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THE ROLE OF WOMEN

IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

JAMAICA

(With Special Reference to the Role of Rural Women)

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April 1980

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AGRICULTURE IN JAMAICA

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No. IV-6 Milton R. Wedderburn, "Allsides Farmers Pre-Cooperative. A Socio-Economic Assessment". March 1980.

No. IV-7 Adele J. Wint "The Role of Women in the Development Process". April 1980

FOREWARD

"The World Plan of Action for the Decade for Women, was adopted by over 100 nations meeting in Mexico City at the United Nations World Conference for International Women's Year in July, 1975. In December, 1975, the United Nations' General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing 1976-85 as the Decade for Women "to be devoted to effective and sustained national, regional and international action to implement the World Plan of Action", and called upon governmental and non-governmental organisations to aid in carrying out the Plan".

"This Plan provides guidelines for national action over the ten-year period from 1976-1985 as part of a sustained, long-term effort to achieve the objectives of International Women's Year. It is addressed primarily to governments and to public and private institutions, women's and youth organisations, employers, trade unions, mass communications' media, non-governmental organisations, political parties and other groups."[1]

During the last few decades Jamaican women have been participating to a greater extent in the development processes of their country. Today there are many women in professional, political, technical and labour roles. The government includes women in ministerial positions and in political leadership.

In 1979 the Inter American Institute of Agricultural Sciences (IICA) initiated a Hemispheric Rural Women's Program for the regions. The IICA Jamaica office is the base of such a programme for the English speaking members of IICA.

1/ Jamaica Women's Bureau, March 1980.

This is the second publication related to women which appears in the collection of papers "Agriculture in Jamaica" as a contribution to the benchmarks of the program in the area.

We wish to welcome this new addition to our collection of papers. The author, a professional woman, has been for many years a dedicated civil servant and now is a very successful and respected professional consultant. Adele Wint has assisted in developing the professional capability of many men and women in the country. We are proud of our personal association with her and hope for future joint professional work in the agricultural sector.

Percy Aitken-Soux
Director
IICA/Jamaica

April, 1980

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PREFACE

The last two decades have witnessed a concentrated and determined action throughout the world regarding the involvement of women in nation building.

Various United Nation Resolutions since the 1960's re-emphasized this commitment. Of note is the preamble to the "Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women":

> "a full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world - require the maximum participation of women as well as men in all fields".

Jamaica has been a signatory to several international convenants which seek to promote equality of treatment and opportunity for women. To mention but a few:

(i) Conference of "Women and Her Human Rights" - jointly sponsored by the National Commissions of UNESCO of Canada and Jamaica held in Jamaica 1974.

(ii) Convention No. 100, 1951 on Equal Remuneration, retified in September 1974.

(iii) Convention No. 111 of 1958 on Discrimination (Occupation and Employment) ratified September 1974.

(iv) Convention No. 122 on Employment Policy adopted in 1964 and ratified by Jamaica in September 1974.

Jamaica is a member of the Caribbean Women's Association, (C.A.R.I.W.A.), which includes nine member territories of the Caribbean. This Association declares that it "is not advocating programmes solely for women as these might re-enforce their separation from the rest of society. On the contrary, all development programmes must include women who must cease to be only token contributors in the decision-making and policy-forming levels."

The main objective of this paper is to provide benchmark data as available, on Jamaican women, with emphasis on the role and status of rural women. This information will be useful in future in-depth studies leading to recommendations for viable women programmes, including such aspects as a viable approach towards solving the problem, the resources required to solve the problem and the expected benefits to the target group and community as a whole.

Many constraints have affected a more in-depth study of this preliminary approach to this vital problem. These include the lack of precise statistics on women's performance in all areas of activity; the time element for fact-finding and presentation, and recent changes in previously declared stance by Government regarding the roles of women in higher offices, and at decision-making levels. However, it is hoped that this brief expose will lead to urgently needed research and documentation on the contribution of Jamaica women.

The author of this paper, a rural woman, wishes to record sincere thanks to the appropriate officers of the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences, especially to Dr. Percy Aitken-Soux, Director, IICA, Jamaica, for the interest taken in the future of Jamaica women and what may eventually be concrete action for the improvement of our station.

The recorder wishes to thank Mrs. Hazel Blake-Nelson and Mrs. Florette Blackwood, Director and Research Officer, respectively, of the Women's Bureau, who gave unstinctingly of their knowledge, time and papers, which are widely referred to in this report; also to the many senior officers of several Government, quasi-Government and Voluntary Agencies who contributed from their wide experiences. The work of some of these Agencies is mentioned in this report and if others are omitted it is in no way due to any lesser appreciation of their contribution but solely due to the constraint of reporting space. To all of you my sincere thanks.

Adele J. Wint
1980

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In developing this presentation it is necessary, first of all, to be able to identify in numerical terms the female population of Jamaica and then to examine their distribution according to the factors ordinarily used in determining the roles played by individuals. This means an examination of the demographic aspects, the distribution of females by age groups, in particular. These will be considered with labour force information and the degree of employment. Information will also be presented to identify the specific industrial and occupational groups in which female members of the labour force engage.

The paper deals specificially with rural women and these will be considered as part of the total female population. However, this information cannot be considered in isolation from that concerning the male population. For comparative purposes, therefore, appropraite data concerning males is also presented. The intention is to identify the female population as fully as possible with a view to pinpointing the rural portion of the female population.

Jamaica is the largest of the English speaking Caribbean countries. It is 4,200 square miles in area and has a population of 2.2 million persons, mainly of African descent.

Historically, the island has depended on agriculture as its main source of livelihood, but within the last two decades, bauxite mining and tourism have become important sectors of the economy.

The island is divided into fourteen parishes, one of which is Kingston. Economic activity in the other thirteen parishes is such that for all technical purposes they must be classified as rural Jamaica. About 60% of the population lives in the rural areas. Greater Kingston has a population of nearly 600,000.

In terms of its economic structure, and particularly in relation to its rural resources, there is a land area of approxi-

mately 1,500,000 acres in farms cultivated by approximately 190,00 farmers, some 150,000 of whom are small farmers. These farmers and their families form the central core of rural development in the country.

Although Agriculture has ceased to be the main contributor to Gross Domestic Product, it continues to be the most important sector in view of the fact that it fulfils many useful roles, in that it is:

(i) the largest employer of labour;
(ii) a source of raw material for manufacturing;
(iii) supplier of significant portion of the country's food requirements, and
(iv) the producer of important crops for export such as, sugar, banana, citrus and pimento.

The statistics which follow provide comparative information on demography and employment for selected years during the period 1970 to 1978. The last population census for Jamaica was carried out in 1970. Since then demographic data have been prepared on a continuous (annual) basis by the Department of Statistics.

TABLE 1: POPULATION FOR JAMAICA 1970, and 1976-1978

1970[1])	-	1,794,000
1976[2])	-	2,082,800
1977[2])	-	2,100,800
1978[2])	-	2,119,200

Source: 1. Abstract of Statistics, 1978.
2.. The Labour Force, 1978.

An examination of the age-grouping of the population indicates its overall potential and also provides a basis for examining the labour force and the employment status of the population. Table 2, which follows, shows some aspects of the population distribution by age groups and also gives its distribution by sexes.

TABLE 2: POPULATION FOR SELECTED YEARS BY SEX AND BY AGE GROUPS - JAMAICA

Age Groups	1970[1]		1976[2]		1977[2]		1978[2]	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
(Years) Under 14	416,767	412,212	410,400	412,600	414,100	400,800	412,300	394,500
14 - 19	78,226	83,279	140,100	143,200	142,800	150,900	151,700	150,900
20 - 24	58,279	66,052	74,000	80,700	79,600	86,300	79,300	92,900
25 - 34	86,192	94,779	105,300	115,400	111,400	112,900	115,100	114,800
35 - 44	73,712	83,108	75,900	92,500	78,800	91,500	80,100	91,400
45 - 54	65,013	70,370	74,600	81,800	71,100	80,700	70,500	79,800
55 - 64	53,981	56,328	69,300	64,000	61,900	70,200	62,100	71,700
65 & over	43,763	55,339	67,600	75,400	68,300	79,200	70,800	81,300
Total	875,933	921,467	1,017,200	1,065,600	1,027,900	1,072,900	1,041,900	1,077,300

Source: 1. Abstract of Statistics, 1978.

2. The Labour Force, 1978.

Women represent slightly more than one-half of the population, the percentage being 51.3% for 1970 and 51.2%, 51.1% and 50.9% for the years 1976, 1977 and 1978, respectively.

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR SELECTED YEAR AND FOR SELECTED GROUPS

Age Groups	YEARS			
	1970[1)]	1976[2)]	1977[2)]	1978[2)]
Under 14 years	44.7%	38.7%	37.4%	36.8%
Under 19 years	53.8%	52.2%	51.4%	50.6%

Source: 1. Digest of Statistics, 1978.
2. The Labour Force, 1978

The limit of 14 years is selected for the reason that it is the period ordinarily used by government for separating the labour force from the remainder of the population, while the 19 years limit is selected as being that for completion of secondary education.

The information presented in Table 3 above indicates that the population is a relatively young one. It further indicates that although numbers in age groups 19 years and under continue to be more than one-half of the female population, the percentage of the female population younger than 14 years has decreased from 44.7% in 1970 to 36.6% in 1978. The pattern for males was similar for the period 1976 - 1978.

The age of 14 has been used as a convenient one from which to separate the population since this is the basis used by the Department of Statistics for identifying the labour force. This point is further spelt out in the information which follows.

LABOUR FORCE

The classifiable labour force is defined as persons who are 14 years and older. It is evident that not all these persons can actually work, some being too old to do so while some are otherwise handicapped and disabled. When these persons are excluded from the population 14 years and older the remainder is the labour force. For statutory reasons a ceiling age of 65 is sometimes used but this is not relevant since there are many persons over 65 who are contributing fully to economic development of the country.

Since the employed form a very large part of the population 14 years and over useful statistical measures are:

(i) The population 14 years and older expressed as a percentage of the total population.

(ii) Percentage of the population 14 years and over which is employed; and

(iii) Break-down of the information by sex.

It is usual under the circumstances to discuss labour force and employment at the same time since they provide important population statistics which help to identify the roles played by specific segments of the population. The labour force has increased considerably from 566,445 in 1970 to 949,200 in 1978. One of the most important observations is the high percentage of the labour force which comprises males, although for the overall population females exceeded them numerically. In addition, using the 1978 statistics a higher percentage (84.3%) of males in the male labour force was employed than females (62.3%) in the female labour force. The inference to be drawn in terms of the national statistics is either that females are not contributory to employment to the same degree as men or that there are not as many suitable employment opportunities for the female members as for the male

Although population statistics have been collected on a parish basis, the distribution of employment between urban and rural areas has not been documented as fully as that for other aspects of the population already presented. In this context information is not readily available to give the breakdown of population of rural and urban population by sex, by industrial group and by occupational groups within these industrial groups.

LABOUR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

The Department of Statistics provides information on employment in relation to the labour force and to the population. It is always useful to examine the relationship between population, labour force and employment since the labour force is apart of the population and those actually employed form apart of the labour force. This information is presented in the Table which follows for the years 1970 and 1976-1978.

TABLE 4: POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE DATA BY SEXES FOR JAMAICA 1970 & 1976-1978

Population	1970[1)]		1977[2)]		1978[2)]	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Population	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Males						
Females						
Population [illegible] and ov[illegible]						
Mal[illegible]						
F[illegible]						
La[illegible]						

In view of the stated objective of this paper every effort is used to obtain population statistics on a sex distributed basis. The ultimate goal of the demographic presentation is to provide a basis for tracing members of the female area of the population through all the various sub-groups in which they finally find a niche, in terms of their overall achievement.

EMPLOYMENT

The information presented in Table 5 which follows indicates how the labour force is employed in general terms and also on the basis of sex for the years 1970, 1977 and 1978.

TABLE 5: LABOUR FORCE BY SEXES AND BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS 1970, 1977 and 1978

	1970[1)]		1977[2)]		1978[2)]	
	(Numbers)	%	(Numbers)	%	(Numbers)	%
Labour Force	566,445	100.0	917,900	100.0	949,200	100.0
Males	378,288	66.8	494,300	53,9	504,200	53.1
Females	188,157	33.2	423,600	46.1	445,000	46.9
Employed Labour Force	N.P =		699,200	100.0	702,100	100.0
Males	N.P.		422,400	60.4	425,900	60.5
Females	N.P.		276.800	39.6	277,200	39,5
Unemployed Labour F						
Males						
Females						
Labour Force total popu'						
Labour F popula and c						
P-						

The publication of unemployment statistics have been relatively recent. There have also been varying interpretations of the terms "labour force", "classifiable labour force", "employed labour force", "unemployed labour force". Additionally, there have been varying interpretations concerning who is an employed person and for how many days such a person has to work to be regarded as an "employed" person. For example, the Department of Statistics uses as a definition the unemployed labour force,

> "those persons who were actively seeking work at a specified period as well as those who although they were not seeking work indicated that they were willing to accept employment and were in a position to do so.".

EMPLOYMENT ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

For purposes of convenience economic activity has been divided by the Department of Statistics into 8 Industrial Groups. These are:

1. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
2. Mining, Quarrying and Refining.
3. Manufacture.
4. Construction and Installation.
5. Transport, Communications and Public Utilities.
6. Commerce.

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(vi) Unskilled Manual and General Occupations.
(vii) Occupations not specified.

INDUSTRIAL GROUPS

On a comparative basis (using some of the data already presented) the overall situation relating to the labour force for the last three years for which data are available is as follows:

	1976	1977	1978
Total Labour Force (male & female)	895,500	917,900	949,200
Total Labour Force (male)	489,200	494,300	504,200
Total Labour Force (female)	406,300	423,600	445,000

Although on the overall, males represented from 54.6% (1976) to 53.1% (1978) of the Labour Force, and about 84% of the male labour force was employed compared with 63.3% of the female labour force for 1978, the employment of males and females varied considerably according to the industrial groups already listed above.

For males, the most important groups in order of numbers employed were:

(1) Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing.
(2) Manufacture.
(3) Public Administration.

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OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Within the industrial groups, there are broad occupational groups into which the labour force is divided. Information is also provided on a basis of sex. In numerical terms more females than males have been engaged in the total labour force in the following occupational groups:

(i) Professional, Technical, Administrative, Managerial and Related Occupations.

(ii) Clerical and Sales Operations, and

(iii) Service Operations

TABLE 6: EMPLOYED LABOUR FORCE BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS AND BY SEXES - 1976-1978

Occupational Group	1976		1977		1978	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Professional Technical and Administrative	30,600	33,000	28,200	33,200	26,900	32,900
Clerical & Sales	33,800	45,600	37,500	48,100	33,200	47,900
Self-Employed & Independent	172,000	80,000	177,600	84,100	188,100	92,200
Service Occupations						
Craftsmen, Production et						
Unskilled Manual						
Occu Spe						

exceeded the number of females. For those groups for which the females exceeded males the very important occupational group, Professional, Technical and Administrative, is included, and this indicated that the female labour force has in fact been occupying a number of important positions.

The industrial groups which attract a relatively large number of rural employees are:-

(i) Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

(ii) Commerce

In the agricultural industrial groups the number of males employed was nearly three times that for females. On the basis of occupational groups the number of self-employed for both males and females was considerably greater than that for other occupational groups. The self-employed group consists largely of farmers. Appropriate data for the agricultural industrial sector are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7: DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED PERSONS BY OCCUPATINAL GROUPS AND BY SEX FOR THE AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING INDUSTRIES GROUPS, 1976, 1977 AND 1978

Occupational Groups	1976		1977		1978	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Prof., Tech., Admin., etc.	1,200	-	2,500	100	700	100
Clerical and Sales						
Self-employed						
Service						
Craftsmen						
Unskilled etc.						
Unsp						

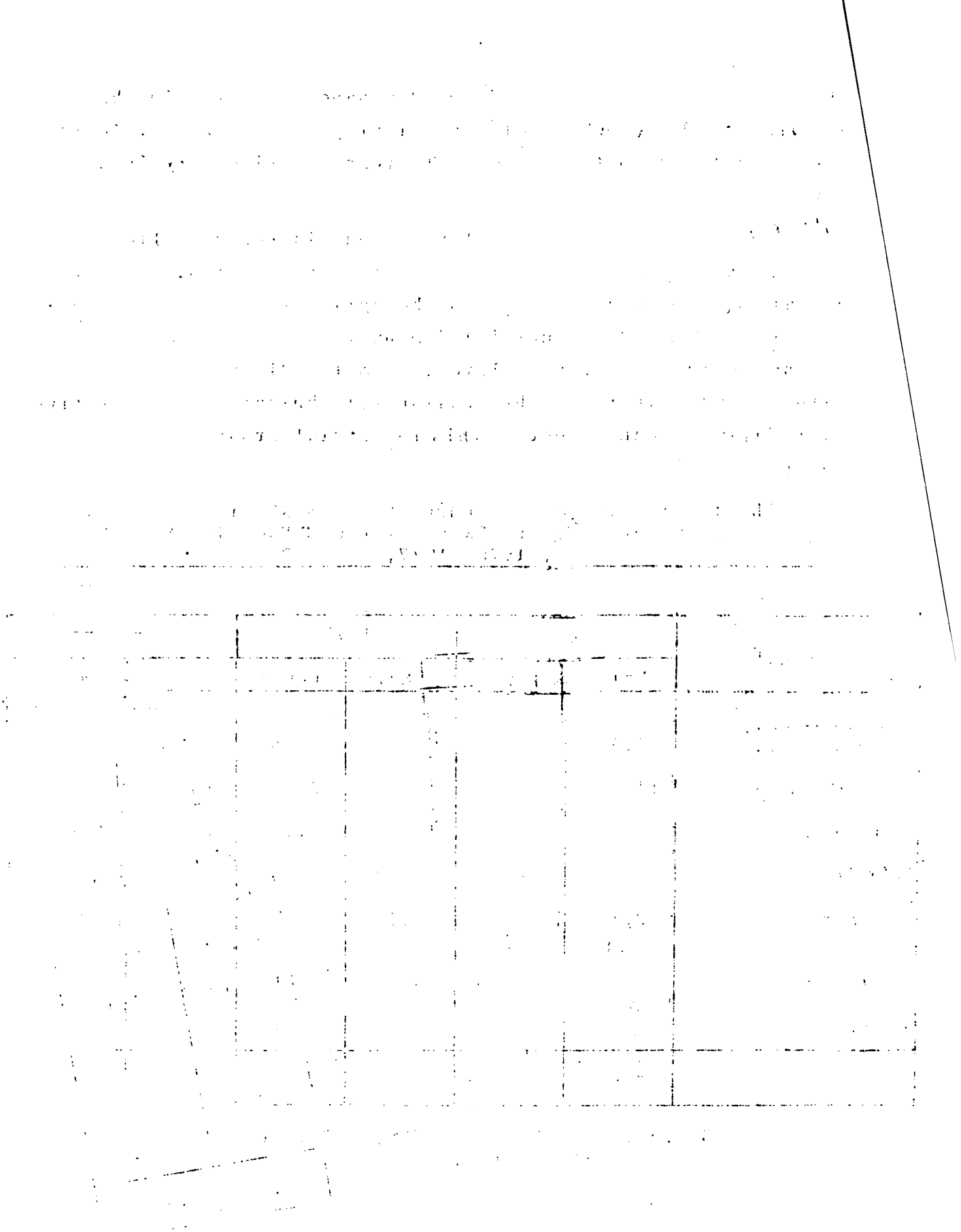
Inspite of the overwhelmning predominance of males in the self-employed group, females still play an important role in a number of occupations in rural areas, particularly in agriculture.

Next to the self-employed group is the unskilled manual occupation group both for males and females. Nearly 98% of the females employed in the agriculture group was in the self-employed and unskilled manual groups as compared with 96% for the males employed. Females did not play a significant role in the Professional,Technical, Administrative, Executive and Management in this industrial group.

TABLE 8: DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED PERSONS BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS AND BY SEX FOR THE COMMERCE INDUSTRIAL GROUP, 1976, 1977, AND 1978

Occupational Group	1976		1977		1978	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Prof., Tech., Admin., etc.	2,200	400	2,300	500	2,600	1,100
Clerical & Sales	11,500	17,500	12,000	20,700	11,700	19,400
Self-employed	8,800	36,300	10,800	37,200	12,800	35,700
Service	500	1,700	700	500	1,100	1,100
Craftsmen	2,100	300	1,300	200	1,100	400
Unskilled Manual etc.	2,400	800	3,300	500	3,000	1,400
Unspecified	100	-	100	-	100	-
Total for Group	27,600	57,000	30,500	59,600	32,400	59,100

Source: The Labour Force, 1978, Department of Statistics.



In absolute terms for the persons engaged in the Commerce industrial group, females exceed the males in the Clerical Sales, Self-employed and Service occupational groups, but were far behind in the other groups, especially in the Professional, Technical Administrative group.

Educational Status of Population

The levels of education of the population provide a very important indication of the potential usefulness of the population. Various measures are used to determine these levels, including those which assess levels of literacy and those which ascertain standards reached in formal education systems. Jamaica had a National Literacy Board which, in 1974, was replaced by the Jamaica Movement for the Advancement of Literacy (JAMAL). Its main purpose is to reduce the number of functional illiterates found in the population who are 15 years and over. Since its creation in 1974 the JAMAL Programme has reached some 100,000 students and covers courses which are designed to:

(i) eradicate illiteracy in Jamaica in the shortest possible period;

(ii) improve the literacy skills of the adult population of Jamaica; and

(iii) develop human resources and so enable each adult citizen to participate meaningfully in the social, economic and cultural development of the country.

In relation to the highest levels of education reached by the labour force the Department of Statistics identifies five levels - namely:

(i) No formal education

(ii) Primary education

(iii) Post-Primary education

(iv) Other

(v) Not reported

The data presented in Table 9 which follows show the comparative position for the educational levels of the labour force by sexes for the years 1976-1978:

TABLE 9: EMPLOYED LABOUR FORCE BY EDUCATIONAL LEVELS - 1976, 1977, 1978 ('000)

Educational Level	Male			Female			All Sexes		
	1976	1977	1978	1976	1977	1978	1976	1977	1978
No Formal Training	16.3	12.4	13.4	7.8	5.3	7.2	24.6	17.7	20.6
Primary Training	336.3	342.3	342.9	201.6	214.2	210.3	537.9	556.5	553.7
Post Primary Training	57.5	59.6	61.8	47.7	52.9	55.2	105.2	112.5	117.0
Other	1.6	1.7	1.3	1.5	0.7	0.5	3.1	2.4	1.8
Not Reported	5.3	6.3	5.0	2.8	3.7	3.5	8.1	10.0	9.1
Total	417.5	422.3	425.0	261.4	476.8	277.2	678.9	699.1	702.2

Source: 1. The Labour Force, 1978

On an overall basis primary education is seen to be the main level of training reached, accounting for approximately 80% of the employed labour force for the year 1976-1978. On the basis of sex the educational profile shows a slightly lower percentage of female employees who have no formal training at all and a higher percentage for post-primary training than males. These points are demonstrated in Table 10:

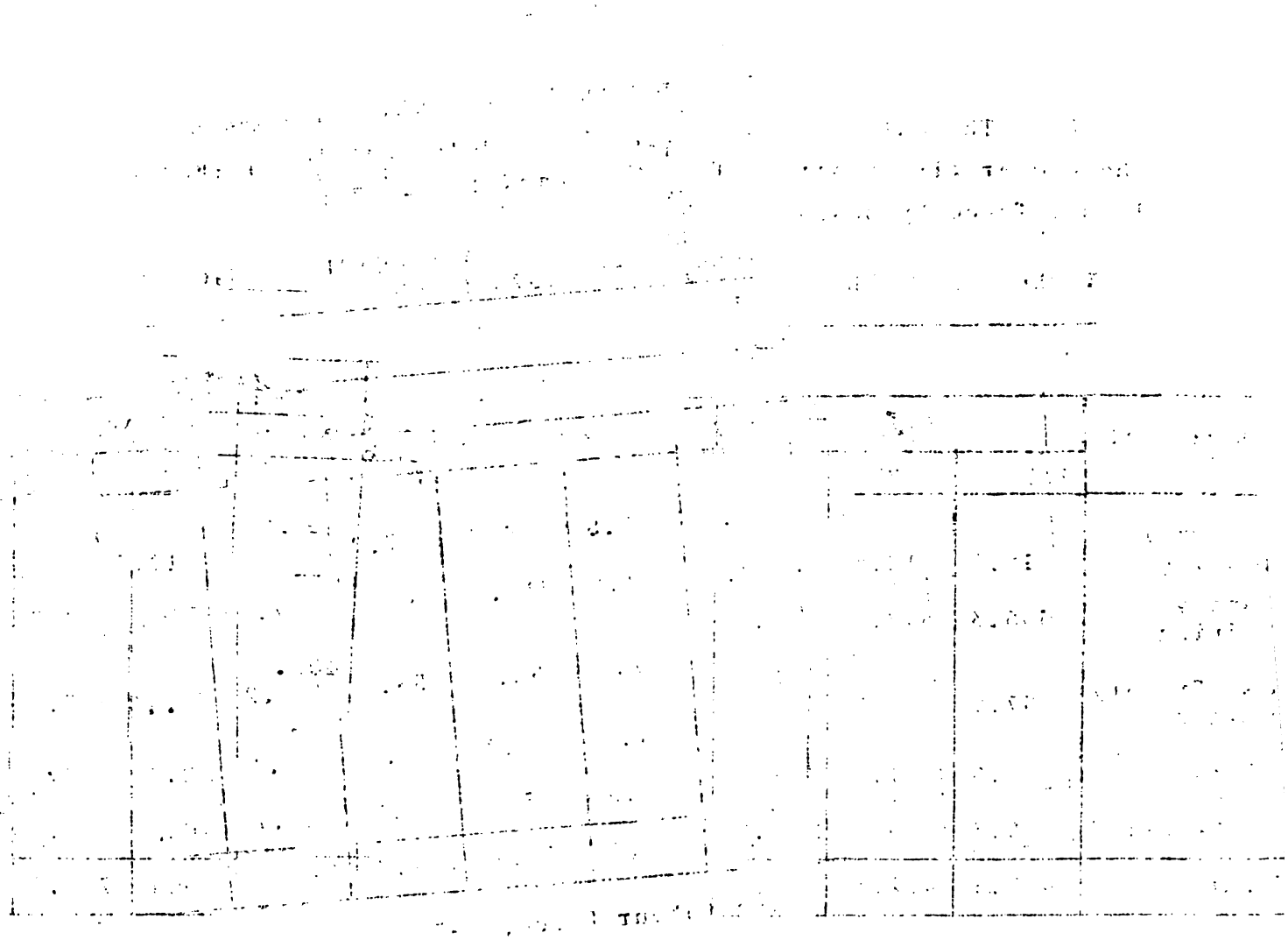


TABLE 10: COMPARATIVE PERCENTAGES OF EMPLOYED LABOUR FORCE BY SEX ACCORDING TO EDUCATION LEVELS REACHED 1976 and 1978

Higher Educational Levels	1976		1978	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%
No Formal Traing	4.0	3.0	3.2	2.6
Primary Training	80.6	77.0	80.7	76.0
Post Primary Training	13.8	18.0	14.5	20.0

Source: 1. Derived from Data Presented in Table 9.

Data presented in Table 11 show the distribution of the employed labour force by occupation groups, by sex and by the highest levels of education reached by persons in these groups. The following are the main observations:

1. <u>For the Professional, etc., Group</u>

   No Formal Education - More males than females had no formal education.

   Primary Education - More females than males

   Post-Primary - Relatively more females than males.

2. <u>Clerical and Sales Groups</u>

   The pattern for this group was similar to that for the Professional Group, but it was observed that relatively speaking far more females than males attained post-primary educational levels.

3. <u>Self-Employed Group</u>

   More males than females had no formal education, and far more males reached the primary education levels than females. It should be observed, however, that there were nearly twice as many male as female employees in this group.

4. Service Group

The females predominated in this group and most of their number were found in the primary education group.

5. Craftsmen Group

Here the males predominated and most were found in the primary education group. However, a significant number was found who reached the post-primary standard of education.

TABLE II: EMPLOYED LABOUR FORCE BY OCCUPATION GROUPS, BY SEX

OCCUPATION GROUPS	SEX	No Formal Years			Primary Years					
		1976	1977	1978	1976	1977	1978			
Prof. Tech. Almin. Exec., etc.	Male	0.4	-	-	6.5	5.9	6.7			
	Female	-	0.1	-	13.2	10.9	8.9			
	Total	0.4	0.1	-	19.7	16.8	15.6			
Clerical & Sales	Male	0.1	0.1	-	17.8	20.4	18.5			
	Female	0.3	0.1	0.1	20.7	21.1	21.3			
	Total	0.4	0.2	0.1	38.5	41.5	39.8			
Self-Employed	Male	10.5	8.3	9.3	157.0	164.2	169.7			
	Female	4.3	2.4	4.2	74.1	79.2	85.6			
	Total	14.8	10.7	13.5	231.1	243.4	255.3			
Service	Male	0.5	0.6	0.1	18.4	20.6	19.6			
	Female	1.0	0.9	1.0	50.8	57.8	51.8			
	Total	1.5	1.5	1.1	69.2	78.4	71.4			
Craftsmen, etc.	Male	0.6	0.1	0.3	70.3	67.9	68.4			
	Female	-	-	-	9.3	8.3	9.4			
	Total	0.6	0.1	0.3	79.6	76.2	77.8			
Unskilled Manual	Male	4.7	3.3	3.7	65.0	62.4	59.4			
	Female	2.2	1.8	1.9	33.1	36.7	33.2	1.6		
	Total	6.9	5.1	5.6	98.1	99.1	92.6	3.1	[illegible]	
Not Specified	Male	-	-	-	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.2	0.4	
	Female	-	-	-	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.2	-	[illegible]
	Total	-	-	-	1.7	1.1	1.2	0.4	0.4	0.4

Source: The Labour Force, Jamaica 1978.

Households

Most of the information obtained by the Department of Statistics has been procured on a basis of enumeration. The unit household are found. In view of the importance of the household and its relationship to the roles played by male and female adults, (usually the heads of Households), a few notes are presented by way of indicating the definitions used by the Department of Statistics.

The household is defined as a group of persons who usually live together and have meals together. It may include members of the family, boarders and living-in maids. There are private and non-private households which have their own characteristics or distinctions in living arrangements. Surveys, however, have been confined largerly to private households, each such housing unit having a single household. Some importance has been attached to the number of households into which the population is divided since this assist in providing discrete units with which to deal. On average there are about five persons per household. The information presented in Table 12 shows the distribution of household heads in the labour force and their employment status for the period 1976-1978.

TABLE 12: HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD IN THE LABOUR FORCE, THEIR EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT - 1976 - 1978

Item		1976	1977	1978
Heads in the Labour Force	Total	428,000	433,600	438,700
	Male	300,800	297,300	297,900
	Female	128,000	136,300	140,800
Employed Heads	Total	377,000	383,800	383,500
	Male	276,700	275,700	274,300
	Female	100,300	108,100	109,200
Unemployed Heads	Total	51,300	49,800	55,200
	Male	24,100	21.600	23,600
	Female	27,700	28,200	31,600
Unemployment Rate	Total	12.1	11.5	12.6
	Male	8.0	7.3	7.9
	Female	21.6	20.7	22.4
Overall Unemployment Rate	Total	20.5	23.8	26.0
	Male	14.7	14.6	15.7
	Female	35.6	34.6	37.7

Source: 1. The Labour Force, 1978

From Table 12, above, it is seen that the number of heads of household increased from 428,800 in 1976 to 438,700 in 1978. Female heads of households accounted for approximately 30% of the total number, being 30% in 1976; 31% in 1977 and 32% in 1978. An important observation is the fact that 87.4% of all household heads were employed in 1978, this being a slight percentage decrease from 1976. Where employment is concerned it is seen that 12.6% of all household heads were unemployed,

while on a sex basis, 22.4% of female heads of households were unemployed as compared with 7.9% for male heads. In a society in which males are usually the heads of households a percentage as high as 30% for females may be regarded as significant. However, the higher rate of unemployment among female household heads is also significant.

Income Earning Potential

Reference has already been made to the occupation groups in which women are employed. The presentation would be incomplete, however, without reference to the distribution of incomes between males and females. Usually, the Department of Statistics, which is the source of most of the statistics used in this paper, collects data for the months of April and October of each year. For the other data already presented in this background section only the information for the month of October was shown as this appeared to be adequate for the purposes for which they were being used.

In Table 13 which follows, income by income groups is presented for the whole labour force, for the male employed and also for the female employed. The data, unfortunately, do not break down the income above $50 weekly i.e., $2,600 per annum), into appropriate income groups, such as -

$50 - under $100 per week	($2,600	- $5,200 per annum)
$100 - under $200 per week	($5,200	-$10,400 per annum)
$200 and over per week	($10,400 and over per annum)	

Income distribution varies with the period of the year, the sex of employees and the industrial and occupational groups. The data which follow stratify weekly incomes according to income groups, but do not present weekly income distribution by other factors.

TABLE 13: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WAGES EARNED BY INCOME GROUPS 1976-1978

	1976		1977		1978	
	April	October	April	October	April	October
BOTH SEXES						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $20	19.7	15.8	14.1	14.9	18.8	16.1
$20 to under $50	54.0	51.9	54.0	52.6	46.6	49.4
$50 and over	26.3	32.3	31.9	32.5	34.6	34.5
MALES						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $20	15.6	13.3	11.3	12.1	14.3	12.1
$20 to under $50	52.4	49.5	51.1	49.8	44.8	47.4
$50 and over	32.0	37.2	37.6	38.1	40.9	40.5
FEMALES						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $20	24.8	19.3	17.7	18.6	24.2	21.0
$20 to under $50	56.0	55.0	57.6	56.1	48.8	51.8
$50 and over	19.2	25.7	24.7	25.3	27.0	27.2

Source: 1. The Labour Force, 1978, Department of Statistics, Jamaica

In general, the percentage of employed females earning less than $50 weekly was always higher than that for male, for the three years listed. However, for weekly salaries greater than $50 the percentage of employed male income earners was always much greater than that for females.

In general terms the information is intended to provide a reference area within which to identify the women in general and the rural women in particular. Most of the information available, however, unfortunately, treats all women in a group without specifically differentiating between rural and urban women. Indeed, in many instances, it would have been difficult to make such a distinction given the actions taken across the country in relation to women's involvement in the various activities of the country's development.

Summarised points from this background presentation are:

1. Although more than half the population consists of females, the labour force consists of far more males than females.

2. A higher percentage of the male labour force is employed than of the female labour force.

3. For females the most important Industrial groups in terms of numerical employment are:

   (i) Other Services
   (ii) Public Administration
   (iii) Commerce
   (iv) Agriculture

4. Numerically, more females than males are engaged in the following occupation groups:

   (i) Professional, Technical, Administrative, Managerial and related occupation

   (ii) Clerical and Sales

   (iii) Service Occupations

5. From an educational point of view a lower percentage of female employees had no formal education than males and a higher percentage of females had post-primary training than males.

6. Although women accounted for only 30% of the employed heads of households, this is considered to be very significant for a society in which the males exercise leading roles.

7. Undoubtedly, women exercise roles which are difficult to identify in numerical terms without access to data collected specifically for this purpose.

8. The comment made at (6) also applies to the differentiation between rural and urban women.

9. It is generally known that, in the rural areas and within more recent years to a growing extent in urban areas, females have been occupying the important positions of primary school principals. Such positions were always held by females.

10. Income-wise - female members of the labour force, in general, were not as highly remunerated as males.

11. On the overall, females appear to be occupied considerably below their potential either from a numberical point of view or in relation to their abilities.

12. It is evident that where rural women are concerned more precise statements concerning them can only be made on the basis of specific studies carried out to obtain stated information. This information certainly is not documented at present to any real degree. However, within the framework provided for all females there is scope for developing appropriate studies.

STATUS OF THE JAMAICAN RURAL WOMAN

Present day Jamaican rural women must be seen in the context of their development from the revolutionary movement which began in 1838. Since then, the major economic change has been that from the sugar dominated plantocracy to small peasant holdings. The freed slaves who took to the hills, away from the existing plantations - a physical as well as a psychological withdrawal - formed settlements in the uncultivated parts of the country. The male farmer now needed an industrious woman as an economic partner. She not only attended to his physiological needs but was an asset in agricultural work and in the marketing of the products.

A brief conceptual framework is provided by mentioning the inevitable effects on the status of women today arising from the social structure. In constraint of time the social systems of the family, education, and religion are presented.

There is no need to explain that the 'countryman's way of life is different from that of the 'townman's'. The fact that one-third of the Jamaican population lives on farms means that it is more remote from the outside world than the urban population. The rural dweller is more parochial and more backward than his opposite number in the town and in the city.

Life is very strenuous for a Jamaica peasant woman. Most women work in the field, attend to the household duties and care for the children. Very often, especially where there is no man to help support the children, the woman supplements her income by working as a domestic in the home of more prosperous families. The child also leads a tiring life.

Consequently, the role and status of rural women are characterized by lack of formally recognized skills, under-utilization of existing skills, low income, and lack of the knowledge and resources to go forward.

Mention is made of the significant role in the economy of the higgler or small tradeswoman, and who represents a singularly interesting personality in the Society.

The higgler or small agricultural tradeswoman has become an institution entrenched in the marketing structure of Jamaica. The higgler depicts a personality distinctly her own - one made up of determination, thriftiness, business acumen and planning skill. This type of rural woman was recognised to possess a relatively low status in the hierarchy of social and political positions. In the production and marketing of agricultural commodities, it is the rural woman (the higgler) who combines in one person the roles of farmer, the reaper, the economist, the transporter, the trader and finally the decision-maker in the apportionment of the returns from her labour. In most instances, as the middleman in trade, she is required to exercise the intelligence, aggressiveness and astuteness that are required to survive in a competitive society as Jamaica's.

The Family

The place of the family in the culture pattern of the island is particularly interesting because, although it appears an incoherent and even tenuous form of relationship, it is extremely potent, and is indeed the outstandingly important social institution. Family relationship remain an important constituent in the life of an individual, far transcending in importance membership in a social group such as a village community centre or a club.

Two main types of family emerge from the meeting of various cultures in the nineteenth century: one centres in the mother (or grandmother), the other in the father. The first is more frequently encountered in the lower levels of society, the second in the higher. There is, however, a wide territory in which the two types of family overlap, so much so in fact that it is necessary to introduce further classification to describe families in which the relationship between the spouses is unstable, and in which the predominant partner may be decided by sheer force of character rather than social custom. A further source of confusion is the fact that though the paternal family is most frequent amongst the landowning peasantry and the upper classes generally "faithful concubinage" (which favours a maternal family) is also an accepted practice amongst these classes.

The Maternal Family

So far as casual observation and the scrutiny of the scanty material goes, the maternal family may be regarded as much the most important over the many years and into the present time amongst the masses of the Jamaican people. In the majority of cases the children of the lower income groups have not the normal background of father and mother (whether married or in concubinage) living together for the period of their childhood, and being jointly responsible for them. Increasingly the pattern of the home of the peasant or urban lower income groups is one of a woman and her children most frequently living in the household of the woman's relatives. The child grows up in a domestic circle of female relatives.

Simey,[1/] who has laid much stress on the "Maternal Family" in the West Indies, conclude that -

> ".... the West Indian family is certainly not matriarchal, since the status of women in society is undefined and weak. Although it is the woman who keeps the family together, it is the man who rules; if a man established himself as a householder, he becomes as a matter of course the possessor of arbitrary authority. On the other hand, the mother looks after the children whether the father is there or not. She feeds, clothes and educates them, and it is to her that they turn in times of trouble throughout their lives. The rural family is invariably matrilocal. From the point of view of the children, the mother is dependable; the father is not. The father is feared; the mother is loved".

Characteristics Of The Classes In Family Behaviour

As the class ladder is ascended from lower to upper level, there is a steady diminution of family and kin feeling. In the lower class the individual is dependent to a great extent upon the kin group for social and emotional security. This, in itself, is the result of poverty which deprives the individual of a wider field of social opportunity. At the other extreme are the members of the upper class who are not confined by poverty, so that social and emotional dependence express themselves in a wider field. Situated between the two, the middle class possesses attitudes of both classes. Here the family is in an essentially fluid state, responsive to pressures both from above and below.

1/ Simey, T.S. - Welfare and Planning in the West Indies, Oxford, 1946, p. 61.

For this reason, one finds that the middle classes obviously suffer from a profound spiritual maladjustment, which not only embitters their lives but also prevents them from placing their undoubted abilities at the disposal of their communities in the way they should. The strain of living bears particularly heavily on the young men and women who find it hard to adjust themselves to the conflicting calls that are made on them.

Education

In Jamaica, the primary (elementary) school is a very important part of village life, not only for the obvious educational reason, but because in many districts the teacher will be one of the chief leaders in the local affairs.

The standard of education varies greatly dependent on the academic training and personal qualities of the teacher. Education has been a formal teaching of reading, writing, arithemetic, a little hygiene and much biblical knowledge. It has not opened up new patterns of ideas for the child and has not helped him to utilize his own mental resources.

The majority of parents regard education as a desirable thing. There are only a few illiterate parents who think education is a waste of time because they can see no difference between themselves and their literate neighbours. On the whole, education is regarded as a means whereby a person may acquire a higher standard of living. As those who do achieve these positions are few in number, this attitude gives to the whole of education an unreal atmosphere.

Vocational education is not considered by rural people as education in the proper sense of the word. The tendency to associate manual labour with degradation, and to regard education as a means of eliminating manual labour

is a serious one in the light of the agricultural economy of the island.

Although the educational system is open equally to boys and girls, the facts are the girls have fewer opportunities for post-primary education because there are fewer places for them in the schools.

Encouragingly, new opportunities have been opening up for women, notably in the field of agriculture and in the Arts. Enrolment of women in the School of Agriculture started in 1918 and the number has gradually increased, as is the situation at The College of Art, Science and Technology.

Religion

In Jamaica there are many forms of religious expression ranging from intense revivalism to fairly orthodox Church of England. Religion, magic and folklore are intricately interwoven. The most complicated theologies co-exist with the most primitive beliefs in sympathetic magic.

The Church Fulfilling A Need

It has been observed that the most obvious form of dependency relationship among West Indians (which includes Jamaicans) is that achieved through church membership. Church going, baptism, confirmation, burial rites, grace at meals and prayers at public meetings are common forms of religious expression. The clergy and ministers of religion are held in great respect in all communities.

Attachment to a church undoubtedly meets the need for social integration, whilst the Christian belief in the healing qualities of love has proven to be the specific remedy for many of the individual psychological problems.

Each church plays a particular part in local affairs. The Angican Church, being the official one, has a high snob value for the social climber. In districts where there is an Anglican Church and a parson the influence of the latter may be quite extensive. Many rural persons reject this particular church because they cannot participate in the service with any degree of overt emotion.

The Roman Catholic Church, with its financial resources, takes very active part in the needs of the people. This, with its open declaration of believe in spirits, the devil and angels, and the propitiation of the supernatural, all falls in nicely with the strained economic conditions of the people and with their magical beliefs.

The Methodists, United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman, (comprising of Presbyterians, Congregational and Baptists), are all deeply involved in assisting the people to face the social and economic problems.

Revivalism

There are several religious cults in the island. Revivalism and obeah unite to form the pocomania cult which appears to be a reaction from religion towards a means of expressing the emotions in motion and rhythm, and so far as obeah is concerned, towards the control by magical powers of the forces which oppress the ordinary man.

Madeline Kerr[1/] has recorded pocomania services she attended while gathering data for her book and has commented on the fact that "these meetings are very exhausting to the participants. Sometimes the "Spirit " does not come and the meetings continue with singing and the curious quadrille-like movement for several hours".

1/ Kerr, Madeline - Personality and Conflict in Jamaica. Liverpool University, Press 1952, p. 126.

In recent times, the Rastafarian Cult has proven a great attraction to members of all strata of the Society.

The Role of the Cults

It has already been pointed out that orthodox religious expression has many functions for certain groups in the Society. What of the Cults? The enormous number of cults, all fairly similar in doctrine and ritual, reflect the general unwillingness of the peasant to cooperate in anything in which he is unable to take an active and individual part. This desire to participate may well be capitalised upon by organisers of programmes, be they in health, recreation or agriculture.

There are certain other functions which may be defined. Conditions of life are, on the whole, so bad that people look forward to a future life for all that they miss in this. At Cult meetings there is great emphasis on being "saved", presumably as a sort of insurance.

Owing to non-formalised outlets for emotions, and often the lack of them in interpersonal relations, any outlet gets utilised to the full.

Facilities for recreation in the country are nearly non-existent, hence any meeting, either religious or political, may be used as a substitute.

Jamaican peasants are extremely individualistic and the culture pattern as it is today does not allow much outlet for leadership. The easiest way to become important is to be one of the cult leaders. These usually take titles such as captain or shepherd or mother. In the pocomania bands they wear ritual uniforms and often carry insignia of office such as crooks.

There is no doubt that in Jamaica many of the nutural leaders are to be found among these religious cults and whose cooperation and service will be of inestimable value.

ENACTMENTS BY GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

During the 1960's there was much dialogue about Women's Liberation on the international scene. During the 1970's the Government of Jamaica pursued a number of actions designed to enact legislation aimed at improving the contribution of women to the development of the country.

The following sets out important legislation which was enacted.

Employment (Equal Pay for Men and Women) Act, 1975

An Act to eliminate discrimination between the sexes in payment of remuneration for the doing of similar work and to provide for matters incidental thereto.

The Equal Pay Act became operable in January 1976. This Act is based on similarity of duties, responsibilities, working conditions and required qualifications. Employers who breach the provisions of the Act can be fined (on conviction) or imprisoned for up to one year. This, therefore, is a major step forward in eliminating discrimination in the terms and conditions of employment.

National Minimum Wage Act

A Government appointed Commission, to which any person or section of the community could make representation, made recommendation to the Government for a National Minimum Wage which became operable on November 2, 1975.

The National Minimum Wage is an hourly rate below which neither male nor female workers should be paid. This was an extremely important step for the many thousands of women who were employed for wages well below the new minimum wage of $24.00 per 40 hour week and had no union to protect their interests.

Family Court Act, 1975

To provide for the establishment of a Family Court and for purposes incidental thereto or connected.

A Family Court was opened on December 2, 1975 to deal with cases of maintenance and affiliation and many other family laws, (excluding divorce), which were previously handled by the Juvenile Court. This is a major breakthrough in the application of Jamaican Law as such sensitive issues of paternity and maintenance are heard in private hearings and not in the open court system with its adjacent problems of sensational press coverage. The Family Court also has a preventative function as it provides family counselling.

Changes were also made in the Maintenance Act to renounce the ceiling on maintenance grants payable for children. This should go some way in assisting many women who have non-supportive partners but hesitated to go to court because of the publicity and the very low maintenance grant awarded.

The Status of Children Act, 1976

An Act to remove the legal disabilities of children born out of wedlock and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The status of children and the status of women are intertwined as so many women bear the full burden of childrearing. The legislation is an example of the law focusing on the needs of women, removal of some of the phychological and real hurdles engrained in the historical development of Jamaica women and a way of developing better citizens.

Legislation Under Consideration

Amendments to the Divorce Law, which will provide for the principle of irretrievable breakdown of marriage rather than the present "matrimonial offence" and the distribution of property on the basis of the principle of equal partnership in marriage are in the process of being finally corporated into the law.

Amendments to legislation on Abortion, to provide that medically supervised abortion should be available. Amendments to the Abortion Law were table in a Ministry Paper by the Minister of Health but more positive action is still be considered.

The Legal Division of the Ministry of Labour is considering the whole operation of maternity benefits with a view to initiating new legislation. The Women's Bureau has made formal recommendations to the Government on this matter.

Funded by the Inter-American Commission of Women, research is being carried out by a Legal Consultant into the Rights of Common Law Unions with a view to enacting legislation which would give protection to women in these unions.

Constitutional Reform

There is a debate in progress on constitutional reform throughout the country. This will continue over a period of 18 months. The Women's Bureau, acting on behalf of all women, have submitted recommendations (based on research findings) to the recently created Constitutional Reform Committee.

Political and Administrative Appointment of Women

Since 1975, Government has made a conscious effort to appoint more women to Statutory Boards at decision-making levels in public offices. The years 1974/75 saw the appointment of women for the first time to the posts of Ambassadors, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Permanent Secretary in the Civil Service and to head the National Minimum Wage Commission.

In January 1977, a woman was appointed Minister of State for Women's Affairs and in September 1978, a woman was elected vice President of a Political Party in Jamaica, in this case the ruling party. In August 1978, a woman was appointed Minister of Education.

The following statistics indicate some of the positions held by women in key areas of administrative, professional and political endeavours of the country:

POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

Politics	Number of Women	
	1976	1977
House of Representatives	2	5
Cabinet	1	0
Council of Ministries	0	1
Senate	3	3
Trade Union (Secretary General)	1	1

Source: Women's Bureau

Number of Women in Top Administrative & Professional Posts

	1974	1977
Judges	2	2
Resident Magistrates	9	9
Ambassadors	1	2
Directors of Public Services Agencies	-	6
Permanent Secretaries	1	1

Source: Women's Bureau

Statutory Institutions or Publicly Owned Companies Headed by Women

1. JAMAL - The Jamaica Movement for the Advancement of Literacy is the organisation currently responsible for Jamaica's basic Adult Education Programme.

2. National Housing Trust - The National Housing Trust is a Statutory Body initiated by Government to provide low cost housing to the nation.

3. Urban Development Corporation - The Corporation is set up with particular reference to the economic and social development of the urban area.

4. Agency for Public Information - This institution is the public information service, which projects programmes in Government Ministries and Statutory Boards.

5. National Hotel Supplies Company - This company imports requirements for publicly-owned hotels.

6. National Minimum Wage Commission - This organisation is responsible to ensure that all workers get a livable wage in return for their work and that the wages are the same for both male and remale.

7. Jamaica Library Service - This organisation is responsible for the promotion and diffusion of knowledge and information, by acquiring, servicing and making available carefully selected books and other material.

ACTION TAKEN BY WOMEN

A number of Women's Organisations have been formed over the years to serve as a vehicle for airing women's problems, taking remedial measures and implementing programmes and projects for their social and economic betterment. Space allows for mention of a few of these organisations.

Contribution Through Organisations

The Jamaica Women's Federation

The Jamaica Women's Federation has its roots in all parishes and has served as a strong integrative force in the communities. Emphasis is placed in helping women to learn, followed by the establishment of lucrative projects. For example, food preserves and small handcrafts of various kinds are made in almost all the branches of the Federation. In addition, women are being guided to be involved in such national activities as the Family Life Education Programme, JAMAL, (Jamaica Movement for Adult Literacy).

The contribution of a large number of women through this national association deserves further study for action as to its best mode of performance in continuing to build women for action.

The Council of Voluntary Social Service

The Council of Voluntary Social Service was established in November 1940. Its goal has been -

> "to bring together on a permanent basis voluntary social welfare organisations of Jamaica in order to secure a comprehensive view of relevant problems and need and to mobilse resources for action."

Starting with 18 member organisations today there are fifty-three; 16 of these are solely women's organisations.

The following three project provide examples of situations where the Council of Voluntary Social Service is required to subsidise projects in order to assist groups to develop small-income industries.

1. Crafts and Food project in Mandeville - Manchester, undertaken by approximately 12 girls, aged 17 plus years.

2. A textile workshop project (cushions, clothing, etc.) in Lucea, Hanover, 8 young women aged 17 plus.

3. A small Preserve Project (guava preserves, wines, etc.) at James Hill, Clarendon, 15 girls aged 16 plus.

The Council of Voluntary Social Service is putting emphasis on development of rural dwellers towards the national goal of economic and social development of the nation.

Worthy of mention is the Council of Voluntary Social Service Advice Service. The number of enquires recorded in the year March 1979 was 7020; there was a great increase in the number of enquires relating to unemployment, financial assistance and personal problems. They were experienced by both urban and rural families. This Service has played a valuable role in ensuring individuals (especially women) of their rights and responsibilites and a confidence in one's self and duty.

Young Women's Christian Association

The Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) started in Kingston in 1923. There are at present 3 branches and 1 Young Women's Christian Association Club Centre in different parts of the island. The Young Women's

Christiana Association pioneered youth club work in Jamaica. Continuing education, small crafts activities and leisure time activities are the main aspects of the Association's programmes. Day Nurseries, Basic Schools, Literacy Classes and marketable training in skills and crafts are uniterrupted services given through the year.

Leadership receives consistent emphasis and many female persons in outstanding positions in the island give credit to the Young Women's Christian Association for the foundation in leadership received there.

Church Women's Organisations

The Church Women's Organisations have given women opportunities to participate in the building of society and their influence can be felt in the policy for all persons and moreso for women to be in the decision-making seats to ensure a just and relevant outcome.

Jamaica Agricultural Society

The Jamaica Agricultural Society (J.A.S.) and the Commodity Group Association in rural Jamaica have for years provided a forum for demoncratic discussion on various matters -

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CURRENT PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE THE COMPETENCE OF WOMEN

Social Walfare

The histroy of the evolution of the social and econonic development of the people of Jamaica may well be written through the records of its Social Welfare Programmes - public and voluntary. This is particularly impressive in the programmes and projects implemented in rural Jamaica. Rural women have found satisfaction, personal growth and acquired skills through their participation in community Social Welfare activities.

Volunatry social work laid the foundation of most, if not all, of the services being undertaken either as an entire Government programme or a joint public-voluntary one. The present Ministry of Youth, Sports and Education, comprising of its several agencies is one of reference. Over a number of years the structure, objectives and projects although maintaining some continuity have made adjustments in keeping with changes of the times.

The following brief historical presentation of the evolution of the Social Welfare in Jamaica and the positive input of Government is given as a testimony to the forthrightness, dedication and competence of rural women.

Social Welfare in Jamaica had its roots from the abolition of slavery when missionaries, teachers and people of goodwill had been informally doing their part for the general social improvement of the people. From the adversity of slavery the peasants learnt the necessity for collective thinking and working for their general well-being. In many districts or villages small farmers by co-operative action known as "Morning Work" or "Day Sport" would help one another to prepare the land.

In the 1930's the Jamaica Welfare Ltd., came into existence and had as its responsibility the welfare programme and so by 1930 the first Community Centre was built at Guy's Hill, St. Mary.

In the 1940's a new programme was introduced known as "The Better Village Programme". This led to healthy competition among the villages as well as among the people within the villages; housewives would make every effort to see that they had better kitchen facilities, better gardens, better houses, and this programme stimulated a civic pride which was already latent among Jamaicans.

In 1948 a Statutory Body known as the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission was reconstructed in the rural areas. On the 10th June, 1965 the name "Jamaica Social Welfare Commission" was changed to "Social Development Commission" and the Jamaica Youth Corps and the Jamaica Youth Clubs were united into the Youth Development Agency.

Social Development Agency is the specialised agency responsible for the Adult Literacy Programme, Home Economic Programme, training and production in craft work (needle and straw) and general community organisation. The change was introduced to motivate the people to an awareness of their needs and through the officers to help them to realise their social and economic needs and to use their own resources for their community development.

Community Centres 1963

At the centres girls were trained in home economics, braiding, soft toy-making and general needlework for a period of about 4-6 months. They later earned their living by working at the Centre, regarded as a small factory.

Centres were not only little factories but meeting places for cultural development - discussions, debates, lectures and other social activities for the general betterment of the community.

Training was the emphasis at this time. The village instructor would go out to the various villages and teach the diverse cottage industries. It was during this time that officers along with the front-line village instructors would visit key persons in the various villages to establish study groups, pioneer clubs and to encourage thrift by the formation of savings unions and thrift clubs.

It was during this period that the 3-F Campaign was formed. Literacy was recognised as urgently important and so simple reading material, as exampled below, was made available.

> "What Mrs. T. eats", "Better Kitchen Gardens" was a project of the day.

The peasant housewife was encouraged to plant more vegetables in the backyard and to eat more of them rather than selling them to purchase salted fish or mackerel.

Following years led to changes in structure and activities of the Social Development Agency and by 1963 the Community Development Programme had to be revitalised and had to undergo some change to fit into the thinking of the people and also to be reorganised to be better able to lead in the socio-economic change.

Skill Training

In the area of education and training the Government is endeavouring to improve the training available to young people who in a few years will be required to make their contribution to national development. Over the

past few years emphasis has been placed on improvements in the following:

1. Technical High Schools
2. New Secondary Schools
3. Vocational Schools
4. Tertiary Level at -
   (i) College of Arts, Science & Technology (CAST)
   (ii) Jamaica School of Agriculture (JSA)
   (iii) Training Colleges

The data on curricula statistics published by the Ministry of Education have shown that many female students are entering the "non-traditional female" courses. Regrettably there still exists the tendency to deliberately place students by sex oriented subjects until there is freedom of choice at the Grade 9 level.

With regard to the Technical and Vocational Schools under the Ministry of Youth, in 1973, there were 32 Vocational Training Centres throughout the island in addition to the German Automotive School and the Nanse Pen Industry Garment School.

Vocational Training

At the Vocational Training Development Institute, Technical instructors are trained. Ten percent of the 150 people trained annually on a full-time basis are women and 20% of the 350 people trained on a part-time basis are women. The women specialise in the areas of Commercial subjects, Home Economics, Hotel Traders and Garment manufacturing, leaving the Industrial Training to the men.

[illegible]

Vocational Training is offered by the following institutions, among others: Industrial Training Centres, 4-H Clubs, Garment Training Schools, Housecraft Training Centres, Hotel Training School, Tourism Production Development, Dental Auxilliary School and Social Development Commission. The Vocational Training Division of the Ministry of Youth has 15% female students, i.e., approximately 380, in a total student body of 2,535 trained in Industrial Training Centres.

The Industrial Training Centres offer training in technical skill areas, which have traditionally been dominated by males such as carpentry, masonry, plumbing, electrical installation, welding, auto-mechanics and the like. There are in fact 18 skills being offered but women are concentrated mainly in the commercial field and in dressmaking, reflecting the same choices as the female instructors at Vocational Training Development Institutions.

Significantly, however, it was through the Vactional Training Division that 35 women from the Special Employment Programme were trained in 1976 in wood-working and welding.

There are to date women in the German Automotive School. The Garment Industry Training School which has a capacity of 70 students now caters for only 44 students 95% female due to lack of equipment. The Housecraft Training Centres offer courses in Home Economics to approximately 400 girls in 7 different centres.

The Dental Auxilliary School trains approximately 20 school dental nurses annually (140 trained to date) in a 2-year programme, and 10 Dental Assistants in a 6-month course (40 trained to date). They are all female.

Youth Community Training Centres (S.D.C.) with a capacity yearly enrolment of 2,000 students train 51% females in mostly "traditional" skills.

The Hotel Training School, Casa Monte, is training 50 students in a 2-year middle management course. The male/female ratio is 50:50.

In our four community colleges percentages of females overall is 56%. The most popular curricula choice of females are the pre-nursing course, pre-college teaching, secretarial, accounts and Hotel Management courses.

Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation does some training now of females for jobs such as meter wardens. The Traffic Warden Service came into operation in July 1974. A total of 61 wardens have been trained, 45 of whom are females. Female bus drivers are now also an accepted fact but data on percentage participation is unavailable.

At the Police Training Schools 3% females are being trained (23 females out of 801 total trainees and there are 5% Women Police on the Police Force - 244 females out of 5,000 total.

The Women's Centre, under the administration of the Women's Bureau, opening in early 1978, proposes to offer:

1. Academic and supportive services to forty 14-16 year old pregnant school girls.

2. Skill training and supportive to 30 unemployed young mothers ages 16-24.

Tertiary Schools

The administrators of these schools are becoming more aware that with women occupying more than half the population of Jamaica no social and economic programme can be successful until Jamaicans, male and female, acquire the right attitude, the appropriate skills and agricultural

technology. Consequently, the curricula of these schools reflect the relevant subjects and that the student body encompasses many more women able and willing to be placed alongside their male counterparts.

EMPLOYMENT

Special Employment Programme

In 1976/77 the Special Employment Programme employed over 24,000 persons full time while a similar number received some benefit in terms of part year employment.

Placement in the urban area is usually in the road maintenance section of the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (K.S.A.C.). In the rural parishes, projects include agricultural development such as, soil conservation and forestry; river training; road and building construction. In the rural area the last project tends to be manned extensively by men, and women participate more in the other two areas.

In the urban centre of Kingston and St. Andrew where 50% of Special Employment Programme jobs were allocated, there were over 7,000 women and 4,000 men employed. Women therefore represented about 64% of those employed. It is more difficult to assess exactly how many women were employed in rural Special Employment Programme projects, but this is estimated at less than 40%.

Only 10% of the lower and middle level Special Employment Programme supervisors trained in weekly sessions between 1975/76 were women and they came from the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation permanent staff.

A number of women have been transferred from street sweeping intoproductive areas of employment; the most important of these projects are as follows:

Project Placement	Functions	Estimated Number of Women Place[1])	Per Cent Female %
1. Day Care Nurseries	Child Care Attendants	100	100
2. Hermitage Watershed Project	Water Management afforestation and soil conservation	30	30
3. Millsbrook Project	Cultivation fruit orchard	40	50
4. Garment Training Project	Machine operating, garment production	160	80
5. Neighbourhood School Centres	School attendants for children on shift	66	100
6. United Women's Welding and Woodwork Industry	Making furniture and toys	35	95
7. Council for the Handicapped Early Stimulation Project	Training of handicapped children and parents in their homes	16	100
Total		444	

Source: Women's Bureau

Public Administration

Middle Management group which includes Clerical, Administrative, Technical and some professional posts, particularly teaching and nursing 65% females as against 35% males plays a significant role in employment of skilled and trained female personnel, but the posts they hold are traditional service oriented rather than in top management.

Service Occupations - Unskilled

In cleaning, related jobs in private industries, domestic households, 88% females, 12% males.

Agriculture

In professional and technical areas of agriculture, only 14% women, but in the unskilled, manual area, there are 32,700 women or 42% and 44,000 males or 58%. The latter group represents the mainstay of agricultural production in which women are significantly involved, but they are classified as unskilled, more for their low incomes and lack of formal education than for their actual skill level.

Sugar Cooperatives

There are twenty establishments which have become cooperatives in the past three years and women represent 13.5% of the cooperatives' membership. They are under-represented on the management committee structure level (6% female) and are not represented at the Board of Management level locally or nationally. Females still fall into traditional menial roles on the farms, for example, weeding, planting, as opportunities for new skill areas in the structure, including top management, are still dominated by men.

The women in cooperatives, both members and non-members, do play a unique role however, in that they provide some social stability in matters concerning housing re-location; the use of finances in the cooperative and in the maintenance and preparation of the land during the off-season. Their particular role needs careful assessment, as much of the positive influence of women on these co-operatives goes unrecognised.

Self-Employment

Women in self-employment fall into the large home-craft category, especially sewing, needlecraft and straw work or are in higglering and subsistence farming.

Craft

There are an estimated 5[illegible],000 persons who have craft skills or are involved full and part-time in the craft industry. This includes metal workers and furniture makers. An estimated 65% of these are women. They are distributed mainly throughout the rural parishes.

Some of these women who have craft skill are part of loosely organised cooperatives, and some fall outside of the home industry category and are employed in factories. Some work at home for private industrial companies and the goods are collected from the worker's home. The majority, however, are under-employed and only 6,000 - 7,500 persons are in direct employment.

Income generated in the craft industry is characterised by two related factors -

1. the irregularity of the income, due to its dependence on the fluctuating foreign and indifferent local market; and

2. a widely varying income scale. Income can be as low as $2.50 average per week, and is among the lowest of all the occupational groups, but can be very high for some of the finer craftsmen, for example, in furniture craft.

The industry tends to be hampered by the following factors:

1. It is time-consuming to finish many craft products, as the stage from gathering the raw material, to drying, plaiting, etc., can take weeks and only one mat, for example, may be produced per fortnight.

2. It is labour intensive, which should be a positive thing, but the labour on which it depends is often child labour. Therefore many craft activities only take place in the summer holiday months or if the demand for the goods is steady, children are taken out of school to participate in the craft and the marketing.

3 The marketing and present levels of income are limited. Based on points 1 and 2, the limited number of finished products available, tend to be marketed individually and sometimes inefficiently, or if the product can be turned out in quantity, for example, wood craft, this is done regardless of demand and a glut is created. In a few cases, craft people sell to retail stores at low prices in order to be assured of steady demand, although they may resent the heavy mark-up on their goods.

4. Skills tend to be concentrated in traditional areas creating unfavourable competitive situations. Training is informal and indigenous to local areas so that there is a seeming

over-supply of certain intermediate level skills in most areas, for example, straw work, and an under-supply of other perhaps finer skills, for example, alabaster carving. A National market strategy and training programme could correct this imbalance.

On the other hand, the craft industry seems to have the following positive values:

1. It is family cohesive, in that many members of a family participate.

2. Training is available in the community free of cost, in that one may learn from an older relative or friend, through an informal apprenticeship arrangement.

3. It is based on local raw materials and reflects a local life-style.

4. Its products tend to be utilitarian as well as purely decorative, so families can use their own craft products, thereby affecting a savings. This factor tends to enhance its local appeal.

Higglering and Subsistence Farming

There are an estimated 15,000 people, mostly women, who work as market vendors.. An approximate 85% of the foodstuff produced in this country is marketed by higglers.

They have a close and interdependent relationship with subsistence farmers. Many of the latter are women whose contribution to their own or their partners' farms has been grossly underestimated. Although they may be

counted among the unemployed, many work part-time or nearly full-time and their economic value is on par with a day's wage in agriculture. It is only the ingenuity and aggressiveness of the higglers by comparison who are in the more fluid bartering trade which have enable a few of them to accumulate some wealth.

Many of the 30,000 women who are skilled or semi-skilled in Arts and Crafts are not regularly employed and are perhaps reflected in the unemployed category. The vast majority of our women are in the "unskilled" category, including small farming, higglering, domestic work, factory work and service occupations, and are therefore subject to both irregular employment and low wages.

Although skills do exist in these occupations, they are not recognised by our society as sufficiently important to receive the level of remunerative rewards needed to rise above the subsistence level. These skills do not guarantee any possibility of mobility into other levels or a scale of income commensurate with the level of skill, so a domestic worker at minimum wage level may well remain there for life.

Thus, the irregularity of employment, low level of skills and low wages form part of the same problem posed by the high level of unemployment among females and youth.

HOME ECONOMICS

What is now generally known as Home Economics was first called Domestic Science in Jamaica and other countries.

Domestic Science has had a long history in the development of the Jamaica people. Recognising that the Colonial pattern of training and education in academic and professional areas was unrelated to the requirements of an agricultural economy with very little natural resources, in the early 1930's education began to encourage the study of domestic science for women and other technical skills for young men. The emphasis for women at that time was on those activities directly concerning the home, such as, sewing, food preparation and serving, the making of preserves and beautifying the house.

Over the years not only did the name of this discipline change, but the subject content was widely expanded. Briefly, the main areas, in addition to the former traditional ones, are today:

Food and Nutrition
Home Management
Textiles and Clothing
Family Relationship and Child Care

Later, recognising that a nation is built on its homes, with the family being the real unit of society, Home Economics has been one of the vehicles for influencing the policy-maker in such matters as health and housing; in strengthening and supporting Government's policies, for example, Government's Family Planning Programme; in establishing a climate in which young people would develop sound value systems based on hard effective work, integrity, and basic honesty.

The main groups and organisations involved in Home Economics are:

Technical High Schools
Technical and Evening Institutes
Continuing Education Institutes
Agricultural Training Centres (for example, ELIM)
Housecraft Training Centres
4-H Organisation
Jamaica School of Agriculture
College of Arts, Science and Technology
Teachers' Colleges
Ministry of Agriculture (Thro' its Extension Division)
Ministry of Education

A brief overview of Home Economics contribution is provided from the following three institutions which have islandwide coverage and have proven to be valuable agents in rural areas, offering not only the opportunity for learning skills, but also serving as a medium for social expression while assisting in developing the economic position of the participants:

Ministry of Education - Home Economics is an important required subject of the curriculum in the Technical and Vocational Education section of the Ministry. In a foreword to the 1977 Curriculum Guide for Grades 7, 8 and 9, the following was stated:

> "The syllabus is planned to provide learning experiences which will help students to develop personal goals and values and thereby gain some understanding of their worth and potential as part of their small family within the Jamaican family.

> .....Factors like increasing knowledge about growth and development of children, increased sensitivity to quality of life, and factors attendant with fertility management make the contribution of Home Economics even more distinctive at this level."

The syllabus presented on a graded basis covers:

> Nutrition Education
> Needlework, Textiles and Clothing
> Home Management
> Food and Nutrition
> Child Care
> Family Life Education

When Home Economics became a subject in the curriculum it was usually regarded as a low prestiged type of occupation which was fitted for the dullards in the system. Even today, there remains somewhat of a stigma attached to Home Economics as a discipline.

Part of the poor profile of Home Economics per se over the past years has been due to the trained personnel in the field, many of whom selected this as what they regarded as an easy option not requiring too much mental effort or basic training. Within recent decades this approach has been changing and the subject is being recognised as a science.

<u>Ministry of Youth, Sports & Education</u> - (formerly the Ministry of Youth and Community Development)

The Social Development Agency, a sector of the Ministry, placed Home Economics as the central activity in the community centres. Many groups undertook projects in Food and Nutrition, in Home Management, in Child Care,

and vegetable gardening, which proved to be a viable economic source for many women in these rural parts.

Much emphasis was placed on the development of skills which would contribute to the family income. Over the years, many projects which were introduced as leisure time activities or for home improvement were brought up to market standard and became an additional source of income. Goods prepared for sale included:

Cushions and other furnishings
Children's clothing
Cakes, buns, bammies
Preserved fruits
Home-made wines and liquors

Other areas of endeavour were the Household Help Scheme. Many women, both in the urban and rural areas, depend largely on employment as household helpers. In more recent times their services were required not only locally but in such places as the United States of America and Canada. The Home Economic Section of the Commission was assigned the task of training prospective household help.

The Homemakers and Mother-Child Centres have greatly benefitted from the services of the officers of the Home Economics section.

In response to the growing demand from rural areas for training in the use of electrical appliances, a series of training days are periodically arranged through the Home Economics Section. These are of immense value. The exposure of women to this skill helped to break the cycle of traditional subjects and traditional jobs for women.

> "It has been rightly said that most women know how to use an iron but few know how it works".

The Ministry of Agriculture

The Home Economics Division is a sector of the Extension Services of the Ministry and is headed by the Programme Coordinator, a qualified Home Economist.

The importance of this Division can be readily appreciated in the light of the integral part played by the rural women in maintaining a well-run home; adequate nutritional standard; proper management of home resources and the care of children and other members of the household.

Essentially, the Home Economics activities are intended to provide a proper balance to the agricultural activities carried out by the men.

The Home Economics in the Ministry of Agriculture assist the rural women to utilise more effectively some of the products grown on the farms. For example, too often farmers sell or dispose of most of the product of high nutritional value to the detriment of their families.

In addition, while exercising this level of management in home affairs because of the more business-like approach of the women in many instances the farm-wife supports the farmer by assisting him in all the business decisions, for example, selling a produce or obtaining inputs, leaving the strictly agricultural chores to the male farmers themselves.

A brief overview of the Home Economics Division of the Ministry, as prepared by the Programme Coordinator, Mrs. N.C. Jones, is given at Appendix III which speaks for

THE WOMEN'S BUREAU

Special mention must be made of the contribution by the Women's Bureau on behalf of the development of Jamaican women and in particular the women in rural Jamaica.

A Women's Desk was established by Government in October 1974 in the Ministry of Youth and Community Development. In 1975 the Women's Desk was upgraded and renamed The Women's Bureau located in the Prime Minister's Office.

The following is quoted from an article supplied by the Bureau for the year 1978:

Aims, Objectives, Functions and Activities of the Women's Bureau

The aims of the Women's Bureau are to seek ways in which Government machinery can help to improve the status and promote the development of women in society.

Its main objectives are:

(a) To identify the status and condition of women in Jamaica society;

(b) To assist in promoting policies and programmes to integrate women into the overall plan for National Development.

In order to pursue our aims and objectives, the functions of the Bureau are:

(a) To collect and collate information on the status of women;

(b) To establish contract with women so as to ensure their full participation in the process of development;

(c) To educate the public as to the problems and potentials of women;

(d) To provide a counselling service for women to inform them of their legal rights and of the programmes and services available to them;

(e) To liaise with Government, non-Government and voluntary organisations with a view to improving the cooperation and coordination of all these programmes which affect the welfare of women;

(f) To work with and keep informed of the programmes being carried out by the United Nations and other Regional and International Agencies.

One of the priority areas of the Bureau relates particularly to rural women.

Much of the Bureau's activities are now centred on rural women, particularly in the area of employment by provision of skills (usually non-traditional).

With specific reference to the rural programme the Bureau endeavours to make women aware of their inner potential and educate them of existing community resources as well as the services offered.

We will continue directing women who are unemployed into skill training, where possible, and act as a catalyst to integrate them into planned and existing programmes of both Government and non-Government agencies.

A number of programmes and projects have been started and the following information makes mention of them:

Women's Bureau Seminar

On the 21st March, 1978, the Bureau held their half-day Seminar at Jamaica House. The Seminar was attended by members of Government and non-Government agencies and it sought to promote and strengthen the relationships between the Women's Bureau and Government Ministries and other Government Bodies.

Parish Workshop

The Bureau conducted a one-day Workshop on 16th August, in the area of Black River, St. Elizabeth. The Workshop was attended by over 200 unemployed women in the area, who identified the resources which exist in the area and their need of income-generating activities. The Bureau through the Regional Officer is working with other relevant Government and non-Government agencies in the area to plan and develop programmes and projects for women.

Economic and Social Projects

The Women's Bureau has been active in instituting a number of economic and social projects.

1. A pilot Project initiated by the Bureau in 1976, in which 35 women drawn from our Special Employment Programme and 2 men are presently employed in making household and day care furniture and toy manufacturing. The group is continuously being trained in cooperative and business management. This programme sought to equip unskilled women with non-traditional skills to enhance their employment possibilities and to provide productive employment within a framework of self-reliance and cooperation.

2, The Seivright Gardens Project is carried on by a group of women who were given training in leather craft. This training was made possible through a fund from CADEC. At present they are producing leather belts, bags, identification tags, etc.

3. The Women's Centre was established in April of this year at 42 Trafalgar Road, catering for pregnant school girls between the ages of 14-16.

This Centre provides continuing education for the girls and plans to return them to schools in order to complete their education. We are pleased to say all the girls have now been accepted in schools for the September term when another group will enter the Centre.

We are relying on our Minister of Education to provide within the Education Code a clear policy statement which will make it mandatory for girls who find themselves in this situation to be given the opportunity to return to school to complete their education.

The Centre also caters for a group of unemployed and unskilled young mothers some of whom are presently receiving skill training by the Vocational Training Institute, in heavy vehicle driving, while others are engaged in leather craft and alabaster at the Social Development Commission Cooperative.

All school girls at the Centre have classes in academic subjects, Family Planning, drama and music, which was started in September of the year under review.

It should be noted that this project which also provides a day-care facility has been funded by the International Planned Parenthood Foundation and Pathfinder, and a teaching staff of lecturers.

(4) Other groups which the Bureau is actively involved includes Majesty Pen Women's Club in Kingston. They are an economically viable cooperative, engaged in producing tye and dye sheets, pillow cases, bedspreads and drapes.

In the rural areas, we have already identified groups of women whom we are encouraging into economic projects.

(5) One such project - a Goat-Rearing Project - in the South Manchester area where women are already engaged in rearing goats on their own land. The Bureau has just acquired funds for this project from the Netherlands Government, so that this project can generate income for the participants.

(6) The other programmes in South Manchester will engage women in Poultry Rearing and production of Spices and Teas. At the moment we are carrying out a survey of natural resources and collaborating with the Jamaica Industrial Develop-

funding to enable approximately 100 women to benefit economically from bammie production. A number of women have already been producing bammies on a small scale and have identified a number of markets both locally and overseas.

(8) The Irwin Home for Girls is a residential home being established in Montego Bay for girls who have left home for one reason or another and was not receiving support from parent or guardian. This home will seek to provide education marketable skills for the girls, and with the cooperation they are receiving from other agencies in and around Montego Bay, it is hopeful that the Home will become a reality before the end of the year.

(9) Worthy of note too, is our Special Development Fund which the Bureau seeks to establish as a funding source for existing and new projects which have a strong women's component. Our aim is to motivate all interested agencies to ensure that women are brought into the main-stream of development. Such a fund will also assist community groups of women involved in economic self-help activities, to purchase equipment, live-stock and other items important to the economic survival of a particular project. This particular programme for which we are now establishing a mechanism will seek funds from both local and international agencies.

Future Plans

Funds have already been made available to identify areas where women in vulnerable positions could be mobilised for economic activity. Four parishes - St. Mary, St. Catherine, St. James and Hanover - have been chosen. Groups considered most vulnerable must fulfill the following criteria:

1. The unemployed among the higher fertility age group (14-29) who have dependent children or are potential mothers and have no visible means of support.

2. The unemployed among the lower fertility age group (30-49) who have dependent children and minimal support.

The Bureau expects to pursue economically visable projects in areas such as crafts, including furniture-making and metal works. It is hoped to establish a national commission on the status of women.

Already the process of integration at the planning level has begun by working closely with the National Planning Agency to ensure that in the National Planning the needs of women are taken into account and that an integrated approach is adopted, and that a request for technical assistance reflects an awareness of the need to involve women both as participants and beneficiaries.

WOMEN'S BUREAU - JAMAICA

A Women's Desk was established by Government in October 1974 in the Ministry of Youth and Community Development. The main object of this Unit was -

> "to seek ways in which Government machinery might help to improve the status and promote the welfare of women in the Society."

In keeping with the Declaration of Mexico - paragraph 5 - in 1975 the Women's Desk was upgraded and renamed the Women's Bureau as -

> "a special unit located in a central position within the machinery of Government (Prime Minister's Office) with responsibility for research and data collection, assessment and evaluation of all programmes, coordination of services for women, investigation of discrimination against women, public education and direct social services to specific groups of women".

It is impossible to itemize all the activities, projects, counselling areas for this brief paper. However, an attempt has been made to record a representative coverage from the wide spectrum of activities.

In its first year the Bureau understood research and study experimentation which led to further action in the following areas:

1. to assess present Government and non-government programmes so as to get some better understanding of the extent to which women are involved either as participants or beneficiaries;

2. to develop with the agencies concerned appropriate strategies to increase the level of participation of women;

3. to develop new approaches to the problems facing women in our society trying as far as possible to achieve coordination of effort between Government and non-Government agencies.

The programmes are mentioned below as examples of needed action at that time:

(a) Motivation of young women to make better use of opportunities for Skill Training. The Programme was designed to involve the staff of Training Institutions in the development of strategies for increasing the level of participation of young women in vocational training, particularly in non-traditional fields,such as carpentry.

(b) The development of Audio-Visual material for motivational programmes.

The Women's Bureau is an agent of social change and inherent in all the programmes are components such as Family Planning, Secondary Education, Health, Personal Development, and Literacy. The Bureau also campaigns to modify the distorting influence of social mass media where it refers to the treatment of women by the creation of stereo-type which are devaluing and/or restricting.

The Bureau continues to advocate through discussion and circulate guidelines to the Government Information Service and the Ministry of Education that the media must try to enhance rather than debase the quality of life in our women.

An example for a contribution by the Bureau to one of the most pressing problems among young women is the service being given at The Women's Centre.

The Women's Centre

In Kingston in 1979 a Women's Centre was established. This Centre caters to pregnant teenage girls between the ages of 14-16 who opt out of the school system because of their condition. Through the programme at the Centre the majority of these girls have successfully returned to the regular school system in order to complete their education. In one year this successful pilot project has shown that of two hundred girls only three second pregnancies occurred and this was due to religious reasons.

The Centre also caters for a group of unemployed and unskilled young mothers, some of whom are presently receiving skill training at the Vocational Training Institue.

A Day Care Centre is attached to The Women's Centre.

Rural Areas

Much of the Bureau's activities are centred on rural women. The main objectives of these programmes are to make rural women aware of their potential and also to provide for them the opportunities for training in skills in both the traditional and non-traditional fields. Rural women have been traditionally engaged in agriculture but at the simpliest levels. The Bureau encourages the participation in forestry, soil conservation, agro-industry and wider and diversified use of raw material in craft industries.

Success in these efforts is shown by the establishment of many projects, among which are:

(a) Goat-rearing in Grove Town, South Manchester

(b) Bammie-making in St. Elizabeth

(c) Pig-rearing in Portland

These projects are carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and other agencies within the community, such as, Health, JAMAL, (Literacy), Social Development Commission, and the Cooperative Development Unit.

The Bureau also liaises with the United Nations and other international and regional organisations which are involved in specific programmes for women.

It is hoped to establish a National Commission on the Status of Women. The Bureau has begun the process of integration at the planning level by working closely with the National Planning Agency to ensure that in National Planning the needs of women are taken into account, that an integrated approach is adopted and that the requests for technical assistance reflect an awareness of the need to involve women both as participants and as beneficiaries.

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS

The women of Jamaica today are independent, vocal and leaders in their communities. No longer can they be subjected to the peripheral positions in the higher eschelons of the political, administrative, executive and productive fields. This fact is especially applicable in the case of urban women.

Gradually, rural women have become involved in more than farming and household chores. In many instances they have become skilled in what was traditionally man's domain. Considerable restriction in obtaining requisite training continues to debar rural women from many areas of employment. Nothwithstanding, in leadership positions, women are numerically stronger than men and occupy influential posts.

Goals of Rural Women

The type of economic structure in areas outside of the cities and towns places much constraint on the goals and motivational patterns of rural men and women. The goals and hopes of these women are centred in their children. They conceive their children's future in terms which they themselves were never able to realise. This over-powering need leads to a seeming harsh discipline and attitude towards children. There is also the necessity to enter into liaison with men able to contribute to the fulfilment of the goals for the children.

The tendency on the part of women to be "independent" arises from sheer necessity and common sense. A woman realises that the position of the man in the household is tenuous, even relatively uncertain. In many cases his finances are insufficient to support the members of the household or family, so she gains partial independence by owning her own small plot of land. In addition, she keeps part of the returns of the produce from her partner's land.

The economic strength of the woman in the home has forced her to assume the role of actual head of the household despite the effort of the man to present himself as the patriarchal head.

There is little argument against the de facto situation in which women are made to take secondary positions especially in the national decision-making process. For while the laws and institutions proclaim equally, the values, attitudes and practices of the society create a milieu in which women are considered for the most part subordinate, lacking in confidence and intellectually unprepared to assume positions alongside men in the mainstream of power and decision-making.

It rests squarely on the shoulders of women to be their own best advocates and to create opportunities for training in every field and at every level.

The following suggestions merely reiterate areas in which rural women could make greater contribution giving them a sense of accomplishment and involvement in nation building, and also additional income in some instances.

1. Agro-industrial activities such as in the preservation of various food items. Techniques and food processing, preservation and conservation equipment should be made available.

2. Training should be intensified to qualify rural women to undertake positions as: Guidance Counsellors in schools and in Community Centres; Assistants for the after-care of discharged sick persons, for the disabled and for the handicapped.

3. In addition, all Agricultural Institutions should make a determined effort to attract more young women as students in agriculture in order to provide adequately trained teachers in the schools and as technical persons in the fields.

4. Itinerant Workshops should be formed by voluntary skilled persons to train young people and provide incentive for pursuing courses in agriculture, home economics and related fields.

5. More women should be trained in co-operative principles and managerial skills that they may be suitably qualified for employment in cooperative enterprises.

6. Promotion of more small cooperative enterprises for production and marketing manned primarily by women, should be intensified.

7. Integrated or special training programmes should be developed for women in rural areas to enable them to participate fully and productively in economic and social development to take advantage of technological advances and thereby reduce the drudgery of their daily lives. Such programmes should include training in modern methods of agriculture and use of equipment, including animal husbandry, cooperatives, marketing, health nutrition, family planning and education.

8. More intensive health edcuation in the deepest parts of rural Jamaica, emphasising such aspects as adequate nutrition, pre-natal and post-natal care and especially programmes to deal with prejudices, taboos and superstition.

In conclusion, the write wishes to underscore the urgency of specific measures being taken to provide appropriate data and information on a sex basis, also on a rural/urban dichotomy which would assist in determining more precisely the status and roles of rural women.

APPENDIX I

International Publications

BUENOS AIRES- 22-30 MARCH, 1976 ESA/SDAHA/AC 10-CP 6	-	Regional Seminars on: "The Participation of Women in Economical, Social and Political Development: Obstacles that hinder their integration.
MORIYAMA, Mrs. Marjumi - Japan	-	United Nations Seminar on: National Machinery to Accelerate the Intergration of Women in Development and to Eliminate Discrimination on Grounds of Sex
OPI/CES I NOTE IWY/15	-	Situation and Status of Women Today. Some Essential Facts - United Nations Centre for Economic and Social Information - December 1976.
CIM	-	Inter-American Commission of Women General Secretary - Organisation of American State - Y.C. 1975 Special Committee for Studies and Recommendations of the Inter-American Commission of Women for the World Conference of International Women's Year
CIM	-	Inter-American Commission of Women Studies - No. 2 - Special Committee for Studies and Recommendation of the Inter-American Commission of Women for the World Conference of International Women's Year. Organization of American State 1975.

APPENDIX II

SOCIO - ECONOMIC

CLARKE, Edith	-	My Mother Who Fathered Me - 1957
HENRY, Francis & Wilson	-	The Status of Women in Caribbean Societies: Social and Economic Studies - 1975
KATZIN, Margaret	-	The Business of Higglering in Jamaica: Social and Econimic Studies - 1960
KRUIJER, G.T.	-	Man - Woman - Child Relationship (Restrictive) Sociological Report on the Christiana Area - 1968
KERR, Madeline	-	Personality and Conflict in Jamaica 1952
COHEN, YEHUDI	-	Structure and Function - Family Organisation
FONER, Nabcy	-	Status and Power in Rural Jamaica - A Study of Educational and Political Change - 1973
SMIKLE, C. Taylor H.	-	Higgler Survey - 1977
SIMEY, T.S.	-	Welfare & Planning in the West Indies 1946

APPENDIX III

HOME ECONOMICS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

This name comprises all disciplines in an educational programme designed to effect management in a home in order to save. The contributory sciences include physiology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, chemistry and bacteriology. Other subjects include education and management.

The Areas of Work

Drawn from these disciplines the areas of work are:

- Food for the Family
- Clothing for the Family
- Home and Money Management to include Budgeting for the Family
- Child Care, Family Welfare and Personal Hygiene
- Family Planning/Population Education
- Art as applied to the Home.

METHODS OF OPERATION

1. Group Formation

These groups - Rural Home-makers Clubs - are organised to enable the family members, particularly the women to -

(a) identify the Extension Officer (Home Economics) to whom they should look for leadership;

(b) organise their activities so that they can attend regular training sessions in the communities.

2. Residential Training Courses

In collaboration with the Training Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture where schedule is prepared annually, these courses are held at the two training centres which are equipped to accommodate women, viz: Canaan in St. James

and Twickenham Park in St. Catherine. Each course has a duration of 4 days and methodology includes the following:

- Lecture Demonstrations
- Group Work
- Individual Work
- Educational Tours
- Evaluation

Films and film strips form a part of the audio-visual aids during the course.

3. INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES

One aspect of the policy of the Ministry of Agriculture places emphasis on the provision of income or the improvement of incomes for farm families. The establishing of income-generating activities allows for the achievement of the aims of this broad principle.

Goal

For the Extension Officers (Home Economics) to reach the families of the 285,171 farmers identified in the Farmers' Register, as well as other families in the rural areas, depending on the employment to staff to achieve the ratio of 1 to each of the 65 agricultural divisions, has been recommended but not yet achieved.

OBJECTIVE

The overall objective is to improve the quality of life of the rural families through an educational programme which seeks to:

1. Teach skills by which the homemakers can improve the performance of household chores.

2. Teach skills by which they can participate in income-generating activities.

APPENDIX IV

RESEARCH PAPERS - GENERAL

1.	PITTS, Cynthia	Women and their Citizenship in Jamaica; Current Laws and Practices which Discriminate against Women - 1974-75
2.	HEYWOOD, C. Lawton and ROBINSON, Victor	The Divorce Law - 1974-75
3.	ST. HYLTON, Bryon	The Income Tax Regulation and National Insurance Act
4.	BONNER, Richard FRANKSON, Barrington & FORSYTHE, Nelton	Rape and Carnal Abuse - 1974-75
5.	BLOOMFIELD, Holly	The Affiliation Act - 1974-75
6.	GRAY, Christine	The Changing Status of Women in the Arts - 1975
7.	WILLIAMS, Sonya Harris	Jamaican Women in Development
8.	BOLAND, Barbara	Employment
9.	WINT, Eleanor	Housing
10.	MUSCHETTE, Pat	Health Services
11.	DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS	Legal Status of Jamaica Women
12.	WOMEN'S BUREAU	Skill Training Opportunities
13.	MATHURIN, Lucille	The Rural Woman in the British Caribbean during Slavery - 1975
14.	WYRE, Iothe	A Study of the Occupation of the Jamaica Market Woman
15.	BENJAMIN, Barbara	Group Organisation within an Urban Market
16.	TAYLOR, Florette	Study of the Allman Town Community U.W.I. Students Availability of Skill Learning - Provided by Government and Voluntary Social Agencies for Women in Kingston & St. Andrew

17. BALFOUR, Carol — Women in Prison (Confidential)

18. MID-EASTERN SOROPTOMISTS — Rural Women - A Study of Needs of Women in the Linstead Area

Papers Nos. 6 to 18 were presented as a background material at the Conference for International Women's Year, Kingston, 1975.

APPENDIX V

ANNUAL REPORTS - ORGANISATIONS IN JAMAICA

1. Jamaica Federation of Women - 1979

2. Y.W.C.A. of Jamaica - 1978-1979

3. The Council of Voluntary Social Services in Jamaica - March 1979

4. Report of Cooperative Department - 1978 to March 1979

5. Curriculum Guide - Grades 7, 8, & 9

   Home Economics

   Technical & Vocational Education

   Ministry of Education - Jamaica

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Autor

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