

This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-
NoDerivs 3.0 Licence.

To view a copy of the licence please see:
<http://creativecommons.Org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

① ZIMBABWE

Ⓐ

CONSULTANCY REPORTS

② ZIMBABWE INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**The Position of Women in Employment
With Specific Reference to the Public
Service.**

K.O. Jirira

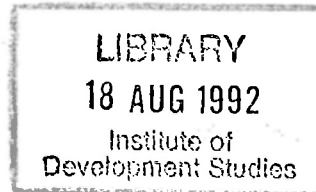
23



P.O. Box 880 HARARE

CONSULTANCY REPORT

Number 23



**THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT
WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE PUBLIC
SERVICE**

**Some Comments on the Opinions of the Ministry of
Community and Cooperative Development and
Women's Affairs**

by

Kwanele O. Jirira

ZIMBABWE INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

HARARE, 1991

© 1991 Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies

P O Box 880

Harare

Zimbabwe

First printing 1991

All rights reserved

Printed and published in Zimbabwe

This paper is a Consultancy Report prepared by ZIDS for the Public Service Review Commission (Zimbabwe). The study was undertaken in 1988. The author, KWANELE O. JIRIRA, is a research fellow at ZIDS. However, the views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Institute.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Recommendations of the UN Decade for Women	1
WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:	
PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS	3
The National Machinery Level	3
<i>The Sectoral Level</i>	4
<i>Women and the Law</i>	5
<i>Women in Agriculture and Rural Development</i>	6
<i>Women and the Development of Science and Technology</i>	7
<i>Women and Employment</i>	7
<i>Women and Health</i>	8
<i>Women and Education</i>	9
<i>Women and Peace</i>	10
EMPLOYMENT POLICY AND EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT	11
Women and Employment in General	11
Women in the Civil Service	13
A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE POLICY POSITION OF THE MINISTRY	20
Working Conditions	20
Women and Training	21
Women and Participation	22
ANNEXES	24

INTRODUCTION

This paper is an attempt to study and analyse the position of the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs on the following issues:

- Summary of Recommendations of the UN Decade for Women.
- Employment Policy; Women and Employment in Government and Elimination of Discrimination and Equality of Opportunities.
- Conditions of Work (e.g. Maternity Leave, Protection, etc.).
- Women and Training.
- International Labour Organisation Plan of Action.
- Women Participation.

Recommendations of the UN Decade for Women

According to Beneria:¹

During the 1970s the growing interest in women's issues materialised in different directions. For the international community the 1975 International Women's Year represented a turning point. For many it was the natural outgrowth of the new visibility of women and their specific problems and concerns...

The years 1976-1985 were declared by the United Nations as the "Decade for Women under the slogan 'Equality, Development and Peace'".² The call/theme was for:³

- a period of joint actions to achieve equality between the sexes; and
- to guarantee the broad participation of women in the economic, social, political and cultural development of their respective countries.

Thus with the attainment of independence in 1980, which marked the beginning of the second half of the Decade, the Zimbabwe Government created a Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs so as to "mobilise, organise, co-ordinate and monitor public, private and non-governmental programmes geared towards closing disparity gaps between men and women in Zimbabwe". To fulfil this monumental task, the Ministry organised a national workshop which was attended by numerous

1 L. Beneria (eds.), *Women and Development : The Sexual Division of Labour in Rural Societies*, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1982, p. xi.

2 Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs, with UNICEF assistance, *The Zimbabwe Report on the United Nations Decade for Women*, Harare, Zimbabwe, July 1985.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 1; *Ibid.*, p. 2.

organisations and ministries as part of its commitment to come up with forward-looking strategies to implement until the year 2000.⁴

Consequently, the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs identified two main areas of concentration in its efforts to improve the status of women in Zimbabwe. These are:

- the National Machinery Level; and
- the Sectoral Level.

4 Op. cit, p. 2. See also Annex 1 on the list of conferences that Zimbabwe has been a part of: nationally, regionally and internationally in its bid to formulate strategies to improve the status of women. Zimbabwe also sent a strong delegation to the Nairobi Conference held in Kenya in July 1985.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS

In its Report⁵ on the United Nations Decade for Women, the Ministry identified the problems and constraints which it saw as the main impediments to women's active participation and potential contribution to national development. Some recommendations were subsequently identified as crucial in any attempt to remedy the situation.

The National Machinery Level

There were several issues touched upon and some of these were:

- *Advocacy for the removal of discriminatory laws.
- *Advocacy for removal of discriminatory labour practices.
- Referral services (since this was "barred" to the predominantly non-white population).
- Mobilisation and development projects (to bring in the people as active participants to nation-building).
- Income-generating activities (to instil self-reliance into the community).
- Literacy campaign (to build a conscientious citizen through the learning of basic literacy skills).
- Early childhood development (to prepare the children to become responsible citizens in the future).
- Community education (to create awareness and conscientisation - necessary prerequisites to equip the community to be active participants in community development).

The problems and constraints identified were:⁶

- The programmes of the Ministry require a multi-sectoral approach but other agencies sometimes fail to appreciate their own role in relation to these programmes.
- Though the Ministry has done a lot since its creation, the concept of national machinery for the development of women like in other countries is still a new one and, therefore, has its own handicaps.
- Women's active participation in the programmes of the Ministry is hindered by inadequate child-care facilities and lack of appropriate technology to ease their workload. Other contributing factors are poverty and illiteracy among the majority of rural women.

5 Ibid. See Table of Contents.

6 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, pp.14-45.

- Die-hard negative attitudes towards women acquired from centuries of tradition and practice continue to colour and cloud the thinking of many men as well as women themselves. Changing these attitudes is necessarily a slow and sometimes painful process. Hence many of the Ministry's suggestions and programmes receive only lukewarm support at best and are therefore ranked very low in the allocation of scarce national resources such as funds and skilled manpower.

The recommendations were therefore that:⁷

- More technical and financial support is needed to strengthen the Ministry's programmes.
- In order to increase understanding of the role of women in development and plan accordingly, there is need to establish a data collecting system which is conscious of the key role that women should play in development.
- The linkages between the Ministry, other ministries and non-governmental organisations need to be strengthened through the appointment, in each Ministry or NGO, of an appropriate officer to serve as the focal point for matters relating to issues of concern to women. Such persons should be of sufficiently high rank to contribute effectively to the dialogue on matters affecting both policy and programmes for women.

The Sectoral Level⁸

These were the seven areas identified:

- Women and the Law
- Women in Agriculture and Rural Development
- Women and the Development of Science and Technology
- Women and Employment
- Women and Health
- Women and Education; and
- Women and Peace.

The following problems and constraints were identified as barring women from actively and fully contributing to the national development process:

7 Ibid., p.15.

8 Drawn extensively from The Zimbabwe Report on the United Nations Decade for Women, The Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, July, 1985. pp.16-42.

Women and the Law

- Among the factors outlined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe as invalid grounds for discrimination, "sex" is excluded. However, plans are underway to amend the Constitution to reflect the needs of the Zimbabwean people.
- The media has not adequately taken up the task of helping to eliminate stereotyped attitudes about the role of women. This is mainly due to the fact that most decision-making positions are still monopolised by men and that most press officers in the rural areas are still males. Therefore, the news reported is seen through the eyes of men with their stereotyped attitudes.
- Although legal provisions exist to protect women against discrimination, in some areas provisions for the implementation and enforcement of these laws have not been adequately made. Furthermore, many women are not aware of their rights. The campaign to educate women on their rights has been hampered by shortage of funds and the high rate of illiteracy among women. For example, in 1982 out of the total population of 15-year-olds and above, 23% had never been to school and among those who had never been to school, 35,2% were male and 64,8% female.
- The prevalence of men in key decision-making positions still makes it difficult for progressive positive changes to be effected quickly. Political participation of women is restricted because African women did not participate in civic affairs in the past. Women therefore lacked sufficient self-confidence to stand for the 1980 local government and national elections. Attitudes of men towards women who want to participate in public affairs also hinder progress in this area. Most women are too preoccupied with household, child rearing and agricultural duties and are therefore unable to take up public office. Although the Government is committed to uplifting the status of women, people's attitudes need to be changed accordingly. Attitudes die hard and positive changes cannot be expected overnight.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need to intensify the mass education campaign in order to:

- Raise the awareness of women in civic affairs and trade unionism.
- Inform women and the community at large on women's rights and their role in national development.

It will also be necessary to:

- Set up a legal aid scheme to cater for women's problems in the rural and urban areas. The legal aid project has already been drawn up, but funds are needed to start the programme.
- Intensify programmes aimed at changing stereotyped attitudes and setting up a women-oriented media committee.

Women in Agriculture and Rural Development

- Women in rural areas do not have land in their own right, but as wives. Women also find themselves increasingly as *de facto* heads of households because of the rural-urban migration of their husbands; yet they are not the ultimate decision-makers on what crops to plough, sell or how the proceeds should be distributed for the various family needs, due to prevalent cultural and traditional norms.
- Women, because land is allocated to male heads of households, have no security of tenure and can be evicted from land that they have invested in, in the event of divorce or the death of the husband or the male head of the household.
- Courses on improved farming techniques are usually offered to men leaving out women who actually do the agricultural work.
- Improvements in technology are not usually extended to women and the predominance of male agricultural extension workers makes it very difficult for women to articulate their needs.
- Many women do not have marketing cards such as those issued by the Grain Marketing Board, Cotton Marketing Board, which would enable them to get credit and to receive money for the sale of their produce in their own name. In 1982, only 11% of those who received agricultural loans were women.
- Marketing facilities are usually situated far away from the producers and transport to the collection depots is a major problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Government, through the Ministries of Agriculture and Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development should seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Change the land allocation policy to give women equal rights to land.
- Allocate more resources and increase agricultural productivity.
- Increase extension services for women.
- Train a larger number of women in agricultural courses.
- Give functional skills such as communication and budgeting skills which would enable women to articulate their needs with knowledge and confidence.
- Mobilise all resources, both internal and external, to finance land reform and development programmes for women.
- Continue to support communal farming and co-operatives financially and otherwise.
- Continue research on appropriate technology.

Women and the Development of Science and Technology

- Programmes to inform and encourage women to participate in science and technology programmes are still in their infancy.
- The new Department of Technology Development is still in its formative stage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The policy on women's participation in the area of science and technology needs to be strengthened.
- Positive discrimination in allocating scholarships in the area of science and technology would help to redress the current imbalance between men and women.
- The intensification of programmes to inform and encourage women to participate in science and technology is essential.
- Skills training for women should not be restricted to the domestic sphere only but should also equip them to break through into the industrial sector.
- Research into women's participation in planning, implementation and use of appropriate technology needs documentation so that appropriate policies can be formulated.

Women and Employment

- Women feel that the high rates at which married women are taxed discourages them from entering formal employment.
- Sex discrimination still exists in job advertisements.
- Women suffer various forms of sexual harassment from male superiors at work.
- Promotion prospects for women are still very dim largely due to prejudices against women. It is men at the top who still make decisions on promotion.
- In the informal sector, facilities for training and on-the-job training are mainly available for men.
- There is no provision for child-care facilities at places of work except for a few enterprises.
- Personnel departments in industry do not have the right orientation to women's needs.
- Women's involvement in trade unions is still minimal and thus their bargaining power is limited.
- Although equal pay for equal work regulations exist, employers usually downgrade jobs done by women. In most cases men are promoted faster than women because of the predominance of men at the managerial level.
- Educational, career and vocational guidance opportunities have not been fully extended to women who may want to enter "male" dominated areas because educational institutions have not yet fully geared themselves to the possibility of women entering these areas.

- Lack of credit facilities and attitudes of the banking institutions which do not take into account the special needs of women have hindered women's participation in the informal sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

An Equality Board, perhaps under a Government department, should be set up to deal with all cases of discrimination against women in employment.

Members of the Board could be composed of lawyers, NGO members and people who are committed to and experienced in women's issues.

This Board would:

- *Document* cases of discrimination against women in the field of employment and training, promotions, sexual harassment and derogatory portrayals of women in the media.
- *Monitor* cases to ensure that legislation relating to women is followed up and appropriate action taken.
- *Channel* information to relevant agencies and ministries to take action. The Board should work in close cooperation with ministries, non-governmental organisations and the office of the Ombudsman.

Women and Health

- There is a general shortage of staff and facilities in some areas.
- Malnutrition amongst children and mothers is still prevalent in some areas and has been further aggravated by the drought.
- The absence of an adequate system of collecting health statistics such as mortality and morbidity rates makes it difficult to plan more effective programmes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The system of collecting health statistics needs to be improved in the rural areas.
- Dissemination of information and education on family planning and child spacing needs to be intensified using developmental approaches.
- The standard of living of communities needs to be improved by the introduction of income-generating activities.
- There is need for the continuation of increased participation of women and men not only as beneficiaries of but also as participants in the promotion of health and the formulation and implementation of policy decisions regarding health at community and national levels.
- More health personnel should be trained and deployed to the rural areas.

Women and Education

- Conflicting demands and responsibilities: often women's productive and domestic responsibilities are seen, both at policy-making and at family levels, to be in conflict with their educational and economic requirements leading to girls being penalised (directly or indirectly) in their access to educational opportunities.
- Career guidance for schoolchildren usually comes when it is too late to change one's subjects.
- Although efforts are being made to change society's negative attitudes towards the education of girls, many educational textbooks still portray women in negative positions thus reinforcing the stereotyped attitudes towards them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is need to develop more materials on women and development in Zimbabwe. Such materials would be used for training teachers and teaching pupils especially over the abolition of sex discrimination.
- A campaign aimed at encouraging women to undertake studies in areas that have traditionally been considered as male domains, and to attend institutions of higher learning is needed.
- Many women have in the past dropped out of school for a variety of reasons. Research into their status needs to be carried out and appropriate corrective measures taken.
- Wide-ranging functional reading materials for new literates are needed. Rural and community press services as well as audio-visual aids need to be developed in order to disseminate and transmit such materials.
- There is need for research, analysis and dissemination of information concerning education and training opportunities for women.
- There is need to facilitate equal access to education and training opportunities at all levels for girls and women in all sectors of society. This will enable them to fully develop their personalities and to participate on an equal footing with men in furthering the socio-economic aims of national planning. This will lead to self-reliance, family well-being and an improvement in their quality of life.
- There is a need to provide innovative programmes and methodologies for women and girls which stimulate creative development, promote the right to freedom and develop the ability to communicate for the eradication of illiteracy. These programmes should at the same time upgrade functional skills and basic information about employment and health-related matters as well as provide information on political, economic and social rights.

Women and Peace

- The destabilisation policy of apartheid-ruled South Africa and other misguided forces continues to be a threat to the peace of the sub-region and therefore for our country.
- The threat of the arms race which might result in the use of nuclear weapons and subsequent global devastation is a threat to our country especially since South Africa is widely reported to have nuclear devices.
- Continued underdevelopment and the effects of drought often drive people to discontent, crime and banditry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Women in Zimbabwe should continue to participate in the broadest way in the struggle to strengthen national and international peace and security, to broaden national and international co-operation and develop friendly relations among Zimbabweans and among nations. They should also strive to achieve unity in Zimbabwe and *detente* in international relations, to promote guarantees of fundamental freedom and human rights in the struggle against tribalism, regionalism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, foreign domination, foreign oppression, and foreign occupation and ensure development to satisfy basic human needs.
- In pursuit of the above objectives, women should receive all possible assistance including support from agencies of the United Nations system as well as other organisations.
- We call upon all progressive women in Zimbabwe, all progressive peoples and governments the world over to proclaim solidarity with our support for the South African, Namibian and Palestinian women in their struggle for fundamental rights. Moral and material assistance should be extended and projects should be carried out to fulfil these aims.

In summary, it is crucial to highlight the fact that the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs recognises the problems and constraints hampering women's effective participation. Hence the numerous recommendations offered as a way to redress the current situation. Greater integrated planning and co-ordination are therefore seen as crucial in assuring that these recommendations are fulfilled. But, in order to fulfil these objectives we must ask: does the environment allow for this to take place? At this point in our paper, we will convert the question of women's employment into a strategy for women to attain "autonomy" in their lives via "gainful" employment.

Note: * This is a result of post-independence changes where the colonial "legacy" had to be erased in order to lay the foundation for an "egalitarian" society.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY AND WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT

Women and Employment in General

According to the First Five-Year National Development Plan 1986-1990,⁹ the Government sees, as one of its main tasks:

The creation of additional employment opportunities ... intended to provide the majority of able-bodied Zimbabweans with *gainful employment* (author's emphasis).

But, the Government is also realistic in that it does acknowledge the existence of widespread unemployment - a feature which will be in existence for quite some time. However, the Government's main development strategy is the development of the material production sectors.

Earlier on, the Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP)¹⁰ had identified women's visible under-representation, especially in the "formal" sector. The need to remedy this situation was viewed as crucial by Government if meaningful appreciation of women's potential capacity and contribution was to be attained.

Thus, according to the First Five-Year National Development Plan, the population of working age is projected to increase 54 percent in 1990. If expansion, therefore, is to take place at all, it will have to absorb as many of these additions - both men and women - to the labour force if the existing dependency ratio is not to be further aggravated by massive unemployment.

Historically, women have been neglected in the "formal" employment sector and this situation is slowly changing since the attainment of independence. In fact, it has been observed elsewhere that:

... restriction of women from the formal sector set the framework for women's future participation in the informal sector.¹¹

Female employment in the formal economy of Zimbabwe in 1983 was 169 000 or 16,3 percent of total employment.¹² Whereas the major employers in the economy were the material production sectors, only about 42 percent of the women found their jobs in these sectors. Women were, to a much greater extent, employed in agriculture (34 percent) and much less in manufacturing (7,1 percent compared to 16,8 percent for the

9 The Republic of Zimbabwe, First Five-Year National Development Plan 1986-1990, Volume 1, April 1986, p.11.

10 Republic of Zimbabwe, Transitional National Development Plan, 1982/83-1984, Vol. 1, 2 May, 1983.

11 Batezat, E. and Mwalo, M., "Final Draft Paper on Women in Formal Employment", Department of Research and Planning, Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare, December, 1986, p.12.

12 See E. M. Jassat and K. O. Jirira, Industrial Development in Zimbabwe: The Case of the Manufacturing Activities, ZIDS, December, 1987 for an in-depth analysis.

total). Most women in formal employment in Zimbabwe work in the services sector. These women are to be predominantly found in the following sectors: trade and restaurants, education, health and private domestic services which account for nearly 43 percent of total female employment.

In only one sector - health - do women outnumber men as employees with 57,4 percent of total employment. A second category is made up of sectors which are also relatively "feminised": finance, insurance and education where women constitute more than a third of the total number of employees. A third category consists of those industries which have from 10 to 25 percent female employees, namely agriculture (21,8 percent), trade and restaurants (16,5), private domestic services (19,8) and other services (16,3).

In the fourth category, under 10 percent, we find mining (2,2), manufacturing (6,9), electricity and water (2,9), construction (1,4), transport and communication (6,5), and public administration (8,7). This data of low statistical involvement of women is further substantiated by the Quarterly Employment Survey¹³ which reveals that only 8 percent of all adult women work in the "formal" sector of the economy and form only about 16 percent of all the employed workforce in this sector. Apparently, this has been a constant phenomenon between the years 1975-1984. When we disaggregate this data further, this constant share of 16 percent is made up primarily from increased employment of females in the education and health sectors - and yet in almost every other sector, the share of actual female employment has in reality fallen.¹⁴

It is important to note, therefore, at this point that several laws such as:

- The Legal Age of Majority Act, 1982
- Equal Pay Regulation
- Minimum Wages Act
- Maternity Leave Regulations
- Electoral Act
- The Sex Disqualification Act
- The Matrimonial Causes Act
- The Inheritance Act

have been enacted in order to give women some degree of equality and autonomy in the running of their lives. For women, the issues of equality and autonomy are a monumental struggle. It has been noted elsewhere in the literature, hence¹⁵ that:

... women's struggle for equality challenges the old tenets of patriarchal society. In addition, it poses fundamental questions about the nature of inequality, of exploitation and subordination, and about the type of social change necessary to eliminate them.

13 Quarterly Employment Survey, Harare, Zimbabwe, 1986.

14 Jassat and Jirira, op. cit., p.43.

15 Beneria, op. cit., p.xi.

Before the position of the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs is presented, it is important to get an idea of what the other Ministries promise. The Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs held a Senior Officials Workshop in December 1985 at the Monomatapa Hotel to discuss the forward-looking strategies of implementation for the advancement of women.¹⁶

Apparently at this meeting, the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs noted that it had:

... requested for senior officials of Under-Secretary level or the equivalent because they are in a position to influence and/or make policy decisions within their Ministries and also because they are in a position to commit their Ministries to future programmes of action. However, not all Ministries complied with the request as they *tended to identify women even in lower positions* to attend the workshop (author's emphasis).¹⁷

Because of these kinds of non-committal tactics, the Ministry has therefore further noted that:

Ministries where the majority of men in top posts are not fully conscientised to the need for women's integration in development, and for another, this denies the Ministry ... an opportunity to open up a debate with male policy and decision-makers since they always manage to wriggle out of situations where they are likely to commit themselves to the advancement of women.¹⁸

The advancement of women is not only the job of the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs (it is only a mobiliser and co-ordinator of programmes), but of all the other Ministries. Rhetoric and non-action seem to be the order of the day despite ministerial pronouncements that the improvement of women's status is a major objective of their Ministries.

Women in the Civil Service

Below is a presentation¹⁹ of what each of the Ministries promised to do in order to improve the status of women.

16 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, Report of the Senior Officials Workshop to Discuss the Forward-Looking Strategies of Implementation for the Advancement of Women: Monomatapa Hotel, 2-4 December, 1985.

17 Ibid., p.3.

18 Op. cit, p.3.

19 Taken exclusively from the Report of the Senior Officials.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Because this Ministry is conspicuous in the absence of women in senior posts:

- Promised that, by the end of 1986 at least 10% of senior posts and those in diplomatic missions should be occupied by women. (Has this promise been fulfilled yet?)
- All wives of diplomats in host countries that permit it should be allowed to find employment (Where? Why cannot these women be trained by the Ministry to work within as other countries do in the case of spouses stationed overseas?)

Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement

- Promised to compile data on women employed currently in this sector. (Has this work started yet?)
- To create a team of extension workers sensitive to the needs of women ... Hopefully, it is envisaged that this would enable the needs of women to be considered whenever planning or executing programmes.

Ministry of Public Construction and National Housing

- That by the year 1995 all Government workplaces should have child-care facilities. (What is of real value is that child-care should be the subject of a Parliamentary decree or a Presidential Directive. Lessons from Cuba on child-care facilities set up with the help of mini building brigades should be noted. If funding is the problem, perhaps on one holiday each year, each worker should work and donate the day's earnings to a Child-Care Fund. This is a common practice among workers in the Soviet Union where it is called *sabotnik*.)
- By the year 2000, all plans for public municipal housing should include women's input.
- Promised that by the year 1990 women should constitute 30% of all apprentices in the building industry.

Ministry of Education

- Career guidance should be introduced early in school life.
- Have data on dropout rate by sex and district.
- Scholarships should be offered on a 50-50 basis by the year 1990.
- Future positive attitudes of teachers towards women's role in development.

Ministry of Energy and Water Resources and Development

The Ministry's position was that women should not only decide where water resources should be allocated but be involved as technicians as well.

Ministry of Home Affairs

This Ministry did not seem to have any position on employing women at the workshop.

Ministry of Industry and Technology

No position emerged on this issue from the workshop.

Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications

The Ministry promised that by the end of 1986, at least 5% of all decision-making posts should be occupied by women.

Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

The Ministry promised that by 1990, 20% of all judges and magistrates should be women (NOTE: The Ministry must create jobs on other occupational levels within its departments for women and not just at the top level.)

Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare

- Promised more meaningful and increased participation of women (NOTE: Too vague and too general a promise).
- Promised the creation of more training opportunities for women. (When? NOTE: Timetable not specified).
- Promised the elimination of sexual harassment.
- Promised that at least 40% of all industrial relations officers should be women by 1990. (NOTE: What of other posts within the Ministry?).
- That there should be increased employment of women in all sectors (NOTE: Why does this Ministry not set an example: i.e. by being the first to fulfil this target?).
- Promised that concrete programmes should be developed for young women.
- Integration of *marginal women* in national development programmes.

Ministry of Trade and Commerce

The Ministry promised to increase women's participation in the transport industry.

A closer look at these "promises", however, shows that they leave much to be desired. Most of these Ministries do not offer any concrete modalities to effect these promises. There is also a vague generalisation of what they will do to advance the status of women. No mention is made of how women are to be integrated into the occupational levels throughout the Ministries. There needs to be greater commitment *through action and not rhetoric* by the ministers/heads in charge of each Ministry if any meaningful change is to take place.

The Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, recognising the various Ministries' shortcomings, has come up with its own set of recommendations necessary to put the process in motion. In fact, the Ministry feels that:

The Government should provide the lead by employing women at *all* levels²⁰ (author's emphasis).

Because, it is also crucial that women be gainfully employed in Government, the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, therefore, feels that the Ministry of the Public Service "...undertakes measures that ensure the equitable representation of both sexes at the various levels of the Public Service structure".²¹ These measures include:²²

- Ensuring the appointment or promotion of women to decision-making levels in the service.
- Undertaking measures that protect the special needs and interests of women civil servants.
- Making sexual harassment an offence and setting guidelines to deal with it in the service.
- Organising special training courses in management skills for women in order to increase their chances of promotion in the service and also to enhance their effectiveness.
- Producing of sex disaggregated data at all levels of the service.

But, the Ministry also recognises that within *each* Government ministry, specific changes need to take place if greater absorption of women (into national development) is to become a reality. The following measures are, therefore, viewed as crucial to effect this change.²³

Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development

This Ministry's main function is: "... to co-ordinate various sectors in the economy and to ensure the equitable allocation of national resources". Below are the measures that are seen as necessary to improve the economic status of women:

- Undertake measures aimed at bringing to light both the quantitative and qualitative contributions of women to national development.
- Integrate women's economic activities at all levels of national planning and in all sections of development.

20 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, Women and National Development, 8th February, 1984, p.14.

21 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, Department of Women's Affairs; Policy, June, 1988. Confidential Document. p.14.

22 Ibid, pp.14-15.

23 op. cit., pp.7-14. (for all of the Government ministries).

- Channel more resources to programmes aimed at promoting the status of women.
- Ensure the production of sex disaggregated data in all sectors.

Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

This Ministry is "... central to law reform activities, it is (therefore) imperative that they be in the forefront of the process to eliminate both *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination against women".

The measures necessary to effect this have been identified as:

- The need to eliminate all discriminatory laws and practices.
- The need to educate communities on new laws that are passed from time to time.
- The need to sensitise lawyers and other legal practitioners on women-centred policy considerations, e.g. dealing with cases of rape, domestic violence, property distribution on divorce, etc.

Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare

This Ministry is "... primarily responsible for ensuring the provision of congenial working conditions for the labour force". Thus, the areas of concern that need to be addressed are:

- Elimination of all laws and practices that discriminate against women and enact legislation that protects the special needs and interests of women at work.
- Implementation of measures to improve the health and safety of working women.

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

This Ministry "... plays a crucial role in the early stages of the development of human resources". Hence, it is imperative for the Ministry to address itself to the provision of adequate guidance to ensure that girls take an active interest in fields that previously were male-dominated.

Ministry of Higher Education

This Ministry is "... responsible for technical and professional training, has the ultimate responsibility to ensure the equitable representation of the sexes in the various professional and technical training programmes".

Corrective measures required include: the continuation of career guidance with a view to encouraging girls to enter into male-dominated professions.

Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement

This Ministry is involved in "... agricultural production and food security" ...It therefore recognises the vital role women play and, as such, needs to implement programmes that "... enhance the effective participation of women both as agents and beneficiaries".

The areas to be addressed include:

- The need to continue to carry out land reform programmes to ensure women's direct access to land use rights.
- The need to ensure the accessibility of both extension and credit facilities to women in their own right.
- The need to train more female extension workers.

Ministry of Health

This Ministry is "... central in ensuring the provision of adequate health facilities, with specific emphasis on meeting the health needs of mothers and children, nutrition and family planning requirements". The areas of concern include: the need to provide adequate infrastructure and human resources, especially at the community level ...

Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism

This Ministry is concerned with "... the conservation and protection of the environment and natural resources ...".

Measures to address include:

- Intensification of the training for women conservation extension workers.
- Increase the participation of women at all levels of the tourist and hospitality industry.

Ministry of Public Construction and National Housing

This Ministry is central to the provision of shelter, as such, "... it is important that adequate housing be provided for all in the urban and rural areas".

Measures required, therefore, include: training of more female technical and professional staff at all levels of the building industry.

Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development

This Ministry is "... responsible for the administration of local authorities which are directly involved in the development of communities ...".

Measures to redress the current imbalance include: ensuring an equitable representation of both sexes in development communities and local authorities.

Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture

This Ministry is "... responsible for the promotion of sports and cultural activities and carrying out programmes aimed at improving the economic status of youths ...".

Measures to effect this should include:

- Promoting equitable participation of women in sports.
- Encouraging young women to participate in youth training programmes which will equip them for self-reliance.

Ministry of Transport

This Ministry is responsible for creating an atmosphere conducive to an efficient transportation system. Changes necessary include: encouraging the training of female technical and professional personnel in the transport industry.

Ministry of Energy and Water Resources and Development

This Ministry is involved in ensuring that there be accessible adequate clean/safe water supplies and energy resources.

Necessary measures to increase women's participation include:

- Ensure the active participation of women at all levels of the water and sanitation programme.
- Ensure the training of women in the maintenance of water equipment such as pumps.

Ministry of Trade and Commerce

This Ministry is responsible for "... the effective functioning of trade and commerce ...".

Measures include: keeping an up-to-date register of women entrepreneurs.

Ministry of Industry and Technology

This Ministry is charged with the development of the industrial sector as well as improving technologies appropriate for growth within the industrial and technological sectors.

Measures required include:

- The development of technologies that promote home industries, thereby increasing employment opportunities ...
- Undertaking measures that encourage women to enter the manufacturing industry.

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE POLICY POSITION OF THE MINISTRY

We shall conclude this paper by making some comments on the policy position of the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs.

Obviously, the policy statement is a generalisation of what the Ministry would like to see changed within the various Government departments. However, there needs to be a systematic "onslaught" to gather raw data, *Ministry by Ministry, for each occupational level, and each salary scale*. Vague measures that are not supported by hard facts such as disaggregated gender-based data will not reveal much convincing evidence. Perhaps the Ministry should begin investigations as to whether the lack of data from the Ministries (if at all) is a deliberate obstructionist strategy to hide the truth or a reflection of the true nature and "complexion" of employees in Government.

In particular we shall look at the position of the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs on the following aspects:

Working Conditions (i.e. Maternity Leave and Protection)

The Ministry's position (as well as being in line with the ILO Plan of Action) is that it is necessary to:²⁴

- Eliminate all laws and practices that discriminate against women and enact legislation that protects the special needs and interests of women at work.
- Undertake measures to improve the health and safety of working women.

The Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs²⁵ had put forward some recommendations at a UNESCO-assisted seminar on women and labour. These were:

- That discrimination against women in employment based on sex must be eliminated, e.g. sex discrimination in job advertisements, recruitment policies, salary levels and promotion prospects.
- Legislation must be passed to protect the interests of women employed as casual labourers in the agricultural sector and who have often not benefited from the enactment of the minimum wage legislation. Casual and seasonal workers (who are predominantly women) should be entitled to all employment benefits.

24 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, Department of Women's Affairs, Policy, June 1988, p.8. Confidential Document.

25 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, National Seminar on Women in Construction and Reconstruction in Post-Independence Zimbabwe, 19-22 November 1985, pp.32-33; see also The Zimbabwe Report on the United Nations Decade for Women, op. cit., pp.28-29.

- Employers should provide child-care facilities at the workplace so as to free women to engage in gainful "formal" employment.
- The need for paid maternity leave may be met through a fund to be called the National Provident Fund to which all working persons - male and female - should contribute a certain percentage of their salaries and from which all women could claim maternity benefits.
- That there also should be set up an Equity Board to consider cases of discrimination (and perhaps sexual harassment cases at the workplace especially from male superiors) via the documentation, monitoring and channelling of information on cases to relevant agencies and Ministries.
- Personnel departments in industry do not have the right orientation to women's needs, hence there is a need to train more female industrial relations officers to work alongside the men so as to strengthen those already working there.
- Despite the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, employers have a tendency to downgrade jobs done by women. Hence, in most cases, men are promoted faster than women ... especially at the managerial levels. Training, both on and off the job, must be designed to improve women's capacities and promotion opportunities.
- Women must begin to actively engage themselves in trade unions and workers' committees so that existing barriers to their upward mobility can be eliminated.

Women and Training

The First Five-Year National Development Plan 1986-1990²⁶ maps out the Government's strategy on manpower development. According to the Plan, Government will, among other things:

- Expand the existing institutional training infrastructure and create new institutions to cater for growing needs and to achieve self-reliance.
- Promote, develop and co-ordinate management training in order to harmonise and rationalise all training in the country and to make the private sector more sensitive to the nation's socialist goals.
- Aim at maximising the use of resources and avoiding duplication in public sector training through greater co-ordination.

The Ministry also recognises that women need to undergo extensive training and retraining in order to equip them with the skills necessary for them to be productive and useful. As such, it has noted that:²⁷ An aspect of employment which cannot be ignored

26 The Republic of Zimbabwe, First Five-Year National Development Plan 1986-1990, Volume 1, April 1986, pp.38-39, op. cit.

27 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, Women and National Development, 8th February, 1984, p.11.

is training and in this too women have been sadly neglected, bearing in mind that women's training and employment needs are directly linked to the economic development of the country.

The Ministry believes that provisions must be made to accommodate women in educational facilities if they are not to be cooks, nannies and housekeepers all their lives.²⁸ According to the Ministry (using the 1984 document) there were over 2,5 million illiterates of whom 60 percent were women. The situation could have slightly improved since the Ministry has been engaged in a vigorous literacy campaign together with the Ministry of Education to improve the nation's literacy level.

The issue of training of women was again highlighted at the One-Day Heads of Ministries and Parastatals Summit²⁹ where it was noted that "more and more women were involved in training courses, workshops and seminars to groom them for a more effective and meaningful role in development programmes".

In other words, women must be trained for all fields and level posts, i.e. in health; law; education, industry and commerce; politics and decision-making; media; development and economic policy-making; agriculture; employment and labour relations; the sciences and technology; business and managerial sciences; law enforcement; defence and any other areas where there is either a marked female absence or poor representation. The current state of affairs still leaves much to be desired since there exists, inadvertently, a "male conspiracy" to marginalise women out of both job *and* training opportunities. The Ministry recognises this and it has therefore embarked on an intensive campaign to redress the situation. And because the ministries/parastatals and private sector have been generally too slow in implementing this call, perhaps a Presidential Directive is the only avenue left to change things for the better.

Women and Participation

According to Leacock:³⁰

The image of women as naturally the servitors of men and men naturally the dominators of women reinforces the myth that traditional family relations in the Third World were based on male dominance ... The idea of women's autonomy is then presented as a Western ideal foreign to the cultural heritages of Third World peoples. The fact is, however, that women retained great autonomy in much of the pre-colonial world and related to each other and to men through public as well as private procedures

-
- 28 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, Women and National Development, op. cit., pp.3-7, 1984.
 - 29 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, "Report of the One-Day Heads of Ministries and Parastatals Summit on the Implementation of the Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women up to the Year 2000", Monomatapa Hotel, Harare, 30th May, 1986, pp.4-5.
 - 30 Eleanor Leacock, "Women, Development and Anthropological Facts and Fictions", Latin American Perspectives, Issues 12 and 13, Winter and Spring, Volume IV, Nos. 1 and 2, pp.8-17 : p.11.

as they carried out their economic and social responsibilities and protected their rights. Female and male modalities of various kinds operated reciprocally within larger kin and community contexts before the principle of male dominance within the individual families was taught by missionaries, defined by legal statutes and solidified by economic relations of colonialism.

In other words, to understand the sources of women's oppression is a critical prerequisite to devising strategies and tactics aimed at redressing that oppression.³¹

The Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs strongly believes in women's overall participation in the national development process. The question to address is: how then can women achieve power-sharing with their male counterparts? They have to be active participants from the village development committees, ward development committees, rural, district or town councils, and at the national level in legislative and other decision-making bodies.³² Women must, therefore, enter the "ring" of development if they are to have a voice in national development.

Political participation has to be backed by economic emancipation. This implies gainful employment for both rural and urban women since a state of dependency obviously undermines women's autonomy.

Education, access to information and "networking" among women of all classes and strata is, therefore, the first step for women in their bid to empower themselves.

31 Pamela M. D'Onofrio and Gerald E. White-Davis, *The World Association of Former United Nations Interns and Fellows, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, An Analysis of the Socio-Economic Bases of Women in Political Participation, 29-31 October, 1979* p.1.

32 Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, *National Seminar on Women in Construction and Reconstruction, op. cit., p.22.*

The following information is provided for your information. The information is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an offer or a recommendation to buy or sell any securities. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions.

The following information is provided for your information. The information is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an offer or a recommendation to buy or sell any securities. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions.

The following information is provided for your information. The information is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an offer or a recommendation to buy or sell any securities. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions. The information is not intended to be used as a basis for investment decisions.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

Below is a list of some of the conferences - nationally, regionally and internationally - that Zimbabwe has been a part of in the spirit of the United Nations Decade for Women.

- Integration of Women in the Industrial Planning and Development Process - UNIDO, Harare, Zimbabwe, April 1984.
- The Role of Women in Food Production and Food Security, Harare, July 1984.
- Regional Inter-Governmental Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference/Third Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development. Arusha, Tanzania, December 1984.
- Experts Meeting on the Improvement in the Situation of Women in Rural Areas, Vienna, September 1984.
- The Commonwealth Officials Meeting in London, October 1984.
- Sub-Regional Meeting on the Integration of Women in Development, Malawi, February 1985.
- Third Session of the Commission on the Status of Women Acting as a Preparatory Body for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements Made and Obstacles Encountered in Attaining the Goals of the UN Decade for Women, Vienna, March 1985.
- The Non-Aligned Countries Conference on the Role of Women in Development, New Delhi, April 1985.
- Sixth Meeting of the Africa Regional Coordination Committee, Addis Ababa, April 1985.
- Resumed Session of the Commission on the Status of Women Acting as a Preparatory Body for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements Made and Obstacles Encountered in Attaining the Goals of the UN Decade for Women, New York, May 1985.

ANNEX 2

The following is a list of Acts and regulations enacted by the post-independence Government with a view to redressing colonial injustices and bring about more equality between the sexes:³³

Legal Age of Majority Act, 1982

This Act gives women and men full contractual capacity and freedom from parental control on attaining the age of majority which is 18 years.

Equal Pay Regulations

This regulation outlaws discriminatory practices: women and men can now get equal pay for equal work.

Minimum Wages Act

The Government instituted a minimum wage for different types of unskilled occupations.

Maternity Leave Regulations

This regulation makes a provision that women can take a maximum of 90 days maternity leave without losing their jobs or career prospects.

The Electoral Act

This Act gives all Zimbabwean citizens the right to vote in elections and referenda if they are over the age of 18.

The Sex Disqualification Act

The Sex Disqualification Act gives Zimbabwean women the right to hold public office and to participate in all public functions.

33 Drawn extensively from the Ministry of Community and Cooperative Development and Women's Affairs, The Zimbabwe Report on the United Nations Decade for Women, July 1985, pp.16-18.