

2. COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION OF CASE STUDIES OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SIX COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

a) Briefing

The writers of the case studies were invited to present their accounts under the following themes:

- (i) The establishment of the official machinery to promote women's affairs in the country concerned
- (ii) Objectives of the organisation established
- (iii) Structure and staffing of the organisation
- (iv) Links with other bodies and legitimising devices
- (v) Financial constraints
- (vi) Methods of operation, management styles, and decision-making
- (vii) Achievements
- (viii) Problems
- (ix) Forced field analysis
- (x) Proposals

b) The Establishment of Official Machinery

The comparative Table 1 overleaf demonstrates the different approaches, as well as the different terminology, used by each Caribbean country in the sample. It is clear that there was considerable activity concerning the status and affairs of women in Jamaica and Guyana before the International Women's Year in 1974. The long standing programmes of the women's NGOs in these and the two other Caribbean countries independent by 1970 were given a new emphasis in collaboration through the Caribbean Women's Association (CARIWA). From the political perspective the ruling parties in Guyana and in Jamaica after 1972, developed strong women's auxiliaries which have remained a force in women's affairs in both countries. In Jamaica the new government of 1972 appointed an Advisory Committee on the Status of Women which led to the establishment of a Women's Desk, with a Special Advisor on Women's Affairs, in 1974. Similarly Guyana had two women's organisations effectively guiding developments before the International Women's Year - namely the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement (WRSM) for the ruling party and the Conference on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana (CASWIG) for the voluntary NGOs.

The table demonstrates for the sample countries the order in which each has set up their Women's Bureau, or its equivalent, their political leadership and their consultative machinery in the form of national women's commissions or advisory bodies.

Table 1: Caribbean and International Initiatives in

1970		CARIBBEAN WOMEN'S	
	JAMAICA (1962)*	GUYANA (1966)*	BARBADOS (1966)*
	PNP Women's Auxiliary	PNC Women's Auxiliary Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement (WRSM)	
1972	Advisory Committee on Status of Women		
1973		Conference on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana (CASWIG)	
1974	WOMEN'S DESK Special Adviser on Women's Affairs		

		INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR	
1975	DIRECTOR AND BUREAU OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS		ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA (ECLA)
1976			National Commission on the Status of Women (ad hoc) Department Of Women's Affairs
1977	Minister of State for Women's Affairs		
1978			
1979			
1980	Parliamentary Secretary Women's Affairs	WOMEN'S BUREAU DIRECTOR/MINISTER	
1981			
1982			
1983		First sub-committee of Bureau First regional Women's Desk	
1984			WOMEN'S BUREAU NATIONAL COMMISSION

* Denotes the year in which each country became independent

Capital letters denote existing machinery

Machinery for Women in Development

ASSOCIATION (CARIWA)

GRENADA (1975)*

DOMINICA (1978)*

BELIZE (1981)*

LEADING TO DECADE OF WOMEN 1976-85

UWI WID OUTREACH PROGRAMME (WAND)

Commission on the Status of Women (ad hoc) 1976

1977

MINISTER OF STATE FOR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS 1978

WOMEN'S DESK MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS
NATIONAL WOMEN'S ORGANISATION (NWO) Women's Desk 1979

WID Unit 1980

WOMEN'S BUREAU 1981

MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS DEPUTY MINISTER NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMISSION 1982

WOMEN'S BUREAU STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE 1983

1984

Grenada alone has had a Ministry of Women's Affairs with a deputy minister, within an umbrella Ministry of Education concerned with human resource development. Machinery for mobilisation of women on a district basis can be seen in the National Women's Organisation which has been developed in Grenada and in the first regional sub-committee which has recently been launched in Guyana.

Even this developmental outline shows the extent to which there has been change and alteration in the short history of national organisation for the development of women's affairs. Related with Table 2 which shows the various ministerial resting places of the women's bureaux or their equivalent, in the first three countries to establish Women in Development machinery the impression must be one of instability and uncertainty.

c) Objectives of the First Decade

Each of the selected countries has had more than one statement of objectives. Generally speaking the early objectives echoed the rhetoric of the international bodies, were unrealistically multiplied and in the majority of cases have emphasised the need to improve the status of women above securing their participation in the development programmes of their country. The point is well demonstrated in the first operational chart for the Jamaica's Women's Desk started in 1974. They were expected to achieve three broad objectives:

- 1 *Identification of problems* (status and conditions) peculiar to women;
- 2 *Improvement of the status* (position and attitudes) of women;
- 3 *Integration* (policy and planning involvement) of women in national development.

The objectives in this order were to be achieved through five functions for the Desk, and later the Bureau, namely, research, programme implementation, legislative matters, representation and co-ordination.

The Jamaican objectives demonstrate two characteristics of most of the objective formulation by and for Caribbean women's bureaux. In the first place they are generalised statements of aims rather than objectives. Secondly, lists of functions for the Bureau in more than one case are substituted for objectives stating how precisely the functions are to be applied to the focal points of the ongoing programme. Barbados, Grenada, Dominica and Guyana all list functions at some length. The Guyana case study alone indicates an annual statement of objectives related specifically to each year's work. Without such programmed objectives there can be little chance of achieving a systematic development.

The sub-regional *Plan of Action* of 1977 set the tone for this kind of "objective" formulation. Having recommended the establishment of official mechanisms "for the integration of women in development" the plan then listed the following functions for whatever organisation was adopted:

- (i) Data collection and research. (*about what?*)⁺

⁺ Bracketed questions and comments in italics are editorial.

- (ii) Participation in the formulation of national plans, policies and programmes, to achieve equality between the sexes and the full integration of women in the development process at all levels. (*apart from the dubious assumption that "the development process" at any level has existed in Caribbean countries in or since 1977, questions beginning who? which? what? and above all how? must precede objectives emanating from this kind of international rhetoric*)⁺
- (iii) Co-ordination of programmes affecting women (*which? how?*)⁺
- (iv) Monitoring and evaluation of ongoing and future plans and programmes, with a view to ensuring that the interests and concerns of women are reflected, and that the involvement of women as beneficiaries and participants is assured (*surely some difficulty is evaluating "future plans and programmes"; but still which? and how?*)⁺
- (v) Documentation and dissemination of information, public relations and publicity (*about what and how?*)⁺
- (vi) Promotion of innovative pilot projects (*which and how?*)⁺
- (vii) Guidance and advisory services (*for whom? concerning what?*)⁺
- (viii) Liaison with regional and international bodies (*which? concerning what?*)⁺

Admittedly not even a sub-regional conference can formulate specific working objectives for a variety of organisations; but they can list their generalised functions for the organisations, with examples, in such a way that the organisations then know how to translate them into specific objectives for themselves, effectively to guide their annual, monthly and even daily working schedules.

The experience since the first statement of objectives of each Women's Bureau has shown that objectives must be reduced to realistic proportions if they are to be any serious guide to action. On the whole the most recent objectives are the shortest and the most action-oriented. They also tend to reverse the preoccupations of 1974-75 when the UN call for Equality, Development and Peace for women was dominating the discussion. The twin-headed goal of developing the potential of women and then ensuring their participation in development now takes the lead over concerns about legal status and discrimination.

The case study on the Women's Bureau in Jamaica does not discuss any refinement of objectives since they were first offered in 1974. It simply details the achievements since and the concern for the future, as a list of development projects actually started.

The Grenada goals for women in development in 1979 coincided with those of the revolution. Paraphrased they were:

- 1 To raise the living standards of all the people of the country, particularly the deprived.

- 2 To deepen the quality of development to include the development of human personality.
- 3 To develop and enrich the process of a grass roots democracy by people's participation in the process of socio-economic transformation of the society.

The Grenadian goals link equality and development far more clearly than any of the other statements in the sample. They remain, however, rhetorical rather than organisational and so lose the force and conviction of operational objectives. It is noteworthy that later "objectives" produced by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Grenada, fall back on the same practice of listing generalised functions and activities for the women's bureaux as appears in the Barbados, Dominica, Belize and Guyana studies.

Belize in 1981, the last of the sample to start a Women's Bureau, set a long term goal, calling it an objective, namely: To upgrade the economic, social, cultural, legal and educational position of women in Belize, thereby assisting them in becoming equal and full partners in the country's development process.

The statement then proceeds to follow precedent by listing generalised activities for the Belize Women's Bureau, but terming them "short-term strategies/objectives" supporting the "long-term objective". The short-term strategies/objectives proposed are research, leadership training, an integrated development plan, dissemination of information, project development, family life education and "income-generating activities for the most needy women". The emphasis in Belize in 1981 was different from that of Jamaica or Guyana in 1974. The economic potential and contribution of women in development is obviously regarded in the later long term objective as more pressing than their legal status.

It is an indication of the limitations on the work of the women's bureaux, which have been set by small resources, that while experience has emphasised the priority need for attention to the economic potential of women, it has still not generated the practice of formulating clear, precise working objectives. A national plan for women is advocated by two writers of case studies; should such plans be developed on a timetabled basis it would be much easier for the staff of women's bureaux, in association with other government and non-governmental development agencies, to produce periodic, specific and realistic working objectives.

The nearest to objective-setting provided by the case studies comes from the regular periodic restatements of proposed activity in Guyana. The problem with the practice as objective formulation, however, is that it states what the Bureau staff will do, but not the response activities anticipated. An example comes from the recent Programme of the Bureau in 1983. The emphasis for the year is on agriculture, including food production and processing. "This", we are told, "is a direct response to government's policy for agriculture as a priority". The Bureau will link with the Ministry of Agriculture and the WRSM outreach programme. Activities will be seminars, workshops, demonstrations. We are not told what these occasions are to deal with, with whom and to what purpose. If food production is the focal point the objectives must be concerned with food production, stating precisely what food is to be produced, by whom, as a result of which activities, by which individuals and bodies. It is

unlikely that the food production or any other economic activity will benefit the women who participate, let alone the consuming public, unless at least simple management decisions and precise objectives are shared, formulated, communicated and used for the realistic evaluation of the activity, by all concerned. The most important activities in food production are the growing and processing of the food; objectives which omit both the activity and the people who conduct it can have little or no impact on a programme of production. Furthermore there is no yardstick for assessing what is essentially a quantitative activity with specific qualitative requirements.

One assumes that "objectives" for women in development to date have been written from the point of view of governments and, to a lesser degree, the public servants involved in women's affairs, because the first decade has seen a struggle to get the machinery implemented. Only in Grenada, and perhaps Belize, has the work of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Women's Bureau respectively reached large numbers of the women for whom it is intended. This is reflected in the absence of either grass-roots language or grass-roots aspirations in the objectives. The writer of the Grenada study emphasises that the strength of the Women in Development programme lay in the mobilisation of a large number of women throughout the country through the National Women's Organisation. Membership of an organisation is one aspect of participation; another is the guided formulation of one's own objectives and their implementation. Mass meetings to communicate objectives and projects formulated by others are local participation in only a limited sense. The language of local groups reporting their own objectives and achievements is entirely missing from the case studies.

There is general acceptance of the two aims of promoting and safeguarding the status of women in society and organising their participation in socio-economic development. Furthermore changing objectives reveal a concern through experience of the second as a way of achieving the first goal. What, however, seems to be lacking is technique (i) in formulating precise objectives and (ii) in using the process as a first stage in the participation in development of women at large. It cannot be denied that most of the active working women in the Caribbean seeking to escape traditional domestic and employment roles, pursue their enterprises independently of official Women in Development programmes. This kind of experience is not reflected in the case studies. It is precisely in objective formulation, with its corollary, implementation, that women's ongoing enterprise can be related to the work.

To summarise the state of the art in objective formulation in the Caribbean Women in Development programmes, it can be said that the international rhetoric has been a substitute even for realistic goals let alone objectives; that hard experience has reduced the range of "objectives", but has still not led to specificity which can be shared and understood by all concerned; that for want of clear objectives evaluation has been minimal because one cannot evaluate an activity which has no clearly defined outcome. If ever there was a case for on-the-job training the formulation of working objectives is one. Furthermore communication with all sorts and conditions of women is increased if one substitutes for "promotion of innovative pilot projects" some such objective as "production of 750 litres of canned and labelled passion fruit syrup a week for six months, to meet an assured market in the neighbouring island, with 15% of

**Table 2.: Ministries which have accommodated the Women's Bureaux
in six selected Caribbean countries**

JAMAICA	GUYANA	BARBADOS	GRENADA	DOMINICA	BELIZE
1974 Min. of Youth & Community Development					
1975 Prime Minister's Office					
1978 Min. of Health & Social Security		1976 Min. of Attorney-General			
		1979 Min. of Labour & Community Services	1979 Min. of Education, Culture etc. Min. of Women's Affairs		
1980 Min. of Youth & Community Development	1980 Min. of Labour			1980 Min. of Home Affairs etc.	
		1981 Min. of Transport Workers & Community Services			1981 Min. of Social Services
	1982 Min. of Cooperatives	1982 Min. of Information & Culture			
	1983 Prime Minister's Office				

all proceeds for workers, until the first review in four months". We can all understand that.

d) Structure and Staffing

The discussion on the organisational structure for the Women in Development programmes in the Caribbean revolves around the following relationships with other bodies:

- (i) The ministry in which the women's bureau is to be accommodated
- (ii) Links with ministries whose programmes do, or could, include and affect women
- (iii) Links with non-government organisations which have traditionally conducted programmes with women for social welfare, household and craft training and family life education
- (iv) Links with women in village and district organisations

The staff of the women's bureaux set up to promote the programme is reported in all the case studies as minimal, fluctuating, often not trained and sometimes not assigned even when established. It is therefore not to be expected that any complex four-part structure, as defined above, has yet come into existence. The diagram of concentric circles of linkage with the women's bureaux on the next page shows, however, that each has achieved some structural relationship with one or more of the groups with which the bureau must work. The measures to achieve these relationships vary in each case.

Perhaps the greatest variety lies in the number of ministries which have accommodated women's bureaux, or their equivalent, in their short history. The shifts seem to reflect either uncertainty about the working functions of the women's bureaux or, in some cases, a deliberate attempt to emphasise a particular role by association with the best related ministry to promote that role. The tabulation opposite demonstrates the mobility of the women's bureaux to date.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs in Grenada, within the Ministry of Education which accommodates all the ministries concerned with human resource development, has its own Deputy Minister. The Deputy Minister for Women's Affairs until October 1983 has also been President of the National Women's Organisation. This combination of roles has emphasised the revolutionary mobilisation aspect of the Women in Development Programme in Grenada.

By now, with the exception of Guyana, all the women's bureaux are operating in ministries which already have other community development or social welfare responsibilities. In Jamaica the Women's Bureau, after sojourns in the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Health and Social Security, has returned to its original home in the Ministry of Youth and Community Development. The Ministry of Social Services in Belize, and of Home Affairs in Dominica house the programmes for women's affairs. Barbados appears exceptional in having, after four shifts of location,

TABLE 3 : COMPARATIVE STAFFING OF WOMEN'S BUREAUX IN SIX COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

JAMAICA	GUYANA	BARBADOS	GRENADA	DOMINICA	BELIZE
DIRECTOR	(MINISTER/DIRECTOR)	DIRECTOR	NATIONAL COORDINATOR	DIRECTOR	DIRECTOR
			HEADS OF DEPT.		
Project Employment Officer	Administrator*		1 Organisation of Women		
Project Coordinator	Coordinator		2 Women in Production		
			3 Political and Social Ed.	Programme Officer	Public Education Officer
			4 Early Childhood		
			5 Admin. & Finance Professional Officers	Field Officer	
Education Officer			1 Social Advisory Centre		
			2 CPE, Culture, Crafts & Sports		
			3 Political Ed. (2)		
3 Regional Coordinators			4 Community Ed. (2) Early Childhood (3)		
			SERVICES		
			1 Office Staff (4)	Secretary	
			2 Drivers (3)		

* Not appointed since mid-1983

placed the Women's Affairs Bureau in the Ministry of Information and Culture; but in fact at this point the community development programme in Barbados remains in the cultural programme of the Ministry. It is therefore in keeping with the rest. Only in Guyana has the trend been reversed. After periods in the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Co-operatives, both within two years of inception, the Women's Bureau has in 1983 been transferred to the Prime Minister's Office. There may be a prestige factor in placing the programme among the special projects of a Prime Minister's Office; it also gives an advantage in policy making since all other ministries relate with it. On the other hand it is not project-oriented, nor is it implementing development programmes. In the circumstances allocation to the Prime Minister's Office appears more likely to produce a bureaucratic administration than an ongoing programme of development activities in the Women's Bureau.

The case studies suggest that the women's bureaux are now better supported in ministries already connected with community development programmes. The latest changes in location, with the exception of Guyana, do reflect the support needs of the more action-oriented, development projects which increasingly dominate the objectives of the bureaux. On the other hand, the women in development programmes placed, and budgeted for, in one host ministry can be neglected by other ministries also associated in practice with women's concerns, such as labour, health, agriculture, housing, utilities, not to mention finance and planning.

With one exception, political responsibility for women's affairs has in each case been vested in a Minister of State for Women's Affairs, or in Jamaica, a Parliamentary Secretary within the ministry which houses the Bureau. In Guyana alone is the minister also the director of the programme for Women's Affairs. A similar political control of activities and planning had no doubt been achieved in Grenada with the Deputy Minister also serving as President of the mass women's movement, the NWO. The political representation is clearly visible in both cases. Barbados alone places its Department of Women's Affairs under the Minister responsible for the Ministry in which it finds itself. Since 1977 the Barbados Department has been located in four ministries and so has successively been politically represented by the Attorney General (1977-79), the Minister of Labour and Community Services (1979-81), the Minister of Transport, Works and Community Services, and, since 1982, by the Minister of Information and Culture.

Professional staffing has been declared inadequate in all the case studies, but the same criticism in each case describes different situations. Grenada has had a staff of twenty-four in its Ministry of Women's Affairs and its mobilisation of the mass NWO is regarded as part of the organisational structure to deal with women's affairs on a nation-wide basis. The promotion of local and voluntary projects in all the other cases is rather a strategy to maintain activities at all, in face of inadequate staffing, than the integration of women at large into a systematic movement for their own development. It must also be noted that the Grenadian NWO have recruited only 21% of adult women and some voluntary groups have still remained apart. It has been a new manifestation in Commonwealth Caribbean terms, but by no means comprehensive in practice.

Apart from Grenada all the other five countries of the sample have a director (or an administrator in Guyana where the director is the political

appointment) with from one to four professional support staff. Professional staff can include education officers, research officers, programme administrators, field officers. Even this modest establishment is not always maintained. The bureaux have suffered losses and much staff turnover, particularly in their changes between ministries. Shortage of staff is one limitation; the need for training is another. The women selected often have social welfare experience, but are lacking in skills such as data collection, mobilisation of, or even communication with, large groups of women to be involved in their own decision-making and management processes. The organisation of self employment and cooperative projects, or indeed even of medium-technology modern production skills, and critically formative evaluation are not widespread abilities in the Caribbean at large. They will be much needed for women's development. With or without these skills there is no way that the staff can systematically reach half the population. The business of exploiting opportunities in both the public and private sectors has become a priority in the circumstances. Most of the women's bureaux have budgets to pay the staff; they have to find other resources for any programme they wish to promote. The staff are therefore increasingly concerned with mobilisation of resources, traditional and new. In the public sector they have to secure women's participation in development programmes involving skill training, credit-raising and book-keeping, production, marketing and other income-generating activities. For new projects resources have to be found, often from private sector or international funding. The necessary procedures are time-consuming and require special knowledge. The staff of the bureaux are not sufficient for the size of the demand. The Jamaican case study, which offers the longest history of project development, is the least optimistic about the future if the Bureau is to continue on current staffing.

In their short history the women's bureaux's shortage of professional staff, high rate of turnover, and the lack of mobilisation skills for socio-economic development on a wide scale, have been considerable limiting factors. Furthermore the first leadership has often passed on to new political roles and international or regional posts, leaving the individual countries to find new recruits at all levels of appointment. Staff limitations are critical where the women in development programmes are already highly complex, many-faceted and requiring for valid development, extensive links and relationships throughout the public and private sector. In short personal relationships in the women's bureaux are at least as important as trained activities. It is not surprising that more than one case study discusses the personal style of the Director of the Women's Bureau. This is already a critical element in the working acceptance of the bureaux, particularly in the machinery of government administration and by NGOs long in the field of social welfare for women, many of which have better established leadership in the community than the newly arrived bureaux.

Because the women's bureaux are all located in ministries with other responsibilities, usually concerned with the whole population, the bureau for women's affairs constitutes an extra reporting line. The convention of reporting to the Permanent Secretary is maintained and the women's bureau staff compete for time, funds and other resources with the officers of other programmes in the same ministry. Similarly the multi-faceted women's concerns require relationships with other ministries which appear to be equally stretched to provide their own specialised programmes without a specific women's component. In these circumstances the women's programmes

instead of being planning for half the population, coordinated with that for the other half, tend to become an unwelcome interruption to single purpose undifferentiated planning in each ministry.

As a support to the professionals in the women's bureaux, prodding by the Minister, Minister of State or Parliamentary Secretary for Women's Affairs is a mixed blessing. The Belize case study particularly reports resentment in the Ministry of Social Services against the Bureau for obtaining advantages through political pressure. In the final analysis if the resources are not available, or their accessibility is restricted, a political decision in one's favour is a Pyrrhic victory.

The most common observation of the case studies about the integration of the women's programmes into the work of the ministry in which they are placed is that the longer established civil servants do not concern themselves much with the work of the bureaux, nor do they know much about it. The director and her staff have not risen through the civil service hierarchy and have different priorities from their host ministry. Since the women's bureaux do not receive a budget for their operational programmes their staff do not even participate in the annual budget competition for funds. The strong impression is that the Women in Development programmes are added to the work of ministries, not integrated with it.

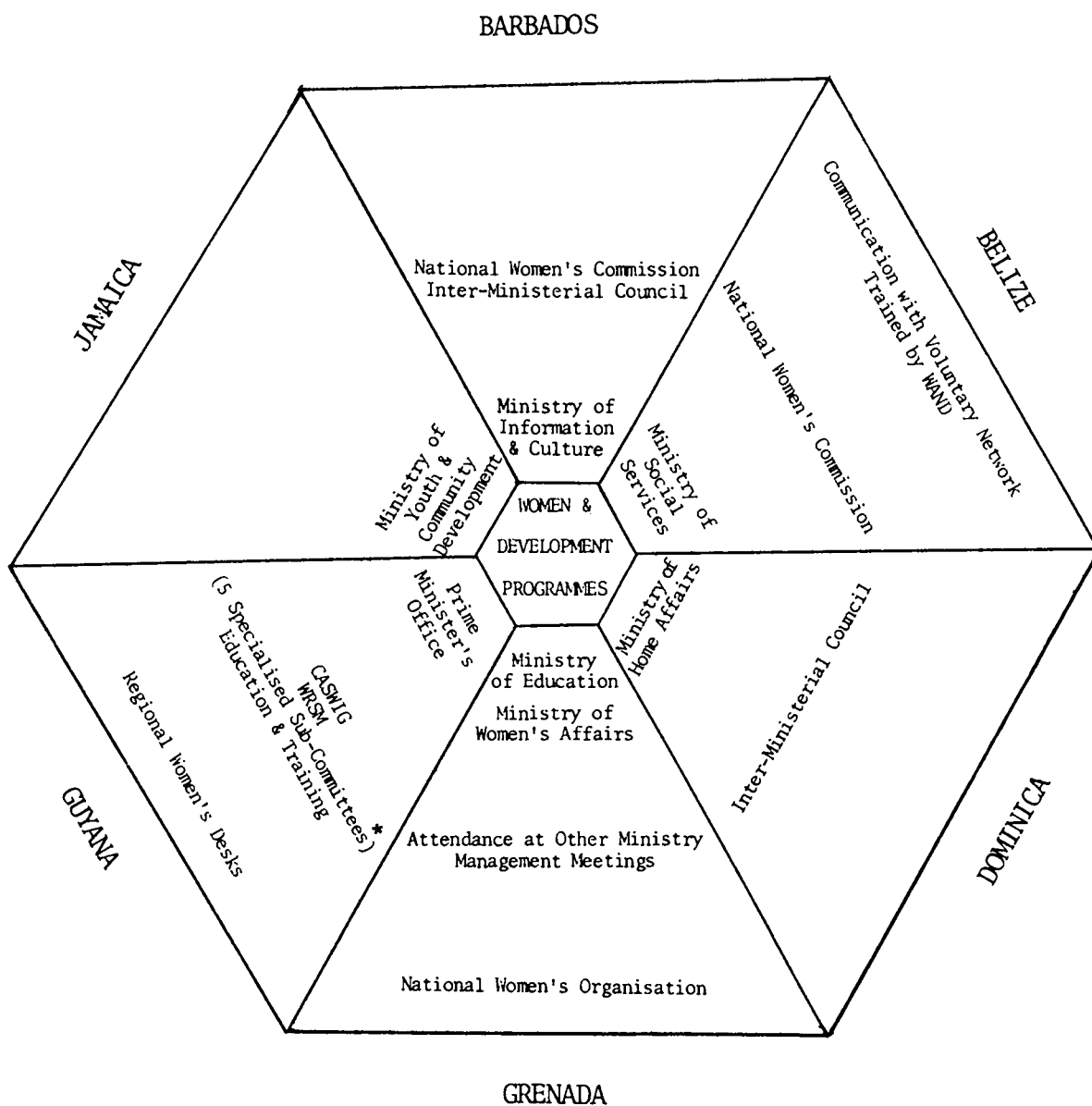
e) Links and Legitimising Devices

All the case studies discuss the working links between the women's bureaux and "cooperating" government ministries as well as the one where they currently reside. Most of the discussants favour some form of interministerial committee to meet on a regular basis. This would provide the ongoing monitoring function of ensuring women's participation in all national projects, benefits and legislation which safeguard their rights and advantages, as well as secure their cooperation in development. The Jamaican case study attributes current frustration in the Bureau specifically to the failure to institute a recommended inter-ministerial council.

Grenada, on the other hand, where the case study cites the largest number of specific links with other ministries, has achieved the liaison, not by any interministerial committee, but by having an official of the Ministry of Women's Affairs on the management committee of every other ministry. This time-consuming procedure had of course been made possible by the size of their staff. It is to be noted also that the Grenadian Ministry of Women's Affairs had only been holding its own ministerial conference once a month, which suggests that monitoring women's interests and activities in the programmes of other ministries has in any case been regarded as more important.

The fact is that women's affairs emerge in the responsibilities of every ministry. The interests of women for instance need to be safeguarded in the Attorney General's Department, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour and of Home Affairs. Women's functions in family life require that their particular concerns be identified and monitored in housing, health, education and food production. Finally the whole concept of Women in Development both as beneficiaries and as contributors requires definition of their participation in all development projects, and

Table 4 : The Linkages Between the Women and Development Programmes and Other Bodies - Ministerial, National and Regional



* Planned but not implemented

implementation of what is defined. The multi-faceted concern of the women's bureaux does make links with all the ministries at least as important to achieve as good relationships within the host ministry, probably more so.

This is also a case where objectives must be clear. All the Women in Development programmes envisage production programmes for women. Two operational approaches emerge from the case studies. The Jamaican case study exemplifies the view that the Women's Bureau should initiate and service its own programme of production projects. This involves the staff in identifying suitable projects, raising, invariably international, funds to start the enterprises, organising training, the operation itself and the business resultant on the work.

Another approach is to ensure the women's component in any national production programme that is being developed, be it agriculture, food processing, distribution, construction, light industry, crafts. The Women's Bureau then relates with each ministry which is developing a project and monitors the prospects for women. This is the emphasis favoured by Grenada, Guyana and to some extent by Barbados.

The second approach is still "a heavy load", but it is more likely to integrate women in development projects than are enterprises run separately, even if parallel. The Women's Bureaux share the tasks, particularly in training their participants for project work, but they share also the time consuming problems of fund raising, project launching and ongoing supervision. Above all they are functionally linked with the other ministries which cannot ignore them or leave them out of the estimates, if the officers of the Bureau and the project officers of the relevant ministries are co-operating in common enterprises.

It is in this context that some regular form of inter-ministerial consultative body and policy is proposed by the presenters of the case studies. In Barbados the development is anticipated in the current year. In Dominica a Standing Advisory Committee of technocrats from all ministries is associated with the Women's Bureau. It is reported that consultation is proceeding well, but that subsequent implementation of plans is weak. The support for projects and other operational work is one argument for a constituted inter-ministerial machinery. Another is stability.

Whether the activities of the women's bureaux focus on the monitoring and support of existing and developing government programmes with a women's component or whether they initiate their own projects, they need authority and support beyond the mere legalities of their existence. The political establishment is in each case now in place; but this can be a hazard in the changes of political parties after elections in the Commonwealth Caribbean countries. The situation changed in Jamaica for example with a change of government after the 1980 election. The Jamaican case study is, no doubt in consequence, particularly critical that not only an interministerial committee has been omitted, but also that two other recommended bodies were never instituted as national machinery to support the Women's Bureau in Jamaica. Both an Advisory Council with the standing of a statutory board and a National Commission on the Status of Women had been recommended by a special working committee and accepted in principle by Cabinet in 1977. The implementation was delayed while the roles and

relationships of the different bodies for women's development were defined. The change of government has brought neither the supporting bodies nor an alternative as a backing for the Women's Bureau.

The National Women's Commissions, or their equivalent, secure other forms of support for the women's bureaux. They can be solely advisory or they can assist in the work of the Women in Development programmes. They can consist of government personnel and the personnel of the NGOs or only the latter. However they are constituted, they bring in the NGOs which hitherto have had the greatest experience in dealing with women's affairs and make them part of the newer development-oriented official Women in Development programmes. For the women's bureaux this offers relevant experience and a wider basis of support in the country. The three Caribbean countries which have embarked on organisation of women outside, but related with, the government programme are Belize, Grenada and Guyana. Each works differently and reflects different emphases.

The National Women's Commission in Belize is that country's legitimising device for the Women in Development programme. In fact so far it has also shown considerable ability to mobilise existing strengths in the regions of the country, for operational research, training programmes and project activity. The link is with a strong voluntary network much of which has been trained by WAND. The National Women's Commission, embracing representation from the country's interests in women's development, has become a policy-making and coordinating body rather than simply an advisory one. Its political weight is regarded as a considerable asset to the Bureau in securing resources for women's programmes. One suspects that as a sustained policy this method of securing attention from the Government machinery has limitations. In another section of the case study on Belize one of the problems is defined: the process of stabilisation of the mechanics to structure and support the National Commission needs more urgent and constant attention than the Bureau can do all by itself.

Grenada has incorporated the Women in Development programme with other community action for the promotion of the revolution. The NWO has had a similar purpose and equal legitimacy with the CPE (Centre for Popular Education) and Y for R youth for Reconstruction). The great strength of this has been that all revolutionary development plans have included women, whether they have been rewriting colonial law or setting up cooperatives, because there has been an established channel of mobilisation. The tense one has to use in reporting on Grenada indicates the uncertainties about the future, since the alternative to the People's Revolution has not yet emerged. This does not invalidate the evidence of considerable integration of women in revolutionary development presented in the case study of Grenada, however shortlived it may or may not have been.

Guyana is concerned with regional development. The Government proposes regional women's desks in each of the ten development regions of the country; one has been achieved. The Women's Bureau has now also strengthened its links with professional expertise in the field by establishing the first of five proposed specialised sub-committees on women's affairs, recruiting from Government and NGO personnel. The Education and Training Sub-Committee of the Women's Bureau started work this year. The dual mechanism of sub-committees of the Bureau and regional desks reinforces the Guyana Women's Bureau's central objective of monitoring and supporting, rather than initiating, activity.

All the link mechanisms being used go beyond the setting up of advisory bodies. The national women's commissions, the Guyana sub-committees, the Grenada revolutionary mobilisation network, are all concerned with policy and its implementation, not merely with generalised recommendations and advice. They are action-oriented and supply the vestigial women's bureaux with some of the validity and support they need. The problem of political domination, and therefore the danger of discontinuity, has been stated by the Belize study and apparently exemplified in Grenada. Another problem could well be the dominance of a social welfare emphasis inherited from past programmes instead of a movement for mobilisation and self-determination of all women in the community, which would reflect the kind of goals more often articulated in the modern politics of independence in the Caribbean.

f) Financial Constraints

Financial constraints are crucial in the development of the women's bureaux, which have all come into existence during the period of economic decline heralded by the rise in world oil prices since 1974. Public expenditure on infrastructure and services has steadily declined; the IMF loans raised by Commonwealth Caribbean countries since the late nineteen-seventies stipulate reduction in the civil service. In the face of these two factors alone it is quite remarkable that the governments have managed to set up a basic staff to run women's bureaux, however inadequate they may appear. Only in Belize have the two officers been paid from non-governmental funds; the Women's Bureau has been funded for a two-year period, until the beginning of 1984, by the U.N. Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women. Although this assistance enabled the Bureau to start, it has led to some differences between the Bureau and the local UNDP office as to whether the Bureau, in such circumstances, is autonomous.

Beyond the payment of salaries and varying provision of secretarial help, none of the bureaux receives an operational budget for any programme, let alone for ongoing projects. It is of course in this context that officers of the bureau are consistently seeking a women's component in all development projects whether run by government ministries or by NGOs. Where a Bureau wishes to initiate a programme of its own the staff must either persuade one of these national bodies to divert funds for the new purpose, a very unlikely eventuality, or they must seek overseas funding, which is itself in competition with other national projects seeking external assistance.

In fact most programmes of socio-economic development in the Caribbean depend substantially for their funding on international and bilateral aid. Increasingly the assistance is in loan form and the project is designed to generate the repayments. Materials for self-help projects, credit for the purchase of land, tools and materials are common bases for loans. These are precisely the loan purposes that have been made difficult for women who find it harder to produce collateral and, despite a growing demonstration to the contrary, are regarded as less credit worthy than men. It is noteworthy that, in the case studies, the international funds raised for women only are for very small definitive projects; they are not open-ended credit, or material resources to support a wide range of enterprises.

Sources of funds mentioned in the case studies show that the Jamaican Bureau has the longest list of international and overseas donors.

Jamaica also presents the longest list of small income-generating projects initiated by the Bureau itself. On the other hand, the Grenadian Ministry of Women's Affairs, which has been the most consistent in its links with other ministries, appears to have been rewarded by the integration of women into the general development projects of these ministries; such as participation in agricultural training (Ministry of Agriculture), training in non-traditional skills (Grencraft), adult education (Ministry of Education), health brigades (Ministry of Health) day care programmes (Grensave), motor mechanics (Ministry of Construction). The Grenada study also reports sessions in "consciousness raising", held by the trade unions and the army. These two resources for women have not been mentioned in any other case study although women have a part in both in most of the other Commonwealth Caribbean countries of the sample. Participation in this variety of ongoing national programmes ensures that women have a share in the budget provided for them. It is probably the only consistent way of maintaining an equitable provision for women in government spending.

The case studies are specific on most aspects of the short but eventful organisational history of the women's bureaux; their comment on funding, however, is as random, one suspects, as its availability and its sources, whether national or international. International funding for most project proposals is currently on the wane. For women in development projects it is certain to decline at the end of the Decade of Women in 1985. It will be disastrous for all the programmes if regular, operational budgets, modest though they will be at this time, have not been established by then. Women's bureaux, however they conceive their objectives, cannot proceed with a programme for women in development on the same terms as voluntary bodies have been doing for so long in programmes of social welfare on behalf of their under- and undeveloped predecessors.

g) Methods of Operation, Management Styles, Decision-making

All the women's affairs bureaux in the case studies now have a minimal, if transient, staff established under a director, reporting to the appropriate minister through the permanent secretary of the ministry where the bureau has been placed. The challenge is to meet objectives, which are increasingly for widespread programmes, without human or financial resources to meet them. The constraints have so far influenced decision-making at all levels.

Some of the women's affairs programmes now have advisory bodies or some national machinery to assist in the identification of priorities for action. Such a body can coordinate the activities of those traditionally concerned with women's rights and welfare with the development projects currently on the drawing board. They are a very important channel of communication and can be used for mobilisation throughout the country.

There is a consensus amongst the writers of the case studies that the women's bureaux need advisory, regional and/or national bodies to assist them in their development. The role of the advisory bodies, particularly in their relationship with the bureaux, secures less agreement. The roles of the national council therefore differ quite a lot. In Guyana the functions are assumed by the long-standing CASWIG and WRSM. The Guyana case study, by omission rather than commission, suggests that these bodies with their record of achievements in the past now leave the Women's Affairs Bureau, essentially their own creation, to deal with the

ongoing work of the programme. The policy of the political director and her staff is to respond to any general directive of government by organising a women's component for the specific development programmes to be promoted. The current priority is, for example, agricultural production, because this is the present emphasis of national development policy. The basic decision is therefore a Government concern; the task of ministries and NGOs is to promote it, monitored and supported by the Women's Bureau.

The articulation of projects for women in development with the national development programme has also essentially been the policy in both Grenada and in Dominica, for different reasons. In the first case it has been in keeping with revolutionary policy to mobilise all citizens for change in their communities. In the second, it has been the only resource in a poor, small country after disastrous hurricanes, to secure any projects for women at all. In both cases the staff of the Women's Affairs Bureau spend much time attending planning meetings in a number of ministries as members of Government boards and committees responsible for production projects and social welfare.

The communication to the NWO in Grenada has often been less than specific; the writer of the case study suggests with hindsight that it probably delivered more revolutionary zeal than plans for sustained activities in the villages. The NWO has been conceived of as a power group of working and poor women, but there are doubts about the input of the membership into the working organisation and direction of women's affairs. The ideas have been coming in fact from the "conscious and articulate women" in the administration at the Ministry of Women's Affairs. The NWO seems to have been a listening post and an agency rather than a catalyst in its own right.

The Belize case study suggests that the National Women's Commission, backed by a country-wide voluntary network, is not only giving strong policy direction in women's affairs, it is also active in implementation, in such matters as district workshops, training programmes, village research and small village projects. It is even suggested that the Director's ideas and dynamism are not always reconciled with the ideas of women at large, which in this case are felt to be available to the decision makers.

The professional women of the bureaux are undoubtedly caught between two influences. On the one hand they are faced with the strong political pressures of the day, which often alienate experienced groups and individuals long established in the promotion of women's affairs, including the "women in the street" themselves. On the other hand neglect and lack of resources must severely limit initiatives by the women's bureaux.

Because almost all operational costs are obtained from international and voluntary sources this is another constraint on decision-making. Projects must be tailored to the aid conditions and conventions of the donor, or at least must be adjusted to them. Much external aid and technical assistance, for instance, have been given for women's projects in home economics, cottage industries and family life programmes. Little has yet been offered for the modern income-generating projects, business management and production development which might bring more women into the formal employment sectors or modern sector self employment.

The most critical factor in decision-making is the response of the women at large in any country. Their boycott of, or non-involvement in, activities remains the final effective determinant of the value of any scheme. Grenada is commended for its mobilisation of women in the NWO. It has, however, only reached 21% of the women in the population. Some groups have deliberately remained aloof, and limitations have already been noted concerning the initiatives actually taken by the NWO membership itself. A popularly based women's movement has yet to emerge in the Commonwealth Caribbean, and yet as heads of families, producers, distributors and traders, domestic and foreign, these are some of the most enterprising women in the world. They are also, at least in the same proportion as men, migrants to North and Central America and now to a lesser extent to Europe. In First World countries they have learnt more sophisticated life styles and relationships, including expectations for better levels of living for themselves and their families at home. The women's bureaux have scarcely tapped the enterprise of poor and aspiring women, or indeed of ladies rich from their own unconventional exercises in the market. If, furthermore, the bureaux could tap this initiative they would have a strong voting public concentrating on their affairs. By the same token resources should be easier to come by if half the population becomes a legitimate pressure group.

Furthermore it is only by a broad-based programme of women's participation in socio-economic development that resources can be self-generated. Independence is as yet a political achievement only. The citizens of independent countries have still to seek personal independence as a consequence of their own political status. Caribbean women in particular still pursue their goals of survival and/or betterment, as a personal concern, often away from home; their countries have not invited them to do much else. The case studies miss this context for the development of women's affairs in the new Caribbean countries.

This stage in Caribbean history is reflected in the limited and somewhat piecemeal methods of operation of the women's bureaux. The writers of the case studies are fully aware that the problems of the women's bureaux to date are far less that the wrong people are making decisions concerning women's affairs than that the marginality of resources does not allow for calculated decision-making at all.

In some of the case studies the proposed device for achieving long-term decisions about women's projects and activities is the creation of a national plan for women in development, to be a blue-print for action. It has already been seen that Guyana has experimented with a workshop to get proposals for the plan from women in the communities themselves. The same goal is set by Belize and implied by the others. The object is obviously to achieve opportunities for women not merely as components in national development plans. Many Caribbean women would prefer the resources for development, such as access to credit, land, training and decision making, which would have far more important multiplier effects in the long run than participation in small definitive projects.

Finally, the question remains as to whose decisions are being sought. Both traditional leaders in social welfare for women and the social science trained staff of the new women's bureaux have their own ideas of what women's bureaux need. The women at large may not agree with these priorities and will then in practice, as they always have, pursue their own

devices without reference to any official programmes for their development. A case in point is the great increase in informal import/export markets conducted by women since the recession of the 1970s presented its challenge. The initiative has been assertive, sometimes highly profitable to individuals and certainly a way of supplementing scarce stock in the retail shops. The weaknesses have been great duplication of goods in the road markets, and in consequence slow and unprofitable sales, lack of concern with consumer preferences, bad pricing, display, and sheer incompetence in weighing, making change and packaging, if any.

There has to be reconciliation of experience and viewpoints. Participation is a high human and social value in the Caribbean. Women in development are no exception; the more that their ideas are incorporated into plans, preferably medium-term and accountable, the more they will cooperate. The machinery to enable them to make their input is important. In fact, however, women are less inspired by institutional arrangements than by programmes, with ongoing decisions to be made. A problem-solving attack with specific objectives will probably be more effective as a succession of participation activities than a national campaign in institution building, with or without a national plan.

h) Achievements

The achievements reported in the case studies are not only interesting and impressive in themselves, but also a good indicator of what each country in the sample has seen as the priority for introducing women into development programmes.

The five categories of achievement claimed in order of frequency for the combined sample, are as follows:

- (i) Structure for the implementation of the programme
- (ii) Legislation for the rights and status of women
- (iii) Production projects
- (iv) Participation of women in planning
- (v) Awareness and motivation

It is perhaps not surprising that achievements in setting up the machinery are the most observed. They have been the initial endeavour and remain the current challenge. The Belize case study makes the most comprehensive claim for achievement in the structure for a women in development programme. They are a recognised presence in the Ministry of Social Security where they have always been accommodated. They have all the elements of a structure, with working relationships with other ministerial departments and NGOs. There is open communication with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry personnel and staff of voluntary bodies; their outreach programme is systematic and sustained.

The Guyana study cites as achievements the establishment of the Education and Training Sub-Committee and of one of the women's desks in the regional affairs commissions. They also claim good collaboration with other agencies, governmental and non-governmental, in activities concerned with nutrition and agriculture.

The formation of the National Women's Organisation in Grenada is reported as a mass mobilisation of women, as a power group to support the revolution. The case study writer also claims achievement in incorporating and thus strengthening some of the established women's social welfare groups, such as the Church Women, and other church groups, and the Home Makers.

The strongest legislative programme to assist the status of women reported in a case study is that of Dominica. The *Maintenance Act* provides equality for all children whether born in or out of wedlock, and the *Income Tax Ordinance* provides for the separate tax assessment of husband and wife. Amendments are under consideration to remove discriminatory aspects in laws relating to inheritance, marriage, divorce, leave passages for civil servants, maternity leave and social insurance. The Grenada study also reports on the granting of maternity leave and the right of women to join trade unions.

It is interesting that the Jamaican case study does not classify as achievements the considerable legislative measures in support of women in that country. The setting up of the Family Court to deal with the confusion of family affairs which are brought to law, the abolition of the legal status of illegitimacy and the establishment of a minimum wage could all have been cited as laws improving the status of women. The Jamaica study in fact only quotes as presumptive achievements economic projects and income-generating activities.

The Guyana study claims credit for project writing and for feasibility studies, and associates the Women's Bureau with implementation of some of the resulting projects. Although production and income-generation are strongly advocated as objectives of the Bureau of Women's Affairs in the other case studies, they are not classified as achievements in the presentation. Nor are there claims for achievement in finding credit, land, or markets for women; even skill training, which has certainly taken place, is not mentioned in this context.

The other two categories of achievement-participation and awareness - are predictably most claimed by Grenada, almost entirely through the activities of the NWO; there have been meetings of parish and social councils where women recognise their rights and the need for change; the Ministry of Women's Affairs is perceived as the defender of these rights.

The Guyana case study claims that the women are participating well in the one regional desk and the one sub-committee where machinery has been established for them to do so. The Dominica study reports that women are asserting themselves and reiterating their commitment to their families and their country.

It is not surprising that in the short lives of the women's bureaux they do not want to claim great achievements yet. This is particularly to be expected when, as the case studies have articulated, there are limiting effects of small staff, lack of finance, poor integration with other ministerial agencies and sometimes with the NGOs as well.

1) Problems

By and large the case studies emphasise the problems created for the women's bureaux by lack of staff and lack of budgets. In each case they deplore the constraints put upon them by these deficiencies, without specifying precisely what has been lost in consequence.

The working relationships with both their own ministry, whichever it is, and with the other ministries whose work also affects women's affairs are the second greatest cause of worry. It is widely felt that the established bureaucracies are not reconciled to the newcomer. The women's bureaux are anxious to initiate development programmes for women and are action-oriented in ministries where maintenance of ongoing activities is the priority. In Belize in particular a woman head of department proved embarrassing in a Ministry of Social Services where men have always headed the departments. The inter-ministerial relationships, while not reported as hostile, are also obviously a challenge for women's bureaux staff seeking a share for women in general projects administered by the public service.

The only problem expressed about the NGOs in the women in development programmes is the extent to which they have been incorporated. In one form or another each case study advocates a board, sometimes of both government and NGO representatives, sometimes of only NGOs. It is clear that the staff of women's bureaux regard such a creation as a legitimising device for their work, and an insurance that they have harnessed the most experienced workers in the field to assist the new programme. The problem, however, is that only in Belize and now in Barbados does such a body exist. Elsewhere staff of the bureau are dealing with individual organisations on an ad hoc basis and have no consistent relationship with the NGOs at all.

Only in the Grenada case study is it reported that some NGOs were not willing to work with the Ministry of Women's Affairs or subsequently join the NWU. This was obviously the objection of groups opposed to the revolution, not to development work with women. Elsewhere, and with other groups in Grenada, the women's bureaux have found it easy to work with NGOs. In some cases the bureau staff have worked for NGOs themselves and are now relating with former colleagues.

The case studies do not express much concern for lack of grassroots contact with women at large in the communities. The Jamaica case study presents strongly frustration felt because the Director of the Bureau does not have the resources to meet the popular demand for production projects. It is not clear from the other studies that any such demand exists or if it does, that it has reached the Women's Bureau.

There is also little negative comment on the state of objective formulation. Each case study shows that the scope of the women in development programmes has had to be restricted, but this is reported rather as a gain in realism than a loss of potential action. The Guyanese study in particular almost expresses relief that the restrictions on staffing and finance have resolved the issues concerning the role of the Bureau.

In many ways the problems not expressed in the case studies are as revealing as those that are. In fact it is hard to see how the women's bureaux can survive as more than tokens of concern when the Decade of Women

ends in 1985. The continuing recession means that little more national budgeting and less international aid can be anticipated. At the family and personal levels survival is a more pressing challenge than development. Women have always played a major role in the survival enterprise, but not hitherto through official programmes. It is arguable that women's bureaux, even if reasonably staffed and supported, will find themselves in the same predicament as the women they both represent and serve.

The emergency aspect of the women in development programme in the nineteen-eighties is hardly presented by the case studies.