A Concept Paper:
THE ROLE OF THAI WOMEN
IN
DEVELOPMENT
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Women play a vital role in national development. Productive employment will not be increased to any significant extent without the expansion of opportunities for women to develop their potentialities. High productivity will not be reached without the proper involvement of farmers, retailers, and distributors, a large number of whom are women. The problems of population, health, and education will not be solved without the effective involvement of the women who bear, nurture, and socialize our children. Nutrition will not be improved without women who produce, process, and prepare most food. Furthermore, a more equitable distribution of income and wealth will not be possible if women are ignored. The integration of women in development is a complex undertaking which involves all sectors of traditional and modern economies. Basically, it calls on policymakers and planners to consider the potential role of women in all development efforts to effectively meet women's needs, enhance their productivity, and ensure their access to development resources and benefits.

The main objectives of this paper are:

1. to demonstrate the need to focus on gender issues in development research, and policy and programme planning as a means of redressing gender imbalances, promoting the achievement of development goals, and improving the welfare of women and their families.

2. to propose gender analysis as a tool for analysing gender issues in socioeconomic development at macro and micro levels.

3. to identify emerging development issues and target groups for policy research and programme planning, and to raise appropriate research questions.
For background information, we will also be assessing the status and the contributions of women as well as reviewing national plans, government machineries, and programmes pertaining to women's development.

STATUS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THAI WOMEN

The situation for Thai women has changed dramatically from the Ayudhya period, spanning from 1350 to 1767, where women were mere assets first belonging to their fathers then to their husbands; they could even be bought and sold.¹ In the Bangkok period, spanning from 1782 to the present, an improvement in the status of Thai women is seen. It was in this period that King Rama IV abolished the sale of wives, King Rama V abolished slavery, and King Rama VI introduced compulsory primary education for both men and women, and publicly endorsed monogamy.

Throughout history, Thai women have played an integral role in the country's social, cultural, and economic development despite the many constraints they are faced with. Some of the barriers inhibiting women are a lack of educational and training opportunities; a lack of access to land, credit, technology and various skills; socialization and sexual stereotypes; childbearing; and legal inequalities. The Thai female labour force participation has always been exceptionally high due to the country's agricultural economy consisting of many family-owned farms, and due to certain historical factors. Under absolute monarchy, men were forced away from their farms for extended
periods of time to do various services for the ruling class. The women were thus left behind to manage the farm as well as handle trading activities.²

Presently, women compose nearly half of the Thai population as well as nearly half of the economically active population 11 years of age and over. The female labour force participation rate (in 1985) of 67.5% is less than the male rate of 77.8%,³ however the female labour force growth rate has been steadily increasing and it was between 1977 and 1983 that female labour force growth (3.78%) overtook male labour force growth (3.24%).⁴ The labour force participation rates for divorced women are the highest (75.9% in municipal areas and 85.8% in non-municipal areas) while those for widowed women are the lowest (33.7% in municipal areas and 44.3% in non-municipal areas).⁵

Table 1. DISTRIBUTION OF THE EMPLOYED POPULATION BY INDUSTRY AND SEX (IN PERCENTAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting, and Fishing</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction, Repair, and Demolition</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage, and Communication</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and Quarrying</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas, Water, and Sanitary Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities not Adequately Described</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding and exclusion of negligible figures.

The majority of women are employed in agriculture, followed by commerce, services, and manufacturing (Table 1). Of those economically active, there are a greater number of women than men in only one industry, the commerce industry. In 1987, the number of women engaged in agriculture was 6.65 million. The overall contribution of women in various agricultural activities is shown in Table 2. Women are the major source of labour in subsistence agriculture. In addition, rural women are mainly responsible for the entire range of home management; this includes food preparation and preservation, household maintenance, health, and sanitation.

Table 2. WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Percent of Participation by Farm Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice Cultivation</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Crop Cultivation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horticulture</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable and Home Gardening</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sericulture</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil Improvement (Compost)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Protection</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Management</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvesting</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preservation and Food Processing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Raising</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Fisheries</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to urbanization, modernization, and a changing economy, the percentage of women in the agricultural sector has dropped from 87.55% in 1960 to 61.27% in 1987. As expected, the percentage of those entering industries and services has increased. Female migrants to Bangkok Metropolis, numbering 51,125 (vs. 32,935 for males) have limited job opportunities due to lack of education, skills, and experience. The majority of these migrants, 57%, enter the city seeking employment opportunities and income. Of those female migrants 15 years of age and over, 72% are single. Nearly 60% of the female migrants to Bangkok under the age of 25 work as domestic servants. Those remaining find employment as hawkers, petty traders, and vendors in the informal sector and factory workers in the various manufacturing industries. Women especially dominate the textile, clothing, shoe, and food-processing industries. Another area of employment for female migrants is unfortunately the sexual services. An increasingly large number of women are being lured into prostitution related work; this has resulted in a myriad of social problems. The most serious problem is, in some instances, the social acceptance and respect that prostitution has gained. Some have begun to feel that it is the ticket to lead them out of poverty to prosperity.

Table 3 shows the distribution of female and male employment by occupation; consistent with the industry distribution, we find the majority of women are farmers, sales workers, and craftsmen/production-process workers/labourers.
Table 3. DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED POPULATION BY OCCUPATION AND SEX (IN PERCENTAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers, Fishermen, Hunters, Loggers and Related Workers, Miners, Quarrymen, and Related Workers</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>68.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Hawkers, Pedlars, and Newsboys</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Others</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Hawkers, Pedlars, and Newsboys</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, Production-Process Workers and Labourers</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Tailors, Dressmakers, and Related Workers</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Carpenters and Related Workers</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Food-Process and Beverage Workers</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Labourers</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Other Craftsmen and Production Process Workers</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service, Sports, and Recreation Workers</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical, and Related Workers</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers in Transport Communications</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Not Classifiable by Occupation</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding and exclusion of negligible figures.


In relation to work status, it can be seen from Chart 1 that the only group where there are more women than men is in the unpaid family worker group.
Average monthly wages for women were generally lower than those of men. For example, in the municipal area, 13.2% of employed men earn more than 5,000 baht a month as compared to 6.7% of women. In the private sector, women's average wage is about two-thirds that of men across the board. Wages in the
government sector were, however, almost equal because of the fixed salary scale. In fact, the average monthly wage of 3040.6 baht for a female government employee in the non-municipal area is slightly higher than the average male wage of 2953.5 baht. Chart 2 shows average monthly income levels of women and men in selected industries.

**Chart 2**

**Comparison of Employed Persons by Income Level and Selected Industries**

Unemployment rates for females were higher than those of males. The rate for females in the current labour force is 4.3% as opposed to 3.1% for males. Among migrants, unemployment rates were higher at 5.1% for females and 4.5% for males.13
As stated earlier, lack of education is an obvious constraint to women's advancement. *Education* is the major determinant of modern sector employment; therefore, women's comparative lack of education is a contributing factor to their low wages, poor opportunities for advancement, and lack of skills and knowledge. Females tend to be somewhat less educated than males with a literacy rate of 84.4% (vs. 91% for males).\(^{14}\) In general, women have lower educational attainments than men; 10% of employed women as compared to 5.2% of employed men have no education.\(^{15}\) Chart 3 shows the level of educational attainment of women and men in selected industries.

**CHART 3**

**COMPARISON OF EMPLOYED PERSONS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND SELECTED INDUSTRIES**

![Chart showing comparison of educational attainment by industry](chart.png)

**SOURCE:** REPORT OF THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY, 1985 (ROUND 3), NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICE, BANGKOK.
Life expectancy at birth projected for 1985-1990 is 67.50 for females and 61.75 for males. The number of children ever-born per 1000 ever-married women is 3935 and the maternal death rate stands at 0.04%. The percentage of married women aged 15-49 practicing contraception is 55.2% and the type of contraception most used is the oral pill.

It should be recognized that not all women are wives of household heads. In fact, 18.1% of household heads are women, with the proportion larger among older household heads (e.g. 33.6% for the 60 and over group, in which group there are more women who are household heads than there are wives of heads). Of women 20 years of age and older, moreover, 13.6% are single and 3.5% are divorced or separated. Of women aged 15-49 years, 31.1 have never been married. Thus, while marriage to a household head may be the norm, a substantial proportion of Thai women are household heads themselves and/or have never married.

In the political arena, it is clear that women's participation in local and national levels has not been significant. On the local level in 1987, only 0.4% of elected Kamnan and Phu-Yai Bahn are women. On the national level, ever since the first elections were held in 1933, only 2.3% of the members of the House of Representatives were women. Currently in 1986, the figure stands at 3.5%. In regards to appointed Senators, 1.9% are women. The political arena has traditionally been a male dominated field in Thailand.
In legal matters, women are not granted equality in the law and law enforcement. There are still laws barring women from some civil service and political positions, from entering military and police academies, and from divorcing their husbands on adultery grounds, even though men may claim divorce on these grounds. The enforcement of the law on employment and prostitution is very lax; this leads to the continued exploitation of women.

Lastly, while the status of Thai women has clearly improved over the past years, societal attitudes concerning women are slow to change. While women will always be the childbearers in society, it is distressing that some members of society believe that women are best suited for domestic roles. There exists stereotypes of women as being weak, indecisive, emotional, dependent, and less productive than men. The effect of stereotypes is that they cause psychological barriers to their victims. Women who actually believe that they are dependent, passive, and emotional will undermine their own as well as other women's development and achievements. These stereotypes must be changed before we can see significant improvements in the status of Thai women.
REVIEW OF THAI NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS, GOVERNMENT MACHINERIES AND PROGRAMMES RELEVANT TO WOMEN

National Development Plans

The government became increasingly aware of the plight of women when the United Nations declared 1975 to be the International Women's Year, and 1976-1985 to be the United Nations Women's Decade. Being a member country of the United Nations, Thailand adopted the objectives of the International Women's Year and sent a delegation to participate in the World Conference in Mexico City. As a result of the conference, more attention has been paid to the development of women; this can be seen in the National Economic and Social Development Board's decision to include women in the Fourth National Development Plan (1977-1981).

The noteworthy points made in the Fourth National Development Plan were that boys have greater educational opportunities than girls, and that women were discriminated against in employment, promotions, and wages. The remedial measures suggested were to offer follow-up study courses, out-of-school education, and skills training especially to the rural women. Other remedial measures were that men and women would be ensured equal promotion opportunities in government work, and that there would also be a push for equal wages and job security in all sectors. Lastly, there were to be revisions and modification in law that discriminate against women.
In the *Fifth National Development Plan* (1982-1986), women were included as a special target group. The importance of this plan was that women's employment, educational, health/nutritional, social, and political problems were recognized. Some specific problems cited were women's illiteracy rate, malnutrition especially during pregnancy, limited opportunities for women in politics and public administration, social attitudes reflecting beliefs that men are more productive than women, and the lack of a central coordinating national machinery for women's affairs. The remedial measures suggested include the promotion of basic, formal, and non-formal education, of career training, of free health services, of nutritional knowledge, and of women's political participation. The Fifth Plan also set out to revise discriminatory laws as well as establish a national coordinating committee for women.

While it is indeed progress for women to be included in the national development plans, it is disappointing that the plans only recognize women's problems without specifying how and when these problems are to be alleviated. There is concern as to what extent these plans have been and will be implemented by policymakers as many of the recommendations and targets have not yet been achieved.

In addition to these national plans, a *Long Term Women's Development Plan* (1982-2001) was drawn. The Long term Plan is more comprehensive than the five year plans as it deals
specifically with all groups of women. Specific targets for the next 20 years were set in the following areas:

Health

Women are to be provided with increased basic health services and education to meet the following targets:
- infant death before or at delivery 1:1000 cases
- infant death after delivery 15:1000 cases
- mother's death at delivery 0.8:1000 cases

Education

Women under 35 years of age shall have compulsory education and 80% of those 35-45 years of age shall have adult education. Also more women will receive vocational education in traditionally male subjects.

Employment

The Plan seeks to provide equal opportunities and wages for employed women, and promote rural employment to control the influx of female migrants.

Local and Public Administration

30% of those participating in local administration, and executive and policy making bodies of national administration will be women.

Politics and Administration

30% of all political candidates will be women.

Law

The Plan seeks to reform abortion laws and divorce law. Harsher punishment is also to be given to sexual offenses.

While the 20 year Plan provides a series of indicators for policy formulation, it does not set interim targets for the 20 year period to be integrated into the five year plans. No specific measures have been mapped out to implement the plan. Many consider the plan to be too ambitious and do not feel that
the targets will come to fruition due to lack of effective national mechanisms, political will, and available funds.

At this time, women’s development activities tend to follow the five year plans therefore it is discouraging that the *Sixth National Development Plan* (1987-1991), in contrast to the Fifth Plan, does not include women as a special target group.\(^{29}\) The actual plan is divided into ten broad working programmes, all of which do not make specific references to women. There is, however, a Women Development Plan supplement prepared by the Sub-Committee of Coordination and Implementation under the National Commission of Women’s Affairs.\(^{30}\) This plan aims to promote good health, education, vocation, social equality, working and wage equality, as well as to encourage men to participate in family planning. In addition to these goals, the plan seeks to improve women’s development mechanisms. Since the main body of the Sixth Plan does not contain any references to women, it is uncertain how seriously policymakers will implement the objectives of this supplement.

**Government Machineries and Programmes**

Efforts to establish women’s development mechanisms date back to 1975 when the government established a National Executive Committee to carry out the objectives of International Women’s Year. The Committee recommended the establishment of a central coordinating agency for women’s development. In 1978, the government appointed a Task Force which was responsible for the preparation of the Long Term Plan. Thereafter in 1979, a section
for Women’s Affairs was established in the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board. This was followed by the establishment of the National Commission of Women’s Affairs which was placed directly under the Prime Minister’s Secretariat. At the present time the Commission is chaired by a Deputy Prime Minister and has the Director General of the Community Development Department as its secretary. The Commission has a mandate to act as the central coordinating agency between the governmental and non-governmental sectors, as a promoter of women’s development, and as an overseer of the national plans concerning women.

In regards to government organizations, there are several involved in women’s development. Some of the main ones and the activities they are engaged in include:

1. **Department of Agricultural Extension**:
   
   Home economists have been working to improve farm family life with a special emphasis on women. Women have been strongly encouraged to form farm women’s clubs to build a useful information network.

2. **Department of Community Development**:
   
   Their agenda consists of income generating, nutrition, and child care projects. There are also vocational training projects for women’s groups, leadership training for women leaders, and training programmes for officials responsible for women’s development.

3. **Department of Non-Formal Education**:
   
   This department provides various job training programmes, and education in subjects of interest.

4. **Department of Public Health**:
   
   This department promotes health and nutritional knowledge especially to pregnant women and children.
It has been more than a decade since the government established a national machinery on women's development. The key government departments and the National Commission on Women's Affairs have made contributions to women's development by carrying out research, organizing worthwhile programmes, and educating the general public about women's needs and issues. Their effectiveness in actually advancing the position and productivity of women has, however been questioned. The extent to which the National Commission on Women's Affairs is able to carry out its mandate to coordinate the efforts of governmental and non-governmental agencies, to promote women's development, and to monitor the implementation of national plans concerning women is still unclear.

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING REVISITED

Development is the result of human labour, ingenuity, vision, capacity for innovation, cooperation, change, and the care and preservation of the environment in which all development activities take place. Development planning is the most widely used method by governments to pursue development goals. The ultimate goals of development planning are to:

1. increase capacity of all people in all sectors to effectively participate in national development activities according to their potential;

2. produce a wide distribution of development benefits among the population; and

3. improve the quality of life.
In this process of development, women’s needs and concerns have often been neglected. Frequently, they are unintentionally overlooked because policymakers and planners are not aware that certain development policies and programmes affect women and men in fundamentally different and unequal ways. Women are concentrated in the lower ranks of the various target groups; often policies and programmes, geared toward the mainstream of society, and their resulting benefits just do not reach these women.

It has also been realized that neglecting women in development planning has resulted in a substantial loss of human resources. Condemning women to menial and low productivity jobs underutilizes human resources and thus retards the process of growth. Improving women’s income-generating production will also contribute to a more equal income distribution by helping those who are most in need. Moreover, the concern for human rights and dignity demands great improvements in women’s work conditions, their access to productive resources and their participation in decision-making at all levels.

Another concern with recent development planning has been definitional and conceptual problems. Policymakers and planners have been misguided by certain assumptions on the term “head of household”, on household allocation of resources, on the social roles of women and men, and on the concept of work.
The term *head of household* which conveys the image of a male-head needs to be reconceptualized since almost 20 percent of the households are presently female-headed in Thailand.\textsuperscript{34} Therefore, development planning that uses the term "household head" rather than "household members" as the unit of analysis will most likely overlook the roles and contributions of other household members. There are also gender differences on *household allocation* of resources by poor women and men. Research on poverty groups suggests that men and women allocate their income differently. Women allocate a proportionately greater amount of their incomes than do men to their children's basic survival needs such as food, health care, and clothing.\textsuperscript{35} In families where men earn marginal income, the women's income is necessary for household survival. It is seen that women have as great a *societal role* in supporting their families, however, governments plan as though men are the sole supporters and women are the dependants.\textsuperscript{36}

The *concept of work* should be expanded to include work in both the domestic and non-domestic spheres. Non-domestic work has been considered productive and challenging while domestic work is unpaid and undervalued. In certain types of work, there are clear boundaries separating the two, however in Thailand, an agricultural country with many women working as subsistence farmers, the domestic and non-domestic work generally overlap. This results in women's invisible contribution to the economy categorized as "unpaid family workers".\textsuperscript{37}
Policymakers should no longer assume that women and men, and different groups of women, will automatically benefit equally from specific policies. Policy decisions ultimately have an effect on all people, however, they provide different impacts. Policymakers and development planners should not consider women only as resources for development. It is important that development should result in more opportunities for women to develop their potentials, and to improve their roles to carry out their responsibility effectively. The integration of women into development planning should be designed to facilitate this process. Moreover, the development process should provide disadvantaged women, especially at the bottom strata of society, equal access to development opportunities and to resources of their societies.

GENDER ANALYSIS: CONCEPT AND TOOL

During the United Nations' Decade for Women (1976-1985), attempts were made through the World Plan of Action, to ensure that development programmes and projects provide equal opportunities and benefits to women as well as men. Though these efforts resulted in increased participation of women in development, they continue to be mainly active at the subordinate levels. In the past, development efforts viewed women as a "homogeneous group in isolation from men; emphasized support services for women's traditional roles as housewives and mothers over their productive roles in the economy; and operated through the vehicle of women-specific rather than integrated projects". To shift the
emphasis from "women", the neutral term "gender" was introduced to implicate differences on the roles and responsibilities of women and men.

The *gender concept* is an analytical framework reflecting women's roles and responsibilities in relation to those of men. It requires an understanding of gender variables, (i.e., the division of labour, access to and control over resources, composition of household income, as well as decision-making in household expenditure and investment) in the base-line situation (i.e., the geographic, economic, social and cultural situation as well as a broader policy environment within which the project operates).

One of the aid agencies examined gender variables and employed gender analysis in the evaluation of 98 development projects. *Gender analysis is defined as the analysis of the intersection between women/men's roles and responsibilities and project goals, strategies and outcome.* In that evaluation, gender analysis was designed to be an integral part of both the social and economic analyses.

"Economic analyses should specify who (men, women) controls the main factors of production (land, labour, and capital); consider labour requirements separately for male and female tasks; specify the differential off-farm earning capacity of men and women; and calculate whether direct returns to labour provide adequate incentives for increased production. The composition of household income by source and earners should also be examined.

*Social analyses* should examine gender roles in the base-line situation and how these intersect with project goals and activities; identify target groups for each activity in the
light of the division of labour and gender roles; examine the outreach of existing institutions and delivery systems to the target group; assess the appropriateness of proposed technical solutions to the needs and resource base of each category of participant; and specify how to adapt delivery systems and technical packages in the light of gender differences. 47

Understanding gender variables in the context of a project is the key to understanding human variables in development and to improving project outcomes. The attention to differences between the roles, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men increases the probability that the projects will involve and benefit women, achieve the project purposes and contribute to the achievement of long-range economic and social goals. To plan effective development programmes and projects, it is essential to understand the ways in which women and men interact, divide responsibilities, allocate risks and resources, share burdens, organize their labour, and plan for the future. 48

The gender concept had resulted in gender analysis, a "tool" that can be used for planning better development projects. This same tool can be applied to the policymaking process. It is important to ensure that women's concerns and perspectives are integrated both at the macro and micro levels.

EMERGING DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

In the past, many efforts have been geared toward improving women's participation in domestic activities and in community development. Not much consideration has been given to the development of women's actual and potential roles in non-domestic
productivities and in other important aspects of national development. There is an urgent need to re-define policy directions and approaches through a better understanding of gender differences. Thailand Development Research Institute, as a policy research institute recognizes the importance of gender analysis in national development issues. Therefore, in January, 1988, a working team was appointed to prepare research agenda on women in national development for the Institute.

In the following section, the working team after consultations with TDRI program directors, researchers, officers in related agencies (both governmental and non-governmental organizations) and several academicians identified and proposed eight development issues. The eight proposed issues have been selected on the following basis:

1) need to concentrate in areas where women predominate and/or are disadvantaged;
2) importance to the establishment of national policy;
3) relevance to the goals of the National Development Plans and the Long Term Women's Development Plan;
4) lack of policy research on these particular issues; and
5) possible integration into the present TDRI research framework.
SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: DETERMINANTS AND IMPACT OF THAI WOMEN'S STATUS

Determinants of Thai Women's Status

Although the socioeconomic roles of Thai women are known, surprisingly little is known about the determinants of women's current marital, educational, health, economic, wage, and fertility status. How important is the quality and quantity of schooling in all of these outcomes? How important are public health, family planning and midwifery programmes? Are the impact of policies related to education and health different for females than for males? Is there differential access by sex to capital markets? If so, why? Is there evidence of labour market wage discrimination or occupational segregation by gender? Does occupational segregation lead to lower returns for investment in female human resources than for males? Do women have more interrupted labour force experience than men? Are there important differences in policy impacts on women in municipal versus non-municipal areas and between Bangkok and other urban areas? What determines female migration among regions? What is the relative importance of labour market, marriage market, schooling options and other factors? What role does women's childhood family background have in determining these outcomes? Are there substantial interactions between such family background (e.g. mothers' education) and the impact of various policies and market changes on different dimensions of women's status? Are prices, including those for contraceptives and market wages, important determinants of various outcomes?
Impact of Thai Women's Status on Other Outcomes

What impact do the various dimensions of women's status have on other members of the households in which they reside? Are there particularly strong effects of women's time use and schooling, for example, on the nutrition and health of other household members, particularly children and the elderly? If women participate more in economic activities, does the reduction of their time in child care and other household activities have deleterious effects on children and others? Do such effects depend on the nature of the economic activities and on the household structure? Is the duration of breastfeeding, for instance, altered by women's schooling and economic activities? Do increased income or increased control by women over household money income have compensating positive effects? Are there basic differences between households headed by men and those headed by women? What role do single adult women play in these respects?

Impact of Major Changes in Thailand on Determinants of Thai Women's Status and on Thai Women's Role

A number of major changes are underway. Fertility rates have dropped sharply. As a result there is a bulge, currently in the 10-20 year-old range (though in the 15-24 range in municipal areas) that is passing through the age structure. Sustained economic growth has increased per capita incomes, but probably also disparities across regions. Export-oriented light industrialization, which in other Asian economies has been associated with high demand for female labour, has been expanding
rapidly and is likely to continue to do so. Tourism is increasing rapidly, also with high demands for female workers. Changed attitudes and concerns about health may significantly alter some dimensions of women's participation in services. Agriculture and unpaid family workers are likely to become considerably less important. Thai female paid labour force participation rates probably will increase substantially, with an associated large increase in their direct control over household money income. There is increasing discussion of reducing subsidies for family planning, health care, and advanced education because of governmental budgetary stringencies. At the same time, there is growing emphasis on the need to expand post-elementary education and to improve the quality of schooling. Family structures seem to be changing, with nuclear families and single adults more common, particularly in municipal areas. There is increasing consciousness of possible gender discrimination and occupational segregation in labour markets, that may lead to legal changes and more provision of child care. How will all these and other changes affect the determinants of women's status and their impact on others, particularly the next generation?

DECISION-MAKERS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Long Term Women Development Plan (1982-2001) of the National Commission on Women's Affair advocates the active roles of women in social, economic and political areas. According to the Plan, by the year 2001, 30 percent of the Village Committee and
Tambon Council members in all groups and levels will be women. Thus, 30 percent of Phu-Yai Bahn (village head) and Kamnan (head of a cluster of villages) will be women. Local development and administrative decisions are made by the Village Committee (chaired by Phu-Yai Bahn) and Tambon Council (chaired by Kamnan).

Since the change of the local election law in 1982, 226 women were elected Phu-Yai Bahn and 16 women were elected Kamnan. Their ability and work performance was accepted by the District Officers and male Kamnans. The total number of Phu-Yai Bahn and Kamnan across the country is over 60,000. The number of women in the Village Committee and Tambon Council was 6.5 percent at the beginning of the Sixth National Development Plan. The gap between the policy and performance is apparent. Effective means should therefore be worked out to translate the government’s present Long Term Women Development Plan into concrete programs and projects.

How and to what extent can women’s interests and concerns be integrated into the policy, planning, administrative, and implementation structures of society? Is it essential that women have a role in the direction that development will take at all levels from the grass-roots community level to the national level? To better understand the situation, it is important to know the impact of the presence/absence of women as decision-makers in the Village Committee and Tambon Council. Are the concerns and needs of rural women being adequately taken into consideration by those involved? Are there differences when a
woman is the chairperson or when women are members of the Village Committee/Tambon Council? How do women perform the role of Phu-Yai Bahn and Kamnan differently from men? What are the differences in the outcome of women's leadership in terms of increasing opportunities for rural women in education, training, leadership roles, and income-generating activities? Do women Phu-Yai Bahn and women Kamnan pay more attention than their male counterparts to new methods and technology to improve women's agricultural productivity and efficiency? Are women Phu-Yai Bahn and women Kamnan more concerned about improving the status of rural women? (i.e., the degree of women's access to and control over material and social resources within the family, the community, and the society at large.) How can they get rural women to participate in the development of the community? What were their approaches in helping other women run for Kamnan or Phu-Yai Bahn? What were their measures to ensure the success of the election?

What are the profiles of women Kamnan and Phu-Yai Bahn? What motivated them to run for the position? Why did villagers elect them as opposed to the male candidates? What were their contributions to the community before they ran for office? Was any family member or relative previously a Kamnan and/or Phu-Yai Bahn? How much and how important was their familial support? What were the tasks best performed by women Kamnan and Phu-Yai Bahn? What was their most important task? What was their most difficult task? What were some of the problems they encountered?
in performing their duties and how did they deal with these problems? How did they handle conflicts between participants at village meetings and between members of the community? How did the villagers and government officers who worked closely with the women leaders view their performance as Kamnan and Phu-Yai Bahn? What were their strengths and weaknesses? What impact does being a Kamnan or Phu-Yai Bahn have on their daily life?

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THAI AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

"Rural development in the Sixth Plan period attaches more importance to developing science and technology to improve the quality of life of the rural population. The emphasis will be on appropriate technology for agricultural development and for promoting small-scale and medium-scale industries. Technological development will take the form of integration of traditional and modern technology. This will enable rural poverty areas to become technologically independent up to a certain level. Suitable modern technology will be applied and traditional technology will be modernized and its efficiency improved. Rural development technology should at the same time be instrumental in improving agricultural and local industrial productivity and be suitable for practical use by the local population." 54

Technology is knowledge that contributes positively to the complex process of social change leading towards development.55 It encompasses all the knowledge, skills, and procedures for making, using, and doing all useful things. It includes methods used in non-marketed activities as well as marketed ones. It encompasses managerial and marketing technique, as well as those of manufacturing and agriculture.56 It is the knowledge applicable to practical problems.57
The following criteria have recently been employed in the selection of technologies:

1. The technology should result in increasing productivity, reducing time and energy spent in the operation, improving the quality, and increasing the quantity of the product;

2. Availability of cheap, local materials for its manufacture and lends itself to small scale, easy replication;

3. Adapted for easy demonstration of its use, operation and repair and maintenance;

4. Suitable and appropriate for women's tasks, skill and knowledge levels, and home and social orientations; and

5. Lends itself to a quantifiable employment of household resources, i.e., income-saving or income-generating.

Experiences in Extension Services

In the past, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives perceived rural women as homemakers. The technology the Ministry provided to rural women was limited to food preservation, food processing, weaving, handicrafts, and nutrition. The Ministry has not placed enough importance on the roles of women in agricultural production. Farm women did not have adequate access to information and training in technology. There are many technologies and tools which could be modified and transformed for the benefit of women and farm workers. For example, new techniques on rice cultivation such as using new varieties of rice instead of local varieties are always given to men's groups. The Livestock Department has given meat processing technology to women's groups but not the know-how on formula feed for animals to assist women to perform their tasks properly. The Farm Mechanization Department did not include women as one of its
target groups. Women were not informed about new technology on tools and small machines. In the area of vegetable growing where almost 100% of women are involved, the extension workers gave that technology to men.60

What are the approaches of other ministries directly involved in rural development? At the 1985 Workshop, a number of questions were raised concerning experiences in technology adoption and extension services.61 What are the channels through which technologies are introduced? To what extent do these channels incorporate women's needs? What role do women play in technology transfer programmes, both as beneficiaries and extension workers? How have these programmes affected women's traditional roles and responsibilities in the farming household and community? What specific extension programmes and technologies are being directed towards women? To what extent have these answered women's needs? What institutional factors hinder or reinforce women in benefiting fully from these programmes? What factors block or give women access to resources and technologies? What are the common problems in implementing extension programmes for women?

Technology – Tools for Change

The prospect of increasing production by extending crop areas is limited.62 Future increases in agricultural productivities can be brought about by technology appropriately adapted to the needs of small farmers. Increasing the food supply of small
cultivators gives an important initial impetus to development as a means for distributing income and employment more widely.

What are the technologies in cultivation known to increase the output and reduce the drudgery of small farmers? What is the specific knowledge of productive and management systems which have yet to be effectively transferred to small cultivators? Who produces these technologies? What are the incentives for such production? What are the roles of universities and technological colleges that provide graduate studies related to farm production? Were graduate students involved in improving existing technology for the benefit of small farmers? What are the criteria for selecting research areas? How is information on appropriate technology disseminated to the rural people?

Who are the users and agents of changes in rural technology? Who are the target groups for disseminating proven industrial applications of technology? Who are involved in planning and decision-making process concerning rural technology? Who can ensure that women as well as men benefit from the technological development and from the available technologies, and that any adverse effects are minimized? What training courses are available to rural women in the fields of food production, food handling, labour-saving technologies, live-stock and poultry management, small scale industries, fertilizers use, marketing, industry, and services? What technologies are available that are more appropriate to the environment?
Women make up half of the human resources available for economic activity. Providing opportunities for women to more fully and more effectively participate in national development will not only improve the position of women in society but will also lead to greater progress towards overall economic and social development objectives. These include increasing economic growth, improving productivity, improving income distribution, reducing poverty, lowering birth rates, and improving the quality of life.

RURAL INCOMES

Rural women participate in a wide spectrum of activities; these include activities in the household, the family farm, the rural economy, and the community. Tasks generally performed by women include various aspects of agricultural production, food processing, animal husbandry, inland fisheries, and marketing of produce. They generate subsistence income from agriculture. Although rural women participate actively outside their households, their participation tends to be confined to the unskilled, low paid, and "invisible" jobs.

Farm Incomes

Agriculture is the most significant sector in Thailand in terms of its absorption of female labour. The majority of women engaged in agriculture are on family farms; they are unpaid family workers and less than 10 percent are private employees.
The fact that women play a crucial role in agricultural production and trade has been widely ignored by development planners. Women have been overlooked in the training programs on modern methods of crop cultivation. Therefore, women continue to use the less efficient traditional methods. In the area of food processing, women generally lose out to men as development programs proceed. Credit for technological improvements or for agriculture is seldom made accessible to women. Loans and membership to cooperatives are generally given to heads of households who are most often male.

Exclusion of women from agricultural development has several detrimental effects. It prevents agricultural productivity and rural incomes from rising as fast as they would if members of both sexes were taught improved farming methods. Moreover, it creates a growing gap in the earning power of men and women, which makes women’s effort in farming hardly worthwhile.

What measures should be taken to change the existing situation? What is required to make the responsible government departments reform their approach in the utilization of human resources in agricultural production? What specific technologies are available to improve the agricultural productivities and managerial skills for women thereby ensuring them of a decent income?
Non-farm Incomes

Non-farm enterprises play an important role in the economic development of rural Thailand. From 1972 to 1983, non-farm cash income in the Northeast increased from 49% of the total family income to 68 percent. For the entire country, the percentage increased from 46% to 59%. There are many types of non-farm enterprises at the village level. They include silk and cotton weaving, pottery, mat-making, fish net-making and the making of bamboo products. The amount of hours worked on farm and non-farm work is affected by the person's level of income and farm size. As farm size increases, the percentage of non-farm income decreases. Non-farm income constitutes 53% of the total income of poor farmers. The effect of non-farm income on the income distribution is significant. With non-farm income, income distributions become more equal than when farm income alone is considered.

Recent studies on non-farm enterprises illustrate some common characteristics among these industries. They all use relatively simple techniques of production. They are also closely-linked with the agricultural sector in terms of labour, raw materials, and product market. In addition, the production is seasonal. Production increases during the slack period of farm production and then decreases during the busy agricultural season. Seasonal employment is predominant. The cause of the seasonality comes from both the demand for and supply of labour. Subcontracting work is also found particularly in the silk
industry. Most non-farm enterprises produce for local markets except products such as ready-made garments or silk which are partly for export markets. Assuring the quality of the products appears to be a major problem.

In the past, rural women were encouraged to participate in cottage industries which are most often time-consuming and provide negligible income. Problems related to cottage industries include market demand, product development and diversification, quality control, lack of skills in marketing, reliability and price stability of raw materials, and shortcomings in managerial capabilities. What measures could be taken to improve the situation? How many women are engaged in cottage industries across the country? Do they belong to any women’s groups? What are their skills? What could be done to use the availability of such skills to produce the products that meet the market demand? What are some of the products of cottage industries that are profitable? What improvements could be made to some of the products that are not marketable presently? What are some of the measures that can be taken to involve women entrepreneurs in productivity improvement?

Recent studies revealed that most of the non-farm rural industries depended on specialized skills and raw materials. Some example are the silk-weaving industry in the Northeast and agro-processing industry near the cultivating area. What are some of the specific products which show potential in both domestic and overseas market? Recently, Friends of Women’s World Banking
supported a women's group to develop the quality of water hyacinth available abundantly, to be used successfully in manufacturing furniture. What can be produced for the market by mobilizing other locally-abundant and low-priced raw materials in the country? What do we know about local resources, raw materials, and local entrepreneurs? To what extent does the women entrepreneur receive skills in production, management, marketing, and in obtaining rural credit?

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

The relationship between development and environment is increasingly obvious. Deforestation, soil erosion, air pollution, degradation of resources, declining resources, and massive soil pollution from indiscriminate use of herbicides and insecticides all play a role in development. The soil, air, water, and forest, our life support systems, are not insatiable sponges; they can no longer cope with the huge quantities of pollutants cast into them. Sustainable development is only possible if it is based on environmentally sound methods.

Who is responsible for the environmental conservation? The government's intention to improve the situation is evident. The Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan includes the following forestry objectives:

1) an increase in forest cover from 29 percent to 40 percent of Thailand's surface area, with an increased emphasis on community involvement in forestry programmes;
2) the identification and introduction of technical innovations to boost productivity of forest operations.

The Thai Government's concern about soil and water conservation dates back to the 1960s. The soil and water conservation policies were included in the Second National Development Plan. The Land Development Department (LDD) has been conducting experiments and research on the causes of soil erosion and on protection measures. From 1966 to 1971, soil and water conservation programmes were implemented in the Northeast. Local technicians were trained to use soil information in conservation planning and to show farmers how to practice soil and water conservation. In the fiscal year 1986, the government provided the LDD a budget of 114.7 million baht for soil and water conservation activity. These included the provision of training for farmer's leaders, the distribution of cover crop seeds and tree crop seedlings, and the establishment of local groups to insure greater farmer participation in soil and water conservation.

Various attempts have been carried out in environmental conservation. Increasingly, local people were engaged in the program, e.g., the private sector initiatives in "social forestry". Fast growing trees were developed under the control of local communities. The objectives of social forestry include making domestic needs for fruit, fodder, and fuelwood, stabilizing soils and preserving watersheds, providing windbreaks, increasing crop yields, and improving farmers' living conditions.
while providing employment opportunities in rural areas. Government agencies are looking for ways of combining watershed and other national resource protection programmes with projects designed to promote social and economic development in high land communities. The aim in forest reserves, for example, is to employ local people on the reserve, and to give them a vested interest in maintaining it.

How effective are the environmental conservation programmes? What is the women’s role in the attempts carried out by the Land Development Department, and by the private sector in "social forestry"? What are the approaches that provide incentive and ensure enthusiasm, commitment, and ingenuity? The existing situation concerning environmental degradation requires concerted efforts to tackle them. What are some examples of new initiatives that illustrated the role of women in environmental conservation? What are the roles of the 7.71 million women involved in agriculture in 1987? A recent study on women’s role in agriculture indicated that women have great potential to become good change-agents if they are given proper training. Women’s farmers have not only taken responsibility in many activities but also accomplished their tasks very well. What training programmes are provided to women farmers to help them reduce the destruction to the environment while they perform their tasks in agriculture?

As homemakers, what are the women farmer’s role in influencing young children in changing their lifestyle and
development patterns? What roles do women play in the economizing of fuel and water that children use?

ENTREPRENEURS
Among the increasingly large number of entrepreneurs in Thailand, there are more women entrepreneurs engaged in commerce and services than men.76 For our purposes, an entrepreneur is defined as one who organizes and manages a business with considerable initiative and risk.77 Due to Thailand's dualistic economy, entrepreneurs will be divided into two groups, those in the formal sector, and those in the informal sector in which members are beyond the reach of laws seeking to protect security and working conditions of labour as well as of social security and welfare provisions.78

Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector
This group of entrepreneurs include the street vendors, hawkers, petty traders, and food stall operators. The majority of these entrepreneurs are women who have the least amount of skills, education, training, and experience. Their work is labour-intensive earning only marginal income. The average monthly wage for a female hawker in a non-municipal area is 565 baht while in the municipal area it is 976 baht.79 These women have been forced to seek employment in the informal sector because they lack the qualifications necessary to enter the competitive formal market. It is clear that new income generation schemes are necessary for these women. This informal sector should be of
concern to policymakers since it is a major employment group within which the poor and uneducated can provide for their livelihood.

Since hardly any research has been conducted on these women, many questions remained unanswered. Who are these women and what is their life like? Why and how did they start their business? What is the nature and condition of their work? What are the advantages as well as the disadvantages? Do their family responsibilities fit in with their occupational demands? Do they have functions in society and if so what are they? What is their pattern of mobility?

Rapid industrialization and urbanization have significantly changed the economy. How have the successful women entrepreneurs in this group taken advantage of these changes? How have these workers benefited from industrialization? How did they respond to the new mass-produced goods? How did they exploit the economies of scale to compete with others? How did they cope with emerging issues ranging from acquiring loans, dealing with numbers, making contacts, signing contracts, and making investments - all activities that women are less well-equipped than men to do? Have they been able to further develop their business considering their many constraints? What types of programmes have been developed to help these women and what has been their effect? Have these women formed cooperatives? How can we improve the flow of relevant information and provide the needed skills necessary for success?
What effects do the present legislation have on these women?

What effects does the recent decision by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration to ban vendors and hawkers from busy footpaths have on these women? Are there any special protective measures given to these workers? What type of legislation and official policies should be formulated to help promote employment and productivity in these informal activities?

Entrepreneurs in the Formal Market

The dualistic nature of our society is clearly evident when comparing the entrepreneurs in the informal and formal sectors of the economy. These entrepreneurs in the formal sector include those who run small enterprises, i.e., hair salons and dress shops to those that run the large enterprises, i.e., hotels and real estate development. Unlike those in the informal sector, most of these women entrepreneurs earn more than marginal income. Many are educated and have good family backgrounds. In this group, there are some women who work more for job satisfaction and personal fulfillment than for financial reasons. These women are making it in the business world. What makes these women entrepreneurs successful? Have any of these women had any previous experience in the informal sector? If so, how did they make the transition into the formal sector? What can women entrepreneurs in the informal sector learn from these women? What characteristics and traits do these women share? How much of a role do family connections and family wealth play?
Recent economic changes have drawn an increasingly large number of farmers into the labour force. As the economy shifts from that of agriculture to industry, there have been more farmers migrating to urban areas to seek employment. Many of these are women who are young, single, uneducated, and inexperienced; therefore, they have limited job opportunities. Many often end up working as production process labourers in the various manufacturing industries.

The Manufacturing Industry

During the 1970's, Thai industrial development policy focused on labour-intensive, export-oriented manufacturing industries. The effect of this policy was that a new labour market was open to women thus resulting in changes in the role and status of women. Women currently constitute 44.6% of the 2,066,700 workers in the manufacturing sector. Once a breakdown of the various industries within the sector is made, it can be seen that women are the majority in the textile, electronic, and food processing industries. It has been reported that women constitute 80-95% of the workers in the textile and electronic industries. At the end of 1984, the total number of the manufacturing registered factories, excluding rice mill factories, was 39,626 and the total number of employees was 1,144,102. There were 8,076 food factories, 1,454 wearing apparel factories, and 1,012 textile factories.
Work Conditions

A number of studies have been carried out on the working conditions of women in large scale industries (more than 199 employees). However, the workers in these large scale factories are at least under the protection of labour law while the workers of the cottage (0-9 employees), small (10-49 employees), and medium size (50-199 employees) firms are not. The large factories also have the more technologically-advanced equipment resulting in a higher degree of safety compared to the medium, small, and cottage size factories. What are the working conditions of these medium, small, and cottage size industries like? Are the earnings of these employees commensurate with their work output? Are women's earnings competitive with those of their male counterparts? Do the employers in the factories prefer to hire single women? Is engaging in overtime work a regular part of their work schedule? What effects does shift work have on workers? Do the female workers in these cottage, small, and medium industries have welfare benefits and job security?

As mentioned earlier, the large scale industries are under the protection of labour law. Some of these laws include the Minimum Wage Law, and the Notification on Labour Protection which provides workers with protections relating to working hours, overtime, holidays, severance pay, employer liability for job related illness, injury, or death, and workers' welfare regarding health, safety, and sanitation. Women are also given special
protections relating to night work, hazardous work, pregnancy, and maternal leave. Questions arise as to whether these laws are enforced. Do employers take advantage of female workers as these workers are unaware of their rights and legal protection due to lack of education? Several of the large size industries are unionized. Are women active participants in these unions? Have working conditions improved as a result of union efforts?

Occupational Safety and Health

An important issue that is of great concern especially after the Bhopal and Mexico disasters is that of occupational safety and health. The rate of occupational injuries has increased from 1,173 per 100,000 workers in 1974 to 4,003 per 100,000 in 1984. In 1972, the government established the Workmen's Compensation Fund which provided injured workers with some compensation.

Occupational Health is an issue loaded with moral, medical, and economic questions. Businesses do not want to spend an enormous amount of their money on improving occupational safety and health. Chemical manufacturers of acrylonitrile have estimated that it will cost $100 million to save one life. These people claim that the benefits far exceed the risks. However, is it moral to jeopardize the well-being of a large group to provide maximum profits for a small group?

The occupational safety and health of women is of special concern because of women's sexual function (menstruation, pregnancy, and puerperium) and because of women's lack of
education and skills thus possibly resulting in more injuries and accidents. Therefore, what is the impact of the work environment on the health of these workers? *To what extent does the working environment contribute to injuries, disability, disease, and death? What measures have been taken to reduce these occupational risks and hazards?* What are the main occupational health hazards in these industries? Are workers inhaling toxic fumes, gases or vapours? Since women often work with small parts, how much strain is placed on their eyes? Besides the occurrence of physical problems, are there any emotional problems experienced as a result of unhealthy and monotonous work conditions? What are the long range effects of some of these hazardous conditions?

*Is there adequate legal framework to protect women workers from occupational health risks?* What could be improved in the law enforcement concerning occupational safety and health?

**HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

The civil servants are vital to the administration of the country. Some of them are key actors in policy-formulation and play crucial roles in setting the direction for national development. Each year, the government spends more than a third of its budget on the government employees. In 1985, according to the survey conducted by the Civil Service Commission, there were 1,780,385 government employees. Of these, 51.09 percent (or 909,678 employees) were civil servants,
13.14 percent (or 233,913 employees) were permanent employees, and 35.77 percent (or 636,794 employees) were temporary employees. In 1985, of the available gender information on 716,181 workforce members in the public sector, women constituted 54.46 percent (390,019 women) In contrast, women constituted only 30.6% (4,632 women) of the 15,133 employees in the executive positions (C7 to C11). 87

It is interesting to note that there were more women (343,479 women) than men (228,593 men) in 5 of the 14 government agencies, i.e., Ministry of Trade and Commerce, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, and Ministry of University Affairs. 88 Why were there more women than men in these agencies but not the others? How many positions are there in the public service that qualified women cannot attain due to certain rules, regulations, and laws? This violates the agreement on the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" signed between the government and the United Nations. 89 Who are responsible for correcting the situation? For those positions that women are allowed to seek, how did they perform on the entrance examination? An earlier study indicated that women did well on the written examination but not as well on the oral interview. 90 The study also identified bias interviewer attitudes as the key reason behind women's less successful oral interview. What can the Civil Service Commission do to correct the situation? How were the interviewers recruited? What type of training programmes were provided for the interviewers?
Although there were more women than men in five government agencies, the majority of the executives in these agencies were men (5520 men versus 3920 women). **What are the criteria for the advancement in the public sector?** To what extent does duration in the service, experience, education, training, and personal connections influence career advancement? **What are the qualifications for both women and men in the executive positions?** What are the profile of the successful female executives? Why were these executive selected by their superiors? How did these executives perform? What are their attitudes towards female public servants and female executives? Earlier studies revealed that supervisors generally did not recognize the potentiality and capability of women for the executive positions. They perceived that women's obligations to their family was the obstacle to career advancement. Moreover, women in management positions usually face difficulties in working with male subordinates who did not accept them, and with male colleagues at the executive levels. What is the present situation?

**How many women in the public sector have potentialities for executive positions?** **What are the specific skills required to upgrade their potentialities?** During the past decade (1971–1981), women had fewer training and educational opportunities. Less than one third of the scholarships (3065 scholarships from the total 9,794 scholarships) were granted to women civil servants. What is the present situation? Why did women receive fewer scholarships? Of those women who received
scholarships, how did they perform? Did they complete the programmes as well as men? Did their supervisors recognize and utilize their acquired skills?

The public sector is a key actor in charting the future direction of development. It is responsible for regulating and implementing various developmental activities. Its efficiency appears to be falling. Recently, the government attempted to initiate administrative reform by various measures, none of which have had a significant impact. What should be the key objective in improving the management of the economic and social development in this country? According to the TDRI Research Plan for Management of Economic and Social Development, the basic objective is the improvement of the managerial process, i.e., the decision-making process, the implementation process, and the resource management process. The management system can be divided into three distinct but interrelated levels, Central Policy Level, Central Line Level, and Local Government Level. How can the concerns of women be integrated into the reform of the management of social and economic development? What measures could be carried out to improve the professional capability and the performance effectiveness of the civil servants in the integration of women into the national development?
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Due to economic, cultural, political, and social changes, it is clear that attempts should now be made to integrate women into the development process. Women deserve special attention because of their multi-faceted disadvantages and constraints, and also because development has a different impact on women than men. Our studies propose to examine and assess the impact on women and their roles in development, modernization, and industrialization dealing specifically in areas where women predominate and/or are disadvantaged. The roles of women will be explored in the context of existing situations using productivity rather than equity criteria.

The eight development issues will examine women’s existing and potential roles as decision-makers, recipients and providers of technology, income earners, environmental conservationalists, entrepreneurs, industrial workers, and civil service executives. The issues have been chosen because of their utmost importance to the establishment of national policy. Some of these issues are already issues in the Sixth National Development Plan and the Long Term Women’s Development Plan. The policies derived from the results of these studies will greatly further efforts in reaching some of the major objectives set in the Long Term Women’s Development Plan. One reason for the lack of success in attaining these objectives is that there has not been enough research on women necessary for policy-formulation. Since the Sixth National Development Plan does not make any special
references to women, it is hoped that results from these studies will provide additional groundwork and data for the integration of women into the Seventh National Development Plan.

The majority of the issues also pertain to the themes underlying TDRI's research efforts and can be integrated into the existing research programmes. TDRI currently conducts policy research on national development issues, however, there has been a lack of gender distinctions within this research. It is recommended that TDRI utilize gender analysis as appropriate in its studies.

Efforts should now be made by policymakers and development planners to work on specific plans to improve women's productivity, expand the equality of women's productive opportunities and reduce the burden of their work. Policy-makers and 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.
FOOTNOTES


4 Tonguthai, pp. 191-192.


6 Government of Thailand, Department of Agriculture Extension, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. (Bangkok, 1987)

7 The Department of Agricultural Extension, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives carried out a study on farm women's participation in agricultural activities. Involved in the study were about 4,000 farmers from the northeast, the north and the central region. Through the extension workers, the number of women and men engaged in each activity was obtained. On the average, the number of farmers (women/men) in the sample of each activity was about 300.

8 Tonguthai, p. 199.

9 Government of Thailand, Department of Agriculture Extension, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. (Bangkok, 1987)

10 Government of Thailand, National Statistical Office, Survey of Migration into the Bangkok Metropolis, the Vicinity of the Bangkok Metropolis, and Khon Kaen Province 1985 (Bangkok, 1985)


13 Ibid.


20 Ibid.

21 Government of Thailand, Department of Local Administration, Ministry of the Interior (Bangkok, 1987)


29 Government of Thailand, National Economic and Social Development Board, The Sixth National Economic Social Development Plan (Bangkok, Office of the Prime Minister, 1981)

30 Thailand National Commission on Women’s Affairs, Subcommittee of Coordination and Implementation, Women Development Plan (Bangkok, 1987).


At the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City (1975), a World Plan of Action was worked out for the UN Decade for Women. In December 1975, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 1976 to 1985 to be the Decade for Women with the themes of equality, development and peace; and the subthemes of employment, health and education.

In 1985, the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the Decade was held in Nairobi, Kenya. At the Nairobi Conference the Forward Looking Strategies were finalized. The strategies contain concrete proposals for measures in the areas of employment, health, education, food, water, agriculture, industry, trade and commercial services, science and technology, communications, housing and settlement, community development, transport, energy, environment and social services.


48 Ibid, p. xi.


51 Apichart Chamratrithirong, Bhasson Limanonda, A Study of Thai Women Leaders in Local Administration, (Bangkok, United Nations Children’s Fund, 1985), pp. 4-5.


54 National Economic and Social Development Board, Rural Development, p. 16.


[60] Ibid., p. 56.


[66] Ibid., pp. 268-269.

Ibid.

Personal communication with Mrs. Chinda Charungcharoenvej, President, Friends of Women's World Banking Thailand, April 1988.

Prepared in consultation with Dhira Phantumvanit and Widhanya Nandhabhiwat, Natural Resources and Environment Programme, Thailand Development Research Institute.

Arbhabhirama, Phantumvanit, Elkington and Ingkasuwan, p. 19.

Ibid., p. 37.

Ibid., p. 86.


80 Prepared in consultation with Dhira Phantumvanit and Widhanya Nandhabhiwat, Natural Resources and Environment Programme, Thailand Development Research Institute.


83 Arbhabhirama, Phantumnavit, Elkington, and Ingkasusan, p. 260.

84 Julian, p. 468.

85 Ibid.


88 Ibid., p. 7.


92 Interview with Thai Civil Servants, Bangkok, March 10, 1987.


94 Ibid., pp. 9-12.
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