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DRAFT PROJECT

THE PARTICIPATION OF CARIBBEAN WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT:  
TRAINING AND INCOME GENERATING PROGRAMMES



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

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Introduction

The Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development was adopted by consensus by the Member States in the Latin American Regional Conference held in Havana, Cuba, from 13-17 June 1977, and approved at the Eleventh Extra-Ordinary Session of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America, held on 21 November 1977.

This plan is an important and pragmatic guideline for action on national, regional and sub-regional levels. The responsibilities for the involved agents - governments, non-governmental bodies and international organizations - are carefully spelled out in the document. Also, the role of CEPAL in this network of concerted action is clearly defined. It was felt that CEPAL should, apart from formulating policies, developing machineries and instruments to promote the women's participation in development, also determine regional and sub-regional needs for technical assistance and give support to all the United Nations bodies operating in the region to meet such needs.

In Kingston, Jamaica, 14-15 February 1978, the Bureau of the Regional Conference celebrated its first consultation with the Secretariat of CEPAL, in order to evaluate achievements and determine a guideline for further events. In the meeting, the urgency to prepare an integrated development project for women's participation in the Caribbean sub-region was expressed, as well as its presentation for approval and financing to the Voluntary Fund for the Women's Decade. This project should respond to concrete national priorities and needs identified in the sub-region; and the activities, when implemented, should give quick and measurable results.

It was considered convenient that the project should be presented to the Governments of the sub-region during the CDCC Meeting, scheduled for 12-18 April 1978 in Belize for their consideration. This procedure would at the same time draw the attention of the Member Governments to the necessity for structural changes in order to permit major participation of women in their own development process and remind the representatives of the CDCC Member States of the pressing need to implement strategies and policies to eradicate female discrimination.

In the Seminar on the Integration of Women in Development in the Caribbean, Jamaica, 6-12 June 1977, sponsored by the Extra-Mural Department of the University of the West Indies and the Jamaican Women's Bureau, a Plan of Action for the Caribbean was prepared. Participants from eleven English-speaking Caribbean Countries and Cuba drew up action guidelines for the Caribbean region, and made very concrete recommendations for implementation. The guidelines received further attention in a follow-up event, the Meeting of the Steering Committee held in Grenada, 7-8 November 1977.

Deliberations from these meetings, results of consultations with pertinent governments and the outcome of fact-finding missions undertaken by CEPAL are the basis for the draft integrated project outline described in this document.

#### Background

In the Caribbean as in other countries of Latin America, a large number of women are fully participating in their countries' development. There are women, although a small number, who, as equals to men occupy high-governmental or private positions, and are therefore sharing responsibility in the political, economic and social decision-making processes.

However, mainly due to the effects of under-development and uneven distribution of property and income, the rural population is often deprived from participating satisfactorily in the development process. In view of growing difficulties faced by small-scale economic ventures in rural areas, polarized by modern agricultural units and agro-industries, out-migration towards the cities has resulted in the formation of an equally under-privileged urban marginal population which does not differ from the rural poor in relation to its available resources.

This project aims at improving the situation of rural and urban marginal family groups in which the female integrants have the most difficult share. The priority target group is the women who are viewed as an increment of the development potentials and not a competitive replacement for men. This vulnerable group of urban marginal and rural women representing half of the Caribbean poor population has never been able to develop its own personality and to integrate fully into society. These women simply have no time or chance, no promotion or information on how to make full use of their potentials in order to participate together with men in the dynamism of social change.

It is believed that through establishing a co-ordinated system of self-service centres in the poor communities - manned and used by themselves - to take over part of the daily family routine, many women would be liberated for at least a couple of hours daily to dedicate themselves to their personal development. This type of problem-solving activity based on voluntary participation is likely to multiply the impact of services already offered to the community by the governments and different private organizations.

#### Justification

The Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development, states in its paragraph 35:

"The family is the nucleus which generates and transmits the values, norms and attitudes which orient the individual and collective conduct of the members of a society. As the mediating institution between the individual and the social group it is particularly important as regards the situation of women and the possibility of broadening their social participation and eliminating the factors of the discrimination against them."

It is often forgotten that the family in the Caribbean constitutes a local institutional innovation, organized historically in the process of satisfying social demands faced by enslaved and indentured migrants.

Black slaves, White, Chinese and East Indian indentees have achieved some form of organization of their private lives, by overcoming innumerable obstacles, and only with the upsurge of own-account agricultural ventures were the constraints somehow lessened. Peasant settlements of former slaves and indentees had to contend with the monopolization of the land either by the planters or the State and to reckon with severe regulations hampering vagabondage, i.e. internal migration. It resulted in a pattern of scattered settlements in more or less self-sufficient hamlets.

The labour force that originated in minuscule peasant or quasi-peasant hamlets was gradually absorbed into plantation and urban activities, which is reflected in migrational displacements of isolated individuals. This particularity of geographical mobility in the Caribbean further creates in the area of attraction, conditions for the organization of private lives which differ from what may be observed wherever migrational flows comprise family units.

In rural or urban marginal situations, Caribbean family units display a unique structure - even though this uniqueness is not always viewed as a result of specific historical developments - which produces interesting achievements designed to cope with various phenomena of social pathology. Among these achievements, one must underline the fact that isolation due to a scattered pattern of settlement in rural areas, and lack of services in overcrowded shanty towns and poor neighbourhoods are counteracted by various forms of mutual help, whereby the family units support each other in fulfilling their functions. The most complex articulation of collective services of the sort is to be found in Jamaican and Haitian Yards. In other countries, literature is not very extensive on this matter, but mutual help and collective self-service are known to be a common feature of community organizations.

Taking into account the general CDCC orientation which requires that strategies selected for development and co-operation in the Caribbean (...) should come basically from the Caribbean itself, the project is designed to re-animate and upgrade the forms of mutual help characteristics of Caribbean rural and urban marginal populations, in order to multiply the benefits of services offered by the member governments.

## Objectives

### Short-Term

- to re-animate and rationalize voluntary self-service activities traditionally existing in the community in order to alleviate the toils of household women. It should result in a number of household women/hours per day free for personal activities;
- to invest the time so spared in training, voluntary and income generating activities, decided upon by the target group;
- to collaborate with pertinent government and other authorities in the delivery of basic services (adult education, health services, agricultural extension, etc.).

### Medium-Term

- to achieve a better health, nutritional and educational status for the pre-school children;
- to increase women rural know-how and improve their marketing and food promotion, and expansion into related processing or small scale industry activities;
- to create revolving funds for improving community investments (collaboration with development banks, credit unions, other funding agencies);
- to change attitudes about the traditional roles men and women play.

### Long-Term

- to increase popular participation and raise the family income level;
- to integrate women more completely into development;
- to respond to the governments' appeal for social structural changes, strengthening the Caribbean identity and self-propelled development.

### Activities

The idea of self-service centres is based on action proposals in the Regional Plan of Action which call on the governments to enable rural women's development integration "with a view, inter alia, to reducing migration towards other zones which worsens the problem of "marginality", to set up training and occupational courses in urban and rural areas to prepare women to participate effectively in the job structure of the country, and finally to promote stronger self-help programmes which would guarantee better standards of living for the family.

To achieve a system of functional self-service centres which would enable women to self-orient a part of their time, the development of a collective personality is imperative. Sons and daughters, men and women, friends should participate in this venture on the basis of equal rights and opportunities. It is furthermore to be expected that such collective everyday participation may favourably influence the traditional gender value system.

The example of the Yard, as a living place or a compound where people meet, share or carry out jointly specific activities, prompt the design of this project. The following self-service centres are envisaged for implementation:

1. A children's day-care nucleus where some community members do voluntary service and attend pre-school children during certain hours in the day. It should be so arranged that these children would receive, besides one well-balanced meal, basic education and health care.
2. Creativity workshops where children and grown-ups belonging to the same community would share creative activities to develop their capabilities and self-confidence.
3. Collective basic utilities for bath and laundry and related requirements, where water facilities which are generally absent or scarce can be provided to the community.
4. Culture and training centre, a meeting place where individual and group training for the members of the community can be housed. (Training in the following areas is contemplated: - marketing, budget preparation and management, small scale industries, co-operatives, crafts and food processing, information and dissemination of legislation).

To implement the project, it is recommended that the Co-ordinator takes the following steps:

- to identify areas for implementation, after having carefully studied and evaluated relevant on-going, discontinued or terminated activities;
- to assist the priority target group in the organization of its problem-solving machinery;
- to make a priority list of training activities. In several governmental requests to CEPAL the desire of increased education in child-care and family health was indicated. Therefore, it is felt that by using adequately trained field personnel, promoters, members of the communities, this type of basic training can be more easily disseminated;
- to undertake a short survey of local market conditions, discuss and identify preferences for income generating activities;
- to explore credit facilities suitable to the circumstances of the target groups;
- design training activities which should be given where possible through existing institutions; organization of specific workshops should be considered when appropriate. (UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO, FAO, CINTERFOR/ILO training courses for small scale industries, management promotion; local education radio programmes, etc.);
- action-oriented research should be stimulated. Different academic governmental and non-governmental research institutions should be informed and invited to participate in the project. Research Development Institutions such as UNRISD, which has already offered collaboration, should be contacted;
- to make the evaluation possible, a basic diagnosis of the project areas should be carried out with participation of the community. The periodicity of the evaluation is to be determined by the Co-ordinating Committee, and the research indicated above would serve as a frame for this exercise;
- to develop the framework for establishment of workshops for creative activities for the rural family. In view of the role played by women in the conservation and

transmission of Caribbean cultures, some of the Centres for Cultural Retrieval and Animation mandated by the CDCC could be staffed mainly by rural and urban marginal women. Retrieval of oral literature and folk music and their dissemination through the mass media could offer the women involved an access to the society at large, establishing reciprocal interchanges and the meaningfulness of their efforts;

- to set the basis for identification of local talents and for training them in appropriate communication techniques.

It is recommended that this project should not create any new institutions or bureaucratic hierarchies, but utilize national infrastructures to a maximum and collaborate with official and private organizations working for social welfare.

#### Implementational Aspects

A Co-ordinator should be appointed for three (3) years, and would be located in the CDCC Secretariat, Port of Spain. She should be selected from among specialists of the Caribbean sub-region, and should have several years of practical experience in integrated social development especially regarding problems of the marginal family.

The Co-ordinator will be responsible for liaising with participating governmental organizations. She will seek international funding and act as the channel of assistance from the United Nations System. She will particularly be responsible for the integration of the project in the overall CDCC Work Programme.

The project should be implemented at country level through an institution designated by the participating governments. A representative from the institution would be the national contact for the Co-ordinator. Together the country representatives would constitute the Co-ordinating Committee of the project for which the Co-ordinator would serve as Secretary.

TENTATIVE BUDGET

		<u>1978/79</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Co-ordinator (P/4)	39 m/m	50,000	40,000	42,000
Travel (within the region)		10,000	10,000	8,000
Consultancy (3 m/m per year) (4 m/m for 1980)	13 m/m	17,100	15,000	8,600
Research - Commissioning research into specific areas <u>1/</u>	6 m/m	3,000	5,000	5,000
National Training Courses 5 per year per country <u>2/</u>		5,000	7,000	5,000
Sub-regional Workshop Two a year (12 persons - 5 dys.) <u>3/</u>		10,000	11,000	12,000
Secretarial Assistance/ Junior Clerk	36 m/m	5,000	5,000	5,000
Equipment, material (sewing machine, slide projector, blackboards)		3,000	2,000	2,000
Miscellaneous		1,000	1,000	1,000
	Sub-total:	<u>104,100</u>	<u>96,000</u>	<u>88,600</u>
	Overhead 14%	<u>14,600</u>	<u>13,500</u>	<u>12,400</u>
	Grand Total:	118,700	109,500	101,000

1/ Action-oriented diagnosis and specific follow-up for evaluation.

2/ Low expenditure estimated since the project will draw mainly on resources already available at country level.

3/ Meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee for planning and follow-up.

