meant for women's groups are popular in rural areas, specially in poultry, agro-based industries and tailoring enterprises. One of the other factors in Malaysia is that the co-operatives are popular among rural women rather than career women in cities.

Although the picture is changing fast, the export processing zones and multi-national companies have recruited women labour on discriminatory terms. There are controversial NGOs such as Consumer Association of Penang and Sahabat Alam Malaysia, which are active in the women's rights as consumers as well as citizens who should receive equal treatment in socio-economic opportunities.

Malaysian socio-economic situation is changing fast due to the enhancement of women's participation in economic activities. Gender roles and relationships too are changing into non-nuclear family at least in urban areas.

3.12 Pakistan

Pakistan stands 120th ranking out of 160 countries in the world of UNDP Human Development Index and has a score of 0.305 between 0 and 1. Per-capita income was US\$ 276. Even social indicators show a poor picture than many other countries in Asia. Life expectancy of women is 49 years whereas men is 51 years. Primary school enrolment of girls is 31% and boys 57%. The women labour in the family is considered as family helpers and unpaid²⁰. This is due to the patriarchal pattern of society and the psychological conditioning which accepts women's subordination to men.

Cultural traditions have influenced the determination of gender roles in Pakistan more than economic factors. The confinement of women to their parental houses or husband's houses has been considered as adherence to the teachings of the religion. Therefore, the provision of education to female children has not been considered a must since the males are expected to be the breadwinners. The result: 35% of the male population is literate as compared to only 16% of the female population.

Although the constitution influenced by the British traditions allow females to be elected to parliament, actually they are discouraged. The election of Benazir Ali Bhutto to the premier's position erupted a debate on religious grounds which was one of the factors of her defeat subsequently.

The legal environment for women's equality is preserved in the 1973 constitution but law of evidence, Haddood ordinance and Quisas and Diyat discriminate women. According to evidence law, evidence of 2 women is equal to one man. In the case of rape or adultery, evidence of 4 adult muslim males of good reputation is needed for proof. the US State Department's 1991 Human Rights Report states that over 2000 women are in jail awaiting trial who could not prove rape or cause for divorce. It has been reported that even minor's have been held for inability to prove rape charges.

Family law ordinance too has discriminatory provisions against women. However, labour legislation in Pakistan provides comprehensive benefits to female workers. They also provide certain privileges in the case of maternity protection and child care.

Pakistan is a patriarchal society. Man dominates over property and family affairs. In such a society, gender roles are traditional: women confine to household chores and reproduction. Income earning women have marginal influence over decision making in the family (Kazi, 1992).

The unemployment rate in Pakistan has been low as much as 1-3% and also the unemployment among women labour is lower than men. The data has indicated that the proportion of unpaid family helpers within the female economically active population is more than 3 times the corresponding proportion of males (Kazi '92).

Female representation in agricultural labour has been increased from 14.5% in 1984/85 to 16.6% in 1987 due to migration of male labour to middle east and non-farm employment. The government's approach to women in development is purely welfare oriented. They have never been considered an economic resource. They have been recipient of welfare schemes.

Pakistan was a signatory to the Mexico declaration. During the Women's Decade, a Women's division was set up at the cabinet secretariat. The sixth and seventh five-year plans at least had specific objectives of increasing the share of women in development. However, the plan continues to treat women as consumers rather than producers and a group who are in need of social services (Kazi,92). The Ministry of Women's Development too followed the same approach in its projects directed towards women.

The need to promote women only co-operatives has been embodied in the Seventh Plan (1988-93) whereas early plans did not have such emphasis. At present, out of 61,000 co-operatives, only 952 are women co-operatives. The membership is less than 30,000. When it comes to women's representation in all

co-operatives, the percentage is between 1 and 2. They have no role in decision making or any important managerial positions (Kazi, 92).

The women's co-operatives are not democratic in character as the selection of the committee is done by the Registrar and the members do not have any role in decision making.

The NGOs working for women are social and charitable organisations which have been motivated by welfare objectives (Kazi, 92). However, some of the recent NGOs have sponsored self-help groups for production oriented activities, which are managed on the basis of co-operative principles.

Renewed interest in women's development and the emphasis on a community based approach can be the basis of a more serious attempt at developing women's co-operatives (Kazi, 92).

The present activities of women's co-operatives reinforce the traditional role of women by undertaking to support knitting, handicrafts, etc. Non-traditional jobs are discouraged. However, when the production oriented projects are developed for women, their current productive roles and occupations have to be taken into consideration.

3.13 Philippines

The Philippines is considered a middle income group country under the World Bank rating. It has the rank of 84 out of 160 countries having a score of 0.613 between 0 and 1 in the UNDP Human Development Index. It had a per-capita income of US\$ 672 in 1990.

The Philippines was one of the countries which ratified the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. In keeping with the UN declaration, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women was established in 1975 under Presidential Decree No.633.

This commission undertook several income generating projects for women under the Philippine Development Plan for Women. It works with the National Economic and Development Authority. It also assists the President and cabinet in policy formulation and programme implementation for the integration of women in national development.

The Philippines became one of the few countries which has a written law on fundamental equality between men and women which was formulated in 1987. The new family code formulated in 1987 has eliminated former discriminatory provisions against women under Spanish colonial law based civil code.

Philippines has a large community of NGOs working on gender issues. The Women of Gabriela has been a coordinator for more than one hundred women's organisations.

In the co-operative sector, the Philippine Federation of Women for Co-operatives (PFWC) has been the oldest organisation established in 1975. Later, Women's Forum of the National Confederation of Co-operatives (NATCCO) was established. It has also initiated the formation of Asean Women in Development Co-operative Forum (AWCF) which has a membership of Thailand (CULT), Malaysia (Credit Union Promotion Club), Indonesia (FORMASI) and the Philippines (NATCCO). Although the co-operative code has no discrimination against women in co-operatives, some special women's co-operatives exist. They are mainly on consumer and multi-purpose types in addition to few thrift and credit co-operatives. Generally women provide a good membership base, are active in attending and participating in general assembly meetings, committee meetings and other type of meetings held by the co-operatives (Jamias, 91).

In the recent years, the women's position has become more vulnerable due to economic recession which resulted in lay off of men who were employed. The families have survived through women's engagement in the underground economy (Jamias). New technologies, processes and social status have been perceived as lightening the burden of women.

In the Philippines, however, the women have no access to credit as men are considered to be full time farmers. This has been some what eased because of a bill passed in the National Congress, allowing women's access to credit without necessarily having the consent of the husband or having him as a guarantor.

Although the actual data is not available, it has been reported that Philippines has a comparatively high percentage of women participating in co-operatives. A survey conducted in 1980 has revealed that the participation is less than half of the total but two regions having 52% and 53% women members and 50% and 50.82% women board members. A survey conducted by NATCCO in 1987 has, however, revealed that 52.22% of membership in consumer co-operatives are women and has a national average of 67.28% females in co-operative staff category. The committee members are only 31.31%.

The education programmes conducted by the two national level co-operative women's forums have focussed on the gender awareness activities and changing traditional values. Socio-cultural background has rooted the women's

subordination deeply which has discouraged independent action by women, considering the family as a secondary position. Church influence has been a critical factor affecting gender roles (Jamias, 91). 80% of the Filipinos support the legalization of divorces as revealed by a survey conducted in 1981.* Decisions on family planning are also influenced by religious beliefs.

Philippines has recorded a high literacy rate among females outnumbering men in school enrolment but has no influence on the participation of females in co-operatives. This suggests the phenomenon of socio-cultural factors' dominance over literacy. The government's efforts to organise rural improvement clubs as an alternative to traditional co-operatives has had only marginal influence.

3.14 Singapore

According to World Bank classification, Singapore falls within high income economy category and in the UN classification, it is a developed country. Per capita income in 1971 was US\$11,245. It also ranks 37 out of 160 countries in the world on the basis of UNDP Human Development Index, which has a score of 0.879 in 1990.

When it comes to social indicators, Singapore has one of the lowest birth rates of 1.3%. Common life expectancy is 73 years. Infant mortality rate is also low, i.e. 7 males per 1000 live births and 6 females per 1000 live births. Common literacy rate is 87.6%.

Singapore has an open market economy where majority of people are salary earners. Traditional family system does not exist except the nuclear family system which is becoming shaky. Female employment is 18.7% and male employment is 28.8%. There is a considerable percentage of self-employment in Singapore. Female unemployment is lower than males even in the categories of 'no education' and below class 10. Female unemployment is more in the university graduates category (Yeo, 91). However, majority of low income earners are women. In the category of monthly income of US\$ 200-299, males are less than women. Again higher income groups above US\$ 300 are males.

Singapore has a special women charter under the constitution. This safeguards women's rights and privileges as equal partners, enjoying equal opportunities to participation in economic and social progress of the country. Equal pay for equal work has been implemented in 1962.

* *ICA Regional Seminar on Enhancing Women's Participation in Co-operative Activities - Report, 1980, p.241*

One could see still that the higher management positions are not open to women comparative to other jobs.

When the production and industrial growth became priorities in Singapore, the trend towards women coming to politics has lost its appeal. However, after few years with the formation of Singapore Council of Women, they are becoming a force. Women are in majority in community services.

With the changes in employment patterns, joint family system has become marginal and confined to migrated labour. Nuclear family itself has changed in terms of gender roles. The properties, normally housing and business, are jointly owned. The change to married women's housekeeping role has brought house maids on employment. Therefore, women have gone into productive and community managing roles more than household chores. Trade unions also had accelerated the process through creating consciousness among labour.

The Singapore Business and Professional Association is one example of increasing consciousness among women on their leadership potentiality in business as well as the community.

In the co-operative sector, women are active in the co-operative societies as members. In terms of types of co-operatives, they are more active in Thrift and Credit co-operative. Taxi Driver's Co-operative (COMFORT) has marginal number of women members. Many credit co-operatives and government and service employees' co-operatives have considerable number of women in the committees. Considering the total number of co-operatives as 63, the representation is still insufficient.

Development of Economy for Women (DEW) Co-operative which is established in 1981 is unique in character as it has only female membership as against all other co-operatives. At the end of 1988, it had 437 members. It provides credit facilities for emergencies, redemption of debt, consumption and business to members. The members are economically active women, students and housewives.

Except DEW Co-operative, co-operative movement in Singapore has not been far progressive than common gender integration level of the country as a whole.

3.14 Sri Lanka

Categorized as a low income country by the World Bank, Sri Lanka has achieved a per capita income of US\$ 418 in 1991. In spite of its low income, Sri Lanka has been seen as one of the highest among developing countries in the

region to achieve a high growth of social welfare as shown in the UNDP Human Development Index. It has a ranking of 76 out of 160 countries having a score of 0.651 between variables of 0 and 1 in 1992.

Sri Lanka has a life expectancy rate of 68 for males and 72 for females. Literacy rate among males is 91% and for females 83%.

Approximately 50% of the work force is women. However, out of this, 65% of women are engaged in semi-skilled and un-skilled grades. Only 6% are categorized as administrative and managerial grades. Sri Lanka Administrative Service, the highest government administrative grade in the country, has an allocation of 25% for women in the recruitment which was introduced in 1968. The increase of women labour has been due to the migrant labour to free trade zone industries consisting of export products such as garments and electronic goods.

The unemployment among females in 1986/87 was 6.3% and among males was 5.6% of the total population. 23.6% females and 11.3% males from the labour force have been unemployed in 1986/87. The major unemployment has been among under graduate population, accounting for 54.5% females and 68.0% males (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 1990).

One of the recent phenomenon is the growth of self-employment which consists of 30%.

Constitution and the laws in Sri Lanka have provided equal status to men and women. Labour laws has stopped discrimination in wages. In keeping with the UN Decade for Women, Sri Lankan government created a ministry in charge of women's affairs and a women's bureau under the Ministry. Women enjoy voting rights from 1931.

Women's movement in Sri Lanka goes back to the colonial days when they organised All Ceylon Women's Society (Lanka Mahila Samithi) and started providing vocational skills to women, through its extension officers. In addition, there are several NGOs such as Sewa Vanitha, Housewives Association, YWCA and Centre for Women's Research, etc.

Sri Lanka has a tradition of mixed-sex co-operatives. Women's co-operative societies are negligible in number. Women have been active in thrift and credit co-operatives from 1911. They have majority of members in weaver's co-operatives and handicraft co-operatives. Multi-purpose co-operatives being the strongest and largest in terms of business has 35% women members, out of a membership of 2.1 million. In Thrift and Credit co-operatives, they have 49% of the total membership. As a result of the representations made by the ICA/SCC/

NCC Women's project in 1979, a legal provision was made for reservation of 2 places out of 7 directors in multi-purpose co-operative societies. This has led all MPCSSs (283) to establish women's committees as advisory bodies who elect the 2 directors. No reservation has been made in other co-operatives although women form a low percentage of leadership.

The co-operative women's committees have been established under the district co-operative unions, who elect the national women's committee under the National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka. As a parallel development during the last 3 years, two such national women's committees have been established under the Thrift and Credit Co-operative Federation and Fisheries Co-operative Federation.

A survey conducted in 1980 revealed that 83.8% employees are males and females consists only 16.2%. Females were in majority in accounts, banking services, sales and secretarial careers.

The ICA/SCC/NCC project for women's consumer education started in 1978 has initiated women's committees, education and training activities and income generating projects in co-operatives. The project has been integrated into the NCC structure and the National Co-operative Women's Committee was formed with a women section in the NCC.

In 1983, the Canadian Co-operative Association supported a women's education project in selected areas with the aim of supporting income generating activities.

The SCC has supported a project on women in fisheries from 1988 to provide financial assistance through a revolving fund and training in vocational skills.

Sri Lanka has a nuclear family system. Still joint family system remains marginally in rural areas. Migration of labour to industries and also to the middle east has created a complex social problem which would result in changes in the family system.

Attempts made by co-operatives and some government projects have been aimed at supplementing income generation. This has not changed the gender roles in rural areas. In the families of full time salary earners, consisting of both spouses, gender roles have been changed considerably. However, due to the declining existence of domestic service system because of the government's poverty alleviation programmes, the traditional gender roles are changing fast.

Although the activities of the co-operatives have increased the community managing role of women, empowerment is still to come. Due to the elimination of dowry system & the introduction of exclusive primary health and functional

literacy programmes, women are no longer a passive force. They form a strong force in political parties and even militant organisations. However, entrepreneurship among women is yet to be developed in rural areas and among unemployed women. Other areas such as consumer consciousness are to be developed still.

3.15 Thailand

Thailand is one of the fast growing economies in the region, having achieved a per capita income of US\$ 1473 in 1990. It has an UNDP Human Development Index score of 0.713 and rank 66 out of 160 countries in the world.

Thailand has a parliamentary structure with a monarch as the nominal head of state. Thai constitution and laws treat both sexes as equal in front of law.

Thailand is drifting away from being an agricultural economy. In 1991, agriculture represented only 12.4% of the GDP.

Thailand has formulated a long-term development plan (1982-2001) for women as a subsidiary to the national development plan. The main components are health and education. Life expectancy remains at 68.75 for females and 63.5 for males. Illiteracy rate among women is twice as that of men. The national average is 9% at present.

The major employment of women is agriculture (61.27%), which is declining. The percentage is still much higher than males. Commerce and services too are higher among women than men.

Thai women are still active in their practical gender needs rather than strategic needs. Their visibility in politics and community work is not that felt. Thai Development Research Institute in 1989 reported that only 0.4% of elected heads of districts and villages are women. Women members of parliament remain only at 3.5% in 1987.

Thai women are subordinate to men and confined to a nuclear family system. Some laws pertaining to divorce and some provisions in labour laws discriminate women. Housekeeping and unpaid family labour is prevalent in the family system (Pailin, 91).

With UN Decade for Women, the government established a national Commission of Women's Affairs in 1979. Several government departments such as agriculture, community development, education, health and co-operative promotion, have women interest sections.

Gender and Development Research Institute is a major NGO dealing with women issues. It promotes gender strategic needs through various research programmes, campaigns and advisory services.

The National Council of Women of Thailand is another NGO functioning under the leadership of the Queen.

Women are active in agricultural co-operatives who represent 22.9% of the membership. Co-operative Promotion Department organises special education programmes for women and initiated an income generating project in 1981 in collaboration with the Co-operative League of Thailand. Empowerment of women was the goal of the activity. This now covers 150 groups of women in agricultural co-operatives.

By-laws of agricultural co-operatives restrict membership to households which are normally headed by men. The consumer co-operatives have 53% women members. Agricultural co-operatives have women membership of 22%. Women staff members represent 60% of the total co-operative employees. Consumer co-operatives have 75% female staff.

In this process, women have been integrated into co-operative structure more than any other sector. Community managing role of women is a growing phenomenon. The next step would be to increase the number of committee members from the present rate of 35%.

Thailand too represents a common feature of Asian countries in treating women as an invisible economic force still, although the picture is gradually changing. The change comes with the migration to cities by women and growing employment which has resulted in economic self-reliance of women. Rural areas are still maintaining family stereo-types. The approach by the state as well as NGOs has not much changed from segregated activities for women which would not have much effect on gender integration. Gender awareness training has not been popular still. Therefore, the present change is a slow process in par with the economic growth rate, which force the traditional family structure which supported subordination of women to change.

3.16 Vietnam

Vietnam ranks 99 in the world, having a score of 0.498 between 0 and 1 of Human Development Index of the UNDP in 1991. This is an achievement in social welfare, considering its per capita GDP of US\$ 200 in 1991, as a least developed country. Vietnam has 50% share of agriculture in the GDP and 32% share of manufacturing.

Vietnam's female mortality rate has been 48 per 1000 live births whereas male ratio was 61. Life expectancy at birth too had been 69 years for females and 64 years for males in 1984.

The Vietnam being a socialist country provides strong legal rights to women. Article 138 of the Penal Code promulgated in 1984, stipulates that violation of women's rights to equality shall be punished. Vietnam set up a National Committee for Women Decade in accordance with Un resolution. The government, as a policy, follows prohibition of all discrimination against women in terms of employment and payment of wages.

In Vietnam, as an exception due to the war, the female population was 51.5% of the population in 1985. The state sector had 46.10% of the total of the workers and civil servants as women. In the co-operative sector, the ratio was 56.14% females. The private sector had 56%. 70% of women took part in direct production.

In 1988, the women's strength in selected job categories was as follows:

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Trade services | 67.5% |
| Agriculture | 65.7% |
| Medical | 68.6% |
| Light industries | 63.5% |
| Education | 62.0% |
| Construction | 54.0% |
| Forestry | 46.0% |
| Transport | 30.0% |
| Communication | 35.0% |

The government has set up a National Women's Association as a macro-organisation which is an independent body advising the government and the party on policy. It is to represent women's rights to equality and to collective membership.

Vietnam enjoyed 82% literacy rate in 1991, a higher achievement for a least developed country. 50% of the total pupils in 1984/85 were female children. In 1985/86, universities and vocational schools and 40.4% females.

The gender roles have been changed considerably during the last few years. It is partly due to war situation and the economic reconstruction work.

The Institute of Sociology in Hanoi carried out a survey on the socio-economic equality between husband and wife which reveals emerging gender

integration pattern in the family*

| <i>Family chores</i> | <i>Mainly done</i> | <i>Mainly done</i> | <i>Done by</i> |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | <i>by wife</i> | <i>by husband</i> | <i>both</i> |
| Buying foodstuff | 70.3 | 6.8 | 18.3 |
| Buying clothes | 57.0 | 12.3 | 29.1 |
| Buying cultural articles | 46.1 | 30.3 | 18.9 |
| Buying costly articles | 28.0- | 34.8 | 32.3 |
| Decide how to divide labour in production | 26.8 | 36.6 | 35.5 |
| Planing new tress | 23.3 | 25.2 | 32.4 |
| Deciding on children's marriage | 10.8 | 7.8 | 27.3 |
| Deciding on children's marriage | 10.8 | 7.8 | 27.3 |
| Selecting a job for children | 9.4 | 10.6 | 35.6 |

Vietnamese women have been politically active since the revolution. It has been reported that 51.2% of housewives attended political rallies whereas husbands account for only 30.8%. Social activities are generally higher among women than men.

Women headed households are having a considerable presence in Vietnam. The co-operative sector claims higher participation of women. The number of workers in agricultural co-operatives has been 60.2% in 1986 and handicrafts and small industry, co-operatives claimed 67% females. Considerable number of chairpersons and other officials in co-operatives too are women.

46.3% of the wives attend the co-operative members' meetings and only 40.6% are men. When Vietnam has started liberalizing the economy, women entrepreneurs have taken the lead. majority of family shops are run by housewives. Husbands are normally out transporting stocks.

However, with the inflation increasing upto 600% per year, during the last few years, and the stagnation of the economy due to US embargo and other factors, women labour force has suffered a lot.

On the other hand, adjustment of employment facilities for women who has reproductive roles too has been difficult. Part-time jobs have become too few.

As once Attila Karaosmanoghu, Vice President, Asian Region of the World Bank, mentioned at Beijing Women Journalists' Association Meeting in 1988**

* *Vietnamese Women in Eighties*, Ed. The Vietnam Union and the Centre for Women Studies, People's Publishing House, Hanoi, 1989, p.29

* *Southern Economist*, June 1, 1989, *Enhancing Role of Asian Women in Development*.

"Technology has affected Vietnamese women labour force too. Many mature labour has difficulties of adjusting to the new technology due to lack of facilities and the full time work added to mature years." This is evident mainly in the agricultural field. Investment in vocational training and new technology has been a constraint faced by the government. It has to be added that many of the schools and other community services are maintained by the village and district level people's committees themselves and they depend on the contribution by the co-operatives and the meagre taxes collected by them..

Vietnam's renovation process (Doi Moi) is accelerating at a tremendous pace at present. Foreign investment and joint ventures are growing. Therefore, the entire human resource need to be readjusted and trained to accept and work with a change. Being a country with women work force as the majority (60%) this is quite a challenge.

3.17 International agencies dealing with gender issues

Starting from the UN Decade for Women (1975-85), many international as well as national organisations emerged to deal with gender issues. There exist two broad categories in the international scene:

- i. Inter-governmental and governmental organisations,
- ii. Non-governmental international organisations.

3.17.1 Inter-governmental and governmental organisations

UN system is the main group in this category. Within the UN system, practically every semi-autonomous agency has at least a section dealing with gender issues. We try to identify the UN agencies dealing with gender issues which are directly connected to co-operatives.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Founded by the Treaty of Versailles of 1919, the ILO is a tripartite organisation composed of the representations of governments, employers and employees.

Promoted by the UN Declaration on Women, the ILO adopted a declaration and a resolution to promote equality of opportunity and equality of treatment for women workers. This resolution resulted in an action plan on medium term (1976-81) adopted in 1976. Among prioritised activities, increased employment for women, elimination of discrimination against women and practical measures for the equal pay principle.

* *Vietnamese Women in Eighties, 1989, p.62*

ILO World employment programme also included women focus. Under this, many research studies were undertaken in the countries such as Bangladesh, China, India and Malaysia. Arising out of these studies, two major projects were launched on rural development and women on inter-regional basis and another project for rural women in Asia. These projects carried out many skill development programmes in the region.

The ILO carried out few co-operative projects for women in the region such as Pakistan and Papua New Guinea. The ILO also had joint projects with UNDP (Papua New Guinea), UNICEF (Bangladesh) and YWCA (Fiji).

The ILO carried out a comprehensive study on women's involvement in co-operatives in 1983. More than one hundred countries and national co-operative organisations participated in the study. A similar study on young women's involvement in credit and saving co-operatives was carried out in several Asian countries during 1982/87.

The ILO has a special branch in their headquarters in Geneva and a regional co-operative branch in Bangkok.

The ILO has several ongoing co-operative projects in several countries in the region, such as Philippines, Indonesia, China, etc. in addition to special project activities in many countries through its MATCOM programme. These activities however are aimed at overall co-operative development.

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

Being an inter-governmental agency, the FAO was involved in agricultural development for a long time. The FAO had a major participation with governments all the same. However, after the World Conference on Agrarian Reforms and Rural Development in 1979, the FAO became interested in rural institution building, including co-operatives. The conference affirmed that *"participation by the people in the institutions and systems which govern their lives is a basic human right and also essential for re-alignment of political power in favour of disadvantaged groups and for social and economic development."*

As a result, and also as a result of continuous pressure from the international non-governmental organisations including the ICA, the FAO launched a Plan of Action for People's Participation in Rural Development. However, plan for integration of women in agriculture was approved only 1989 FAO Conference. Earlier strategies of the FAO was confined to women's involvement in agricultural labour only. Home economics was the actual field of operation although, the 1979 Conference has accepted the role of women in agricultural and non-

agricultural activities. Women in developing agriculture was accepted as an approach in 1983.

These assessments concluded that:

- a) Women in traditional agrarian settings contributed more to food security and family earnings through wage labour and entrepreneurship than was generally known and accepted,
- b) Women did not have equal opportunities with men in agriculture,
- c) Women were not sufficiently involved in the planning and implementation of development,
- d) The design of agricultural projects did not take adequate amount of women responsibilities and potentials,
- e) More and better information was needed on women's activities and their multiple roles.

Since then, FAO has launched several projects for integrating women into rural development. Some of them are:

- Access to credit projects in Vietnam, Malawi, Sierra Leone, etc.
- Access to market project,
- Access to training projects in Latin America and the Caribbean,
- Access to research and technology projects. These vary from country to country. Some of them are based on cash crops and also new areas like sericulture. These projects are located in Latin America and Asia.
- Access to income generating projects for women in Asia and Africa,
- Access to small farmer development projects for men and women.

The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAPA) of the FAO is involved in the projects located in Asia and the Pacific regions. The latest projects of the RAPA is the introducing of a data base for women in agriculture.

United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

UNESCO is concerned about literacy and peace in the family context, contributing for equal participation by both sexes. UNESCO carries out several adult literacy projects aimed at women in the region.

UNESCO collaborates with the ICA in the Un environment activities and leadership development programmes for leaders of co-operatives in adult education. At the request of the UNESCO, the UN declared 1994 as the Year of the Family. The UN Commission on the Status of Women provides guidance in

the form of policies and mechanisms for UN affiliated organisations on women in development. The Commission has many observes including the ICA Women's Committee. It organises world conferences on women where the policies, strategies and status of women are discussed:

UN also has another agency attached to the UN office in Vienna as a Division for Advancement of Women. ESCAP women activities functions under this division. ESCAP in Bangkok was responsible for implementing the UN Decade for Women resolutions through the governments in the region. These officers coordinate women's activities with other un agencies such as UNEP, WHO, etc. relating to their fields. The UN also has set up an International Institute for the Advancement of Women.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has a division for Women in Development. It has promoted several gender programmes at the country-specific levels and regional levels.

Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP)

The CIRDAP is an inter-governmental body promoting social development through an integrated approach developed on the Comilla model in Bangladesh.

Having a focus on women in development, CIRDAP conduct research and training on the subject. The main project areas are:

- Formulation of policies and projects,
- Information and data on some basic issues,
- Training for skill development and income generating activities,
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Canadian International Development Authority (CIDA)

Canadian International Development Authority is a donor agency under the Canadian government operating several projects in several community development fields in Asia. These projects are on bi-lateral governmental basis or through the NGOs. CIDA supports gender integration in several ways:

- analyzing data to identify the needs and opportunities,
- initiating dialogue with recipient countries and other development agencies to promote women in development,
- training and development programmes in issues related to women,
- developing a system for analyzing projects to improve their impact on women at the planning and evaluation stages,

- funding projects for women in literacy, health and population, income generation and skills training.

CIDA has initiated a project for destitute rural women in Pakistan to receive income through a rural maintenance programme. In China, CIDA provides management skill training and fellowship programmes for women. In Indonesia, women have been identified as target group for forestry, water and social projects. Support to Philippine consists of training and consultancy. In Thailand, the support is in the area of exchange of information.

Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA)

SIDA is one of the biggest government assistance programme for developing countries in community development programmes. SIDA was established in 1965 and engaged in bilateral technical assistance programme with governments in the developing countries. Assistance to NGOs form a substantial part of the assistance programmes. These assistance is channelled through Swedish embassies in 17 countries. These programmes aim at:

- ensuring economic and social equality,
- promoting growth of resources,
- furthering political and economic independence,
- promoting democratic development in society,
- ensuring environmentally sustainable development.

SIDA bi-lateral assistance go to 80 countries. Some of the biggest programmes are located in Asia such as India.

Many of the SIDA primary health and public amenities projects are aimed at women as the target group. Some of the Indian projects are meant for women in non-formal education. The activities involve formation of women's groups, awareness making, training, health education and income generating activities. Many of the NGOs associated with SIDA promote co-operatives and self-help groups in many areas of community development.

Asian Development Bank

Asian Development Bank is one of the recent organisations who got activated in women in development activities. ADB adopted a policy in 1985 through which efforts are being made to help women groups to explore their potential and to improve their share of benefits of development such as educational and employment opportunities.

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After 1989, the Bank started financing projects in women in development. A primary education (girls) centre project in Pakistan was the first project funded by the ADB. Another project was undertaken in the Philippines in the fisheries sector.

Another policy adopted by the Bank was that women should be taken into account at every stage of a project cycle. A technical assistance programme too is being launched in Bhutan, Malaysia and Pakistan.

3.17.2 Non-governmental International Agencies (NGOs)

International Co-operative Alliance

Being one of the oldest international NGOs in the world, the ICA has a long history of association in women's activities. The ICA was set up in 1895. Subsequently, the International Co-operative Women's Committee, an affiliate to the ICA, was established in 1921. Since then, the Women's Committee is active in the ICA structure upto now.

Being a consultative body (Category A) to the UN, the ICA supports UN developmental activities, specially in the fields where the co-operatives are involved. The ICA has liaison offices in several UN agencies. Being the largest international NGO, the ICA has 79 countries, 200 organisations and 630 million individuals as members.

The ICA has given highest priority for gender integration in co-operatives in its development policy. The work plan adopted to cover the period upto 2000 AD, treats women as a priority target group.

The ICA has 4 regional offices, where gender integration is one of the priority areas in their work plans.

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific started its gender activities in a more systematic way after 1976. The first Conference on the subject was held in 1976 in Kuala Lumpur. As a result of this conference, several national level policy making seminars for co-operatives were undertaken.

The women's division set up at the ICA Regional office was instrumental in promoting national level activities providing technical and financial assistance. The division conducted two special projects in Sri Lanka and Thailand which provided experiences to other co-operative movements on the gender strategies in terms of policy mechanisms and work plans.

Several training manuals were produced and income generating activities for women were introduced in several countries.

As for institutional arrangements for gender planning, national women's co-operative organisations were formed in member countries which undertook gender planning. Some countries were able to set up women's committees at the village level too.

The ICA ROAP (then ICA ROESC) conducted international seminars to review the progress in 1980 and 1982. The programmes came to an end in 1985.

The gender programme renewed its activities again with a different strategy in keeping with the current developments in the concept and planning strategies in 1991.

Swedish Co-operative Centre

Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) has been set up for international co-operative technical assistance programmes by the Swedish Insurance Cooperatives (FOLKSAM), Consumer Cooperatives (KF), Farmers' Cooperatives (LRF), Cooperative Bank (Foreningsbanken), Housing Cooperatives (HSB), Oil Cooperatives (OK), and Cooperative Trade Union (RIKSBYGHEN) and support its activities.

SCC has been the major supporter of ICA activities upto now in terms of finances and other resources. Many of the development projects of the ICA are funded by the SCC. ICA Regional Office in New Delhi was set up by the SCC in 1960. The ICA Women's activities were financed by the SCC during the UN Decade for Women. ICA ROAP women's programme was solely financed by the SCC.

In addition to the support to the ICA, SCC has several movement-to-movement support programmes with several countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, which includes China, India, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Uruguay, Uganda, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Women is a priority target group for SCC. During the Decade of Women, SCC funded 2 projects in the ICA ROAP in Sri Lanka and Thailand.

SCC financed 2 projects for women groups in India, starting from 1983. This included women in small industries in six groups belonging to two states. They were formed as self-help groups which resulted in the formation of co-operatives. Another project in Sri Lanka included women in fisheries among other project activities.

SCC is active with ICA ROAP again on gender issues in addition to other project assistance to ICA ROAP.

Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA)

The Canadian Co-operative Association, which is the apex co-operative organisation in Canada, was another country co-operative organisation next to SCC, which came to Asia for technical assistance programmes. The CCA was concentrating on support to credit co-operative movements at the beginning and later diversified its activities.

At the beginning, the CCA started with movement-to-movement support on bi-lateral basis and at present is supporting the ICA ROAP and sub-regional programmes as well. Women in Development has been a priority area for the CCA. It has women in development programmes supported in the form of finances as well as personnel in Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India and Indonesia. Country programmes generally are for income generating activities and vocational training for women.

In addition to country programmes, the CCA supports a sub-regional gender programme in the Asean countries titled Asean Women in Development Co-operative Forum. The project office is located in the Philippines. The Forum has conducted gender awareness training since 1990. The CCA has assisted the ICA ROAP to conduct an inter-country study on women in fishery co-operatives, after which a bi-lateral project was established with the Fishery Co-operative Federation in India. The CCA also continues to support the present and future gender activities under the ICA ROAP.

Japanese Co-operatives

- i. Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union (JCCU)
- ii. Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives (CUAC)

Although functioning as members of the ICA ROAP, both Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union and Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives are supporting gender activities of the region under their special programmes.

The JCCU has been financing the Consumer Co-operative Development Project under the ICA ROAP for few years upto now. As a part of its activities, JCCU supported to carry out activities relating to increasing housewives' participation in co-operatives since 1988, through regional seminars and country-specific activities. JCCU has trained several country-specific women as in the case of Bangladesh, Thailand, Philippines and Sri Lanka.

The JCCU has also initiated exchange programmes between women co-operatives groups of Japan and many other countries in the Region. The Consumer Co-operative Union has extended support to conduct specialised

gender activities in the future starting from the 1993 Co-operative Gender Planning Conference through the ICA ROAP.

The CUAC had a long standing women association under its organisation. While supporting a 6-months agricultural co-operative management raining programme through the ICA ROAP, the CUAC organised another continuing activity to train 6 rural women leaders annually on agricultural co-operatives in Japan. The programme is held at the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia (IDACA). The first programme was conducted in 1991.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE

Co-operative institution is a product of the society fulfilling a socio-economic need of a section of the community. If the family is considered as the basic institution of a large society, it has an influence on the functioning of the society. Co-operative societies serve and work with the family. Participation of men and women in equal terms as an integrated whole would bring more productivity to the family. What would be the future of the family?

The Asia-Pacific Region has different stages of development of gender issues. This is related to socio-economic development. Extended or joint family is commonly known. Alvin Toffler in his study in 'Third Wave' has identified expanded family with future family in a technological society, where communication and information technology has taken over family relations. In terms of gender relations within the family, three systems have started functioning:

- Extended family,
- Nuclear family,
- Expanded family.

The commonly known nuclear family has tried to maintain the traditional role for the women which has become difficult to hold on. The family has been trying to survive economic upheavals by resorting to changing gender roles. The industrialization, migration to cities and to different countries by family partners caused role changes and role reversals. Migration to Middle East, Japan and Australia has caused psycho-social problems of these partners. The women in the extended or nuclear family have been the victims of these changes as well as civil wars, natural calamities and refugee status. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Vietnam have experienced the bitterness of the refugee family head becoming a woman.

These circumstances have brought complex issues in family relations. Although literacy campaigns have brought marginal consciousness of women

as a potential development resource, the nuclear family system with traditional values has hindered pressing it further.

The 'welfare approach' for dealing with gender issues still continues in many governments in spite of these changes.

How do we reconcile this status of the region, with the development elsewhere? John Naisbitt and Patricia Aberdeen in their book titled 'Megatrends 2000' name the 1990's as the 'decade of women in leadership'. They have come to the conclusion in the context of US:

- To be a leader in business today, it is no longer an advantage to have been socialized as a male.
- For the last two decades, US women have taken two-thirds of the millions of new jobs created each year in the information era. They will continue to do so far into the millennium.
- Outside the military management model, men and women are equally capable of inspiring commitment and bringing out the best in the people.
- If the male was the proto-typical industrial worker, the information workers is typically a woman.
- The tendency, often attributed to women, to want to balance the top priorities of career and family (along with other personal interests) is generational, not gender specific.
- Women missed out on the industrial age, but in America they have already established themselves in the industries of the future.
- Women are already leading their own businesses, which they are now starting in the US at twice the rate of men.*

When we compare the development of economies in the west and the changes in the family systems accordingly, the Asia Pacific Region has shown different experiences, even in the case of Japan. As an example, single mothers or one parent children are not acceptable even in the most developed countries in the region. At best, nuclear family system still functions as a model. These countries still believe in gender stereo-types. However, no alternative has been still found to replace the family as the primary social unit and also as the ideal and natural environment for child rearing. Therefore, attempts are now being made to find new meanings and interpretation of the family. UNESCO started a project to have a world-wide consultation on the future of the family.

* Naisbitt John, Aberdene, Patricia, *Megatrends 2000*, pp.199-204, Pan Books, 1990

International Year of the Family (1994) would find exchange of several experiences on the subject.

As the experiences in the open market economies have shown, one way of survival for the family is the new division of gender roles or rather flexibility of gender roles between men and women. These changes are not similar even within a country when different cultures and ethnic groups co-exist. They may have to undergo changes in accordance with the environmental and circumstantial factors such as integration or other changes. Even so the pace is rather slow. Japan and Korea are clear examples.

The socialist countries have gone ahead in the case of gender integration more radically. As explained in country studies of Vietnam, China and North Korea, gender roles have become more loose and flexible for the benefit of women. This has happened along with other radical changes in politics. It was a revolution against feudal socio-economic systems where women were considered as inferior beings.

In other cases of open economies and mixed economies, as feminist argue, the government agencies still continue with welfare approach to the problem of gender and treat it as external to the employment planning process. Therefore, women do not appear as part of the human resource on equal terms of men, hence, the constitutional and judicial provisions of equality are deceptive and not related to practice.

Literacy was considered as one way of enlightening women to become a strong force, but has not shown much headway in overcoming socio-cultural inhibitions. Traditions have shown more strength.

Experience in the region has shown that agricultural economics have preserved traditional roles for women irrespective of developmental level of a country. The introduction of technology to agriculture has brought more pressures on women.

Empowerment approach to gender issues has not been known or has been unpopular among many countries in the region. Therefore, gender strategic needs are not given much attention by planners except in the legal environment. In spite of growing literacy and economic activities among women, marginal representation has been seen in politics and decision making in these countries.

There is a new kind of gender discrimination and exploitation of women emerging with the industrialization of the region either by domestic companies as in India or multi-national companies such as in many countries in South-East

Asia and South-Asia, where Japanese, Taiwanese, Korean, European and American joint ventures have come. The women are paid lower than men and without special arrangements for night shift or maternity. Worst of it is that due to the poverty of the countries, many governments either exempt these companies from normal labour laws or ignore them even in the case of foreign investments. Many would have expected that when the literacy rate and other social indicators are higher among women and become employed and migrated to cities to come out of their extended family and the traditional passivity with subordination, they would become independent and confident in their equality with men. This development has brought about new women's oppression and subordination not only in Asia but also in Central America. This trend would result in breaking the nuclear family and also socio-psychological trauma among these employed women and men who were forced to live up to their gender roles perceived through social conditioning.

In spite of the positive socio-economic changes introduced during the UN Decade for Women and afterwards, the very survival of the girl child has become an issue. The region has experienced high mortality rate of female live births in some countries. Considering the situation of female population becoming less than half of the total population, the problem has to be considered more seriously. As in the case of India, even the new technology is used to abort female foetus prematurely.

The situation in regard to the gender integration too reflect the same situation as in the other sectors. One or two exceptions have been shown as in the case of Japan and Australia, where the co-operatives have become more progressive on gender issues than general country situations.

The special type of women's co-operatives have not shown much strength in the movement as a whole. The income generating activities under these co-operatives have hardly provided sustainable and viable income to women other than supplementing the household budget. The cases of improve entrepreneurship have been rare.

Women groups within the mixed type of co-operatives do not have sufficient strength to lead a campaign for changes in the overall gender participation in co-operatives to achieve substantial changes.

The important issue to be considered is how could we accelerate the process of changes towards gender integration in co-operatives as well as community at large? Although the practical solutions may be different from country to country, there are some common parameters the gender activists could agree.

Going through the above discussion on the progress, one clear problem highlighted is the inadequacy of planning strategies for gender integration. Moser too has emphasized the need to develop national planning strategies to differentiate not only on the basis of income but also on the basis of gender. She quotes a simple example of opening a maternal health facility without considering the working hours of mothers. Therefore, the economic activities or social amenities should relate to gender needs. The integration should take place at the planning stage itself.

During the last decade, a macro level policy and legal environment has been created to facilitate the empowerment of women so that they become equal in terms of their sex. However, some countries still have discriminatory legal provisions which need to be removed (Kabir, 91). In addition, in many countries, the gender activities falling under different ministries are not coordinated. They need to be rationalised (Kabir, 91). One way would be a coordinating or advisory body at the national level. Many income generating activities have been introduced for them to become independent and self confident about their potentiality for development. However, gender subordination continues still in varying degrees. This relates basically to family based situations. Subordination first comes within the family itself. Therefore, egalitarian strategies are essential to be adopted to strengthen the weaker gender partners. Changing roles of men and women need to be perceived by each other in order to achieve equal strength and equal functioning. Sharing and exchanging roles come within the family context in such a nuclear family. This may mean the change in the value systems of individual family members as well as the community eventually. Therefore, the isolated strategies to empower women may need changes. Creating awareness and gender training means the involvement of the oppressor and the oppressed. Family relations among male and female members is the key for change. Abolition of sexual division of labour is the urgent need at present. Concretely, the goal should be to encourage the formulation of families that are characterized by a sharing of responsibilities from parenting to bread-winning and to domestic work (Jamias, 91).

These changes need to be extended to the work place and society. Training gender awareness and gender orientation on the part of co-operative membership and staff, specially at the policy making and planning levels, is a necessity (Pailin, 91). The co-operatives should strive for building a social system which will enable women workers to fully realise their ability in society at large. It will be necessary for the co-operative movement to contribute to the construction of a truly affluent society based on co-operation of people and the first step

towards this goal must be made by promoting the role of women within the co-operative organisation (Yamauchi, 91). The strategies used upto now in many co-operatives strengthen the stereo-typing of women in their environment. The training programmes were confined to household activities and some income generating vocations traditionally accepted as women's jobs. This may need to be re-adjusted to undertake other vocations (Jamias, 91). The development planners should consider the potential role of women in all development efforts to effectively meet women's needs, enhance their productivity and ensure their access to resources and development benefits (Pailin, 91).

Economic policies that relate to production, distribution and consumption must be assessed in terms of their gender responsiveness. On the production side, employment and training are crucial (Jamias, 91).

The relevance and the validity of special co-operatives for women has been discussed. The researchers specially in Islamic countries agree that women co-operatives should be further strengthened (Baheran, Kabir, Saleh, 91 & Kazi, 92).

At the same time, they argue that the presence of women groups should be promoted and if necessary special committees should be formed in mixed types of co-operatives (Kabir, Baheran, 91). Some pilot projects could be undertaken on this (Baheran, 91). Functional literacy has been a priority for empowering women. In many countries, low literacy prevents women taking up leadership positions. Practically all researchers agree that literacy should be a high priority among women. There should be short term and long-term strategies to deal with this issue.

The functional literacy means not only reading and writing skills and also awareness programmes. These should use not only face to face learning approaches but also mass media (Baheran, Jamias, 91). Long-term strategies involve training children to perceive the sex equality and equal productivity potential of males and females (Jamias, 91). In this process, sex biases in issues like career choice and personality traits could be overcome.

The education and training is related to technology. The technology as mentioned earlier could become a negative factor in empowering women if it is not incorporated into women training programmes. Specially in the case of agro-technology, veterinary sciences, aqua-culture and food processing have direct relevance to present day gender roles as well as income generating activities of women. Therefore, comprehensive data base on women in co-operative need to be prepared and introduced (Pailin, Vulvano). The prepara-

tion of a data base should be done on participatory basis. Gender related research is essential for further planning. Establishment of a network for information for the region would be helpful in exchanging information on gender issues. The women's organisations and interested agencies will be able to benefit from such a network (Vuluano).

Present women's co-operatives and also individual members do not have a sound financial base individually and organizationally. Bank rules and conditions for loans make it difficult for them to have access to credit. They themselves do not have enough capital as many of them are housewives. Therefore, the obstacles for accessing credit needs to be removed in order to promote viable economic projects by women. In addition, supply of raw material and services as well as marketing facilities should be ensured (Berninghausen, Saleh, Vuluano, 91).

One of the characteristics of the existing leadership in women co-operatives organisations is the domination by middle class and upper middle class women in leadership positions. This is true generally with traditional co-operatives. They treat these women's co-operatives as social organisations. Therefore, the change of attitude by the women leaders is necessary in order to provide better services to women (Berninghausen, 91). There are many international agencies active in the field of gender activities. The International NGOs could show an impact in gender related projects (Vuluano, Saleh, 91) in developing countries.

Future gender integration strategies need rethinking on the existing strategies followed by the related institutions. A segregated approach to educate women providing services and organising projects have been followed hitherto. As the studies have shown that this approach ignores a half of the issue-male domination in the family as well as in the society-the results achieved are rather limited. Therefore, it has become necessary to adopt a different strategy where the partners of the problem are taken together and start awareness process before entering into formal organisational process (Rikhy, 91). However, it appears that certain cultures have inhibitions towards such a process. In those circumstances, special women's activities could be recommended (Baharen, Saleh). Broad socio-cultural issues need to be discussed in a different forum.

REFERRED COUNTRY STUDIES & OTHERS

1. Gender Integration and Women in Co-operative Development Study reports by:
 - Ms.Fahima Azizi, Afghanistan
 - Ms.Fatema Kabir, Bangladesh
 - Ms.M.B.Vulaono, Fiji
 - Dr.Gurveen Rikhy, India
 - Dr.Jutta Berninghausen, Indonesia
 - Ms.Maryam K.Saleh, Iran
 - Ms.Akiko Yamauchi, Japan
 - Ms.Gung Jong Ok, DPR=Korea
 - Ms.Rahaiah Baheran, Malaysia
 - Ms.Shahnaz Kazi, Pakistan
 - Ms.Teresita P.Jamias, Philippines
 - Mr.Dennis Yeo, Singapore
 - Ms.Chandra Rupasinghe, Sri Lanka
 - Ms.Pailin Supakitvilekagarn, Thailand

2. Moser, Carolyne.

ANNEX 1

DECLARATION OF MEXICO ON THE EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, 1975

THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

- Aware* that the problems of women, who constitute half of the world's population, are the problems of society as a whole, and that changes in the present economic, political and social situation of women must become an integral part of efforts to transform the structures and attitudes that hinder the genuine satisfaction of their needs,
- Recognizing* that international co-operation based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be developed and strengthened in order to find solutions to world problems and to build an international community based on equity and justice,
- Recalling* that in subscribing to the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations undertook specific commitments: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...., to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".
- Taking Note* of the fact that since the creation of the United Nations, very important instruments have been adopted, among which the following constitute landmarks: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, and the Declaration and Programme of Action for

- Taking into account* the Establishment of a New International Economic Order based on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, that the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considers that: "discrimination against women is incompatible with human dignity and with the welfare of the family and of society, prevents their participation, on equal terms with men, in political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries and is an obstacle to the full development of potentialities of women in the service of their countries and humanity",
- Recalling* that the General Assembly, in its resolution 3010 (XXVII) of 18 December, 1972, proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year and that the Year was to be devoted to intensified action with a view to promoting equality between men and women, ensuring the integration of women in the total development effort, and increasing the contribution of women to the strengthening of world peace,
- Recalling further* that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1849 (LVI) of 16 May, 1974, adopted the Programme for International Women's Year and that the General Assembly, in its resolution 3275 (XXIX) of 10 December, 1974, called for full implementation of the programme.
- Taking into account* the role played by women in the history of humanity, especially in the struggle for national liberation, the strengthening of international peace, and the elimination of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, alien domination, racism and apartheid.
- Stressing* that greater and equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making shall decisively contribute to accelerating the pace of development and the maintenance of peace,
- Stressing* also that women and men of all countries should have equal rights and duties and that it is the task of all States to create the necessary conditions for the attainment and the exercise thereof,
- Recognizing* that women of the entire world, whatever differences exist between them, share the painful experience of receiving or having received unequal treatment, and that as their awareness of this phenomenon increases, they will become natural allies in

the struggle against any form of oppression, such as is practiced under colonialism, neo-colonialism, zionism, racial discrimination and apartheid, thereby constituting an enormous revolutionary potential for economic and social change in the world today,

Recognizing that under development imposes upon women a double burden of exploitation, which must be rapidly eliminated and that full implementation of national development policies designed to fulfil this objective is seriously hindered by the existing inequitable system of international economic relations,

Aware that the role of women in child-bearing should not be the cause of inequality and discrimination, and that child-rearing demands shared responsibilities among women, men and society as a whole,

Recognizing also the urgency of improving the status of women and finding more effective methods and strategies which will enable them to have the same opportunities as men to participate actively in the development of their countries and to contribute to the attainment of world peace,

Convinced that women must play an important role in the promotion, achievement and maintenance of international peace, and that it is necessary to encourage their efforts towards peace, through their full participation in the national and international organizations that exists for this purpose,

Considering that it is necessary to promote national, regional and international action, in which the implementation of the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year should make a significant contribution, for the attainment of equality, development and peace,

DECIDES to promulgate the following principles:

1. Equality between women and men means equality in their dignity and worth as human beings as well as equality in their rights, opportunities and responsibilities,
2. All obstacles that stand in the way of enjoyment by women of equal status with men must be eliminated in order to ensure their full integration into national development & their participation in securing and in maintaining international peace,.

3. It is the responsibility of the State to create the necessary facilities so that women may be integrated into society while their children receive adequate care,
4. National non-governmental organizations should contribute to the advancement of women by assisting women to take advantage of their opportunities, by promoting education and information about women's rights and by co-operating with their respective governments,
5. Women and men have equal rights and responsibilities in the family and in society. Equality between women and men should be guaranteed in the family, which is the basic unit of society and where human relations are nurtured. Men should participate more actively, creatively and responsibly in family life for its sound development in order to enable women to be more intensively involved in the activities of their communities and with a view to combining effectively home and work possibilities of both partners,
6. Women, like men, require opportunities for developing their intellectual potential to the maximum. National policies and programmes should therefore provide them with full and equal access to education and training at all levels, while ensuring that such programmes and policies consciously orient them towards new occupations and new roles consistent with their need for self-fulfilment and the needs of national development,
7. The right of women to work, to receive equal pay for work of equal value, to be provided with equal conditions and opportunities for advancement in work, and all other women's rights to full and satisfying economic activity are strongly reaffirmed. Review of these principles for their effective implementation is now urgently needed, considering the necessity of restructuring world economic relationships. This restructuring offers greater possibilities for women to be integrated into the stream of national economic, social, political and cultural life,
8. All means of communication and information as well as all cultural media should regard as a high priority, their responsibility for helping to remove attitudinal and cultural factors that still inhibit the development of women and for projecting in positive terms, the value to society of the assumption by women of changing and expanding roles,
9. Necessary resources should be made available in order that women may be able to participate in the political life of their countries and of the international community since their active participation in national & world affairs at decision-making and other levels in the political field is a pre-requisite of

women's full exercise of equal rights as well as of their further development and of the national well-being,

10. Equality of rights carries with it corresponding responsibilities; it is therefore a duty of women to make full use opportunities available to them and to perform their duties to the family, the country and humanity,
11. It should be one of the principle aims of social education to teach respect for physical integrity and its rightful place in human life. The human body, whether that of women or man, is inviolable and respect for it is a fundamental element of human dignity and freedom,
12. Every couple and every individual has the right to decide freely and responsibly whether or not to have children as well as to determine their number and spacing, and to have information, education & means to do so,
13. Respect for human dignity encompasses the right of every woman to decide freely for herself whether or not to contract matrimony,
14. The issue of inequality, as it affects the vast majority of the women of the world, is closely linked with the problem of under-development, which exists as a result not only of unsuitable internal structures but also of a profoundly unjust world economic system,
15. The full and complete development of any country requires the maximum participation of women as well as of men in all fields: the under-utilization of the potential of approximately half of the world's population is a serious obstacle to social and economic development,
16. The ultimate end of development is to achieve a better quality of life for all, which means not only the development of economic and other material resources but also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the human person,
17. In order to integrate women into development, states should undertake the necessary changes in their economic and social policies because women have the right to participate and contribute to the total development effort,
18. The present state of international economic relations poses serious obstacles to a more efficient utilization of all human and material potential for accelerated development and for the improvement of living standards in developing countries aimed at the elimination of hunger, child mortality, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness, which concern all of humanity and women in particular. It is, therefore, essential to establish and implement with urgency, the New International Economic Order of which the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States constitutes a

basic element, founded on equality, sovereign equality, inter-dependence, common interest, co-operation among all states irrespective of their social and economic systems, on the principles of peaceful co-existence and on the promotion by the entire international community and economic and social progress of all countries, especially developing countries, and on the progress of States comprising the international community,

19. The principle of the full and permanent sovereignty of every State over its natural resources, wealth and all economic activities, and its inalienable right of nationalization, as an expression of this sovereignty, constitute fundamental pre-requisites in the process of economic and social development,
20. The attainment of economic and social goals, so basic to the realization of the rights of women, does not, however, of itself bring about the full integration of women in development on a basis of equality with men unless specific measures are undertaken for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them. It is, therefore, important to formulate and implement models of development that will promote the participation and advancement of women in all fields of work and provide them with equal education opportunities and such services as would facilitate house work,
21. Modernization of the agricultural sector of vast areas of the world is an indispensable element for progress, particularly as it creates opportunities for millions of rural women to participate in development. Governments, the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other competent regional and international organisations should support projects designed to utilize the maximum potential and develop the self-reliance of rural women,
22. It must be emphasized that, given the required economic, social and legal conditions as well as the appropriate attitudes conducive to the full and equal participation of women in society, efforts and measures aimed at a more intensified integration of women in development can be successfully implemented only if made an integral part of overall social and economic growth. Full participation of women in the various economic, social, political and cultural sectors is an important indication of the dynamic progress of peoples and their development. Individual human rights can be realized only within the framework of total development,
23. The objectives considered in this Declaration can be achieved only in a world in which the relations between states are governed, inter-alia, by the following principles: the sovereign equality of states, the free self-determination of peoples, the unacceptability of acquisition or attempted acquisi-

tion of territories by force and the prohibition of recognition of such acquisition, territorial integrity, and the right to defend it, and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States, in the same manner as relations between human beings should be governed by the supreme principle of the equality of rights of women and men,

24. International co-operation and peace require the achievement of national liberation and independence, the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, apartheid, and racial discrimination in all its forms as well as the recognition of the dignity of peoples and their right to self-determination,
25. Women have a vital role to play in the promotion of peace in all spheres of life: in the family, the community, the nation and the world. Women must participate equally with men in the decision-making processes which help to promote peace at all levels,
26. Women and men together should eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, foreign domination and occupation, zionism, apartheid, racial discrimination, the acquisition of land by force and the recognition of such acquisition, since such practices inflict incalculable suffering on women, men and children,
27. The solidarity of women in all countries of the world should be supported in their protest against violations of human rights condemned by the United Nations. All forms of repression and inhuman treatment of women, men and children, including imprisonment, torture, massacres, collective punishment, destruction of homes, forced eviction and arbitrary restriction of movement shall be considered as crimes against humanity and in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international instruments,
28. Women all over the world should unite to eliminate violations of human rights committed against women and girls such as rape, prostitution, physical assault, mental cruelty, child marriage, forced marriage and marriage as a commercial transaction,
29. Peace requires that women as well as men should reject any type of intervention in the domestic affairs of States, whether it be openly or covertly carried on by other States or trans-national corporations. Peace also requires that women as well as men should also promote respect for the sovereign right of a State to establish its own economic, social and political system without undergoing political and economic pressures or coercion of any type.

30. Women as well as men should promote real, general and complete disarmament under effective international control, starting with nuclear disarmament. Until genuine disarmament is achieved, women and men throughout the world must maintain their vigilance and do their utmost to achieve and maintain international peace.

WHEREFORE,

The World Conference of the International Women's Year:

1. Affirms its faith in the objectives of the International Women's Year, which are equality, development and peace;
2. Proclaims its commitment to the achievement of such objectives;
3. Strongly urges governments, the entire United Nations system, regional and international inter-governmental organizations and the international community as a whole to dedicate themselves to the creation of a just society where women, men and children can live in dignity, freedom, justice and prosperity.

DIFFERENT POLICY APPROACHES TO THIRD WORLD WOMEN

← Women in Development (WID) →

| ISSUES | WELFARE | EQUITY | ANTI-POVERTY | EFFICIENCY | EMPOWERMENT |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| Original | <p>Earliest approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - residual model of social welfare under colonial administration - modernization/ accelerated growth economic development model. | <p>Original WID Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - failure of modernization development policy - influence of Boserup and First World feminists on Percy Amendment, - declaration of UN Decade for Women | <p>Second WID approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - toned down equity because of criticism - linked to redistribution with growth & basic needs | <p>3rd and now predominant WID approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deterioration in world economy - policies of economic adjustment rely on women's economic contribution to development | <p>Most recent approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - arose out of failure of equity approach, - Third world women's writing and grassroots organisations. |
| Period most popular | 1950-70: but still widely used | 1975-85: attempts to adopt it during and since Women's Decade | 1970s onwards: still limited popularity | Post 1980s: now most popular approach | 1975 onwards: accelerated during 1980s, still limited popularity |
| Purpose | To bring women into development as better mothers; this is seen as their most important role in development | To gain equity for women in the development process; women seen as active participants in development | To ensure poor women increase their productivity women's poverty seen as problem of underdevelopment not of subordination | To ensure development is more efficient and more effective; women's economic participation seen as associated with equity | To empower women through greater self-reliance; women's subordination seen not only as problem of men but also of neo-colonial oppression |
| Needs of Women met and roles recognised | To meet PGN* in reproductive role relating particularly to food aid, malnutrition and family planning | To meet SGN** in terms of triple role - directly through state to-down intervention, giving political and economic autonomy by reducing inequality with men. | To meet PGN in productive role, to earn an income, particularly in smallscale income generating projects | To meet PGN in context of declining social services by relying on all 3 roles of women and elasticity of women's time. | To reach SGN in terms of triple role: indirectly and through bottom-up mobilization around PGN as means to confront oppression. |
| Comment | Women seen as passive beneficiaries of development with focus on reproductive role, non-challenging therefore still widely popular especially with government and traditional NGOs. | In identifying subordinate position of women in terms of relationship to men, challenging, criticised as Western feminism, considered threatening and not popular with government. | Poor women isolated as separate category with tendency only to recognise productive role; reluctance of government to give limited aid to women means popularity still at small-scale NGO level. | Women seen entirely in terms of delivery capacity and ability to extend working day, most popular approach both with governments and multi-lateral agencies. | Potentially challenging with emphasis on Third World and women's self-reliance, largely unsupported by governments and agencies. Avoidance of Western feminism, criticism, means slow significant growth of under-financed voluntary organisations. |

Source: C.O.N.Moser

"Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs" in World Development, Vol.17, No.11, 1989

* PGN - Practical gender needs
**SGN - Strategic gender needs

ICA RO & EC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE - 1975

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. The Conference notes that women are active in most types of co-operatives, such as consumers, agricultural, fisheries and allied activities, housing, thrift and credit and producers' societies, but they have not been represented in the elected bodies and management strata of the movement in numbers proportionate to their contributions. As a result, the co-operative movement has lost the benefit of additional human resources which women co-operators could provide in the successful promotion of social and economic objectives. Further more, co-operatives enable women to supplement their family incomes, thereby enabling them to raise standards of living.
10. The Conference acknowledges that despite co-operative principles which reject discrimination between sexes, traditional attitudes have tended to ignore the part women play or can play in co-operative development. Without denying that women themselves have not always taken advantage of rights to which they are entitled, it is quite apparent that in many countries national legislation appertaining to inheritance of property rights still create barriers for women seeking membership in co-operatives. Likewise, co-operative bye-laws conditioned by legislation often includes clauses which, in effect, bar or deter women from membership.
11. The Conference recognizes that the greatest obstacle to women's participation is their lack of education in the co-operative principles and practices, and this has consistently put women at a disadvantage. It was accepted that co-operative education and training are open to both sexes. In practice, however, women have been granted only limited opportunities or have not availed themselves of existing facilities.
12. The Conference emphasizes the need for technical assistance if women are to receive the necessary education to participate in established co-opera-

tives, or for special reasons, wish to promote co-operative projects suitable for their particular skills or to satisfy their current needs.

13. The Conference considers that the co-operative movement should review its role as an employer of female labour and its responsibilities in this respect.
14. The Conference realizes that to fulfil these requirements, the support of the ICA, its member organisations, the UN and its specialized agencies, governments, donor organisations and other international non-governmental organizations must be enlisted.

The Conference therefore recommends the following:

15. IMMEDIATE ACTION

- 15.1 The co-operative principle of equality between the sexes should be observed in every facet of co-operative activity and adequate representation of women be accepted from the grass roots to the highest levels of the movements,
- 15.2 As a follow-up to the present Conference, national conferences on the 'Situation and Role of Women in Co-operatives' should be called by member organisations within one year, i.e. before July, 1976,
- 15.3 Member organisations should conduct at the earliest, a survey in each of their countries to ascertain the present situation and role of women in co-operatives. These survey should be completed within six months.
- 15.4 The ICA Regional Office and Education Centre for South-East Asia should provide guidelines to the member organisations for carrying out the surveys.
- 15.5 The ICA Regional Office should be responsible for producing a report based on the collective findings of these surveys,
- 15.6 Accordingly, every national member organisations should formulate an action plan for implementation in its country.

16. REPRESENTATION

- 16.1 Ways and means should be found for inclusion of women on the ICA Council for South East Asia,
- 16.2 Member organisations should appoint representatives to the ICA Women's Committee,
- 16.3 Delegates should be sent to the ICA Women's Conferences held prior to the ICA Congresses,

- 16.4 As a matter of policy, women representatives should be included in all national delegations, international events and committees inside and outside the South-East Asia region, particularly those of the ICA,
- 16.5 Women should be given representation on the boards of directors of the national co-operative organisations in each country,
- 16.6 The national co-operative organisations should establish women's co-operative committees to formulate policies and programmes for enhancing women's participation in co-operative societies. Similar committees should be established in all co-operative organisations, at the secondary and primary levels,
- 16.7 The national co-operative organisations should appoint women officers to carry out the programmes in regard to women.

17. LEGISLATION

- 17.1 All national laws applying to inheritance and property rights and also co-operative bye-laws should be examined to identify impediments which prevent women from taking full membership in co-operatives,
- 17.2 In all co-operatives, particularly agricultural co-operatives, where legislation is most likely to debar women from membership, revision and amendments of co-operative bye-laws should provide for family membership to enable all active persons to fully participate in these organisations.

18. EDUCATION

- 18.1 Women should be included in all on-going co-operative education and training programmes designed for (a) members, (b) prospective and associate members (families, students, etc, (c) board and committee members, and (d) employees. In this connection, it was emphasized that particular attention should be paid to education programmes for women in rural areas,
- 18.2 In addition to scheduled courses in co-operative educational and training institutions, courses should be organised for women participants only,
- 18.3 Co-operative centres and training institutions should organise short-term and specialized courses for women who are involved in a part or full-time honorary capacity in co-operative societies,
- 18.4 To assist in co-operative development, co-operative education should include social and economic subjects affecting the family and the community such as consumer information and protection,

- 18.5 Regular regional conferences of the type currently held should be arranged for women,
- 18.6 Information on scholarships, fellowships, grants, etc. offered by organisations such as the UN should be circulated with all possible speed,
- 18.7 Women should be included in exchange programmes for co-operative personnel, e.g. teachers, students, etc.
- 18.8 Enquiries should be made into the availability of materials in co-operative organisations and related agencies which could be used by women's groups. Suitable material should be prepared and made available for women's educational programmes. In this connection, the importance of producing and translating the needed material into the local languages was emphasized,
- 18.9 Co-ordination should be established with national and international agencies operating programmes for adult education, functional literacy, family planning, etc.

19. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- 19.1 Women should share with men in all technical assistance received by individual member organisations of the iCA,
- 19.2 As an international non-governmental organisation, with consultative status to the UN and its specialized agencies, the ICA should emphasize matters directly relating to women co-operators,
- 19.3 International agencies such as the ILO, FAO, IBRD and other UN bodies, and national technical assistance agencies like SIDA, USAID, NORAD, DANIDA and CIDA should be approached to supply experts and technical assistance for conducting feasibility studies relating to the setting up of co-operatives, particularly industrial projects,
- 19.4 Programmes which could qualify for assistance should be submitted to agencies like the Swedish Co-operative Centre, which has been providing technical assistance to various projects in the field of co-operative education for many years,
- 19.5 Attention should be paid particularly to the provision of books, audio-visual aids, transport, premises or any other facility necessary to carry out co-operative educational programmes for women,
- 19.6 Experts, teachers and field workers should be recruited to assist in projects where economic activities are being promoted for women, e.g. consumers', producers' and artisans' or agricultural societies,

19.7 Financial assistance should be made available for women's seminars and conferences at all levels of co-operative development.

20. EMPLOYMENT

- 20.1 Equality for both sexes should be observed at all times in appointing personnel for employment in co-operative service and in regard to salary scales,
- 20.2 Attention should be given to recruitment of women in co-operative organisations, including appointment to professional, managerial and administrative posts,
- 20.3 All co-operative organisations employing women should provide adequate facilities for women to carry out their work under good working conditions, recognizing their family commitments.

ICA ROEC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE - 1980

RECOMMENDATIONS

Against the background of the talks given, study visits, observations and discussions held, the seminar makes the following recommendations aimed at enhancing the participation of women in co-operative activities.

1. While re-emphasizing the recommendations of the Regional Conference on 'The Role of Women in Co-operative Development' held at Kuala Lumpur in 1975, this seminar reaffirms the following:
 - a) that member organisations should conduct surveys in their countries to ascertain the present situation and role of women in co-operatives and to suggest ways and means for enhancing women's participation in co-operatives;
 - b) that women's committees be set up in all countries of the region at all levels, to formulate policies and programmes for women co-operators.
2. This seminar further realizes that women must get into the mainstream of the co-operative movement in order to raise the socio-economic status of women and living standards of the family and the community and recommends that if women are to be absorbed in the mainstream of the co-operative activity, women's committees should be incorporated within the framework of the organisational structure at primary, secondary and national levels.
3. Realizing that in most countries of the region women are not members of co-operatives in their individual rights, the seminar recommends as its first priority an effective programme for enrolment of women in co-operatives in which they can actively participate.
4. For the effective coordination of women's activities, the seminar recommends the setting up of an Asian Women's Regional Council which should

be affiliated to the ICA Women's Committee. The seminar also recommends that there should be sufficient representation from the region on the ICA Women's Committee.

5. Realizing that co-operative education is vital for the social and economic advancement of people and the movement, the seminar recommends that the vast human resources available be correctly estimated so that the programmes are specially designed to improve and increase the quality and quantity of co-operative leaders and co-operators, with sound attitude to face the future with confidence.
6. The seminar also recommends that each country revise its national policy on education to include co-operation as a subject in the syllabi of all educational institutions at all levels.
7. Realizing that women are recent entrants into the co-operative movement, the seminar recommends that special programmes of co-operative education, leadership development and management training, etc. be made available for women co-operators.
8. Recognizing that the needs of the family can no longer be met on the income of the male members alone, the seminar recommends that income generating activities such as handicrafts, agro-based activities, etc. for women be identified and encouraged.
9. Realizing that the co-operative societies play an important role in improving the living standards of the members and the community, the seminar recommends that the combination of co-operative education programmes with activities aimed at family welfare, namely, nutrition, health, childcare, home management, consumer protection, etc.
10. Realizing that no programmes can be successful without adequate funds, the seminar recommends that financial support be ensured for women's co-operative activities.
11. The seminar recommends the appointment of full-time paid co-operative personnel to work with women's groups.
12. The seminar recommends that effective coordination be ensured between co-operatives, government and other agencies which also aim at improving socio-economic conditions of women.
13. The seminar recommends that periodical review, seminars, etc. should be undertaken at regular intervals at the national and regional levels regarding women's co-operative activities.

14. The seminar recommends that national and international agencies should extend support to projects aimed at improving socio-economic conditions of women in the region.
15. The seminar recommends that in the spirit of co-operation and in keeping with their specialisation, international agencies such as FAO, ILO, etc. be approached to provide technical and financial assistance.

ICA ROEC WORKSHOP - 1982

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKSHOP

Against the background of talks, study visits, observations and discussions, the Regional Meeting-cum-Workshop makes the following recommendations for enhancing the participation of women in co-operative activities through women's committees.

While reaffirming some of the recommendations of the Regional Conference on 'The Role of Women in Co-operative Development', Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 21-28 July, 1975, and the Regional Seminar on 'Enhancing Women's Participation in Co-operative Activities' held in Sri Lanka in 1980 (annex 3), this meeting makes the following recommendations:

1. Realizing that no programme can be successful without adequate funds, the meeting recommends that funds be regularly allocated by co-operative organisations at all levels for women's activities.
2. Women's Committees at national level should formulate annual action programmes and distribute them to the committees at all levels for implementation.
3. The co-operatives at the national and secondary level and at society level, wherever it is possible, should appoint women training officers. The ICA ROEC should support the appointment of such training officers at least at the apex level and in the initial stages. Where it is not possible to appoint training officers, the co-operatives at all levels should have liaison officers to work with women co-operators.
4. Seminars for women should be held at national, sub-regional and regional levels at shorter intervals than at present.
5. Realizing that to improve the quality of life of the rural women and their families, motivation, education and training are necessary, the meeting recommends that these be achieved through the use of fully equipped mobile units and other means of education.

6. The regional meeting notes that in some countries of the region, women are involved in consumer, thrift and credit, fisheries and other types of co-operatives. Here too, suitable programmes should be developed to enhance their participation in these types of co-operatives, to enable them to raise social and cultural status.
7. Special training classes should be conducted to inform women about election procedures, etc. to encourage them to seek representation on managing committees, boards and other responsible positions.
8. In addition to co-operative education and leadership training, women should also be given training in income generating skills, co-operative management and related subjects to enable them to play an effective role in the societies to which they belong.
9. The ICA ROEC Women's wing represent Asian Women at the ICA Regional Council Meeting, the ICA Women's Committee and other important forums,
10. The participants should follow-up recommendations made here with the apex level co-operative organisations in their respective countries.
11. The ICA should have a meaningful dialogue with its member organisations in the region regarding the implementation of the recommendations made at this meeting through correspondence, as well as its various forums at national, regional and international levels.

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