

**National machineries for women in  
development:  
experiences, lessons and strategies for  
institutionalising gender in development  
policy and planning**

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## ACRONYMS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific countries as recognised under the Lomé Convention
ANC	African National Congress (South Africa)
AWOJA	Association of Women's Organisations in Jamaica
BoWA	Bureau of Women's Affairs (Jamaica)
CEDAW	Convention on The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Cooperation Agency
COREDES	<i>Consejo Regional de Desarrollo</i> , Regional Development Council (Chile)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development)
DWA	Department of Women's Affairs (Belize), Department of Women Affairs (Namibia)
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FRELIMO	<i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i>
GAD	Gender and Development
GDU	Gender and Development Unit (Namibia - Ministry of Agriculture)
MFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (Uganda)
MINASCOF	<i>Ministère des Affaires Sociales et de la Condition Féminine</i> (Cameroon)
MMD	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (Zambia)
MT-PDP	Medium Term Philippines Development Plan
NANAWO	Namibia National Women's Organisation
NCDP	National Commission for Development Planning (Zambia)
NCRFW	National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women
NCW	National Council of Women (Tonga, PNG, Uganda)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGOCC	NGO Coordinating Committee (Zambia)
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRA	National Resistance Army (Uganda)
NRC	National Resistance Councils (Uganda)
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
NWC	National Women's Councils (Uganda)
NWM	National Women's Machinery
ONAM	<i>Organización Nacional de la Mujer</i> (Guatemala) National Women's Bureau
PASCA	Programme to Alleviate the Social Cost of Adjustment (Uganda)
PDPW	Philippines Development Plan for Women
PPGD	Philippines Plan for Gender-Responsive Development
PPU	Provincial Planning Unit (Zambia)

PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RDPC	Rassemblement Démocratique Populaire Camerounais
SAL	Structural Adjustment Loan
SERNAM	<i>Servicio Nacional de la Mujer</i> (Chile)
	National Service for Women
SWAPO	South-West Africa People's Organisation (Namibia)
TAL	Technical Assistance Loan
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNIP	United National Independence Party (Zambia)
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
WAD	Women's Affairs Division (PNG)
WAU	Women's Affairs Unit (Tonga)
WDO	Women's Development Officers (Belize)
WID	Women in Development
WIDD	Women in Development Department (Zambia)

## **Executive Summary**

### **1. Introduction**

This report reviews the experience of national women's machineries (NWMs) in developing countries, drawing on case study material from African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries (including Belize, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Uganda and Zambia) as well as comparative material from Chile and the Philippines where national machineries are well-established. The report was commissioned by the Gender and Development Desk of the Directorate General for Development (DVIII) of the European Commission, as an input into policy development and dialogue.

In Part II, NWMs are assessed through their mandate, status and activities. The range of constraints to the effectiveness of NWMs are examined as well as the variety of instruments adopted to further the implementation of gender-aware policy. Part III analyses the implications for NWMs of the changing macro-political and institutional environment, emphasising the current interest in 'good government,' specifically, programmes of decentralisation and civil service reform as well as broader issues of participation and democratisation. Part IV draws out the implications of the discussion for those seeking to provide financial or technical assistance to NWMs and suggests where future strategies to support 'gender mainstreaming' might focus.

### **2. Lessons from Experience of National Women's Machineries (Nwms)**

NWMs were central to the 'integration of women in development' strategy of the 1970s. Since the mid-1980s, the slow pace of change in women's status and opportunities, the experience of project and policy 'misbehaviour' and the ghettoisation of women's issues in government structures, has called into question the top-down strategy of creating NWMs. Twenty years of experience point to a number of lessons about the creation and support of national machineries and the wider policy context within which they operate, which could usefully inform future financial and technical assistance to NWMs and, more broadly, the project of institutionalising gender in government policy and planning.

In the 1990s, shifts in the conceptualisation of WID/GAD issues are reflected in new approaches to the state as a vehicle for change. The focus has shifted from integration to institutionalisation, or 'mainstreaming'. Mainstreaming looks beyond the promotion of projects and programmes for women, to the consideration of gender issues across all sectors, ministries and departments. This, in turn, may imply transformation of the institutional structures of government and the state and requires close attention to the links between national women's machineries and other areas of government.

Some progress has been made. Many NWMs, particularly the more recently established ones, engage in advocacy and policy oversight work, as well as direct involvement in 'women's' projects. Formerly, NWMs tended to be marginalised and ghettoised in social and welfare sectors but more recently they have begun to move into central decision-making locations within the bureaucracy, such as ministries of planning or finance, or the President's or Prime Minister's office. In some cases, however, the rhetoric of gender mainstreaming is not translated into practice and NWMs continue to conform to the old welfare-oriented model.

A range of political, institutional and financial constraints limit the effectiveness of national machineries. Important among these are:

**Conceptual shifts in the discourse on women in development and gender in development.**

These have created some confusion, for example, between welfare and equity objectives and strategic and practical needs, which are rarely translated into clear policy goals. In general, there has been a shift from welfare-based strategies to a more transformative approach. At the same time, there has been something of a backlash against the discourse on gender, particularly in places where men are perceived to be 'losing out'.

**The lack of a strong mandate.** This often results from the lack of a high-level commitment, lack of a strong internal constituency and dependence on external funding. *If the NWM is to be effective, a solid constitutional and legal status is crucial, as is a policy which specifies goals and clear lines of organisational responsibility and accountability. These need to be backed by planning procedures and management support structures which can transform policy into practice.*

*Where a NWM does not currently exist, or is not longer functioning, there is little point in establishing such a structure in a vacuum. Attention is first needed to consultation and building support both within government and wider civil society for the project of gender mainstreaming.*

**Conflicting roles.** There is tension between advisory, advocacy and policy oversight and monitoring roles and direct involvement in projects, each of which require different skills and institutional cultures. In general, this leads to an overburdening of activities, with NWMs struggling to make an impact in any single area. In some cases, there is a schism between central advocacy work, informed by a feminist agenda and field-level operations which tend to be more welfare-oriented, with field-level staff lacking awareness of, or interest in, current gender debates. In general, the experience of projects and programmes implemented by NWMs is not very positive, with a predominance of traditional welfare-oriented activities (e.g. mother and child health care) or income generation. *Direct involvement in project implementation is not a crucial part of NWM activity, in the current context. If gender mainstreaming is the objective, policy oversight and advocacy roles are vital in order to influence wider government policy and push for legislative change. Where the NWM does implement projects, it should be in conjunction with the relevant specialised ministries. The implementation of innovative demonstration projects, in areas where other ministries are not working or do not have the expertise, has worked successfully in some countries.*

**Locational instability and inappropriateness.** This mitigates against the establishment of priorities and mechanisms of influence. Given its cross-departmental nature, there is no automatic location for the NWM. The main institutional options are location within a single ministry, or to be constituted as a central advisory body, usually within the President's or Prime Minister's office, attempting to influence planning process across all departments. In the former case, the autonomy associated with being a single ministry may be offset by lack of influence in other sectors. Where women's issues are competing with other marginalised constituencies (e.g. youth, children) within a single ministry, there is likely to be severe competition for resources. In the latter case, women's issues may gain a higher profile, enhanced access to funding and stronger connections with, for example, the civil service. However, there is a danger that the NWM may become overly dependent on one or two key political figures at the centre.

**Underfunding of NWMs.** The evidence suggests that NWMs are both underfunded and vulnerable to arbitrary budget cuts. This is indicative of a lack of priority to gender issues in the bureaucracy with a direct impact on staffing levels and quality (which tends to be low, inexperienced and lacking in specialist skills) and on the scope of activities. NWMs cope by diversifying activities, which tend to be skewed in favour of highly-visible projects of a relatively short-term nature, rather than the less visible work of long-term institution building or developing advocacy capacity.

Even where there is strong internal commitment, realistically, low income countries are not in a position to fund their own NWMs and rely heavily on external funding. It is important to ensure that this reliance does not result in lack of internal commitment and accountability. *Donors can play a role in supporting women's organisations in civil society and in creating links, consultation and networks between civil society and NWMs, in order to promote accountability. Equally important is the ability of NWMs to influence public spending decisions and public expenditure reviews. Here, too, external support in the form of leverage from donor agencies, where co-ordinated with an internal lobby, could be valuable.*

**Bureaucratic resistance.** Sectional interests and rivalries of ministries mitigate against the consideration of cross-sectoral issues such as gender, which require a co-ordinated approach. Women's ministries themselves are often keen to protect their 'turf' and concentrate on highly visible activities which will attract donor funding. The personal and political nature of gender adds to the resistance of government officers to examining these issues.

**Lack of autonomy.** Political patronage and interests and electoral demands can be very influential over appointments of Ministers and the activities of NWMs. Women's ministries are notoriously tied to the political interests of ruling parties (often through their women's wings) or ruling families. Women ministers are often relatives of heads of state or government, or other important political figures. In this scenario, the NWM can simply become a vehicle for promoting and legitimising the ruling party. Such connections make relations with the autonomous women's movement very difficult.

### **3. Towards the Mainstream: Strategies Adopted by NWMs to Influence Government Policy and Planning**

A range of measures have been adopted to overcome some of the above constraints and to promote the 'mainstreaming' of gender in development policy and planning, in particular:

- the inclusion of gender in development plans;
- guidelines and checklists for planning and evaluation;
- gender awareness training;
- inter-departmental linkages through committees and focal points;
- links to and consultation with women's organisations and NGOs.

**Gender in development plans.** Two main strategies have been adopted which are perhaps done most successfully in tandem. The first is the development of a national policy and/or action plan on gender issues (possibly as an interim measure) and the second is the integration of gender into the main planning process. It is important that the first is clearly articulated with the second, otherwise the gender-related goals and objectives can simply be ignored or diluted in the main plan. *In order to effectively integrate gender into development plans, a number of factors are important. There is a need for: political and economic ground work by gender advocates; for top level commitment; for action programmes and earmarked funds; for gender-disaggregated data and indicators on issues such as violence, reproductive health etc.; and for concrete targets and progress indicators at both macro- and sectoral levels.* Often sound policies are not followed through with action plans and these in turn are not directly linked to resource allocations with specified targets and time frames. *There is a need for people with budgetary skills in order to follow through these processes.*

**Guidelines and checklists.** The utility of checklists and guidelines for pre-investment planning and monitoring and evaluation purposes rests on the willingness of planning officers to use them. *Guidelines and checklists need to be devised in consultation with the people who will apply them and should be used early in the planning cycle. The effective use of guidelines and checklists also requires analytical skills, an information base which is gender-disaggregated and incentives or vetoes to encourage their application.*

**Gender training.** Gender training is particularly important in overcoming bureaucratic resistance and affecting attitudinal change. *Because of the deep-seated beliefs associated with gender relations and their confusion with cross-sex inter-personal relations, to be effective, gender training needs to be ongoing and targeted at all levels of the bureaucracy, including senior civil servants and/or ministers. Conceptual clarity about gender is an important in gender training. Furthermore, training is not likely to be effective in isolation, without changes in institutional structure, rules and culture: incentives are required for changed behaviour.*

**Focal points.** This is the main mechanism which has been adopted to create linkages between NWMs and other ministries and departments. In practice, focal points have often been limited in effectiveness because junior female staff tend to be burdened with the responsibility, with few, if any, extra resources, little training, support or clarity about their role. *This points to the need to designate high-level personnel as focal points, give them a clear brief, additional resources and rewards and to set up a support structure and training. In many countries, focal points per se have had limited effect. More concerted programmes involving different sections of the bureaucracy in developing gender policy have proved more fruitful, as in the Philippines and in Uganda.*

**Inter-ministerial co-ordinating committees.** These are another mechanism to overcome bureaucratic resistance and co-ordinate policy on gender issues. Such committees comprise representatives from a range of ministries and sometimes non-government experts, chaired or co-ordinated by the NWM. Here, the status of the NWM is crucial in terms of its ability to call meetings and influence other ministries and civil servants. Ministers may be reluctant to attend without additional incentives.

**Links with women's organisations and NGOs.** The legitimacy and accountability of the NWM are dependent in part on the quality of its links with women's organisations and NGOs representing women's interests. A number of factors influence this relationship, particularly the degree of autonomy granted to NGOs co-operating with the state, the views which women's organisations themselves take of the state and the sector of co-operation. A variety of mechanisms, both formal and informal, for consultation between NWMs and women's organisations have been tried, ranging from seats on government committees, to public hearings and informal consultation. *A system of formal representation is likely to exclude small and weak organisations so that where women's organisations are diverse (e.g. ethnically, socially or politically) public hearings combined with wider consultation may work better. In order to reach women who are not part of the organised women's movement or formal organisations - often the most marginalised groups - resources are needed for outreach work by field level staff and an openness to working with loose structures is required.*

No single measure to promote gender mainstreaming in itself provides a solution. Gender mainstreaming will occur through a co-ordinated process, based on the building of alliances both within and outside government, towards the development and implementation of gender policies. *While the process itself will be outside the direct influence of external agencies, there is certainly scope for strategic technical and financial support in such areas as training, the establishment of focal points and co-ordinating committees, convening policy workshops, data gathering exercises, coalition building, and policy advocacy. It is important that different elements are co-ordinated within an overall process.*

#### **4. Restructuring and Good Government: New Opportunities for NWMs?**

Beyond these specific constraints on the effectiveness of NWMs and in their relations with the wider government apparatus and civil society, it is important to look at the wider policy environment and the political factors which might underpin a strategy for institutionalising gender.

One key issue here is the **increasing irrelevance of development plans** in countries undergoing economic restructuring, as five year plans are suspended in favour of adjustment policies. In this context, there is a tendency for gender issues to be relegated to social programmes attached to adjustment packages, rather than to inform the design of adjustment packages themselves and, within social programmes, for women to be characterised as an undifferentiated 'vulnerable group'. *Gender issues should be a consideration in the design of broad economic policy and certainly sectoral adjustment policies. Analytical tools and the information base for assessing the gendered impact of liberalization and gender-based constraints to adjustment are available. There is a need to build coalitions which can influence the economic policy process. A more sophisticated approach to gender considerations in social programmes should also be adopted, within a clear policy framework.*

Another key factor is the **current donor concern with 'good government'**. Paradoxically, the mainstreaming of gender in the bureaucracy is being promoted at a time when down-sizing of the bureaucracy and the decentralisation of service provision is the dominant approach to government. Civil service reform and decentralisation affect NWMs directly and indirectly, by shifting the locus of decision-making and resource allocation and changing the institutional structure, rules, culture and practices of government. They open the opportunity for increasing accountability of government service provision to women. At same time, there is a danger that gender issues will become further marginalised in government, unless attention is paid to this in the design of reform packages.

**Civil service reform** provides a new opportunity for the institutionalisation of gender, through the restructuring of ministries, redirection of resources, introduction of new mechanisms and procedures to take gender issues into account, including enhanced control mechanisms to ensure effectiveness of gender procedures and the introduction of gender training, as part of reform packages. There is also the danger that when restructuring occurs, gender issues could be marginalised, existing informal gender equity practices could be squeezed out and that a new culture of efficiency will erode concerns with social justice and equity. *Gender mainstreaming needs to be brought to the fore within the good government debate and integrated with programmes of civil service reform and decentralisation.*

*There is also a need for empirical research on the gender-differentiated impact of civil service reform, e.g. through retrenchments, rationalisation of departments, changing institutional cultures, job regrading and training programmes, which could exacerbate existing inequalities, particularly where there is strong competition for resources.*

**Decentralisation** provides an opportunity to make service provision at local level responsive to women's needs, especially since they are often the main consumers of local services. However, it may also be associated with a tendency to 'pass the buck' on issues such as gender to which there is little commitment, especially if there is no reallocation of resources and can lead to intense competition over resources between competing local interest groups. *In order to ensure local level implementation of gender policies and to increase accountability of service provision to women, gender units or women's committees within local government are required.* Just as at national level, however, there is a danger of ghettoisation and under-resourcing.

Decentralisation allows for increased representation of women in local government and mechanisms of accountability to women. However, there are a range of reasons why women tend not to participate in local government and where they do, to subsume their gender interests to class or political interests. Local government is often more hierarchical and embedded in local social structures than national government and so is difficult for women to penetrate as independent political actors, or for them to raise controversial gender issues. *The experience of attempts to increase women's representation in government shows that quotas and reservations alone are insufficient: what works best is party lists in conjunction with quotas as well as training and support networks for women both as candidates and elected representatives.* Women's under-representation is often structured into bodies such as regional development councils, since they tend to be under-represented in, e.g., labour and business associations making up such bodies. *Local-level bodies inviting participation from civil society organisations should ensure they include representation from women's organisations, coupled with a requirement that participating institutions take measures to increase female representation and voice in their organisations.*

*More broadly, issues of **participation and democracy** underlying the 'good government' agenda require a gender analysis. NGOs and participatory methods (e.g. PRA), as vehicles for popular or community participation cannot be assumed to be sensitive to gender. Processes of public consultation may impose particular constraints on women. *Special measures are required to facilitate women's participation in public consultation processes, such as separate women's meetings. In processes of democratisation, the implications of different types of electoral system for female voter and candidate participation and representation also require consideration.**

**Transitions to democracy and periods of post conflict reconstruction provide new opportunities for institutionalising gender** and raising public awareness of gender issues. The mobilisation women and women's organisations for democracy or during conflict provides the basis for a new awareness and shift in perception of gender issues. Such situations also pose questions for women's organisations as to how to adapt goals and strategies to a new context which may result in a decline in activity or disorientation, particularly where outside agencies shift financial support from NGOs to government and former activists are absorbed into the bureaucracy. *It is important that donor agencies continue to support the development and capacity of women's organisations in civil society, as well a government structures, in post-transitional situations.*

## I. Introduction

### 1. Background

In 1962, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women first identified the value of appointing national commissions on the status of women which were to make recommendations for improving the position of women in their respective countries. The United Nations (UN) defines national machinery as: 'a single body or complex organised system of bodies, often under different authorities, but recognised by the Government as the institution dealing with the promotion of the status of women' (cited in Ashworth, 1994:5). The First World Conference on Women, which launched the UN Decade for Women in 1975, endorsed the World Plan of Action which identified national machinery as 'effective **transitional** measures for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full integration into national life' (cited in Moser, 1993: 111; emphasis added).

The creation of state women's machineries (as well as similar structures in donor agencies and NGOs) raised expectations that women's needs would be addressed in development policy and planning. By 1985, 90 percent of countries had established some form of national machinery for women, 50 percent of which had been set up during the first Decade for Women (1975-1985).

Two decades later, the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) states that:

'In order for the Platform for Action to be implemented, it will be necessary for Governments to establish or improve the effectiveness of national machineries for the advancement of women at the highest political level'. (United Nations, 1995: para 296).

What was envisaged initially as a transitional measure has come to be regarded as a permanent requirement. This, in some sense, constitutes a failure. The establishment of government institutions to address women's needs, whilst legitimising a focus on gender in development and, in some cases, supporting innovative approaches to policy as well as programme and project design, has not met the expectations raised. In 1987, the UN began to express doubt about the effectiveness of national machineries, highlighting their small budgets and lack of staff, prevailing attitudes that legitimise female subordination, mandates that focus on welfare, and their lack of influence over other government ministries (Moser, 1993: 111).

Over the last two decades, national women's machineries (NWMs) have often proved to be weak, under-resourced, vulnerable to changing political fortunes and to co-optation by political parties. This has led feminists to ask whether the failure of NWMs is the result of technical constraints or whether the state and bureaucracies are, due to their gendered nature, unable to respond to women's gender interests. In the light of this, the 'top-down' strategy of creating NWMs has undergone some reconsideration.

## **2. Gender Analysis of State Institutions**

Feminists have questioned the assumption that the state is gender neutral or autonomous from patriarchy. They have explored the ways in which the state defines and polices the boundaries between the 'public' and 'private' along gendered lines. The archetypal public citizen at the centre of state laws and policies is a male citizen, whilst the domestic and private arena are deemed female. The structurally unequal position of women is institutionalised in state laws which establish unequal inheritance rights, set different ages for legal adulthood by gender and tacitly condone domestic and sexual violence or sanction differential wages for equal or comparable work. Even where development programmes are intended to 'integrate' women into development they often serve to reinforce traditional gender ideologies which contribute to women's disadvantaged position (Goetz, 1995: 3-5).

Whilst the state may be seen as largely oriented to male interests, it is made up of a complex set of institutions with conflicting priorities. 'Male interests' in themselves do not form a coherent category and may have conflictual elements within them. The extent to which the state and its institutions will promote men's or women's interests depends on the history of state formation and politics embedded in institutional rules and processes, as well as on wider social processes, such as the construction of the family, the nature of social relations and the extent of women's participation in civil society. (*Ibid.*)

Through a better understanding of the structures and institutions of the state, as well as of the ways in which external forces can change those structures, feminists hope to find strategic points of entry through which to make public policy more receptive to the needs and interests<sup>1</sup> of women (Goetz, 1995: 3-5; Staudt, 1990). 'What we are looking for is the establishment of a strategic presence for women's gender interests in policy-making where there is legitimation for the expression of the interests of women as a gendered social category endowed unequally with values and resources and with potentially different ambitions for the way policy is pursued' (Goetz, 1995: 7).

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<sup>1</sup> The notion of women's needs or interests, just like men's, should not be assumed to be a pre-determined, coherent set of issues as they change in different social contexts.

### **3. From Integration to Institutionalisation**

The strategies adopted by those who wish to make the state represent women's as well as men's interests have undergone shifts as constraints to this process have emerged. The call of WID (women in development) advocates from the 1970s onwards was for the integration of women into the development process, with the establishment of NWMs a central part of this strategy of integration. However, the slow pace of change in women's status combined with the experience of policy and project 'misbehaviour' has led to a questioning of the earlier emphasis on integration. For some, the emphasis on WID had resulted in the ghettoisation and increased marginalisation of women's issues. In this view, the creation of separate institutions to deal with WID issues may have led to an overall reduction in the resources reaching women (Moser, 1993). Others have argued that women have always been 'integrated' into development and that the problems stem from the unequal and exploitative nature of the development process itself (Razavi and Miller, 1995: 1).

Thus, the quest for integration - the 'adding on' of women's concerns to pre-existing policies and programmes - has shifted to a focus on the institutionalisation or 'mainstreaming' of gender concerns. This concept goes beyond gaining access for women to existing resources and programmes, to a more transformative or agenda-setting project. It parallels the conceptual shift from WID to GAD (gender and development), attempting to achieve a transformation in gender relations through a process which involves both men and women.

Mainstreaming looks beyond the promotion of projects and programmes for women, to the consideration of gender issues throughout development policy and planning and across all ministries and departments. This, in turn, may require transformation of the institutional structures of government and the state. This is clearly an extremely demanding agenda. In the face of the difficulties in simply gaining access to the workings of government and ministries, the task of transformation is often, by necessity, downplayed or postponed. Bureaucracies are frequently hostile to what are seen as political agendas and gender-transformative goals translate badly into technocratic planning languages. As a result, mainstreaming has tended to become preoccupied with the minutiae of planning and procedures and its advocates often adopt language which will gain a sympathetic hearing in government circles<sup>2</sup> (Razavi and Miller, 1995).

The shift from integration to institutionalisation involves a change in the conception of the role of NWMs. A focus on welfare-oriented projects and programmes targeted predominantly at women is clearly in tension with the mainstreaming agenda, which demands that gender issues gain a hearing in macro-level policy-making. This, in turn, requires close attention to the capacity of women's ministries to influence other ministries and departments and the mechanisms to achieve this, as well as an examination of the overall policy environment.

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<sup>2</sup> So, for example, the language of equity associated with GAD has shifted to that of efficiency in order to appeal to the primary concern for growth (Goetz, 1995: 50).

#### **4. Structure of the Report<sup>3</sup>**

This report reviews the experience of national women's machineries (NWMs),<sup>4</sup> drawing on case study material from a range of countries (including Belize, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Uganda and Zambia) as well as comparative material from Chile and the Philippines where national machineries are well-established<sup>5</sup>. In part II, NWMs are assessed through their mandate, their status (as defined by insitutional form and location, staffing and budgets) and their activities. This is followed by an examination of the range of constraints on the effectiveness of NWMs, including bureaucratic resistance, locational instability and lack of autonomy, and a review of the variety of instruments adopted to further the implementation of gender-aware policy.

While these factors are crucial for the workings of NWMs, the external institutional environment also influences and constrains NWMs. Political parties, external donors, NGOs and women's organisations all shape the environment of the NWM and thus its scope for action. Political factors are crucial: an upcoming election or transition to democratic rule can provide strategic opportunities to secure a stronger place for gender in state structures.

Part III analyses the implications for NWMs of the changing macro-political and institutional environment, from the perspective of the current interest in 'good government'. This includes an examination of decentralisation and civil service reform and of actual and potential interventions in these processes to promote women's interests, as well as a more general discussion of the issues of participation and democratisation which underlie the 'good government' agenda.

Part IV draws together the lessons from the experience of NWMs, particularly their implications for those seeking to provide financial or technical assistance to strengthen NWMs and suggests where future strategies to support gender mainstreaming might focus.

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<sup>3</sup>..... This report was commissioned by the Gender and Development Desk of the Human and Social Development Section of the Directorate General for Development (DGVIII) of the European Commission. The views expressed in it are those of the authors and not the Commission. Parts I and II were drafted by Bridget Byrne (BRIDGE Research Assistant) and Part III by Julie Koch Laier (IDS Research Assistant), who also contributed to I.2.1. Rachel Marcus (Consultant to BRIDGE) edited the draft and added case study material on Namibia and Belize. Sally Baden (BRIDGE Manager) advised on overall structure and content, wrote section 4 and edited the final draft. Anne Marie Goetz (IDS Fellow) provided advice on content and commented on drafts. Thanks also to Stephen Devereux (IDS Fellow) for advice and loan of materials and Zoë Oxaal (BRIDGE Research Assistant).

<sup>4</sup> ..... The focus here is on ACP countries since these are the main concern of DGVIII.

<sup>5</sup>..... Appendix I details the experience of NWMs in institutionalising gender in these countries and is selectively drawn on in the text. Case study material draws on government publications, policy documents and consultancy reports. The information available is highly variable between different countries so that coverage is somewhat uneven.

## II The Experience of National Machineries for Women in Development

### 1. *Assessing National Women's Machineries*

#### 1.1 *Mandates*

In order for NWMs to have sufficient autonomy and status to promote changes in government policy, it is important that they have established mandates backed up by law or decree, defining their powers and roles. These may constitute specific mandates for the NWMs, as well as their inclusion in national development policies which themselves provide a mandate. NWMs themselves also need coherent policy which goes beyond broad policy statements, stating specific goals and priorities and with coherent lines of responsibility and accountability. This needs to be backed up by relevant planning procedures and management support structures which are able to transform policy into practice. In addition, it is crucial that women in development or gender and development (WID/GAD) policy is integrated into national policy objectives. Otherwise any WID/GAD initiatives will be regarded as a drain on resources rather than contributing to the status or profile of ministries (Moser, 1993: 124).

The mandate given to NWMs is crucial in defining the scope of the activities and influence and their general orientation. Until the late 1980s, many NWMs had a welfarist approach focusing on women as mothers and wives. In Belize, for example, the Women Development Officers of the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) are direct descendants of colonial home economics officers. More recently, there has been a shift from WID to GAD approaches, at least at the level of rhetoric, for example in Uganda, the Philippines and Jamaica. In Namibia, the mandate of the DWA includes formal links with other Ministries. More commonly, these links are informal and depend on individual goodwill (see 3.4, Appendix I).

In practice, NWMs often have weak, unclear, or non-existent mandates. NWMs have been established as a result of a number of influences: from women's organisations; in response to the demands of 'key' women; through pressure and/or funding from donors and through pressure from the international feminist movement via the UN system. NWMs may face problems if they are regarded as donor-promoted as this implies a lack of internal mandate and therefore national commitment (Goetz, 1995: 14). This lack of commitment may be reflected in a dependence on external funding and a failure to include WID/GAD in national development policy, as in Uganda, Jamaica, Zambia and Belize (see examples in Appendix I).

Where the NWM has largely been set up from 'above' - that is, with no or insignificant pressure from national women's organisations - **establishing** legitimacy can be a difficult task, as Box 1 on Namibia suggests. Where the creation of the NWM is largely a result of internal pressure, early legitimacy, at least in the eyes of women, is more easily obtainable. In both cases, a major subsequent challenge for NWMs is **maintaining** credibility by representing women's interests.

### **Box 1: The Creation of Namibia's Department of Women Affairs**

In 1990, the Department of Women Affairs (DWA) was established in the Office of the President without prior consultation with women's organisations:

'It was not an initiative from below by which gender equality might be achieved .... The dominant national women's NGO (Namibian National Women's Organisation, NANAWO) is headed by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and its membership is drawn largely from SWAPO [the political party in power] and the DWA. Both the DWA and NANAWO have had difficulty interfacing with autonomous women's NGOs as the latter feel distanced by the party political and ideological orientation of DWA and NANAWO. The Women's Movement in Namibia is dominated by SWAPO women members in terms of their recognition by donors and the government' (Wanzala, 1995:55).

Despite these difficulties, the DWA has successfully established gender as a crucial issue to be considered throughout the national planning process, and has managed to get gender issues considered in every sector in Namibia's latest National Development Plan. (See Appendix I for further details).

In Uganda, there was a high level commitment to improving women's access to the state which included the establishment of a WID Ministry. However, whilst President Museveni has given strong support for the inclusion of gender in development policy, there is a fear that the policy has become dependent on his political fortunes. In response, the Ugandan Ministry of WID, Youth and Culture has drafted a National Gender Policy which would give it a permanent mandate. This is currently going before the Ugandan Cabinet.

In some cases (Cameroon, Jamaica, Tonga), there is significant internal pressure for the establishment of a machinery for women. For example, in Jamaica, women's groups were directly involved in promoting the WID agenda in the early 1970s, collaborating in a National Advisory Committee on the Status of Women in 1973.

NWMs can establish and maintain legitimacy under both sets of circumstances by building links with NGOs or women's organisations. This entails setting up informal or formal structures where the NWM responds to the demands made and issues raised by various groups of women (see section 3.4).

Conflicts of interest between the constituencies to which the NWM is accountable can undermine legitimacy. The demands of women's organisations and NGOs, international donors, government agencies, or political parties may be very different, and in some cases contradict one another. For example, the Bangladesh Ministry of Women - and indeed the Bangladeshi state more widely - has to balance the conflicting demands of Western and Islamist donor agendas, as well as responding to the advocacy efforts of Bangladeshi women's organisations and NGOs (Goetz, 1995). The NWM may be torn between the need to implement projects or programmes to appear to be 'doing something' for women citizens, and a focus on policy, advocacy and mainstreaming gender across a variety of sectors, in response to the demands of donors, as in Namibia, Zambia, and many other countries.

However, the interests of 'external' and 'internal' constituents are not necessarily opposed to each other. Donors, for instance, can be an important resource for strengthening the relationship between NWMs and NGOs, through assistance to NGOs and women's organisations or by assisting NWMs in setting up links with groups in civil society, a role that was evident in donor support for pre-Beijing networking.

## 1.2 Status

The status of an NWM is reflected in its institutional structure and location, its relations with other ministries, the level of staffing and its budgetary allocation, all important indicators of the level of commitment to WID/GAD issues in government. The status of the NWM, to a large extent, dictates its ability to fulfil its various roles.

### Location

The NWM, as a set of co-ordinated structures within and outside government with the aim of achieving equality for women, may take many different forms. It is possible to identify three primary types of machinery (these types are not mutually exclusive):

- ...units formally established within the executive, the legislative or the judicial apparatus of government;
- ...bodies whose functions are mainly advisory and consultative, located either within or outside the formal apparatus of government
- units within or affiliated with the national political party (Ooko-Ombaka, 1980: 48).

Along with other areas of development policy, such as community development, rural development and environment, the WID/GAD agenda does not fit neatly into a single sector. This means that it does not have an automatic institutional location.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, where the national machinery is placed in the structure of government has an important impact on its status, as well as on its role and relations with other departments and ministries. Location reflects government commitment to the notion of promoting women's participation in national life, its ideological position about the role of women and therefore its perception of the role of the machinery itself (Moser, 1993: 118).<sup>7</sup> The location of the NWM also affects its relation to other sections of government. Access to planning, policy formulation and funding sectors of government, in particular, determine the machinery's ability to have any significant impact on the direction of development.

The main contrast in the institutional structure of NWMs is between a single ministry or unit (possibly within another ministry) with responsibility for WID/GAD (e.g. Ministry of WID, Youth and Culture in Uganda; the WIDD in the Ministry of Finance in Zambia) and a centralised unit, often within the President's or Prime Minister's Office which seeks to act as a 'watchdog' and influence the planning process across all development sectors (e.g. the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women; the Women's Affairs Unit in Tonga). Placement within the office of the head of state or government may ensure that women's issues receive a higher profile and enhanced access to funding. In addition, units within the Prime Ministerial or Presidential Office may have stronger connections with other departments, such as the Civil Service Department, which may enhance their ability to promote WID/GAD concerns (Ashworth, 1994: 26).

Where an NWM is merged with another ministry, it may face problems of competition over resources within the ministry and being forced to adapt to different policy frameworks. A

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<sup>6</sup>..... Institutional location refers both to the vertical location of the NWM, i.e. its proximity to power in the central directorate, and horizontal location, i.e. the thematic or sectoral location (Goetz, 1995:19).

<sup>7</sup>..... Moser (1993: 122), however, also warns against too much focus on the location of the NWM and considers that the real issues are access to power and strategy.

ministry exclusively devoted to women's affairs or gender issues may grant autonomy, but it does not ensure effectiveness, unless the ministry has sufficient resources and is integrated into the national planning and budgeting process.

### Staffing

The size of the staff in central WID/GAD units and on WID/GAD desks within ministries and departments is a reflection of the budget allocation received and the status given to the department. It also crucially affects the ability of the NWM to institutionalise gender within government policy and programmes. A 1990 survey of Caribbean countries showed that NWMs had an average staff size of four (excluding Jamaica, which had 15). In addition, the average age of the director or head of the NWM was 37, suggesting that the directorship was a relatively low-status position (Moser, 1993: 126). NWMs in Chile and the Philippines have at least 40 full-time staff plus field-level workers.

In addition to the size of the staff, their level of skills and commitment are also important. The cross-sectoral nature of WID/GAD calls for a particularly wide range of skills. If staff lack technical expertise their participation is likely to be seen by ministries as an encumbrance rather than a resource. Staff need project and policy analysis, design, implementation, evaluation and gender analysis skills as well as conceptual clarity in their use of the term gender. Crucially, there is a need for financial skills to ensure that policy commitments are followed through into national and ministerial budgets (Goetz, 1995).

There is limited information on the technical and other skills base of NWM staff although in general technical skills are lacking.<sup>8</sup> The distribution of staff between central and regional and field positions is also important in terms of the ability to influence projects and programmes on the ground and to access the views of grassroots women. On the other hand, field-level staff may have limited allegiance to the current goals of the NWM and minimal expertise in GAD. (This is certainly true of SERNAM field staff in Chile and of Women Development Officers of the DWA in Belize.)

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<sup>8</sup> ..... In a few instances, (e.g. in the WIDD of the Ministry of Finance in Zambia, where half the posts are for economists), the requirement for specialist skills may be one reason why posts remain vacant. Training programmes to upgrade the skills of existing staff might be one way around this.

## Budgets

The size of budget allocated to WID/GAD reflects the perceived importance of the work of the NWM. The government budget statement may in effect represent the government's annual declaration of policy. There is general agreement that all women's machineries are severely under-funded: 'No NWM has access to resources appropriate to its mandate' (Ashworth, 1994: 9). In general, WID/GAD issues are marginal in budgetary planning, if present at all. Policy commitments often fail to be taken through to their budgetary implications. Lack of resources forces NWMs to adopt coping strategies, such as focusing on one activity, diversifying into small projects which may be properly the work of other agencies, or the use of informal networks (Ashworth, 1994: 9).

NWMs are often forced to rely on external funding. The prevailing concern within multilateral and bilateral donors for gender issues means that funding is accessible and may provide political leverage which enables NWMs to obtain recognition and funding from internal sources. However, dependence on external funds implies less control over the preferred policy direction and results in a tendency toward project-oriented activities geared towards short-term funds in fixed quantities and the preference of donors for visible results. It may be more difficult to obtain funds that strengthen the advocacy capacity of NWMs (Moser, 1993: 125).

In spite of the problems of relying on external funding, there may be little option in the context of resource constraints. It is notable that of the countries discussed in Appendix I, those which have been able to commit significant national resources to NWMs, such as Chile and the Philippines, are middle-income countries and that even they are increasingly relying on external funding sources. Despite the potentially greater economic returns to investing in women as well as men, it may be economically and politically difficult for very poor countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, to muster internally the resources necessary to institutionalise gender-sensitive planning and policies. Reliance on donor funds, which appear to many aid-recipient governments to be readily available for gender-oriented activities, may constitute the most viable strategy for countries such as Uganda, Cameroon and Zambia.

### *1.3. Activities*

One of the difficulties faced by NWMs is the many potential roles and strategies they could adopt, which often leads to overburdening. This is particularly likely to be a problem where a high profile new policy is established through a top-down process. The range of roles and activities adopted by NWMs include:

- ...'advocacy' or 'advisory', including research, data collection, identification of problems, co-ordination and liaison, training, raising gender awareness both within and outside government;
- ...policy 'oversight' or 'monitoring' unit: monitoring of policies, projects, programmes and legislation and impact assessment;
- ...implementation of projects: including formulation and design of policy, programmes and projects (Goetz, 1995: 4-5).

These different roles and activities are potentially conflicting:

'Women's offices seem to have intrinsically incompatible aspects to their mandates. Research in technical areas, from tax policy to crop rotation, requires integration into the rest of the technical community. Political action such as advocacy of a women's perspective, lobbying for more funding for women's projects, or the maintenance of links to other women's groups, demand cross disciplinary organisation and a somewhat more confrontational collective stance. Working on project administration involves yet another kind of structure defined by authority and co-operation' (Guyer, cited in Lewis, 1990: 196).

Given the wide array of potential roles that NWMs could adopt and resource restrictions, it is important that priority areas are selected to prevent a dissipation of resources and energy and resulting poor performance and loss of credibility. An important choice is whether the NWM will try to implement its own projects (and whether in doing so it will seek collaboration with other technical ministries) or whether it will simply try to influence or advise other ministries or agencies undertaking major projects.

If the NWM is directly involved in projects, it can ensure that WID/GAD policies are implemented, albeit on a modest scale, and there is the possibility of a demonstration effect. However, the lack of resources - both financial and technical - which characterise NWMs also mitigate against the running of successful (and therefore likely to be imitated) projects. If the NWM is to implement projects, this should ideally be in collaboration with more technically specialised ministries, such as Ministries of Health or Agriculture. This, in turn, raises problems of working cross-sectorally and risks the NWM losing control of the projects and being dependent on the ministry concerned for specialist personnel (Lewis, 1990: 193). However, it may also provide opportunities for increasing gender-sensitivity in line ministries, particularly among 'front-line' field personnel.

The case study material (see Appendix I) reveals that projects and programmes implemented by NWMs have tended to focus on income generation or small-scale enterprise type activities (e.g. Jamaica, Belize, Namibia, Zambia). While these are not necessarily bad projects *per se*, they risk falling into the well-documented problems of many such 'women's' projects. SERNAM in Chile has adopted a different model, where it only implements demonstration projects in areas which other ministries are unlikely to support, e.g. on sexual and domestic violence, legal reform, etc. In Namibia, the DWA has also acted in a coordination capacity for projects supported by external agencies.

Alternatively, the NWM could adopt the role of a centralised advocacy unit. This presents the challenge of working cross-sectorally. In order to ensure that gender is integrated into all sectors of government, the NWM would need to have the automatic right (rare in practice) to review and comment on all other ministries' policies and programmes, ideally with some powers of veto. The NWM needs to have the technical and research capability which would ensure that its interventions are seen as a resource, rather than an irritation. There also needs to be a commitment to WID/GAD agendas in other ministries, ideally accompanied by a structure of WID/GAD desks or focal points (see 3.4).

Direct involvement in projects and central advocacy and policy oversight roles are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Where there is a history of field level operations, e.g. through women's officers and groups, especially in rural areas, attempts to pull out of these activities may meet opposition from both beneficiaries and staff, even where field operations are not particularly

effective. However, it is important that projects do not become divorced from the wider objectives and approaches adopted and that traditional welfarist programmes are developed in accordance with current thinking and changing needs. Overall, while direct intervention in projects may not be strictly necessary, providing effective consultation mechanisms are in place, advocacy, policy oversight and monitoring roles would seem to be crucial if gender mainstreaming is to occur.

Box 2 describes the structure of the NWM in Ethiopia, illustrating both the range of functions of the NWM itself and the institutional mechanisms adopted in an attempt to mainstream WID.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Box 2: Mainstreaming WID/GAD in Ethiopia***

The National Policy on Ethiopian Women (1993) states that 'There shall, in all ministries and government organisations be a Department of Women's Affairs entrusted with the responsibility of organising women and promoting their interests'. There is a Women's Affairs sector in the Prime Minister's office whose duties include:

- .... the co-ordination, facilitation and monitoring of women's affairs at the national level;
- initiation of proposals at national level pushing for the enactment and improvement of existing policies;
- support to the establishment of women's affairs organs in all regions, central ministries and public organisations;
- monitoring the implementation of women's affairs policies in various government organisations and the country in general;
- .... supporting the women's movement;
- .... providing research and information on women's status in Ethiopia.

In addition, the National Policy lays out the responsibility of women's affairs sectors within Regional Administrative Offices which are accountable to the Region's Administrative Councils. These include ensuring that gender issues are properly reflected in the preparation of development plans and research. Within each Ministry and Public Organisation there is also a Women's Affairs Department, directly accountable to the Minister, which monitors and assesses the 'proper treatment of gender issues during the preparation of plans, studies and research and ensures that the necessary amendments are made.' (Source: National Policy on Ethiopian Women: The Transitional Government of Ethiopia, 1993, Addis Ababa.)

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<sup>9</sup> ..... As the policy is relatively recent, it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of this strategy which will depend to a large extent on the scale of resources devoted to its implementation and its ability to win support across government.

## **2. Constraints to the Effectiveness of NWMs**

### **2.1 Overview**

The previous section has given a broad assessment of NWMs through their mandates, status and activities, highlighting some of the problems encountered by NWMs, specifically in terms of weak mandates, institutional location, insufficient resources and staffing and conflicting roles.

These constraints are expanded on here, as well as additional factors which limit the effectiveness of NWMs, such as:

- ....shift in the conceptualisation of WID/GAD;
- ....bureaucratic resistance;
- ....lack of autonomy;
- ....lack of accountability.

### **2.2 Changes in the conceptualisation of WID/GAD**

The effectiveness of NWMs is constrained by inconsistencies in policy which are a reflection of the changing conceptualisation of and priorities within WID/GAD. There may be confusion or conflict between welfarist, efficiency and equity approaches and between strategic versus practical needs. Most NWMs have their origins in a welfarist approach, because that was the dominant approach at the time of their establishment and also because of the tendency to locate NWMs within social sector ministries. The confusion over possible roles and activities which the NWMs could undertake is compounded by lack of clarity over WID/GAD itself.

Whilst meeting the practical welfare needs of women is clearly an important task for NWMs, it is increasingly recognised that this is often done in a way which merely reinforces traditional gender divisions and women's subordination. This realisation has led to a growing association of WID/GAD discourses with labour market and productivity issues, particularly in the context of the increased visibility of women in formal and informal labour markets. For example, in Uganda, where women produce 80 percent of the country's food and provide 70 percent of agricultural labour, much official attention has been given to women's productivity. President Museveni has stated that:

'Our policy aims at strengthening the position of women in the economy by raising the value and productivity of their labour and by giving them access and control over productive resources' (cited in Goetz, 1995: 46).

Despite this high-level endorsement, the agricultural sector has been slow to address women's production needs (*ibid.*).

Whilst the welfare-oriented nature of early WID discourse may have been more easily accommodated within bureaucracies, the move towards gender-transformative conceptualisations of WID/GAD issues is likely to face more resistance. In some countries, a 'backlash' is apparent, where policies promoting women's education or employment, for example, are increasingly perceived as worsening male unemployment, as in the Caribbean and Brazil, for example (Rowan-Campbell, 1995:143). Similarly, where traditional family structures seem to be weakening and breaking down, official policy documents often warn of the danger of

initiating conflict between the sexes and undermining the complementarity of men's and women's roles, with implications for conceptualisation of WID/GAD (Goetz, 1995: 47).<sup>10</sup>

The shift from WID to GAD has often been misunderstood or misinterpreted by state institutions as a means to side-step the more radical implications of responding to women-specific disadvantage, by focusing back on men (Goetz, 1995: 50). For example, in Jamaica the shift to GAD has led to a major concern with 'men at risk' (Marriot, 1994).

Shifts in the WID/GAD rhetoric are often poorly or inconsistently translated into policy and practice. As a result, there may be confusion over what NWM policy entails. This is compounded by the fact that NWMs are often staffed by people with limited understanding or sympathy for the WID/GAD agenda.

### 2.3 *Weak mandates*

Many NWMs have no clear mandate either defining their own power and roles or their relationship to central decision-making bodies. Even where their tasks and roles are spelt out, this is often in very vague terms, without clear goals, procedures or institutional mechanisms. This reflects a lack of political commitment and the inability of most NWMs to influence national development planning, budgetary allocation or the activities of other ministries. It also leads to a confusion over roles (see below) and to vulnerability to changing political fortunes, particularly where, as in many cases, first ladies or other prominent female relatives of political leaders act as figureheads for the NWM.

### 2.4 *Lack of resources*

There is a consensus among gender advocates that NWMs themselves are under-resourced and that both governments and development agencies allocate insufficient resources to sectors and programmes which would benefit women, thus reinforcing women's structural disadvantage.

Comprehensive data are not available on budgetary allocations and there are methodological difficulties in assessing how much public expenditure is targeted at women rather than men.<sup>11</sup> In times of economic crisis and adjustment, women's issues may be seen as 'soft' and the lobby for spending in this area may be weak, so that women's programmes are vulnerable to arbitrary cutbacks, particularly at moments when accounts have to be balanced.

Where government funding has been lacking, donor agencies have often filled the gap but this is clearly not sustainable and creates problems of external dependence. Governments may simply use WID structures and programmes in order to capture funds, without any real commitment.

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<sup>10</sup> For example, the fourth Five Year Plan (1990-1995) of the Government of Bangladesh states that: 'There are two main ways of integrating women into the development process and for improving their condition. One process tends to highlight the gender differences and brings men and women into a greater competition for existing job opportunities. The second process emphasises more the complementary relationship between men and women and tends to develop them on a whole with focus on the integrative aspects of the family' (Government of Bangladesh, 1990: I.8; cited in Baden *et al.*, 1994)

<sup>11</sup> In Bangladesh, UNIDO found that 13-14 percent of government expenditure was allocated to women, while according to the World Bank, 35 percent of education expenditure benefited women (cited in Baden *et al.*, 1994).

Perhaps more significant than lack of resources of NWMs themselves is the lack of power or capacity of NWMs to influence public spending programmes. The support of external donors - including multilateral financial institutions - for more gender-sensitive policies may provide some leverage for revising public expenditure plans and increasing resources to GAD initiatives. This requires coordination with an internal lobby which has sufficient skills, backing and influence to push for changes.

## *2.5 Locational instability and inappropriateness*

NWMs have, over relatively short periods, experienced many locational moves, a reflection of political or financial expediency rather than of changing strategies. For example, in the space of eleven years (1974 to 1985) Jamaica's Bureau of Women's Affairs experienced five sectoral moves, from the Ministry of Youth and Community Development, then to the Prime Minister's Office, to Health and Social Security, back to Youth and Community Development, then to Labour and finally to Welfare and Sports (Moser, 1993: 121). In Grenada in 1983 the Department of Women's Affairs was moved into the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, from the perhaps equally quixotic location of Communications and Works. Constantly shifting location hampers the ability of NWMs to set in place mechanisms to promote institutional change. Moves may result in a loss of staff and disruption to programmes. When two ministries are merged, this often leads to the redefinition of programmes to coincide with the interests of the new minister. Each move causes the NWM to be transferred to the budgetary allocations of the shared portfolio, setting up competition for resources each time and requiring staff to take on an advocacy role repeatedly, particularly if the NWM is placed in an obscure location, with little obvious overlap of issues. It is also likely that new staff will have to be trained (Ashworth, 1994: 16; Moser, 1993:122).

WID/GAD units are often merged with a social welfare ministry as in Cameroon, or a 'quasi-sector' where residual concerns are grouped together such as Youth and Culture, as in Uganda. The placing of WID/GAD concerns in the social sector indicates that gender issues are not regarded as relevant to central government concerns with economic growth and development and financial stability. It is also associated with a tendency to use a welfare approach. WID/GAD issues are therefore placed in a marginal position, often within a marginalised sector. In a survey of 34 Commonwealth countries in 1993, 65 percent of those who reported having a NWM had bureaux, units, desks or departments located within ministries with titles which did not reflect that they carried the women's affairs portfolio (Obang, 1993: 3).<sup>12</sup> The absence of a reference to the women's affairs portfolio in the ministerial title generally implies that the WID/GAD is not a high priority within the Ministry, weakening the claim of the NWM in the competition for resources. More recently, some NWMs have been established within central ministries such as Planning (SERNAM in Chile) and Finance (WIDD in Zambia) and many are located in the President's or Prime Minister's Office (see 1.2 and Appendix I), possibly providing more scope for influence of central policy decisions and greater authority.

## *2.6 Bureaucratic resistance to WID/GAD*

A particular problem in establishing and carrying out a WID/GAD policy is the bureaucratic resistance that it faces. This results both from the difficulties of accommodating a cross-sectoral

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<sup>12</sup>.... However, this proportion had fallen from 76 percent of respondents in 1990.

issue such as gender into highly sectorally-divided bureaucracies, as well as the resistance which WID/GAD policies face due to their political and personal nature.

Particularly in the context of resource scarcity, projects and programmes lead to opportunities for personal patronage and profit and there is a tendency for departments to develop distinctive mandates and operational processes tied to disciplinary and sectoral concerns, in order to retain privileged access to resources. The cross-cutting nature of WID/GAD concerns tends to run up against these bureaucratic boundaries (Goetz, 1995: 27).

The extract in Box 3, gives an illustration of how the constraints of working in collaboration with other ministries determine the strategies adopted by the NWM in Cameroon.

### **Box 3: Administrative Politics in Cameroon**

'Inter-ministerial lobbying and collaboration conflicts directly with the propensity to protect organisational boundaries present in all bureaucracies. This territoriality is particularly pronounced in Cameroon because ministries themselves are highly developed patronage organisations, each ministry jealously guarding its territory. Competition is well recognised between the Ministry of Agriculture, one of the biggest in the country, and parastatals controlled directly by the Ministry of Plan, which has successfully cut Agriculture's budget and personnel by creating many agricultural parastatals under its direct control. Three smaller ministries, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Department of Community Development and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, all have overlapping responsibilities but do not collaborate. All strive to have the greatest number of social workers, with the result that social workers' training and assignment is a saga of duplication and wasted resources. Permanent staff are among any minister's most reliable political advocates, especially in a one-party system, because they have a very concrete interest in ministerial aggrandisement. The newly created Ministry of Women's Affairs faces severe structural constraints predisposing it to opt for small projects aimed at women, which it can plan and implement itself' (Lewis, 1990: 195).

Equally, national WID units may seek to retain ownership of gender issues and so concentrate on specific projects which provide visible justification for their existence. This may be a particular problem as the policy shifts from a strategy of integration, accompanied by WID-oriented projects for women, to a mainstreaming strategy which seeks to disperse responsibility for WID/GAD.

Resistance to WID/GAD is not simply a reaction to challenges to structures, but is also a response to the way in which the WID/GAD agenda may be seen to have personal implications for all those who work in bureaucracies:

'Gender redistribution politics are as conflict-laden as any other redistributive issue but are subtle in the personalised resistance they incur and complex in their confusion with cross-sex interpersonal relations' (Staudt, 1990: 10).

Thus, when analysing the possible points of entry for WID/GAD in bureaucracies, it is important to examine public officials and to consider who they are, what their values are and to what extent ideology provides the basis for behaviour, bureaucratic politics, standard operating procedures, programme operations and new initiatives (Staudt, 1990: 12).

## **2.7 Conflicting roles**

Section 1.3 highlighted the wider range of responsibilities which are typically accorded to NWMs and touched on the difficulties in performing often conflicting roles, with a major axis of tension between direct involvement in projects and central advocacy work. These tensions may be further heightened by personal and political rivalries and schisms within NWMs themselves. With a very wide brief and often limited resources, NWMs may be hard-pressed to make an impact in any one area, leading to a vicious cycle whereby ineffectiveness undermines credibility.

## *2.8 Staff constraints*

The effectiveness of NWMs is often hampered by staffing problems, including under-representation of women in senior positions in the civil service, the lack of commitment to gender transformation on the part of those working within the unit, isolation of committed individuals and political patronage.

Women are generally under-represented in high level positions in both the civil service and in government. It is clearly important to increase gender equality in government employment. This involves addressing the structural factors - conditions of work, methods of selection and promotion etc. - which constrain the participation of women. Possible measures include affirmative action programmes and the use of quotas (see III.2.1 for a discussion of this in relation to local government). However, it should not be assumed that women automatically have a higher level of commitment to WID/GAD than men. Those women who have achieved positions of importance may not feel sympathetic to other women's gender interests, or may be too isolated to risk association with the GAD issue (Goetz, 1995: 38). There may also be a high level of political patronage involved in appointments to NWMs (as with other government appointments). This can be seen in the (albeit decreasing) tendency for Presidents', Prime Ministers' or Ministers' wives to head NWMs.

Men and women alike may regard employment in NWMs as demotion (Goetz, 1995:7). Even those who do have a commitment to WID/GAD may face opposition to their attempts to bring it to the attention of others. This may prove particularly difficult for men:

'Open displays of conflict are disturbing for both men and women. Men employed in WID units often experience a particular form of trauma. Especially with their other male colleagues in the organisation, they have somehow become desexed by the professional issue on which they are working' (Moser, 1993: 117).

The isolation of staff highlights the need to increase women's representation in politics and government administration and underlines the importance of networking. Networking can be achieved within the administration through the use of focal points, bringing together those working on WID/GAD. Networking with groups outside the administration can also be important, although those in government may be constrained by a professional culture which disapproves of association with what are deemed as political interests.

## *2.9 Lack of autonomy*

The institutional weakness of NWMs renders them vulnerable to political interference and manipulation. Patronage in appointment to NWMs is not uncommon (see above) and there are often close associations between the women's wings of ruling parties and the NWM (e.g. in

Namibia, Jamaica, Cameroon). In Namibia, the perception of close ties between the head of the DWA and SWAPO has hampered the development of a consultative relationship with autonomous women's organisations.

For those NWMs which are closely tied to a party machinery, there are severe constraints on developing an advocacy role that is seen to be in opposition to the party line. Maintaining the support of party elites, both men and women, may be crucial to survival. This is illustrated, with reference to Cameroon, in Box 4.

**Box 4: Pleasing Political Constituencies in Cameroon**

In Cameroon, a new Minister of Women's Affairs was appointed in 1984, in a wave of new appointments following the change in presidency. In 1985, she was elected head of the women's wing of the ruling party. For the head of a fledgling ministry with minimal resources, a party role which includes a seat on the national political committee can provide leverage to overcome resistance. However, it also leads to pressure to gain the support of elite party women, including at provincial and local levels. Despite the talk of democratisation by the new president, 'neither the new president of the Republic nor his minister of women's affairs was willing to permit wholesale grassroots challenges of the party' (Lewis, 1990: 194). One result of these political pressures was the rapid acceptance of an unsuitable project in a key political area: 'small, locale-specific development projects offered a visible vehicle to demonstrate the new minister's ability to deliver to local party representatives and to tie constituencies to the ministry' (*ibid.*).

### *2.10 Lack of accountability*

A further constraint on the effectiveness of NWMs is lack of accountability, both in the narrow managerial sense of clear lines of responsibility within the organisation and in the wider sense of accountability to the range of groups and organisations representing women's interests. The latter is a particular problem where there is a close association between the NWM and the ruling party (see above). Networking and consultation with women's organisations is also hampered by lack of regional representation and lack of resources available to field-level staff (e.g. for transport), or for building links.

### **3. Instruments for the Implementation of Gender Policy**

#### **3.1 Overview**

This section describes the range of strategies adopted by NWMs to promote gender-sensitive policy and practice and overcome the constraints listed in section 2. These include:

- lobbying for the inclusion of gender in national development planning;
- the use of guidelines and checklists as planning and evaluation tools;
- gender-awareness training of government officers and others;
- the establishment of cross-departmental linkages including WID/GAD interministerial committees and focal points;
- the establishment of links and consultative relationships between NWMs and women's organisations.

Country experience in these areas is detailed in Appendix I and drawn on selectively here.

#### **3.2 Inclusion of gender concerns in national development plans and budgets**

National development plans and budgets are important public statements expressing the politically chosen priorities for change and progress. They are based on macro-economic frameworks which are designed to create conditions in which the national vision can be realised. It is thus important that gender concerns are integrated into development plans and budgets.

Proper integration of gender into development plans and budgets should include:

- ...political and economic groundwork by WID/GAD advocates (thus requiring personnel with financial skills);
- ...top-level commitment to WID/GAD priorities;
- ...action programmes and earmarked funds for every planning sector;
- ...gender-disaggregated data and indicators dealing with issues such as physical security, reproductive health, political participation or legal rights;
- ...gender-specific quantitative and qualitative achievement targets and progress indicators at macro and sectoral levels (Goetz, 1995:28).

A variety of approaches have been adopted to this key issue with varying degrees of success. In some countries, NWMs in consultation with NGOs and women's organisations have developed national plans for women. In Jamaica, a five-year National Development Plan for Women was prepared in 1990, following the adoption of a Policy Statement on Women by the Cabinet in 1987.<sup>13</sup> In Belize, a government policy statement on women was adopted in 1992, but as at early 1996 had not been translated into a plan of action.

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<sup>13</sup> The National Policy Statement on Women of Jamaica sets out the background to gender issues, principles for policy development and ten immediate goals, which include measures to protect and promote women's employment and income, expansion of child care provision, protection from violence, incest, rape and sexual harassment, specific housing provision for female-headed households and legal reforms. The framework for implementation is also spelt out in broad totals.

A problem with separate development plans for women is often their lack of integration with mainstream development plans. In Jamaica, for example, the National Development Plan for Women was elaborated separately from the Five Year Development Plan and remains largely external to it.

The Philippines Development Plan for Women (PDPW) was launched in 1989 to coincide with the Medium Term Philippines Development Plan (MT-PDP), which also includes a macro-policy on women. Here, the elaboration of a separate plan for women was explicitly seen as an interim measure, until such time as mainstreaming in the national Plan was achieved. 'As a companion plan, the PDPW is intending to analyse impacts on women of policies and strategies outlined in the national Plan, and to propose complementary strategies for diminishing negative impacts' (Valdevilla, 1995: 96). With the expiry of the PDPW in 1993, government and the National Commission on the Role of the Filipino Women (NCRFW) are now developing a 30-year Philippines Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD).

SERNAM in Chile have formulated a national Equality of Opportunity Plan focussing on legal and constitutional change to promote women's rights; equal participation of women and men in education; improving women's access to the labour market; promoting anti-sexist messages in the media and strengthening the public institutional apparatus for implementation and evaluation of equal opportunities policies. This has the advantage of having a truly gender perspective, by moving away from a focus on women alone, thereby allowing consideration of other axes of differentiation such as race and gender. On the other hand, it is unclear to what extent SERNAM has been able to comment effectively on general national development plans.

An alternative or parallel approach has been to attempt to get gender issues into national development plans themselves. Until recently, treatment of gender in development plans has tended to amount to, at worst, a complete absence or, at best, a special chapter devoted to women (sometimes combined with children). For example, Tonga's Fifth Development Plan in 1986 contained no mention of women, not even under data collection. In Uganda's 1993-96 Rehabilitation and Development Plan, there are a mere three paragraphs under a small sub-heading on WID. By contrast, Zambia's Fourth National Development Plan contained a chapter on women, as did the Namibian Transitional Development Plan (1991/2 - 1993/4). In Namibia, considerable progress has been made through DWA advocacy and the 1995-2000 National Development plan addresses gender issues sector by sector, rather than in a separate chapter. Similarly, the new National Development Plan in Belize was drawn up with consultation of rural men and women throughout the country and the DWA was able to comment on the gender implications of all proposals.

However, particularly in countries undergoing or recovering from economic crisis, development plans may no longer have much relevance. In both Cameroon and Zambia, for example, Five Year Plans have been suspended while the countries undergo structural adjustment programmes. In Cameroon, WID efforts are now focused on the Social Dimensions of Adjustment Programme. Similarly, in Uganda, gender issues have been relegated to the Programme to Alleviate Poverty and the Social Costs of Adjustment (PASCA). In such programmes, women tended to be treated as undifferentiated category, as one of several vulnerable groups. The danger is that women are once again targeted with welfare programmes, while gender issues are not considered in the design of macro-economic or sectoral adjustment programmes, or in their impact on patterns of labour and asset deployment, household budgets or provision of social services.

### 3.3 Guidelines and checklists for planning and evaluation

There are various tools which can be used to promote the use of gender analysis in programme planning and evaluation. These include checklists and guidelines, both for pre-investment planning and for monitoring. Box 5 gives an example of the gender monitoring checklist developed by the Bureau of Women's Affairs in Jamaica. A system for benchmarking under each heading and for follow-up at a later date is also included in the checklist.

**Box 5: Gender Monitoring Checklist, Bureau of Women's Affairs, Jamaica**

Checklist questions:

1. *Baseline data.* Is sex-disaggregated baseline data systematically collected and used in decision-making?
2. *Policy links.* Are links made between existing policy and the work being done?
3. *Consultation.* Are men and women in the workplace identifying and addressing gender issues that are important to them?
4. *Equity Actions.* Are actions taken to address gender issues, systemic discrimination and constraints to achieving gender equity?
5. *Context.* Are the unique circumstances and relationships specific to the workplace factored into measures for gender equity?

Whilst guidelines and checklists may be useful tools for the implementation of gender policy, their success depends on there being sufficient will to use them. It is important that guidelines and checklists are developed in consultation with the different sectoral and technical departments, so that they are seen to be relevant to their needs. The effectiveness of guidelines and checklists also depends on their use at an early stage in the planning cycle and on the existence of sufficient incentives and/or vetoes to ensure that they have an impact. Finally, the effective use of guidelines and checklists presupposes the availability of adequate levels of skill and gender-disaggregated information.

### *3.4. Gender awareness training*

It is clearly important for the mainstreaming of gender issues that those working at all levels of government become sensitised to the issues. Gender training is an important part of this process and one which is increasingly being taken up by governments as well as development agencies. In the Commonwealth Secretariat survey of 34 governments, 79 percent had instituted some form of gender training programme, and 44 per cent had the capacity to plan and deliver specialised gender training without external assistance (Obang, 1993: 10-11).

The success of gender training depends on the context in which it takes place. The unique nature of WID/GAD, in the extent to which it crosses both personal and professional lines, means that it confronts deeply-held beliefs and attitudes which may be very difficult to influence in the course of a few training sessions. On-going training programmes are likely to have more impact than one-off courses. Gender training is sometimes incorporated into a holistic training process, which has the advantage of overcoming resistance, but may also mean that the issues are not thoroughly treated. It is important to reach all levels of the bureaucracy but given limits on resources, training may be effectively targeted at particular groups, such as focal-point officers or senior officers. In Uganda, gender training has been conducted for senior civil servants; in the Philippines, gender training is given to representatives on planning committees. One government included in the recent Commonwealth Secretariat survey has devised a peer-group, collective training programme for ministers who form a task force and are expected to return to their respective ministries to spearhead gender training there (Obang, 1993:11).

In practice, gender training in government is of varying quality and meets with different responses. Gender training offered to government officials in Jamaica has been described as 'vacuous' (Goetz, 1995). In Chile, training offered by SERNAM to other ministries met with a hostile response in agriculture but was better received in statistics (see Appendix I).

Whatever the training offered, there are considerable problems of resistance, particularly from middle-level bureaucrats. Many officials are unwilling to attend training sessions, yet there may be limits to the effectiveness of sessions which are compulsory and attended with resentment. The effectiveness of gender training also comes up against the problems of staff turn-over and the need to be continually retraining new staff.

Finally, training is likely to have little effect if institutional rules, structures and cultures remain the same. The development of more gender-aware approaches needs to be supported by positive incentives for changed behaviour and concrete institutional change (Goetz, 1995).

### *3.5 Cross-departmental linkages: inter-ministerial committees and WID/GAD focal points.*

Inter-ministerial committees, working groups or teams, chaired by a representative (or external nominee) of NWMs are useful ways of addressing specific priority subject or sectoral areas. They allow for collaboration across specialisms and sectoral divisions and can help to ensure the consistent application of gender policies. However, the ability of the NWM to influence the inter-ministerial committee - whether it has a servicing, chairing or co-ordinating role may be crucial. Particularly if gender is not considered a high priority, ministries may be unwilling to become involved in such co-ordinating bodies. Inter-ministerial committees are likely to run up against bureaucratic resistance to the crossing of sectoral boundaries (Ashworth, 1994:18).

Ministers or civil servants may consider their attendance outside their mandate and therefore refuse to attend or require additional payment for doing so.

Inter-ministerial collaboration is often organised through a system of 'focal points' for WID/GAD within each ministry. These can play a key role in the mainstreaming of gender in government. However, their roles are frequently ill-defined and they are often under-funded. Ashworth (1994: 18) outlines some of the problems with focal points:

- designating as the focal point the nearest available female member of staff without any gender training, knowledge of the issues, or seniority to advise her colleagues;
- isolation, lacking a clear identity in the context where they work;
- unclear mandates/terms of reference;
- overburdening, as other responsibilities are not reduced on nomination as NWM focal point;
- conflicts of interest if they have dual roles (e.g. being the focal point for women **and** trade unions);
- devaluing of the position, leading to the staff member being locked in his/her grade and by-passed for promotion.

Designation of WID/GAD focal points can make an important contribution to the institutionalisation of gender issues in the national planning process. However, focal points in themselves are insufficient without a clear process for involvement in developing gender policy or gender mainstreaming. In the Philippines, there are seats for women representatives in the technical committee (the approving body) and in the different technical sub-committees (the drafting bodies) of the national planning process. There is a focal point for women in the national planning body, composed of staff who support the work of the committees. Agency representatives of the various planning committees are given gender sensitivity training.

In Uganda also, focal points in themselves were ineffective and a broader process of departmental involvement in policy development was devised (see Box 6).

### ***Box 6: Focal points and cross-ministerial planning in Uganda***

In Uganda, each ministry has been responsible for designating a focal point officer since 1991. The WID department advised that this should be a high-ranking official - such as a commissioner or assistant commissioner. All have been given training and encouraged to initiate and chair ministerial policy reviews as part of the cross-governmental effort to generate a national gender policy. This has not been very effective and in some ministries, staff are unaware of the existence of the focal point (Goetz, 1995: 26).

Following this, the WID department launched a major cross-ministerial planning exercise, in alliance with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MFEP). They elaborated a National Policy Statement on Gender Issues and set up procedures for 'gender-oriented policy development' in every ministry. The Department of WID works out an initial policy paper for each ministry which is presented to the cabinet by the relevant minister. Once approved, the ministry forms a top-level committee, to elaborate policy details, which works with the WID team. Gender analysis of the ministry's existing work and recommendations for change are formulated, submitted to a ministerial workshop and then presented at national two-day policy workshop which finalises a set of guidelines. These policy statements inform the watchdog role the MFEP performs using budgetary measures to monitor implementation progress in each ministry. (Goetz, 1995: 32).

### ***3.6 Links and consultation between NWMs and NGOs/women's organisations***

A number of ways can be identified in which NWMs establish informal and formal links with NGOs/women's organisations. These include:

- Formal status for NGO/women's organisation representatives in government agencies (see Box 7 for the example of the Philippines);
- Public hearings where NGOs/women's organisations can participate and voice their opinions;
- Consultations with NGO/women's organisation representatives;
- Co-operation with NGOs/women's organisations through national umbrella organisations;
- Informal lobbying by the NGO/women's organisation community.

In Guam, for example, NGOs are invited to participate in public hearings and make recommendations and also nominate their members to various committees. In Sri Lanka, the Women's Bureau holds quarterly consultations with NGOs to co-ordinate efforts (U.N./UNIFEM, 1989). In Jamaica the Bureau for Women's Affairs has worked closely with the umbrella organisation AWOJA (Association of Women's Organisations in Jamaica) and an NGO Desk in the National Planning Institute has been established (Narcisse, 1995). In Chile, the 1995 Equal Opportunity Plan was drawn up in consultation with NGOs, although SERNAM - Chile's NWM - has no formal mandate to work with NGOs. Likewise, in Uganda, the WID Ministry embarked on a civic education programme and nation-wide consultative process, eliciting women's views on the country's new Constitution (Goetz, 1995).

In the Philippines, the NGO community plays an essential role in supporting the mainstreaming of women in government through a network of national government and non-governmental organisations. The alliance consists of some 300 national women's NGOs and umbrella organisations, including gender workers in government. The women's movement thus plays an advisory, consultancy and monitoring role in relation to the government's activities.

A close and established relationship between NWM and NGOs/women's organisations, such as through NGO/women's organisation seats in various departments, can be a way of ensuring greater input from the NGO community. This may mean ceding some formal or informal power to NGOs. In other cases, it may become a mechanism for exerting more control over NGO/women's organisation activities.<sup>14</sup> For NGOs/women's organisations, formal status also means adhering to the 'rules of the game' with associated loss of autonomy and possible loss of legitimacy in the eyes of the people they claim to represent. This relates to suspicion of state activities in many countries and to distortion of their original policies and programmes, away from the interests and demands of their original constituency.

A system of seated representatives may result in the exclusion of small or weak women's organisations. Where the women's movement is especially diverse, rather than allocating seats to specific NGO representatives, wider consultations with a range of NGO representatives and public hearings may be preferable. This may be the case in countries with significant ethnic diversity, or where women are closely involved in political movements and represent a number of different perspectives.

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<sup>14</sup> ... In Bangladesh, for example, all NGOs must register with the government in order to be able to obtain outside funding. To register they must submit details of their projects and plans of operation with estimated cost, duration etc. While in practice there is little interference in NGO activities, their autonomy is clearly limited. In Bangladesh, such laws have implications for organisations promoting women's development and equality, particularly if Islamist interests gain further influence (UN/UNIFEM/ESCAP, 1989).

### **Box 7: State-NGO cooperation in the Philippines**

In the Philippines, government agencies have a long history of co-operation with NGOs for the delivery of social services and this has strengthened in recent years. The Department of Health for instance, has produced a directory of NGOs and a set of guidelines for NGO- state collaboration as a product of a national workshop on the topic. Other government agencies have likewise strengthened their relationship with the NGO sector.

Building on this successful relationship, in 1986 the Philippine Constitution stated that 'the state shall encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation', and that the state should 'facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms' for NGO participation. The results are that

'...the Government has started harnessing NGO resources to its overall development efforts; it has placed some NGO leaders in public positions, including the Cabinet; NGO representatives have been invited to sit on Congressional committees; and sectoral representatives for women, the urban poor, and the peasant poor, have each been appointed by the president to sit in Congress... The appointment of former NGO leaders, most of whom are women, to critical social services agencies has not only forged closer working relationships between government agencies and NGOs, but has also advanced the cause of women in the sense that there seems to be a shift of goal from merely the integration of women in developmental efforts to one of equality between men and women' (U.N./UNIFEM/ESCAP, 1989:9).

There are a number of factors which are likely to influence its relative 'success' or 'failure' of the state-NGO relationship:

- NGO - state relationships are most successful when the partners have space to influence decision-making without losing autonomy. According to a UN/UNIFEM/ESCAP (1989) report drawing on case studies of NGO-state relations in Bangladesh, Guam, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand, government attempts to control NGOs were one of the biggest sources of conflict;
- Another important factor is the view NGOs/women's organisations hold of the state. In Chile, for instance, SERNAM's relationship with civil organisations has been hampered because many organisations see SERNAM as an arm of the state which does not represent their interests (Waylen, 1993);
- The success or smoothness of the relationship between the state and NGOs may vary according to the sectoral programmes and policies pursued. In the UN/UNIFEM/ESCAP (1989: 19) study of Asian and Pacific countries, better state-NGO cooperation was found in health sector collaboration than on issues of employment, where NGOs have tended to advocate 'radical' measures such as higher wages and distribution of surplus land to women agricultural labourers;
- Where the NWM's agenda differs from that of (some) NGOs/women's organisations, co-operation may not be viable. In Guatemala, for example, the National Women's Bureau, ONAM (*Organización Nacional de la Mujer*), whose programmes focus on home economics, has little relevance for women's organisations, which address peace, human rights and economic issues (UNICEF, 1994).

While some NGOs/women's organisations may choose to distance themselves from the state, others are rejected by the state as potential collaborators due to their unacceptably 'radical' or 'feminist' demands. Additionally, some types of women's mobilisation are not considered viable for cooperation at all due to their sporadic nature. These include protest movements with little or no organisational structure, but which articulate the interests of grassroots or poor women in a

way that established organisations may not. NWMs, which often lack legitimacy, cannot be seen to align themselves with protest movements against another arm of the state.

Protest movements where women actively confront the state can have mixed consequences for NWMs. In some cases, they undermine the legitimacy of the NWM by raising issues which the NWM is unable or unwilling to deal with. As a result, some NGOs may shift their allegiance away from the NWM. Under other circumstances, confrontational movements can provide a basis for an NWM to take on and promote the issues raised in a way which was not possible before due to lack of commitment and support.

In summary, there is considerable scope for NWMs to establish links with NGOs and women's organisations concerned with welfare issues, as the Indian Department of Women and Children has done, and with feminist organisations where issues of common ground can be found. An example is the collaboration between Belize's Department of Women's Affairs and the Belizean NGO Women Against Violence, who together carried out consultations, lobbied government and eventually succeeded in getting a law passed against domestic violence.

The question of how NWMs can collaborate with less structured movements and women who do not articulate their interests through strictly organised groups, is critical. Women in this category are often poor women in marginal areas. How to reach such women is a challenge which NWMs face in all developing countries.

### **III. Good Government and Gender Mainstreaming: New Strategic Opportunities?**

#### ***1. Gender perspectives on good government***

Promoting 'good government' has become a major objective of most donors since the 1980s.<sup>15</sup> The main issues stressed are:

- democracy (through multi-party elections);
- respect for human rights and the rule of law;
- efficiency, accountability and transparency of government and public administration.

Some donors also include popular participation, equity and poverty concerns and market-oriented economic policies under the heading of good government (IDS, 1995).

In practice, the promotion of good government by donors has led to civil service reform, reforms of public sector financial management and public enterprises, decentralisation and legal and constitutional changes. Of these, the most widely adopted programme has been civil service reform (World Bank, 1994: 2). Other measures include assisting new political parties, aiding human rights groups and NGOs and the promotion of participation, consumer choice over services, and press freedom.

To date, the good government debate has largely ignored gender issues, particularly in the very areas - efficiency and accountability of government and administrative structures - where it has been most readily applied. The following two sections focus on two central aspects of good government: civil service reform and decentralisation.

The good government agenda affects NWMs both directly, through the restructuring of government departments including NWMs themselves and indirectly by shaping the political and institutional context in which NWMs operate.

In most countries, NWMs co-operate with other government departments in a variety of activities, from information-gathering to the execution of programmes (see Appendix I). As a result, NWMs are highly dependent upon the workings of the civil service, in terms of procedures, structures, practises and agents (Goetz, 1995). These, in turn, are influenced by administrative structures, finance and numbers and attitudes of staff. Civil service reform implies an institutional restructuring and overhaul of procedures as well as drastic changes in the numbers, conditions and distribution of staff, all of which will affect the location, role and activities of NWMs. It also provides an opportunity for institutionalising gender within civil service structures and procedures.

Decentralisation potentially provides NWMs with a means to reach the women they seek to represent and serve and a framework for institutionalising gender concerns at local level.

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<sup>15</sup> This relates to increasing donor concern about the ineffectiveness of aid, attributed to 'poor governance', to changing conceptions of the respective roles of the public and private sectors and to increased sensitivity to public criticism of aid to repressive undemocratic and corrupt regimes (World Bank, 1992). The World Bank is a major promoter of good government. Between 1991 and 1993 it embarked on 455 projects in which governance was a major component (World Bank, 1994). 'Good governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policymaking (that is, transparent processes); a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law' (World Bank, 1994, p. vii).

## **2. Decentralisation**

### **2.1 Gender issues in decentralisation**

There are a range of ways in which decentralisation<sup>16</sup> and a transfer of power to local government<sup>17</sup> might benefit women. Decentralisation can create spaces at the local level for women as political actors, thus constituting an opportunity for more democratic governance. It can also increase accountability through greater transparency at local level, with more scope for women to hold local governments accountable to their needs. The process of decentralisation also provides an opportunity for the institutionalisation of gender concerns at this level, where there is likely to be a direct impact on women's daily lives.

Local governments deal primarily with consumer services, such as health, education and infrastructure. Women's roles as 'carers' of their families make them the main consumers of local government services on their families' behalf, in many contexts. Consequently, local governments have a crucial role to play in meeting women's immediate needs (Hirschmann, 1991). Decentralisation of power and resources to local government is an opportunity for local authorities to respond better to women's needs and to give women more control over how these needs are met.

However, women's gender interests may also be marginalised at the level of local government and in the process of decentralisation. Kardam (1995) notes how decentralisation can result in 'passing the buck' on issues to which there is little commitment, such as gender issues. This may be particularly problematic if decentralisation is not associated with adequate local resource allocation. In these cases, gender issues are unlikely to be reflected in budgetary allocations and expenditure on women's needs may have to be funded by extra-budgetary resources (Errazuriz, 1992).

The current interest in decentralisation is not well informed by a gender analysis, so that the potential negative implications of this process for women are not being addressed, or the possible opportunities for institutionalising gender at local level. The experience of attempts to promote women's involvement in local government and the experiences of gender units at local level, could inform such an analysis.

### **2.2 Women's representation in local government**

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<sup>16</sup> Decentralisation has been carried out in many different ways and the term can refer to very different initiatives. Four major aspects are commonly distinguished: privatisation, deconcentration, fiscal transfers and devolution (Manor, 1995). The exact combination of the elements of decentralisation largely depends on the motivations for carrying it out. Some of these may be efficiency, democratisation and accountability, participation, responses to nationalism/regionalism, or as a response to donor pressure.

<sup>17</sup> Decentralisation may take place at various levels of government. It can mean increasing the powers of provinces, states or regions, without ever reaching local levels. However within the governance debate, the focus of decentralisation has been mainly on the lower levels of government, which is the main focus here.

While women's political representation in many developing countries is higher at local than national level,<sup>18</sup> their participation is still significantly lower than that of men. In Rwanda, Nepal and Zambia women made up just one per cent of local councillors during 1990-94. In Ghana, Senegal, Congo, Cameroon, Cape Verde and Fiji, women constituted less than ten per cent of local representatives in the same period. In Mozambique, women constituted 27 percent of local government representatives between 1990 and 1994 compared to 13 per cent in Jamaica and Guyana (UNDP, 1995).<sup>19</sup> For this reason, measures to enhance women's political participation at local and regional level<sup>20</sup> have been instituted in a number of countries, sometimes in conjunction with decentralisation. Box 8 illustrates this process for India, Bangladesh and Namibia.

However, positive discrimination to ensure women's direct participation in local politics may be problematic for a number of reasons:

- Nomination and reservation are direct ways of ensuring women seats in local authorities. Reservation of women candidates on party lists is a 'weaker' form of positive discrimination. Unless reservation of female candidates on party lists is combined with other measures it does not **necessarily** ensure greater female representation. A major advantage of elections based on party lists rather than individuals is that voters are unable to discriminate against women candidates. On the other hand, where there are no stipulations as to which position women should take on the party lists, nor any rules ensuring that the sequence ranking of the lists has to be followed once in office, women may be marginalised.
- While nomination and reservation of seats for women ensure women's representation, the flipside of these measures is a possible lack of legitimacy. Where reservation of seats take place under individual-based elections, women candidates may receive fewer votes than some male candidates and yet take up posts. This can undermine female politicians' legitimacy in the eyes of their constituents<sup>21</sup> and fellow male politicians. The problem of legitimacy is likely to be even greater for women nominated to their posts.
- ...A linked problem with nomination and reservation is the effectiveness and competence of female councillors. Where representatives lack political experience, it is likely to jeopardise women politicians' potential impact at the local level.

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<sup>18</sup> Data is non-existent for many countries, especially countries with low levels of human development. of countries with medium levels of human development (according to the 1995 Human Development Report) all but five out of 26 countries (Cameroon, Nicaragua, Egypt, Cuba, and Ecuador) with adequate data had higher female participation in local government than at the national level between 1990 and 1994. In countries with low levels of human development the relationship is seemingly reversed; however little data is available for these countries (UNDP, 1995).

<sup>19</sup> The world's best rates of female participation in local government are only 29 per cent - in the Nordic countries - and 35 per cent in New Zealand (UNDP, 1995).

<sup>20</sup> Positive discrimination is not a practice limited to local government. For instance, the ANC in South Africa has adopted an informal quota system with the result that 25 per cent of the National Assembly are now women. The Frelimo party in Mozambique adopted its own one-third quota system for women in the first multi-party democratic election in Mozambique in 1994. The result is that women now constitute almost 25 per cent of representatives in the legislature (Jacobson, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> Where seats are reserved for women, these can be made more accountable to autonomous women's organisations and women in general by establishing structures of consultation and by giving women a say in choosing their representatives. Nomination of women representatives by male politicians is clearly not desirable.

### **Box 8: Affirmative action for women in local government**

The Indian system of *panchayati raj* (local self-government) has been in place since Independence. However, due to its ineffectiveness, there has been a renewed concern with decentralisation since 1989 and as part of this the reservation policy for women was implemented in 1993. One third of all seats in local government (*panchayat*), including among chairpersons at the village, intermediate and district level of the three-tier system, are reserved for women. The one-third rule for women also applies to the reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

In Bangladesh, provision has been made for the direct nomination of three women members in every local government at union and district levels. Nominated female members have, in theory, equal rights to elected members but are required to specialise in family planning, social welfare and cottage industries. A *Union Parishad* would usually consist of one chairman, nine elected members and three nominated women. In theory, the women should be nominated by the next level of the local government structure (the *Upazila Parishad*) but in practice, they are usually chosen on the recommendation of the chairman of the the *Union Parishad* (Qadir & Islam, 1987).

A study of 191 local female politicians in Bangladesh showed that a majority of these women were not having much impact: they tended not to speak up in meetings, were unaware of the practical implications of their positions, and lacked knowledge about the problems faced by women in the constituencies (Qadir & Islam, 1987).<sup>22</sup> Although it can be expected that lack of awareness and effectiveness among female councillors is greater where they have been nominated as opposed to elected, evidence from India show that this problem is also widespread among elected women (Manikyamba, 1989).

Parties competing in the 1992 Namibian local elections were required to have a certain minimum number of women on their lists.. Where councils were made up of less than ten members, parties had to adopt at least two women on their list and where they were made up of more than ten members, there had to be a minimum of three women on the party list. Additionally, the definition of 'political party' was broadened to include any organisations or associations. As a result, women constituted approximately one third of elected representatives - 114 out of a total of 362 people (Abantu for Development, 1995: 6).

In practice, women have been generally unable to secure a strong presence, or push their gender interests in local government. There are a number of factors which explain this:

- Regardless of how women enter local government, it is clear that **lack of support and isolation are common factors**. Evidence from Zambia suggests the majority of women local councillors felt that their biggest problem was that they were not treated on an equal footing with men;
- Women experience **conflict between domestic obligations and public work**;
- **Many women in politics, even at local level, effectively become 'sociological males'** through divorce, childlessness or other factors which separate them from experiencing gender divisions of labour - and thus women's practical needs - in the same way as the majority of women they represent. This is also the case with elite women, who can buy in the services that other women have to provide for themselves. Such women also often feel that affirmative action and gender redistributive policies are unnecessary, since they achieved political office without any such assistance (Hale and Kelly, 1989; Goetz, 1994);
- **Success in politics often depends on adopting dominant modes of behaviour and priorities**. This may make women reluctant to raise gender issues, given the few political 'rewards' expected from alignment with 'soft' sectors;
- **Most politicians, male and female, are of elite or middle-class origins**. Elite women may well act in solidarity with men of their class, and promote their class interests over gender

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<sup>22</sup> Only six of 191 nominated women in the survey stated their role in local government to be their primary occupation.

interests. Further, rigid political hierarchies may prevent easy access for poorer women (and men) into politics. This is exacerbated by poor women's lack of basic skills such as literacy, and limited access to resources;

- **Women often 'pose' as politicians on behalf of husbands or other male relatives**, whether or not mechanisms of positive discrimination are in place, and political parties push female relatives of deceased male politicians to stand for office to capture sympathy votes. This is particularly common in South Asia (Rai, 1995; Meenakshisundaram, 1995; Alan, 1995). While such women could go on to become active politicians in their own right at national level, the greater embeddedness of local government in social structures may constrain their action in local politics.<sup>23</sup>
- **Where women politicians are active in promoting gender equity, their effectiveness may be constrained** by lack of experience, lack of equal recognition and support from male colleagues, and by opposition from both female and male constituents.<sup>24</sup> Women's experiences in local government in many countries are - despite affirmative action - shaped by traditional norms of 'women's proper role', which has normally entailed exclusion from public decision-making, resulting in women's limited experience in politics.

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<sup>23</sup> For women who enter politics on their own initiative while supported by relatives in politics, second-hand experience and knowledge can increase their effectiveness.

<sup>24</sup> A 1992 exit poll survey in Namibia showed that the majority of Namibians 'did not find it difficult' to vote for a woman (78 per cent). However, of those not in favour of female candidates, women were as hostile to female candidates as men were. The majority of the 22 per cent rejecting female candidates said that it was because 'women are not suitable to hold political office' (Wanzala, 1995).

### 2.3 Institutionalising gender in local government

Women's committees can be set up in local authorities to promote gender issues (Gwaywa, 1991), in the form of a consultative committee within the bureaucracy, or as a separate political structure. The latter has been pursued in Uganda where National Women's Councils (NWC) were established in 1993, parallel to the National Resistance Councils (NRC) structure. Although it is too early to assess the impact of the system, it may serve to ghettoise women's issues if the 'female' NWC system becomes undervalued and marginalised in relation to the 'male' NRC system and may provide an excuse for ignoring gender issues in the NRC system (Goetz, 1995). On the other hand, it may also provide institutional means for women's active political participation, in a bottom-up manner - as it was set up to do (*ibid.*). Box 9 gives the example of women's councils in Brazil.

The composition and structure of local government is likewise crucial for the institutionalisation of gender issues. Where local interest groups are directly represented in local or regional authorities, the nature and composition of representation can have gendered impacts. Regional Development Councils (*Consejos de Desarrollo Regional* - COREDES) were established in Chile in the 1980s composed of: 20 per cent representatives from business, 20 per cent from labour, seven percent from among professionals, seven percent from cultural groups and six per cent from organisations promoting social and economic development. As women were marginalised in the groups granted the largest shares of representation - business and labour - their under-representation was structured into the COREDES from the outset.

Members of local governments are not necessarily all elected and bureaucrats are commonly appointed by higher government levels. In Uganda, each district has a Central Government Representative who is appointed by the President and takes precedence over all other officials in the district (Nsibambi, 1994). Similarly, all professional personnel are recruited by the Central Public Service (Nsibambi, 1993). In this case, the Central Government Representative and professional personnel are primarily accountable to central government forces, and only secondly to local interests. Given the domination of men in national politics, accountability to higher levels may undermine women's interests at the local level.

In theory, local government may provide a platform for the political participation of groups who are too small and weak to influence central government (Saunders, 1986). This can be beneficial for women given their limited and weak public political participation in many developing countries. However, in practice, local government is often more hierarchical than other levels of government (Manor, 1996) and strong local interests groups act as barriers to women's entry. Where decentralisation is accompanied with devolution of power to local authorities, women can find themselves further marginalised by stronger local interest groups as competition over power and resources increases. The same can happen where local authorities are starved of funding with local groups having to 'battle' over existing resources.

### **Box 9: Institutionalising gender in local government in Brazil**

Since the early 1980s, there has been pressure from women's organisations in Brazil to set up public bodies to address women's issues, at all levels of government. By 1991, there were 11 state-level Councils for Women and 37 Municipal Councils for Women. The Councils are an important means of participation for women's organisations which decide to work with government structures. Even the most marginalised groups such as rural women began to be heard in government. The network of state-level and municipal councils was coordinated until 1989 by the National Council for Women's Rights (CNDM) which also pushed for gender equality in national government, particularly through legal and constitutional change. After 1989, political changes in federal government curtailed the CNDM both politically and legally, severing the connection with the women's movement.

At state and municipal level, the effectiveness of Councils for Women has depended on the political strength of the local women's movement, the quality of links between the Councils and women's organisations and state legislative powers (Campanile, 1995b).

### ***2.4 Gender and decentralisation: possible strategies***

Decentralisation is one main plank of current effort to introduce 'good government' but little attention has been paid to its gender dimensions. The main way in which gender issues have been addressed at local government level is through measures to improve women's representation, such as reserved seats. In themselves, such measures are inadequate to either ensure women's effective participation or to ensure that women's gender interests are considered in policy and programmes. Additional measures such as awareness raising, training programmes for female candidates and representatives, the cultivation of links and networks between women's local government and women in NGOs and the timing of meetings and provision of childcare to fit with women's schedules are required.

In addition, structures and mechanisms are required at local level as decentralisation procedures, to ensure consultation with women's organisations and that women's needs and interests are taken into account in policy decisions and the allocation of resources.

### **3. Civil Service Reform**

#### **3.1 Background to civil service reform**

Civil service reform is another major area of the good government agenda. It may affect NWMs directly if they are restructured; and indirectly as changes throughout the government apparatus affect their working, particularly given NWMs' often close co-operation with, or dependence on, other government agencies. The consequences of this from a gender perspective are twofold. Firstly, civil service reform may have differential effects on male and female civil servants in terms of job losses and changes in employment conditions. Secondly, restructuring of the civil service can affect the scope for the mainstreaming of gender in government.

Civil service reforms vary according to country-specific structural and institutional circumstances, the commitment of the reforming countries and the role and influence of donor agencies. They are often linked to other reforms such as structural adjustment and decentralisation. The World Bank supports civil service reform in two ways: through Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs) and Technical Assistance Loans (TALs), mostly to African countries.

World Bank support to civil service reform through SALs has focused on two measures: retrenchments in order to reduce the wage bill and reform of pay and employment policy in order to create greater incentives and enhance efficiency and productivity in the civil service. With TALs, the focus is mainly on institutional capacity building and the implementation of projects or reform programmes themselves (Dia, 1993). The relative importance paid to 'down-sizing' (cutting the size of the civil service) versus 'right-sizing' (restructuring the civil service with developmental goals in mind) varies. Due to disappointing results with civil service reform, more attention is now being paid to 'right-sizing' (Dia, 1993).

In practice, civil service reform usually includes several of the following measures:

- Rationalisation of ministries and other government departments;
- Strengthening of administrative structures and control mechanisms;
- Establishment of decent salary levels and monetary rewards for staff;
- Staff reduction;
- Implementation of job grading;
- Introduction of upgraded technology;
- Establishment of promotion processes based on performance rather than seniority or clientelism;
- Encouragement of an organisational culture of accountability, efficiency, discipline including the use of anti-corruption measures (Langseth, 1995; Nsibambi, 1993; Nsibambi, 1994).

Despite more attention to 'right-sizing', little effort has been made to include attention to gender issues in civil service reform packages.<sup>25</sup> Equally, little research has so far been carried out on the differential consequences of civil service reform for women and men.

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<sup>25</sup> An exception is the DAC/WID Taskforce on Gender Guidelines for Programme Aid and Other Forms of Policy-related Assistance. Work is in progress.

### 3.2 Civil service reform as an opportunity for the institutionalisation of gender concerns

Civil service reform may create a number of positive opportunities for women within government structures and for the institutionalisation of gender issues:

- **Adequate levels of pay** (where implemented and not accompanied by wage freezes) reduce the need for civil servants to pursue extra jobs or income-generating activities outside the public sector. This may be particularly attractive to female employees who find it difficult to juggle multiple jobs on top of domestic responsibilities;
- **Training targeted towards civil servants with low skills and education levels** is likely to benefit women who - partly for these reasons - are concentrated at the lower levels of state bureaucracies;
- **Clear and transparent promotion policies** can aid competent women's occupational mobility within the bureaucracy where this has been restricted as a result of clientelistic 'male-biased' modes of promotion.<sup>26</sup> A change in promotion procedures based on merit rather than seniority may be especially beneficial to women whose formal labour force participation fluctuates more than men's (women move in and out of the labour market more often than men)<sup>27</sup>;
- **Resources could be redirected to departments which prioritise gender issues**, with the rationalisation of Ministries and government departments . It is an opportunity to support any existing NWMs or the establishment of such;
- **Strengthening organisational procedures represents an opportunity to firmly establish procedures which take gender issues into account at all levels in the public administration.**<sup>28</sup> Enhanced control mechanisms in the civil service should include measures which ensure the effectiveness of 'gender procedures'. Procedural guidelines in all departments and Ministries should specify the means by which gender issues are to be taken into account at the level of planning, execution and evaluation of projects, programmes and policies. Accountability and sanctions for non-cooperation may ensure their effectiveness;
- New training programmes can be introduced which raise gender awareness in the bureaucracy.

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<sup>26</sup> Mukurasi (1991:8) argues: 'If possession of relevant education and training were the main issue, some of the top male bureaucrats in Tanzania today would not occupy the positions they do, for they possess neither the academic qualifications nor the relevant experience for these executive positions. Some bureaucrats have acquired their posts through the 'old boy network'....'.

<sup>27</sup> For examples from Chile, see Henriquez and Perez (1994); Pardo (1983).

<sup>28</sup> In Chile, this has not taken place. A study of the mainstreaming of gender issues in Chile concluded that attention to gender issues in departments and Ministries other than SERNAM (the NWM) was primarily a result of individuals' commitment to these issues as opposed to institutional mechanisms (Pollack, 1994).

### 3.3 Gender biases in civil service reform

Although civil service reform holds the potential for benefitting women employees and increasing attention to gender issues in government, there may be gender biases arising from such reform.

- **NWMs may become further marginalised in government structures.**  
Resources may be curbed, with a resulting shift in priorities and a reduction in activities.
- **An organisational ethos of efficiency is likely to erode concerns for social justice and gender equality** and further marginalise women employees and add to the constraints they already face:  
'These include institutional cultures which are oriented to men's work patterns and life cycles, institutional incentive systems and rules structures which undervalue women's contributions, organisational schedules and work patterns which do not accommodate the multiple demands on women's labour, and the absence within organisations of support systems for women personnel such as child care, adequate maternity leave' (Goetz, 1994).
- **Informal gender equity practices may be undermined.**  
Where the strengthening of rules and procedures takes place without laying down clear guidelines for incorporating gender concerns, informal gender-equity practices (as a result of commitment by individuals) may be undermined.
- **Rationalisation of ministries and departments can disproportionately affect women.**  
Women tend to be employed in sex-stereotyped sections of public administration (Goetz, 1994) such as women's units, health and social welfare departments which may be the focus of cutbacks. In addition, a common criteria for lay-offs is that the most recent employees are dismissed first. Where the widespread hiring of women in the civil service is a recent phenomenon, as in Ghana, staff reduction is thus likely to hit women as a group harder than men (Alderman *et al.*, 1994).
- **Existing job inequalities between men and women may be exacerbated.**  
A common feature of civil service reform is job grading which creates a structured internal job hierarchy. However, as women are often concentrated in the lower end of the state bureaucracy, job grading is likely to have to effect of disproportionately 'up-grading' the jobs where men are highly concentrated and 'down-grading' those jobs women tend to occupy.
- **Training programmes may exacerbate existing gender inequalities.**  
Certain 'hard-core' departments and ministries or higher occupational positions may be prioritised for receiving training, as in Botswana.<sup>29</sup> Men are usually disproportionately represented in key positions and ministries dealing with issues such as finance, foreign affairs, internal affairs and agriculture, where new training programmes are liable to be concentrated.

### 3.4 Gender and civil service reform: possible strategies

The design and implementation of civil service reform programmes should ensure that priority is given to institutionalising gender concerns, that women do not lose out in comparison with men and that existing inequalities are redressed. In this respect, priority areas are:

- **Institutionalising gender.** As restructuring of the administration and its procedures take place, the opportunity to institutionalise gender issues must be acted upon.

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<sup>29</sup> Since men dominated the technical areas - and these received most training - women were disadvantaged in training opportunities, which had a negative effect on their career progression (Alexander, 1992).

- **Service provision.** Attention should be paid to the rationalisation of service provision as a consequence of civil service and other reforms. Poor women are often the group who rely most on public services. An important concern should be how women's access to services may be negatively affected by such reforms and whether they will lead to an increased burden on women's unpaid labour (Elson, 1995).
- **Accountability.** Mechanisms should be sought to increase the accountability of service providers to women, especially poor women, through, for example, consumer or user committees. This might include community-based monitoring and evaluation of service provision.
- **Retrenchment.** Measures must be taken to ensure that this does not hit women harder than men as a result of women's weaker occupational position and job segregation. Investigation into what happens to retrenched female and male civil servants is needed to establish the gender implications of civil service reform beyond the civil service itself.
- **Rationalisation and restructuring of departments and ministries.** Care should be taken to redeploy women within the bureaucracy when the rationalisation of certain departments disproportionately affects women.
- **Training.** A strategy should be developed which seeks to improve male and female job prospects rather than increasing current inequalities.

In general, further research is needed into the gendered implications of civil service reform, which has attracted little analysis to date.

## **4. Participation and Democracy**

### *4.1 Gender issues in participation*

Underpinning the good government agenda are broad concerns to promote participation and democracy. However, 'participation', as it is formulated in the good government agenda, does not ensure women's participation in public decision-making fora or the promotion of their gender interests. Likewise, the claim that greater democracy necessarily entails greater political participation by women, needs careful examination. A more critical examination of what is meant by participation and democracy - and their gender implications - is required.

The World Bank defines participation as 'intrinsic to good governance. Indeed, participatory development can be thought of as a local-level reflection of good governance' (1994: 42)<sup>30</sup>. Participation can take many different forms and refers to: participation in formal politics; participation in policy processes; the role of civil society organisations in democratic transitions; 'consumer choice' in public services; decision-making in community management; and participation in programmes and projects. From a gender perspective, advocacy of 'participation' begs the question of 'whose participation?' and what it entails. Participation can refer to presence, ability to speak or decision-making impact, all of which are differentiated by gender, class and other social cleavages.

Establishing links with NGOs can provide a channel for the participation of disadvantaged groups.<sup>31</sup> However, it must not be assumed that NGOs necessarily represent poorer women's interests nor that participatory methodologies such as PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) will necessarily lead to an increase in women's participation, or foreground women's gender interests, although they may have this potential.

In many societies, men traditionally have a greater public role than women. This means that women may be reluctant to speak in public fora where prevailing norms dictate that women should not have a public political voice. Even if they do so, stereotypical views of 'women's place' can influence the extent to which they are taken seriously. This a common problem for female politicians in local government. The micro-politics of such fora may also mean that controversial issues (i.e. issues of gender equality) are not raised in public.

Box 10 on Uganda's new Constitution illustrates how a participatory approach to good government is not necessarily inclusive of women.

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<sup>30</sup> This is a relatively recent shift, however. The World Bank's **Governance and Development** publication from 1992 pays no explicit attention to participation.

<sup>31</sup> The World Bank recognises the intermediate roles NGOs can play in projects. However in 1993, NGOs participated only in 30 percent of all World Bank projects (World Bank, 1994:44).

### **Box 10: Uganda's participatory approach to drafting the new Constitution**

In Uganda, the Constitutional Commission embarked on one of the most inclusive participatory approaches to soliciting the nation's views on the new Constitution. The methods included public meetings and brainstorming all over the country and the acceptance of written memoranda from any citizen. Explicit instructions were provided as to how citizens could make an impact. It soon became clear, however, that women were not participating at equal levels to men. One reason was that women would not speak up in public gatherings for cultural reasons. Another problem was illiteracy: over fifty percent of women in Uganda are illiterate. While this also affected men, men had more connections to unions and associations who could help them with writing memoranda. Once this was realised, separate women's meetings were held, to facilitate women's participation in a more inclusive way (Goetz, 1995).

Community participation is characterised as a bottom-up process which involves all members of the community. However, it is likely to marginalise women unless the specific constraints facing them are considered. Women's limited spatial mobility (as household tasks confine many women to the household for extensive periods of the day) and heavy work burden can limit their scope for organising themselves. Lack of resources (e.g. funding, experience and literacy) and connections (for instance, to unions and associations) exacerbates the problem.

In practice, community participation often means participation by the (male) elite (Castillo, 1995: 63). Community participation in service delivery in Uganda provides an example. Introducing community financing in the form of user charges and fees had clear gender and class implications. Community management of schools meant that male members of higher income families took control of the Parent - Teacher Associations which set school fees. The fees were often set at a level which excluded poorer children (Goetz and O'Brien, 1995). Since decentralisation often gives increased influence to local elites, measures to ensure the voice of marginalised groups need to be in place to counteract this (Castillo, 1995).

At the level of projects and community-based service provision, a number of measures can be adopted to attempt to enhance women's participation, such as separate fora for women where they are encouraged to voice their opinions and meetings close to women's home or work place with child-care provided. Beyond this, there is a need for gender awareness among service providers (women and men) and for mechanisms to ensure that women's gender interests are 'mainstreamed' in the policy process.

#### **4.2 Gender issues in democratisation**

Transitions to democracy or peace create new opportunities for political actors. They are periods of (relatively) rapid and drastic change where different actors try to secure a foothold within the state or outside it. Transitional periods also mean that organisations face a range of other issues than those they initially formed around which may no longer be relevant. New alliances may be formed and strategies and objectives changed. Where the original reasons for mobilising are gone, some actors choose to leave the public political arena. As in Chile, women may also be 'forced out' of the political arena with a transition to democracy, as men return to positions held by women for them in their absence as 'care-takers' (Waylen, 1992). The unity that bonded groups together over common issues may also be lost as the agenda changes, further weakening their ability to achieve their aims (Byrne, 1994, Jaquette, 1994).

Transitional periods provide opportunities for institutionalising gender issues which have to be grasped by activists promoting women's interests. This was successfully achieved in Chile: SERNAM - Chile's NWM (see Appendix I) - was born with the transition to democracy. In 1988, a group of women established the *Concertacion de Mujeres por la Democracia* (Coalition of Women for Democracy) and successfully demanded that a Ministry for Women was incorporated into the electoral programme of the *Concertacion* (Coalition). Box 11 details the post-war Ugandan experience.

**Box 11: Gender issues in post-war Uganda**

'During the Amin and the two Obote regimes, women's organizations were oriented to welfare and religious work and were largely co-opted to state concerns through the Uganda National Council of Women, established by Amin in 1978. Two decades of state terror and civil strife pushed women into more radical roles as active combatants in Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA), while non-combatant village women performed vital supply and intelligence roles in a guerrilla movement which was strongly supported by the civilian population. This experience created a momentum which was sustained after the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government took power in January 1986, where there has been an impressive range of official efforts to create new forms of women's access to the state' (Goetz, 1995: 15).

However, transitional periods can also pose problems for institutionalising women's interests, especially for those groups who fail, or are unable to, assert new roles for themselves. The political strategies pursued before democratisation may no longer work well under the new circumstances and organisations may need to re-form and consider new strategies. As the political space is filled by parties dominated by male political actors, women's organisations have to decide whether to join in - often in a marginal way - or to remain autonomous. It is considerably easier for groups with access to resources and solid organisational experience to institutionalise their interests, than for those groups with few resources and/or whose organisational structure is very loose.<sup>32</sup> Regardless, some degree of institutionalisation is usually required for the women's movement to retain political space.<sup>33</sup>

The Zambian example in Box 12, demonstrates how, in a country with a relatively weak women's movement, the transition to democracy resulted in a deinstitutionalisation of gender issues.

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<sup>32</sup> This problem is exacerbated where international aid is withdrawn or redirected away from women's issues and groups (Rowan-Campbell, 1995:141; Byrne, 1995).

<sup>33</sup> Jaquette (1994) suggests that the kind of institutionalisation needed is some degree of hierarchy rather than flat leadership; less stress on autonomy and a move towards co-operation with state institutions; and a change in perception of goals and strategies, while keeping a sense of purpose which will 'legitimize' mundane tasks.

***Box 12: Gender and the transition to multi-party democracy in Zambia***

In Zambia, women candidates and gender issues fared badly in the multi-party elections in 1991. The winning party, the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) stood only seven women out of a total of 150 parliamentary candidates. Not one of the six elected female candidates were given a seat in Cabinet. The previous UNIP government had one woman in Cabinet. Only after many protests by women, were two women appointed to Cabinet six months later. The MMD government has no national policy on gender issues, any sectoral policies with foreground gender issues, unlike the previous government which had a national policy on gender and development. Nevertheless, the NWM established by the UNIP government continues to lobby for such policies. (See Appendix I). (Abantu for Development, 1994:14).

## **IV Conclusions: Strategies for the Future**

This report has focused on the lessons from the experience of national women's machineries, especially in ACP countries, drawing also on experiences from elsewhere, with a view to informing future financial and technical assistance to national women's machineries and more broadly to the project of gender mainstreaming.

One broad conclusion is that a narrow focus on the national women's machinery, in isolation of the broader policy context, is not useful. This is particularly so where programmes of economic restructuring and political liberalisation or administrative reform are underway, or about to be introduced. In this context, adhering to pre-existing models of NWMs will only to serve to reinforce their marginalisation.

One strategy might be to integrate proposals for strengthening NWM or for gender mainstreaming in government planning and administration more closely with programmes of civil service and administrative reform, at the design stage, with a particular focus on ensuring that gender issues are not marginalised in the process of down-sizing the bureaucracy; on strengthening mechanisms and procedures for gender planning and on issues of accountability to women in service provision.

Attempts to integrate gender into five year development plans in countries where these have been effectively suspended as the basis of economic policy may be a misplaced focus. There is a need to bring gender into the discussions of broad economic policy and particularly sectoral policies where economic reform programmes are being implemented. The analytical basis for such a dialogue has been developed: what is perhaps lacking is a coalition of interests with both sufficient expertise and grounding in the issues and sufficient influence to push gender issues in such fora. External donor agencies could play a role in building a coalition around gender issues in economic policy-making and lobby for the input of women's organisations and gender analysis in public expenditure reviews.

One fundamental problem identified for NWMs is their weak mandate, undermined by the lack of a strong internal constituency, of formal legal status and of top level support. It is clear that a top-down strategy of establishing a NWM in a vacuum will not be effective. Where a NWM does not currently exist, or has effectively ceased functioning, efforts are first needed to build up support for any new initiative both within government and in civil society. At the same time, there is a danger of political co-optation and vulnerability to changes in government. This can be countered to some extent by broadening the links between the NWM and civil society

Now that the consensus among GAD advocates favours mainstreaming gender in policy and planning, a major focus should be on the links between NWMs and other areas of government, as well as with non-government organisations and the women's movement. A range of options for consultation and networking can be considered. Openness to working with different types organisations is required.

Where decentralisation of government and service provision is being introduced, particularly where a genuine devolution of power and resources is involved, there is an urgent need to look at institutionalising gender at different levels of government, particularly local government, but also at state and regional levels where appropriate. Here there are some innovative experiences to build on.

To date, many NWMs have been reliant on external funding and technical assistance, introducing problems of accountability, of governments attempting to capture funds with little real commitment to the issues, of a tendency towards project activities of a fixed term nature which are visible and attractive to donors, perhaps at the expense of capacity building in policy advocacy. Realistically, in low income countries, external funding will continue to be required to establish NWMs or build their capacity. So, the nature and conditions of funding to NWMs or to programmes of gender mainstreaming require careful consideration to avoid some of the above problems. Donors should ensure that funding supports capacity building as well as short-term project objectives and that links with other sectors and civil society are being developed as part of funding packages.

Where NWMs have been newly established during a period of political transition, it is important that outside agencies continue to support the non-government sector as well as supporting the development of government machinery and specifically ensure that provisions are made for consultation between the two.

Of the various measures adopted to increase the impact of NWMs through gender mainstreaming, no single element can be said to provide the solution. Gender mainstreaming will occur through a co-ordinated process, based on the building of alliances both within and outside government, towards the development and implementation of gender policies. While the process itself will be outside the direct influence of external agencies, there is certainly scope for strategic technical and financial support in such areas as training, the establishment of focal points and co-ordinating committees, convening policy workshops, data gathering exercises, coalition building, and policy advocacy. It is important that different elements are co-ordinated within an overall process.

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<b>BELIZE</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries</b>
<p>'To empower women to upgrade their economic, social, cultural, legal and educational position through gender sensitive education and training programmes which will enable them to become equal partners in the process of national development' (Ashworth, 1994: 13).</p> <p>The Government has a National Policy Statement on Women (1992) which assigned principal oversight responsibility to ensure ministries and departments meet their objectives, to the then Ministry of Social Development. This needs to be translated into a plan of action (Government of Belize, 1994: 15).</p> <p>As well as advocacy and oversight, the Department of Women's Affairs has Women's Development Officers (WDOs) in most districts, who assist women in implementing income-generating projects. The WDOs are direct descendants of the Home Economics Officers of the pre- and early post-independence period, and many WDOs concentrate on teaching baking, sewing and other craft skills, and in some cases, procuring project funding. The WDOs are also contact points for national initiatives involving women, such as consultation exercises.</p>	<p>The 1990-4 National Development Plan was the first to broaden its consideration of women's roles and needs from 'domestic skills' 'midwives and maternity beds' (Government of Belize, 1994:9), to consideration of the needs of different categories of women - urban and rural, youth, the elderly, single parents and includes a recognition of the 'central role of women in the nation's economic and social development' (<i>ibid.</i>: 7). The approach to women, adopted by the DWA derives from an analysis of women's productive, reproductive and community management roles. However, despite impressive commitments and a seven-point plan of action, many of the key areas, such as employment and training had no budgetary commitments.</p> <p>In 1994, a new National Development Plan was drawn up, with consultation of rural men and women throughout the country, to establish their priorities. The DWA, in its role on an inter-ministerial committee (see below), was able to comment on the gender implications of all proposals (Ashworth, 1994:13).</p> <p>With funding from the Commonwealth Secretariat, the DWA set up a gender database to improve its contribution to gender-sensitive planning (Ashworth, 1994).</p>	<p>1979: A Women in Development Unit was set up 'in response to the United Nations Decade for Women' (Government of Belize, 1994:2).</p> <p>1986: the DWA was created in the Ministry of Social Development.</p> <p>1993: with administrative reorganisation, this Ministry became the Ministry of Human Resources, and ministerial portfolio responsibility was assigned to the Department (<i>ibid.</i>).</p>	<p>Belize has a system of inter-ministerial sub-committees. DWA is represented on a committee which examines the social impact of proposed projects.</p> <p>At local level, WDOs often co-operate with line ministry staff in project implementation (particularly with staff of the Ministries of Agriculture and Health). There are no formal structures to achieve this and links depend on inter-personal connections. WDOs often lack access to transport, so collaboration with better resourced ministries is imperative.</p>

<b>BELIZE</b>			
<b>Status including budget and staffing levels</b>	<b>Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)</b>	<b>Programmes/ projects</b>	<b>Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement/ other organisations</b>
<p>The DWA has its own Minister (the only woman minister and one of the very few women in parliament). Arguably, its location within the Ministry of Human Resources has helped maintain a 'welfare' orientation, at least at district level.</p> <p>The DWA receives approximately US\$ 125,000 per year to cover the general operating costs of the department. Project funds come mostly from the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNICEF (Ashworth, 1994: 13). The Belize Report for the Fourth World Conference on Women states that 'the resource requirements of DWA need to be addressed. These must include its basic operating budgets, transport needs and in-service training requirements' (Government of Belize, 1994: 14).</p> <p>In 1994, the Department had 15 staff, comprising seven WDOs, three technical officers, four support staff and a director.</p>	<p>There are plans to establish focal points in each ministry to 'better co-ordinate and ensure gender integration into programmes and policies' (Ashworth, 1994: 13).</p> <p>Two DWA staff have attended short gender training courses, and have shared knowledge internally (<i>ibid.</i>). Inter-ministerial training has not taken place.</p> <p>The Belizean planning system encompasses a number of sub-committees. DWA is represented on the committee whose role it is to assess the likely social impact of proposed projects.</p> <p>No information is available on the use of guidelines or checklists.</p>	<p>UNICEF formerly funded income-generating projects through the DWA; however their shift of focus towards advocacy and networking has reduced funding from direct implementation of projects. This has evoked some discontent among rural women.</p>	<p>The National Women's Commission, set up in 1982, is an advocacy/ advisory body. The division of labour and mechanisms by which it works with DWA are not clear.</p> <p>The DWA collaborated with the NGO Women Against Violence to get the Domestic Violence Act passed. DWA is represented on the Women's Issues Network, an NGO body.</p> <p>At district level, the DWA tends to work through its own staff, rather than NGOs. NGOs wishing to implement projects with women are more likely to collaborate with line ministry staff.</p>

CAMEROON			
Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD	Inclusion in national development plans	Locational history	Linkages with other ministries
<p>Mandated to study and draw up policies and programmes to improve the status of women and eventually eliminate discrimination (UNIDO, 1992a: 1).</p> <p>The <i>Cellule Juridique</i> (Legal Cell) under MINASCOF is mandated to take care of all the legal affairs of the Ministry, namely for the drafting of legislation concerning women, family and the elderly (UNIDO, 1992a: 1).</p> <p>The approach taken by MINASCOF in their policy towards women is characterised more by social than economic considerations and the colonial influence is maintained in the concentration on women's domestic roles and activities. Women's groups are encouraged and women are taught traditional female tasks such as knitting, crochet, embroidery, cooking and basic hygiene (von Braunmühl, 1993: 10).</p>	<p>In the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (1987-91), the Government of Cameroon tacitly admits the absence of adequate recognition of the role of women in the development process. The plan states that the government has to:</p> <p>'provide...basic structures and training programmes necessary to enhance the abilities and increase resources of women with a view of improving their social status and the well-being of the family... It is therefore necessary to continue, and even accelerate the setting-up of structures intended to ensure the balance between women's present role as a housewife and mother and as a participant in economic, social, political and cultural development' (UNIDO, 1992a: 2) However, few programmes of action have been planned or realised (von Braunmühl, 1993: 10).</p> <p>In the agricultural sector, the Government's policy puts emphasis on the cash-crop sector, thus effectively excluding women from extension services (UNIDO, 1992a).</p> <p>The Five-Year development plans have been suspended and the country is currently implementing a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) with six main parts, of which the Social Dimensions of Adjustment Programme is one. In this last section MINASCOF is called upon to re-orientate its mandate towards a more normative role of the conception and co-ordination of WID.</p>	<p>1984: Ministry of Women's Status</p> <p>1988: merged with Ministry of Social Affairs to become Ministry (MINASCOF)</p> <p>MINASCOF consists of three services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Women's Education Service;</li> <li>2. Women's Economic Integration Service;</li> <li>3. Women's Organisations Relations Service</li> </ol> <p>(UNIDO, 1992a: 1).</p> <p>MINASCOF also has a Division for Research, Planning and Evaluation (DEPE) (von Braunmühl, 1993: 11).</p>	<p>MINASCOF participates in the implementation of educational and training activities organised by the various ministerial departments.</p> <p>The community development programme (of MINASCOF) has almost no links with extension services of the Ministry of Agriculture. Extension services are not directed at women (von Braunmühl, 1993: 10).</p>

<b>CAMEROON</b>			
<b>Status, including budget and staffing levels</b>	<b>Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)</b>	<b>Sectoral programmes</b>	<b>Relations with autonomous women's movement</b>
<p>Was funded by CIDA as part of Social Dimensions of Adjustment Programme. This funding was terminated in 1993 (von Braunmühl, 1993: 11).</p> <p>MINASCOF has 120 staff, arranged in a field-level service structure. However, due to the merger of the two ministries at a time of economic crisis, these services are severely under-funded (von Braunmühl, 1993: 9- 10).</p>	<p><i>Comité Consultatif pour la Promotion de la Femme</i> (Consultative Committee for the Promotion of Women) has the mandate to study women's status in Cameroon, especially in areas relating to women's professional activity and training and to propose to MINASCOF any action or programme aiming at the enhancement of women's participation in national development. In 1993, this committee was no longer functional (UNIDO, 1992: 1).</p>	<p>The <i>Home Atelier</i> of MINASCOF in Douala offers craft training for carpet weaving, sewing and embroidery, textile dyeing, ceramics and drawing. This three year training targets young women with primary education who come from poor families from all over the country.</p>	<p>The <i>Bureau National de l'Organisation des Femmes du Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounais</i> (National Bureau of the Women's Organisation of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement ) is the women's wing of the ruling RDPC Party and was created in 1960. It publishes the National Programme of Action and the Annual Report of Activities, and also organises local and national training programmes, co-operatives and saving associations, and promotes literacy and family planning (UNIDO, 1992: 1).</p>

<b>CHILE</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries</b>
<p>The mandate of SERNAM is advocacy and oversight; it has no executive powers or powers of veto. Carries out research particularly to evaluate policies and programmes in relation to CEDAW. Its is constituted by law rather than presidential decree, which strengthens its position.</p> <p>SERNAM has nine departments - planning and research, regional development, training, communications, international relations, administration and finance, public relations, press and cabinet ministry.</p> <p>SERNAM's mandate excludes project implementation, except for demonstration and experimentation, although in practice it does implement pilot projects through NGOs (Goetz, 1995:21); it has offices in all regions.</p>	<p>SERNAM is formulating a national Equality of Opportunity plan focusing on legal and constitutional change to promote women's rights; facilitating equal participation of women and men in education; improving women's access to the labour market; promoting anti-sexist messages in the media and strengthening the public institutional apparatus for implementation and evaluation of equal opportunities policies.</p> <p>Has managed to get the National Statistical Institute to disaggregate data by gender for development planning, but was unable to get indicators relevant to gender difference, such as physical security, reproductive health or political participation included in statistics or surveys.</p> <p>It is unclear whether SERNAM has been able to comment effectively on other national development plans.</p>	<p>1949: Women's Legal Office set up, which became National Women's Office in 1951.</p> <p>1977: merged with <i>Centros de Madres de Chile</i>, which had run income-generating projects since the 1950s, under control of Gen. Pinochet's wife, Lucia Hircart de Pinochet, to form National Women's Secretariat (SNM - <i>Secretaria Nacional de la Mujer</i>).</p> <p>1991: SERNAM was formed as a unit within the Ministry of Planning, but with its own Minister.</p> <p>Appointment to SERNAM's 11-member advisory council is at the President's discretion. This council assesses proposals and makes recommendations to SERNAM.</p>	<p>There are women's desks and informal focal points in some ministries, which SERNAM supports (see below). Successful collaboration with Ministries of Labour and Education.</p> <p>SERNAM tries to influence other ministries in gender-sensitivity; mainstreaming of gender within other ministries relates more to the personal convictions of individuals than institutionalised processes.</p>

CHILE			
Status including budget and staffing levels	Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)	Programmes/ projects	Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement/ other organisations
<p>40 people in full-time, permanent positions; approximately 400 staff in total. The vast majority are women. Staff in regional offices are not necessarily GAD advocates even if they have received training.</p> <p>Original budget was \$2 million from government and \$1.5 million from outside, but now 60 per cent comes from multi-laterals. Information on present budget levels unavailable.</p>	<p>Gender training in Ministry of Agriculture (very hostile) and National Statistical Institute (successful).</p> <p>No formal contact/focal points; informal focal points filled by 'individuals uninterested in the issue and hence unwilling to commit time to it' (Goetz, 1995:26).</p> <p>No information is available on inter-ministerial committees.</p>	<p>Public awareness-building; implementing pilot projects in areas neglected by other branches of government, including sexual violence, adolescent pregnancy and female-headed households (Goetz, 1995:21). Also training for and support to micro-enterprises, pressure for legal reform and established network of information centres on women's rights.</p>	<p>The <i>Concertacion de Mujeres por la Democracia</i> - Association of Women for Democracy, established in 1988 as part of democratic transition, lobbied for the creation of SERNAM.</p> <p>SERNAM has collaborated with NGOs and international organisations, for example on research into labour issues and domestic violence.</p> <p>Pollack (1994:4) suggests that the relative separation of SERNAM from the women's movement may relate to a desire on behalf of the movement to remain autonomous and a reluctance on SERNAM's part to become embroiled in the politics of NGOs and women's organisations.</p>

<b>JAMAICA</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries</b>
<p>Objectives of Bureau of Women's Affairs (BoWA):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to promote the integration of women in all areas of national development through facilitating the development and implementation of a National Plan of Action for Women;</li> <li>2. to improve the economic situation of women through facilitating the development of programmes and projects that provide training and income support for women.</li> </ol> <p>1987 Policy Statement on Women by BoWA adopted by Cabinet (on issues of employment, childcare, physical and sexual abuse, housing, discrimination, welfare, fertility, education, though nothing on empowerment or political representation). The role of BoWA: to facilitate and co-ordinate the inter-ministry committee.</p> <p>However, the National Policy Statement on Women lacks a system of operationalisation. It also needs revision and recognition by present government. It lacks a budget allocation. Only junior staff turn up to committee meetings and the inter-ministry committee is ineffective (Goetz, 1995; Marriott, 1994).</p> <p>Its approach has combined advocacy and implementation of projects (see below). In recent years, BoWA has shifted its approach from WID to GAD.</p>	<p>In 1990, a Five Year National Development Plan on Women was prepared. However, this lacks a budget and although the main agents for implementation have been identified, execution is sole responsibility of the BoWA. It has not been internalised by other departments - it was made without any real participation from them (it should have been the work of the inter-ministerial committee). It was elaborated separately from the Jamaican Five Year Development plan, and remains largely external to it (Goetz, 1995).</p> <p>Recent (pre-1992) national policy documents completely lacked gender analysis (Tomlinson, 1992).</p>	<p>1974: Women's Desk within Ministry of Youth and Community Development</p> <p>1975: upgraded to Bureau. Shifted to office of Prime Minister.</p> <p>1978: under Ministry of Social Security</p> <p>1980: under Ministry of Youth and Community Development</p> <p>1986: under Ministry of Social Security</p> <p>1989: under Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Sports</p>	<p>There are women's desks in the Ministry of Health and in the Planning Institute. However, these are marginalised and concerned only with welfare issues -major projects are sent to the Macro Division in the Planning Institute (Marriott, 1994).</p> <p>An inter-ministerial committee is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the Plan of Action for Women, making an annual report to Cabinet on progress in implementation, and developing inter-ministry linkages to address the issues in the plan. The committee should consist of senior representatives of key ministries. Permanent Secretaries in all Ministries are responsible for the implementation of the goals and principles 'as they relate to their own ministries'. Generally the BoWA is expected to serve as support to all ministries in the implementation of the Policy statement.</p>

JAMAICA			
Status, including budget and staffing levels	Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)	Programmes/ projects	Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement/ other organisations
<p>Highly dependent upon outside funds; no government funds. When government failed to match donor finance this was withdrawn, and project activities had to stop.</p>	<p>Gender Monitoring Checklist covers: 1) baseline data; 2) policy links; 3) consultation; 4) equity action; 5) context. BoWA has a seat on the project Pre-Selection Committee in Planning Institute. The Gender Monitoring Checklist has been sent to the Policy Review Unit for Pilot execution in the ministries - but as at 1994 there had been no response. BoWA attacked for failing to turn up to Project Pre-Selection Committee.</p> <p>New civil servants all get training in assessing the gender-differential impact of policies and projects, though this has been labelled 'vacuous' (Goetz, 1995:26).</p>	<p>Formerly involved in implementing income-generating projects, but stopped when funding withdrawn in late 1980s.</p>	<p>Originally set up in response to internal pressure from women's movement.</p> <p>Working with National Advisory Council, the Bureau advises on funding and technical assistance offered by other agencies on the establishment of businesses and farms (UNIDO, 1992b).</p> <p>Relations with NGOs and women's organisations have declined since the economic downturn of the 1980s weakened women's organisations. BoWA's own lack of funding has weakened linkages. BoWA has increasingly come to rely on NGOs to implement projects, and on Parish Advisory Committees (a local government structure) in rural areas for the implementation of policy on women.</p>

<b>NAMIBIA</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries</b>
<p>The Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) is mandated to co-ordinate WID initiatives in Namibia, and to provide a central focus for research, information gathering and dissemination leading to greater awareness of gender issues.</p> <p>'The Department's approach will be aimed at reducing gender-based inequalities and putting into place programmes targeted towards equitable distribution of resources and facilities' (National Planning Commission, 1993: 261).</p> <p>Shortly after its inception, DWA consulted with women throughout Namibia and held a workshop to discuss its role and strategy. As a result it was decided to focus on networking and facilitation functions rather than the direct implementation of projects.</p> <p>DWA's role is therefore mainly that of advocacy with some implementation and oversight functions.</p>	<p>The Transitional Development Plan (1991/92 - 1993/94) has a chapter on women and some reference to women in the chapters on education, health and crime. It is not clear whether this document was produced in collaboration with the DWA.</p> <p>Partly as a result of DWA advocacy, the National Development Plan for 1995 - 2000 addresses gender sector by sector, rather than having a Women in Development section (FAO, 1995:12).</p>	<p>The DWA was established in the Office of the President in August 1990, where it has remained ever since.</p>	<p>These are mandated in Namibia's Transitional Development Plan (1991/2 - 1993/4).</p> <p>In 1992, the DWA and the National Planning Commission established an inter-ministerial Gender Network to monitor gender issues in government policy. In 1993 it was intended to, expand this to include more NGO input. However, the Network has met sporadically and NGO involvement has not yet been achieved (CEDAW, 1995: 9).</p> <p>In late 1994, DWA established nine sectoral committees with government and NGO representation in the following fields: reproductive health, legal affairs, violence against women, education, training and employment, rural community programmes and the environment; information, education and communication, economic activities, research and data collection, and women in decision-making. It is too early to comment on the effectiveness of these committees (CEDAW, 1995).</p> <p>Earlier attempts at the integration of the Ministry of Women in Water, Agriculture and Rural Development received limited resources. In 1993, the Ministry was reorganised and a Gender and Development Unit (GDU) created in the Directorate of Agriculture. The GDU has responsibility for a recently developed initiative to 'integrate women into agricultural services' (FAO, 1995:12).</p>

<b>NAMIBIA</b>			
<b>Status including budget and staffing levels</b>	<b>Instruments used (training/guidelines/checklists/committees/ focal points)</b>	<b>Programmes/ projects</b>	<b>Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement/ other organisations</b>
<p>Despite its location in the Office of the President, the DWA lacks recognition within the government. It is 'not consistently consulted on legislation and policies which include critical gender components, and there is no DWA representative at Cabinet level or in the National Assembly, not even as an observer ... The DWA would be better placed to accomplish its objectives if its status and capacity were increased' (CEDAW, 1995: 9).</p> <p>The DWA strategy workshop recommended that DWA 'seek a Cabinet decision that all policy documents or draft legislation be submitted to DWA for comment and input that takes women's concerns into consideration' (Ashworth, 1994:13). To date this has not been achieved.</p> <p>The DWA's budget and staffing is limited and insufficient to balance 'the enormous expectations coming from government as well as from the public' (<i>ibid.</i>). Precise budgetary and staffing details are not available.</p> <p>DWA has not been able to establish on-going regional representation. This makes it difficult to represent rural women adequately (<i>ibid.</i>).</p>	<p>Committees - see section on linkages.</p> <p>As yet there are no gender focal points in other ministries or partner organisations, although these were recommended both in the DWA strategy workshop (Ashworth, 1994: 13) and in the Transitional National Development Plan (National Planning Commission, 1993: 262).</p> <p>The strategy workshop identified gender-awareness training as a key task for DWA (Ashworth, 1994:13). It is unclear whether DWA has carried out such training.</p>	<p>The DWA has provided training in small-scale income-generation and business management skills in several regions (National Planning Commission, 1993: 262).</p> <p>DWA has supported and co-ordinated foreign NGO and development agency work in the fields of education and training; support for women's income-generating activities; identification of areas for appropriate technology; social and legal issues; and health and nutrition (<i>ibid.</i>).</p> <p>DWA also believes that through its advisory role, it has contributed to the increase in provision of reproductive health care, and to a trend towards greater gender equality in formal sector education and employment.</p>	<p>DWA was active in promoting the formation of the National Association of Namibian Women (NANAWO) in 1992 - a non-party political umbrella organisation for women (National Planning Commission, 1993:262). Wanzala (1995:6) suggests that the perceived domination of the DWA and NANAWO by SWAPO members has distanced them from autonomous women's organisations. Networking is also hampered by a failure to establish regional offices to date.</p> <p>Through its co-ordinating role, DWA has considerable contact with NGOs and donors (see above).</p>

<b>PAPUA NEW GUINEA</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries</b>
The mandated functions of the Women's Affairs Division (WAD) are advisory, oversight, and awareness-raising with some implementation functions.	<p>From 1982-7 WAD prepared a framework for the national policy on women, which was approved by the National Executive Council in 1990. This policy should 'prompt central government to actively search for and initiate appropriate mechanisms for gender-sensitive planning' (Cox, 1994: 364).</p> <p>It is unclear whether WAD has made input to other national development plans.</p>	WAD has been located in a number of ministries under several different names. It was administered by the Prime Minister's Department until moving to its present location in the Department of Youth and Home Affairs.	No information is available.
<b>Status including budget and staffing levels</b>	<b>Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)</b>	<b>Programmes/ projects</b>	<b>Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement/ other organisations</b>
No information is available.	<p>Interdepartmental Women's Advisory Committee, whose secretariat is located within the Women's Affairs Division. This is an advisory committee to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Youth. It is unclear whether there are also inter-ministerial advisory committees on women.</p> <p>WAD will 'make the policy widely known through popular media and educational materials, and is organising the mobilisation of provincial women's division and councils to educate public servants and ensure the formulation of women's policies' (Cox, 1994: 364).</p> <p>No information is available on gender training.</p>	WAD runs and participates in one programme and one project. No further details are available.	<p>WAD was seen as competition to the National Council of Women (NCW) (a legally constituted 'NGO'), as both depended on government money. The NCW collapsed in 1985-6.</p> <p>WAD collaborates with provincial women's councils. No further information on the relationship between WAD and other organisations is available.</p>

PHILIPPINES			
Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD	Inclusion in national development plans	Locational history	Linkages with other ministries/departments
<p>The new constitution provides that 'the state recognises the role of women in nation building and shall promote the fundamental equality before the law of women and men'.</p> <p>The NCRFW plays an advisory role, assisting the Cabinet on policies, programmes and projects for women's advancement. It is empowered to monitor the implementation of the PDPW, issue circulars and call upon other agencies for support.</p> <p>Up to 1987, the approach to women by government was generally welfare oriented, with women included for consideration alongside other relatively disadvantaged groups, such as youth, the disabled etc. Recognition of women's importance generally hinged on their roles as mothers and wives.</p>	<p>A macro policy on women is explicitly included in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan.</p> <p>In 1989, the Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW) was launched to coincide with the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MT-PDP) 1987-92. The PDPW technically expired in 1993, so the government and leaders of the women's movement are now preparing a 30-year Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGD).</p> <p>There are seats for women representatives in the technical committee (the approving body) and in the different technical sub-committees (the drafting bodies) of the national planning process. There is a focal point for women in the national planning body, composed of staff who support the work of the committees. Agency representatives of the various planning committees are given gender sensitivity training.</p>	<p>1975: National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, (NCRFW), an advisory body to the President.</p>	<p>The PDPW called for the setting up of WID focal points in all government agencies.</p> <p>The NCRFW works with the national Statistical Coordination Board and the National Statistics Office to produce a GAD Database System.</p> <p>The NCRFW 'plants' seed trainers in various government agencies to respond to internal training needs. Technical assistance is provided to review mainstream training programmes and incorporate gender awareness sessions.</p> <p>The Women in Development and National Building Act directs all government agencies to submit semestral reports on their compliance to the provisions of the Act. Reporting guidelines are provided to agencies to help them undertake a situation analysis of women's status/situation within their sectoral area and within the agency itself. The reports are submitted to Congress, the Office of the President, the NCRFW and the national planning body.</p>

PHILIPPINES			
Status, including budget and staffing levels	Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)	Programmes/ projects	Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement
<p>In 1993, received an annual budget of P7million (approx. US\$300,000). To minimise adverse reactions to the PDPW, the NCRFW deliberately refrained from seeking new appropriations to fund implementation. Instead the NCRFW directed agencies to tap their regular appropriations, including savings and official development assistance for this purpose. The President has also issued two memoranda to ensure that budgets for women's concerns are earmarked by government agencies. The Department of Budget and Management, the national planning body, and the NCRFW issued a joint memorandum providing guidelines on how budgeting for women could be managed. A policy statement on the allocation of budgets for women was also incorporated in the 1995 General Appropriations Act.</p> <p>At the moment, however, many of the activities on women are funded through foreign assistance and <i>ad hoc</i> financing mechanisms.</p> <p>The NCRFW has 54 staff, only 12 of whom occupy technical positions. The Board is composed of 17 women, all from the non-government sector. (Valdeavilla, 1995)</p>	<p>The PDPW makes use of women's seats on committees, focal points and gender training (see section on inclusion into national development plans)</p> <p>The Focal Point for Women's Concerns has the task to initiate, co-ordinate, facilitate, monitor and provide technical assistance. The NCRFW carries out a capability building programme for focal points, consisting mainly of monitoring, seminars, inter-focal point dialogue, planning assistance etc. The NCRFW works for the inclusion of Focal Point efforts in the performance evaluation system to prevent the focal point activities being an unrecognised 'add on'.</p> <p>The NCRFW is developing tools and guidelines for planners and implementers. GAD guidelines are being tested at a sub-national level. Customised guidelines are also being developed by sector, particularly in the Department of Agriculture.</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>Women's movement had campaigned for the establishment of a government machinery for women.</p> <p>In the run-up to the formulation of the PDPW, consultations were held with women on 11 priority issues (agriculture, trade unions, education, health law, family, policy and action, research, sexual exploitation, arts and culture, community organising and media).</p> <p>Women's NGOs play an important role in supporting the mainstreaming of women in government. There is a national government and non-governmental organisation network - an alliance of some 300 national women's NGOs and umbrella organisations, including gender workers in government. The women's movement is at the forefront of lobbying for legal and administrative reforms, they advise and consult agencies on mainstreaming, and monitor the government's perspectives on major social and policy concerns</p>

<b>TONGA</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries</b>
The Women's Affairs Unit is mandated to become the secretariat to the National Council on Women's Affairs (NCW); to advise and recommend policy proposals and research to NCW; to develop women's projects and seek funding for them; to be the official point of contact between women-focused national, regional and international organisations.	No mention of women in Fifth National Development Plan in 1986 (not even under data collection).	1993: a Women's Affairs Unit in the Prime Minister's Office was set up.	No information is available.
<b>Status including budget and staffing levels</b>	<b>Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)</b>	<b>Programmes/ projects</b>	<b>Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement/ other organisations</b>
The 1990-4 budget for the establishment of a national women's machinery was \$9,000. Neither information collection on women's activities, nor dissemination of information received any budget at all.  No information is available on WAU's access to power, structure or staffing levels.	No information is available.	No information is available.	WAU is represented on Langafonua, the National Women's Council, which is headed by the Queen of Tonga, and has a membership of 24 women's organisations.

<b>UGANDA</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries/departments</b>
<p>Strong support of the President (Museveni) been important for its legitimacy and development. However, it is also a source of insecurity to be closely associated with one individual, in the single ruling party.</p> <p>The National Gender Policy currently before the cabinet is designed to give a clear mandate and definition of its role (Stella Mukasa, pers. comm.).</p> <p>A process of re-evaluation and reflection in 1994/5 led to a shift from a women-specific to a gender-oriented focus (Stella Mukasa, pers. comm.).</p>	<p>Gender issues are insufficiently detailed in current national planning document - the 1993-96 Rehabilitation and Development Plan - which contains three paragraphs under a small sub-heading on WID. Gender is not integrated into planning assumptions regarding the impact of liberalisation on patterns of labour and asset deployment in productive sectors such as agriculture, nor the impacts of higher prices for basic commodities on domestic consumption budgets. Gender-specific issues are not detailed in social sector chapters, nor are gender-differential impacts of new measures in social sectors such as cost recovery for health and education services assessed. Gender issues are relegated to the Programme to Alleviate Poverty and the Social Costs of Adjustment (PASCA), where women as an undifferentiated category are listed as one of several vulnerable groups (Goetz, 1995: 31-32).</p>	<p>1978: Ugandan Council of Women (NCW) established by the Military Government in response to UN Women's Decade - a small department within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.</p> <p>1988: WID Ministry created, within the Presidential office</p> <p>1991: these merged to become Ministry of WID, Youth and Culture as part of civil service reforms.</p>	<p>Each ministry has been responsible for designating a focal point officer since 1991. The WID department advised that this should be a high-ranking official - such as a commissioner or assistant commissioner. All have been given training and encouraged to initiate and chair ministerial policy reviews as part of the cross-governmental effort to generate a national gender policy. This has not been very effective and in some ministries, staff are unaware of the existence of the focal point (Goetz,1995: 26).</p> <p>The WID department launched a major cross-ministerial planning exercise, in alliance with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MFEP). They elaborated a National Policy Statement on Gender Issues and set up procedures for 'gender-oriented policy development' in every ministry. The Department of WID works out an initial policy paper for each ministry which is presented to the cabinet by the relevant minister. Once approved, the ministry forms a top-level committee, to elaborate policy details, which works with the WID team. Gender analysis of the ministry's existing work and recommendations for change are formulated, submitted to a ministerial workshop and then presented at national two-day policy workshop which finalises a set of guidelines. These policy statements inform the watchdog role the MFEP performs using budgetary measures to monitor implementation progress in each ministry. (Goetz,1995: 32).</p>

UGANDA			
Status, including budget and staffing levels	Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)	Sectoral programmes	Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement
<p>'...The nearly total reliance on outside funding undermines the sustainability of these efforts and at the same time reveals a lack of long-term strategy and institutionalised mechanisms for promoting the WID agenda' (Goetz, 1995: 23)</p>	<p>Main activity since 1992 - cross- sectoral review of development policy with view to formulating a National Gender-Oriented Policy statement.</p> <p>Has provided gender awareness training for senior civil servants.</p> <p>There are WID focal point officers in each ministry. However, there are problems of communication and collaboration between focal point officers and the WID department, which are not helped by civil service structure. High-ranking officials lack time and often commitment to take on a new and controversial policy agenda: the focal point position is not budgeted for and civil servants are under-paid and have outside income-generating activities (Goetz, 1995: 27).</p> <p>Checklists, guidelines and gender indicators for the monitoring of project implementation are currently being drawn up. This is done in collaboration with each ministry (see heading on relations with other ministries).</p>	<p>The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (the first Ministry of Agriculture in Africa to have a woman minister) has established feeding the population as its first stated priority, and secondly seeks to provide raw materials for Uganda's industries. The re-valuing of women's food production activities and the emphasis on a 'balanced' diet for all confronts sex differentiation in food intake in favour of males. The ministry has also established a food and nutrition council which is strongly educative and developed a 'women's desk' within the ministry. It has also organised training for women - particularly as agricultural extension officers (Boyd, 1989: 110).</p>	<p>The WID Ministry has embarked on a civic education programme and nationwide consultative process, eliciting women's views on the country's new constitution. This is designed to enhance women's participation in civil society and their impact on national politics.</p> <p>The WID department has been involved in capacity building for women in the Resistance Council (RC) system which organises the community at a local level.</p>

<b>ZAMBIA</b>			
<b>Mandates given and approach to WID/GAD</b>	<b>Inclusion in national development plans</b>	<b>Locational history</b>	<b>Linkages with other ministries</b>
<p>Advocacy, oversight and research - the Women in Development Department (WIDD) has no executive powers, nor powers of veto. WIDD pushes for gender-sensitive policies in all areas of development; monitors and evaluates the implementation of such policies and programmes; promote strong links between the National Commission for Development Planning (NCDP), the Provinces and Districts to ensure implementation of GAD policies at all levels. It also carries out research, and has established a GAD data bank; and educates women on human rights and how to maximise economic opportunities.</p> <p>Zambia Associates for Research and Development (1994) conclude that a shift from WID to GAD is necessary, although their overview of the work of the department suggests that WIDD has focused on promoting gender-awareness, rather than running projects for women. Too little information is available to assess this.</p>	<p>Had some impact on the Fourth National Development Plan, with a chapter on women's issues. However, there was a chasm between the plan and its implementation, which was anyway abandoned by the new government in 1991.</p>	<p>1986: WID Unit was formed at Ministry of Finance in the National Commission for Development Planning (NCDP) 1988: WID Unit was upgraded to the WID Department (WIDD).</p>	<p>Most significant links are with Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Education; also Labour, Social Services and Provincial Planning Units (PPUs) through focal points (see below).</p>

<b>ZAMBIA</b>			
<b>Status including budget and staffing levels</b>	<b>Instruments used (training/ guidelines/ checklists/ committees/ focal points)</b>	<b>Programmes/ projects</b>	<b>Relations NGOs/autonomous women's movement/ other organisations</b>
<p>Despite being upgraded to a department in 1988, by 1994 WIDD still lacked the authority to perform its objectives. Zambia Associates for Research and Development (1994) conclude that its horizontal location is correct in terms of access to other ministries, but it needs to be closer vertically to centres of decision-making.</p> <p>In 1994, WIDD's Lusaka office had nine professional staff and a further five positions were unfilled. Half the posts are for economists.</p> <p>NORAD has been the lead donor, and allocated Kw. 136.5 million between 1991-5. This compares to a government contribution of Kw. 11.5 million in 1992-3 (longer term figures are not available). Many running costs - e.g. staff salaries of gender focal points - are donor-funded.</p>	<p>These are focal points in line ministries at national and provincial levels.</p> <p>Gender-awareness training is carried out in line ministries, including at provincial level. Provincial focal points have also conducted some training at grassroots levels but what this entailed is unclear.</p>	<p>In addition to policy advocacy, WIDD has 'played a leading role in co-ordinating female entrepreneurs and other specialised activities, and linking them to regional and sub-regional groupings' (Zambia Associates for Research and Development, 1994). The Department also plays an important role in facilitating the co-operation of women in different political parties.</p> <p>WIDD's impact in terms of raising gender-awareness has been greatest in Lusaka, and Luapuala, Northern and Western Provinces, where the gender focal points have been most active (these focal points are funded by Dutch development aid).</p>	<p>During UN Decade for Women, Zambian women's organisations lobbied for a national women's machinery, an important factor in WIDD's establishment.</p> <p>WIDD collaborates with NGOs and women's organisations through the NGO Co-ordination Committee (NGOCC), and makes use of NGO gender specialists and consultants in its workshops.</p>