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Gender mainstreaming: A study of efforts by the UNDP, the world bank and the ILO to institutionalize gender issues

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Gender Mainstreaming: A Study of Efforts
by the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO
to Institutionalize Gender Issues

Shahra Razavi
Carol Miller

Occasional Paper 4, August 1995

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
United Nations Development Programme

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Preface

The Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September 1995, provides an opportunity for the world community to focus attention on areas of critical concern for women worldwide — concerns that stem from social problems embracing both men and women, and that require solutions affecting both genders. One of the main objectives of the Conference is to adopt a platform for action, concentrating on some of the key areas identified as obstacles to the advancement of women. UNRISD's work in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women focuses on two of the themes highlighted by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women:

- inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself; and
- insufficient institutional mechanisms to promote the advancement of women.

The Institute's Occasional Paper series for Beijing reflects work carried out under the UNRISD/UNDP project, **Technical Co-operation and Women's Lives: Integrating Gender into Development Policy**. The activities of the project include an assessment of efforts by a selected number of donor agencies and governments to integrate gender issues into their activities; the action-oriented part of the project involves pilot studies in Bangladesh, Jamaica, Morocco, Uganda and Viet Nam, the goal of which is to initiate a policy dialogue between gender researchers, policy makers and activists aimed at making economic policies and productive processes more accountable to women.

This paper takes up the first activity mentioned above by providing an account of efforts to mainstream gender in the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO. It identifies some of the obstacles that have been encountered in the different institutional settings and highlights the opportunities for further progress.

Shahra Razavi is Project Co-ordinator of **Technical Co-operation and Women's Lives: Integrating Gender into Development Policy**; Carol Miller is a researcher at UNRISD.

August 1995

Dharam Ghai
Director

Executive Summary

Section I Institutionalizing WID/Gender Concerns

Public institutions continue to be of significant interest to feminists given that they reproduce and contribute to women's subordination through their assumptions, working procedures and activities. There are divergent views, however, on whether public institutions can be made more accountable to women; the two main positions taken by feminist critics of public administration are: (i) the "disengagement" strategy, which is sceptical of the ability of development institutions to promote women's concerns; and (ii) the incremental approach, which sees development institutions as too important a force to be ignored, and thus promotes change within them, even if it is piecemeal. The second approach is reflected in the types of changes that have been introduced in the three agencies analysed in this paper — the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO — and in the United Nations system more generally.

The international women's movement, punctuated by the United Nations World Conferences on Women, has since the 1970s called upon international development agencies and governments to "integrate" women into the development process. An early institutional response was the setting up of women in development (WID) bureaux which funded and/or executed a variety of women's projects. By the mid-1980s, due to the slow pace of progress in improvements to women's status and well-being, and the continued marginalization of women-specific projects, the need for new strategies became apparent. In this context, "mainstreaming" gained currency amongst international agencies and governments as a new strategy aimed at bringing women's concerns into the centre stage of development.

A distinction has been made between an "agenda-setting" and an "integrationist" approach to mainstreaming; the former attempts to transform the thrust of development policy as it brings women's concerns into the mainstream, while the latter attempts to integrate those concerns within the existing development activities without necessarily altering the agenda. The changes that have been introduced in the three multilateral institutions, documented in this paper, fall within the confines of the incremental approach. In this context, mainstreaming involves two main components: (i) integrating gender issues into the entire spectrum of activities that are funded and/or executed by an organization (i.e. projects, programmes, policies); (ii) diffusing responsibility for gender integration beyond the WID/gender units — through mechanisms such as gender training and gender guidelines — making it a routine concern of all bureaucratic units and all staff members.

The extent to which an institution responds to outside pressures for change hinges on a number of factors, the three most significant being: (I) the organization's degree of independence from external pressures;

(ii) the organizational mandate, ideology and procedures; and (iii) the existence and capacity of internal policy advocates and entrepreneurs. This paper documents how the three multilateral agencies have responded to the demands of the WID movement, with reference to these three categories.

Section II Methodology

The paper draws on three main sources of information: (i) primary material produced by the three agencies (published documents, unpublished reports, internal memoranda); (ii) analyses of agencies by external researchers; and (iii) UNRISD reports on interviews carried out with staff members at the three agencies.

Section III The United Nations Development Programme

External pressures and influences

The governance structure and funding arrangements are the main mechanisms through which different pressures are brought to bear on the UNDP. The organization is funded directly through voluntary contributions, with the Nordic countries providing a significant proportion of these resources, which gives them greater “voice” in decisions over how funds are used. These donors have been amongst the active “promoters” of the WID/gender mandate. At the same time, the UNDP is accountable to an executive board that functions on a one member-one vote basis in which developing countries have a greater representation than developed countries; on the whole, developing countries have been less enthusiastic about WID/gender issues. Moreover, as UNDP’s value system emphasizes self-determination of “recipient” governments, it is reluctant to impose external definitions of development, such as WID/gender, on them. Another factor that limits UNDP’s “independence” is its decentralized decision-making structure: the country programming exercise (undertaken jointly by the recipient government, the UNDP and the multilateral and bilateral agencies, which sets out the goals and priorities of a given country) gives voice to recipient governments and executive agencies that may not necessarily prioritize gender issues in the national development structure. As part of its mandate to build “national capacity” the UNDP has committed itself to strengthening gender analytical skills and women’s political constituencies at the national level; these efforts are meant to strengthen the voice of national constituencies which prioritize WID/gender issues.

Organizational mandate and ideology

UNDP was established to co-ordinate and administer United Nations resources for technical co-operation. The lack of a more substantive mandate has in the past served as an obstacle to effective internal policy advocacy on behalf of WID/gender. UNDP’s sustainable human development mandate is, however, providing greater opportunities for the overall strengthening of its WID/gender mandate. Although UNDP’s in-house WID/gender unit — the Gender in Development Programme (GIDP) — is being called upon to play a more proactive role, it has not

been accorded the necessary resources and WID/gender expertise to fully exploit the new opportunities.

Organizational procedures — mainstreaming

In line with its co-ordination mandate and its managerial culture, UNDP has gone a long way in strengthening its internal procedures and staff skill levels to mainstream gender throughout the programming process. The main procedural tools being promoted at both the headquarters and the field level are: gender training, gender guidelines, WID task forces at the country-level, and new monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. While significant steps have been taken in putting new procedures in place, UNDP's highly decentralized structure presents a formidable challenge to the implementation of WID/gender policy given the difficulties in ensuring that headquarters' directives are followed at the field level.

Section IV
The World Bank

External pressures and influences

In contrast with the one country-one vote system of other specialized agencies, voting power in the World Bank's governance structure is determined by the capital contributions that support non-concessional lending. While weighted voting is rarely exercised, most observers are of the opinion that the G-7 countries exercise more voice than developing country members within the Board of Executive Directors that meets on a regular basis at the Bank's headquarters. Although one of the more powerful member countries, the United States, has lobbied the World Bank on environmental issues, it has been less willing to do so on WID/gender. The Nordic governments, however, despite their weak voting power, have been active promoters of WID/gender — both politically and financially. As the World Bank opens up to a more diverse set of pressures, the advocacy work carried out by NGOs provides a critical entry point for WID/gender advocates; the available evidence, though sparse, seems to suggest a failure on the part of some NGOs to prioritize gender issues in their advocacy work. Despite these diverse sources of pressure, the Bank's management maintains a significant degree of control over policy directions and lending decisions, which makes it imperative that WID/gender entrepreneurs promote the subject with management.

Organizational mandate and ideology

The lack of an obvious organizational fit between the Bank's mandate and ideology, on the one hand, and gender concerns, on the other, has not been a major obstacle to gender mainstreaming. For a start, there have been changes in the Bank's definition of its core mandate; in recent years poverty alleviation and human development have gained ascendancy, which are more in tune with WID/gender concerns. Equally important, however, WID/gender entrepreneurs have been able to mould gender issues into a shape that is acceptable to the Bank economists. The Bank's in-house WID/gender unit has drawn on research carried out in the Bank and outside to highlight the positive synergies between

“investing in women” and the Bank’s main objectives — poverty reduction, increased productivity, more efficient use of resources and social returns. One of the main problems with this approach, however, is that it limits interventions for women to those cases where the economic argument is strong (where gender equity and economic efficiency overlap).

Organizational procedures — mainstreaming

Since 1984, guidelines have been put in place to mainstream gender issues within the Bank’s operations. The 1993 reorganization, which was meant to strengthen the operational relevance of the work carried out by the policy/research departments (where the WID/gender unit is located), gave further impetus to mainstreaming gender issues across the Bank’s operational departments. A significant part of the mandate of the new in-house WID/gender unit — the Gender Analysis and Policy (GAP) team — is to mainstream WID within operations through staff gender training, the preparation of “best practice tool kits” and demonstrations of how gender concerns can be integrated into up-stream policy documents. A very encouraging move in recent years is that WID/gender staff have extended the scope of their scrutiny into project implementation, highlighting the gap between objectives set out in appraisal reports and actual implementation of WID/gender components; the preconditions for successful implementation of WID/gender action include country commitment, the involvement of a gender specialist from the Bank and good supervision of the gender component during implementation. The Bank’s attempts to enhance the role of its in-house evaluation department provides an opportunity for further reinforcing the application of existing WID/gender guidelines and directives.

Section V

The International Labour Organization

External pressures and influences

Of the three organizations considered in this paper, ILO’s governance structure is the most “permeable”: its tripartite structure enables employers’ organizations and trade unions to be officially represented in its governing bodies and to share power with governments. Nevertheless, while many of the items on the agenda of trade unions have also been of interest to women workers, questions have periodically been raised by feminist advocates about the capacity of mainstream trade unions to represent the specific interests of women workers. The fact that tripartism does not embrace the growing ranks of the “unorganized”, a significant proportion of whom are women, is increasingly seen as a serious shortcoming. As far as governments are concerned, as in the other two agencies reviewed here, a small number of them have been active promoters of WID/gender: the Nordic countries, Australia, Canada and the Netherlands. They have also supported WID/gender by directly funding projects of their choice (a practice known as multi-bi funding); their financial support has been particularly valuable given that the ILO has been on zero-growth budget since 1984. As the ILO decentralizes its operations through radical administrative and personnel changes (already under way), it becomes

imperative that active women's constituencies exist at the national level to pursue WID/gender activities.

Organizational mandate and ideology

The ILO's mandate — promoting social justice through the framing of international labour standards — has provided a fertile ground for addressing women's concerns (equity arguments). In fact, as far back 1919 women's issues have been included in the ILO's standard setting work. In promoting attention to women's issues in some of the technical departments which include a significant number of development and labour economists, WID/gender entrepreneurs have found social justice arguments to be insufficient on their own, and more effective when backed by solid social and economic analyses and research findings. The willingness to engage in an economic discourse is not limited to the ILO's WID/gender policy documents though; it is also visible in some of the agency's other policy documents, indicative of what some observers have termed the ILO's new "market realism". On the substantive side, ILO has done innovative research on women's labour participation over the past two decades — some of this work has been path-breaking and is a backbone to feminist labour economics.

Organizational procedures — mainstreaming

Since the mid-1980s, a number of steps have been taken to strengthen institutional procedures in line with the mainstreaming strategy: creating new posts to integrate gender issues in ILO's technical co-operation programmes; issuing gender guidelines; and gender training. While the mainstreaming strategy is the driving force behind these new institutional innovations, at the operational level there appears to be a continued emphasis on projects targeted specifically at women. It may be a matter of time before the mainstreaming strategy bears fruit in terms of operations, but the predominance of women-specific projects may also indicate a reluctance to whole-heartedly endorse the new mainstreaming strategy. Even if WID-integrated mainstream activities become the norm, the ILO will face the more general problem encountered in the UNDP and the World Bank — ensuring that gender issues are adequately budgeted for and not lost during the implementation phase.

Section VI Concluding Remarks

One front on which there has been some encouraging change as a result of the WID movement has been in the agencies' conceptualizations of women's roles: there is growing recognition of women's productive roles and of the fact that women are relevant to a much wider range of development issues and policies than was previously thought. Despite the attempts by development agencies to integrate gender issues into their mainstream activities through a variety of procedural and institutional mechanisms, the challenge remains in ensuring that paper commitments are translated into concrete action. While this paper has not concerned itself directly with issues at the implementation level, the evidence reviewed suggests a number of factors that are likely to be important: lack of adequate budgeting for women's components of

projects and programmes; inadequate analytical skills and supervision during implementation; and lack of political commitment at both the agency-level and the country-level.

The three case studies highlight a number of issues. First, as far as external pressures are concerned, the influence of supportive donors, like the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and Canada, has emerged as a key factor in all three agencies, especially in the UNDP and the ILO given the importance of the financial contributions of these countries. The paper also highlights some of the potential problems if the WID/gender mandate is not actively internalized by the agencies, and especially the “recipients” of development assistance. Issues of “ownership” will become more critical as the agencies go further in their attempts to decentralize their activities.

The organizational mandate presents different challenges to the WID/gender entrepreneurs in the different agencies. ILO’s mandate has provided the most hospitable environment. At the World Bank considerable entrepreneurship has been needed to bring out the economic and efficiency dimensions of gender, so as to “fit” the subject with the organization’s mandate. The obstacles facing WID/gender advocates in the UNDP have been of a different nature: the initial lack of clarity in the organizational mandate made it difficult to develop a coherent and substantive approach to women’s issues; while the human development mission has provided a clearer and more conducive environment, it remains to be seen how far the WID/gender staff can apply the necessary expertise to draw out its gender dimensions.

Related to an organization’s mandate are its procedures. One of the goals of the mainstreaming strategy has been to make gender a routine concern through new procedures; the logic of this strategy is to make every staff member responsible for integrating gender issues into all aspects of their work: research, operations, policy advice, etc. The mechanisms used to diffuse responsibility to all staff members have been gender guidelines, training programmes and gender “tool kits”. The fact that all three agencies are up-grading their monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should, in principle, present WID/gender advocates with an opportunity to increase attention to gender issues. As the focus of this paper is on strategies that are being pursued to promote attention to women’s concerns across the organization, it is useful to summarize some of the common themes and problems:

- Given that gender is a cross-cutting theme it requires organization-wide responsibility; but pursuing a cross-cutting mission in highly sectorally-divided bureaucracies presents formidable obstacles. Very rarely has responsibility for gender issues gone beyond the small circle of staff directly responsible for WID/gender work. While the focal point system has been useful for advocacy work, very rarely do focal points have the authority, seniority and expertise to be able to promote gender issues with senior management. Even where focal points have had some gender training, rarely have they had the expertise to draw out the WID/gender dimensions of their department’s work in a sufficiently

rigorous manner. Questions thus need to be asked about the extent to which limited WID/gender resources should be spread across an organization: is it, for example, cost-effective to provide gender training to all staff members in an organization where the WID focal points are not themselves gender specialists? Where should the balance lie between diffusing responsibility and strengthening existing gender capacity?

- The overall low level of gender expertise is indicative of a more general problem faced by WID/gender machinery. WID/gender staff bear the responsibility for promoting organization-wide attention to WID/gender concerns through staff training, preparing guidelines, and carrying out oversight and monitoring functions. Such responsibilities tend to “crowd out” the important work of research, policy and strategy development in the sense that they bite into the overall resources allocated to WID/gender. The emphasis placed by all three agencies on providing policy advice makes it imperative that the capacity for doing gender analysis at the policy level be strengthened. To play an effective policy advisory role, the WID/gender unit must be well-placed institutionally to influence policy (as in the UNDP’s gender unit); it is also necessary for the expertise to exist for gender policy analysis (as in the World Bank’s gender unit).

- As we have seen, gender mainstreaming emerged as a strategy to overcome the problems of marginalization that women-specific projects had created. Yet WID-integrated projects and programmes have not necessarily been effective in avoiding similar problems. Nominal attention to WID/gender at the design stage renders a project or programme “WID-integrated”, but obscures the fact that these concerns tend to get lost during implementation.

- The mainstreaming strategy requires substantial human resource commitments — both in terms of staff expertise and staff time — yet despite some resource commitment, in all three agencies resources are too limited to enable a thorough job to be carried out. It would be unfortunate if “mainstreaming” were used as a cover to avoid committing resources to WID/gender.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BPPS	Bureau for Programme and Policy Support
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy Paper
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EGALITE	Equality of Rights Branch
ESP	Education and Social Policy Department
ESW	economic and sector work
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEMMES	Office for Women Workers' Questions
FY	fiscal year
GAP	Gender Analysis and Poverty
GIDP	Gender in Development Programme
G-7	Group of Seven (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States)
HDI	Human Development Index
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IILS	International Institute for Labour Studies
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	international non-governmental organization
IPF	indicative planning figure
MDT	multidisciplinary team
MERS	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting System
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Committee
NGO	non-governmental organization
OED	Operations Evaluations Department
PAN	Programme Advisory Note
PHN	population, health and nutrition
PHRWD	Women in Development Division of the Population and Human Resources Department
PRC	Programme Review Committee
PSD	Programme Support Document
SAL	structural adjustment loan
SDPED	Social Development and Poverty Elimination Division
SEGA	Sectoral, Economic and Gender Analysis
SPR	Special Programme Resources
SSG	Senior Staff Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WEP	World Employment Programme
WID	women in development

Introduction¹

The United Nations World Conferences on Women have provided critical rallying points for an international movement through which feminists worldwide voice their demands. Since the 1970s the movement has called upon states and international development agencies to “integrate” women into the development process. An early institutional response was the setting up of women in development (WID) bureaux within both national governments and international agencies which funded and/or executed a variety of women’s projects. By the end of the Women’s Decade (1976-1985) with the slow pace of progress in improvements to women’s status and the continued marginalization and “misbehaviour” of women’s projects (Buvinic, 1986), the need for new strategies became apparent. On the one hand, there was concern that WID efforts during the Decade had created ghettos in the name of integration (Jahan, 1995). And on the other, some feminists argued that women were already integrated within development, and that their problems stemmed from the unequal and exploitative nature of the development process itself.

In response to some of these criticisms, in the post-Nairobi period some development agencies and governments promoted “mainstreaming” as a new strategy for taking women’s concerns into account. By bringing women’s issues into their mainstream policies, programmes and projects, they hoped, earlier problems of marginalization would be overcome. To carry out this mandate, development organizations attempted to integrate gender concerns into the very institutional structures and procedures responsible for development work. WID/gender bureaux, divisions, units and focal points thus mushroomed across a wide range of organizational contexts, their mandate being to institutionalize, or “make routine”, gender issues in the organization’s work.

This paper provides an account of efforts to mainstream gender in three multilateral development agencies in response to the pressures that have been brought upon them by the WID movement. It uses the comparative material to identify some of the obstacles that have been encountered in different institutional settings, and highlights the opportunities for further progress. Section I sets out the conceptual underpinnings of feminist attempts to promote women’s concerns within development institutions. Section I also looks at the factors which condition organizational response to outside pressures for change. Sections II, III and IV review and analyse the experiences of the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO respectively in institutionalizing WID/gender. Section V draws together the main points emerging from the three core sections.

SECTION I

Institutionalizing WID/Gender Concerns

Feminists have long questioned the presumed gender-neutrality of formal institutions. They have shown how institutions reproduce and contribute to gender inequality through their assumptions, working procedures and activities. Development agencies, for example, have tended to associate productive work with men, thereby reproducing male privilege by diverting scarce public resources (for extension service and credit, for example) to them. On the other hand, assumptions of female dependence and domesticity have rendered women the clients of residual public services, such as home economics and nutrition education, delivered through the underfunded parts of public bureaucracies. Where women have been the targets of less marginalized parts of public assistance it has been in the context of population policies, which are very often implemented through draconian measures aimed at controlling their reproductive functions. It was no accident that the World Bank's initial interest in women was in the context of population economics — the desire to understand and control the determinants of fertility. Even the human-centred and pro-poor Basic Needs Strategy showed an explicit interest in women when it came to fertility and population dynamics; women were not seen as potential beneficiaries of the recommended land reform programmes, nor were they the prime targets of mainstream employment schemes.

It was in response to these overt forms of gender bias that the international women's movement highlighted the role of public institutions in maintaining women in a subordinate position. There have been two tendencies within feminist critiques of bureaucracies. The first, sometimes referred to as "disengagement" strategy, is sceptical of the ability of institutions and bureaucracies to promote women's concerns (Ferguson, 1984; Stienstra, 1994). Once women's concerns are taken up by an institution, they become so diluted that real change becomes highly unlikely. This critique is one that has been raised in other contexts as well. It has been argued that the ways in which the movements of socially excluded groups, such as the urban poor or rural workers, have been institutionalized generally involve "the mobilization of the excluded for ends they had no part in deciding, reduced them to apathetic conformism" (Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994:102).

The second tendency promotes change within bureaucracies, even if it is incremental. This approach is reflected in the types of changes that have been introduced in the United Nations system, such as the setting up of WID bureaux and the adoption of WID/gender policy statements or guidelines. The argument here is that development agencies, or bureaucracies, are simply too important a force to be ignored. However, many of those promoting this approach are aware of its shortcomings. As Staudt puts it, "those opting to work in the mainstream encounter deep resistance and face troubling ethical questions about where they invest their energies and the ends they thereby serve" (1990:7).

As was noted in the introduction, in the post-Nairobi period “mainstreaming” came to replace “integration” as a strategy for promoting women’s concerns within development institutions. Mainstreaming strategies were meant to bring women into the centre stage of development, especially the macro-level concerns such as adjustment, environment and poverty alleviation (Anderson, 1990). The change in terminology, however, did not in fact resolve the tensions that had marked integrationist approaches. Mainstreaming itself came to signify different things to different people. Jahan (1994) makes the distinction between “integrationist” and “agenda-setting” mainstreaming. The former simply “added on” women to pre-existing programmes and policies, while the latter implied a more transformative approach whereby adopting women’s issues and concerns would promote a fundamental change in the mainstream.

International development agencies have been active promoters of mainstreaming — within both their own procedures as well as those they advocate for development institutions in developing countries. While some claim to embrace the more transformative definition of mainstreaming, within the United Nations system — with the exception of UNIFEM — the trend has been towards an “integrationist” approach to mainstreaming. In this connection, mainstreaming has involved primarily two main components: (i) integrating gender issues into the entire spectrum of activities — projects, programmes and policies — that are funded and/or executed by an organization; (ii) diffusing responsibility for gender integration beyond WID/gender units.

Institutionalizing women’s concerns within public agencies, however, has been no easy task. The process of mainstreaming requires a radical overhaul of all organizational procedures to ensure that bureaucratic outcomes are routinely free of male bias. Jahan has recently argued that within donor agencies the concerns over means (e.g. mainstreaming) have often taken precedence over ends (e.g. gender equality) (1995:113). The aim of WID/gender policy entrepreneurship, as Jahan reminds us, is to see concrete change in the activities of an organization — i.e., its projects, programmes and policies — and, ultimately, to see improvements in the situation of the subjects of policy intervention. A critical step in this direction — and one that cannot be by-passed — is to ensure that gender considerations are routinely included in the way an organization operates — what Jahan refers to as the “process” or “means”. As the following sections make clear, over the past two decades WID/gender staff have devoted considerable attention to this area. It is important for those promoting change in the field of WID/gender to have an understanding of how development organizations operate. This paper intends to provide some insight into these issues.

The way in which institutions respond to outside pressures hinges on a number of factors. Kardam (1993, 1995) specifies three critical sets of issues that are likely to impact on the responsiveness of institutions to outside pressures for change: (i) the organization’s degree of independence from external pressures; (ii) organizational mandate,

ideology and procedures; and (iii) the existence and capacity of internal advocates and entrepreneurs.

External pressures and influences

International organizations exhibit different degrees of responsiveness to other actors. The governing body is the formal channel through which external pressure can be exerted. In the context of the World Bank, voting is weighted to reflect economic strength, and the organization has tended to be more responsive to its major donors. The UNDP has to cater to a more diverse range of governments which are formally equal, even though those contributing voluntary funds are able to “promote” their favoured themes and concerns. The ILO has the widest circle of accountability amongst all of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Unlike other organizations considered here, the ILO’s tripartite governance structure includes non-governmental representatives as well, namely employers organizations and trade unions. As we will see, in all three agencies sustained external support for WID/gender has tended to come from a small group of donor governments, and in the case of the ILO, from trade unions as well, to the extent that some of the issues prioritized by them have tended to be of concern to women workers.

Governments can also influence an agency through a practice known as “multi-bi” funding, where in addition to funding that goes through an agency’s regular budget, donor governments directly fund projects of their choice in a multilateral agency. A number of criticisms have been made of this practice. Childers and Urquhart (1994) claim that it has fostered the idea that countries contributing most in financial terms should have a greater voice in the way funds are spent. Edgren and Möller (1991) have argued that the practice has weakened the position of governing bodies in determining the policy direction of their activities.

As this paper makes clear, a small group of committed donor governments — the Nordics, the Netherlands and Canada — have used multi-bi funding to promote the WID/gender agenda. In view of the fact that some United Nations agencies have been on zero-growth budgets since the early 1980s, this source of funding has proven to be vital for WID/gender. Where governing bodies and high-level management have been unsupportive of the WID/gender agenda, external funding has been particularly important. The practice of multi-bi funding does, however, raise questions about the degree of “ownership” that agency bureaucracies and governing bodies have over the WID/gender agenda; similar questions have been raised about developing country governments (Goetz, 1995). In both cases, the danger is that the feminist agenda has remained excessively donor-driven.

International NGOs (INGOs) have in recent years become more vocal and adept in promoting a variety of issues, including women’s concerns. A selected few of women’s INGOs have exercised a direct influence through their consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. This status provides them with the

right to attend meetings, suggest agenda items, speak and submit written statements; it does not give them the right to vote. It was partly through this mechanism that women's organizations were able to have a United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) declared. Consultative status also provides a channel for maintaining sustained pressure on the United Nations system (Stienstra, 1994). Women's INGOs can also exert indirect pressure by lobbying government delegates to pay attention to gender issues in international fora. They can also raise the profile of women's issues by providing agency staff with relevant documentation (UNIFEM and UN/NGLS, 1995). These indirect mechanisms may in fact be more effective than direct pressure through ECOSOC. There are, however, few studies tracing the channels through which such indirect pressure is exercised.

Internal policy advocates and entrepreneurs

External pressure alone cannot explain institutional response to WID/gender issues. An important factor conditioning response is the presence of staff members willing and able to promote a new issue and equipped with skills ranging from the more technical and analytical, to brokering and bargaining with different actors to line up support (Kardam, 1991; 1995). As we will see, WID/gender "entrepreneurs" have had to provide convincing justifications for the relevance of WID/gender to their organizations' activities. Policy entrepreneurs are staff members who actively identify new issues and specialize in acquiring new knowledge about them (Kardam, 1991:7). The term entrepreneur is used to emphasize the importance of specialized knowledge and bargaining skills which the word advocacy may not necessarily convey.

As Polsby has suggested, policy-making is both a technical undertaking and a political process, and actual policies are made through a combination of facts and power (cited in Kardam, 1991:8). In the case of WID/gender policy entrepreneurship there is an additional dimension in the political process that works at the personal level. WID/gender policies, unlike other new issues claiming the attention of bureaucrats, intrude into the perceived private sphere of relations between men and women, challenging the existing distribution of resources and power (Staudt, 1985:2). The fact that WID/gender issues can be personalized may thus intensify the resistance of bureaucrats. In response, policy entrepreneurs are tempted to couch WID/gender in a language that is non-conflictual (as a "win/win" scenario).

Staff members promoting women's issues may be divided into three categories. First, "policy entrepreneurs" with specialized knowledge of gender issues who can use their expertise to present WID/gender in a language that is acceptable within the institution and who are also in a position to bargain and forge alliances with both internal and external actors; WID/gender would be part of their job description. Second, advocates who may not necessarily have specialized knowledge of WID/gender but who promote attention to women's issues as part of their professional duties. Third, advocates who lack specialized

knowledge of WID/gender but who are committed to gender equality and who promote attention to women's issues during the course of their day-to-day activities even though WID/gender is not part of their job description. The focal point system popular in international agencies draws on the above three categories, in addition to a fourth category: women staff members selected on the basis of their gender who have neither specialized knowledge nor a clear commitment to promoting gender equality within the organization.

Feminist institutional analysts have argued that the under-representation of women serves as an obstacle to the institutionalization of WID/gender policy (Staudt, 1995). One reason given for the emphasis on staffing levels is that as long as women are in a minority in professional and senior level posts, they are unlikely to jeopardize their own careers by challenging existing organizational culture and procedures. Hence, greater representation of women is seen as a way of transforming institutions and making them more accountable to women (see tables 1-3). While there is no evidence to confirm that women in decision-making positions are likely to act in women's interests (Goetz, 1992:13-14), it is undeniable that the majority of WID advocates within development institutions have been women. This is confirmed by our case studies.

Organizational mandate, ideology and procedures

The third factor conditioning organizational response to WID/gender is the fit between the organizational mandate, ideology and procedures, on the one hand, and WID/gender concerns, on the other. Organizations are created to serve a range of objectives — to facilitate economic growth and efficiency, as with the World Bank, or to promote “social justice”, as specified in the ILO's Constitution. In some cases, however, an organization's mandate/goals are left unclear — a problem that successive UNDP administrators have tried to grapple with. Institutionalizing a new concern is facilitated if it has an easy fit with the organizational mandate. While feminists are by no means united on how gender subordination can be overcome, a concern for gender equity constitutes one of the common denominators, making it easier for an organization, like the ILO, that is committed to social justice to justify a concern for gender, while in the case of the World Bank considerable “entrepreneurship” was needed to transform the goals of gender policy into a language that was consistent with efficiency and economic growth. UNDP's new sustainable human development mandate also provides a fertile environment for the promotion of WID/gender concerns.

To institutionalize a new concern, organizational procedures need to be adapted. Kardam (1991:6) defines procedures to include staff skills, decision-making techniques (whether based on technical analysis or social analysis), and decision-making structure (whether centralized or decentralized). A concern for gender equity can be integrated more easily in decision-making techniques that use social analysis, although economic techniques, such as cost-benefit analysis, have also been used

for promoting attention to gender concerns. As is shown in Section IV, however, there are a number of problems in using cost-benefit analysis to promote gender — widely regarded as an equity issue.

As with other development agencies, in the three cases reviewed here staff members responsible for WID/gender have made progress in putting their organization's procedural mechanisms through a gender lens: gender guidelines and checklists, gender inputs in project design and evaluation forms, gender training to provide staff with gender skills complemented by "tool kits" to use in their daily work. The underlying objective has been to de-institutionalize male bias — more simply, to make it difficult for staff to ignore women's issues in their day-to-day activities. To meet this aim they have tried to diffuse responsibility for WID/gender throughout the organization, making it a routine concern of all staff members and a routine part of all projects, programmes and policies. The need to diffuse responsibility has been reinforced by the realization that WID/gender units do not have the capacity and resources to maintain an active presence in all bureaucratic divisions. The UNDP has probably gone the furthest with these technical innovations, while the ILO is a relative latecomer, with the World Bank somewhere in between. However, as we see below, it would be erroneous to equate the existence of institutional procedures with the actual institutionalization of WID/gender concerns.

SECTION II

Methodology

This paper analyses the institutionalization of WID/gender in three international agencies — with highly diverse institutional missions and ideologies, and varying degrees of accountability to other actors. The criteria for selecting the three agencies were: the UNDP for its central role within the United Nations system; the ILO for its "social justice" mandate, presumably hospitable to WID/gender, and its relatively wide constituency; and the World Bank for its efficiency/growth mandate and its relative impermeability to outside influence.

We have drawn on four main sources of information: (i) primary material produced by the agencies themselves (published documents, unpublished reports, internal memoranda); (ii) analyses of agencies by external researchers; (iii) reports on interviews carried out by UNRISD (Palmer and Jha, 1993). The interviewees included individuals in a variety of posts: WID/gender, monitoring and evaluation, and policy review. On average three posts were interviewed in each agency. Further interviews were carried out by the present authors in 1994 and 1995 with similar posts in the ILO and the UNDP.

The paper uses the comparative material to analyse the factors influencing agency response (outlined in Section I). We have therefore focused on the ways in which the three organizations have responded to the demands of the international women's movement. In this connection, we have highlighted a number of factors: the role of key donors

promoting the WID/gender mandate; the way in which this mandate has been taken up and interpreted by internal WID “entrepreneurs” in line with each organization’s goals and ideology; the impact of the changing policy environment on strategies and opportunities for promoting WID/gender; and finally, the bureaucratic procedures including, for example, the setting up of WID/gender units and focal points as well as the adoption of gender guidelines and the dissemination of gender skills through training.

According to Kardam’s framework all of these variables condition response. Response itself is measured in terms of the extent to which an organization’s activities or “outcomes” — projects, programmes, policy documents — include gender considerations. There are obvious problems in measuring “outcome”. For a start the relevant data are not always available, although this is becoming a more serious concern as development agencies are being asked to account for their work on WID/gender. Unfortunately, of the three organizations reviewed here, only the World Bank provides systematic in-house data on outcomes. We have thus refrained from ranking the three agencies on the basis of their responsiveness to WID/gender.

The problem, however, is not simply one of data deficiencies. There are also serious methodological problems in trying to collapse all of an agency’s activities into a single indicator: how should different activities be weighted? Are research documents more important, or are projects? How should policy pronouncements be weighted? Are women-specific projects more important, or are WID components in mainstream projects? And once an aggregate indicator is constructed through some arbitrary weighting system, will it actually say very much about the way gender issues are being approached by an agency? As with other attempts at aggregation, some of the more interesting questions are not even raised: for example, why has it been easier for one agency to integrate gender concerns into its projects and not its policy pronouncements and research, while the other has done much more substantive gender research, but little by way of integrating gender in its mainstream projects?

In sum, the area this paper seeks to explore is how the three development organizations have sought to institutionalize, or make routine, a concern for women. It does not provide a systematic review of agency activities, although examples are cited of agency documents and projects/programmes. Nor does the paper provide a systematic assessment of what the three agencies do “in the field”, although again references are made to problems of implementation where relevant material has been available. It is with these provisos in mind that the rest of the paper should be read.

SECTION III

The United Nations Development Programme

Overview of the institutional context

The UNDP was established in 1966 to co-ordinate and administer United Nations resources for technical co-operation, particularly at the field level, for the tripartite system comprising United Nations member states, United Nations specialized agencies and the agency itself. It was to fulfil this function in a way that would promote self-determination and self-reliance of recipient countries. UNDP is funded through voluntary contributions from member governments of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. In 1993, it received over US\$ 1.4 billion in contributions and dispersed approximately US\$ 1 billion for its technical co-operation activities. Among the major contributors in the past decade were the Nordic countries — in 1992 they provided a combined total of US\$ 344.2 million² — followed by the United States with US\$ 107.4 million and Japan with US\$ 92.1 million (UNDP, 1993a). Assistance to recipient governments is made on grant terms rather than loans. Recipient governments must contribute resources, often 50 per cent or more of the total costs of projects and programmes, from their domestic budgets to meet some of the local costs.

Resources are allocated to countries on the basis of need according to an internationally agreed formula — the indicative planning figure (IPF). The IPF is the projected amount that will be available for programme activities in a country over a five year period known as a programming cycle. As this paper was being prepared, UNDP was more than half-way through the fifth cycle of country programming, 1992-1996. IPF calculations are based on population, per capita gross national product and other indicators such as deteriorating terms of trade. Fifty-eight per cent of all UNDP resources are allocated for the countries designated as “least developed” by the United Nations General Assembly. Contributions to UNDP’s core resources declined by 163 million in 1993. On the basis of this decline, and estimates of declining contributions in years to come, programme commitments have been cut to 70 per cent of planned IPFs (UNDP, 1994a).

Compared to many other development organizations, UNDP’s structure is remarkably decentralized. It has 132 country offices around the world, managed by resident representatives, and a relatively small head office in New York. In fact, of its approximately 7,000 staff members, 85 per cent serve in developing countries, including most of its professional staff. Each year it also calls upon the expertise of as many as 28,000 international and national experts. Overall policy guidance is provided by the Bureau for Programme and Policy Support (BPPS) located at the headquarters level. The operational side of UNDP’s work is primarily the responsibility of the four regional bureaux³ at headquarters, and the country offices. At the country office level, the resident representative normally serves as resident co-ordinator of all United Nations system activities in a given country.

In terms of organizational procedures and staffing, as a central administrative agency of the United Nations, high priority is placed on good management rather than on substantive issues connected with programme/policy content. Although UNDP staff may be trained as social scientists, they are known as “managers” and performance is based on good administrative skills. Although Kardam (1991; 1993) sees UNDP’s management culture as a constraint on WID/gender, in the sense that there is little scope for policy entrepreneurship, as we will see below, WID/gender advocates can nonetheless appeal for attention to WID/gender issues on the basis of good management skills.

The most important function performed by the UNDP is the country programming exercise. The country programme sets out the goals, strategies and priorities of a given country. It is prepared jointly by the recipient government, the resident representative, and participating multilateral and bilateral agencies. Once the overall country programme has been approved by the UNDP executive board, individual programmes and projects are drawn up by recipient governments in collaboration with the resident representative and specialized agencies. While UNDP is responsible for the overall conceptual and institutional framework of the programme/project cycle, the executing agency is responsible for the attainment of project objectives, and accountable to UNDP for the disbursement of funds. Implementation is generally the responsibility of implementing agencies designated by the executing agency to oversee the detailed management of project outputs, although the executing agency may also be responsible for implementation. In the past, United Nations specialized agencies have executed many of UNDP’s programmes/projects. In recent years, greater emphasis has been placed on execution and implementation by governments and non-governmental organizations. Given this decentralized system, the task of operationalizing headquarters’ commitment to WID/gender is clearly a formidable one.

On the issue of “independence”, UNDP’s sensitivity to external pressure has had contradictory implications for WID/gender. Like other United Nations agencies, the UNDP has had to respond to pressure from the international women’s movement, especially in connection with the United Nations women’s conferences. Donors supportive of WID/gender have been another important source of pressure. As noted above, UNDP is funded entirely through voluntary contributions, with the Nordic countries providing a significant proportion of resources which effectively gives them greater “voice” in decisions over how funds will be used (Childers and Urquhart, 1994:101). The extent to which UNDP has taken up the WID/gender mandate has depended to a large degree on the support of committed donors, especially from the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and Canada (Kardam, 1991:31). Given UNDP’s lack of a substantive mandate, however, demands from donors and recipient governments have resulted in a situation wherein UNDP’s already rather modest IPF resources are dispersed over a range of unrelated small projects (Kalderén, 1991:335), of which WID/gender is just one of many thematic concerns.

At the same time, external pressures have been described as an important factor limiting response to WID/gender (Kardam, 1991). The UNDP is accountable to a 36 member executive board (until 1994 referred to as the Governing Council), functioning on a one member-one vote basis, in which developing countries have a greater numerical representation than developed countries.⁴ On the whole, recipient governments have rarely been enthusiastic about WID/gender issues. And, as UNDP's "value system" emphasizes the self-reliance and self-determination of recipient governments, it "avoids imposing external definitions of development" such as WID/gender (Kardam, 1993:1776). Unless pressure is brought to bear on governments by national level women's movements, the WID/gender mandate is not likely to be taken seriously in UNDP country programmes. UNDP's decentralized structure can also be seen as a factor limiting its "independence". For example, the country programming exercise gives "voice" to recipient governments and executing agencies that may not prioritize WID/gender issues in the national development context. The fact that recipient governments normally contribute significantly to the cost of projects and programmes makes it all the more difficult to promote a controversial issue. As UNDP-funded activities are usually executed by other agencies, it becomes unclear with whom the responsibility for implementing the WID/gender mandate lies.

As a consequence of its lack of "independence" from external actors, UNDP must attempt to balance the pressures from donor governments promoting the WID/gender agenda with its reluctance to impose "external agendas" on recipient governments. And given its decentralized structure, it is inevitable that where there is a lack of commitment to the full implementation of UNDP's WID/gender mandate at the national level, response is likely to be low.

Three important changes in UNDP's work since the beginning of the 1990s have had a significant impact on WID/gender policy: first, the identification of sustainable human development as UNDP's overall mandate; second, the shift towards a more comprehensive programme approach; and third, the further decentralization of UNDP's activities. All of these changes have taken place in an environment of donor retrenchment and reflect UNDP's efforts to improve performance and accountability.

In theory, the sustainable human development mandate provides a hospitable environment for WID/gender policy. UNDP describes the concept of sustainable human development as "widening people's choices by enhancing their capabilities" (UNDP, 1993a:7). In 1990 the Governing Council identified six areas upon which UNDP's sustainable human development mandate should focus: i) poverty eradication and grassroots participation in development; ii) environmental problems and natural resources management; iii) management of development; iv) technical co-operation among developing countries; v) technology for development; and vi) women in development. Since 1990, specific priority areas have changed slightly from year to year but remain within

this general framework. The country programmes and the projects therein are to be prepared as well as appraised and evaluated in such a way as to reflect their impact in human development terms, not just on the basis of income generation or productive growth. According to UNDP, “sustainable human development is development that not only stresses economic growth but distributes its benefits equitably” (UNDP 1994a:3). The **Human Development Report**, published annually by UNDP since 1990, and its Human Development Index (HDI) serve as evidence of the shift in attention from economic growth towards people-centred development.

In response to a perceived failure of UNDP effectively to carry out its role in the overall co-ordination and administration of United Nations resources for development co-operation,⁵ a number of new strategies have been adopted. Country Strategy Notes are being prepared by UNDP to co-ordinate the work of the United Nations system in a given country. A greater effort is being made to ensure that individual projects of the country programme demonstrate a mutual correlation and interdependence rather than exist as an unrelated collection of activities as has often been the case in the past. Moreover, a “programme approach” has been adopted whereby the country programme should be one of the constituent parts of the national development programme under the management of the government. This approach is intended to help overcome the fact that some country programmes have been extraneous to overall national plans, thereby weakening the possibility of national “ownership” of the programme. Attempts to strengthen the co-ordination of United Nations system activities through the UNDP could impact positively on overall response to WID/gender in the country programming exercise if UNDP is able to promote WID/gender as a priority theme and thereby enhance the sense of “national ownership” of the WID/gender agenda.

The goals of “national capacity building” and promoting “national ownership” of the development agenda, have encouraged the further decentralization of UNDP’s activities. The aim is to make UNDP programmes more participatory (UNDP, 1994b:72). The increased commitment to national ownership and management of the development process is said to reflect the lessons of experience: donor-driven and managed development efforts have had only limited impact (UNDP, 1994c). In this context, “UNDP requires that all relevant elements of society be involved in the identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation” of UNDP-sponsored activities at the country level (ibid.). As we see below, efforts are being made to include women’s groups in this process.

Finally, there are changes underway to improve the overall monitoring and evaluation of UNDP’s activities — in other words, to measure UNDP’s “performance”. Such efforts are no doubt a response to the tightening aid environment. UNDP’s new Programme Support Document (PSD), prepared at the country level on specific thematic issues of programme concentration, puts emphasis “on the clear definition of goals, targets, benchmarks and results” (UNDP, 1994c). It

is required that these be measurable, and whenever possible quantifiable. The PSD will form the basis for a policy review by the project advisory committee convened by the regional bureaux to review programmes and projects (UNDP, 1994c). The role of evaluations is also being strengthened: the Central Evaluation Office has been relocated from BPPS to the Administrator's Office to form the new combined Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning. The main role of the new office will be to "carry out timely evaluations of UNDP activities...with the goal of increasing UNDP's effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and capacity for system-wide leadership and co-ordination and generally improving UNDP's overall performance" (UNDP, 1994d). In theory, the overall strengthening of monitoring and evaluation of UNDP's activities provides an opportunity to improve WID/gender accountability.

The factors considered above condition UNDP's response to WID/gender. Its system of governance and its respect for the self-determination of member states encourages a reluctance to push a new and controversial issue such as WID/gender. Donor governments supportive of WID/gender, however, provide financial incentives for institutional response and serve as key allies for internal advocates. Even so, the decentralized structure presents a formidable challenge to the implementation of WID/gender policy given the difficulties in ensuring that headquarters' directives are followed at the field level. The country programme exercise, the main activity in which UNDP is involved within developing countries, presents its own challenges: a lack of commitment to WID/gender policy by any of the actors involved in the programming process (e.g. governments, NGOs, multilateral and bilateral agencies) will serve to undermine response to WID/gender even if commitment exists at headquarters level. Finally, although the lack of a substantive mandate has in the past served as an obstacle to effective internal policy advocacy on behalf of WID/gender (see Kardam, 1991; Pietilä and Eide, 1990), the human development mandate is providing greater opportunities for WID/gender policy entrepreneurship, and the overall strengthening of UNDP's response to WID/gender issues, as we will see below.

UNDP's response to WID/gender in the 1970s and 1980s

Early response to external pressures

It was during the 1970s and early 1980s that the influence of the international women's movement was most strongly felt, and with the support of committed donor governments WID issues were placed firmly on the United Nations agenda. UNDP responded in a number of ways. In 1976 a focal point for women was appointed who attempted to sensitize UNDP staff members by making available research on women in development. Some staff training was undertaken. In the following year, WID focal points were designated in the four regional bureaux to assess project proposals for their inclusion of women and to monitor and report on the overall progress of the efforts of the regional bureaux to integrate women. Typically, they were given no additional resources to carry out this task. In 1977, the first UNDP guidelines on WID issues were produced: "Guidelines on the Integration of Women in Development". The guidelines were included in the UNDP **Programme Manual** under a section "Special Considerations in Projects" thus indicating their "added on" status. Staff were encouraged to examine all projects from the stand-point of women's role in development, though most emphasis was placed on traditional areas such as education, health and handicraft production (Kardam, 1991:19).

Two evaluation studies, in 1978 and 1985, found limited progress in promoting women's participation in development projects and programmes of the United Nations system. On the basis of the 1985 report it was estimated that fewer than one in six projects reported to affect women planned to involve women in project implementation (Kardam, 1991:23). The report also indicated that women were primarily targeted for projects concerned with maternal and child health. UNDP's Governing Council on both occasions demanded increased and more systematic attention to women's issues. UNDP responded with further guidelines. For example, in the early 1980s, staff were instructed to include programmes and projects of particular interest to women in country programming, to attend to women's special requirements (e.g. training, education, health, income-generation, water supply, etc.) and to improve the data base on women and women's work (Kardam, 1991:22).

By 1985 the Nordic countries were prompted to make a joint statement to the Governing Council arguing that the focus on women's reproductive roles ignored the important productive roles of women. They pointed out that women in development "was not just an issue of justice and equality, but a question of growth and efficiency, a means to accelerate substantially the development process" (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:42). For the rest of the decade, within the context of the policy environment of structural adjustment, external and internal advocates often used "efficiency" type arguments to promote attention to WID/gender. They placed increasing emphasis on the need to consider WID/gender issues at the more "up-stream" level of country programming rather than the project level only. The new policy

guidelines prepared in 1986, “UNDP Programme Advisory Note [PAN] — Women in Development”, provided the first reference to the importance of introducing WID issues during consultation undertaken to identify the development priorities of recipient governments. For example, resident representatives were directed to include proposals concerning WID in their advisory notes submitted to governments as part of the country programming process (Kardam, 1991:32).

While these directives indicated commitment to WID, they provided no details on resource allocation. It was assumed that donor governments interested in WID could be approached for additional resources. Kardam suggests that the PAN guidelines were introduced by UNDP partly in response to claims by its major donors that they would use performance on WID issues as one of the criteria on which to base their support to multilateral agencies (ibid.).⁶ The Nordic countries soon made it clear that UNDP should demonstrate its own commitment to institutionalizing WID policy through the reallocation of existing resources (ibid.). Beginning in 1986 a number of changes were made to strengthen UNDP’s response to WID/gender.

The Division of Women in Development

In 1986, women in development became one of the four UNDP priority themes designated by the newly appointed administrator and in 1987 the Division of Women in Development was created. These initiatives can be linked to the heightened emphasis on WID throughout the United Nations system in the aftermath of the Nairobi Conference and to donor pressures noted above. The Division was located in the Bureau for Programme and Policy Evaluation (now known as the BPPS) and had three professional staff members, one at the level of director. The overall responsibility of the Division was to “assist in ensuring and monitoring through the UNDP’s programmes and projects a substantially larger role for women, both as active participants at all levels and as beneficiaries of such projects” (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:43). It was not involved in financing and implementing projects, which was the role of the UNDP-administered fund UNIFEM⁷, but worked instead to “mainstream” WID into UNDP’s work. In line with some of the criticisms emerging of “women-specific projects” (see the introduction, above), it shifted emphasis towards the integration of WID into mainstream UNDP programmes and projects.

Division staff worked as “advocates” to promote WID/gender responsiveness among their colleagues on a day-to-day basis. They attempted to promote WID through “persuasion”. Sufficient research and analysis was being generated outside UNDP during this period to demonstrate the negative consequences of overlooking women in development projects and programmes. Internal advocates were thus able to draw on the support of committed donors and some of the more gender-aware United Nations agencies in order to promote attention to WID/gender within UNDP as good “professional practice” (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:45; Kardam, 1993:1776). The new procedures that emerged reflected this concern with good project management. Indeed, UNDP’s

mandate of co-ordinating United Nations development assistance has meant that greater emphasis is placed on “procedures” than on substantive research and policy analysis. Given the lack of a substantive mandate and the emphasis on management skills, professional staff have rarely possessed the skills or had the incentives to undertake the research and analytical work needed to demonstrate the relevance of WID/gender in UNDP programmes and projects (Kardam, 1991:38). Nonetheless, in line with their organizational culture, internal advocates have been instrumental in promoting procedures for attention to WID/gender issues.

Procedures for “mainstreaming” WID

Within the UNDP, mainstreaming involved two strategies: diffusing responsibility for WID/gender throughout the organization and integrating WID/gender concerns into “mainstream” activities. During the late 1980s Division staff relied primarily on three tools to mainstream WID/gender: new guidelines, gender training, and the project review form. A new set of guidelines, “Women in Development: Policy and Procedures”, which built upon the PAN guidelines, were prepared by the Division in 1987. The Division focused particular attention on the importance of integrating WID at the country programming level (Kardam, 1991:21; Pietilä and Eide, 1990:47). Norway’s Ministry of Development Cooperation facilitated efforts by providing “seed-money” to review a number of country programmes and explore opportunities for directing attention to WID in planning (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:47). The mainstreaming strategy did not entail a complete abandonment of projects specifically for women: it was argued that “women-specific projects will continue to be needed for as long as gender inequalities and discrimination continue” (UNDP, 1990a:5).

Another “mainstreaming” strategy was WID/gender training. As early as 1975 the UNDP had produced training materials on women in development. With the formation of the Division, training courses expanded, although no agency-wide training was introduced (UNDP, 1990a:8). Funding for training seminars was in some cases provided by bilateral agencies (Kardam, 1991:28-32). The point of training was to promote WID/gender responsiveness on a day-to-day basis among the Division’s “constituency”: UNDP staff, governments and executing agencies. WID/gender training was thus used as a tool to help diffuse responsibility for WID policy throughout the institutional structure and to rely on the mobilization of regular staff and financial resources. In theory, the task of mainstreaming was also facilitated by an organization-wide focal point system which was put in place in the summer of 1987.

One of the main procedures to strengthen UNDP’s response to WID/gender introduced during this period was the project review form requested by the Division. For all new projects, and a sample of ongoing ones, country offices completed a project review form that sought to identify whether WID issues were included in project objectives and activities and whether women were included as participants (Kardam,

1991:28; Pietilä and Eide, 1990:48). The aim of the form was to provide baseline data for monitoring projects for their WID/gender responsiveness. In addition, the Division attempted to play an “oversight” role to promote attention to WID/gender. According to one of the former directors of the Division, the greatest opportunity was provided by the Division’s participation on the action committee, chaired by the administrator and composed of senior management officials, which discussed and approved projects over US\$ 700,000. The Division used the committee as a means to demonstrate the relevance of WID issues: “[p]roject by project, the Director or her deputy suggested and inquired how the projects could involve women as participants and beneficiaries...Gradually, the staff presenting projects would include in their presentations information on the relevance of project activities for women or vice versa” (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:45). However, the impact the Division staff could have was limited — there were not sufficient resources to adequately review the hundreds of new projects approved each year. Moreover, as has been the case with WID bureaux in other institutions, the Division had no authority to ensure that its suggestions were followed.

Bureaucratic outcomes

Analysis of the project review forms suggested that WID/gender issues were starting to be considered even in non-traditional areas: an independent review by Kardam (1991:24) indicated a growth of projects in areas such as agricultural extension and income generation, for example.⁸ Nonetheless, internal reviews suggested that despite the mainstreaming efforts of the Division, by the end of the 1980s little progress had been made in integrating WID issues in country programming. In 1989 a study undertaken by the Division of 11 fourth cycle country programmes revealed that none of the countries explicitly mentioned women’s concerns nor made reference to the importance of women in priority sectors (Kardam, 1991:27). Joint Nordic statements to the Governing Council during the late 1980s stressed the importance of taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the new programming cycle which was to begin in 1992 (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:49).

In response, UNDP attempted to consider the reasons for its poor results. Some of the blame was placed on the limits of the project review form, which was described as a *pro forma* activity rather than an *aide-mémoire* to be used in the course of project formulation, review and evaluation (UNDP, 1990a:9-10). External assessments pointed to constraints posed by UNDP’s decentralized decision-making structure (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:46). A key issue prioritized at the headquarters level receives attention at the field level only if country office staff are able to adapt and implement policy signals they receive. Country office staff described themselves as being overloaded, with little time to identify opportunities for the integration of WID. The extent of country office response to the WID mandate appeared to depend largely on the support of the resident representative (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:46). The fact that project implementation is usually left to United Nations executing agencies or national governments was seen to represent another obstacle

for ensuring sustained attention to WID/gender. Pietilä and Eide (1990:47) point out that a major structural constraint for UNDP is that its main counterpart at the country level is usually the ministry of finance or planning, which tends to be less prepared to discuss WID/gender concerns than many other ministries and WID bureaux. Kardam reported a widespread perception among UNDP staff members that unless financial or political incentives were involved, governments were uninterested in WID issues (1991:33). In this connection, where programmes or projects were insufficiently funded, WID components were likely to be dropped first and resources re-allocated to higher priority areas (ibid.).

By the end of the 1980s, by its own assessment, progress in integrating WID/gender issues into the UNDP's activities, especially at the programme level, had been slow. There was a growing awareness that commitments at the headquarters level were not necessarily taken up or reflected in the work of UNDP staff at the country office level; similarly, the importance of greater commitment to and understanding of gender issues among governments and executing agency staff was recognized (UNDP, 1990b). Thus the decentralized decision-making structure and, in particular, the reluctance of many recipient governments to perceive WID/gender issues as important development concerns, emerged as important obstacles to effective response in the UNDP.

UNDP's response to WID/gender in the 1990s

As outlined in the introduction to this section, UNDP now defines its mandate as building national capacity in sustainable human development. As one component of this mandate, there has been an emphasis in recent years on building national capacity in WID/gender. In this connection the Governing Council has recommended the decentralization of WID activities to the field level (UNDP, 1990a:8; 1990c) and the expansion of WID/gender training, particularly at the country level (UNDP, 1990d). In support of these decisions, in 1991 US\$ 8 million was allocated in Special Programme Resources (SPR) for catalytic initiatives to build capacity in WID/gender.⁹ Response to WID/gender since the beginning of the 1990s in many ways reflects the changing mandate of the organization.

The Gender in Development Programme

In 1992 the Division of Women and Development was renamed the Gender in Development Programme (GIDP). According to GIDP, "the name change represented a shift in the approach and focus of the unit, as well as in the types of support it could provide to country offices for strengthening agency and national capacity in gender-responsive planning and programming" (GIDP, n.d., 1:3). The shift from WID to gender involved a recognition that it was important to consider the socially constructed roles and relations between women and men, not to look at women in isolation. Instead of continuing to exist as a separate division in its own right, the GIDP forms part of the Social Development

and Poverty Elimination Division (SDPED), within BPPS, established to consolidate all the pillars of sustainable human development. In this context it is worth noting that environmental concerns were seen as sufficiently distinct a subject to warrant a separate division within BPPS. For the GIDP, a further organizational layer has been added between it and the director of BPPS, thereby effectively decreasing GIDP's influence with top management. GIDP's location within SDPED, however, provides new opportunities for influencing programming that are considered below.

The main mission of BPPS is to provide overall policy guidance and operational tools for achieving sustainable human development in programme countries. As part of BPPS, GIDP's role is to contribute to the development of appropriate tools, mechanisms and training materials for one component of sustainable human development — women in development. The GIDP's "constituency" has been widened to include NGOs and individuals in national training institutions, and not only UNDP staff and counterparts in governments and executing agencies as had been the case with the WID Division. This extended mandate reflects UNDP's new commitment to the broad participation of civil society in development initiatives.

The GIDP has only three full-time professionals with which to fulfil its mandate of assisting UNDP "to formulate and implement gender-sound policies" throughout the organization's activities (GIDP, n.d., 1:3). In principle, staff are aided by focal points throughout UNDP. However, as in other organizations, focal points are not always WID/gender experts and cannot be expected to carry out the formidable task of integrating gender concerns into the activities of their departments. UNDP staff interviewed were of the opinion that although the focal point system in the regional bureaux (headquarters level) did not function well, there had been a few WID/gender policy initiatives emerging from these bureaux.¹⁰ As for the country offices, the role of focal point is usually assigned to junior personnel, indicating its relatively low priority. Although focal points may be committed to the promotion of gender issues, they are unlikely to have appropriate technical skills to draw out the gender dimensions of the key thematic issues of the country programme. Given the institutional (and spatial) distance separating the GIDP from operations at the country offices, its influence can only be indirect (e.g. through its WID/gender policy papers, guidelines and training). In practice, attention to WID/gender concerns at the country office level still appears to depend on the resident representative: does she or he have the commitment and initiative to seek support from skilled gender experts to ensure the integration of gender concerns in country-level activities?

Like WID units in many other institutions, GIDP staff members see themselves playing primarily an “advocacy” role within the organization. Commitment to the mainstreaming strategy adopted by the earlier WID Division in 1986 remains strong and this is reflected in efforts to improve WID/gender procedures in recent years. Two interrelated goals still are pursued: to diffuse responsibility for WID/gender to all staff members and to integrate gender concerns into mainstream activities. At the same time, women-specific projects are considered necessary in the context of “sex-segregated societies and in cases where there is a need for a critical intervention to ensure that women participate in and benefit from development activities through special projects” (GIDP, n.d, 6:12).

New procedures for mainstreaming WID/gender

In line with its “co-ordination” mandate, UNDP appears to acknowledge the importance of strong procedures for overall institutional accountability to WID/gender (GIDP, n.d., 5:10). In fact, many of its initiatives in recent years have concerned precisely the strengthening of procedures — both in connection with skill level and also through the preparation of further WID/gender guidelines. The line between “procedures” and “bureaucratic outcomes” blurs in the case of UNDP. As we will see below, some of the major WID/gender projects and programmes are directed towards ensuring that decision-making procedures at the country level are more responsive to WID/gender concerns. In this section, however, we focus primarily on procedures targeted at UNDP staff to promote a gender-sound programming process (GIDP, n.d.).

Gender training is seen as a key procedural tool for mainstreaming WID/gender issues despite some recent assessments that are critical of the overall benefits of such training (see CIDA, 1993). UNDP’s rationale for gender training is as follows: “If gender or WID practitioners cannot be everywhere at once, perhaps their influence can be felt if operatives learn to recognize the importance of probing questions and an analytical approach that recognizes gender issues” (GIDP, n.d., 7:16). Like the ILO, considered below, the UNDP is planning to provide specialized training in gender advocacy for its focal points, as well as “gender-training of trainer” courses for country level staff to pass on their new skills to colleagues (GIDP, 1995). Thus far, gender training has covered only a fraction of all staff members. In practice, attempts to spread the responsibility for WID/gender throughout the system have meant that there are few internal WID/gender “experts”. Instead, UNDP tends to rely on consultants for WID/gender expertise.

GIDP staff still play an important oversight function within the UNDP. In project appraisal committees and in the Programme Review Committee (the former Action Committee), GIDP staff comment on country programme advisory notes and on draft country programmes (UNDP, 1993b:2). GIDP intends to play a more “proactive” role to influence the content of the resident representatives’ advisory notes for

the sixth cycle and a new UNDP policy paper and framework for gender mainstreaming is being prepared in this connection, as discussed below. GIDP staff members monitor all of the reviews carried out by the Programme Review Committee (PRC), the secretariat of which is provided by BPPS, as well as those carried out by the Senior Staff Group (SSG) dealing with management policy. However, with limited staff resources, the influence of GIDP is likely to be relatively weak in this context.

There is also a new commitment to making top-level managers more accountable for integrating WID into UNDP programmes and projects (UNDP, 1993b:6). regional bureau directors, for example, are to be asked to provide an annual overview of progress in the mainstreaming of WID in their mandates. Whether such directives will remain “trapped on paper” appears to be a concern preoccupying the GIDP. It has pointed to the need for clear incentive structures. For example, at the field level, it has suggested that “gender responsiveness” be introduced into office management plans and the Performance Appraisal Review (PAR) system, including specific goals for mainstreaming gender in individual staff performance plans (GIDP, n.d., 6:15-16). Other gender-responsive procedures recommended by GIDP cover areas such as programming missions, national country programmes, and project implementation. For example, GIDP suggests that all terms of reference for mission team members should refer to the requirement of incorporating gender concerns in programming missions and external consultants used in the project formulation process should be made “gender accountable”. The latter point is crucial in view of the fact that UNDP relies primarily on external consultants in the programme formulation mission. However, the goal of making 28,000 consultants “gender accountable” represents a real challenge for UNDP. GIDP’s strategy of pushing for clearer incentive structures (penalties and rewards) sets it apart from the other “WID units” considered here which have opted for the route of “persuasion”.

Efforts are also underway to strengthen the role played by UNDP country offices — the central link between headquarters and recipients. resident representatives have been requested to establish WID task forces comprised of UNDP, United Nations and government agencies, non-governmental organizations and bilateral donors for better collaboration on national WID strategies (UNDP, 1993b). WID task forces have already been set up in some countries with the assistance of country offices as consultation mechanisms to review the status of women and to prepare national reports for the Fourth World Conference on Women. In some cases GIDP reports evidence of “more permanent WID oriented advocacy and advisory policy consultation bodies”.¹¹ As for the policy dialogue that supports the country programming process, GIDP recommends that UNDP staff should examine national and sectoral goals and strategies from a gender disaggregated perspective to identify strategies that facilitate women’s participation. They emphasize that a prerequisite for gender mainstreaming is a detailed “gender situation analysis” of each country in which the programming process is carried out (GIDP, 1995; n.d., 6:3-6). The policy dialogue should

include consultations with WID focal points in ministries and women's bureaux and with women's organizations. (GIDP, n.d., 6:7-9). Whether these recommendations are implemented in a systematic way remains to be seen.

Perhaps in response to the variety of WID/gender directives coming from headquarters, there has been an increased demand from the country offices in recent years for support in gender training, advisory services, data collection and analysis (UNDP, 1990a; 1993b; ACC Task Force, 1993). While it is encouraging that country offices and some recipient governments are taking a greater interest in WID/gender, the trend is indicative of a more general problem. Response to WID/gender at the country office and government level may not in fact be a reliable measure of commitment. There may be professional (for the country office) and financial (for governments and NGOs) rewards for paying lip-service to WID/gender. It has been suggested that the poorer countries are more likely to include gender components in their programmes and projects than those making higher financial contributions to support costs, such as the Latin American countries (Palmer and Jha, 1993:3). However, there is no guarantee that attention to WID/gender in programming documents will be carried through to the implementation stage. Nonetheless, even paper commitments to WID/gender provide internal and external advocates with leverage during the implementation process.

Efforts are also being made to improve monitoring and evaluation. A system to collect thematic statistics on WID/gender is being put in place that should assist UNDP to evaluate its progress in mainstreaming. This initiative is part of a system-wide effort to devise a more appropriate classification system to measure progress in mainstreaming the thematic concerns identified as part of UNDP's sustainable human development mandate. Although the precise classifications are still under review, staff at headquarters and at country offices will be requested to collect data in order to categorize projects in terms of their gender-responsiveness. If data collection and analysis are followed through by UNDP staff members, both internal and external WID/gender advocates will be in a better position to assess the percentage of gender-responsive programmes and projects. No such data are now available.

*Sustainable human development:
New opportunities for WID/gender policy entrepreneurship*

The policy statements emerging from the UNDP since the beginning of the 1990s suggest that the predominant development discourses are "equity" and "empowerment". The participatory approach promoted in connection with national capacity building, and the shift from **economic** to **sustainable human** development all indicate a more "people-oriented" focus. Despite the easy organizational fit of empowerment within UNDP's new sustainable human development mandate, it is interesting to note the efficiency arguments pushed by external and internal WID advocates in the late 1980s have not been abandoned. For example, the latest WID/gender policy paper, "Integrating Gender

Concerns in Programming” (GIDP, 1993), at the outset uses “efficiency arguments” to justify attention to gender: the failure to recognize women’s economic contribution “has often resulted in leaving a potential economic contribution untapped” (GIDP, 1993:1). Similarly, the “theoretical framework” as set out in the 1993 policy paper corresponds to the “gender roles framework” which, as we have argued elsewhere (Razavi and Miller, 1995), provides “economic” arguments for delivering resources to women.

Documents emerging from the GIDP suggest that staff members have taken an eclectic approach to WID/gender. One interviewee even suggested that “UNDP speaks with many voices” (Palmer and Jha, 1993:8). GIDP’s programming package **Programming through the Lens of Gender** (GIDP, n.d.) confirms this assessment. It encourages practitioners to adopt either a WID approach or a gender approach where necessary or to choose freely from the range of different policy approaches to women and development (welfare, anti-poverty, efficiency, equality, empowerment). One reason for the all-embracing approach adopted by the GIDP is that its constituency is so wide. Its guidelines on programming must accommodate the variety of needs and approaches of its different clients. Yet its lack of focus undermines UNDP’s ability to provide effective policy guidance for its constituents. This is especially evident in the failure to develop and promote a framework more suitable to the goals of equity and empowerment, although the GIDP appears to be attempting to fill this gap with the new policy paper now under preparation, **Gender and Sustainable Human Development: Policy Perspectives** (1995). This policy paper conceptualizes gender issues in a way that is more consistent with the sustainable human development mandate. “Gender equality and equity” are put forward as a central objective of UNDP’s programmes and operations. An effort is made to draw out some of the gender dimensions and interlinkages of the four thematic issues now identified as “focus areas” of the sustainable human development mandate: eliminating poverty, creating employment and sustainable livelihoods, the advancement of women and regenerating the environment. Unlike the 1993 policy paper, the analysis contained in the draft 1995 paper does not make “efficiency-type” arguments for attention to WID/gender; rather WID/gender concerns are framed in a way that justifies attention to women in terms of the goals of equity and empowerment.

Does the framework upon which UNDP bases its WID/gender activities really matter? The new mission of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support is to provide UNDP and its programmes “with ready access to world-class knowledge, policy guidance, and operational tools on how sustainable human development can be achieved in programme countries” (UNDP, 1994e). Although GIDP is being called upon to play this role and tentative moves in this direction are outlined in the draft 1995 policy paper, it has not yet been allocated the necessary financial resources and the skilled WID/gender staff to strengthen its capacity for policy guidance on women and development. And it seems unlikely that this will happen in the near future. The UNDP Administrator has stressed that “BPPS is not in charge of centralizing expertise but rather

its mandate is to diffuse expertise” (UNDP, 1994e). But even the selection of knowledge to be diffused, tools and procedures to be promoted, and consultants to be hired demands relevant expertise. And more importantly, how can overall policy guidance be provided in the absence of WID/gender expertise?

Those interviewed believed, nonetheless, that GIDP’s position within UNDP is strengthened by the fact that “women in development” is one element of the organization-wide sustainable human development mandate. This gives them a point of leverage in their advocacy work. The positioning of GIDP within the SDPED also provides openings to promote the integration of gender concerns. GIDP participates in the UNDP/sustainable human development task force and in the activities of the co-ordination unit for sustainable human development recently established within BPPS. The main responsibility of this unit is to develop the sustainable human development framework and the inter-linkages for sustainable human development across the themes and programmes covered by BPPS divisions (UNDP, 1994d). It is too early to tell whether GIDP will be able to influence policy in this way.

Bureaucratic outcomes:

National capacity building in WID/gender

As noted above, given the organizational culture of the UNDP, often more emphasis has been placed on getting the procedures right than more substantive research and analysis of WID/gender issues. In this context, since the early 1990s, some of the major WID/gender programmes — in other words, “bureaucratic outcomes” — have been devoted entirely to national capacity building in WID/gender. UNDP has interpreted this to mean building skill level and “constituency” building in WID/gender.

Much of the work carried out under programmes for building national capacity in WID involves primarily **technical** interventions. The areas targeted for capacity building include: gender analysis; generation, dissemination and usage of gender disaggregated data and statistics; and the integration of gender perspectives in projects and programmes (GIDP, n.d., 1:5). One such project is a collaborative effort with the FAO to develop a Social, Economic and Gender Analysis (SEGA) Training Programme for use by the United Nations system and recipient countries. The aim of the project is to review and adapt gender training methodologies in order to develop local frameworks in gender training, to develop materials relevant to local contexts, and to train local trainers — especially gender trainers — within key ministries. A number of pilot projects are also underway to tap or strengthen the capacities of regional and national level institutions in gender analysis (GIDP, n.d., 2).

The long-term goal of capacity building is to promote national ownership of WID/gender. Improved skill level at the national level will enable governments and civil society groups better to assess their needs. According to the GIDP, “No WID capacity-building effort can succeed without building the capacity to understand gender issues at the

decision-making level of national planning ministries and other governmental bodies responsible for the allocation of development resources” (GIDP, 1993:5). This is particularly important in view of the commitment of the United Nations system to the principle of national execution of projects. The total volume of projects executed by countries is growing steadily and this places the onus on officials in ministries and national institutions for mainstreaming gender.¹²

The national capacity building mandate, however, also aims at “building a gender constituency” capable of playing an advocacy role at the national level (UNDP, 1993b:5; GIDP, 1993:6). Training and direct support to NGOs for the Fourth World Conference on Women is, for example, aimed at “constituency building in advocacy for the integration of women in development” (UNDP, 1994f:10). Gender training is also described as “an empowering tool for local women” through which they can “learn to articulate their rights and concerns and to gain access to their share of resources and services” (GIDP, n.d., 4:4). UNDP’s interest in working directly with NGOs, however, gives rise to a more general problem. Are NGOs being “created” primarily in response to aid availability and, if so, how far will national capacity building initiatives be able to overcome problems of sustainability once project funding ends?¹³

Overall, such projects reflect UNDP’s conviction that national capacity building in WID involves strengthening both government and civil society. However, it remains unclear whether the problems associated with its inherently political agenda have been fully grasped, including, for example, the difficulty of creating a genuinely “participatory” programming process. The idea that social groups representing the excluded will materialize and that they will be easily integrated into the participatory process represents yet another example of what Cernea (cited in Vivian, 1994:21) has described as the fallacy of the “*fiat lux*” (“let their be light”) approach. In other words, the assumption is made that development interventions to build or strengthen social organizations will somehow overcome the power relations that marginalize certain social groups.

A recent study of the capacity building mandate of aid agencies also emphasizes the essentially “political” nature of the exercise (Moore, 1995). Although some of its programmes and projects to build national capacity in WID/gender are clearly geared to strengthening the women’s “constituency” at the national level, UNDP has placed itself in a somewhat tenuous position in relation to its claim of neutrality and respect for national sovereignty. According to Moore, public sector and civil society organizations need political support if they are to obtain resources, have an impact on policy and generally do effective work. It may well be difficult to carry out institution building in developing countries without the kind of interventionism that the capacity building mandate, with its emphasis on partnerships and participatory processes, is apparently attempting to replace. In other words, strengthening civil society institutions is likely to involve a degree of political commitment

that most development agencies are unwilling to engage in. It remains to be seen how far UNDP is willing (and able) to go in this direction.

*Bureaucratic outcomes:
Measuring response to WID/gender*

The only available data documenting how far UNDP activities have attempted to integrate women are those collected by the WID Division in the late 1980s (see above). In the meantime there have been sporadic efforts to monitor how far the WID/gender procedures are producing the desired outcome: the mainstreaming of WID/gender concerns in all UNDP activities. A desk review of 31 “advisory notes” for fifth cycle programming carried out in May 1991 found that “although there is some progress towards integration, WID issues are often regarded separately, or as a special concern rather than as an integral part of a plan” (Bernardes Davidson, 1991:i). While a few “advisory notes” systematically mainstreamed women’s issues in all priority areas of the country programme, to the extent that special provisions were made for gender-specific data and the preparation of specific strategies to address women’s concerns, in the majority gender issues are referred to only in passing as an important element of the sustainable human development mandate. This gap is still evident in many of the fifth cycle country programmes prepared on the basis of the earlier advisory notes, raising questions about how far WID/gender issues will be included in the formulation and implementation of projects based on the country programme. Many of the initiatives described in the sections above are aimed at improving performance in this context. Presumably the new monitoring system now being prepared by the GIDP will help to measure the extent to which WID/gender has been mainstreamed in the next programming cycle.

As noted above, the new Programme Support Document (PSD) also promises to provide data on how far UNDP programmes are producing human development outcomes. If the indicators used in the PSD are along the lines of its Human Development Index, which bases calculations on income, educational attainment, life expectancy — in other words, quantifiable data — there is a danger that some of the unquantifiable dimensions of gender power relations will be overlooked by policy makers. Of course, the HDI already goes some distance in bringing to light inequalities between men and women. A country’s ranking may change significantly when data on women, rather than aggregate data on the whole population, are used. No doubt this is one of the reasons why the **Human Development Report** has come under criticism from United Nations member states, with the result that UNDP has been forced to distance itself organizationally from the report.¹⁴ This move is unlikely to insulate the UNDP from further criticism upon publication of the 1995 **Human Development Report**, which will focus on gender and human development, and which is expected to present new indicators on gender equality to rank countries on a global scale.

Finally, on the issue of financial accountability, the mainstreaming strategy makes it difficult for the UNDP to calculate the total resources

being spent on women. Nor are figures available on what should be an easier task, the calculation of total resources spent on women-specific projects.¹⁵ As for country programming, there are no IPF targets set for spending on women. As in many other organizations, the lack of financial accountability mechanisms within UNDP remains an obstacle to assessing the organization's response to WID.

In summary, UNDP's sensitivity to "external pressures" has had two implications. On the one hand, pressure from key donors has been instrumental not only in getting WID/gender issues on the agenda, but also in demanding that UNDP translate its apparent commitment into action. On the other, UNDP's system of governance and its decentralized decision-making structure have proven obstacles to the implementation of WID/gender policy at the country level. Unless a commitment to WID/gender issues is apparent at the country level — usually in the form of an active women's constituency that can exert pressure on the government — response is likely to remain weak. The importance of national ownership of the WID/gender agenda has not escaped the UNDP, and efforts are being made to strengthen national constituencies. How far UNDP will be able to meet this challenge remains to be seen.

Under its "mainstreaming" mandate, UNDP has gone a long way in putting its procedures through a "gender lens" and is poised to further strengthen existing mechanisms (GIDP, 1995 draft). Efforts in this area can be linked to UNDP's management culture. Although Kardam (1991) is right to emphasize the weak policy entrepreneurship within UNDP, it could be argued that, given their organizational culture, WID advocates have been successful entrepreneurs in promoting new "procedures". Nonetheless, with the shift to the sustainable human development mandate and the recent emphasis on providing "policy guidance", new forms of policy entrepreneurship will be needed. Although UNDP is expanding staff gender training, it is likely to continue to rely on the assistance of external gender experts for substantive research and analysis. Without a top-management commitment to earmark resources for internal experts with technical and analytical skills to draw out the gender dimensions of the sustainable human development mandate, an opportunity will be missed to strengthen policy entrepreneurship in UNDP.

SECTION IV The World Bank's Response to WID¹⁶

Overview of the institutional context

The World Bank stands apart from the other organizations considered in this paper due to its role as a major lending institution. It was established at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, initially to finance post-war reconstruction and then to spearhead economic development. The Bank has traditionally provided project funding to developing countries, but during the 1980s it also embarked on the more controversial course of policy-based lending with attached “conditionalities” (Singer, 1994).

Member countries, numbering 177 by the end of fiscal year 1994, subscribe capital to the Bank, a small portion of which is paid “in cash”, while the rest remains “callable” as a guarantee.¹⁷ The guarantee by major industrialized countries enables the IBRD to raise money for its lending operations on the world's capital markets. IDA, on the other hand, obtains voluntary replenishments of concessional funds from donor countries and extends financial assistance to the poorest developing countries on easier terms. In fiscal year 1994, lending by the Bank to all borrowers amounted to nearly US\$ 21 billion, one quarter of which went through the IDA (World Bank, 1994a).¹⁸

In Section I of this paper, the extent of an organization's independence was highlighted as an important factor conditioning its response to a new issue. In her comparative study of three development agencies, Kardam (1991) described the World Bank as an organization with “medium” sensitivity to external pressure — less sensitive than the UNDP, but more so than the Ford Foundation. Ironically, she found the Ford Foundation to have been most responsive to WID/gender, the UNDP the least responsive and the World Bank somewhere in between. One conclusion one can draw from Kardam's work is that WID/gender has not been high on the agenda of those actors who have been powerful enough to exert effective pressure on these agencies. Two questions are important here: which actors are in a position to influence the World Bank? And how likely are they to do so on behalf of WID/gender?

The Bank's governance structure has a number of distinct features. Although formally a specialized agency of the United Nations, the Bank is not accountable to ECOSOC. In theory all powers are vested in the Board of Governors that meets annually, one governor representing each member country. The powers of this board are in turn delegated to the Board of Executive Directors that meets on a regular basis. According to the Bank's Charter, the five largest shareholders of the Bank each appoint their own director, while the remaining directors represent several countries each. Voting power is determined by the capital contributions that support non-concessional lending operations — an arrangement that contrasts with the one-country one-vote system of other specialized agencies.

While the Bank's management often claims that the practice of weighted voting is rarely exercised, according to many observers the Group of Seven (G-7) countries nevertheless have more "voice" than developing country members within the Board of Executive Directors (Ayres, 1983; Mistry and Thyness, 1991). The Bank is more likely to respond to new issues if its major shareholders recommend that it pay attention to them (Kardam, 1993:1777; Williams and Young, 1994:89). The United States, with its relatively large capital subscription, is in a particularly favourable position, reinforced by the fact that the Bank president has always been a United States national (Ayres, 1983:57). Referring back to the second question posed above, while the United States has lobbied the World Bank on environmental issues (Rich, 1994), it has been less willing to do so on WID/gender, for reasons that have to do with the strength of domestic lobbies in the United States.

The Nordic governments, despite their weak voting power, have played an important role in trying to steer the Bank away from what they think are harmful trends for the institution and its borrowers, being the "social conscience" by emphasizing poverty alleviation, social sector lending and lobbying for reform in debt management (Mistry and Thyness, 1991:263-4). As in other agencies reviewed here, the Nordic governments have also been active promoters of WID/gender in the Bank — both politically and financially, such as through grants and trust funds.

Over the past year the Bank's management has tried to respond to some of the criticisms raised by NGOs and other outsiders about the Bank's lack of accountability to its borrowers. An Independent Inspection Panel has been set up to strengthen accountability "to affected parties of an action or omission by the Bank" (World Bank, 1994b:17, 74), and the range of documents open to the public has been expanded, in an effort to make the institution more "transparent" (World Bank, 1994c). Despite the increased activism of NGOs towards the World Bank on environmental issues, NGOs have been less vocal about gender concerns (Siddharth, 1995). The tendency to subsume all the Bank's problems regarding women under structural adjustment risks ignoring the gender biases in other Bank activities, particularly in countries not undergoing adjustment (*ibid.*). As NGOs are becoming more vocal and adept at scrutinizing international agencies, there is growing concern about their failure to prioritize gender issues in their advocacy work (Mayoux, forthcoming).

Even though major donors, in comparison to other external actors, have considerable "voice", it would be incorrect to assume that they control the World Bank. There is in fact considerable controversy about the role of the Executive Board. On the one hand, unlike other agencies reviewed here, the Executive Board meets on a regular basis; in theory, this means that a wide range of the Bank's activities can be reviewed and discussed by the Board, providing an institutional mechanism for considerable accountability. On the other hand, those who have studied the Bank have described it as an "inverted" (Mistry and Thyness, 1991:264) and "management-run" (Ayres, 1983:66) institution. As one of the earlier

accounts noted, despite its status as the oversight body representing the member countries, in practice the Executive Directors veto a project “only under extraordinary circumstances and have virtually no opportunity to initiate the consideration of specific projects” (Ascher, 1983:421). Referring to the McNamara years, Ayres makes a similar observation:

During the course of the research for this study no single instance was discovered of a project’s being turned down by the directors. Management also had great flexibility in determining what matters of general policy it would submit to the directors for review. Bank mythology had it that the comments voiced by the directors in their weekly meetings were fed back into the design of future projects and the formulation of future policies, but there was very little evidence that this was in fact the case (1983:66).

Similar tensions emerge from Mosley et al.’s assessment of the World Bank’s move to policy-based lending. According to this account, while the Executive Board approved the very brief proposal document put to it by the Bank’s management, its formal blessing by no means indicated unanimity within the Bank on the desirability of structural adjustment loans (SALs). As the authors put it, “the Board had bowed to the wishes of the management of the Bank, but remained sceptical about the utility of SALs for several years” (1991:34). Even if we do not endorse the view that the Executive Board functions as a “rubber stamp”, it seems reasonable to assume that the Bank’s management — like that of many other organizations — has a significant degree of control over policy directions and lending decisions. If this is the case, then we can expect the presence of internal entrepreneurs willing and able to promote a new subject with management to be particularly significant, as are the institutional mandate, ideology and procedures with which they have to wrestle.

As was noted in Section I, an organization is likely to respond more positively to WID/gender if there is a “fit” between its mandate and ideology, on the one hand, and gender concerns, on the other. Over the years, there have been some significant changes in the Bank’s definition of its core mandate with implications for those promoting issues like WID/gender, environment, and social analysis. During the presidency of Robert McNamara (1968-1981), for example, the alleviation of poverty gained increasing recognition as a major Bank objective and was also reflected in new areas of Bank lending (Ayres, 1983:5). In the 1980s poverty alleviation and equity issues were demoted as the need for stability and “structural adjustment” gained ascendancy (Mosley et al., 1991:23-24).¹⁹ By the late 1980s some further shifts were noticeable: certain priorities like poverty alleviation and “social costs of adjustment” were again being elevated, and human development and environmental concerns were on the agenda (ibid.).

Despite these shifts and turns, most observers agree that the dominant language in the Bank remains economics (Lexow and McNeill, 1989:74). A large proportion of staff are economists and those who are not economists “generally acquire the economic way of thinking quite quickly, whether because they believe in its merits, or because of its dominance within the Bank” (ibid.). William Clausen, president of the World Bank from 1981 to 1986, has been quoted as saying, “the Bank is not a political organization, the only altar we worship at is pragmatic economics” (cited in Williams and Young, 1994:93). Accounts of staff attitudes and value systems confirm that although many staff members are interested in problems of social justice and equity, they are uncomfortable with these issues because they lack rigour, and are “value-laden and subjective” (Kardam, 1991:72).

When issues such as “poverty alleviation”, “participation” and “governance” have been promoted within the Bank, the tendency has been for their advocates to link them to concerns of economic viability and productivity. The question that the Bank’s Development Research Centre sought to answer in **Redistribution with Growth** (Chenery et al., 1974), for example, was whether the pursuit of poverty alleviation might be at the expense of growth (Ayres, 1983:79). Similarly, in promoting “participation”, advocates have emphasized its positive impact on project viability (Narayan and Srinivasan, 1994). In the following sections we will be looking at how gender issues have been interpreted and presented by policy entrepreneurs promoting the subject within the Bank, keeping in mind the institutional culture within which these entrepreneurs operate.

There are, however, some visible changes in the Bank’s staff composition and in its procedural mechanisms. In recent years more sociologists and anthropologists have been hired, and thanks to the concerted efforts of the sociology group, new procedures have been put in place that stipulate socially sensitive and culturally appropriate project design and implementation strategies (Cernea, 1994). As we will see below, a number of WID/gender procedures are also now in place. As with the other agencies, however, there is little evidence to show that the new procedures have become institutionalized, or routinized, in Bank operations. The organizational structure and staff incentive systems have been important intervening variables in this context.

At headquarters the main organizational division is that between Operations and the Central Vice Presidencies.²⁰ The latter are responsible for setting policy and undertaking research — in theory, to strengthen Operations. Whether in practice this takes “a servicing, advisory or instructional role varies to some extent over time and according to the issue” (Lexow and McNeill, 1989:74). Operations, as the name suggests, is the main body responsible for maintaining a steady stream of loans and all the work that it demands — identification, appraisal, negotiation and supervision of projects. It is composed of six operational regions, with their respective country and technical departments.²¹ For new issues that are striving to make an impact on Bank practice, such as environment or WID/gender, these departments

provide important entry points. It has not always been easy, though, to make an impact on operations through work carried out in the research/policy departments. As Rich puts it:

The Environment Department itself inhabited a world of paper, publishing upbeat accounts of strengthened internal directives and producing volumes of environmental issues papers and action plans, while the lending juggernaut lumbered ahead on a separate planet called Operations (1994:183).

One of the aims of the 1993 Bank-wide reorganization, as we will see below in the context of WID/gender, has been to bring the two parts closer together, and to strengthen the direct operational relevance of the work performed by the research/policy departments. Whether internal procedures are followed by staff members working in Operations also depends on staff incentives there. A number of observers have drawn attention to the “moving money” mentality that seems to be dominant in the operational departments of the World Bank, and which mitigates against scrupulous observance of environmental and social guidelines (Rich, 1994:183). This pressure to lend is meant “to return the Bank toward being a positive net lender to developing countries” (ibid.; Mosley et al., 1991:47). Given this incentive system and the fact that World Bank loans are repaid by the borrowing country irrespective of the success or failure of the project/programme for which the loan was made, the quality of operations has always been a vexed issue. In theory, a major corrective role has to be played by the Operations Evaluations Department (OED). OED has, over the years, produced many critical reviews, but it is, according to some observers, one of the most marginalized parts of the Bank (Rich, 1994:171).

Although top management is not of the opinion that its decisions are influenced by the pressure to lend, the issue was recently discussed by an in-house assessment of Bank performance — the Wapenhans Report (World Bank, 1993a). This report, prepared by a task force headed by the retiring Bank vice-president, Willi Wapenhans, warned that the performance of the Bank’s portfolio had been declining during the 1980s (World Bank, 1993a; George and Sabelli, 1994). It recommended a number of radical changes in the Bank’s operating procedures, among them the need to enhance the role of OED and to change staff incentives so that they encourage better management of portfolio, as opposed to the “moving money” mentality, or the “approval culture” as the Report called it. If operations do become subject to more stringent scrutiny by OED, this should facilitate the enforcement of guidelines, like those on WID/gender.

The Wapenhans Report also drew attention to issues at the national level that impact on the Bank’s performance. It noted a significant degree of borrower non-compliance: borrowers respected their agreements in only 22 per cent of the loans examined. A similar conclusion emerged from an external assessment of the Bank’s structural adjustment loans (Mosley et al., 1991). The Report thus recommended the fostering of a “genuine partnership” between the Bank and its borrowers to enhance their sense of “ownership and commitment”.

This constitutes a major challenge for the World Bank, which has very often been criticized for its centralized structure and work methods.²² Critics have urged the Bank to broaden the base of its government interlocutors, and to involve NGOs, researchers and donors more effectively; they have also urged it to carry out more of its work in-country with local counterparts (IDS, 1994:49). The Bank has taken a number of steps in this direction, such as setting up more country offices, and engaging with NGOs more systematically. The current president is, according to some observers, keen to promote the further decentralization of the organization. Nevertheless, cultivating a constituency for issues that are contentious, such as poverty or WID/gender, is a highly politicized endeavour. As we noted earlier, it raises difficult questions for international agencies which do not want to be seen as interfering in the domestic affairs of their member states; this is especially true for the World Bank: the organization's Charter forbids it to even take "political and non-economic influences" into account.

It seems from the above description that the World Bank has a number of distinct features which, on the surface at least, do not augur well for a topic like WID. First, its relative independence from, or lack of accountability to, the more obvious WID constituents, such as women's NGOs. Second, the organizational goal of growth/economic efficiency, which does not seem to mesh with WID's equity mandate. Third, an institutional culture and a set of procedures dominated by economics, and technical and economic analysis, that seem hostile to WID's footing in sociology, and its methods rooted in social analysis. And finally, operational staff working under pressure to "move money", reluctant to consider yet another set of conditions/guidelines.

As the following account will show, despite a slow start the Bank has responded to WID. This has been made possible, for the most part, through the efforts of internal entrepreneurs to mould WID into a shape that is acceptable to Bank economists, as well as by the Bank's shifts towards areas of concern that are more in tune with WID. The Bank's competitive attitude vis-à-vis the academic/research community and its financial strength to hire top-level experts have been important contributing factors. There are nevertheless a number of remaining obstacles, which the following sections seek to outline.

The reactive years, 1975-1985²³

Institutionalizing WID:

Setting up structures and issuing procedures

The antecedent to formal WID institutions in the Bank was the "informal WID lunch group", set up in 1973 by a group of female professionals (OED, 1994). Influenced by the Washington-based women's circles advocating attention to women's issues in United States foreign assistance, their objective was to promote WID issues within the Bank. The United Nations request for a contribution to the 1975 Mexico City Conference seemed at first to provide an opportune political

moment for the WID “lunch group”: the International Relations Department, charged with the task of preparing the Bank’s conference paper, drew on their expertise. This brief episode, however, failed to register any major political gains for WID in the Bank. It was not until January 1977 that the first WID post was created (OED, 1994).

The WID adviser, like other “offices” of its kind, was given a broad mandate, yet with few resources to match. Her duties were to make staff members more conscious of the costs of not taking women into account, to provide operational support, and to respond to outside requests for information (OED, 1994:10). The post was situated in the Projects Advisory Staff of Central Projects, in the research/policy side of the Bank, along with other advisers working on cross-sectoral issues (*ibid.*). While being kept out of the “project flow”, these project advisers were nevertheless meant to provide intellectual and technical support to the Bank’s operations.

In theory, the WID “office” played a monitoring and oversight role: it reviewed all projects at the preparation and appraisal stages, providing criticisms and suggestions that would have to be addressed before the projects could advance (Kardam, 1991). Lacking any clear power to reject inappropriate projects, however, the WID adviser had to rely on persuasion and suggestion. With resources consisting of no more than a half-time secretary, a half-time researcher, and some funds to hire consultants (*ibid.*), the task of scrutinizing the 250 to 300 projects approved by the Bank each year, and monitoring the hundreds of ongoing ones, was inevitably only partially carried out.

Some initial steps were taken in 1984 to diffuse responsibility for WID to other parts of the organization. Formal and fairly explicit guidelines on WID appeared for the first time in the **Operational Manual** of the World Bank under the “Sociological Aspects of Project Appraisal” (OED, 1994). These guidelines were drafted by the WID adviser and the “informal sociology group” of which she was a member (*ibid.*; Kardam, 1991). Appraisal, it was pointed out, should determine whether the project design takes into account: (i) the local factors which impede or facilitate women’s participation in the project; (ii) the contributions that women can make to the project; and (iii) the likely impact that the project might have on women. As subsequent experience in the Bank and elsewhere was to confirm, without any accompanying changes in incentive structures and/or sanctions to enforce compliance, and without the appointment of WID staff in operations to oversee compliance, the new guidelines failed to make responsiveness to WID a routine concern in operations.

Organizational fit and WID discourses

While the lack of commitment to WID, reflected in its low-profile institutional presence and its under-resourced “office”, was a major impediment to its institutionalization, there were other factors as well that reinforced its marginal status. WID did not have an easy “organizational fit” with the Bank’s mandate and ideology, especially in the climate of the early 1980s when equity issues were being increasingly placed on the “back burner”.²⁴ To counter these adverse structural forces, a significant amount of entrepreneurship was needed on the part of the WID adviser to build internal alliances, to bargain with management and to present WID in a persuasive manner. The fact that the WID adviser was an institutional outsider (senior United Nations official) and a sociologist not well-versed in the institutional language, however, did not facilitate strategies of this sort. Moreover, the fact that she spent most of her time defending the Bank’s WID work to the outside world, rather than on building a position of influence inside the Bank (Kardam, 1991:77) further exacerbated her marginal status. Her main allies seem to have been the sociologists in the Bank, who were themselves facing a major up-hill battle at the time (Kardam, 1993).

What, if anything, can we decipher of the Bank’s early approach to women? Two main points are worth noting here. First, most of the Bank’s early research on women, like that of other agencies, was directed at understanding the determinants of fertility. Women were thus strongly associated with biological reproduction. Although the population problem provided an opportunity for raising women’s issues (e.g. female education), the nature of the link between women and fertility that the Bank constructed was considered to be problematic by some feminist critics. In Mexico City (1975), conference participants criticized the Bank and other development agencies for their “instrumental” approach: the reluctance to value gender equity as a goal in itself. This in fact remains a contentious point, even though “instrumental” arguments can, and often do, endorse some of the demands that are being made by feminists (e.g. education, employment). As we will see below, the real problem with “instrumentalism” arises when certain equity demands cannot be made because they do not contribute to other goals and objectives.

The second point to note is the early reference to “mainstreaming”. The document prepared by the International Relations Department as the Bank’s contribution to the Mexico City conference emphasized the need to mainstream women’s issues in regular projects, and was critical of special WID projects (OED, 1994). As was noted above, in recent years many development agencies have adopted mainstreaming as their strategy, partly in response to the “ghettoization” of women’s issues in women-only projects. The Bank’s adoption of mainstreaming in 1974 may indeed have been aimed at averting such undesirable outcomes. But we also know from other institutional contexts that there has often been resistance to women-only projects because they are seen as political rather than technical projects.²⁵ From what we know of Bank culture, it

is very likely that this too was a consideration in prompting the Bank to adopt mainstreaming as its strategy.

Bureaucratic outcomes

The WID adviser's effort to monitor progress provides the only institutional memory on WID action through the mid-1980s (OED, 1994). The data cited below refer to project documents at the appraisal stage, rather than actual implementation. As we will see in the following section, it is only in recent years that WID staff have been able to extend the scope of their scrutiny into project implementation.

Based on the list compiled by the WID adviser, Kardam estimates that the number of projects with "significant WID components" constituted approximately 24 per cent of all projects in 1979-1984 period (1991:54). The OED report, however, provides a less optimistic account of that period.²⁶ It estimates that projects with some type of gender-related action constituted 7 per cent of the investment portfolio during the reactive years. The report notes that there was a temporary increase in projects with gender-related action between FY78 and FY83, when they constituted about 11 per cent of the entire investment portfolio (as opposed to 3-4 per cent before FY78), but the increase was not sustained after 1984 — ironically, the year the operational guidelines were issued — indicating the failure to institutionalize gender concerns.

According to Kardam's data, the bulk of the projects with gender-related action in the 1979-1984 period were in agriculture and rural development and education; geographically, they were concentrated in Africa. Similar trends emerge from the OED report for the period FY67-FY85, where 40 per cent of all projects with gender related action are concentrated in "agriculture" and 45 per cent in "human resources"; 37 per cent are concentrated in Africa and 26 per cent in Asia (1994:18-19). Women's more visible involvement in the agricultural sector, especially in Africa, seems to have facilitated their inclusion in the agricultural and rural development projects. The Bank's initial interest in female education, as noted above, was closely linked to population concerns. But more generally, even without explicit WID guidelines and institutions, development agencies and governments have tended to be more adept at addressing women as beneficiaries of health and education, even though such programmes have rarely taken into account women's special needs and circumstances.

The proactive years, 1985-1994

Institutionalizing WID: Setting up a WID Division

As we have seen, following the 1985 World Conference on Women in Nairobi many agencies, if they had not already done so, issued formal WID policy statements and WID plans of action. The Bank's formal policy statement was not issued until 1994. Nevertheless, the Nairobi Conference, with its emphasis on "women's machineries", gave new impetus to strengthening WID institutions in the Bank. Moreover, by

this time WID had become a more serious issue and could not be ignored by a development agency wishing to keep abreast of new development concerns. Two immediate changes thus followed: a more focused mandate for the adviser, and a boost in resources allocated to WID.

The first indication of what appeared to be a more serious approach came in September 1985 with the appointment of a senior economist from inside the Bank as the new WID adviser. Very early on the adviser met with senior operational staff to discuss a more effective strategy (Lexow and McNeill, 1989). Within months her mandate was narrowed down: project monitoring, advice to operational staff, external relations, information dissemination and staff training were scaled back. Instead a two-pronged strategy was delineated: (i) demonstrating how attention to WID contributed to development objectives in a language that is acceptable to economists; (ii) providing clear operational guidelines (OED, 1994). The guidelines were to be used by Operations, which itself seemed, in the short-term at least, to have been let off the hook, given the WID adviser's reduced monitoring role.

The new approach was endorsed by the operational vice-presidents in 1986. At the same time each region appointed a WID co-ordinator (or focal point), often the assistant director of projects, which meant that she or he already had a full array of responsibilities to which WID was added. It also meant that the regional focal points were not gender specialists. According to the WID adviser's new mandate, her office would "provide leadership and seed money, but efforts on the ground would be led by the regions" (OED, 1994:22). While this new division of labour provided a more focused strategy for the adviser, the adverse implication was that it effectively removed the little oversight power that she had hitherto exercised. And with weak WID representation in the regions, it was very unlikely that "efforts on the ground would be led by the regions". It is perhaps in these terms that the relative decline in WID action between FY84 and FY88 (see above) must be explained.

Accompanying the more focused strategy was a boost in financial resources: WID's budget more than doubled in 1986, from US\$ 80,000 to US\$ 190,500, and by 1988 it stood at US\$ 620,000 (OED, 1994:27). More than half of the budget came from external sources — the UNDP and the Norwegian Trust Fund, in particular (Lexow and McNeill, 1989). While the ability to attract outside funds may have enhanced WID's legitimacy within the Bank, the need for external support raised questions about WID's priority there (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:2).

In institutional terms, the WID Office grew into a unit with three professionals in January 1987. After the 1987 Bank-wide reorganization, the unit became a WID division in the Population and Human Resources Department (PHRWD), maintaining its association with what is seen as a "soft" area in the Bank — human resources and social sector planning. In 1988 the WID Division put in a new monitoring system whereby all projects were reviewed at approval to judge attention to WID. Its professional capacity was slowly expanded to eight professional staff

members by 1990. There were still no full-time WID posts in Operations, though. The contrast between the Bank's efforts at institutionalizing WID and environment is revealing. The latter experienced a 10-fold growth, from six to more than 60 professional staff between 1983 and 1987 (Rich, 1994). By 1987, thanks to the lobbying efforts of environmental NGOs in the United States on the Congress, environment had a full department in the central vice-presidencies, as well as having technical specialists in the environmental divisions in four of the operational regions (ibid.).

A progress report presented to the Board of Executive Directors in February 1990 outlined the operational achievements of the WID initiative. Even senior-level management, however, do not seem to have been convinced of the "progress" reported to the Board.²⁷ By 1989/90 the President and the Board, concerned that WID issues were not integrated in Bank projects, were pushing for faster and more effective implementation (OED, 1994). There was also considerable Nordic input in these Board debates (Pietilä and Eide, 1990). Concerned with the slow pace of implementation, in April 1990 the regions were asked to appoint WID resource persons. Each region was given an extra post for WID Coordinator (the only full-time WID post apart from the WID Division) and each country department was asked to designate a resource person whose duties would include the difficult task of integrating WID concerns in departmental activities (OED, 1994:28).

The appointment of these operational posts was an important step. Yet their impact will critically depend on the level of expertise and the kind of support that they receive in operational departments. Their impact will also depend on the extent to which "pressures to lend" remain dominant. Regional environmental staff, for example, who were supposed to exercise scrutiny over projects, were often hampered by both limited budgets and limited authority, unable to stop powerful task managers "riding roughshod over Bank policy" (Rich, 1994:183). In the case of WID too, it is unrealistic to expect "contact persons", whose location and status within their departments are reported as highly variable (GT/AFR, 1993), to be able to veto the decisions taken by country directors without major changes in the incentives of high-level management.

Institutionalizing WID: Decentralization

The slow progress that was being made in the early 1990s was considerably affected by the Bank-wide reorganization of 1993 which, according to the Gender Team in the Africa Region, led to a "considerable loss of institutional memory" and a "temporary slowdown of momentum in building up and sustaining staff gender capacity" (GT/AFR, 1993:2). In general, the reorganization down-sized the technical departments in each of the regions, expanded the staffing capacity of the country departments and, through the establishment of three central thematic vice presidencies (see overview), sought to strengthen the direct operational relevance of the work performed by the policy/research departments. As mentioned above, the need for a clearer

country focus aimed at improving “portfolio performance” was one of the recommendations emerging from the Wapenhans Report.

The reorganization affected both the central WID Division and the operational WID persons/units. In what seems to have been a poorly-devised strategy, in October 1992 the WID Division was informed that it would close and its staff be dispersed to the technical departments (in Operations) (GT/AFR, 1993). In the event, a Gender Analysis and Policy (GAP) thematic group was set up in the Education and Social Policy Department (ESP) of the newly-created Vice-Presidency for Human Resources Development and Operations Policy. The GAP team now has six high-level positions, down from the eight of the WID Division, but the monitoring function that was carried out by the WID Division between 1988 and 1993 has now been allocated to a “monitoring team” that is responsible for both poverty and gender (OED, 1994).

A significant part of the GAP Team’s mandate is to support the mainstreaming of WID in operations: through staff training, the preparation of “best practice tool kits”, and demonstration of how gender concerns can be integrated in country assistance strategies (OED, 1994:43). Of the different mechanisms for institutionalizing gender concerns, training has been of relatively low priority in the Bank. Following its brief experience with gender training in the early 1980s, no training was offered for nearly four years. Since 1988 some gender training has been provided by the training division through specific courses on gender, and as components of other courses, such as agriculture, nutrition and environment. According to OED, one of flaws of past training efforts has been the lack of attention to incentive structures; current thinking, it claims, “is that more attention needs to be paid to the organizational context, and that incentives to use these new skills should be built into an organization’s incentive structure” (OED, 1994, Appendix C:75).

Although the new operational focus is a positive move, it also entails inevitable trade-offs. As the GAP Team contributes more of its time to operationalizing WID/gender, the capacity for doing research and policy analysis is inevitably reduced. This is quite unfortunate, for as we will see below, the analytical work that was carried out by the WID Division in the late 1980s informed the Bank’s operational work for several of the following years. Research/analysis, however, cannot be done once-and-for-all; it needs up-dating to take stock of new developments. Research results have also been useful politically in helping WID entrepreneurs promote the issue within the bureaucracy.

WID capacity in the operational departments is highly uneven, being particularly strong in the Africa Region, which also contributes intellectually to the Bank’s WID/gender work (see below). Between 1990 and 1993, the “WID Unit” in this region slowly built up a core of four full-time staff positions. It now has a “Gender Team” with two staff members in its technical department. Staff capacity in its country departments is being strengthened with a multi-donor Country Operation

Support Facility (WIDT/AFR, 1993). Staff capacity in the Asia Region is also relatively strong, and has been responsible for some procedural innovations such as the 1991 addition of WID to “Supervision Form 590”, which requires task managers to rate their projects on a broad range of indicators (World Bank, 1992a). However, the Asia Region has not found the WID rating to make a significant difference in the level and quality of attention directed at gender issues during supervision; where WID did not figure amongst the project’s objectives some teams simply cited “not applicable” (OED, 1994:49). Moreover, a 1992 portfolio review had found reporting on WID components and objectives to be weak even where there are clearly stated WID objectives (World Bank, 1992a:16).

Staff capacity in the Middle East & North Africa and Europe & Central Asia Regions appears to be weaker than in the Africa and Asia Regions, and WID-related activities are lagging behind (World Bank, 1992a; OED, 1994). One of the reasons for the slow response stems from the difficulty in finding appropriate entry points for WID. Bank lending to these regions is concentrated on non-project lending to sectors such as industry, development finance and energy, where the relevance of WID activities seems less obvious, compared to agriculture and human resources (World Bank, 1992a).

WID entrepreneurship: Talking to economists

In 1985 the WID Division adopted, what seems in retrospect, a fairly effective strategy: to provide a solid intellectual justification for the Bank’s WID mandate. In making a case for WID in intellectual terms, the Division’s economists capitalized on the re-thinking of structural adjustment lending that was going on in some quarters of the Bank. By this time the general climate seemed to have become more conducive to poverty and social sector considerations. In September 1986 the new president announced the Bank’s emphasis on WID, which in 1987 became one of the four formal “areas of special emphasis”, along with poverty reduction, environment, and private sector development (World Bank, 1992a).²⁸

The intellectual work that had to be done was demanding — arguing gender in efficiency terms was not easy, especially as data were scarce and not always supportive of the efficiency premise. But to convince the Bank’s economists that WID was a legitimate concern for their organization, a sound conceptual and evidential base had to be built. In this context the WID adviser and her colleagues decided to give top priority to investments in the social sectors where the evidence for “high payoffs of investing in women’s human capital” was strongest and the “returns” were highest (World Bank, 1992b:5). Based on research carried out in the Bank and outside, the positive synergies between investing in women and the Bank’s main objectives — poverty reduction, increased productivity, more efficient use of resources, and social returns — were highlighted. Many of the arguments have by now become familiar: female education reduces fertility and averts child mortality, and is the highest return investment in the developing world;

spending on the health care of adult women aged 15-44 offers the biggest return of health care spending for any other demographic group of adults (World Bank, 1993b; World Bank, 1994b).²⁹ There was also evidence, especially from Africa, of the high returns to investing in the physical and human capital of women farmers — through education, extension service, and other agricultural inputs (Saito and Spurling, 1992).

In the late 1980s the WID Division produced a series of working papers that set forth what Palmer (1993) calls the “why” and the “means” of incorporating women’s issues in Bank activities. The first paper defined the equity and efficiency dimensions of WID (Collier, 1988). This was followed by a second paper — more operational in approach — which aimed to use research findings to help Bank staff identify issues and develop action plans concerning women in economic and sector analysis and in project design (PHRWD, 1989). The emphasis was on building “human capital”, as well as on “equipping women immediately” — through measures such as credit and extension service — to improve productivity and earning capacity (PHRWD, 1989:iii). Sectoral operational guidelines were also prepared for forestry (in 1989) and for agriculture (in 1990).

As Palmer observes, by arguing the case for a synergy between equity and economic efficiency, “these papers signalled a break with the more diffuse pre-1987 sociological approach” (1993:1). However, even though the WID Division was thereby building a stronger position for itself inside the Bank, there were those outside the organization — not just independent researchers and NGOs, but bilateral donors supporting the WID Division with generous financial contributions — who were less convinced of the merits of using efficiency arguments. An evaluation report for the Norwegian Women’s Grant, for example, while accepting the constraints posed by the Bank’s institutional culture, noted the dangers of not recognizing gender equity as a valid objective in itself: it could, for example, limit interventions only to cases where the economic case was strong (Lexow and McNeill, 1989:89). This was in fact an accurate reflection of some of the obstacles the WID Division was facing. As the initiating memorandum for the policy paper put it:

Nevertheless, the question arises as to whether the game is worth the candle — whether it is so difficult and expensive to expand opportunities for women that other development investments make more sense. Answers to this question vary by sector, but in some sectors effective and affordable approaches are at hand (World Bank, 1992b:5).

And what if attention to gender issues does not enhance project success, as is often claimed by efficiency advocates? The Bank’s OED report mentions, with some trepidation, that “differences in overall performance between projects with and without gender-related actions were small” (1994:47). Given the organizational culture, however, one can expect that WID entrepreneurs will have to continue to exploit those areas where gender equity and economic efficiency overlap — the “win/win scenarios”.

Bureaucratic outcomes: Policy documents

Economic and sector work (ESW) constitutes an important part of the analytical work carried out by the technical departments in the operational divisions. It is meant, in theory at least, to inform the Bank's "policy dialogues" and investment operations via a vehicle known as the Country Assistance Strategy Paper (CAS). ESW encompasses reports on a wide range of sectoral topics, such as agriculture, education, and finance, as well as country level WID, environmental and poverty assessments.

A growing proportion of ESW addresses gender issues, especially sectoral reports on population, health and nutrition, education, and agriculture, as well as macro-economic reports and country economic memoranda covering these areas. Evidence gathered by the WID Division's monitoring unit showed that nearly 50 per cent of ESW reports in FY92 contained discussion, analysis and/or recommendations on gender issues (World Bank, 1992a). The equivalent proportion recorded for FY88 and FY89 was nearly 25 per cent (World Bank, 1990a). However, the kind of mention that gender issues get in these reports is highly varied; one staff member pointed out that it may amount to just data reviews of women's roles (cited in Palmer, 1993). An internal review by the Africa WID Unit on work on population, health and nutrition — one of the more active sectors as far as gender issues are concerned — found only a limited consistency between the issues identified in the sector reports and their recommendations, and between the recommendations of the sector reports and the subsequent project designs (World Bank, 1992a:7).

i) WID assessments

A potentially critical subset of the Bank's ESW work, as far as gender issues are concerned, are the country level WID assessments. Like other parts of the Bank's ESW work, the WID assessments are varied in their analytical strength and operational relevance. While earlier reports were more descriptive, those produced in recent years have become more analytical and policy-oriented (World Bank, 1992a; OED, 1994). Very often WID assessments appear to stand alone, with weak links to the Bank's lending operations and policy recommendations at the country level — a criticism that also applies to other sectoral/issues papers, such as poverty assessments (IDS, 1994).

It is often claimed that in addition to their documentation value, WID assessments can help foster a process of discussion between the Bank, borrowers and other donors with potentially positive repercussions that go beyond the Bank's own WID work. One example of the "process" generated by WID assessments comes from Bangladesh. The WID report was discussed during a 1990 local consultative group meeting with donors and the government. This meeting, OED (1994) notes, gave visibility and legitimacy to the topic and led to follow-up action by senior government officials, resulting in the Planning Commission's

decision to “mainstream” gender across all development sectors in the fourth five year plan (1990-95).

As is documented elsewhere, with its weak planning capacity, the women’s ministry responsible for the mainstreaming exercise was unable to take advantage of this political opening (Goetz, 1995). Ironically, the WID assessment had warned of the government’s weak institutional capacity for mainstreaming gender, and called for “directives to be issued by the highest authorities” (World Bank, 1990b:xxii). This is exactly what the government of Bangladesh did through the Planning Commission. But the subsequent experience clearly underlines the unviability of relying on mere top-down exhortation, and the need to invest more effort in local level consultation and analysis if WID assessments are to initiate genuine policy debate.

ii) Poverty assessments

With renewed emphasis on “poverty reduction” as one of the core mandates of the World Bank (World Bank, 1990c), poverty assessments (PA) have been given particular attention in recent years. The scope for including gender issues in these documents is significant: they provide important entry points for developing gender-sensitive policies and programs, as well as putting WID issues on the policy agenda. One oft-cited example of a gender-sensitive document is the 1993 Uganda poverty assessment (OED, 1994:36; World Bank, 1994b:58-9).

Uganda: Growing out of Poverty has a separate chapter on the gender dimensions of poverty, as well as a sub-section in the final strategy chapter that provides specific recommendations. To generate gender-responsive growth, the government is urged to “create a level playing field” (World Bank, 1993c:40). The emphasis is on women’s legal rights, education and health needs, alleviation of domestic labour constraints (through investments in labour-saving technology and infrastructure), and protection against the AIDS virus. As Evans (1994) points out, however, to build a strategy of poverty reduction the report would have had to include a more rigorous understanding of the mechanisms and processes that create gender-differentiated poverty (in **both** male-headed and female-headed households), and provide a series of poverty indicators that are sensitive to gender differences and easy to monitor. Although the gender chapter discusses important gender issues in Ugandan agriculture, the report fails to draw out the gender implications of the labour-intensive growth strategy that is being recommended.

A further problem is the tension between fiscal constraint and the need for investments in social and physical infrastructure. Given the report's continued emphasis on stabilization and adjustment measures, and the serious obstacles the Ugandan government faces on the revenue side in the budget, there seems to be little room for manoeuvre in terms of changing budget allocations (Udsholt, 1994). In fact, cost-recovery schemes that are already in place (for education, for example) are imposing a particularly heavy burden on women's incomes (Evans, 1994). In this context, it is not clear how the recommended improvements in women's health and education, as well as investments in domestic technology and physical infrastructure, are to be realized through the re-allocation of public resources.

The latter problem is pervasive in the Bank's poverty work. A recent independent review of poverty assessments carried out for eight African countries recommended better integration between poverty assessments and public expenditure reviews (IDS, 1994).³⁰ The review also recommended that poverty assessments be more explicit about the relation between the Bank's project lending and the pro-poor agenda, making recommendations about specific projects that could be dropped, or that could be altered so that they became more pro-poor (*ibid.*). With the close institutional links that exist between gender and poverty, both in the central vice-presidency and in operations, as well as the substantive overlap between the two areas, the Bank's poverty work provides a potentially critical entry point for gender concerns into the Bank's mainstream operations — both at the macro-economic level and at the project level. The problem, however, seems to be that poverty assessments themselves do not have a sufficiently strong foothold inside the Bank to influence mainstream operations. In the Africa vice-presidency, for example, the lead economists of five out of six country departments have assigned the poverty brief to the human resources division rather than retaining it in their own office, which suggests that poverty is identified as a "soft" issue of less relevance to macro-economic planning than to social sector planning (IDS, 1994:50).

iii) Up-stream documents

The Country Assistance Strategy Paper (CAS) is a relatively short document that sets the tone for the "policy dialogue" between the Bank and the borrowers. A staff member interviewed in 1992 commented that only 5 to 10 per cent of Country Strategy Papers — the next step after CAS — mention WID (cited in Palmer, 1993). The data for FY94 show that nearly 50 per cent of CAS statements contain gender analysis (GAP Manager, personal communication, 17 July 1995). One of the main tasks the GAP team has been asked to perform is to demonstrate to selected country departments how gender concerns can be included in CAS documents as a way of building WID capacity there. Both OED (1994) and the Policy Paper (World Bank, 1994b) consider this to be an important step in making WID operational. Interesting nuances nevertheless emerge from the two documents.

OED makes it clear that the inclusion of WID statements in CAS documents, which are inevitably brief, should not be pursued

mechanically. It encourages the country departments to be flexible in this exercise, given that the situation in each member country is different, and the quality of gender work in the country departments is highly variable (OED, 1994:53). OED's emphasis is away from the "product orientation" that is so deeply ingrained in the Bank, encouraging WID staff to strengthen the process of policy dialogue at the country level.

The problem with the country dialogue on WID, as the Policy Paper sees it, is of a rather different nature. What is important in the context of drafting WID components for CAS documents, the paper argues, is for the Bank to assess what the positions and constraints of governments are, "especially those associated with cultural norms and deep-seated traditions" (World Bank, 1994b:65). In the context of WID, the Bank very often claims that it does not want to appear to be forcing governments into positions that conflict with their "traditions" and "culture". The political problem of having a weak female constituency unable to promote gender concerns is thereby framed as a "cultural" problem. Some of those who see the problem in political terms, namely that women — like the poor — have a weak constituency, tend to argue that donor agencies like the Bank need to add WID conditions to their lending operations, to strengthen weak domestic constituencies.³¹ The position one takes on this issue depends, to a great extent, on how one assesses other policy conditionalities that have been attached to Bank lending. Both internal and independent assessments seem to suggest that policy conditionalities have not produced the degree of government compliance that was expected (Mosley et al., 1991). It is very unlikely that compliance with WID conditions will be any less problematic. A less contentious strategy would be for the Bank to strengthen the gender analysis in its own policy documents and policy dialogues, investing more effort in strengthening country level work in information generation, gender policy analysis and formulation, in consultation with a wider network of national civil and research institutions. Where gender issues are highly contentious, however, there are likely to be serious limits to what the Bank — or any other external actor — is willing to do even at this level.

Bureaucratic outcomes: Operations

According to the OED report, WID's operational record in the FY86-FY93 period shows considerable improvement: the proportion of projects with gender-related action has increased to 24 per cent, from 7 per cent in the reactive years. Geographically, they continue to be concentrated in the low-income countries, with the increase particularly strong in the Africa region where 43 per cent of all projects with gender-related action can be found (OED, 1994). In terms of sectoral or thematic concentration, too, there has been very little change. As in the reactive years, the bulk of projects with gender-related action are concentrated in human resources (45 per cent) and agriculture (39 per cent).

These figures, however, refer to project documents at the appraisal stage and not to actual implementation. As one unpublished Bank document explains, a “significant” gap exists between objectives set out in appraisals and actual implementation of WID components (World Bank, 1992a:10). As was noted above, a very positive move is that WID staff have in recent years extended their scrutiny into project implementation.

One of the problems with “mainstreamed” projects is that their WID components tend to get marginalized during implementation. As one internal WID review of portfolio management for Latin American countries found, “WID objectives are not matched by specific activities and actions to achieve them” (cited in World Bank, 1992a:16). Moreover, the funding needed to translate WID objectives into action is rarely allocated. As the same review noted, funds needed “to undertake WID activities are not specified in a large number of project documents and, frequently, no Technical Assistance is available to support implementation capacity” (ibid.). It seems to be in response to some of these problems that the Bank has, for the first time in its history, experimented with women-specific projects — two in Africa and one in Latin America (OED, 1994).

OED mentions three key preconditions for successful implementation of WID action in mainstreamed projects: country commitment to the project and to the WID component; involvement of a gender specialist; and good supervision of the gender component during implementation (OED, 1994). Feedback from task managers provides further insight into the possible dynamics. As far as difficulties at the country level are concerned, one of the main problems identified by task managers is lack of institutional capacity and skills in implementing WID, a problem that is exacerbated by their perception of WID as an additional imposition from the Bank (World Bank, 1992a). Adding to this set of problems is the Bank’s own lack of follow-up during implementation and supervision (OED, 1994). A point not sufficiently emphasized by OED is that “inadequate supervision” is essentially a reflection of the Bank’s own lagging resource commitments to WID. An internal Bank document makes the point very clearly: “There is still a widespread perception among staff that the resources are still too limited to do a thorough job on WID” (World Bank, 1992a:17).

The second point raised above relates to government commitment to WID, considered to be essential for effective implementation of WID policies and components of projects. As we have seen, the Bank now talks about the need to cultivate “national ownership” over the projects and policies that it finances. Even though it is difficult to decipher what exactly the Bank means by these pronouncements (Williams and Young, 1994:90), there nevertheless seems to be an opening for WID advocates to stress the critical importance of cultivating a wider national constituency for WID: consulting a wider network of resource persons and institutions to take on board a more diverse set of views and inputs, to ensure that governments are kept accountable. This process of consultation is more than using NGOs as vehicles for implementing projects, which is part of current donor practice. It requires an approach

that is more process-oriented, time-consuming, and locally anchored. The effective implementation of WID policies and components is critically dependent on the existence of active WID constituencies and institutional capacity at the national level. If WID constituencies are weak there may not be all that much that external agencies like the Bank can do.

In sum, over the past decade there has been considerable progress in the Bank's response to WID. While some of this owes to external pressure (such as from Nordic governments and the United Nations Women's Conferences), the available evidence suggests strongly that internal WID entrepreneurs played a critical role in promoting the subject, with varying support from top management. Tailoring their presentation of WID/gender to the institutional culture, they focused on "human capital" and "labour productivity" issues exploiting the equity/efficiency synergies. While this was effective in giving WID a foothold in the Bank, their work has remained predominantly, though not exclusively, confined to the "soft" area of human resources and social sector lending — secondary in Bank practice to macro-economic policy.

There always has been a tension between the "human capital" arguments that appear in WID and other human resource/poverty documents, and the "fiscal constraint" advice that is given to governments through macro-economic policy documents and dialogues. The dilemma is not WID's alone. It also confronts poverty alleviation — the linchpin of the Bank's reformed approach to adjustment. Targeting and safety nets are seen as obvious answers, neither of which questions the wisdom or design of adjustment itself (Vivian, 1994). Reflecting their "residual" status, both poverty and WID are located within the Human Resources divisions of the Bank, secondary to macro-economic policy.

There have been attempts within the Bank to revisit macro-economic programs from a gender perspective, with economic arguments that go beyond the "social cost" issues. These arguments appeared as a technical note entitled **Paradigm Postponed: Gender and Economic Adjustment in Sub-Saharan Africa** (HRPD/AFR, 1993), prepared by the Gender Team in the Africa Region. The paper was meant to "contribute to the World Bank's 'Women in Development' Policy Paper" (HRPD/AFR, 1993:ii), but it failed to make an appearance there (World Bank, 1994b). In an institution where solid technical arguments command respect, documents that lack sufficient facts and figures will not find it easy to win the up-stream battle.

There is nevertheless a real need for gender concerns — as part of the much broader agenda for social development — to win the ear of macro-economic policy makers, i.e., to "transform the mainstream". As was noted earlier, the Bank's poverty alleviation mandate provides the most obvious entry point for gender, and the institutional proximity between poverty and gender in the Bank can facilitate their cross-fertilization. For this to happen, however, the central GAP Team would have to assume a more proactive role, drawing on solid research and analytical work. Given the new emphasis on operations, and the GAP Team's

mandate in mainstreaming gender across the operational departments, balancing the two may prove to be difficult without a significant increase in resources allocated to WID/gender

SECTION V The International Labour Organization

Overview of the institutional context

Of the three organizations reviewed in this paper, ILO is the oldest and also the most complex, both in terms of its organizational structure and in its mode of governance. The creation of the ILO, through the 1919 Versailles Peace Treaty, was facilitated by a number of specific concerns on the part of the victorious Allies, chief amongst them the desire to contain social unrest and to provide mechanisms for organized labour to participate in reforming capitalism from within. These concerns, as is seen below, underlie the institutional mandate and the unique representational basis of the ILO. In 1946 the ILO became the first specialized agency associated with the United Nations.

ILO's budget is established biennially. The regular budget, to which all member countries contribute according to proportionate assessments, stood at US\$ 330 million in 1990/91 (Edgren and Möller, 1991). The bulk of ILO's operational activities, however, are financed from extra-budgetary resources, the main contributors being the UNDP and the bilateral donors.³² Extra-budgetary resources reached US\$ 297 million for 1990/91, constituting 47 per cent of total resources available to the ILO.

Compared to many other development organizations, the ILO's governance structure is remarkably "permeable". Its "tripartite" structure enables employers' organizations and trade unions to be officially represented in its decision-making bodies and to share power with governments. At the International Labour Conference each delegation is composed of government representatives, and one worker and one employer delegate.³³ The Conference, in turn, selects 28 government representatives and 14 members each from the employers' and the workers' groups on a regional basis to sit on the Governing Body that meets two times a year and acts as the organization's executive organ.

The first question that needs to be asked in the context of this paper is whether the ILO's relatively more democratic governance structure has facilitated the representation of women's interests. Although our answer will have to remain speculative, the available evidence seems to suggest that while the ILO's decision-making institutions are indeed more "porous" than those of many other development agencies, the representation of women's interests has encountered some obstacles. For a start, despite a provision in the ILO constitution recommending the participation of women delegates whenever issues concerning women's labour are under discussion (Article 3), women are numerically underrepresented in the two decision-making bodies, especially in the

Governing Body (Riegelman Lubin and Winslow, 1990). Even in the Conference, however, women's participation has not exceeded 15 per cent (Pietilä and Eide, 1990) — mirroring their low profile in the bureaucracy (see table 3). While women delegates are by no means all feminists, their numerical presence is relevant to this discussion given that they have tended to be more active than their male counterparts in raising issues that are of concern to women workers (*ibid.*; Riegelman Lubin and Winslow, 1990).

Another question that arises is whether the representatives of civil society, especially the trade unions, have been more adept than government delegates in prioritizing women's issues. Historically, feminists have lobbied the ILO in alliance with trade unions, and sometimes from outside the tripartite structure when unions have not taken up their specific interests and demands, to press for women-friendly legislation. While many of the items on the agenda of trade unions have also been of interest to women workers, questions have periodically been raised by feminist advocates, both within the ILO context and beyond, as to the capacity of mainstream trade unions to represent the specific interests of women workers — such as child care, or sexual harassment at work (Hosmer Martens and Mitter, 1994). Given that women constitute a significant proportion of unorganized workers these questions are being posed with more urgency in the 1990s. ILO's own experience with organizing women in the rural and informal sectors since the 1980s in its technical co-operation programmes underlines the importance of women's organizations in reducing vulnerability (ILO, 1994a). The fact that tripartism does not embrace the growing ranks of the "unorganized" is increasingly seen as a serious shortcoming:

Tripartism must become socially more inclusive, extending in a systematic way to include rural workers, the social partners on the informal sector, the un- and underemployed, the poor more generally and those social groups that are particularly discriminated against such as women, indigenous groups and refugees (Stiefel, 1991:23).

While the "social partners" may not have been ardent advocates of the feminist agenda, a number of governments have turned out to be supportive of women's concerns, as in the other two agencies reviewed here; this has been particularly, though not exclusively, true of the Nordic governments, Australia, Canada and the Netherlands. Questions relating to gender equality, discussed in the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards (formerly known as the Committee on Discrimination), have been among the priorities of the Nordic Governing Body members (Pietilä and Eide, 1990). Some of these governments have also "promoted" WID/gender issues through extra-budgetary financing; this has been particularly important in view of the fact that ILO's regular budget has been on zero-growth since the early 1980s.

In the period from 1987 to 1992 there was a significant increase in both the number and the financial size of projects financed by the bilaterals which were specifically targeted at women: in 1987 there were 21

projects representing a total of US\$ 11.8 million, compared to 46 projects in 1992 at US\$ 32.2 million (ILO, 1993a:16). During this period funding from the bilaterals accounted for between 46 and 58 per cent of total funding for WID/gender operational activities; other important sources, outside ILO's regular budget, were the UNDP, UNFPA, and the multilateral banks (*ibid.*).

While it is undeniable that extra-budgetary funding for technical co-operation has given the ILO the flexibility to weather the harsh financial climate of the 1980s and 1990s, some criticisms have nevertheless been made of this practice. With accountability shifting to the institution that provides funding, the extent to which ILO's own governing bodies are able to influence the choice of activities, observers claim, has been reduced (Cox, 1973; Edgren and Möller, 1991). This critique has a number of interesting implications for WID/gender activities, as we discuss below.

It is clear from the figures cited above that extra-budgetary funding has been one channel through which governments supportive of women's issues have effectively promoted WID/gender programmes and projects within the ILO. The positive role played by these governments was reiterated by several interviewees. At the same time, the fact that WID/gender activities have been prioritized and funded by a handful of donors raises questions about how far the organization has developed a sense of "ownership" over the WID/gender agenda, and thus how sustainable the activities are. In particular, it is not very clear how far the WID/gender agenda has been internalized by ILO's developing country members. These questions are likely to be raised with greater urgency in the coming years, now that the ILO has embarked on a course of bureaucratic decentralization whereby the field offices are expected to determine future work programmes (ILO, 1993a).

The main instrument for determining strategies and future programme activities will be the multidisciplinary missions organized at the initiative of field offices. Radical administrative and personnel changes are also being made to establish in all regions multidisciplinary teams of experts (MDTs). Their function will include programming of activities, as well as sectoral analysis and research work, in addition to the provision of technical advisory services at the national or sub-regional level, in close consultation with governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and donors. A problem that may be encountered as ILO decentralizes its programming activities is the relative weakness of workers' and employers' associations in some countries, although efforts are being made to strengthen these associations. As with many other attempts at decentralization, the weakness of women's constituencies at the local level is likely to emerge as a potential constraint for pursuing WID/gender activities in many national settings.

If the tripartite structure has not been particularly conducive to women's issues, are there any other institutional characteristics that have facilitated a positive response to WID/gender on the part of the ILO? Compared to both the UNDP and the World Bank, the ILO's

organizational goals seem to provide a more fertile ground for addressing such concerns. The ILO's original mandate, as set out in the preamble to its constitution, was to contribute to universal and lasting peace through the promotion of social justice. Social justice was to be achieved primarily through the framing of international labour standards — the organization's "original vocation" (ILO, 1994b:41). As we will see below, as far back as in the 1920s, women's issues have been addressed in ILO's standard-setting work.

Although social justice remains an overarching goal and standard-setting still retains an important place as one of the ILO's principal tasks, questions have been periodically raised about its relevance and usefulness, especially as far as developing countries are concerned. Such criticisms have become more serious in recent years, as they coincide with a drop-off in the rate of ratifications (*ibid.*). The acceleration in international trade, the general deregulation of the economy and the importance of corporate restructuring have combined to prompt renewed debate on social regulation. Some of the recent controversy has revolved around the "social clause" — that the access of exporting countries to international markets be made conditional on compliance with basic ILO standards. As with other debates on standards, the employers' organizations have been quick to point out that social and labour legislations "promote rigidities and hamper economic growth and employment" (IOE, 1993:3), while the trade unions have urged the ILO to be "rock solid on its mandate" — social justice (Brett, 1994:22).

What about the bureaucracy: is the pursuit of social justice through standards an organization-wide mandate? In theory, all the work that the ILO does — be it research, technical co-operation, or policy advice — is meant to reinforce its standard setting mandate, and it has systematically tried to foster a synergy between its standard setting and technical co-operation programmes (Edgren and Möller, 1991:128) through guidelines and other staff directives (e.g. PROG/EVAL, 1991). The promotion of labour standards is nevertheless a more direct concern of some parts of the bureaucracy than it is of others.

The division between standards and technical co-operation is reflected in the bureaucratic structure, where one deputy director-general presides over Standards and another over Development and Technical Co-operation, giving rise to some of the problems that plague all bureaucracies — lack of coherence and cross-fertilization. Reinforcing this division is the cleavage between different segments of ILO staff distinguished by their different world views and approaches, with the technical and field segments having an "essentially pragmatic" outlook, while those working in the standards segment tend to possess a more "coherent ideology" and identity linked to the legal profession (Cox, 1973:123). The promotion of standards has also tended to be very much the concern of headquarters specialists, especially the legal experts, while technical staff in the field have little familiarity with them (ILO, 1993a). Adding to this complexity, ILO's staff structure has since the 1960s also included a "developmental" segment, which is composed of economists for the most part (Cox, 1973). As we will see below, in

promoting attention to women's issues in some of the technical departments which include a significant number of development and labour economists, WID/gender entrepreneurs have found social justice arguments to be insufficient on their own, and more effective when backed by solid social and economic analyses and research findings.

The need for policy entrepreneurs to use analytical arguments and research findings reflects the kind of work that the ILO does. In addition to standard-setting and technical co-operation, the other important component of the ILO's mandate is research and policy analysis, which is carried out by all technical departments, as well as by the International Institute of Labour Studies (IILS) created by the ILO in 1960. The ILO's constitution states in clear terms that it should "examine and consider all international economic and financial policies and measures" in the light of its fundamental objective — social justice (ILO, 1994b:92). The ILO made significant contributions to the policy debates on employment and basic needs in the 1970s. More recently, however, it has been criticized for not playing a sufficiently prominent role in offering up-stream policy advice to its member states, and urged to build up the analytical capacity that has been seriously impaired over the years (Edgren and Möller, 1991). The weakening of the ILO's analytical capacity has been linked to the funding crisis, and the general orientation towards technical co-operation projects (*ibid.*).

The criticism has, with some qualifications, been accepted by the Director-General (ILO, 1994b). As he explains, there are many reasons why ILO has been unable to live up to the responsibility entrusted to it by the Declaration of Philadelphia, one of the more critical being the ineffectiveness of formal institutional arrangements allowing it to influence the activities of major financial institutions (*ibid.*).³⁴ The Director-General has also referred to the need to recruit staff capable of providing high-quality policy analysis if ILO is to compete with other international agencies (especially the Bretton Woods institutions) in providing policy advice within its area of specialization. One of the concrete outcomes of the new effort to highlight ILO's role as an actor in the field of employment policy was the launching of **World Employment 1995**, which the ILO intends to produce regularly.

It would be erroneous, however, to assume that the ILO has not produced critical analyses of macro-economic policies during the 1980s (e.g. Jamal, 1993), even though this work has lacked the kind of platform from which ILO's earlier work was launched. There are probably several reasons for ILO's reactive stand. The onslaught of neo-liberalism in the 1980s seems to have left many agencies in a state of paralysis. A more important factor, as one interviewee pointed out, has been the zero-growth of ILO's regular budget which has hit its research programme particularly hard; extra-budgetary sources have tended to be geared to technical co-operation rather than research. As yet, there is little indication of how ILO intends to change its incentive structures to promote research. A somewhat contradictory set of incentives that have been put in place seem to be the new administrative and personnel changes which are meant to decentralize ILO's activities. As senior

research and policy analysts are encouraged to contribute to the regional multidisciplinary teams of experts (MDTs), in what seems to be an essentially operational post, it is not clear how they can contribute to the organization's research capacity. Whether ILO will be able to assume a more proactive and critical research/policy role in the 1990s thus remains to be seen. What is clear, however, is the challenge facing the WID/gender entrepreneurs: to ensure that their research findings are systematically fed into the up-stream policy advice that is given to the ILO's member states.

The ILO's early response to women's issues (1919-1975)

Like the other organizations considered here, it has long been argued that the work of the ILO concerns men and women equally. However, the ILO is unique in that its constitution makes explicit reference to women: it states that the organization must deal with the protection of women, for example, and that member states should apply the principle of equal remuneration without distinction of sex. Promoting attention to women's concerns within the ILO has been facilitated by the relatively easy "fit" with the organizational mandate. In the early 1920s, for example, a special service for women's questions, later upgraded to a section, was set up in the Conditions of Work section, and headed by a specialist on women's work.

During ILO's early years a tension became apparent in the discourses through which attention to women workers' questions were framed. On the one hand, the social justice mandate was interpreted in a way to promote special protective legislation for women, justified on the basis of their reproductive functions. Some of the earliest ILO conventions, such as the Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No.1) and the Night Work (Women) Convention, 1919 (No.4), reflected this approach. On the other hand, primarily in response to pressure from equal rights lobbyists, the ILO has sought to promote equal rights of women workers. In the 1930s, for example, some earlier conventions and recommendations, such as the Night Work (Women) Convention, were revised to ensure that protective legislation did not diminish women's employment opportunities. At the same time, a concern for equality was apparent in a number of new resolutions — such as the Resolution concerning the right to work of married women, 1939, and the Resolution concerning women's right to representation, 1939. In the post-war years, standard-setting activities in the area of equal rights continued — for example, with a further revision to the Night Work (Women) Convention, 1948 (No.89), the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No.100) and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111). A special programme for women was set up in accordance with the provisions of the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention and the establishment of a discrimination branch helped to bring further attention to equal rights for women as well as other disadvantaged groups.

To look at “bureaucratic outcomes” in the context of ILO’s work, two points are worth noting. First, that bureaucratic outcomes include not only projects, programmes, research and policy documents (as in the other agencies), but also international legislation (conventions, recommendations, etc.). Second, as was noted above, ILO’s original vocation was its standard setting work; it was only in the late 1950s, as more developing countries joined the organization, that operational activities gained significance.

As far as women’s issues were concerned, in the early years emphasis was placed primarily on legislative concerns. Some research was carried out on such issues as equal remuneration for work of equal value and discrimination against women workers upon which to base new legislation. Member states of the ILO during the inter-war period were primarily Western democracies and the work during this period reflected the working conditions in these countries.

The changing membership of the ILO in the post-war period drew attention to the need for new approaches to respond to the conditions and status of women workers in developing countries. Between the 1950s and the early 1970s, the ILO’s new operational activities thus centred on technical and advisory assistance to the member states on questions of legislation and administration (Gaudier, 1994:7). Regional conferences of the ILO in the 1970s reflected a growing concern that more technical aid should be directed to the needs of women in the developing countries (Riegelman Lubin and Winslow, 1990:161). New research was undertaken to investigate the situation of women workers in developing countries. Technical assistance began to move in the direction now so familiar in development agencies: small-scale operational activities directly targeted at groups of women and focused primarily on training and other measures to promote women’s educational and employment opportunities (Gaudier, 1994:7; Reigelman Lubin and Winslow, 1990:128).

The United Nations Decade for Women, 1976-1985

Although women’s issues had long been on the ILO agenda, and both research and operational activities were carried out in this area, the declaration of the International Women’s Year put pressure on the ILO to demonstrate further its commitment to women’s concerns. In 1975 it adopted a Declaration on equality of opportunity and treatment for women workers and a Plan of Action for its implementation. The Plan of Action recommended that “a unit of the International Labour Office should have the responsibility to study more closely the problems of women workers, to promote equality of opportunity and treatment for them, and to ensure that the needs of working women receive due attention in all aspects and all areas of the Office...” (ILO, 1994c:22). In 1976 the Office for Women Workers’ Questions (FEMMES) was duly set up within the Promotion of Equality Department. The Equality of Rights Branch (EGALITE), of the same department, also engaged in some efforts to promote equality for women workers, although most of

its activities concerned other areas under its mandate, such as political and ethnic discrimination.

The role of FEMMES was mainly an advocacy one, although it was also involved in consolidating documentation and disseminating information. The Director, a D1 level post, was responsible for co-ordinating women workers' questions within the Organization. However, the means through which she could carry out this mandate were limited. No organization-wide guidelines were issued through which to implement the Plan of Action. As both the specialized research and women's projects were carried out in other departments, the budget for FEMMES covered only staff costs and activities connected with the dissemination of information and technical meetings (Pietilä and Eide, 1990:Annex 3).

Although indirectly supported in their work by FEMMES and the ILO's stated commitment to the Plan of Action, the growth in research and projects for women during this period depended on the skill of individual WID policy entrepreneurs working within the technical departments. During the Women's Decade, these policy entrepreneurs seized a number of opportunities to promote WID concerns. Advocacy and research conducted in connection with the Decade, as well as by the ILO's World Employment Programme (WEP) and the basic needs strategy provided an opening for greater attention to women's concerns, in particular the situation of poor rural women. In the mid-1970s the ILO launched its Programme on Rural Women which still exists as a unit of the Employment and Development Department.

The basic needs approach brought into focus the central role played by women in meeting their families' basic needs and in population growth — another important concern of this period. This early approach to basic needs failed, however, to pay attention to women's productive labour and employment needs; instead emphasis was placed on their reproductive work "as procreators or dieticians or child care practitioners" (Palmer, 1977). Nonetheless, the basic needs approach provided policy entrepreneurs with leverage to pursue new research on women. The shortcomings of focusing on women's reproductive work became clearer as new studies by the ILO on rural women in Africa, Asia and the Pacific began to appear. The aim of these studies was to provide a better profile of women's situation in developing countries upon which to formulate interventions. This research enabled policy entrepreneurs to demonstrate to their colleagues the extent of women's productive work.

The ILO thus embarked on new efforts to assign a monetary equivalent to the bulk of women's labour that falls outside the scope of economic statistics.³⁵ Research during this period also indicated women's participation in the new "informal" sector. Overall, this research helped to bring into focus the extent of women's productive work and some of it is a backbone to feminist labour economics. Because research and operations are largely carried out within the same departments within the ILO, it was possible to feed some of this new research into projects for women, which tended to be in the form of "women-specific"

activities. Income-generating projects were a popular type of intervention during this period, combining the economic objectives of generating income, with social objectives of group organization. Subsequent assessments pointed out the failure to meet the economic objectives, and their unsustainability once project funding ended (Buvinic, 1986). The idea that project failure could be linked in part to the isolation of women-specific projects from mainstream ILO activities contributed to the “integrationist” strategy which emerged in the post-Nairobi period, as we will see below.

The expansion of these new technical assistance projects took place alongside ILO’s usual areas of work, such as research on women’s labour force participation and training programmes for women. There was a change, however, in this period in the nature of standard-setting work: in addition to the adoption of new conventions and resolutions, increasing emphasis was placed on the revision of existing standards, especially protective legislation, to ensure that protective measures for women would not act as obstacles to their full integration in economic life (ILO, 1994c:52).

The post-Nairobi decade, 1986-1995

The Nairobi Conference in 1985 prompted the ILO’s adoption of the Resolution on equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women in employment. The resolution recognizes that women workers are still being discriminated against and that progress to overcome discrimination demands more gender responsive policies on the part of the ILO. On the basis of the above resolution, in 1987 the ILO adopted the Plan of Action on equality of opportunity and treatment of men and women in employment, which stands as its most comprehensive “policy statement” on women’s issues to date. The aim of the Plan of Action is to ensure that “issues relating to equality of opportunity and treatment are systematically included at each stage of policy formulation, planning and implementation in all ILO programmes and projects” (ILO, 1994c:ix). In the area of technical co-operation, the Plan emphasizes that, in accordance with Governing Body recommendations, “particular attention will be paid not only to strengthening and further developing specific projects for women but also to promoting the full integration of women in projects of a general nature” (ILO, 1994c:132). While the Plan of Action firmly committed the ILO to a “mainstreaming strategy”, and referred to the need for new institutional mechanisms and procedures to implement the strategy, these institutional changes were slow to be put in place.

Institutional changes

Since the mid-1980s there have been a number of attempts to strengthen the institutional arrangements in line with the mainstreaming strategy. One of the first moves was the creation in 1986 of the post of Co-ordinator of the Women in Development Programme. The post was located in the Promotion of Technical Co-operation Branch and its function was to work with technical units and the field structure to

integrate WID/gender into ILO's technical co-operation programmes. This move was in part a reflection of the need to strengthen the integration of women's concerns in technical co-operation activities. The post was sponsored for the first two years by Norway and later became a core budget post. The Women in Development Programme produced information booklets on enhancing women's visibility and participation in planning and monitoring of development projects and programmes (e.g., Messell, 1989; ILO, 1991).

During the 1987 Governing Body meeting, the Norwegian member pointed out that there was no indication in the 1987 Plan of Action of procedures for implementation (Reigelman Lubin and Winslow, 1990:139). Although the WID Programme was a step in the right direction, new strategies were needed to ensure more co-ordinated and comprehensive policies for women workers throughout the ILO. One effort in this direction was the restructuring of FEMMES. In order "to ensure a more effective and rapid integration of women's issues into all ILO activities", in 1989 FEMMES was closed down (ILO, 1989:89). At the same time, the Equality of Rights Branch (EGALITE) was moved to the International Labour Standards Department and became more involved in questions concerning the discrimination of women workers. The Branch took over the application and implementation of the main equality conventions (No.100, No.111 and No.156), which had previously been the responsibility of the Application of Standards Branch. In EGALITE one staff member covers the issues of gender equality, in addition to her other tasks.

In April 1989, a post of Special Adviser for Women Workers' Questions, at D1 level, was set up and funded through the regular budget. The post of special adviser is attached to the Office of the Deputy Director-General in charge of technical programmes, thereby giving the special adviser a higher profile and, in theory, a stronger position from which to promote the co-ordination and mainstreaming of women workers' questions within the ILO. The main functions of the special adviser are to provide policy advice on ILO priorities and objectives concerning women workers and to guide the implementation of a strategic overall ILO programme for the advancement of women in employment. In this capacity, she is expected to promote interdepartmental collaboration and multidisciplinary approaches for the promotion of equality of women in employment. To facilitate these tasks she works with focal points in the technical and regional departments, and supervises the work of regional advisers for women workers' questions. The Special Advisor also reviews, monitors and reports on the implementation of the overall ILO programme for women workers. One responsibility carried out in this connection is the servicing of the Governing Body Committee on Discrimination for its standing agenda item "ILO action for equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women in employment" (ILO, 1993b). In addition, the special adviser is responsible for relations with ILO constituents, and for providing advice to governments, employers' and workers' organizations to enhance their role in the promotion of equality for women workers.

The special adviser now exists as a separate unit (previously the post was under general management) and has reclaimed the name of the previous WID Unit, FEMMES. The staff support and resources allocated to the special adviser, however, are not commensurate with her responsibilities. The department presently has only one staff member in addition to the special adviser. Four officials have been attached to the department on a temporary basis, an arrangement that is expected to come to an end in December 1995. Despite efforts by a number of countries and workers' organizations at the 1995 International Labour Conference, the staffing situation has not been placed on a more secure footing.

The cross-departmental nature of the special adviser's work in an organization reputed for its rigid bureaucratic structure raises obvious problems (Lotherington et al., 1991:67). In addition to the post of Coordinator of the Women in Development Programme, described above, there are a number of institutional arrangements for dealing with women's issues across the organization. In 1989, a focal point system was set up in all headquarters' departments and regional offices. The position and terms of reference of the focal point differ from department to department. For example, some have the task of integrating gender into the department's mandate as part of their job description. Others have been asked to serve as focal points but do not have the role included in their job descriptions and therefore combine the task of raising gender issues with their own technical work in their department. Attempts to devise standard terms of reference have been resisted thus far on the grounds that the institutional needs of each department demand a certain degree of flexibility. One interviewee noted that resistance to the idea of full-time work as focal point often comes from the focal points themselves, who fear it is a bad career move, although another suggested that her career had not been blocked by being associated with gender issues.

One constraint identified in relation to the focal point system is the tendency for the focal point to assume the entire responsibility for integrating WID/gender into a department's work (Palmer and Jha, 1993:7). The problem is magnified where the focal point has no expertise in gender issues. This is one the reasons that focal points have been targeted as the first group of ILO staff to undergo the new gender training programme, discussed below. However, as indicated above, in some departments and branches, especially where women workers' questions have long been on the agenda (e.g. in the areas of rural employment, employment and population, conditions of work and training), gender expertise in the department has been building up for some time (ILO, 1990). These specialized staff members may also serve as "focal points" but they are more directly involved in gender issues on a day-to-day basis than those focal points who do combine their work to promote gender concerns with other responsibilities.

The special adviser meets on a regular basis with focal points to guide them in their work. However, the work of the focal point needs support from top-level posts in each department. As secretary of the Inter-

Departmental Committee on the implementation of the ILO Plan of Action, established in 1990, which brings together directors, branch heads and focal points, the special adviser has an opportunity to generate support for the focal points' work by building commitment among department directors.³⁶ This committee is the main official decision-making body on gender issues of common concern, such as gender training and preparations for the international conferences.

In 1991, the special adviser successfully lobbied to have a temporary post set up in the Evaluation Unit of the Bureau of Programming and Management to promote attention to gender issues in the design, monitoring and evaluation of ILO programmes and projects. Up until 1993 the post included other duties in addition to promoting gender. Recently, another institutional change was made at headquarters level to deal with women's issues. The post of Co-ordinator of the Women in Development Programme was divided in two. One staff member in the Promotion of Technical Co-operation Branch has been assigned the project level work of the previous post, although she is expected to devote only 25 per cent of her time to gender work. A second staff member in the Bureau for Active Partnerships has been assigned the task, in addition to other duties, of providing advice to regional and national offices on ways to integrate gender issues into their country programming.

The work of the Bureau for Active Partnerships is in line with the overall efforts to decentralize ILO's activities. Other measures have been taken to make the field structure more responsive to women's issues. In 1990-1991 four new posts as Regional Advisers for Women Workers' Questions, at P5 level, were set up in each of the regional headquarters. Although the regional advisers report to their regional directors, their mandate is to assist the special adviser in monitoring regional and national activities for attention to women workers' questions. Their specific tasks include identifying areas and means for priority action, monitoring and reporting on how gender issues are being promoted in the regions. Another manifestation of decentralization are the multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs). While most MDTs have WID focal points, only a few of these are gender specialists. The staff member in the Bureau for Active Partnerships is helping to promote attention to WID/gender in the work of the MDTs.

While the decentralization of the ILO's activities is clearly an important move in helping to bring programming more into line with "local realities", there are several negative implications for women. First, the new strategy of sending headquarters staff to serve in the field for several years raises problems for the women staff members who tend to be less mobile than their male counterparts. Secondly, as we have argued elsewhere in this paper, decentralization raises problems for responsiveness to WID/gender, unless there are active women's constituencies at the national level providing incentives for ILO staff, governments, employers and trade unions to pay attention to women's issues.

The institutional arrangements for dealing with women's issues in the ILO thus encourage a division of labour throughout different departments. Unlike the UNDP, for example, where the Gender in Development Programme bears the responsibility for developing WID/gender strategies, designing guidelines, and monitoring their implementation, these various tasks have been delegated to staff in different departments of the ILO, though they work in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser. A similar sort of division of labour has been pursued in the World Bank, although with the closing down of the WID Division in 1992, an institutional "home" for WID/gender concerns was effectively lost. Attempts to diffuse the responsibility for WID/gender concerns to different departments are in line with the mainstreaming strategy. Nonetheless, unless a strong central unit exists to promote and support the work of colleagues throughout the organization, the diffusion of responsibility may not have its intended effect of strengthening response to WID/gender concerns.

Procedures for mainstreaming

When the ILO committed itself to the full integration of women in all activities across the organization (see the 1987 Plan of Action in ILO, 1994c), it also recognized the need for guidelines to facilitate this task. The first guidelines, prepared by the Evaluation Unit of the Bureau of Programming and Management in 1988, provided a two-page summary of questions to be considered in project design to ensure that women would be included as participants and beneficiaries. The guidelines were to be applied to projects funded by donor agencies. At the same time, staff were requested to use the UNDP's Project Review Form, mentioned in Section II above, for project proposals sent to UNDP. In view of the fact that ILO's operational activities are largely funded through extra-budgetary resources provided by multilateral and bilateral donors, it is hardly surprising that efforts are made to tailor projects to donors' concerns. In 1992 a document was prepared by the Promotion of Technical Co-operation Branch to inform staff of the women in development policies of the major multi-bi donors (PROMOTEC, 1992). The document provides a formidable tool for internal WID entrepreneurs to use financial incentives to promote attention to WID issues within the ILO. However, it also raises questions about the level of in-house commitment to gender issues.

In January 1995 new guidelines for the integration of gender issues into the design, monitoring and evaluation of ILO programmes and projects were issued. They represent a more systematic attempt to promote the importance of gender analysis and planning than the 1988 guidelines and are intended for use in mainstreaming women's concerns into activities across the organization, not just in projects funded through extra-budgetary resources (PROG/EVAL, 1995:1). The definition of mainstreaming used in the guidelines is to "incorporate gender concerns into activities to deal effectively with the obstacles faced by women in participating fully in and benefiting from these activities" (ibid.:8). The guidelines emphasize a point that has been made in many ILO documents since "mainstreaming" appeared on the agenda: that this

strategy does not exclude the use of women-specific activities and/or affirmative action whenever women are in a disadvantageous position.

If we consider UNDP's long experience with guidelines, it is clear that guidelines in themselves are not sufficient as incentives for attention to WID/gender — a point that was made by some interviewees. One staff member involved in designing the guidelines stressed that her strategy has been to support a group of mutually reinforcing measures: guidelines, gender training and sensitization. The strategy of "persuading" staff of the importance of gender issues was described as more conducive to promoting change in behaviour than building more formal staff incentives (rewards and punishments) into the system.

Recently, FEMMES has begun to organize training courses and workshops on gender issues (Groenen, 1995). The training programme is being funded by the Netherlands for two years, after which the ILO will become responsible for its continuation. FEMMES is trying to tailor the training programme to the specific needs of the ILO, as a previous attempt to use training material borrowed from other organizations was considered to be inappropriate by trainees. The training programme has been prepared by the special adviser in collaboration with other departments and field offices. All technical departments, for example, have been requested to prepare sector-specific briefing notes on women and gender issues in relation to their area of expertise for inclusion in the package of training materials under preparation by FEMMES. The gender training is aimed not only at ILO staff but also at ILO's "social partners" and women's organizations. Although participation is on a voluntary basis, staff involved in the programme report an enormous interest from the field level. One explanation they give for this enthusiasm is that "focal points" are seeking to improve their skills in order to be able to better fulfil their role.

Both the guidelines and the gender training programme can be interpreted as rather belated attempts to implement the 1987 mandate to integrate women's concerns into all ILO activities. The aim is to foster responsibility amongst all staff members for promoting women's concerns in their day-to-day work. While it is argued that gender specialists will still be necessary for the provision of technical advice, the full integration of women into all ILO activities is seen to depend upon commitment from both ILO staff and its social partners (PROG/EVAL, 1995).

Like the other organizations considered here, the ILO has also made efforts recently to strengthen the role of evaluation. The Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting System (MERS) was put in place in early 1994 on an experimental basis in a few departments and field offices. This system is meant to provide more systematic monitoring and evaluation of regular budget activities which have existed for a considerable period with externally funded budgets. Reports are to be prepared every six months, and at the end of two years a major evaluation is to take place. Like the new evaluations in other agencies, MERS does not contain a specific component on WID/gender, but if the project in question

includes a WID/gender dimension, it will be evaluated. The monitoring and evaluation components of the new guidelines for integrating gender issues can in theory serve as a complement to the MERS system, but it is left to individual staff members to take this initiative.

Discourses

As we have seen, technical departments in the ILO engage in both substantive research and operational activities. In order effectively to promote attention to women's issues in this context, WID/gender entrepreneurs need a combination of analytical skills/research findings and political tactics — a strategy which is in many ways similar to the one used by the World Bank's WID Division in the late 1980s. In both cases political tactics and advocacy cannot stand on their own; they need to be substantiated by solid analysis and research. The type of discourse used by WID/gender entrepreneurs in the ILO, however, has been quite different from the one which has been adopted by the Bank's WID Division. ILO's mandate — the promotion of social justice — has enabled WID/gender entrepreneurs to make demands for women's equality without necessarily having to justify it by showing the synergies between equality and economic growth/efficiency. There are, however, a number of interesting nuances that are worth noting.

In their discussion of WID/gender advocacy in the ILO, Lotherington et al. (1991) argue that between the policy level and implementation there is a shift in the kind of arguments used; while social justice and equity arguments predominate in policy documents, WID/gender advocates often use efficiency arguments to demonstrate the relevance of women's issues in the context of ILO's technical work. Our reading of recent policy documents and interviews with staff members suggest a somewhat different scenario. As we have noted at several points in this section, given the importance of socio-economic analysis in the work carried out by the technical departments, staff members working on WID/gender issues have had the incentive to strengthen their analytical capabilities drawing on substantive research findings. Having to base one's case on rigorous/analytical arguments and research findings, having to make "sophisticated and analytical arguments" as one staff member noted, does not necessarily imply an "efficiency" approach.

Similarly, while ILO's policy documents on women continue to be based on the social justice mandate — the ultimate justification for paying attention to women's issues is social justice — they also engage in economic arguments. One pertinent example is a document presented to the Governing Body on the changing role of women in the economy, which goes quite far in highlighting the efficiency and growth implications of women's employment for households and enterprises, and at the national and international levels (ILO, 1994a:9). While the document celebrates the synergies between gender equality and economic growth/efficiency on lines that are somewhat similar to the arguments used by the WID Division in the World Bank, it does not go so far as to make its case for equality contingent upon such growth synergies. The document also devotes much attention to issues relating

to the “quality of work” and labour standards, drawing on the findings of the Interdepartmental Project on Equality for Women in Employment, which is in line with the organization’s original mandate. Such willingness to engage in an economic discourse is not limited to ILO’s WID/gender policy documents, though. It can also be seen in a number of other recent policy documents (e.g. ILO, 1994d), indicative of what some have termed ILO’s new “market realism” (Mayoux, 1995).

Bureaucratic outcomes

As noted above, bureaucratic outcomes in the ILO can be categorized into three different groups: international labour standards, policy documents and research, and programmes and projects. Overall, the trends noted in connection with the Decade for Women (1976-1985) have continued over the past decade. For example, there have been no new conventions concerning women workers since 1985. It can be argued that the decline in standard-setting instruments concerning women indicates a shift towards mainstreaming of women’s issues within other standard-setting instruments. For example, over the past decade the Equality and Co-ordination of Human Rights Branch (formerly the Equality of Rights Branch) has worked to draw attention to the way in which existing standards are applied to women. A protocol to the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1959 (No.111) is being considered which is intended to cover the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, marital status and pregnancy, for example. Also, some recent conventions, while not women-specific, do in fact relate primarily to women, including for example the Part-Time Work Convention, 1994 (No.175), and the proposed convention on home-work, discussed at the 1995 International Labour Conference. According to one interviewee, standard-setting work now tries to take “a holistic approach” to promoting equality for women workers. Efforts are made to show the linkages between different conventions; for example, the application of the provisions of the Equal Remuneration Convention or the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention may not be complete without attention to issues raised in the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No.156) which, thus far, has had only 20 ratifications.

While the mainstreaming strategy has been the driving force behind many of the institutional innovations described in the above sections, at the operational level there appears to be a continued emphasis on projects targeted specifically at women (ILO, 1993a:16). The budgetary data provided by the ILO on its WID/gender activities include women-specific projects only. Data for 1991 show that WID-specific projects account for 6 per cent of all ILO projects, representing approximately 4 per cent of total budgetary allocations.³⁷ These figures may underestimate total spending on women because they are calculated on the basis of projects with WID in their titles.

The lack of data on mainstreamed projects may be interpreted in a number of ways. The mainstreaming strategy may not yet have led to a

change in the organization's concrete activities: it may be a matter of time before the strategy bears fruit. However, the predominance of women-specific projects may also indicate a reluctance to wholeheartedly endorse the new mainstreaming strategy. Finally, even if WID-integrated mainstream activities become the norm, the ILO will face the more general problem encountered in our discussions of the UNDP and the World Bank: how can mainstreamed activities be monitored for the resources allocated to women and for attention to gender issues throughout the implementation process?

Finally, the ILO continues to produce substantive reports and publications on a range of issues concerning women workers. As noted above, the research carried out in connection with the Interdepartmental Project on Equality for Women in Employment and the 1994 Forum which concluded the project indicate the important work that has been carried out recently by the ILO. However, the ability of the ILO to produce substantive research on women's work is likely to be influenced by the relative lack of attention top-level management presently attribute to research. It remains to be seen how effectively in-house research on women's work will be fed into mainstream policy documents, such as the **World Employment** report, as well as country level policy dialogues.

In summary, like the other organizations considered here, response to WID/gender concerns in the ILO can be attributed primarily to two factors: the moral and financial support of key donors and the work of internal policy entrepreneurs. Although the ILO's tripartite structure provides opportunities for civil society groups to promote women's issues, employers and trade unions have not necessarily been more supportive allies than key donors. It needs to be emphasized, once again, that most of the items on the agenda of trade unions can also, in principle, benefit women workers; the shortcoming has been their reluctance to prioritize issues that women workers and their organizations consider to be important. Moves to decentralize the activities of the ILO could, in theory, provide greater voice to other civil society groups hitherto excluded from the ILO's governance structure. If such moves are to benefit women, efforts must be made to ensure that groups or individuals representing the interests of women workers, particularly rural, informal and unorganized women, are included.

The ILO's original mandate of promoting social justice through standard setting has provided a hospitable environment for feminist advocates. In the present economic climate there appears to be considerable controversy amongst ILO's constituents regarding the organization's original mandate, and WID/gender advocates have sometimes found it necessary to frame their arguments for attention to women in ways that demonstrate how equality for women workers can contribute not only to social justice but also to economic efficiency.

Compared to the other organizations considered here, the ILO has been late in introducing new procedures for mainstreaming WID/gender concerns. The fact that the ILO has a long history in dealing with

women's issues, during which it has established specific institutional mechanisms and strategies for this purpose, may help to explain its more cautious approach to mainstreaming, and insistence on the need for women-specific activities.

SECTION VI

Concluding Remarks

While it is difficult to draw conclusions about the experiences of all agencies from the three cases considered in this paper, it is not unreasonable to assume that they are indicative of more general trends. The past decade has seen a more concerted effort on the part of the agencies to respond to some of the demands of the WID movement. One front on which there has been some encouraging change has been in agency conceptualizations of women's roles in development. There is growing recognition of women's productive roles, and more generally of the fact that women are relevant to a much wider range of development issues and policies than was previously thought. Despite the attempts by development agencies to integrate women's issues into their mainstream activities through a variety of procedural and institutional mechanisms, the challenge remains in ensuring that paper commitments are translated into concrete action. A follow-up to this paper would be to scrutinize that process: the multiple factors that impinge on it and, in one way or another, impede effective implementation. We already have a few indications about what some of these factors are: lack of budgeting for women's components, inadequate analytical skills and supervision during implementation, and lack of political "commitment" at both the agency level and the country level. What is needed, though, are concrete country level case studies tracing the process of implementation of gender activities from headquarters down to the "field level".

As was pointed out in the introduction, this paper did not intend to look at specific problems encountered during the implementation of projects, programmes or policies. Instead it aimed to consider how the three agencies have attempted to make attention to women's issues a routine part of all their activities — what we have referred to as institutionalization. How far they have gone in doing so has been conditioned by a number of factors outlined in Section I: external pressures; internal policy advocates and entrepreneurs; organizational mandate, ideology and procedures (Kardam, 1991).

As far as external pressures on institutions are concerned, the influence of supportive donors, like the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and Canada, has emerged as a key factor in all three agencies, especially the UNDP and the ILO, given the relative importance of their financial contribution to operational activities. The positive role played by these actors deserves a more systematic analysis than that provided in this paper; such an endeavour would no doubt highlight the critical role played by the women's movement in these countries — both historically and over the past decades in connection with their development assistance programmes.³⁸ NGOs provide another source of pressure on

multilateral agencies, but few studies have adequately documented their advocacy work with multilateral agencies on gender issues. Some of the studies that are emerging question the extent to which mixed-sex NGOs prioritize gender issues (Mayoux, forthcoming; Siddharth, 1995).

This paper has also highlighted some of the potential problems if the WID/gender mandate is not actively internalized and owned by the agencies, and especially the “recipients” of development assistance — governments, NGOs and other national constituencies. As all three agencies have acknowledged, the interest and commitment of these partners is a key factor in the successful implementation of WID/gender activities. National ownership is likely to become even more critical as the efforts towards further decentralization in each of the organizations proceed.

The organizational mandate has presented different challenges in each of the agencies. The ILO’s mandate has provided the most hospitable environment given the easy organizational fit between social justice and gender equality. While there have been some changes in the organizational goals of the World Bank over the years, skilled WID/gender entrepreneurs have successfully moulded gender issues into a shape that is compatible with the Bank’s economic approaches. The entrepreneurs have nevertheless found it difficult to promote equity issues where they have not been able to provide rigorous evidence of efficiency gains. In the case of the UNDP, the obstacles have been of a different nature: the initial lack of clarity in the organizational mandate made it difficult for WID/gender staff members to develop a coherent and substantive approach to women’s issues; while the new human development mission provides a very conducive environment for these issues, it remains to be seen how far WID/gender staff can apply the necessary expertise to draw out its gender dimensions.

Related to an organization’s goals and mandate are its procedures — the kinds of skills and methods used by staff for project design, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. One of the major goals of the mainstreaming strategy has been to institutionalize gender through new procedures; the logic of this strategy has been to make every staff member responsible for integrating gender concerns into all aspects of her or his work: operations, research, policy advice and, in the case of the ILO, standard-setting. Thus WID advocates and entrepreneurs have tried to adapt organizational procedures to make attention to gender issues a routine concern through such means as gender guidelines, training programmes, and gender “tool kits”. Even though it is too early to assess the concrete impacts of moves to upgrade monitoring and evaluation in the three agencies, in principle it presents an opportunity for WID/gender advocates to strengthen attention to gender issues.

The above factors, in theory, combine to make an organization’s activities (projects, programmes, policies and international legislation) more gender-responsive. As was noted in the introduction, there are serious data deficiencies as far as these “bureaucratic outcomes” are concerned; most agencies cannot provide detailed information on the

resources they have allocated to WID/gender activities. The problem stems, in part at least, from the difficulties in measuring attention to women in mainstream activities (as opposed to women-specific activities). There are also methodological problems if we attempt to rank the agencies in terms of their performance, for reasons that were mentioned in Section I. As the focus of the paper has been on the strategies that are being pursued to promote attention to women's concerns, some of the main points emerging from the case studies are outlined below.

- Given that gender is a cross-cutting theme, it extends into the territory of many bureaucratic divisions, demanding organization-wide responsibility. Very rarely, however, has responsibility gone beyond the small circle of staff directly responsible for WID/gender work. Our case studies have suggested that in spite of the existence of guidelines and checklists and gender training, the extent to which WID/gender concerns are incorporated into mainstream activities is still dependent on the work of a few committed and competent individuals with gender expertise. While the focal point system in all three agencies has been useful for advocacy work, a number of obstacles are frequently encountered. For a start, rarely do focal points have the authority and seniority to be able to “promote” gender issues with senior management. Deficiencies in skill and expertise have compounded their lack of political clout. Even where focal points have had some gender training, rarely have they had the expertise to draw out the WID/gender dimensions of a department's work in a sufficiently rigorous manner.

It has been noted that “a few days of training is barely a beginning for an officer who wishes to become competent in gender analysis” (CIDA, 1993:15). This is as true for focal points as it is for other staff members. Given the constraints to effectively diffusing responsibility for gender analysis throughout an organization, the 1993 CIDA evaluation recommended that “it would be more effective to focus on the specific responsibilities of key managers” within each department (CIDA, 1993:9). The manager's administrative responsibility would perhaps then serve as an incentive to ensuring that the department includes staff members with gender expertise. This strategy, as we have seen, is being pushed by the UNDP's Gender in Development Programme. Moreover, based on experience to date all three agencies recognize the failure of past approaches where gender training was not combined with procedural changes — i.e., guidelines and other staff incentives. The trend is now towards combining these different strategies.

Questions nonetheless need to be asked about the extent to which limited WID resources should be spread across an organization. Is it, for example, cost-effective to provide gender training for all staff members in an organization where the WID focal points themselves are not gender specialists? Where should the balance lie between diffusing responsibility and strengthening existing WID capacity? While the mainstreaming strategy has no doubt led to a greater staff awareness of WID/gender issues, this has taken place at the expense of strengthening in-house WID/gender expertise. This problem is particularly acute in the

UNDP, which is dependent almost entirely on external WID/gender consultants. Given the popularity of gender training across a wide range of institutional contexts (including Southern NGOs), the extent to which it changes staff behaviour needs to be monitored much more carefully and thoroughly than it has been to date.

- The overall low level of gender expertise is indicative of a more general problem faced by WID/gender machinery. WID/gender staff bear the responsibility for promoting organization-wide attention to WID/gender concerns through advocacy work or through various forms of technical support, such as staff training and the provision of guidelines and checklists. In many cases, they also carry out oversight and monitoring functions. Such responsibilities tend to “crowd out” the important work of research, policy and strategy development in the sense that they bite into the overall resources allocated to WID/gender. The emphasis placed by all three organizations on providing policy guidance makes it imperative that the capacity for policy level gender analysis be strengthened.

Whether the WID/gender unit in each organization can be called upon to play this role depends upon a number of factors. It is essential that the unit be well-placed institutionally to influence policy, as is the case with UNDP’s GIDP, for example. It is also necessary that the capacity exist for policy analysis. The World Bank’s GAP team appears to have such a capacity, even though the new operational emphasis inevitably reduces staff time for research/policy analysis. While in the past the ILO has done some path-breaking analysis of women’s work, it remains to be seen whether research capacity can be maintained as senior level staff are encouraged to participate in what appear to be operational posts at the regional level (i.e., the MDTs).

- While gender is a cross-cutting theme, WID/gender advocates need to think more strategically about where their efforts should be focused. It may well be that gender is more relevant to some issues than to others; in this case, mechanically integrating gender into all areas of concern in an agency may not be the most effective way of using WID/gender resources and expertise. The role of good internal policy entrepreneurs is to identify the areas in which gender is most relevant and also more likely to bear fruit in a given institutional context. This was an important part of the strategy that the World Bank’s WID Division pursued in the late 1980s, and the UNDP’s Gender in Development Programme seems to be moving in a similar direction.

- The attempt to integrate WID/gender into mainstream activities has led to the proliferation of “WID-integrated” activities. These projects have not necessarily overcome women’s marginalization. Nominal attention to WID/gender concerns at the design stage renders a project or programme “WID-integrated”, but obscures the fact that these concerns tend to get lost during implementation. The fate of WID/gender concerns in UNDP country programmes provides evidence of this trend. Where institutional procedures have been put in place to carry through policy commitments to women, very rarely have the budgetary resources

necessary for their implementation been calculated. And once the costs of implementing policy commitments have been calculated, the further obstacle of winning budgetary allocations remains.

- The mainstreaming strategy requires substantial human resource commitments — both in terms of staff expertise and staff time — yet despite some resource commitment, in all three agencies resources allocated to mainstreaming are too limited to enable a thorough job to be carried out. In general, development agencies need to evaluate the extent to which attention to gender issues is sustained during the implementation of WID-integrated activities. Positive steps in this direction have been taken by WID/gender staff members in the World Bank's operational departments. Even in this case, however, only a small proportion of projects with WID/gender components are adequately supervised during implementation. As for the UNDP and the ILO, it is not clear whether staff members have extended their scrutiny of women's components to include implementation.

Finally, in writing this paper we have been struck by the extent to which the same kinds of strategies and tactics for integrating gender issues have been adopted by the three agencies through a kind of “snow ball effect”. This is due, in part at least, to the fact that the agencies have tended to respond to a common set of pressures (e.g. United Nations Conferences on Women). One of the problems behind this apparent consensus is the failure to set priorities and strategies for their WID/gender mandate in-house (although this is less true of the World Bank). The failure to do so may stem, to some extent, from the fact that WID/gender funding has been on an *ad hoc* basis. It is also indicative of the more general way in which new themes, terminology and operational models are diffused across institutions. Very often the pressure to keep up with new trends or “fashion themes” means that not enough time is invested in critically assessing their relevance and usefulness to what each agency does; nor is there enough emphasis on monitoring the effectiveness of specific components of that strategy. On the basis of material reviewed for this paper, it is clear that while there were good reasons for placing mainstreaming on the agenda of the international women's movement, the means for achieving its objectives will have to be thought through and assessed more systematically and critically by those who adopt it.

Endnotes

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² Contributions broken down by country are as follows: Sweden: US\$ 122.9 million; Denmark: US\$ 89.6 million; Norway: US\$ 89.6 million ; and Finland: US\$ 42.1 million. In 1993, although Sweden's contribution was reduced to US\$ 70.7 million, the Nordic countries remain the strongest financial supporters of UNDP (UNDP, 1993a).

³ The four regional bureaux are as follows: Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. There is also a Division for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

⁴ The membership is as follows: eight from African states; seven from Asian states, four from Eastern European states, five from Latin American and Caribbean states and 12 from Western European and other states.

⁵ The UNDP has faced criticism on a number of fronts: that its co-ordination function in recipient countries has not always led to the avoidance of wasteful overlap in activities carried out by different parts of the United Nations system; that technical co-operation has often been "supply-driven"; and finally, that it has tended to rely on foreign experts or expensive expatriates, leading to unsustainability once the executing agency withdraws (see Edgren and Möller, 1991; Berg, 1993 and Kalderén, 1991). Critics acknowledge, however, that such failures do not lie entirely with UNDP. UNDP's responsibility for co-ordination is often resisted by other agencies and it lacks authority to enforce participation of its sister agencies.

⁶ Pietilä and Eide's study on the role of the Nordic countries in the advancement of women within the United Nations system supports the view that Nordic countries are aware of and very willing to use their financial influence to support their priority concerns (1990:49).

⁷ Initially called the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, in 1985 UNIFEM joined the United Nations system as a "separate and identifiable entity in autonomous association with the United Nations Development Programme" (NGLS, 1994: 73).

⁸ Kardam's review of 65 projects covering the years 1979 and 1989 involving women showed that the majority were in three sectors: agriculture and rural development (24), small scale enterprises (18), and education (10). Only four were in the area of health, population and nutrition (Kardam, 1991:24).

⁹ These resources come out of the seven per cent of the regular UNDP budget set aside for experimental and innovative approaches. The 30 per cent reduction in UNDP programming resources lowered this allocation to US\$ 5.5 million.

¹⁰ There is evidence of some sectoral initiatives by regional bureaux, including for example a 1992 report on women's role in Arab food security and the Africa Bureau's work to strengthen gender in development policy and planning capacities in regional institutions.

¹¹ Personal communication with GIDP, 17 February 1995.

¹² For an assessment of the United Nations' experience in recent years with implementing the principle of national execution of projects see Kabongo, 1994.

¹³ Recent problems associated with the "creation" of NGOs at the national level in response to UNDP's new emphasis on working with NGOs were raised in interviews with staff at United Nations-NGLS.

¹⁴ The **Human Development Report** is not an official United Nations document. It represents an independent intellectual exercise undertaken by a UNDP team and a panel of consultants under the supervision of the Human Development Report Office.

¹⁵ When asked about the figure of US\$ 16.7 million devoted by UNDP to women and development for the period 1990/91 quoted in an ECOSOC document, one interviewee responded that they did not know how this figure had been calculated (UNDP, 1994c).

¹⁶ The World Bank Group encompasses the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA), and is affiliated with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

¹⁷ The relative shareholdings of individual countries are based on complicated formulae which reflect their weight in the global economy and in trade (Mistry, 1991).

¹⁸ Although legally and financially distinct, the two bodies almost always operate as a joint entity: they have the same offices, staff, executive board, and operating procedures (Mistry and Thyness, 1991).

¹⁹ As Mosley et al. (1991:24) point out, even during the presidency of William Clausen (1981-1986) the Bank was not a neo-liberal monolith.

²⁰ The thematic vice presidencies are: Environmentally Sustainable Development; Finance and Private Sector Development; and Capital Development and Operations Policy.

²¹ The 6 are: Africa; East Asia & Pacific; South Asia; Europe & Central Asia; Middle East & North Africa; and Latin America & Caribbean (World Bank Organization Chart, October 1994). The Africa Region, for example, has 5 country departments and one technical department. South Asia and East Asia & Pacific share one technical department, as do Europe & Central Asia and Middle East & North Africa.

²² The World Bank is a relatively centralized agency — more so, at least, than the UNDP; it has fewer field offices around the world (75, compared to UNDP's 132) and a smaller proportion of its staff members work full-time in the field offices (18 per cent compared to UNDP's 85 per cent). The figures are: 6,658 staff members based at headquarters; 335 staff members, recruited at headquarters, are serving in field offices; 1154 staff members, recruited locally, serve in field offices (World Bank figures were obtained from Spokesman for the World Bank, 15 June 1995). These figures do not include consultants.

²³ The distinction between "reactive" and "proactive" years is taken from **The World Bank — Gender Issues in Bank Lending: An Overview**, World Bank, OED, June 1994, which is the first Bank-wide study of the emergence and evolution of gender issues in the organization.

²⁴ Staff active in WID activities have described A.W. Clausen, who replaced McNamara in 1981, as "less supportive" (OED, 1994:14).

²⁵ In her analysis of bilateral European agencies, Staudt notes the unpopularity of women-specific approaches in the "high-technology, high-volume" German bilateral agency (BMZ) for this reason (1995).

²⁶ The list of projects with gender-related action was established by OED through an iterative review process, using the ratings system created by the WID Division, Population and Human Resources Department in 1987 (OED, 1994:Annex A). Kardam's interviews were carried out between 1986-1989; the data she was given by the WID Adviser are dated May 1986 — not based on the 1987 ratings system.

²⁷ Peer reviews described the progress report as "too optimistic and self-congratulatory in tone" (OED, 1994:26).

²⁸ These "areas of special emphasis" set the Bank's "priority points of intervention to enhance its development effectiveness" (World Bank, 1992a).

²⁹ Although they would have also liked to show that countries that have invested heavily in women have grown faster (in terms of GNP), they could not do this in a sufficiently “rigorous and convincing” manner (World Bank, 1992b:9).

³⁰ The PER constitutes an important part of the Bank’s policy advisory role, focusing in particular on public expenditure on the social sectors (education and health in particular), and their sub-sectors.

³¹ This point was, for example, raised in a recent UNRISD/UNDP Advisory Workshop (December, 1994). The implication being made about donors is that they are a benevolent “meta state” (Vivian, 1994) allied with “women” (or the poor) against a patriarchal (elitist) state.

³² In 1994 the Nordic countries contributed 48.6 per cent of total bilateral voluntary contributions. The distribution among them was: Denmark US\$ 7.9 million (21.6 per cent); Finland zero (0 per cent); Norway US\$ 8.2 million (22.3 per cent), and Sweden US\$ 2 million (5.5 per cent). Data supplied by the Finance Department, ILO, July 1995.

³³ The Conference has universal membership and meets annually. It adopts the conventions and recommendations that constitute ILO’s standards. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for managing and co-ordinating ILO programmes, as well as being responsible for the Conference agenda, controlling expenditure and choosing the Director-General, who is responsible only to the Governing Body (Ghebali, 1989).

³⁴ The absence of truly effective institutional mechanisms at the international level for addressing social development is now being discussed in many quarters, and is likely to involve numerous actors in a drawn-out and controversial debate (Commission on Global Governance, 1995; South Centre, 1995).

³⁵ See for example, **Women and Development: The Sexual Division of Labour in Rural Societies**, L. Beneria (1982); **Unpaid Work in the Household: A Review of Economic Evaluation Methods**, L. Goldschmidt-Clermont (1982); **Women’s Work in Third World Agriculture: Concepts and Indicators**, R. Dixon-Müller (1985).

³⁶ Only one other ILO interdepartmental committee exists (on poverty research).

³⁷ These data were provided to the authors by PROMOTEC based on their computerized list of projects, May 1995.

³⁸ Some of these issues are discussed in Staudt, 1995.

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