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## Quick impact initiatives for gender equality: a menu of options

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**Working Paper No. 462**

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**Quick Impact Initiatives For Gender Equality:  
A Menu of Options**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The UN Millennium Project identified a set of Quick Impact Initiatives (QIIs) for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to the Millennium Project, QIIs are interventions to be implemented in the early years of an MDG scale-up strategy that generate rapid results. With adequate resources, they can be implemented quickly (e.g., within three years) without large investments in infrastructure or capacity. This paper suggests some criteria that donors and governments can use to identify such initiatives for gender equality and uses those criteria to develop a broader menu of QIIs for gender equality and women's empowerment in low- and middle-income countries. It focuses particularly on Quick Impact Initiatives to promote women's economic opportunities.

JEL Classifications: H5, J16, O2

Keywords: Millennium Development Goals, gender equality, quick impact initiatives, economic opportunity, education, employment, rural infrastructure, reproductive health, violence against women.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The UN Millennium Project (2005a) identified a set of Quick Impact Initiatives (QIIs) for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to the Millennium Project, QIIs are interventions to be implemented in the early years of an MDG scale-up strategy that generate rapid results. With adequate resources, they can be implemented quickly (e.g., within three years) without large investments in infrastructure or capacity (UN Millennium Project 2005a). Box 1 provides an illustrative list of Quick Impact Initiatives to achieve the MDGs.

Beyond this brief description and the list of illustrative QIIs, the Millennium Project did not provide criteria for how to identify candidates for such initiatives, nor did it provide a comprehensive list of such initiatives that could address gender equality and women's empowerment (Millennium Development Goal 3, hereafter referred to as MDG3). This paper suggests some criteria that donors and governments can use to identify such initiatives for gender equality and uses those criteria to develop a broader menu of QIIs for gender equality and women's empowerment in low and middle-income countries. It focuses particularly on Quick Impact Initiatives to promote women's economic opportunities.

The paper is organized as follows. The next section summarizes seven strategic priorities for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment recommended by UN Millennium Project Task Force 3. These seven strategic priorities are the framework within which a range of interventions for gender equality and women's empowerment has been identified. Section 3 proposes six criteria for identifying gender-sensitive Quick Impact Initiatives from among the range of interventions that can be implemented for gender equality, focusing specifically on improving economic opportunities. Based roughly on these criteria, Sections 4 and 5 propose a menu of quick impact initiatives that can promote gender equality and empower women, either directly or indirectly, in low and middle-income countries. The paper concludes with recommendations for the World Bank, other donor agencies, and national governments for implementing gender QIIs in national MDG development strategies.

Before proceeding, it is important to note that Quick Impact Initiatives should not be seen as substitutes for long-term development strategies or for the transformation that is required to take place in institutions and policies. Implementing a full set of MDG-based investments and policies will take time and in many cases will involve complex institutional change. But by implementing the quick impact initiatives described in the following pages, large-scale progress can begin immediately and major results can be achieved within three or more years. Because QIIs have been proven to work in a reasonably short time, they can help build confidence in government and donor efforts to achieve MDG3. More importantly, they can be the fulcrum for longer-term efforts and investments to empower women.

**Box 1. Illustrative Quick Wins**

- Eliminate school and uniform fees to ensure that all children, especially girls, are not out of school because of their families' poverty. Lost revenues should be replaced with more equitable and efficient sources of finance, including donor assistance.
- Provide impoverished farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa with affordable replenishments of soil nitrogen and other soil nutrients.
- Provide free school meals for all children using locally produced foods with take-home rations.
- Design community nutrition programs that support breastfeeding and provide access to locally produced complementary foods and, where needed, micronutrient (especially zinc and vitamin A) supplementation for pregnant and lactating women and children under five.
- Provide regular annual deworming to all school children in affected areas to improve health and educational outcomes.
- Distribute free, long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets to all children in malaria-endemic zones to cut decisively the burden of malaria.
- Eliminate user fees for basic health services in all developing countries, financed by increased domestic and donor resources of health.
- Expand access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, including family planning and contraceptive information and services, and close existing funding gaps for supplies and logistics.
- Expand the use of proven effective drug combinations for AIDS, TB, and malaria. For AIDS, this includes successfully completing the 3 by 5 initiative to bring antiretrovirals to 3 million people by 2005.
- Provide access to electricity, water sanitation, and the Internet for all hospitals, schools, and other social service institutions using off-grid diesel generators, solar panels, or other appropriate technologies.
- Reform and enforce legislation guaranteeing women and girls property and inheritance rights.
- Launch national campaigns to reduce violence against women.
- Establish, in each country, an office of science advisor to the president or prime minister to consolidate the role of science in national policymaking.

*UN Millennium Project 2005(a).*

## 2. SEVEN STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Task Force 3 of the UN Millennium Project proposed a comprehensive framework for translating the Millennium Development Goal of gender equality and women's empowerment into operational policies and programmatic initiatives. The Task Force identified seven strategic policy/intervention priorities for achieving MDG3 on gender equality and women's empowerment (see Box 2). The Task Force noted that these seven, interdependent priorities represent first-generation development problems that have not yet been addressed systematically within and across countries.<sup>1</sup> They need immediate attention if Goal 3 is to be met by 2015.

### **Box 2. Seven Strategic Priorities for Action on Millennium Development Goal 3**

1. Strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls while meeting commitments to universal primary education.
2. Guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights.
3. Invest in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens.
4. Guarantee women's and girls' property and inheritance rights.
5. Eliminate gender inequality in employment by decreasing women's reliance on informal employment, closing gender gaps in earnings, and reducing occupational segregation.
6. Increase women's share of seats in national parliaments and local government bodies.
7. Significantly reduce violence against girls and women.

*Source: UN Millennium Project 2005(b).*

The Task Force also identified a set of series of practical actions for each strategic priority that can bring about gender equality and empower women. For instance, eliminating school fees or offering scholarships to poor families can increase girls' enrolment in primary and secondary schools. Harmonizing statutory and customary laws, promoting legal literacy, and recording women's share of land and property can help to advance women's property and inheritance rights. Though no single intervention will eliminate violence against women, a combination of infrastructural, legal, judicial, health, and education-related actions can significantly reduce it and its consequences. Some of

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<sup>1</sup> These seven priorities are a subset of the priorities outlined in previous international agreements, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Cairo Conference Programme of Action. The recommendations in these international agreements remain important for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, but the task force sees the seven priorities as needing immediate action if the goal is to be met by 2015.

these actions may take years to implement and achieve results, but others can be implemented in a relatively short period of time and lead to positive changes. We refer to the latter as Quick Impact Initiatives.

### **3. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR GENDER SENSITIVE QUICK IMPACT INTERVENTIONS**

This paper concentrates on Quick Impact Initiatives that directly or indirectly promote economic opportunities for low-income women. In many countries around the world, women's employment status and low earnings are associated with poverty. Women tend to be concentrated in informal employment, where pay and conditions of work are worse than in public and formal jobs. Occupational segregation by sex is extensive, and in many countries, is highest among the least educated workers (Anker 1998; Deutsch et al. 2002). In all countries, men earn more than women, and this is true across different groups of workers (agricultural, manufacturing, production, supervisory) and different types of earnings (monthly, hourly, salaried). Finally, women in many countries around the globe are far less likely than men to own or control such productive assets as land and housing, which provide economic security, incentives for taking economic risks that lead to growth, and important economic returns.

There are a number of interventions that promote women's economic opportunity; some take many years to be implemented at scale and realize positive benefits for the target population. Others may have more immediate effects. Based on a review of the literature, and in consultation with gender experts from policy research institutes and donor agencies, we selected six criteria for identifying the gender-sensitive Quick Impact Initiatives reviewed in this paper that promote economic opportunity.<sup>2</sup> They are:

1. The intervention is relevant to the context/development priorities of the country and linked to a long-term strategy to achieve the MDGs.

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<sup>2</sup> The consultation was held jointly in New York and Washington, D.C. on November 21, 2005. Participants included representatives from the World Bank, UNIFEM, the IDB, the UN Millennium Project, the International Center for Research on Women, the Open Society Institute, and Levy Economics Institute.

2. The intervention has been shown to be successful in multiple contexts, locations, and environments.
3. The intervention is capable of being implemented and scaled up to a majority of the target population within three to five years.
4. The intervention is likely to have a measurable impact within 3 years of implementation.
5. The intervention can be implemented with several, if not all, of the following gender-sensitive design features: the use of gender analysis in project design and implementation, participation of the female population in design and implementation of the intervention, collection of sex-disaggregated data, and sex-disaggregated monitoring and tracking systems.
6. The intervention is likely to be financially sustainable, and includes potential for cost recovery through external sources, government revenues, and/or household contributions.

These six criteria provide a useful guide for selecting Quick Impact Initiatives. They can also serve as a checklist for donors and governments to use in identifying Quick Impact Initiatives for investment within countries. In practice, it will be the case that not every intervention will meet these criteria, but that is true for interventions in most fields. What it suggests is that greater attention be given to well-designed evaluations that can track policy and program impacts. We will return to this issue at the end of the paper.

#### **4. A MENU OF OPTIONS FOR QII'S IN LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES**

This section lays out a menu of options for Quick Impact Initiatives in low- and middle-income countries. Table 1 provides some examples of QIIs that directly or indirectly improve women's economic opportunity and that meet the criteria described above.

Some of these QIIs improve women's economic opportunity directly—e.g., public employment schemes create jobs and provide income to poor men and women. Financial services can strengthen women's businesses, increase access to markets, and generate higher returns that can improve household income.



**Table 1. Examples of QIIs That Directly or Indirectly Improve Women’s Economic Opportunity**

Strategic Priority	Quick Impact Initiative to Improve Women’s Economic Opportunity
<i>Direct</i>	
Strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarships for girls</li> <li>• Elimination of school user fees</li> <li>• Making schools girl-friendly by improving their safety, design of facilities (such as latrines for girls) and promoting girls attendance (such as permitting married adolescents to attend)</li> </ul>
Invest in infrastructure to reduce women’s and girls’ time burdens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-cost energy technologies marketed by women’s businesses</li> </ul>
Eliminate gender inequality in employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public employment guarantee schemes</li> <li>• Financial interventions for self-employed women</li> </ul>
<i>Indirect</i>	
Guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand access to family planning and contraceptive information and services</li> <li>• Eliminate user fees for basic health services</li> </ul>
Reduce violence against women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health system interventions</li> <li>• Community awareness and training</li> </ul>
Increase share of female seats in political bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quotas or political reservation</li> </ul>

Some QIIs improve economic opportunity indirectly. For instance, access to reproductive health services is often a precondition for access to economic assets and resources and opportunities to employ them productively. Family planning allows women to balance the size of their family and timing of their children with their need and desire to earn income (UN Millennium Project 2005b). The ability to control their fertility also allows women to seek additional education or training, prepares them for better employment, and permits them to take part in other desirable activities such as community affairs (Family Health International 1998). Because violence against women results in decreased labor market participation, increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, and lower earnings, investment, and savings, interventions to reduce

violence against women can improve women's economic status (UN Millennium Project 2005b).

Evidence suggests that women who participate directly in decision-making bodies press for different priorities than those emphasized by men. Women are often more active in supporting laws benefiting women, children, and families. The likelihood that women will promote such laws rises when there is a critical mass of women leaders and when there are mechanisms to institutionalize collective action such as women's caucuses or multiparty women's alliances. Research in the United Kingdom in 1996 found that, although both women and men prioritized economic issues, women were more concerned about part-time work, low pay, and pensions, while men were more concerned about unemployment. Research in India found that women elected as leaders under mandated reservation invest more in public goods most closely linked to women's concerns, including drinking water, fuel, and employment generating activities such as road construction (Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2001). Interventions to increase women's participation in legislative bodies can, therefore, be important for improving economic opportunities.

A number of policy changes aimed at directly and indirectly improving women's economic opportunities also qualify as Quick Impact Initiatives. These might include changes in laws and/or regulations that eliminate prohibitions for women to own land or other property. For instance, during 1988–95 five countries (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua) passed agrarian legislation for joint adjudication or titling of land to couples. In countries where mechanisms of inclusion have been adopted and implemented, women have benefited to a greater extent than they have from previous agrarian reforms (Deere and Leon 2003). This was also the case in Viet Nam, which revised its marriage and family law in 2001 to require joint titling for land and other family assets (World Bank 2002d). Changes in labor laws/codes that were designed with the view that women are "secondary workers" and thus discriminate against women and/or passing of anti-discrimination employment legislation or equal employment opportunities acts meet the QII criteria discussed above, although in practice their implementation might take longer to achieve results.

The examples in Table 1 have been implemented in a range of low- and middle-income countries. They can be implemented and scaled up within three to five years and begin to demonstrate results shortly thereafter. All interventions can be designed in ways that meet the needs of both women and men. Most interventions have the potential to be financially sustainable although external subsidies are often required, especially at start-up.

## **5. QUICK IMPACT INITIATIVES THAT DIRECTLY INCREASE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

The empirical examples described in the next two sections illustrate what can be accomplished with political commitment and adequate resources, although in specific contexts they may fall short in some dimensions of the above criteria. The discussion shows both the strengths of the various interventions and where there is room for improvement. The interventions are relevant for both low and middle-income countries, although the design features, financing characteristics, or other elements may differ across these environments. The examples that are featured in these sections are not exhaustive. As noted above, there are other possible Quick Impact Initiatives that are not reviewed here because of a lack of good information, but that are worth considering by governments and donors. As countries undertake MDG-based planning exercises, government and civil society organizations will undoubtedly identify a range of other possible quick impact initiatives. These should be evaluated for their effectiveness and lessons learned should be disseminated widely for replication and scale-up in other contexts.

The next section profiles Quick Impact Initiatives that have direct economic benefit for women, including those that increase girls' participation in secondary school, offer public employment to women, build community infrastructure while providing income earning options to female entrepreneurs, and provide financial services for business creation and expansion.

### **5.1. Quick Impact Initiatives to Increase Gender Parity in Primary and Secondary Education<sup>3</sup>**

There is ample understanding of how to remedy the problem of girls' low enrollments. The insights and lessons learned in the past two decades of experimenting with a range of interventions (Subrahmanian 2002) can be applied in low- and middle-income countries in the next ten years.

Among all levels of education, secondary and higher levels of education have the greatest pay-off for girls. A recent review of the research evidence shows that "in most cases, only secondary or higher levels of schooling lead to improved options, opportunities and outcomes for women (Malhotra et al. 2003). Governments and donors should pay particular attention to interventions aimed at helping girls to complete secondary school.

Herz and Sperling (2004) identify three approaches to increase girls' participation in primary and secondary school that have been effective in a variety of countries:

- Making girls' schooling more affordable by eliminating user fees and other school fees to reduce direct costs, and by providing incentives to families to send their girls to school, for instance, through scholarships, take-home rations programs, or other means.
- Building schools close to girls' homes, involving the community in school management, and allowing flexible scheduling.
- Making schools girl-friendly by improving the safety of schools, the design of facilities (such as latrines for girls), and instituting policies that promote girls' attendance (such as permitting married adolescents to attend).

Some of these approaches are long term. For instance, building schools close to girls' homes may take several years to reach the full population in need.<sup>4</sup> Yet, many other interventions can have more rapid impact, such as making girls' schooling more

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<sup>3</sup> This section draws heavily on UN Millennium Project (2005b), pages 48-52.

<sup>4</sup> Decreasing the distance to school encourages girls' enrollment and attendance, by alleviating concerns for safety and reputation. Research in such diverse countries as Ghana, India, Malaysia, Peru, and the Philippines indicates that distance matters for all children, but especially for girls (Sipahimanlani 1999; Lavy 1996; Gertler and Glewwe 1992; King and Lillard 1987). Providing schools within local communities has been shown to substantially increase enrollments for girls in Egypt, Indonesia, and several Sub-Saharan African countries. In Egypt, following a campaign to construct rural primary schools, girls' enrollment grew 23 percent, while boys' enrollments grew 18 percent (Duflo 2001; Rugh 2000; Filmer 1999).

affordable and making schools girl-friendly. These Quick Impact Initiatives are described below.

*Quick Impact Initiative #1: Eliminating User Fees for Primary School*

User fees are a major barrier to access to education among the poor. Eliminating or substantially reducing school fees has resulted in increases in primary enrollment, particularly for girls. When free schooling was introduced in Uganda in 1997, primary school enrollment nearly doubled from 3.4 million to 5.7 million children, rising to 6.5 million by 1999. Total girls' enrollment increased from 63 percent to 83 percent, while enrollment in the poorest fifth of girls rose from 46 percent to 82 percent (World Bank 2002c). In Tanzania, the elimination of primary school fees in 2002 resulted in additional enrollment of 1.5 million students (Coalition for Health and Education Rights 2002). Abolishing user, uniform, and other fees is important for ensuring that girls' attend and complete school.

Although eliminating user fees can have quick results, governments do need be concerned about replacement revenue and about additional revenue to be able to scale up education systems to meet the additional demand. User fees can be replaced by revenues from general taxation or through donor assistance channeled through the Fast Track Initiative for qualifying countries. It will be important for governments to prepare estimates of the resources needed to cover the financing gap caused by abolishing user fees in education, including the incremental resources needed to scale up the system to meet new demand. The Millennium Project (2005c) estimates that abolishing user fees will cost between \$1.7 billion–\$2.8 billion annually in 2005–2007 for Sub-Saharan Africa.

Waiving user fees has resulted in millions more children attending school. Unless governments simultaneously make investments to strengthen system capacity, train additional teachers, modernize and revamp curricula, and improve quality, the short-term gains in attendance may not translate into long-term educational achievements. Therefore, the abolition of fees is a first step in a longer-term process.

### *Quick Impact Initiative #2: Provide Secondary School Scholarships for Girls*

Scholarship programs have also been effective in boosting adolescent girls' enrollment and retention rates. Bangladesh launched a nationwide stipend program in 1994 for girls in secondary schools, including all *madrasas* (religious schools). The program has had a substantial impact on girls' enrollment, particularly in rural areas (see Box 3 and UNESCO 2004; World Bank 2001). In Tanzania a scholarship program for girls significantly increased their enrollment in secondary school, and the program was subsequently extended to boys.

#### **Box 3. The Bangladesh Female Secondary School Assistance Program Increases Girls' Enrollment**

Bangladesh's Female Secondary School Assistance Program began in 1994, building on earlier NGO efforts begun in 1982. Its purpose was to increase rural girls' enrollment and retention in secondary school, assist them in passing their Senior School Certificate examination, and enhance their employment opportunities. The program provides scholarships to girls in grades 6–12 living outside the metropolitan areas of Bangladesh covering full tuition, exam costs, text books, school supplies, uniforms, and transport; increases the number of female teachers in secondary schools; educates communities on the importance of girls' education and encourages parents to get involved through parent education committees; improves school infrastructure; and reforms curricula and adds occupational skills training to have immediate application in labor markets.

In 1991–92 only 27 percent of girls enrolled and only 5 percent of those completed secondary school. In 2002, girls accounted for 54 percent of all secondary school enrollments in the program areas. Their attendance and achievement also improved, surpassing those of boys: in 2002, attendance was 91 percent for girls and 86 percent for boys, and 89 percent of girls obtained passing marks in year-end exams compared with 81 percent of boys.

The program has steadily extended its coverage, and by 2002, it was supporting 5,000 schools in the 118 poorest rural districts. The number of girls receiving scholarships increased from 197,000 in 1994 to 875,858 in 1999. The requirements for eligibility and continuation of the scholarship are regular attendance (at least 75 percent of total school days), maintaining a minimum 45 percent in the yearly and half-yearly exams, and being unmarried. The annual stipend ranges from \$12 for grade 6 to \$36 for grade 10 and is awarded directly to the girls through their own banking account. This feature aims to teach girls about banking practices and to give them saving habits.

The program also sought to recruit more female teachers, setting a target of 40 percent of new teachers. By 2002, this target was almost achieved. The program also upgraded school infrastructure, to make it more friendly to girls. By 2002, 3,667 latrines and 3,652 tubewells had been built. Between 1994 and 2002, 3,080 girls received occupational skills training that prepared them to enter the labor market. The program had one other significant impact: between 1994 and 2000, the proportion of married girls dropped from 29 percent to 14 percent among girls ages 13–15 and from 72 percent to 64 percent among girls ages 16–19.

*Sources: Herz and Sperling 2004; Orlando 2004; Filmer, Prouty, and Winter 2002; UNESCO 2004.*

Kremer et al. (2004) report that following implementation of a program in 60 schools in Kenya that paid girls' school fees and gave their families a \$38 grant, more girls attended school and test scores were raised.<sup>5</sup>

Cambodia established a national program of scholarships for girls and ethnic minorities to encourage the transition from primary to secondary school and from secondary to postsecondary education (Velasco 2004). The scholarship is not only for newly enrolled girls but also girls who are at risk of dropping out because of high costs. It covers tuition, board, and lodging for those who need it most. Though the program has not yet been systematically evaluated, a pilot girls' scholarship program in four districts of Kompon Cham province had a 90–95 percent success rate for enrollment and retention (UNESCO 2004; Asia Foundation 2005).

Some programs provide cash grants to poor households with school-age children. Grants are conditional on regular school attendance. The programs aim to increase enrollment and attendance by compensating households for the direct and opportunity costs of sending children to school. Such programs simultaneously raise the immediate incomes of impoverished families and help to educate poor children. Conditional cash transfer programs are well established in Mexico (PROGRESA, now called Oportunidades), Brazil (Bolsa Escola), and Bangladesh (Food for Education). Mexico's PROGRESA provides cash transfers to poor households in marginal rural areas conditional on children attending school regularly (see Box 4). It has increased enrollment rates at the primary level and even more at the secondary level, especially for girls. Such programs are also in place or under development in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, and Turkey (Morley and Cody 2003a). School-feeding and take-home rations programs also provide incentives for school enrollment and retention (IFPRI 2001). These programs have demonstrated effects in boosting girls' enrolments at the primary level, but they are not widely implemented at the secondary level.

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<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, the attendance of boys, as well as girls who did not receive the scholarship, increased as well.

**Box 4. Cash for Education Programs—Mexico’s PROGRESA**

PROGRESA, the largest cash for education program in Latin America, reaches 2.6 million households, or 40 percent of rural families. The Mexican government, concerned by evidence showing that girls tend to drop out at very high rates after primary school, initiated the program in 1997. PROGRESA’s grant schedule awards increasingly higher payments for girls to attend secondary school. In grade 7, boys receive 240 pesos a month, while girls receive 250 pesos a month; in grade 8 boys receive 250 pesos a month, while girls receive 285 pesos a month, and so forth. The program increased girls’ primary school enrollment by 0.96–1.45 percentage points from an initial level of about 93 percent. At the secondary level, where girls’ enrollment rates before the program were 67 percent, girls’ enrollment rose by 3.5–5.8 percentage points. Sources: ILO/UNCTAD Advisory Group 2001; Morley and Coady 2003b; Skouflas and McClafferty 2003.

*Quick Impact Initiative #3: Improving Safety and Infrastructure*

Schools need to be safe places for girls. This includes freedom from harassment from male peers and from the predatory behavior of male teachers (Lloyd and Mensch 1999). Several initiatives have been tried that work in a relatively short period of time. Although ministries of education have been slow to address gender-based violence systematically throughout their school systems, NGO efforts have emerged in countries around the world to counter gender-based violence in schools. They offer workshops, theater, and a range of other program activities for students on destructive gender norms and violence and attempt to shape positive, nonviolent masculine and feminine identities. These efforts, which have mostly been limited to individual schools, are gaining popularity. They need to be rigorously evaluated and, if proven effective, expanded throughout school systems.

In Rajasthan and elsewhere in India, community initiatives led to the formation of the Shikshakarmi Project, which appoints a female helper to escort girls to and from school and provide care during school hours. According to Jain (2003), this has increased girls’ attendance rates.

Another minimal but essential step toward making schools hospitable environments for girls is providing private latrine facilities. Experience across 30 African countries, for example, indicates that a majority of young women do not attend school when they are menstruating if there are no private latrine facilities to enable them to care for personal hygiene (Forum for African Women Educationalists 2001; World Bank 2001).



Opportunity costs for girls' education that arise from their reproductive roles can be addressed in a variety of ways. Changing policies to permit married and pregnant adolescents to attend school, as in Botswana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, and Zambia is a rapid way to promote girls' attendance (UNESCO 2004). Other measures—such as flexible school schedules—enable girls to pursue an education while meeting household responsibilities. Flexible schedules, double sessions, and evening school hours have been introduced in Bangladesh, China, India, Morocco, and Pakistan (Herz et al. 1995), again with quick results.<sup>6</sup>

## **5.2. Quick Impact Initiatives to Reduce Women's and Girls' Time Burdens**

In most rural communities in low-income and some middle-income countries, women and girls (and sometimes boys) compensate for infrastructure deficits: the lack of electricity or other fuel sources, the lack of water and sanitation facilities, and the lack of roads and motorized transport. The time women and girls spend on routine tasks can be reduced dramatically if the appropriate infrastructure is in place: efficient sources of energy (especially new forms of fuel for cooking and heating), safe and accessible transport systems, and water and sanitation systems. This section will focus on energy-related interventions.<sup>7</sup>

Rural electrification is probably the most desirable alternative to biofuels, but this is a long-term strategy. Currently, the high cost and limited availability of electricity in developing countries restricts household use for some tasks, including cooking. In the interim, several other options can be implemented quickly to address cooking, heating, and food processing needs and to reduce reliance on fuelwood and biomass materials.

### *Quick Impact Initiative #4: Low-cost Energy Technologies That Enable Women to Earn Income*

There is no blueprint for providing energy services and technologies. Rather, successful off-grid approaches must address actual conditions in specific locations. Skutsch et al.

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<sup>6</sup> There do not appear to be any programs designed to transfer some of the burden of domestic tasks to boys, although countries should consider this as another option.

<sup>7</sup> Other resources for water and sanitation include Chancellor and O'Neill (1999), Saini and van Koppen (2001), Verhagen et al (2004), and Energia News (2005).

(2005) identify an energy services approach that starts not with the technology but rather with an analysis of what the needs of people are. This approach, illustrated in Table 2, pays attention to three issues: availability, affordability and safety.

**Table 2. The Gender-Aware Energy Policy Matrix**

	Dimensions/ Issues	Political	Economic	Environmental Sustainability	Social Equity & Empowerment
A C C E S S	Availability	Instruments to provide wide choice of energy forms for household and informal sector (e.g., biomass and LPG are part of supply mix)	Mechanisms to stimulate suppliers to enter the market supplying household energy (e.g., women are trained and supported to establish their won ESCOs)	Promotion of clean energy sources and technologies (e.g., incentives for developing household energy supplies around modern biomass forms)	Equal distribution and access to energy services (e.g., women are involved at senior level in energy-sector decision making)
	Affordability	Mechanisms to reflect women's incomes and cash flows in the cost of fuels (e.g., requirement for LPG suppliers to provide different size cylinders)	Pricing policy reflects women's incomes and cash flows (e.g., in electricity connection tariffs and payment methods)	Mechanisms stimulate switch to renewable energy sources and technologies (e.g., women have access to credit sources sufficient to purchase solar home systems)	Increased purchase power through reduced energy bills for households and informal/small businesses
	Safety	Safety regulations apply to household labor-saving equipment	Pricing policies and tariffs encourage switch to safer fuels and technologies (e.g., from kerosene to LPG or biogas for cooking)	Promotion of non-polluting technologies (e.g., information campaigns about the benefits of smokeless biomass stoves or solar cookers)	Promotion of increased well-being and personal safety (e.g., through street lighting enabling women to participate in events after dark)

Source: UNDP 2004a.

**Availability:** A wide range of alternative energy technologies are now available, and others are being developed very quickly, to meet cooking and lighting needs in low- and some middle-income countries. Cooking fuels, such as kerosene and liquefied petroleum

gas (LPG), are good substitutes for traditional biofuels because of their higher thermal efficiency and relative lack of pollutants. The use of such fuels also saves women time for more productive or empowering activities by eliminating the need to walk long distances to gather fuel and reducing cooking time. Time saved can be used for income-earning pursuits, attention to children, civic participation, or leisure (Barnes and Sen 2003).

A new class of cooking stoves has been developed that result in similar benefits. In India, the government is promoting cooking stoves with greater thermal efficiency and lower indoor air pollution emissions than traditional stoves (Barnes and Sen 2003). In the short term, because charcoal is a more convenient cooking fuel than wood and is already accepted in many parts of the world, investing in efficient charcoal production and improved charcoal stoves can make an important contribution by requiring less fuelwood and reducing harmful emissions (Modi 2004).

Mechanical power is needed for preparing foods, grinding grain, pumping water, and running equipment for household use. Decentralized power can be obtained from conventional energy sources such as diesel generators, or renewable energy sources such as wind, micro-hydro, and photovoltaics, or modernized biomass technologies.

A number of technologies provide alternatives for lighting in the absence of electrical power, including decentralized village power systems using diesel-powered mini-grids for charging batteries that can be carried to households and multifunctional platforms powered by a diesel engine for low-cost rural motive power. Appropriate technologies for households and small businesses in rural areas include direct current batteries that can operate fluorescent-current lamps.

The use of these alternative technologies must be context specific. As Misani (2001) points out, energy projects must start from an assessment of people's needs rather than a plan to promote a particular technology. What works in one place may not work in another because of different distance to markets, availability of resources, or different traditions. Even within the same country, approaches might differ. In Mali, for instance, village-specific feasibility studies showed that local customs and practices affected the timing and amount of demand for post-harvest grinding and milling. In Bangladesh, a successful energy project that met women's needs in Char Montaz (described in

Appendix 2) was successful because it started with a needs assessment and identified an appropriate technology. The local survey showed that lighting was the priority and the women created a marketing plan based on willingness to pay for battery operated lamps. Project evaluations also showed that the further away a village was from a battering charging station, the less likely people were to buy battery-operated lamps, and the project was designed to take this into account.

**Affordability:** Cost is often a constraint to women's access to infrastructure. Sometimes a combination of interventions can assist in lowering costs. In the longer-term, improved road and port infrastructure, improved handling and storage facilities at ports, bulk purchases of fuels, and regulatory reform can all help to reduce the cost of alternative fuels, for example (Modi 2004). However, in the short-term, there are a number of ways that energy projects can be designed to be affordable to poor households and earn income for women and women's associations. National energy policies can support energy services that increase economic opportunities for women. According to UNDP (2004a), which reviewed eight case studies of energy interventions in low-income countries, the most successful projects were those that stimulated income directly through engaging local people in the manufacture and sale of energy technologies, as well as indirectly through gains in productivity resulting from new energy inputs. The Bangladesh and Mali case studies in Appendix 2 show how interventions can be structured to earn income for poor, rural women. In Mali, women operated the diesel generators as formal businesses and became energy entrepreneurs, selling energy services to men and women. In a project in Malawi, women realized income directly from the sale of biomass briquettes. And, in Bangladesh, women make and sell battery-operated lamps. The greater the income-generating effects of sustainable energy efforts, the easier it is to mobilize support from governments, donors, and communities.

Rural villages may not have the financial base to support investments in desirable energy technologies. Marketing is a crucial part of sound business strategies and business-like models should be adopted in project design. In Bangladesh, a detailed marketing plan analyzed locations, customer characteristics, target markets, competition, and electricity demand, as well as the budget implications for the production of battery-

operated lamps. In Mali, village-level feasibility studies are used to determine whether or not there is enough demand and ability to pay within a community to support a multifunctional platform installation. If there is not enough market demand to cover operating costs, the project is not initiated in that location. Demand is calculated based on actual ability to pay for the services, not merely on the fact that such energy services are needed.

In theory, energy initiatives should be able to pay for themselves in the long-term. Short-term public policies may be needed to subsidize initial costs and to provide innovative financing and credit arrangements for investment in energy equipment. A critical role for government policy is appropriate targeting of subsidies to benefit the poorest, as well as the inclusion of sunset strategies to phase out subsidies when they are no longer justified. Direct subsidies or lease-finance mechanisms are widely supported ways to cover the upfront costs of these fuel sources (such as the cost of an LPG stove or cylinder).

Credit is needed to help people living in poverty to meet high initial costs for new equipment. It allows initial costs to be spread out over time in small payments similar to operating costs. In Bangladesh, when women were able to buy batteries on credit, the market for the lamps increased. In some cases, credit is better targeted to community organizations, not to individual households. In Mali, the women's groups earn enough money from platform operations to pay off loans and cover operating costs.

Few projects are sustainable yet. Even in Mali, the successful multi-functional projects still rely on government and donor support to cover a portion of the capital costs. But to put this in perspective, rural energy projects in many of the now-industrialized countries initially required substantial government subsidies.

**Capacity building:** In all energy interventions that have successfully addressed gender needs, technical business and skills training has been an essential feature of program and project design. Capacity building is critical to strengthen involvement of women and attention to women's concerns throughout all levels of energy policymaking, planning, and project implementation. The Mali and Bangladesh, projects profiled in Appendix 2 did a good job of training at many levels. In Bangladesh, women were taught how to

construct the lamps, and group leaders were given instruction in bookkeeping, accounting, and business management skills so they could operate the manufacturing facility.

Formal and informal women's organizations and networks can play important and stimulating roles in mobilizing resources for sustainable energy projects. Instructing women in project management and fund raising may empower them to launch new projects and to contribute to poverty alleviation in the longer-term.

### **5.3. Quick Impact Initiatives to Reduce Gender Inequality in Employment**

Task Force 3 of the UN Millennium Project identified two strategies to reduce gender inequality in employment: increasing women's control over economic assets and improving women's access to employment. Providing poor women access to credit is a key channel to enhancing women's asset ownership and saving. Public employment guarantee schemes have shown great promise in providing women labor market opportunities. Other measures that could yield quick results in urban labor markets are labor intermediation services and traineeships in firms.

#### *Quick Impact Initiative #5: Financial and Business Services to Strengthen and Expand Women's Enterprises*

Microfinance programs have been the most popular economic strategy over the past two decades to assist poor and landless women to enter self-employment or start their own business. According to the State of the Microcredit Summit Campaign 2001 Report, 14.2 million of the world's poorest women—accounting for nearly 74 percent of the 19.3 million poor people served by microfinance—now have access to financial services through specialized microfinance institutions, banks, NGOs, and other non-bank financial institutions (Druschel et al. 2001). Many microfinance programs, which incorporate savings components, have enabled women to build assets to use as collateral, reduce consumption volatility over time and self-finance investments rather than turning to creditors (Morduch 1999). According to Pitt and Khandker (1998), non-land assets increase substantially when borrowing is by women and not by men.

A number of lessons have been learned about the features of micro-finance programs that make them gender sensitive. For instance, programs must provide a diversity of financial instruments, including loans, savings, insurance, and other products that account for differences in needs among women and between women and men. Substituting character-based lending for collateral-based lending has been important in contexts where women do not own or control assets, such as land or housing, that can be used as collateral. In programs that use collateral-based lending for purchase of productive assets, programs can require registration of those assets in women's names or in joint names and applicable in loans for both women and men. Some programs have given preferential promotion of loans to women for house and land purchase and covered market registration costs on the condition that the asset and market site registration be in women's names

Credit, of course, is only one type of financial service provided by programs. Poor women also need savings and insurance. Many microfinance institutions provide these services (Mayoux 2005). Other non-financial services that are important are training/mutual learning for women to increase their organizational and business skills. Legal aid support or links with other service providers is also important for women to access to resolve conflicts over property rights, in cases of domestic violence (which is an issue for some micro-credit programs), or other difficulties (Mayoux 2005).

There is an active debate in the literature about the empowering effects of microfinance for poor women. One issue is the extent of control that women have over loans. Goetz and Gupta (1996), for instance, found that 39 percent of women in the four programs they studied in Bangladesh had little or no control over their loans, although they remained responsible for loan repayment. Women's lack of control over the use of the loan increased with loan size. Some studies find an increase in women's workloads when they participate in microfinance programs (Kabeer 1998).

The financial viability of micro-enterprise loan programs is the subject of extensive discussion in the literature. Some lessons for program design include the importance of cross-subsidies derived from charging better-off clients for some business services, such as business registration, that can cover the costs of non-financial services such as training that help women's businesses increase their productivity.

Parker (2005) notes that, “microcredit is most likely to be successful when it is implemented as a professional banking activity, with significant resources, and a long-term commitment.” She observes that for every 20 non-financial service organizations that consider microcredit as a new service, only one may actually be able or willing to pay the high price of implementing the operating principles required for sustainability.

For micro-credit to be sound, a pre-existing level of ongoing economic activity, entrepreneurial capacity and managerial talent is needed (Parker 2005). These conditions may not hold in an immediate post-emergency environment, for the chronically destitute, in severely disadvantaged rural areas lacking infrastructure and access to markets, in contexts where people are dependent on a single economic activity (such as a single agricultural crop), or in situations of chronic illness. In these situations, social protection, social insurance, and public employment are better options (see below).

#### *Quick Impact Initiative #6: Public Employment Guarantee Schemes*

Public works programs have been important counter-cyclical program interventions in both developed and developing countries for many years. They typically provide unskilled manual laborers with short-term employment on infrastructure projects (road construction and maintenance, irrigation infrastructure, reforestation, soil conservation), although some offer employment guarantees year-round. They have also been implemented to counter financial risk-induced unemployment (Korea and Argentina).

Governments can implement public works directly (through line ministries), or indirectly through the private sector (contractors) or NGOs. There is a great deal of variation in program administration across countries. They can be implemented fairly rapidly, for instance, as in Argentina, reaching close to five percent of the population (or 2 million people) in its first year of operation, or they can be phased in over time, as in India.

For poor women, especially in rural areas, public employment guarantees can provide an important source of work and income, although evaluations of country programs reveal that not all achieve their potential. Perhaps the most well known and best studied scheme in developing countries is the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme, introduced in Maharashtra, India, in 1972. The scheme guarantees employment



to unemployed rural adults on a defined piece-rate basis. The objectives are to sustain household welfare in the short run and contribute to development of the rural economy in the long run by improving rural infrastructure and assets. Women's participation in the scheme increased gradually, rising from 41 percent in 1979 to 53 percent in 1987, and has remained fairly stable since.<sup>8</sup> The localized nature of the employment offered and the systematic provision of child care reduce the costs of women's participation, and there is no overt gender discrimination in wages. Women's earnings from the scheme constitute as much as 30 percent of household income (see Appendix 2 and Engkvist 1995).

Like many labor market interventions, public employment guarantee schemes can contain gender biases. In some programs women earn less than men, partly because they are excluded from higher wage or physically difficult tasks. Women can be more susceptible to exploitation, and village studies in India show higher rates of female participation than official registers, suggesting that women work as unpaid labor on behalf of men (Engkvist 1995). Baden (1995) notes that other public works schemes have a varied record on female participation. Phase one of the Rural Employment Sector Program in Bangladesh achieved more than 40 percent participation of women. Women attended meetings and saved more regularly than men, but they were allocated fewer days of work at lower daily rates. Few women's groups participated in project planning as compared with men's groups. In Chile's Minimum Employment Program (PEM), set up in 1975, 73 percent of the participants were women by 1987 (Buvinic 1993). To counter the "feminization" of PEM, the government set up the Employment Program for Household Heads (POJH), paying the minimum wage to heads of household, twice the rate under PEM. POJH attracted mainly men and discouraged the wives of poor men from working outside the home.

Despite these problems in practice, there are a number of design features that can make public employment guarantee schemes more gender sensitive. The benefits to women depend on: (1) whether or not women have equal access to direct wage employment benefits; (2) factors of design and implementation that determine women's participation; and (3) whether women benefit equally from the assets created by public

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<sup>8</sup> The work participation rate for females in rural Maharashtra is higher than participation rates in the Employment Guarantee Scheme.

works (Swamy 2003). The case studies described in Appendix 1 illustrate these issues in more detail.

There are six core gender-sensitive design features for public employment guarantee schemes. They are:

**1. Distance from employment site to women's homes.** Long distance to work sites has a strong and negative effect on women's participation rates relative to men's. It was found in Ethiopia (Quisumbing and Yohannes 2004) and India (Krishnaraj et al. 2004a) and that locating work sites close to women's neighborhoods/villages can increase women's participation in the program.

**2. Provision of crèches or links to crèches.** The availability of day care centers or creches, as in the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme, substantially increases women's participation in employment. On-site child-care provision, combined with early childhood development programs, can improve child nutrition and relieve constraints on women's participation in public works, as well as lay the foundation for entry into primary school (Quisumbing et al. 2004).

**3. Mode of payment.** The mode of payment, whether in cash in the form of a wage or a piece rate or in-kind in the form of food, can increase women's participation by giving them greater flexibility (Subbaro 2001; Devereux 2005). The timing of payment also matters (Quisumbing 2004; Subbarao 2003; Gaihra 2000); delayed payments, for instance, discourage female participation. It has also been found in some programs (primarily in sub-Saharan Africa), women's participation increased when payment was in the form of food because they could control the use of food more easily, whereas men were more easily able to appropriate money (Subbarao 2003).

**4. Existence of government directives for equal pay.** The existence of government directives for equal pay increases the participation of women in public employment programs; this was the case, for instance, in South Africa (Adato and Haddad 2001) and in India (Gaiha 2000).

**5. Employment in enterprises providing services or products is as important as construction of infrastructure.** In the Jefes program in Argentina, a large number of projects are designed specifically to cater to community needs by providing a wide range of goods and services. For instance, the program enables participants to work in community centers and food kitchens, family attention centers which address domestic violence issues or provide temporary shelter and other services to abused women or children, and health promotion programs, which offer basic education on sanitary issues. Women, by and large, are the primary labor force in these activities (Tcherneva and Wray 2005a).

**6. Community/women's participation in design and execution.** Community participation has been found to increase the percentage of employment going to women (Hoddinott et al. 2001). In South Africa, community participation led to project outcomes that were more cost-efficient, generated increased benefits to the community, and with greater gender impact, measured by an increased number of women's working days (Hoddinott et al. 2003). One lesson from this and other studies is that policy needs to be directed toward increasing women's involvement in decision-making regarding the creation and management of community assets.

Public employment guarantee schemes can be financed in different ways, and the source of funding affects the duration of employment. In most African countries (with exception of South Africa), bilateral donors funded many public works, and programs lasted only as long as donor support (Subbarao et al. 1997). In countries where public works are domestically funded, either partially (as in Bangladesh) or fully (as in India), programs have operated for much longer periods and are seen to be more financially sustainable.

## **6. QUICK IMPACT INITIATIVES THAT INDIRECTLY PROMOTE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

This section profiles examples of Quick Impact Initiatives that indirectly promote women's economic opportunities, including QIIs that improve reproductive health, reduce violence against women, and increase women's participation in elected bodies.

### **6.1. Quick Impact Initiatives for Reproductive Health**

The longer term strategy for reducing maternal mortality and improving reproductive health is a health district model, with a backbone of health centers, family practices or equivalent decentralized structures, and a referral district hospital.<sup>9</sup> Transformations of administrative districts into functional health systems take time and have been complicated by an unfavorable economic climate in many countries. However, within this model, there are several well-known interventions for reducing maternal mortality and improving women's reproductive health that can work within a decade or less. The Millennium Project (2005a) highlighted increasing women's access to information and services, including family planning information and services, and closing the funding gap for commodities, supplies and logistics, as two Quick Impact Initiatives that meet the criteria in Section 2 for improving reproductive health.

#### *Quick Impact Initiative #7: Providing Family Planning Information and Services*

Interventions to provide family planning information and services are well known and well evaluated. Family planning services that provide women with a range of contraceptive options and informed choice have been shown to reduce high-risk pregnancies associated with multiple pregnancies and helps women avoid unwanted and unsafe abortions (Lule et al. 2003). Bundling multiple services (e.g., immunization with reproductive health outreach; follow-up care for intra-uterine devices with pap smears and screening for reproductive tract infections) is both effective and can significantly

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<sup>9</sup> The ideal scenario for reducing maternal mortality is an integrated primary healthcare system, where every birth, whether it takes place at home or in a facility, is attended by a skilled birth attendant, backed up by facilities that can provide emergency obstetric care and essential newborn care and by a functioning referral system that ensure timely access to the appropriate level of services in case of life-threatening complications (UN Millennium Project 2005c).

reduce the costs to the health system and the user (with the reduction in the number of required visits). Incorporating medical abortion into family planning programs can be an effective and quick impact initiative within family planning services; medical abortion has proven effective and highly acceptable in developing countries and is suitable for less-advanced health systems (Winikoff et al. 1997).<sup>10</sup>

The case of Iran (Box 5) shows how fertility decline can be achieved within a decade by increasing access to information and family planning services. A critical feature in Iran's program is the lack of user fees for family planning supplies, which has increased access among the poor.

**Box 5. Dramatic Demographic Change Within a Decade: The Case of Iran**

The example of Iran illustrates how the introduction of a family planning program can spur voluntary fertility decline by removing both cultural and economic barriers. The population growth before 1986 was 3.9 percent per year but fell between 1986 and 1996 to 2 percent per year. In 2002, the population growth rate had declined to 1.2 percent per year. This fall in population growth is due to a dramatic decline in the fertility rate in both rural and urban areas.

In 1989, Iran introduced a family planning program delivered through the primary health care facilities. The program had three major goals: to encourage families to delay first pregnancy and to space out births; to discourage pregnancy to women younger than 18 and older than 35 years; and to limit family size to three children. Before a couple marries they must pass classes in family planning but after marriage have access to all modern contraceptive methods free of charge at public clinics. The lack of fees for contraceptives has given also low-income couples the possibility to control their own fertility. As a result, contraceptive use among married couples has increased from 37 percent in 1976 to 74 percent in 2000 and the average age of marriage for a woman increased from 19.7 in 1976 to 22.4 in 1996.

Religious objections to the program were addressed through extensive consultations with clergies and the religious community. In 1988, the High Judicial Council declared that, "there is no Islamic barrier to family planning." This decision was later discussed at a seminar for eminent clergy and physicians to gain their support. Some influential clergy were still not convinced, so the government took the case to the Expediency Discernment Council of the System, which resolves disputes between the parliament and the Guardian Council. The Expediency Discernment Council agreed with the High Judicial Council's decision that the government could introduce the policy without conflicts with Islam.

The family planning program was later followed by other supporting policies to remove the economic incentives for large families, including support for interventions to reduce infant mortality; promote women's education and employment, and social security and retirement plans. Access to health facilities in both rural and urban areas, as well as infrastructure, play an important role in a successful family planning program. Furthermore, the support from the religious community was crucial to the success of the program. All these incentives help creating an understanding among the general public about the benefits of smaller families and spurred the dramatic fertility decline Iran has seen the past 15 years.

*Source: Adapted from UN Millennium Project 2006.*

<sup>10</sup> The procedure, consisting of an initial dose of antiprogestogen, usually mifepristone, followed by a prostaglandin, typically misoprostol, is effective if done within nine weeks of the last menstrual period.

*Quick Impact Initiative #8: Reducing Maternal Mortality*

Evidence from a number of countries suggests a range of interventions to reduce maternal mortality that meet the criteria in Section 2. Countries that have been successful in reducing maternal mortality have used facilities beyond public hospitals and clinics, for example, birthing homes, private providers, and maternity waiting centers to improve geographic access to emergency obstetric care for populations residing in remote and rural areas. Between 1990 and 1997, Honduras reduced the number of maternal deaths from 182 to 108 per 100,000 by targeting specific areas; for example, one strategy was to set up 13 birthing centers in remote areas known for high maternal mortality (Box 6 and Danel and Rivera 2003). Egypt had similar and impressive gains with reducing maternal mortality from 174 to 84 between 1992 and 2000; one contributing factor was an increase in the use of facilities for deliveries, including those in the private sector. Cuba started maternity waiting homes as early as 1962, which, between 1963 and 1984, helped to increase institutional deliveries from 63% to 99% and led to a decline in MMR from 118 to 31 per 100,000 (Lule et al. 2003).

**Box 6. Honduras: Reducing Maternal Mortality**

In Honduras, one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, the maternal mortality ratio declined by 38 percent between 1990 and 1997, from 182 to 108 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. This was the result of a concerted effort by government officials and development agencies. The Honduran government implemented a three-part strategy during the 1990s, consisting of: first, a reorganization of the health services intended to increase access to skilled care for pregnant women; second, the training of health workers, including traditional birth attendants, to recognize high-risk pregnancies; and finally, community participation in which local communities were provided opportunities to identify solutions to their health care problems and given more input into decision-making.

*Source: Levine 2004.*

The increased emphasis on local health workers as agents for delivering a large array of interventions, for instance, in models being implemented in Ghana and Ethiopia, is another step in service provision that can be taken relatively quickly. As shown in Box 6 above, Honduras increased the number of health personnel and skilled birth attendants in local areas.

Sri Lanka has halved its maternal mortality rate at least every 12 years since 1950. Training local health workers to deliver interventions was a primary factor in the

country's impressive achievement of halving maternal mortality rates over the last forty years (see Box 7).

#### **Box 7. Reducing Maternal Mortality in Sri Lanka**

In the 1950s, the maternal mortality ratio in Sri Lanka was estimated at between 500-600 per 100,000 live births. Sri Lanka has cut in half the maternal mortality ratio at least every 12 years since that time, so that in 2005, the maternal mortality ratio is 60 per 100,000. Moreover, skilled practitioners attend to 97 percent of all births, compared with only 30 percent in 1940.

How did Sri Lanka—a poor country, with a per capita income of \$740—do this?

In Sri Lanka, health services have benefited from strong public sector leadership. Going back to the 1930s, the government focused on expanding free health services in rural areas, with attention given to preventive services and control of major communicable disease. Financing for this effort was derived largely from income taxes. Sri Lanka also has a good civil service registration system that provides valuable information for planning and monitoring of interventions to reduce maternal deaths.

Sri Lanka's strategy unfolded in phases, first improving overall, rural access to lower and higher level health facilities, professionalizing midwives, reaching particularly vulnerable populations, and later emphasizing quality improvements.

*Access:* Health units staffed by a medical officer and public health midwives, along with viable referral systems for pregnancy and other health problems. Health units are supported by cottage hospitals offering basic services; rural hospitals and maternity homes at a primary level; district hospitals at the secondary level; and tertiary provincial hospitals with specialist services. The number of services expanded “rapidly” increasing from 112 government hospitals in 1930 (182 beds per 100,000 people) to 247 hospitals in 1948. Between 1948-50, national ambulance fleet increased and all provincial hospitals had between 3–4 ambulances, as did major district hospitals.

*Professionalizing Midwives:* Public health midwives underpin the health unit network. Each midwife services a population of 3,000–5,000 and lives within the local area. Duties include visiting pregnant women in homes, registering them for care, encouraging them to attend antenatal clinics, and working with doctors who run the clinics. Midwives are a key element in providing reproductive health care, embedded within the public health system and their local communities.

*Reaching vulnerable populations:* Workers on tea estates were particularly isolated. In 1970, after government nationalized tea estates, government assumed responsibility for health services and a network of polyclinics was established to provide integrated maternal and child health services to tea estate workers. Between 1986–1997, the number of women from the estates delivering in hospitals increased from 20 to 63 percent. The maternal mortality ratio for tea estate workers declined from 120 in 1985 to 90 in 1997.

*Source: Adapted from Levine (2004).*

For reproductive and maternal health services to be taken up and be sustainable, financial barriers have to be overcome. There are two broad options for organizing financing of the health care system: through a general tax-based system or through a social health insurance system. Both provide financial risk protection and promote health equity through prepayment of health care costs and pooling of health care risks. As noted

above in the example of Iran, not implementing user fees is important for enabling poor women to access services; rather attention needs to be given to structural changes and a refinancing of health care services. Funding flows need to be increased and channeled in different ways. Thailand, for instance, made a “quantum leap” (WHO 2005) in extending financial coverage by merging various partial insurance schemes and extending entitlements to the whole population. This required the fiscal space to increase public funding so as to ensure an adequate supply of services. In most countries, financial sustainability will only be achieved in the short and middle term by consolidating all sources of funding- external and domestic, public and private.

## **6.2. Quick Impact Initiatives to Increase Women’s Political Representation<sup>11</sup>**

Some countries have made noticeable progress on women’s representation in political bodies since 1991. Their experience suggests that gender quotas and reservations are an effective Quick Impact Initiative for increasing women’s representation in national and local legislatures.

### *Quick Impact Initiative #9: Political Quotas and Reservations*

There are three quota-like mechanisms that have demonstrated their potential for increasing women’s representation in political bodies. Statutory gender quotas require that political parties field a minimum number or percentage of female candidates in legislative elections. Argentina’s 1991 Quota Law (la Ley de Cupos), for example, requires that each party list contain a minimum of 30 percent women. Political parties often adopt quotas on a voluntary basis rather than by legal statute. Reservations or reserved seats are mechanisms to set aside a percentage of legislative seats for women. These seats may be filled through competitive election or by appointment. In Taiwan, China, the seats go to women who receive the most votes in general elections. In Tanzania, each party appoints women to fill the reserved seats in proportion to the votes it receives (Htun 2003b).

In 2004, 37 countries had gender quotas or reservations.<sup>12</sup> Of these 37 countries, 23 had statutory gender quotas and 14 reserved seats in national legislatures or local

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<sup>11</sup> This section draws heavily on UN Millennium Project (2005b), pages 107-108.



councils. In an additional 33 countries political parties applied gender quotas on a voluntary basis. Quotas have been used in both rich and poor countries and in both old and new democracies.

Every region includes countries with statutory quotas or reservations, but two regional patterns stand out. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 11 countries adopted national gender quota legislation in the 1990s and a 12th (Colombia) introduced quotas for senior posts in the executive branch. This experience suggests the influence of regional diffusion of quota policies. In the Balkans during the 1990s, gender quotas were introduced in every new electoral regime in the former Yugoslavia except for Croatia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovenia all introduced quotas). The Balkan experience shows that in the period following civil war or the founding of a new state, the crafting of new electoral institutions opens a window of opportunity for increasing women's representation. In some cases, the international community has influenced adoption of such policies. In others, women's groups within the country have been the most important actors.

Although many countries have introduced quotas, there is tremendous variation in women's legislative representation in these countries. Thus, quotas do not automatically ensure women's equal representation in legislative bodies (Tinker 2002).

Experience offers four lessons about the conditions under which quotas effectively enhance women's voice in political bodies. The first lesson is that a country's electoral system strongly influences the impact of quotas (Htun 2003b). Quotas work best in closed-list, proportional representation systems with placement mandates and where electoral districts are large—where many candidates are elected from each electoral district and parties can expect several candidates running in the district to gain a seat. In such systems voters vote for a party list, not for individual candidates, and party leaders control the placement of candidates on the list. The number of votes received by the party determines how many candidates from the rank-ordered list are elected.

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<sup>12</sup> Countries with gender quotas or reservations at the national level include: Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Korea (DPR), Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia and Montenegro, Sudan, Taiwan (China), Tanzania, and Uganda. Three countries have quotas at the local level only: Greece, India, and Namibia.

Second, placement mandates are critical to the success of quotas in closed-list proportional representation electoral systems. Because candidates are elected from party lists in the order in which they appear, placement on the list determines the chances of being elected. Placement mandates require parties to place women in high or “electable” positions on party lists (for example, by alternations of women’s positions with men’s on the party list). This system sets up a reasonably direct relationship between the number of women candidates and the number of women elected. Without these mandates, political parties tend to comply with quotas in the most “minimalist” manner permitted by law, assigning women the lowest places on the list (Jones 1998). For example, the Costa Rican quota law contained no placement mandate for the first two elections in which it was applied, and parties placed many women near the bottom of party lists, where they stood no realistic chance of getting elected. Following the Costa Rican Supreme Court ruling requiring parties to adopt placement mandates, women’s representation in the national parliament jumped from 19 percent to 35 percent.

Third, quota laws must specify details of implementation. Vague laws leave too much discretion to political parties to apply—or fail to apply—quotas as they see fit. For example, the first Mexican quota law of 1996 failed to specify whether the quotas applied to regular candidates, alternates, or both. As a result political parties complied with the gender quota by including women as alternate candidates. In the national elections of 2000, 70 percent of alternate candidates were women. Mexico’s law, revised substantially in 2002, also fails to specify how the quota is supposed to be applied in the 300 single-member districts that elect three-fifths of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, for quota laws to be effective, there must be sanctions for noncompliance. The strongest sanction is to have a party’s list of candidates declared invalid and for the party to be forbidden from contesting the election. For these sanctions to work, judges must be able to monitor party compliance and groups must be able to challenge noncompliant lists in court. When a quota law was first applied in Argentina in 1993, for example, very few party lists complied (Aggio 2001). Networks of women politicians and feminist activists, spearheaded by the National Women’s Council of the executive

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<sup>13</sup> Though the text of the Mexican law suggests that the quota applies to both the proportional representation and the plurality elections, sanctions for noncompliance are administered only for proportional representation elections.

branch, appeared in court to challenge party lists. In most cases electoral judges refused to validate the lists and sent them back to the political parties (Durrieu 1999).

### **6.3. Reducing Violence Against Women (VAW)**

The literature on what constitutes effective anti-violence interventions is sparse. A recent review of the literature by Bott, Morrison, and Ellsberg (2005) identifies several promising initiatives, but most of these are long-term strategies. For instance, efforts to prevent violence against women are long-term in nature. However, there are several QIIs for mitigating the consequences of violence and for punishing perpetrators that meet the criteria described in Section 2 above.

#### *Quick Impact Initiative #10: Health System Interventions to Mitigate the Consequences of Violence*

Within the health system, there are several examples of improving the health care response to VAW that can be implemented fairly quickly. Typically, this includes changes in policies and protocols, infrastructure upgrades to ensure private consultations, training for all staff (including managers), ensuring that providers have adequate resources such as referral networks and directories, and strengthening the ability of staff to provide emergency services such as danger assessment, safety planning, prophylaxis for sexually-transmitted infections, and emergency contraception.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation of the Western Hemisphere carried out an initiative that illustrates this approach in four member associations in Latin America: Profamilia (Dominican Republic), INPPARES (Peru), PLAFAM (Venezuela), and BENFAM (Brazil). Qualitative and quantitative baseline, mid-term, and follow up studies concluded that the initiative improved provider attitudes and practices, strengthened patient privacy and confidentiality, increased detection of women who experienced physical and sexual abuse, improved the overall quality of women's health care, and benefited survivors through the provision of specialized services such as legal aid, counseling, and support groups. These changes occurred within three years (Guedes 2004). It is important to note that this intervention relied on outside funding, but there is scope for cross-subsidies from other programs and services.

*Quick Impact Initiative #11: Female Police Stations or Cells*

Another intervention that has quick impact is the establishment of female police stations or cells. According to research evidence, they generally appear to increase reporting, as well as the likelihood that women will receive services such as forensic exams, counseling, emergency contraception, and sexually-transmitted infections prophylaxis. On the other hand, evaluations have documented numerous problems in different countries, such as efforts being undermined by law enforcement personnel who are not willing or able to enforce the law. The establishment of female police stations has, in certain instances, enabled regular police stations to abdicate responsibility for protecting women. Because of these problems, Human Rights Watch argues against separate stations for women as a long-term strategy.

*Quick Impact Initiative #12: Community-Based Awareness and Training Programs*

A third type of Quick Impact Intervention to reduce violence against women is community-based awareness and training. The Stepping Stones Project, carried out in the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, the Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, is a community-wide training package focused on STI/HIV prevention and gender and reproductive health. Originally developed in Uganda, the project aims to encourage communities to question and rectify the gender inequalities that contribute to HIV/AIDS. It uses workshops, community-wide meetings, drama, peer group discussions, and other strategies to increase awareness of gender-based violence, among other health issues. Numerous evaluations show improvements in self-reported attitudes and behaviors in a relatively short timeframe. The program seems to have reduced social acceptability of wife-beating at the community level and produce a corresponding drop in that behavior in several communities (Bott et al. 2005).

Other community-level interventions that have been shown to reduce violence against women (and men) at home and in the streets also include restrictions on the sale of alcohol, for instance, prohibiting the sale of alcohol after a certain hour of the night. Evaluations from Bogota, Colombia as well as several states in India suggest that alcohol restrictions led to substantial reductions in public and gender-based violence.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has shown that there are a number of schemes that meet the criteria of Quick Impact Initiatives that can make a discernable difference in the lives of men and women. The paper also shows that implementation of QII's can vary widely. QIIs are not a substitute for longer-term transformation, but they do show that short-run steps are possible.

As noted earlier, there are a number of other possible QIIs that were not reviewed here because they lack documentation, although they have all the main features of QIIs. Other possible QIIs include policy changes, such as changes in laws and/or regulations that eliminate prohibitions for women to own land or other property. Changes in labor laws/codes that were designed with the view that women are "secondary workers" and thus discriminate against women, and/or passing of anti-discrimination employment legislation or equal employment opportunities acts would also qualify. Other measures that could yield quick results in urban labor markets are labor intermediation services and traineeships in firms. For all these initiatives, donors should invest in documenting their impact.

A number of lessons emerge for improving QII's over the next ten years. First, it is important to have better program and impact evaluations. As Duflo (2004) notes, "scaling up implies that same program can work in different environments and that learning from experience is possible." Donors, governments, and NGOs need to have reliable program evaluations—both process evaluations of how well the program is meeting its stated objectives and impact evaluations to determine objective results on the population affected by the intervention. Duflo (2004) provides a good summary of how to improve program evaluation efforts.

The PROGRESA program that was described in Box 4 benefited from a strong, multi-pronged evaluation effort. It started in 1998 with a pilot program in 506

communities, half of which were randomly selected to receive the program.<sup>14</sup> Baseline and subsequent data were collected in those and the remaining communities. Evaluation done by the International Food Policy Research Institute and other independent researchers showed positive results and provided useful information to the Mexican government for scaling up the program. By 2000, PROGRESA was reaching 2.6 million families, or 10 percent of the families in Mexico (Duflo 2004). It has subsequently been expanded to Mexico's urban communities and several countries in Latin America are implementing similar programs.

Most of the interventions discussed in this paper have not benefited from the type of evaluations that have led to PROGRESA's success. Governments and donors can do better in designing and implementing programs evaluations. The evaluations should pay attention to the criteria suggested in Section 2: the intervention is likely to be successful in multiple contexts, locations, and environments; the intervention is capable of being implemented and scaled up to a majority of the target population within a three-to-five year timeframe; the intervention is likely to have an impact within 3 years of implementation; the intervention can be implemented with key gender-sensitive design features; and the intervention is likely to be financially sustainable, and includes potential for cost recovery. Once such evaluations are in place, it would be useful to build a database of Quick Impact Initiatives to achieve all the MDGs and to put it in multiple formats that would be easily accessible to donors and program planners.

A second issue has to do with financing for QIIs. Cost information for Quick Impact Initiatives is not readily available. Yet this information is crucial for project planning and budgeting purposes. Grown et al. (2006) have developed a methodology for estimating the costs of interventions to finance gender equality and empower women that can be used in country-level budget and planning exercises carried out by the Ministry of Finance with various line ministries. This methodology can be used to help calculate the costs of the initiatives described here.

The examples provided in the paper show that there can be no excuse for inaction. Quick Impact Initiatives represent an immediate and feasible set of options that can begin

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<sup>14</sup> PROGRESA is unusual among education and other interventions because of the large number of well-designed evaluations that have been conducted of the program by independent researchers over the past decade.

today. With adequate resources and political will to implement them, the world community can make real progress by 2015.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **GENDER RESPONSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE INTERVENTIONS**

#### **Mali Multifunctional Platform Project (MFP)**

*Program aims and objectives:* Overall objectives are to provide a decentralized and sustainable energy supply and to ensure that it is used and controlled by women. The program further strives to alleviate poverty among women in rural areas by increasing productivity and income generating opportunities and to reduce time spent collecting fuelwood and water or engaging in labor intensive agricultural activities.

*Program description:* In 1993, the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) initiated a program to decrease the burden of fuel collection by supplying labor-saving energy services and multi-functional platforms to rural villages and to encourage the empowerment of women through their involvement in the design, management, and implementation of the project. The multifunctional platform, which is a machine with a simple diesel engine, can perform a variety of tasks, including the powering of tools, the generation of electricity, and the pumping of water. Through this combination of simplicity and multiple uses, a group using the platform may simultaneously produce sustainable energy and income. In addition, the platform's simplicity enables communities to install and maintain their own machines and allows them easy access to replacement parts.

Following a participatory assessment of community and women's needs in 1997, UNDP and the government of Mali began providing support to existing platforms, recognizing the projects potential as an engine of development and poverty reduction for the community. The program is currently managed by the Malian Department of Industry and Commerce, with ongoing support of UNDP (Modi 2004). Women's associations own, manage, and maintain the platforms in each village and sell energy services to both men and women.

*Impact:* Between 1999 and 2004, 400 platforms were installed, serving 80,000 women in ten districts. A study of 12 villages found that women saved 1 to 3.3 hours per day milling and de-husking rice once the mechanized platforms were introduced. Indirect results from time saved include an increase in women's income by US\$68 annually (average annual income is \$122), a rise in the number of women earning income of more than 150,000, an overall increase in food production (rice) and consumption, an increase in the ratio of girls to boys completing elementary school, and an increase in the proportion of girls entering secondary education from 31 percent to 38 percent (UNDP 2004b).

*Gender specific design features:* MFPs are run as a formal business; women own and manage the energy supply, keep accounts and stock inventories, maintain a register of clients, and perform general maintenance. Operators manage accounts and provide reports to the women's associations and receive income for their work. Participatory feasibility studies are conducted to determine community and women's needs, expectations and uses of the platform, while other technology and affordability studies are conducted by NGOs. The program targets women as primary beneficiaries because energy poverty specifically effects women due to the nature of gender relations. In response to demand from villages, the project made platform management by women's associations a condition. Training was provided to women's management committees in literacy, bookkeeping, management, and maintenance. The project convinced men that because women perform the grinding, hulling, and water collection, this equipment had to be their property and under their control.

*Financing:* From 1999 to 2004, costs totaled approximately \$8.6 million, with 40 percent funded by UNDP. The cost of a single platform is about \$4,300. Fixed costs of the engine are recovered through fees on a variety of services provided by the platform. The overall project budget is approximately \$2.5 million, which is co-financed by the Norwegian government. Local partners have been mobilized to finance platforms and training costs (including NGOs, other donors, the private sector, social clubs, and individuals). Women's associations put up to 40–60 percent of total equipment costs and pay for all

operation and maintenance through grants from the project. As of now, the project has no line of credit. The original pilot was funded through UNIDO/IFAD; since then, UNDP has supplied 40 percent of \$8.6 million, which is co-financed with Norwegian government. The project provides grants of up to \$1,500 for platforms and up to \$10,500 for mini-grids or mini water networks so that women's associations can afford them.

*Enabling environment:* The Government of Mali has supported the project since 1997; it has been administered through Department of Industry and Commerce. Recently, several measures have been taken to increase the affordability of the platforms. First, the project provides grants of about \$1,500 for the basic equipment and installation (about 40–60 percent of total equipment costs). The size of this grant is calculated based on the cost of the module and the village's ability to mobilize its resources. Second, the cost may often be lowered by contributions from community organizations. Third, certain arrangements can be made, such as payment in-kind. Fourth, the project has created a website that may attract potential benefactors. Finally, there has been discussion concerning the creation of credit institutions. The current rate of multifunctional platform "affordability" for all Mali is 96 percent.

*Limitations:* The evaluation of the pilot in 1998 revealed several challenges to up-scaling, most notably that reliability is a general problem and that there is great need for: more rigorous financial, economic, social, and technical feasibility studies to evaluate platform installation; village-specific methodologies and tools, as village context affects outcome of feasibility studies and assessments of viability of individual platforms; a strengthening of institutional capacity building, an increase and diversification in energy sales for more revenue; and finally, a reduction of costs while maintaining platform effectiveness and reliability.

*Sources:* Burn and Coche (2001); Modi (2004); UNDP (2004b).

## **Bangladesh Opportunity for Women in Renewable Energy Technology Utilization Project, Char Montaz**

*Program aims and objectives:* To create a decentralized sustainable micro-enterprise system, that is managed by women, in which energy can be generated at a low cost, to supplement the national government's overall goal to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth.

*Program description:* The project was initiated by the Prokaushali Sangsad Limited (PSL), which is an engineering/consulting firm based in Dhaka (World Bank 2002a). It is located in southern Bangladesh, in the middle of the Bay of Bengal. Through the formation of a 33 member cooperative in 1999, rural women have engaged in the assembly, installation, maintenance, and marketing of direct current (DC) lamps (used in houses, fishing boats, shops, and mosques) and charge controllers powered by diesel generators and, more recently, by photovoltaic (PV) systems. The long-term target area of project covers nearly 20,000 households within 300 square kilometers. Currently, the project uses a diesel generator for recharging batteries, but it will be replaced with solar PV systems shortly. In addition, the cooperative now allows consumers to purchase the DC lamps with credit, supplied by the cooperative, in order to raise sales.

*Impact:* Overall, early evaluations of the program suggest it has increased villagers' access to modern lighting and empowered women. In the initial two years of the program, more than 1,200 households, stores, and boats began using direct current lamps, and incomes were increased by 30 percent. Modern lamps are replacing kerosene lamps, improving the quality of indoor air and lighting, household and business safety and security, while enhancing productivity. These improvements have enabled stores to stay open longer, fisherman to utilize electrical equipment, and children to complete more schoolwork at home (World Bank 2002a).

*Gender specific design features:* The program trains women in all aspects of energy production, from assembly to management, services that are in high demand. Women now have increased opportunities to acquire technical and business skills, thereby

reducing women's social exclusion and increasing their role within the community. Male family members have also been encouraged to act as advisers to the women, particularly on marketing, sales, and operating battery-charging services. The program provides women with an excellent opportunity to earn a relatively good wage, in that if a woman makes and sells two lamps a day, she earns the wages equivalent to a skilled laborer, which may benefit both her family and her social status. Within the program, the importance of including women as managers and technicians alongside men can't be emphasized enough. Community perceptions of women and of their capabilities are eroding gender biases and expanding women's earning potential. The high demand for energy services has helped to underline the importance of women's contributions (technical and business skills, micro-enterprise management, micro-credit management) to the community, earning them higher status and respect.

*Financing:* The project has been partially funded since its creation by the Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP), which is a joint program of the World Bank and UNDP.

*Enabling environment:* After consultations with NGOs and local community members, the national government clearly recognizes the critical need for electrification in rural areas as a high priority. The project was initiated after PSL conducted surveys on household energy use and methods of sustainable rural energy sources. The surveys were distributed by female engineers, who identified the need for rural women to play an instrumental role in the project. From the initiation of the project, both women and local NGOs have been consulted on project implementation and have shown great support. The longevity of the program looks promising, with a market of 20,000 households in an area where grid extension within the next 20 years seems highly unlikely (UNDP 2004b).

*Limitations:* The cooperative is not yet economically viable. In its present phase, donors are looking to make this a practical sustainable enterprise. A major challenge is that the cooperative is producing under capacity (producing only 200-250 lamps per month when capacity can accommodate 900 lamps). Also, it had an accumulated inventory of only 560

lamps. There are potentially captive markets in surrounding islands but the cooperative needs marketing assistance (ESMAP 2004). In addition, sales are hindered by the lack of consumer credit to purchase the necessary batteries. Currently, the program lacks the necessary financing to expand, due to the initial high costs of purchasing the equipment.

*Sources: Berthaud et al. (2004); World Bank (2002a).*

## **Morocco Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project<sup>15</sup>**

*Program aims and objectives:* The overall objective of the project is to improve the access of rural communities to safe water. By doing so, the program further intends to improve the health and productivity of rural communities, and to reduce the burden of girls traditionally involved in fetching water, thereby increasing their school attendance.

*Program description:* The project targets 27 provinces out of 58 rural Moroccan provinces. The program has two key components. The first component is the construction and rehabilitation of water supply facilities, implemented by the General Directorate of Hydraulics (DGH) in villages and groups of villages with populations ranging from 250 to 3,500 people. The National Portable Water Authority (ONEP) supervises the implementation of the project in larger communities located near existing pipelines. Methods of supply are determined by water availability, beneficiary demand and willingness-to-pay, and investment and recurrent costs. They range from simple well or rainwater collection systems with handpumps to well/borehole with electric/diesel or solar pump, storage tank, and small distribution systems, which may serve several public fountains or house connections. The second component is the improvement of rural sanitation, which involves the construction of household and school latrines and health centers, as well as a pilot demonstration of several small-bore sewage systems with a communal septic tank.

*Impact:* The program maintained safeguard policies for environmental and social issues; great care was taken to prevent a substantial increase in wastewater through the construction of appropriate household sanitation facilities. The number of beneficiaries of rural water supply has increased from 20 percent in 1994 (about 2.6 million people) to 50 percent by the end of 2002 (about 6.4 million people). Specifically, there are now 284 public water points that have been constructed/rehabilitated, 9,614 household latrines and 24 block latrines, and 304,000 additional people with access to safe water and adequate sanitation. In the specified 6 provinces, reported cases of diarrheal diseases in children

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<sup>15</sup> Although this intervention is not structured as an income-earning enterprise for women, it is included in this Appendix because it had significant benefits for reducing women's time burdens.



(up to age 5) have decreased by 24 percent from 1994 to 2000. Elementary school attendance within the 6 provinces financed by the World Bank rose from an average of 42 percent in 1997–98 to 58 percent in 2001–02. For girls, in particular, it rose from 30 percent to 51 percent, with a retention rate over five years of 57 percent (61 percent for both sexes overall).

*Gender specific design features:* The program responded to a key concern voiced by rural women: ensuring the provision of safe potable water from public taps less than 500 meters away from their homes. In addition, at least one woman is supposed to be included in each Social Mobilization Team (SMT), both to guarantee female participation in the project and to facilitate hygiene education. The program has had a significant social impact on women and girls. Evaluations of the program conducted in 2000–01 showed that women are highly satisfied with the quantity and quality of water supplied. The time women and girls spend gathering water has been reduced by 50 to 90 percent. This enables women to spend more time on agricultural production and in literacy classes, while girls devote more time to education.

*Financing:* The cost of the rural water supply component of the program is approximately \$46.7 million, of which the World Bank has supplied \$10.5 million. The rural sanitation component costs about \$5.1 million, of which the World Bank has supplied \$1 million (World Bank 2003). Project beneficiaries contribute at least 5 percent to investment (with the rural commune contributing 15 percent) and pay full O&M and replacement costs. This stated investment specifically applies to rural water supply systems that are considered to be at the minimum service level (i.e., public fountains). Rural water supply systems considered to be at a higher service level and cost, (i.e., house connections), are also eligible for investment, but only if beneficiaries cover 100 percent of the total cost. As to the specific financing and costs of the overall project, the World Bank finances 6 of the 27 provinces involved, while the remainder are financed by other donors: the French Development Agency (AFD), Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), and German Bank for Reconstruction and Development (KfW).

*Enabling environment:* The Government has affirmed its intention to further increase and expedite rural water supply coverage, specifically raising the target from an 80 percent access rate by 2010 to a 92 percent access rate by 2007. Its “2020 Rural Development Strategy” clearly expresses its intent to expand basic rural infrastructure, user participation, and integration of women in program implementation. The program is currently under the supervision of the National Potable Water Authority, which has been directed to ensure continued support to the Water Users Associations and systems that were originally set up by the DGH. The program is expected to continue to benefit from intensive donor support, the World Bank, in particular, plans to continue its support of the program in the specified provinces (World Bank 2003).

*Limitations:* The Government failed to sufficiently fund the Water Users Associations until they could manage rural water supply systems on their own, with the result that there was a low number of SMTs, inadequate compensation, and incomplete training. This oversight threatened the sustainability of investments. A lack of inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation further resulted in insufficient collaboration with the Ministry of Health for water quality control and hygiene education. Also, evaluations suggest that the current rural water supply systems are too simplistic to be sustainable for long. Other water supply technologies and management models must be considered, particularly where easily accessible groundwater is scarce, for the program to continue. In regards to gender, there needs to be a greater attempt to gain the direct participation of women in project implementation. Out of the 6 provinces financed by the World Bank, only one successfully retained a female member (only for about two years as long as UNDP grant funds were available), severely limiting any direct participation of women in program design and management.

*Sources:* World Bank (2003b).

## **Photovoltaic Systems for Community Water Pumping in the Mamiraua Sustainable Development Reserve—Brazilian Amazon**

*Program aims and objectives:* To increase the use of clean and sustainable energy to power community water pumps through the use of solar photovoltaic (PV) technology.

*Program description:* This program is used as a model for the promotion of sustainable development through the use of renewable energy in the Amazon. The project was implemented within the Humid Tropical Program of the Ministry of Science and Technology. Project goals and activities were established by the local population, technicians and researchers on photovoltaic energy. The solar PV water systems were designed to meet the specific water demands of five different communities. There are two kinds of pumping systems: submersible and surface. Submersible pumps are placed inside wells or water storage reservoirs, while surface systems are built on floating platforms made out of wood and recycled bottles. Both water systems involve a distribution pipe that delivers water at each house gate (Branco 2006). Twenty-five local people were trained in the operation and maintenance of the PV lighting and water pumping systems. In addition, Mamiraua implemented a micro-credit funding scheme so as to ensure the long-term sustainability of the program (USAID 2003).

*Impact:* There have been a number of positive impacts of the program, such as increased availability of clean water to the population, which is further linked to improved health conditions. Appropriate technology with low maintenance costs has now been implemented, as well as capacity building for the community. As for the gender features, the program has successfully introduced a gender equity perspective in the context of sustainable energy, which has led to better living and working conditions for women, as it is no longer necessary to walk long distances to fetch water. They may now devote this time saved to productive activities, including eco-tourism and handicrafts, thus enjoying a higher income.

*Gender specific design features:* Women are involved in most operational activities, as well as the management and monitoring of the system. In fact, one of the main goals of the project is for the community representative group responsible for the management and monitoring process to be made up of at least 25 percent women. Gender analysis was used in the design and implementation of the project.

*Financing:* Funding is provided by the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Brazilian Council for Scientific and Technological Development, USAID, Winrock International, and the Mamirau Institute.

*Enabling environment:* The community is well organized by local non-governmental organizations, and community members have been encouraged to participate at all the various stages of project implementation. Following the successful implementation of this projects, REPSO Brazil assisted in developing another proposal with USAID support, for the Program for Energy Development of States and Municipalities (PRODEEM) to replicate this initiative in 13 additional communities (USAID 2003).

*Sources:* Branco (2002); USAID (2003).

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEMES**

#### **Argentina Jefes y Jefes de Hogar Desocupados (Jefes)**

*Program aims and objectives:* A job guarantee program to alleviate the impact of rising unemployment due to sharp worsening of economic crisis in 2001–2002.

*Management and coordination:* The Ministry of Labor is responsible for overall management, coordination, and monitoring of Jefes. The program is decentralized to municipalities and municipal councils, which decide on subprojects and approve applicants for jobs if they meet eligibility requirements. The program is managed by a Technical Coordinating Commission, which reports to the minister of Labor and includes six National Directors whose areas have a role in implementation of the Program; representatives of the Social Security Administration and National Councils of Administration, Execution and Control are also members. Municipal consultative councils, including representatives from public service providers, workers, businesses, churches, and city mayors, were established in order to ensure transparency of the selection process. The council approves proposals for workfare activities (both infrastructure and community services) proposed by municipalities, other public organizations, and civil society, and are a channel for information and resolving complaints on beneficiary registration.

*Program description:* Jefes provides 150 pesos per month for a minimum of 4 hours of work per day for heads of households in community services, small construction or maintenance activities, training, finishing basic education, or as a temporary worker of a private company. Eligible participants must be from households with children under age 18 with a handicap, be a person with a handicap, or be a pregnant woman. Poorer areas are eligible to receive a higher share of financing to cover cost of materials for subprojects that help address obstacles caused by lack of counterpart funding. Community projects make up 87 percent of all jobs created by the program.

*Impact:* Jefes was implemented in 5 months. Participation in the program grew to 2 million at its peak in 2003, representing five percent of the population. Female heads of households accounted for 60 percent of program participants in the first two years and is now at 75 percent. The program gave employment to unemployed persons and women who were formerly inactive in the labor market. Evaluations suggest that the reduction in indigence rates was significant and large in the first four months of the program, falling by 25 percent amongst participating heads of households and among individuals by 18 percent.<sup>16</sup> Other benefits include ‘formalizing’ the informal economy by registering the unemployed, issuing them social security cards, involving them in training and employment, and assisting them to reenter the private sector. The insertion rate into private sector has grown from 18,948 to 76,068 people. Further, employers who hire Jefes workers must register them and pay benefits.

*Gender specific key of success:* Decentralizing to municipalities meant that many activities done in communities which were formerly unpaid are now being paid, such as environmental cleanup, child care, and soup kitchens, among others (Tcherneva 2005).

*Financing:* Governments total spending on *Jefes* and *Pel* is about one percent of GDP, translating into approximately \$2 billion in (2002), of which the World Bank funds \$600 million (World Bank 2002b). The government finances up to 80 percent of projects, although it typically is about 60 percent. The remainder is provided by NGOs or executing firms, so it commands greater commitment from public and private spheres.

*Enabling environment:* This is the first time the government attempted to implement more community-based system, relying on municipalities and local consultative councils (both public authorities and civil society) for implementation, linked through a service network. Projects eligible to be undertaken were expanded to include those which meet basic needs such as provision of food and medicine.

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<sup>16</sup> Indigence is extreme poverty measured in terms of income necessary to purchase minimum amount of food calories per day (Tcherneva 2005).

*Limitations:* The program was designed for heads of households, although the eligibility criteria were not strictly enforced. In early stages of implementation, household head was not verified, so that many women were able to participate, even if married, while their husbands took informal sector work. There is growing debate over this last issue among policy makers. Policy makers and World Bank see this as a leakage of benefits to the non-poor, with women working to supplement family incomes for non-poor families. However, limiting participants to head of households is gender-biased, as it is based on a male-breadwinner model in which women do not have separate entitlements. The latest solution is also gender-biased: the government is planning a separate welfare program for women with children, which does not include a work requirement (World Bank 2002b), reserving the employment program for men who will be helped to transition from informal to formal sector work. As Tcherneva (2005) points out, this kind of policy fails to consider the benefits to women of working and earning income in terms of integrating and strengthening women's participation in their communities. Tcherneva's 2005 survey of female participants in Jefes indicated that most of women preferred earning income for work over staying at home and not working. The new policy would also reduce the opportunities for women to obtain formal sector employment since they are denied the chance to gain valuable work experience. Finally, it restricts their ability to voice their demands for new projects that specifically address needs of women by shutting them out of civic participation in public works projects.

*Sources:* Tcherneva and Wray (2005); World Bank (2002b and 2003a).

## **Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS)**

*Program aims and objectives:* The Employment Guarantee Act of 1977 guarantees gainful employment to all adults above 18 year of age, residing in rural areas and municipal councils in Maharashtra, who are willing to undertake unskilled manual work on a piece rate basis to build rural infrastructure.

*Management and coordination:* Overall, the program is state run, but implemented by the municipalities. More specifically, there is a three-tier set up, consisting of designated committees for planning, direction, and coordination, that exists at the state, district, and Panchayat Samiti (community) levels. At the state level, the Planning Department makes a budgetary provision, and then quarterly credit limits are released to the Collector at the district level, who is required to maintain an account of program expenditure, as is the Tehsildar at the Panchayat Samiti authority level. Vigilance committees have also been formed at all levels, under the chairmanship of the Revenue Secretary (Gaiha 2003). The maintenance of assets is overseen by local authorities, largely resulting in poor upkeep of these assets (i.e., roads washed away in the rain, percolation tanks that ran dry shortly after construction, etc.). This may be attributed to the delays in the transition of assets to the authorities, the failure to allocate the appropriate resources to maintain these assets, political conflicts, lack of proper blueprints, delays in implementation, and/or the community's lack of a sense of involvement once the creation process of the particular asset has been completed.

*Program description:* The Employments Guarantee Scheme (EGS) is implemented across 33 districts of Maharashtra, in 350 tahsils (administrative tax districts) and 162 'C' class municipal towns. The scheme is self-targeting, meaning that the job opportunities it provides are available to anyone over the age of 18, who lives in either a rural or 'C' class municipality of Maharashtra. There are both short- and long-term poverty reducing components to the scheme. In the short-term, employment is provided during poor agricultural years and during 'lean' seasons within the year. The wage income from this employment is designed to supplement agricultural income when work is not available to



provide food security, and to minimize the effects of other income shocks. The long-term component facilitates asset creation through construction of rural infrastructure, the expansion of job opportunities, and the alleviation of poverty. EGS projects must meet a mandate that labor form at least 60 percent of project costs; and sites should be no greater than 8km from workers' homes.

*Impact:* Thirty-eight percent of EGS participants were women in 1995–96, by 1998–99 there were 73 percent, which in 2002 fell back to 58 percent. From 1975–2002, the employment generated by the scheme has grown from 110 million to 162 million person days, with a peak generation of 190 million during the mid-1980's. Overall, the scheme confers transfer and stabilization benefits, which include the gross benefits to the participants and the extra income generated by the scheme's output, as well as a decrease in the risk faced by the poor of a decrease in consumption, all of which play a role in poverty alleviation. In a study conducted by Raghav Gaiha, the share of EGS earnings among the poor ranged from 18 to 40 percent, and among the non-poor, 18 to 33 percent (Gaiha 2003). The EGS has also contributed to general political activism and coalition building among the poor, which is significant, as it leads the political system to be more responsive to their interests. In addition, the EGS creates a sense of collective activity, despite social/religious differences, through close interaction on work-sites, paving the way for collective action among the poor.

*Gender specific design features:* The EGS has incorporated a number of gender specific design features, including: (a) provision of work close to home (8km, formerly 5km); (b) provision of work not requiring special skills; (c) a lack of discrimination in recruitment; (d) a parity of wages offered to men and women; (e) provision of shelter, drinking water, and especially of crèches for children; and (f) maternity benefit to a female worker (15 days leave with wages at the rate prevailing in that particular zone) if she works continuously for 75 days before delivery. The EGS Act has also provided for the representation of women in the district and panchayat level committees so that their voice may be included in the planning and implementation of the scheme. While these features serve as adequate guidelines for the program, their actual implementation could still be

much improved by taking such measures as: (a) making women more aware of how EGS works and of their rights/entitlements; (b) providing job training in agriculture and related activities; (c) creating community assets that address women's needs and granting women's organizations the authority to maintain them, for instance, if following wasteland development, women were awarded collective ownership of the reclaimed land or the ownership of trees following the development of nurseries, instances which there is great scope for in social forestry and watershed development; and (d) a fusion of services (health, literacy, child care, etc.), on EGS sites, so that the large number of women on-site may take advantage of these services.

*Financial sustainability:* Total expenditure in 2001–02 was Rs 9,146.5 million, of which 80 percent was spent on wages, generating 162 person days at a Rs 56.56 cost per person. The average wage per person day is Rs 45.28. The expenditure represents 4.57 percent of development budget. Fifty percent of the scheme is financed through a combination of taxes, including: (a) a tax on professions, trades, callings and employment; (b) an additional tax on motor vehicles; (c) an additional tax on sales tax; (d) a special assessment of irrigated agricultural land; (e) a surcharge on land revenue; and (f) a tax on non-residential urban lands and buildings under the Maharashtra Education Cess Act. The other half is funded by the government, which is required to annually make a contribution from its general resources matching the total sum of these specified collected taxes. This financing system has helped to ensure the sustainability of the scheme by lessening its dependence on general budgetary resources. Also, as the majority of the contributing taxes are urban, the increasing urbanization equates to an increase in collected taxes. In practice, government has not contributed its share since 2000, and resources earmarked for the fund have been shifted to other areas such as debt servicing, policy shift from agricultural to urban, and a shift in priority from agricultural to horticulture.

*Enabling environment:* The scheme is fully supported by the state government of Maharashtra, and widely involves all levels of society, from politicians to the urban population. In fact, the scheme requires the whetting of the local blue print by the EGS Panchayat Samiti Committee, which theoretically consists of representatives of backward

classes, minorities, participants of the scheme, and women. More recent, centrally sponsored poverty alleviation schemes, such as the Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) and the Employment Assurance Scheme, have been created to enhance the EGS, and to involve the poor in the decision-making process by putting the panchayats in charge of implementation. The financing system described above is also helpful in maintaining the program.

*Limitations:* There still exist numerous program limitations, which include an elaborate registration procedure, associated delays in payments of wages, and rampant corruption, resulting in systematic underpayments to all workers. Also, some of the very poor population, the landless and chronically unemployed, are excluded from receiving program benefits. The only potential solution to this oversight is the identification of this particular population, along with improved location and timing of projects, in particular, the extension of projects throughout the year. There is also confusion over exactly what type of assets EGS should create. While the EGS Act stipulates that program assets must be “productive,” it has yet to clearly assess the concept of productivity. Thus, there remains wide uncertainty over what should be given priority between alternative aims and needs, what weight should be given to the gestation period of projects (short-term or long-term), and the cost of productive assets. There is still great need for a clear definition of productivity so that only the assets that both fulfill the needs of the community and increase employment opportunities may be created. There is also a critical lack of adequate data on the direct impact of the program in terms of localized employment created, as well as data on gender. In addition, there is often a greater labor presence than man-days planned for, resulting in lower wages for shorter time periods. Normally, only one family member is provided work, lasting for as little as 2–4 days (Bulsara and Sreenivasa 2006). Overall, there has been a hefty decline in wage levels; wages are now often less than half of the market wage rates. In fact, while the average wage per day on EGA work sites in 2001–2002 was Rs. 45.28, the average daily wage for unskilled labor in the market was Rs. 70–80. Lastly, in 30 years of operation, the scheme has failed to provide job training.

Concerning the gender aspect of the program, Krishnaraj et al. (2004b) note that in practice, some of the progressive gender design features have not been implemented; for instance, they could not find one incidence of maternity or family planning benefits being rewarded, mainly due to three factors: women do not work 75 consecutive days given the discontinuity of employment under EGS, site shifting and lack of records keeping, and women's lack of knowledge regarding their rights and entitlements, which prevents them from claiming mandated benefits. Moreover, although shelters and crèches are theoretically provided for women workers, they remain primitive, with few toilets on or nearby worksites. Men also commandeered shelters for their own use. It must also be noted that, in practice, there are questions about whether women truly control the income they earn, as there have been recorded instances of women's wages being handed over to men. Finally, the traditional sexual division of labor is reproduced on work sites, with women being given more labor-intensive unskilled tasks and restricted from machinery use.

*Sources: Krishnaraj et al. (2004a and 2004b); Gaiha (2000 and 2003); Bulsara and Sreenivasa (2006).*

## **South Africa's National Public Works Program (NPWP)**

*Program aims and objectives:* The main objectives of the NPWP are: to generate and maintain physical assets to meet the basic needs of the poor; to reduce unemployment through the creation of new job opportunities (especially for women); to provide training to those involved in the program; and to empower communities.

*Management and coordination:* The program is under the supervision of the South African Department of Public Works, but unions, community-based organizations (CBOs), and the private sector also play a large role in project design and program management. This has proven to be problematic, as the different groups often clash on foundational aspects of the program, such as where the projects should be located, targeting methods, whether or not communities should be in charge of hiring/firing workers, and in particular, the union's desire to gain higher wages for workers, rather than adhere to a wage rate set at or below market wages for poverty self-targeting. Contractors and community-based Project Steering Committees oversee individual public work sites; they also determine the project wage if it is not pre-determined by the national government. The local government, engineering consultants, contractors, or CBOs decide the actual distribution of jobs. In practice, however, the task most often falls to CBOs, as the projects are required to have community participation and also because community committees are seen to be the most appropriate form of worker liaison (Adato and Haddad 2001).

*Program description:* The NPWP is designed to generate income and productive infrastructure through the provision of jobs with a wage rate set at or below market wage to the most deserving people, selected through a targeting process. Women are explicitly targeted for the new jobs in order to expand their general skill and knowledge, thereby increasing their leverage within society. A system of job training was established to prepare workers for future labor market integration and to supply them with long-term job skills. An emphasis is also placed on community participation to sharpen the managerial and decision-making skills of local people, thus enabling them to continue

and expand upon public works efforts within their own communities (Adato and Haddad 2001).

*Impact:* According to Ravallion, between 83 and 92 percent of South Africa's public works projects outperformed an untargeted transfer scheme (Ravallion 1999). Those areas in which a higher wage rate was offered and an administrative overhead was applied to the benchmark untargeted transfer fared the best in terms of project performance. In areas where there is a greater degree of community participation, in which the purpose of the low wage rate is clearly communicated (i.e., a lower wage rate = a greater number of jobs for people in the community), it has been found that workers are more likely to lower their wage expectations for the benefit of the community (Adato and Haddad 2001). Community-based committees have been found to be the most suitable for distributing scarce jobs, as they are familiar with which community members are most eligible for the program, they may identify the best way in which the program can benefit the community, and they can learn from the process. Unfortunately, there remains the potential for conflict between community participation and the goals set by the program, in that communities may have local biases, whether it is toward women or those who are not active in the community (Adato and Haddad 2001).

Studies conducted in the Western Cape concluded that, on average, 39 percent of the employment days generated from public works programs went to women. Within the programs most successful at attracting female employees, TRANSPORT and WWP, 44 percent and 51 percent (respectively) of employment days went to women (Adato and Haddad 2001).

An analysis of the NPWP conducted by the South Africa Gender Budget Initiative found that 41 percent of those employed on the projects were women and 12 percent were youths (Republic of South Africa, Department of Finance 1998). Although the figure for women is lower than the female proportion of the population in the rural areas in which the projects operate, it is almost certainly higher than would have been the case without explicit targeting. Unfortunately, women were assigned more menial jobs, average wages were lower, they were generally employed for shorter periods than men, and less likely than men to receive training. In fact, only 32 percent of women who were

employed received training, compared to 37 percent of men (Republic of South Africa, Department of Finance 1998).

*Gender specific design features:* The NPWP has been less successful at incorporating only a few of the core gender sensitive design features discussed in section 5.3 of the paper. NPWP policy itself does reflect gender sensitivity, in that one of its primary objectives has been, from the beginning, to target women for job opportunities, in an attempt to expand their skills and power, and improve their employment prospects. The problem lies in the actual implementation of this policy, largely due to locational biases. The program could potentially be improved by putting in place more effective targeting measures, such as shortening the distance from the household to the work site, the provision of crèches or links to crèches, and/or the existence of government directives for equal pay.

*Financing:* The program is financed as part of the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) of South Africa's Department of Public Works, which raises the majority of its revenue through the rental and sale of land, buildings, and structures (South African Yearbook 2005).

*Enabling environment:* This program was initiated to be a vital part of the Reconstruction and Development Program (Adato and Haddad 2001). It is significant that the nation's most prominent unions, COSATU and SANCO, signed onto the program's Framework Agreement, allowing public works sites to pay a wage rate less than the market wage, with the condition that job training is provided, community participation is encouraged, and useful assets are constructed (Adato and Haddad 2001).

*Limitations:* The many objectives of the program have proved problematic, as they complicate the targeting process, in that while projects may do well in one targeting dimension, such as poverty, they may do poorly in others, like infrastructure need or community capacity building (Adato and Haddad 2001). The programs are, for the most part, not well-targeted in terms of opportunities going to those who need them the most,

either in terms of poverty, unemployment or infrastructure. There also continues to be much debate over the criteria used for targeting and the ways in which it is applied. There is great need for the collection of a key set of indicators for project monitoring and evaluation; currently there is little incentive for this. In addition, public works wages are often above market wage, rather than below.

*Sources: Adato and Haddad (2001); Haddad and Adato (2002); EASU (2004 and 2005); Republic of South Africa, Department of Finance (1998).*



## **Public Works, Food Aid and Food for Work in Ethiopia**

*Program aims and objectives:* Ethiopia's public works programs are designed to provide unskilled workers with short-term, labor-intensive employment that contribute to improving the country's infrastructure, thereby both addressing people's immediate needs and increasing overall community assets.

*Management and coordination:* The World Food Programme (WFP) heads the program, but channels the operations through the Ethiopian government, which delegates some targeting authority to communities.

*Program description:* Ethiopia's public works programs may be divided into two main groups: (1) food for work (FFW), wherein participants generally work in community development programs (i.e., roads, terraces, dams, and local infrastructure construction) and payment is made in kind, and (2) free food distribution programs (FD), which distribute cereals to those unable to work. The government of Ethiopia's goal is to allocate 80 percent of its food assistance resources to FFW programs. To attain this goal, the Employment Generation Program, otherwise known as Employment Generation Scheme (EGS) was initiated in 1993. Under this program, 80 percent of food aid is to be directed to EGS food for work, while the remaining 20 percent is to be given directly to those who are unable to work. There is a set wage rate (approximately 15 kg of food per person for month), as well as other standards for participation of pregnant and lactating women.

The actual distribution of food aid is based on the following methods: administrative targeting (based on factors such as asset/livestock ownership, age and gender, nutritional status, etc.); self-targeting, which is generally implemented by utilizing wages below the market wage rate and "inferior" goods; and community-based targeting, whereby the community determines household eligibility for food aid programs.

*Impact:* The most recent available estimates illustrate the rapid growth of the EGS from 33 *woredas* (similar to districts) and about 200,000 workers in September 2001 to 57 *woredas* and about 600,000 workers in April 2002. In addition, the EGS has provided short-term employment to more than 200,000 per year since 1997 (Subbarao and Smith 2003). Overall, the food aid program has been shown to reduce vulnerability, such as lessening the impact of a bad rainfall shock, and to improve nutritional health and child growth (6-24 month olds grow approximately 1.6 cm faster in communities receiving food aid than if no food aid was available).

*Gender specific design features:* The WFP has mandated that it will require women to control the family entitlement in 80 percent of WFP handled and subcontracted operations (although actual practice is somewhat different) (WFP 2003). The WFP is taking steps to increase women's active involvement in the program by holding multiple briefing sessions, local-level participatory planning meetings, and offering increased training opportunities to women, with the purpose of raising women's participation in both the decision-making and implementation processes. It is hoped that women will make up approximately half of the membership of community-based participatory planning groups, and that 25 percent these women will be placed in decision-making positions by the end of 2006 (WFP 2002).

*Financing:* The World Food Programme (WFP) supplies the bulk of the funding for food aid programs; between 1999–2003, the WFP donated food to the FFW valued at \$35.6 million, while the Ethiopian government spent \$12.9 million (Subbarao and Smith 2003). Ultimately, the EGS runs mainly on donated food, therefore any actual cost to the government is nominal.

*Limitations:* It has been found that better-educated women are more likely to participate and women with higher livestock holdings are less likely to. There continues to be a wide gap in male and female participation rates, as most community development projects tend to utilize heavy labor and because of time conflicts with housework and childcare, as well as an aversion to traveling long distances to a job site. In addition, women are less likely to be selected for jobs that involve hard labor, as community-building projects often do.

According to a 2003 study, women accounted for approximately 26 percent of the employment in public works projects, and while they were specifically targeted in about 43 percent of the villages, they were not necessarily prioritized in job allocations. In fact, only 14 percent of the villages thought that women were a priority. In addition, crèches (daycare) were only found in one village. In order for the level of female participation in public works programs to increase, there needs to be a greater availability of jobs, such as those involving soil conservation and forestry, which have been found to be more conducive to female participation, as they allow workers greater flexibility in accomplishing tasks, both in terms of time and payment. Overall, more effort needs to be made to consider women's physical capacities, potential ways in which more women could be attracted to participate, ways in which to allow a greater degree of flexibility in scheduling, and a provision of crèches. This would better enable women to participate in the FFW, while still maintaining the household (Quisumbing and Yohannes 2004).

*Enabling environment:* Ethiopia's public works programs appear to be off to a rocky start, as the management and coordination of the programs, as well as specific guidelines for the programs, are unclear. There is also a lack of data and corresponding methodology for targeting and for ways to increase female participation. In order for these programs to succeed, there is great need for more formal supervision, structure, and standards, as well as improved communication between the parties involved in the implementation of the programs, specifically, the WFP, the national government, the local governments, and the communities.

*Source: Quisumbing and Yohannes (2004); Subbarao and Smith. (2003).*