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WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT
EXTRA MURAL DEPARTMENT, U.W.I.
BARBADOS

CASE STUDY

WAND

A Regional Institution for Women and Development

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Case Study of WAND, a Regional Institution for Women and Development, (prepared for UNICEF by Sondra Zeidenstein)

Summary

This Case Study describes WAND, a Regional Institution, to promote the integration of women in development in the countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean. There is a clear need in this region for such an institution because many of the countries of the region are too small and too isolated to take systematic action on their own at the present time. A regional institution could help link and share existing resources, overcome the isolation, and promote the beginnings of national programmes. WAND grew out of the felt need of women of the region for such an institution and is an expression of their mandate. It is located in a regional institution, the University of the West Indies, a placement that gives the flexibility and autonomy needed to engage in various levels of interaction. The way in which it is funded reinforces this flexibility and autonomy. WAND's overall mandate is to help implement the Regional Plan of Action. The specific functions it chooses at a given time relate to the needs that exist, the resources that exist, and the gaps that have to be filled. It carries out its functions through three (3) kinds of activities. One is training, which includes input into the training of others, but is largely carried out through its own Workshops. Another is technical assistance, which involves identifying needs, linking resources and in some cases, finding assistance. A third is communication through printed material, audio-visual aids and kits. All these activities are undertaken in a collaborative mode. During its first year, WAND was impressively successful in serving the needs it was created for, because of the momentum it gained from its origins in the region, because of its placement and because of its specially suitable approach. Future support should reinforce its advantages.

The Case Study is divided into five (5) sections. Section I describes the basic features of the region, the need for a regional women and development institution and the constraints such an institution might face. Section II describes the origins and operational characteristics that facilitate the activities of WAND. Section III describes the nature of WAND's programmes and the kinds of activities through which it carries them out. Section IV describes the major achievement of WAND during its first year in each of its activities. Section V is an evaluation of the project.

I. The Region: Need for a Women and Development Institution and Constraints

The Region - The Commonwealth Caribbean is made up of twelve countries and territories, stretching more than one thousand miles through the Caribbean. They are Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica, Antigua, St. Kitts, Belize and Montserrat. These islands have for the most part, similar historical backgrounds, cultures and a common language. Their civil service and educational system are similar.

With the exception of Trinidad which has oil, and Jamaica and Guyana which have bauxite, agriculture and tourism are the more important sectors of the economies of all the islands. However, a major difference among the islands is their degree of economic development, a function, for the most part, of population size, area and natural resources. Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana have more developed economies in comparison to the other eight islands, which with populations ranging from 12,000 to 140,000 are primarily agricultural.

Major development issues identified by all the islands include unemployment and underemployment, and a deteriorating agricultural economy, both in subsistence and export crops. Major development efforts include revival of export crops, development of sources of supply for currently imported foods, and development of industry.

Although each country takes a national approach to its problems, there are institutions of several kinds that take a regional approach. Among the older ones is the University of the West Indies, with campuses on the larger islands and university centres on the smaller ones, providing a common system of higher education throughout the region with areas of specialization like law, medicine or agricultural engineering, located in different countries. The Caribbean Conference of Churches founded in the 1950's is another regional body. In addition, there are regional bodies representing trade unions, news media, educators, sports and many other activities. More recently, the Secretariat of Commonwealth Caribbean Countries (CARICOM), was formed to strengthen the institutions and mechanisms of regional economic integration.

The women of the Commonwealth Caribbean have for the most part a common history and culture, which gives them a regional identity and distinguishes them from women in the larger regions of the Caribbean and Latin America. They share common strengths and problems.

Commonwealth Caribbean women are raised to be economically active. On the basis of figures derived from research in Jamaica and Barbados, it is estimated/they form about 40% of the labor force. They form 30 to 40% of the agricultural labor force with contributions as subsistence farmers and wage labourers in food production, marketing and processing. With literacy rates as high if not higher than men's in many areas, they make up more than half the civil servants and educators. More than one-third of all households are headed by women, and women share the economic burden in most of the other households.

However, women's rates of unemployment and underemployment are considerably higher than men's. About 70% of those who are employed are in low-paid, low-skilled, marginal jobs. Their opportunities for moving from traditional to modern sectors of the economy are limited. Not only does this situation make it difficult for women to meet their family's needs but it also undermines national development efforts in many areas, especially, but not only those in which women are traditionally involved.

Caribbean women express their regional identity through several regional institutions. One is CARIWA, the Caribbean Women's Association which was founded in 1973 and serves to bring together non-governmental women's organisations throughout the region. Another is the Caribbean Church Women of the Caribbean Conference of Churches.

Need for a Regional Women and Development Institution

A regional institution focussed on integrating women in development fills a definite need in the Commonwealth Caribbean. There is no doubt, though much research still needs to be done, that the women of all twelve countries and territories face serious obstacles that require special attention, if the condition of the women and their countries are to improve. The particular kinds of obstacles they face are specific to the region and common throughout the region. However, the capacities of individual countries to overcome these obstacles without regional support, vary considerably. Only a few of the countries have the administrative capacity for the research, training and technical support necessary to help identify and solve the problems faced by women. Only a few of the countries have machinery like a Women's Desk or Bureau, without which there is unlikely to be persistent pressure toward integration of women. The other countries not only lack these essential resources, but are isolated from effective interaction with each other by hundreds of miles of ocean. Another problem created by the isolation among islands is that the resources that do exist, even in the poorer islands of special expertise or successful development experiences, are not often shared. The loss is especially serious because these are resources that others in the region could certainly use effectively since their conditions and cultures are so similar. A regional institution with a focus on women and development could address these problems more effectively than the individual countries could and therefore hasten the integration of women in development throughout the region. In addition, it could help coordinate the efforts of other regional institutions and donor agencies, so that the benefits of their resources are maximized.

Another problem that requires a regional approach if it is to be addressed on the smaller islands in particular, but also throughout the region, is the very low level of awareness of the fact that women are facing special obstacles and that support to women will hasten development. Certainly, such lack of awareness persists everywhere, but the specific characteristics of the problem vary from place to place. Throughout the Commonwealth Caribbean, as we have noted, middle-class women work and even predominate in professions like the civil service and education. The rate of literacy for women is as high if not higher than men's. Culturally, it is often the case that mothers and grandmothers are the mainstay of families. These facts are often misinter-

preted by middle-class men and women who are the policy makers and planners to mean that women as a group do not have serious problems. The reality of the difficult situation of the large majority of women is overlooked. Unless the awareness of policy makers and planners changes, the concerns of women will not be integrated in major development planning. Any grass-roots attempts by women to improve their situation will wither without the support of mainstream development resources like training, jobs and access to capital. There is a need to raise awareness stopped about the real situation and contributions of Commonwealth Caribbean women, especially in the countries where there is no existing institution to address this issue. There is also a critical need to influence regional planners so that the concerns of women are included appropriately in their plans.

Constraints on a regional institution

Although there is a clear need for a regional institution to promote the integration of Commonwealth Caribbean women in the process of development, there are at the same time, constraints and frustrations likely to confront such an institution. The island countries, though they perceive themselves as constituting a region, function through their own national machineries. A regional institution does not have clear channels of authority or action, nor can it command responses from national institutions. To be useful in the situation that exists, one of its major goals would have to be action at the national level. However, since it cannot be directly involved in the national actions it seeks to promote, it runs the risks of being merely advisory or too far removed from the realistic concerns of those it wants to support. In regard to raising awareness about women among planners or promoting coordination of efforts among other organizations, such an institution would have to depend on being asked or invited to make this kind of input. These are sensitive areas of interaction and cannot be mandated.

More practical constraints involve the distances to be covered and the number of people and groups throughout the region to keep in touch with. The outreach or extension efforts of such an institution would make very travel demands on staff.

II Origins, Placement, Funding

Origins

The creation of a new regional institution for Commonwealth Caribbean Women-- the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies-- resulted, like a number of new institutions in the world, from the United Nations adoption in 1975 of the Plan of Action and Resolutions prepared at the World Conference for International Women's Year. But the way in which it developed is important, because modes that were emphasized in that process, self-definition and collaboration, gave it its special character and potential.

In part because they saw themselves as needing a regional identity vis-a-vis larger institutions of which they are a subregion (ECLA and OAS, for example), women representing the Governments of the English speaking Caribbean countries met in Jamaica in June 1977 for a Seminar on the Integration of Women in Development which was sponsored by the University of the West Indies and the Jamaica Women's Bureau and was funded by UNICEF. At the seminar, participants defined their own plan of action to be the basis for Women's Programmes in the area and, among other things, explored mechanisms for strengthening cooperation and collaboration at the regional level. The plan of action produced by the Seminar recognized that although effective action to change the status of women and increase their participants in the process of development could only be taken at the national level, (for which it spelled out a comprehensive plan), there was nevertheless a special role for regional agencies to promote programmes at the national level.

The Seminar set up a seven-person Steering Committee, representing countries and institutions of the region, funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York to carry out its regional mandates. In addition to other activities, it set up as the regional mechanism proposed by the Seminar a Women and Development Unit--WAND-- and attached it to the University of the West Indies, though with its own funding identity and mandate. Its objectives were to monitor the Plan of Action of the Jamaica Seminar and assist in programmes to assure its implementation.

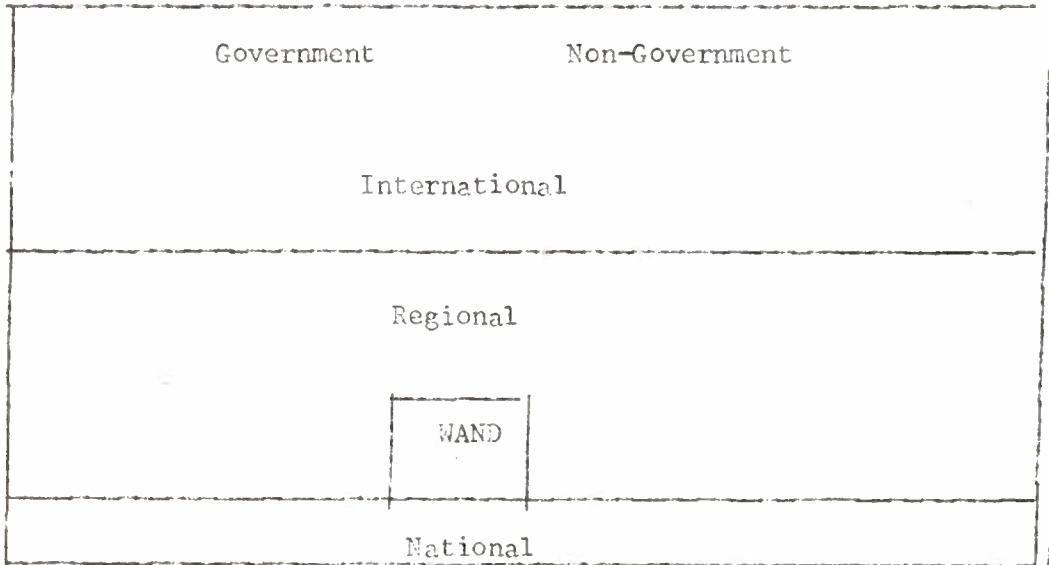
Placement

The question of institutional placement of a regional institution and especially of one committed to integration women in development is critical to its mode of operation and to its potential for effectiveness. WAND, the Women and Development Unit created by events stemming from the Jamaica Seminar, is located in the Department of Extra Mural Studies of the University of the West Indies. Its head is a specialist tutor within the department.

The University of the West Indies, as indicated earlier, is regional and has a presence in every country. Its Department of Extra Mural Studies, though an integral part of the University, has a degree of flexibility and autonomy vis-a-vis the University and special characteristics of a developmental nature. For one thing, it has resident tutors who represent the University in countries where there is no campus. The resident tutors, through their University centres, can develop training programmes and courses responding to community needs and can channel technical and professional resources of the University. The resident tutor centres are a respected presence in these countries. In addition, the Department of Extra Mural Studies has specialist staff-tutors in Social Welfare, Family Life Education, Trade Union Education, Creative Arts, Radio Education, Human Resources Development and, through the Social Welfare Tutor, linkages with the regional Child Development Centre. It works with University departments and with Government and non-Government agencies and assists them with training for a range of personnel.

By being located here, WAND automatically gains a number of advantages: access to relevant staff; a regional spread; the outreach of the Centres; flexibility in dealing with Government and non-Government institutions; and integration in an administration machinery that can handle its financial affairs.

The following chart suggests the potential for collaboration-- a key goal of WAND-- created by its placement:



WAND's central placement provides the potential for such activities as:

- 1) negotiating or working with both Government and non-Government bodies
- 2) working through the University with Government extension officers who are doing in-service courses; or in preparing training materials that can be used throughout the region.
- 3) working directly with institutions, organizations and groups within countries, like extension services, cooperatives, National Council of Women, etc.
- 4) working with Women's Bureaus of Desks or Departments of Women's Affairs in countries that already have such institutions.
- 5) working with the CARICOM Secretariat or the Caribbean Council of Women at the regional level as well as with ECLA and OAS of which the Caribbean is a sub-region
- 6) working with international agencies, to help them understand what is happening in the countries of the region where they may not have direct experience and, when appropriate, to channel their funds.

Funding

It is not always obvious to administrators how the manner of funding can affect the ability of an institution, especially a new one at its inception, to perform and develop. The way in which WAND has been funded has been important in enabling it to make a strong beginning in carrying out its regional role.

WAND was funded initially with a two-year grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York, with its budget allocated in a way that seemed appropriate prior to actual experience of the programme, but with the possibility, as experience indicates, to shift allocations from one category to another. The procedure for requesting approval to make the necessary shift is simple and swift--a matter of weeks. Such a basic kind of flexibility to reshape a programme in accordance with its experience at the critical time, which is often non-existent in government or even semi-autonomous institutions like a university, has made a great deal of difference in WAND's ability to respond to opportunities through which it could develop. For example, it was able, by shifting allocations, to proceed with the planning and implementation of projects for which funds were expected but held up by lengthy procedures before the funds were actually received. In some cases, these beginnings provided a base to which other institutions could then respond.

This ability to move with relative ease and speed has attracted resources, both material and human, to a core programme. WAND has increased its operating budget of about \$113,000 for the first year by about 50% and its budget of about \$111,000 for the second year by about 250%. (Sources of additional funding have included: USAID, UN Voluntary Fund, Commonwealth Foundation, UNICEF, UNFPA, and Caribbean Development Bank). During the first year WAND spent

53%	of its budget	on	Administration
2%			Meetings
30%			Training/Workshops
3%			Communications
12%			Technical Assistants/Consultants

During the second year the estimated proportions have changed to:

25%	Administration
5%	Meetings
10%	Training/Workshops
7%	Communications
53%	Technical Assistance

III Programme and Activities

Programme

In order to achieve its objective of monitoring the comprehensive Plan of Action developed by Caribbean women at the Jamaica Seminar and of assisting in programmes to assure its implementation, WAND has evolved a long list of possible functions it could assume in that role. (See Appendix). However, from the comprehensive list of functions which define its scope, WAND addresses itself to those which emerge as most appropriate to WAND's attention. The selection of priorities is based on the expressed needs of constituent groups, the emergence of new resources in the region and the clearer identification of resource gaps. For example, the recent creation of a women in development office of ECLA affects the kind of role WAND will take if it is to avoid replication of efforts.

Activities

WAND carries out these functions through several major kinds of activities: training, technical assistance and communication. Its mode of operation in all these activities is collaboration.

A. Training

WAND organizes its own training and seeks to make inputs into training organized by others. Its objectives in all training efforts are: (1) to raise the level of awareness and to influence attitudes about women; and (2) to build networks of people and linkages between programmes that can contribute to integration women in development. In the workshops it organizes itself, it seeks in addition to communicate relevant skills and a participatory or self-defining approach.

WAND sets up its own workshops in connection with specific issues. It considers its workshop methodology, developed in collaboration with the Human Resources Development Unit of the Department of Extra Mural Studies at the University of the West Indies and with World Education, to be as important as workshop content. Contrary to the traditional directive and formal approach to training the approach in WAND workshops is participatory and non-formal. This approach is considered basic to WAND's mandate. If the goals for women include not only developing practical projects and programmes for improving their social and economic well-being, but also enhancing their dignity, autonomy and self-esteem, it is essential that they participate in the design and development of programmes affecting their lives.

B. Technical Assistance

A pressing need identified in most development analyses of the Caribbean region is for technical skills to carry out programmes. WAND seeks to help meet that need in regard to programmes and projects for

integration women in development in several ways:

- (1) by identifying kinds of needs
- (2) by expanding and facilitating technical cooperation within the region
- (3) by providing technical assistance for programmes which will contribute to the implementation of the Caribbean Plan of Action. Although WAND can respond only to requests that are for short-term, low-cost assistance, it has the ability to fill a gap in meeting technical assistance needs. WAND has flexibility that other institutions in the region may not have to respond to requests for technical assistance with immediacy. It can respond to small-scale projects that may not qualify for assistance from other institutions. It can focus on programmes and projects not normally covered by other technical assistance programmes, e.g., related to integration women in development.
- (4) by advising other institutions capable of providing technical assistance as to what kind seems most relevant to efforts in the region and helping to link those institutions to the group experiencing technical assistance needs.

Pilot Projects or Programmes

WAND's regional placement and its activities of training and technical assistance make it especially suitable to identifying, supporting and communicating widely important pilot projects or programmes. WAND itself does not organize, implement or fund projects or programmes. However, it can call attention to pilot projects that already exist in the region. And it can help groups to develop projects, to find sources of funding, to develop participatory approaches to planning, training and evaluation. It is expected that WAND will use pilot projects or programmes in the following ways:

- (1) to test ideas, approaches, methodologies
- (2) to develop appropriate training of staff and participants
- (3) to learn about women, through direct contact as opposed to academic research, kinds of information needed to inform other programmes and policy
- (4) to influence wider development policy at higher levels by providing concrete examples of ways to achieve policy goals
- (5) to communicate new approaches to the region

C. Communication

WAND considers communication an important element of its regional programme, supporting all its other efforts. It can stimulate interest and increase awareness of the situation of women among people throughout the region who are not reached directly by other WAND activities.

It is a way of maintaining contact and networking among people who have been reached by WAND's activities but are spread throughout the region. It is a way of informing people about the varied resources and activities related to women in the region in order to build momentum and encourage collaboration. It can keep development groups and agencies in close communication with WAND's progress and plans.

D. Collaboration

A primary goal of WAND is to promote collaboration, and approach dictated and supported by its own history and institutional placement. WAND sees collaboration as involving two main strategies:

- (1) Since there is a range of regional and national institutions in the area-- some new, some old-- that are already concerned with integration women in development, collaboration depends on awareness among them of what each is doing and is capable of doing; and in light of that knowledge, commitment among them to use the particular strength and institutional vantage points of each for reaching their common goals. One would expect this approach to lead to a more even geographical distribution of resources and a better use of already existing resources.
- (2) There is a larger range of relevant institutions, agencies, and groups that do not yet see the significance of integrating women in development, yet without whose support at a policy and programme level it is impossible to accomplish the goals of integration. An initial step toward real collaboration with these institutions is to help them see what the issues are, develop commitment to them and understand their role in regard to them. The next step is collaboration with WAND and other such institutions to help them carry out their role.

IV The First Year

Programme

During its first year, WAND focussed on the following functions:

1. The collection of information on other regional programmes and institutions and establishment of contact with these,
2. the development of the network of people, groups and agencies in the region, and the promotion of linkages between programmes which might promote collaboration and co-operation in women and development programmes.
3. contributing to a better awareness of the role of women in the development of the region and of the need for programmes and policies to ensure their full participation in the process of development.
4. taking initiatives in relating to those recommendations in the Plan of Action which dealt with--

- a) improvement of the economic status of women at the lowest income level by promoting the expansion and upgrading of income-generating activities in the fields of crafts and agro-industries,
- b) the establishment of national machinery for the integration of women in development,
- c) the reorientation and training of people working with low-income women in order to promote approaches which would emphasize the participation of women in development of projects and programmes to meet their needs.

Activities

Non-WAND Workshops

WAND was invited to contribute to ten training conferences and seminars. They ranged from in-service training for agriculture extension officers conducted by the University Faculty of Agriculture to an ECLA-sponsored meeting of Government-experts on the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for the integration of Women in Development.

At the in-service training course, WAND introduced a discussion of the role of women in rural development. The extension officers, who were from Grenada and Antigua (countries without machinery like Women's Desk or Women's Bureaus) had an opportunity which had not been available before to think about the ways in which rural women's roles and problems were relevant to agricultural extension services. They were introduced to the range of agencies in the region that focussed on the concerns of women, including WAND. WAND's placement in the University made this important, awareness-raising service to poorer islands of the region, relatively easy and inexpensive.

The participation of WAND at the ECLA-sponsored meeting on the Regional Plan of Action raised awareness at another level. In this case it was awareness of the special characteristics of the sub-region of the Commonwealth Caribbean and the kinds of programmes suited to its needs. WAND was created out of a felt-need for just such a voice in the larger region and its presence at the conference ensured that the distinctive voice of Commonwealth Caribbean women was heard.

Another important opportunity for WAND was an invitation to a regional conference on Vocational Training Needs and Programmes. At this conference, WAND addressed the issue of vocational training needs and programmes for women in the region.

WAND Workshops

During its first year, WAND organized five workshops. The number and high quality of these workshops are an indication of WAND's ability to act quickly and of its acceptance in the region and among donors.

One of these workshops was organized to bring together members of the media and regional agencies concerned with women to brief the media on regional programmes for the integration of women in the process of development and to gain support for efforts toward this objective. It was considered important from the start to develop and link with a network of media people who clearly understood the goals and programmes of the regional agencies concerned with the integration of women. This workshop helped to lay the foundation for a communication strategy which would reach each country in the region and which would support the goals of the Decade for Women.

The other four workshops which WAND organized in the first year grew out of mandate from the Jamaica Seminar to the Steering Committee and hence to WAND, to mobilize viable action in regard to income generation for women through craft and agro-based industries. The Jamaica Seminar had identified unemployment and underemployment of women as one of the most urgent problems of Commonwealth Caribbean women. It considered agro-based industries and crafts an important base of income-generation for women because:

- 1) this was the kind of work poor women were already likely to be doing;
- 2) Government extension machinery involving craft and food-processing training for rural women already existed as part of a home economics programme and could be transformed to an industrial programme; and
- 3) major policies of Governments in the region emphasize substitution of local for imported foods and increased national benefits from tourism. (For example, of nine million dollars spent on crafts by tourists in Barbados in recent years, only three million were spent on crafts made in Barbados.)

A series of four WAND workshops addressed these issues. They are an impressive illustration of WAND's special capabilities of stimulating grass root action throughout the region in response to an urgent problem. The first of these four workshops was held at the regional level. It brought together representatives of Government and non-Government programmes from almost every country in the region involved with organizing craft and agro-based industries, resource people and representatives of regional and international agencies. In this way it was able to tackle the problem of isolation faced especially by the smaller islands and to introduce new concepts, skills and resources rapidly and widely. By its special workshop methodology, it enabled participants to share regional resources, while defining their distinctly national needs.

Participants had been invited to prepare and bring with them to the Workshop, questionnaires which sought to identify some of the problems facing women engaged in crafts and food processing in the region.

The Workshop was designed to allow for the fullest participation of country representatives and most of the Sessions were in the form of workshops which explored such issues as the role of women in crafts and agro-industries, the priorities for action to improve the social and economic status of women in these activities; possible structures for the organization of these activities; sources of raw material supplies and market possibilities; elements of project planning for the promotion of income-generating activities, etc.

In the light of the findings of the Workshop, participants were invited to identify specific target groups and objectives for follow-up workshops at the Sub-Regional level.

Three Sub-Regional workshops followed the regional conference. They focused on the aspects of project planning and programme development identified as needs by those who participated in the regional workshop. These workshops reached more directly and with more intense focus, those who worked directly with poor women in the poorer countries. Again, because of the methodology of these workshops, the region was not imposing any programme on the countries or on groups within countries, but was providing a way for local self-definition and development. A careful follow-up evaluation indicated that participants had been strongly influenced by the new ideas introduced at the workshops. The level of enthusiasm and energy generated at the workshop still remained high six months later. For example, participants who had prior experience in working with groups reported that they had tried many of the new skills and methodologies they had learned. Those with no prior experience reported that they were involved in starting new groups. All of them indicated heightened awareness of the importance of planning, assessing needs and evaluating projects and of carrying out these activities with the participation of the group involved. Many indicated that they were more aware of other resources on their island and were building networks with others on their own and nearby islands. Almost all of them felt that they were at initial stages in using new skills and approaches and needed more assistance through training or technical assistance. A few typical examples may give a better idea of the strong impact of the workshop.

- 1) A woman from a very small island had been selected by her Government to attend the regional workshop. She then helped to organize a sub-regional workshop. Her experience prior to the workshop had involved organizing a group of six underemployed women to do weaving. She had arranged for their training and the building of looms. She said that the survey of crafts she had prepared for the regional workshop had taught her a lot about her island.

Her experience at the workshops and what she learned from others in similar conditions, encouraged her to expand the weaving project. When asked by women of the village that the weavers came to help them organize, she linked up with an existing craft institution, helped the women form a group, choose a leader, and begin to develop production plans based on local raw materials. Now other villages are asking for similar assistance. She feels that she needs technical assistance from WAND in business management, identification of raw materials and design training.

- 2) A woman from another small island, who attended the regional workshop, had prior experience as a volunteer in helping poor women and handicapped children. She was also working for ILO organizing family life education among industrial workers. She was very enthusiastic about the workshop. She said she had learned new ways to involve people in learning and planning. However, her work was with illiterate people and the workshop she attended was involved with literate people. She felt she needed more training to be able to use these new participating methods in her own work. She had already contacted WAND for assistance. In addition, she is involved in developing a training school for young unemployed girls so they can become self-supporting. She feels she has a much better sense of how to do feasibility studies, make plans and evaluate actions than she had before. She was developing the project by linking with another institution on the island, as suggested by the WAND workshop.
- 3) A woman from another small island who attended the workshop was an organizer of women's groups as part of the community development work of the Caribbean Council of Churches. She said the workshop gave her techniques for putting ideas she already had into practice. She was able to use immediately techniques to increase the participation of people in setting and reaching objectives. She learned how "ordinary" people can engage in the planning process, and she is practicing what she learned. She said she learned the importance of keeping written records and doing systematic evaluation. She is putting this knowledge in practice also. She has already organized five seminars involving the new skills and methodology. She said the people at these seminars "came alive" in planning their programmes. Since the workshop, she has organized seminars on three other islands and in doing so has linked up with women there who had participated in the WAND workshop. She says she is also using the follow-up techniques she learned. She feels that what she and her group need now is practical training in management.

These typical examples show that WAND, in spite of being a regional body, has found ways to reach the "grass-roots" level on all the islands and to overcome the isolation of the smaller islands in regard to action for women. And it has done so by encouraging the potential for self-definition rather than by imposing a preconceived programme.

B. Technical Assistance

Through its workshops and their stress on needs assesment, WAND has found a way to identify technical assistance needs in the region related to agro-based industry and craft production. Workshop participants who are involved with production groups have expressed their need for training and expertise in preparing feasibility surveys, in exploring markets, in managing commercial enterprises and in designing products. WAND staff is helping them to find ways to meet these needs, either by helping them write proposals for assistance, by helping them locate resources, and sometime by providing funds. In regard to locating resources within the region, WAND is in the process of assessing technical and resource capability in the region. It is planning to produce and distribute a book detailing existing Caribbean technical resources. This should hasten the process of sharing resources of proven success in the region.

WAND has had opportunities during its first year to provide technical assistance. It has done so partly through its own staff, especially in regard to helping women on the smaller islands work toward the establishment of national machinery for integrating women in development. It has also hired consultants and technical experts in such areas as project planning, accounts and book keeping, and craft marketing. These experts have either worked through WAND or directly with individual projects. They were hired in situations where the need was immediate and short-term and WAND's ability to act with speed and flexibility were the critical factors in meeting the need. WAND is planning to add to its own staff an expert in food technology whose extension work in the region will be greatly expanded by WAND's connections with individuals and groups on all the islands.

WAND has increased the skills of its own staff by getting technical assistance in the fields of training, programme evaluation and communication. For these skills, it has drawn on the services of World Education and International Women's Tribune Centre.

C. Communication

During its first year WAND sponsored the media seminar described above in order to link and promote efforts in the region to raise awareness about women. It also acted directly to raise awareness by producing and distributing a series of articles "Concerning Women and Development" intended to stimulate discussion.

The articles were on the topics: "Women and Development: A Caribbean Perspective", "The Employment of Women Workers" and "Women at the University of West Indies". In order to reduce the isolation among these concerned about women, it has brought out the first issue of a newsletter and sent it to many groups and institutions in the region. The newsletter described the various agencies existing in the region that were working for integration of women in development.

In addition, WAND has distributed the Caribbean Resource Book Focusing on Women in Development, developed by International Women's Tribune Centre, consisting of an annotated directory of women's organizations, groups and projects throughout the Commonwealth Caribbean, a bibliography of resources, a funding and technical assistance manual and directory, and the Regional Plan of Action for the integration of Women in Development in the Caribbean. With IWTC it has developed flip charts containing visual presentations and narrative describing the activities of regional development agencies and strategies and a slide/tape kit on the development and implementation of the regional plan of action, as well as other information materials.

This impressive communication strategy is especially suited to an institution serving a widespread region with a common language and culture. However, it is intended that these written materials and audio-visual aids will reinforce, not substitute for other forms of communication undertaken by WAND in reducing isolation, locating resources and encouraging networks and linkages throughout the region.

D. Collaboration

Because WAND was created as a result of a regional conference, it began its first year with a variety of important contacts in the region already established, and was successful in building on them through collaborative effort. It also extended its contacts and collaboration to other important agencies. During the year WAND worked collaboratively with such institutions as UNICEF, ILO, Caribbean Development Bank, the University of West Indies, the YWCA, and Meals for Millions. As indicated earlier, a number of institutions collaborated with WAND by contributing to its funding. In its first-year report, WAND has carefully documented the range of visitors to the WAND office, invitations from key agencies for various kinds of input, and negotiations and discussions with institutions concerned with issues relevant to women. All of these evidence that WAND is moving in the direction of collaboration and is being perceived as a focus for women and development action in the region.

Future Projections

WAND's planning for the future is guided by several processes. One is an impressive system of internal evaluation (developed with the aid of World Education) which helps determine the kind of follow-up

and related action needed to reinforce activities already undertaken. Another is the guidance of the Advisory Committee which is made up of key people from the region (including participants in the Jamaica Seminar from whose mandate WAND was created) which helps determine what resource gaps in the region WAND needs to fill. Out of these processes, WAND has developed the following plans for the coming year.

- (1) intensive support to income-generating projects through training and technical assistance.
- (2) development of "kits" for communication skills in programme planning and project development to be used by relevant groups
- (3) development of training material to help improve the self-image of girls and women as a way to give them confidence to act on their potential-- to be included in training programmes of schools, guidance departments, family life education community development programmes, etc.

The staff will increase during the second year from one tutor-coordinator and one programme office to one tutor-coordinator, two programme officers, one project development specialist, one communication specialist and one food technology expert so that it can support expanding activities. Efforts will be made to seek longer-term funding

E. Evaluation

Since WAND is only a little more than a year old at this writing, it is not appropriate to think of evaluating its impact. However, it is possible after one year to draw certain conclusions from what it has begun. It has shown that it can be a catalyst for direct action and change among poor women in the poorer countries of the region; that it can provide follow-up support and technical assistance for such actions; that it can link resources in the region; that it can promote awareness about women and development in people of varying levels of responsibility and influence on all the islands; that it can collaborate toward the goal of rationalization of efforts with other institutions in the region. In other words, it has proven its potential for meeting the special needs of this region for a women and development unit if all the countries are to begin to move toward this goal.

One can also see, from its beginnings, what the special strengths are that have enabled it to overcome many of the constraints a regional institution might be likely to face. One is its commitment to development through local self-definition and participation and the programme it has developed for promoting them. Another is its emphasis on eval-

uation and follow-up to all its activities and the system it is evolving for carrying them out. And a third is its collaborative approach in carrying out its mandate, which is made easier by the support of a strong communication strategy. Luckily, WAND's approach is facilitated by its operational flexibility and autonomy. But above all it is made possible by the excellence of its staff who are the key to the extraordinary amount of work achieved in the first year.

Support to the programme in the coming years should, in my opinion, be addressed to further reinforcement of these special strengths so that WAND can continue to respond to the critical need of the Commonwealth Caribbean for a regional Women and Development Institution.

Appendix

Functions of WAND

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1. To collect and document information on the range of programmes and services operating specifically for improving the status of women in the region as well as the scope for women in other programmes.
2. To provide and/or facilitate consultation and professional guidance to governments and non-governmental organisations in developing national and regional programmes and projects directed to the integration of women in development.
3. To assist with, and encourage, special programmes and projects in support of the goals of the Decade for Women, and to assist in the preparation of project proposals for international funding.
4. To assist governments in--
 - a) the setting up of national mechanisms to facilitate the achievement of the goals of the Decade for Women, and
 - b) to identify priorities and formulate projects for increasing the participation of women in development.
5. To encourage and participate in developing procedures for research documentation and evaluation of programmes and projects at the national and regional levels.
6. To disseminate relevant information, communication strategies and documentation.
7. To encourage the development of national training programmes.
8. To assist in strengthening women's organizations in the region.
9. To organize regional seminars and workshops as, and when, required.
10. To assist in securing technical assistance for income-generating, appropriate technology and skill training projects, with particular reference to women.
11. To promote in particular, Programmes of legal and educational reform, and child development programmes.
12. To identify possibilities, and promote programmes of technical co-operation between countries in the CARICOM region.
13. To liaise with the sponsors of this Project, CARICOM Secretariat and CARIWA, and with other regional and international agencies and organizations.
14. To document and evaluate this project and the role of the Co-ordinator in particular, with a view to validating or amending strategies and approaches used in the Project.