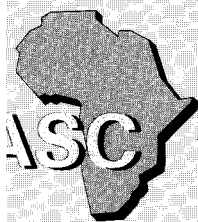


Deborah Fahy Bryceson

**Easing Rural Women's Working Day
in Sub-Saharan Africa**



AFRIKA-STUDIECENTRUM

African Studies Centre/Centre d'Etudes Africaines

P.O.Box 9555 / 2300 RB LEIDEN / The Netherlands

Working Paper
vol. 16 / 1993

Easing Rural Women's Working Day in Sub-Saharan Africa

Deborah Fahy Bryceson

Working Paper vol.16 / 1993
African Studies Centre - Leiden

© 1993 D.F. Bryceson	Dfl. 5.00
----------------------	-----------

Copies may be ordered from the **African Studies Centre**,
P.O.Box 9555, 2300 RB Leiden, The Netherlands.
Prices do not include postage.

ISBN 90-5448-006-8

CIP-GEGEVENS KONINKLIJKE BIBLIOTHEEK, DEN HAAG

Bryceson, Deborah Fahy

Easing Rural Women's Working Day in
Sub-Saharan Africa / Deborah Fahy Bryceson - Leiden:
African Studies Centre - (Working Papers /
African Studies Centre, ISSN 0924-3534; vol . 16)
Met Bibliogr.
ISBN 90-5448-006-8
Trefw.: Vervoer; Africa / Vrouwen ; Africa

**Easing Rural Women's Working Day
in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Deborah Fahy Bryceson
African Studies Centre, Leiden

February 1993

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	1
1. Introduction	1
2. Western Perceptions of African Rural Women's Work	2
2.1 Colonial Presumption: Women rooted to the Soil	2
2.2 Post-Colonial Preoccupation: Comparing Male and Female Labour Contributions	4
3. Addressing Gender Inequality: External Donor Agency Efforts	6
3.1 Redundancy of Housewives	6
3.2 Projecting the Right Role	7
3.3 Back to Female Endurance Assumptions: Women in Structural Adjustment Programmes	9
4. Western Impact for Better or Worse	10
4.1 Off- Target Projects	11
4.2 Miscasting Women in a Household Setting	13
5. An Alternative Approach: Homestead Economics	16
6. Generational Change: Mind over Matter	18
6.1 Outline of a Girls' Homestead Training and Income-Generating Programme	19
6.2 Sliding into Gender Stereotyping?	22
7. Conclusion	23
Bibiliography	25

Easing Rural Women's Working Day in Sub-Saharan Africa

Deborah Fahy Bryceson

African Studies Centre, Leiden

February 1993

Abstract

This paper examines the inter-face between rural African women's work conditions and Western perceptions and interventions to address them. From a schematic review of Western attitudes towards African rural women's work, the paper moves on to consider donor intervention directed at improving rural women's status. The central question posed is how external donor agencies can extend beyond localized project efforts to provide the material foundation for facilitating widespread change in women's working day of a self-determining nature. A 'homestead economics' approach is suggested as a catalyst for change.

1. Introduction

In the space of two and a half decades, documentation on African rural women's work lives has moved from a state of dearth to plethora. Awareness of women's arduous work day and the importance of women agriculturalists to national economies is now commonplace amongst African policy-makers and Western donor agencies. Throughout the dramatic upheaval in African development policy of recent years, as state and market forces realign, donor agencies have consistently espoused a concern to improve the material conditions and status of rural women at the household level. Nonetheless, economic and social forces intensifying rural women's working day throughout Sub-Saharan Africa overwhelm donors' scattered projects directed at alleviating women's workload. This paper considers shortcomings of Western donor agency intervention and recommends alternative measures for easing rural women's workload. Western attitudes to African women's working day is briefly reviewed before examining existing types of interventions and suggesting other possible forms of donor action.

2. Western Perceptions of African Rural Women's Work

Western conceptions of the role of female labour in African rural societies can be divided into two main categories roughly co-inciding with the colonial and post-colonial periods.

2.1 Colonial Presumption: Women rooted to the Soil

British colonial officials were well aware of women's role as agricultural producers in the local agrarian economy. In fact the continuation of this role was the underlying premise of colonial policy for the rural areas. Thus, male labour could be siphoned from rural areas for colonial mining and plantation enterprises because household provisioning of subsistence food needs was women's work. Women were seen as the embodiment of hearth and home, providing male migrants with their starting and ending points in a bachelor-waged, circular migration labour system. The colonial administration could pride itself on its avoidance of the dreaded 'de-tribalized native' and urbanization.

The creation of large industrial centres with workers completely divorced from food production would be an entire innovation of very doubtful desirability; it appears most unlikely to occur. The African man, and still more the woman, is firmly attached to the soil, and the whole fabric of social organization is based upon the right to cultivate; it thus seems probable that the native will always aim at having his own home among his own crops...(Orde-Browne 1926: 72).

The above quotation reveals the central paradox of the colonial perception of women. Women were most strongly identified with agricultural production, yet the rural home and the crops were perceived to belong to the man, the head of household, even if he exercised his headship *in abstentia* as was so often the case. In many patrilineal areas, this male supremist conception was congruous with local attitudes. However, colonial male bias was derived more from pragmatic considerations of tax collection rather than conformity to local customs. Men were encouraged to earn cash incomes through wage labour and cashcropping so that they could pay household taxes. Outside of tax collection, the colonial state's relationship to rural households was

of a *laissez-faire* nature. Women, as the central pillars of household provisioning, were left to their own devices.

It was only when household welfare reached critical, i.e. starvation, levels that colonial policies became interventionist. Policies for famine prevention and relief were prominent features of district administration (Bryceson 1980 & 1990). Malnutrition became an area of concern which led to the appointment of 'Lady Anthropologists' to investigate the problem (Chilver 1992: 108).¹ One of the earliest studies was done by Audrey Richards, dealing with the Northern Rhodesian labour reserve of Bembaaland. Richards (1939) documented the constraints women faced in household provisioning, from field production to food preparation and distribution to immediate and extended family. She argued that:

Though the unit of male labour is often non-existent, with the absence of so many of the men at the mines, the domestic and gardening economy of the women remains for the most part intact, and there seems no doubt that women deserted for months or even years by their husbands are more happily placed in a matrilineal community than in a patrilineal one (Richards 1969 (1939): 131).

Despite her general pronouncement that the absence of men did not cause a disruption to agricultural production, her careful documentation of the Bemba agrarian economy revealed several gaps. Notably men's tree cutting and fencing tasks were missed, resulting in reduced planting and heavier game depredation on crops. Perhaps, most telling was Richards' observation of women's not infrequent lack of a 'will to work'.² Adequate household food supplies were usually on hand yet women lacked the energy to labouriously pound and cook them for domestic consumption.

¹ The British colonial service otherwise did not hire women (Rogers 1980: 47).

² "In fact, so-called 'laziness' may be directly due to diet deficiencies, or to their more indirect effects on human appetites or the will to work. The immediate disadvantage of grinding and pounding to a tired woman may seem more obvious than the ultimate weakness she knows she will feel if she goes without her evening meal" (Richards 1969 (1939): 399-400).

Phyllis Kaberry (1952), investigating the economic position of women in Bamenda, British Cameroons, recognized that men did make timely inputs into the community's agricultural production:

...the European observer, confronted by the spectacle of women bending over their hoes through the day while a number of men may be seen lounging in the compounds, are apt to regard the division of labour as not only inequitable but as an exploitation of the female sex. Such an attitude, however, fails to take into account the contribution made by the men in the heavier tasks, more especially in the dry season; and, secondly, the onus on them to earn money for household necessities (Kaberry 1952: 27).

Kaberry argued that needs were limited, which in turn limited men's productive output, leaving women to do the bulk of household provisioning of subsistence food requirements.

The income from [palm] oil may be pitifully small; nevertheless it is in excess of a man's needs, as traditionally conceived, and provides the small surplus which may be set aside as a contribution to marriage payment for another wife for himself or for a younger brother or adolescent son. Without the incentive to accumulate wealth for this purpose both before and after marriage, the temptation for the average male to sink back into a state of bibulous lethargy would, I think, prove overwhelming, particularly in view of the fact that the women provide most of the food...(Kaberry 1952: 26).

2.2 Post-Colonial Preoccupation: Comparing Male and Female Labour Contributions

Ester Boserup's (1970) work entitled Women's Role in Economic Development was a watershed in Western perceptions of African rural women's work. Sifting research findings world-wide, she related patterns of the sexual division of labour and population density to different agricultural modes of production. Her argument confirmed what every colonial administrator had taken for granted: female labour is the lynchpin to African hoe agriculture. This knowledge, however, had new implications.

In rural areas, government taxation had moved from simple poll and hut tax collection to exactions on agricultural production. Post-colonial governments and donor agencies had embarked

on ambitious programmes to '*develop*' agriculture, '*modernizing*' it and raising its productivity. Hoe production was considered inefficient. Boserup's title summed it all up. Women had a role to play in economic development. As Sub-Saharan Africa's mainstay producers, they were a valuable productive asset.

Boserup's book also attracted Western feminists but for different reasons. More than anywhere else, African women cultivators approached the feminist ideal of autonomous female producers. So began the untireless enterprise of feminist researchers, documenting the gender division of labour in rural societies throughout the continent. Highlighting female labour contributions in detailed labour allocation studies, these researchers have generated a veritable mountain of ethnographic data.

In general, the research findings (see, for example, Hafkin and Bay (eds.) 1976; Bay (ed.) 1982; Robertson and Berger (eds.) 1986; Stichter and Parpart (eds.) 1988; and Davison (ed.) 1988) suggest that whatever autonomy African women have is conditioned by their ascribed role and relationship to others in the community. Studies repeatedly document the corrosive force of the market and the state on rural communities and women's place in those communities (Bukh 1979; Afonja 1986; Sender and Smith 1990). Given men's headstart in dealings with the state and as participants in labour and commodity markets, women's access to productive resources mediated by the state and market are systematically disadvantaged. Women's commitment to food crop production for household consumption becomes a liability, while men are free to capitalize on cashcrop production opportunities. State provisioning of improved inputs and agricultural extension is beamed at men who produce the taxable crops, as opposed to the subsistence crops. Female heads of households are doubly disadvantaged (Kossoudji and Mueller 1983 and Bukh 1979). Without male spouses, they lack even indirect access to *modernized* agriculture and its associated cash income. Alongside these tendencies, women's labour day has intensified in response to population pressure and, in some cases, environmental degradation. Fallow periods are reduced leading to the need for fertility-enhancing measures which, in the case of women, tend to be labour rather than capital-intensive (Airey and Barwell 1991). As population pressure builds up, distances to firewood and water sources as well as agricultural fields increase, necessitating long daily journeys for women laden with heavy loads (Bryceson and Howe 1992).

3. Addressing Gender Inequality: External Donor Agency Efforts

Western donor agencies' response to recent research findings has been conditioned by uncertainty. The existing literature on rural women in Sub-Saharan Africa is primarily in the form of field studies generated by social scientists, especially anthropologists. Despite the clear finding that gender inequities permeate African agrarian societies, the sheer weight of case study detail has been an obstacle preventing the collation and generalization of findings at national and regional levels, which would facilitate relevant policy formulation for rural women. Furthermore, external agencies have an ambiguous role vis-a-vis the African rural population. Donor agencies are there to *develop* rather than to *civilize* the resident population. The colonial civilizing mission was bent on direct cultural transfer. External agencies pose as more tolerant missionaries willing to accept local customs and mores.

However, donor agencies' handling of women's development issues is an obvious example of the impossibility of external funding agencies' cultural neutrality. Because the role of women has been so hotly contested in their own societies, external agencies are under pressure to promote a normative notion of what activities women in recipient countries should be pursuing to gain gender equality. This has led to an entrenched pattern of Western donor initiatives directed at rural women.

3.1 Redundancy of Housewives

Barbara Rogers' (1980) book The Domestification of Women published ten years after Boserup's contribution, built on the work of Boserup and feminist scholars, formulating a cogent argument which challenged donor agencies' and development planners' assumptions about rural women's 'natural place' in non-industrialized countries. Tracing Western misconceptions back to the colonial period, Rogers charged that Third World women, traditionally used to being productive agents in their own right, had, through external intervention, been relegated to the domestic sphere, encouraged to conform to Western middle-class notions of a housewife's familial role. She went on to suggest that the decline of staple food production experienced in many countries could be related to donors' failure to provide incentives to women producers.

Rogers' book signalled a turning point. Western donor agencies were establishing much more serious and better funded women's programmes. Some donor agencies, notably USAID, had taken an early lead in requiring all their project proposals to include a consideration of the project's impact on women whatever the nature of the project (Tinker 1990). The Western donor emphasis during the 1980s was on enhancing rural women's capabilities as autonomous producers. Efforts to 'domesticate' women were considered inappropriate. Instead women were to 'go public' seeking economic activities outside of the home.

3.2 Projecting the Right Role

Reaching rural women directly was a major concern of donor agencies. Field study evidence suggested that rural women were increasingly becoming encircled by male-dominated markets and the state. Male bias in national and regional policy formulation led donor agencies to distrust the male bureaucracy with the implementation of women's programmes. Grassroots projects were the obvious way of circumventing this constraint and coincided with Western feminist preferences for non-hierarchical structures. Projects tended to be entrusted to local non-governmental organizations and based on the principle that after initial training by an external agent, the women participants would take control of the project. Women-only projects were the norm, justified in terms of the desire to avoid male interference in decision-making and disagreements between women and men over the project's resource allocation. This formula for women's projects evolved quite naturally.³ Controversy however raged in donor quarters and amongst feminist academics about the ultimate objectives of women's projects, whether they were essentially offering economic improvement or political empowerment. It was over this issue that the orientation of donor agency women's programmes divided.

³ Buvinic sanguinely argues that this approach conformed with donor agencies' needs. Projects based on voluntary labour were cheaper and easier to implement than other types of interventions. Reliance on NGOs offered an easy entry point at a time when most governments in developing countries were not convinced of the legitimacy of gender issues. Overall, "[t]he project orientation favored by donor agencies to expand poor women's economic opportunities was more compatible with the limited financial resources allocated to women's issues; with the restricted clout of and access to policy makers that practitioners had in recipient countries; and with the need to build up a concrete record by the end of the Women's Decade that was easier accomplished through discrete interventions" (Buvinic 1989: 1049).

Moser (1989) traces the changing aims of women's projects historically, distinguishing different donor biases. The family welfare approach was an orientation drawing from the colonial model which viewed women primarily as mothers through which child welfare could be addressed. In the 1970s this approach came under heavy attack and was increasingly supplanted by the Women in Development (WID) approach. WID's original aim was to gain equity for women vis-a-vis men in the development process. It developed different variants. One, toned down gender considerations and focussed on class, taking an anti-poverty stance, becoming known as the Women and Development (WAD) approach. The other emphasized efficiency, and was directed at increasing women's work productivity. Disillusionment with the shortcomings of these approaches gave rise to the most recent variant which stresses the empowerment of women as a way of achieving equity with men, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach. Rathgeber (1990) traces the theoretical origins of the different approaches, identifying WID with modernization theory, WAD with underdevelopment theory and GAD with socialist feminism. She argues that GAD offers a more holistic approach to women and their social relations to men, taking account of women's reproductive activities as well as their productive work 'both inside and outside the household'.

While the aims and philosophical underpinnings of women's projects have steadily evolved as outlined above, the actual form of donor support and external intervention has not evidenced as much change. Income-generating projects have dominated. The belief that women can begin to gain equality with men by earning cash 'outside the household' has been implicit or explicit in most approaches and project designs. Projects directed at introducing labour-saving technology have arisen largely out of the realization that women often do not have time for income-generating activities in addition to their normal workload. Efforts to improve women's local resource access, another and the newest form of women's projects, are also hinged to a growing appreciation of the range of productive constraints on women's labour.

Despite the diversity of approaches and forms of projects, two features remain common to all. The objective of project intervention is to raise women's status vis-a-vis men. Secondly, as projects, these efforts are geographically localized and of limited duration. Their direct effect is usually restricted to relatively small numbers of women, whereas their indirect effect is difficult to

measure. In theory these projects are high-minded and status-conscious about women while in practice they are small and in need of status-raising themselves.

3.3 Back to Female Endurance Assumptions: Women in Structural Adjustment Programmes

Under the crisis conditions of the late 1980s and the 1990s, donor project orientation generally has increasingly given way to balance of payments support and sectoral finance to maintain crumbling infrastructure. In return, African governments have been forced to scale down state-led initiatives and give precedence to the market. Despite pronouncements to the contrary, women's projects have been vulnerable to budgetary cut-backs favouring infrastructural maintenance over social service development, the categorization that most women's projects continue to be lumbered with.

A countervailing tendency has, however, appeared amidst the economic crisis. The first hints of sectoral attention from some donor agencies has surfaced. Notably, the World Bank, USAID and Ford Foundation introduced programmes in 1988 that went beyond a project framework in an attempt to favourably influence policy formulation and sectoral development in relation to women.⁴

Nonetheless, on the whole, evidence points to rural women faring very poorly under structural adjustment programmes (Ardayfio 1986). The collapse of government finance has led to drastic retraction of essential public services. Serious cracks in the provisioning of health facilities, schools, rural water supplies, etc. have increased the work burden on rural women (Wagao 1988 and Leach 1990). Furthermore, the heightened emphasis on production for the market in structural adjustment programmes poses a dilemma for rural women (Bryceson 1992). How can women participate in increased commodity production in addition to their activities in food production, household maintenance and childcare? If they do not succeed in squeezing time out of their working day to increase participation in commodity production, they run the risk of being further marginalized from cash and access to local resources relative to the men. In circular fashion, we

⁴ The World Bank's Safe Motherhood Initiative and the USAID's Micro-enterprise Lending for the Poor Program (Buvinic 1989: 1048-50).

arrive back at our starting point: women's over-booked working day is the major stumbling block to their involvement in what donors perceive as 'status-enhancing' productive activities.

4. Western Impact for Better or Worse

Recent debates in a deconstructionist vein have questioned such fundamental concepts as *development* (Ferguson 1990). The term, 'development' is infused with Western cultural values and donor agencies whose *raison d'être* is development, cannot take the word for granted in the context of Africa. This paper is premised on a restricted notion of development. By eliminating prescriptive notions of what economic, social and cultural changes are inferred by 'development' and delimiting its definition to basic material welfare improvements through reductions in human wastage and want, then 'development' becomes a defensible term. In this sense, it can be argued that the process of development entails reductions in premature death, unnecessary suffering and physical deprivation, in line with the world's existing sustainable resource base, technical knowledge and humanitarian awareness.

Such material changes will almost invariably instigate cultural change, but the form of cultural adjustment will not be pre-determined. Culture evolves, be it in the form of political, social or ideological change, from people's existing cultural frameworks. Any donor intervention, whatever its purported purpose, gets re-aligned to local interests. Responsible donor intervention must have as its first objective progressive material change. However, if it is apparent that local interests, for example the prevailing gender relations, will subvert the target direction from the 'have-nots' to the 'haves', then further external efforts must be applied to keep the intervention on course. Off-course donor intervention results from intransigent local circumstances or from misconceived projects. Project design is often faulty, based on a misconstrued understanding of the objective situation in specific localities and/or rural Sub-Saharan Africa in general. This is a line of argument that will be explored below.

This sub-section reviews three types of donor projects in turn, namely, income-generating projects, labour-saving technology projects and improved local resource access projects. Practical shortcomings of each project type are considered, before proposing the missing elements of an

analytical framework, more reflective of African rural women's perspectives and goals, which could be used as a basis for better designed interventions.

4.1 Off-Target Projects

Due to their prevalence, income-generating projects have received substantial critical scrutiny (Buvinic 1986 and Bruce and Dwyer (eds.) 1988). As mentioned above, women's heavy workday is the main obstacle to the successful adoption of income-generating projects, in rural areas. Women, with the spare time to participate in such projects tend to be older or wealthier women who, it could be argued, are the least needy of cash amongst the female population. The limited time and erratic participation of younger women, i.e. mothers with heavy childcare and household provisioning responsibilities, usually yields insufficient individual benefits to warrant their project involvement.

Income-generating projects tend to offer a relatively restricted horizon for participants. Normally traditional female skills, such as sewing and cooking, are called upon rather than developing less gender-defined skills. Projects are commonly launched before sufficient market research has been undertaken. In extremely competitive or non-existent market situations, women participants have difficulty selling their labour-intensive products. If and when participants get reasonable earnings from a project, there is no certainty that women's increased income will change gender relations in the household. Detailed case study evidence provides no proof of a positive correlation between female earnings and a more balanced sexual division of labour within the household (McCormack *et al.* 1986).

The introduction and spread of labour-saving devices has made a deep impact on women in many areas. Most notable is the introduction of grinding mills. Women are recorded willing to headload their maize several kilometers to and from mills in order to avoid having to pound it by hand with the traditional mortar and pestle. Mbilinyi quotes one rural Tanzanian woman saying: "Pounding? That's colonisation. I'd rather go without some of my food to pay for the milling" (Mbilinyi 1987: 28). Hand mills that women could use in their homes scored a big success already in the 1950s in the Cameroons (O'Kelly 1978: 55-59). The provision of village water supplies is

also a large step forward, saving women from walking long distances carrying extremely heavy loads (Curtis 1986).

McCall (1987: 124) observes that most of the labour-saving devices and schemes so far introduced have concentrated on macro-scale technology delivery rather than introducing technology into the home. He speculates that state and donor agencies may prefer this scale due to ease of installation, maintenance and ultimate control. In the already cited example of hand mills which were utilized in the home, Chilver (1992: 124) notes that they were eventually displaced by large mechanized mills that were considered to be more modern. Cooking stoves, which are disseminated to households, are exceptional in this regard. Nonetheless, the main target user has been urban rather than rural women due to fuel crisis concerns in towns (Cecelski 1987: 58).

While women, as firewood and water collectors, take responsibility for most of household load carrying, nonetheless men are far more likely to gain access to intermediate forms of transport capable of reducing human effort in travel and load carrying (Bryceson and Howe 1992). In a village setting, ownership of scarce intermediate transport technology like bicycles symbolizes status and is usually monopolized by men. In some cases, productive utilization of bicycles by men or their female relations is foregone, since such usage would jeopardize the working order or appearance of the cycle from the perspective of the prestige-conscious male owner. Most often, however, ownership of intermediate forms of transport is a business proposition. Load carrying and passenger transport are services that are sold rather than put at the disposal of household subsistence provisioning. Men's easier acquisition of intermediate transport technology is primarily related to their greater purchasing power. 'Appropriate' intermediate technology from the perspective of village women is usually 'too expensive' rather than 'low-cost'.

The main criticism of the labour-saving project approach is the narrow range of devices being disseminated. Women's work could be facilitated by numerous tools and organizational improvements (Carr 1984).⁵ The range of devices presently being promoted only begins to address the reality of women's high physical mobility amidst continual multi-tasking and childcare responsibilities. A much more comprehensive array of devices is required. For example, various time-saving and light-weight kitchen utensils using local materials are needed to reduce the time

⁵ For example, the Intermediate Technology Development Group's (U.K.) publications catalogue provides a wealth of technical and organizational ideas for application to women's work lives.

women spend preparing food. Multi-purpose tools could be designed on the Swiss pen-knife model to save female energy on agricultural tasks and load carrying. Technology innovations to alleviate the difficulties posed by both the cumbersome size and weight of the multi-item loads women carry are a precondition for the introduction of many other labour-saving innovations.

Projects pursuing improvements in women's resource access are most recent and have not congealed into a set pattern, having first emerged in the context of South Asian local struggles over forestry and land usage. As population densities increase and reach critical levels in many rural areas of Africa, and as communal systems of land tenure give way under international pressure for African governments to sanction a market in land, women's extensive usufruct land rights are unlikely to be replaced at anywhere near parity levels. It is apparent that women's rights will have to be defended at regional and national levels as well as the local level. The South Asian model of localized struggle between large landowners and poor farmers is not strictly applicable in the Sub-Saharan African context. In many cases the powerbroker is a multi-tiered government rather than a rich, private monopolist. The issue of resource access in the rural African context will often have to confront national laws which overlook women or, in the case of laws which do offer women protection, make rural women aware of their rights and inform them of how they can go about exercising their legal rights.

The purpose of this sub-section has been to briefly review the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three main types of women's projects. The over-riding criticism that can be leveled at all three is that as projects, delimited in time and space, their impact is ephemeral. Specific projects may register marked success in their project area, but disappear virtually without trace at the completion of the formal project, having achieved little or no influence in a broader geographical sense.

4.2 Miscasting Women in a Household Setting

While Roger's anti-domestication has successfully exposed the fallacy of the 'homemaking' image for African women, Western perceptions of African women's working life in the rural areas remain slanted. The literature continues to cast African women in a house-bound setting analagous to that of women in Western society. Despite intentions to the contrary, Barbara

Rogers and other feminist theorists have perpetuated Western bias through their frequent reference to rural women's activities *in* and *outside* the household. Through this simple phrase, a welter of theoretical assumptions are implied regarding the function of the market and state as public institutions on the one hand, and the household as a private institution, on the other.

In Western industrialized countries, the state and market are public agencies distributing goods and services largely on an impersonal basis within class-divided societies. States and markets of this nature are still embryonic in Sub-Saharan Africa. The economic organization of lineages and more inter-personal forms of distribution have prevailed. Subsistence agricultural production, rather than commodity production, has been the norm. With increasing external intervention, the role of the market and state is growing in African rural societies, but it is premature to ignore the importance of the local community, village, clan, and extended family in determining distributive outcomes.

In the development literature, most of these inter-personal ties are encapsulated in the term 'household'. However, due to indiscriminate use of this term and its juxtapositioning to the Western-influenced notions of the 'state' and 'market', the term 'household' absorbs a number of misleading connotations.⁶

From a Western perspective, the words 'house', 'home' and 'hearth' conjure up images of physical protection and social warmth against *outside* elements, be it bad weather or uncaring state and market forces. The term 'household' has been used in this paper to refer solely to the occupants of a domestic unit. In the literature more generally, the term has imbibed geographical and social connotations which are, in fact, not strictly applicable to rural African domestic arrangements.

Western feminists are concerned with women's relegation to domestic labour within the household. In a figurative sense, women's confinement to the home, 'within its walls' is an image that is entirely alien to what rural African women face on a day-to-day basis. Houses, in much of rural Africa, traditionally did not and, it could be argued, do not presently have the same symbolic or physical importance as in the Western world. Houses, as physical shelters, are primarily for

⁶ For a discussion of the inadequacy of the concept of the household vis-a-vis domestic production, consumption and reproductive behaviour in Africa see Guyer (1986).

sleeping. Cooking, eating, entertaining and most of a woman's work life is usually conducted outside of the physical confines of the building. Furthermore, and more importantly, unlike in the West where the occupants of the house are usually immediate family and the people one would expect to share one's most intense emotional and financial ties, this cannot be assumed in rural Africa where the influence of lineages still holds sway and family relationships are of an extended nature, rarely contained within a single house.

The notion that a woman's worklife can be clearly delineated between work *within* and work *outside* the household is permeated with Western institutional assumptions. In Western industrial societies, traditionally, work within the household was restricted to 'housekeeping' and childcare, reflective of the household's function as a unit of consumption and reproduction. *Productive* work took place outside of the home both physically and organizationally. Such production was mediated by the market. In the rural African context, this dichotomy is distorting. Domestic residences are units of production as well as units of consumption and reproduction. Work, especially women's work, tends to be for subsistence, but also encompasses agricultural production destined for the market. In the course of their working day, women are not confined to the house. Women's work to provide the basic needs of household members for food, water and fuel takes them far beyond the geographical perimeter of the house, into the village and surrounding countryside. Furthermore, unlike their female counterparts in Western countries, their work is a classic example of vertical integration. A domestic residence's food, water and fuel supply are: 1) directly produced by the woman at its natural source in the field 2) physically delivered to the living quarters by the woman and 3) processed, i.e. subjected to value added production, by the woman, in other words, 'transformation work', before being 4) distributed to residential occupants for consumption.

This vertical productive process is not adequately captured by 'home economics'. Home economics, formerly termed 'domestic science', is a Western approach to women's household management conditioned by the European and North American experience of women's domestic activities that are delimited to the third and fourth spheres outlined above.

Ironically, the acceptance of Rogers' argument and the dismissal of a home economics perspective has led to very little systematic attention to the nature of African rural women's

domestic work burden. It is vital that due attention be placed on streamlining, if not eliminating, the arduous tasks that African rural women perform in the first and second as well as the third and fourth spheres listed above. By restricting consideration to women's 'productive' work in agriculture and for the market, primarily the first sphere, without addressing the severe labour constraints they face in the second and third spheres, Western donor agencies have, in pendulum fashion, over-reacted. Neither the colonial emphasis on women as housewives nor the present emphasis on women as market-oriented producers provides a balanced perspective for analyzing women's work and formulating effective interventions to ease women's multi-functional daily workload.

5. An Alternative Approach: Homestead Economics

There is need for a new approach which acknowledges that African rural women's work, not only spans, but *integrates* agricultural field work, transformation work and childcare in logistically complex arrangements. The term 'housework' is not applicable here. *Homestead work* is more pertinent since it embraces work in the domestic unit and on family agricultural holdings. *Homestead economics* is defined as the study of the allocation of rural women's labour as a scarce resource. In this section, the terminology and approach of homestead economics is outlined.

Homestead work consists of women's daily livelihood management. From the perspective of women themselves, such work is aimed at meeting basic needs and improving the standard of living of homestead members. While the latter objective is usually considered to be achieved through cash-earning opportunities such as increasing marketed agricultural production or participating in income-generating projects, the homestead's standard of living can also be improved through increased work efficiency which gives women more time to devote to homestead goods and service provisioning. Alternatively, the freed time can be spent as leisure, thereby raising women's standard of living.

Homestead economics, as a field of study, would entail the dissection of the detailed mechanics of women's work, questioning what, when, where, how, and why women's tasks are performed. Women's own perspective must be used as a starting point. This necessitates

household and village level studies employing a participatory research methodology to probe women's views regarding their work objectives and problems (Bryceson *et al.* 1981; Anderson 1984; Information Centre for Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture (ILEIA) 1989; and Chambers 1992).

Besides attitudinal study, various combinations of multi-disciplinary teams of social scientists, agronomists, engineers, technologists and physiologists, working in conjunction with local women are needed to systematically review the time, effort and spatial dynamics of women's work. These findings would reveal labour bottlenecks and provide the basis for advancing testable ideas regarding technical and socio-economic improvements. Improvements could include a wide range of measures tailored to the availability of local resources, the agricultural calendar, average household size and composition, etc. Emphasis should be placed on better management of the temporal and spatial dimensions of women's work which would help streamline multi-tasking activities and the demands of childcare. Family planning which takes account of household labour needs should be included. Most importantly, a homestead economics approach would aim to generate a far larger array of different functional types of appropriate technology tailored to the work demands of women in specific circumstances.

The question of dissemination and popularization of the studies' findings arises. The participatory research approach, if successful, would ensure that the findings are part of a self-discovery on the part of the women themselves. Organizational improvements would emerge through interaction between the external researchers and the local women. However, the indigenization of better homestead management and the dissemination and sustainability of more appropriate technology usage both in the locality studied and over a wider geographical perimeter in similar agro-ecological zones is a matter requiring special attention. Training courses, the publication of practical handbooks for literate women and the activation of women's groups are recommended but are not enough. Many women who are not directly involved in the research will not have the time, interest or literacy to be reached in this way. Thus, a new forward-looking strategy has to be developed to overcome the usual obstacles encountered in reaching women.

6. Generational Change: Mind over Matter

It is odd that while the influence of Western feminism has spilled into foreign donor programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa bringing about a much needed focus on rural women's labour constraints, so little of the accumulated experience and success in raising feminist consciousness in the West has been distilled and used to sensitively inform donor project design in Africa.

Over the course of the twentieth century, relative to rural women in the developing world, women in Western industrialized societies have been beneficiaries of a technological revolution which has reduced much of the erstwhile drudgerous domestic labour they performed. This has contributed to Western women's relatively high standard of living and available time for leisure pursuits or income earning outside the home. Alternatively, released time has resulted in women's involvement in more elaborate housekeeping (Cowan 1976).

Piped water and gas, electricity, domestic appliances such as ovens, refrigerators, washing machines, dryers and vacuum cleaners, as well as the automobile have, during the first half of this century, become relatively commonplace for women to utilize. This technological breakthrough, however, did not bring about a changed perception of the role of women in Western society. During the 1950s, women were strongly identified as housewives and mothers. It was only when technology afforded them more reliable means to control their reproduction, i.e. the pill, that a sufficient material basis for an ideological transformation was laid. The 1960s and the decades that followed witnessed a large-scale social movement in which women have sought to define new roles for themselves in society. Significantly, the initial groundswell for change consisted primarily of youthful women who challenged the view that they were destined to be first and foremost wives and mothers. The feminist movement's continuing momentum has been fueled by women's expectations of career options in addition to or in place of marriage and motherhood.

Rural African women's role expectations are different from Western women of the 1990s. Most rural African societies are strongly pro-natalist. Children are valued for economic and social reasons (Bryceson and Vuorela 1985). A woman's role as mother profoundly defines her identity

in the rural society. Birth rates are high.⁷ Infertility is viewed by the society at large and by infertile women themselves as personal failure and is often grounds for divorce. Through giving birth, women achieve social acceptance and security. Group approval and solidarity is central to a woman's life in rural Africa where fluctuations of climate and health create a high risk environment.

A rural woman's daily workload is primarily directed at meeting the basic needs of children and other homestead members. Women rely on work support from their children. Without an array of domestic appliances to lighten their work burden, children's labour input is of considerable utility (Kamuzora 1986). Increasingly, however, children are attending school which reduces their labour contribution to the homestead and places more pressure on women's labour. It is in this context that women's need for the innovations that homestead economics could generate is particularly acute. Nonetheless, it is women of childbearing age with families to provision who have the least amount of time to respond to donor-initiated women's projects aimed at lessening their labour constraint.

There is, however, a way out of this seemingly intractable situation. Not all of the female population have 'over-booked' work schedules. Teen-aged girls, who in many African countries are school-leavers with up to seven years primary education, tend to have less time commitments. Without children of their own, they are homestead 'helpers' rather than central provisioners. Since virtually all rural women marry, these girls' status can best be summed up as *nubile*, absorbed temporarily into the homestead workforce while waiting for betrothal. In some areas, marriage comes very soon with girls wedded in their early and mid-teens and starting to bear children quickly thereafter.

6.1 Outline of a Girls' Homestead Training and Income-Generating Programme

A national homestead economics training programme focussed on teen-aged girls has several advantages. It may prolong their age of marriage, and thereby help to slow down

⁷ According to World Bank statistics, in 1990, the total fertility rate for low and middle income countries of Sub-Saharan Africa was 6.5 compared with 5.7 for North Africa and the Middle East, 4.2 for South Asia, 3.3 for Latin America and the Caribbean and 2.7 for East Asia and the Pacific (World Bank 1990).

population growth which tends to outstrip national economic growth. But more significantly it harnesses the talents and energies of the one category of adult women who are least affected by a labour constraint and who are at an impressionable age, a time when lifetime attitudes are formed.

The form and content of the programme would necessarily vary from country to country, depending on institutional capacity and levels of female literacy. Furthermore, within any one country, the programme would have to be adapted to individual localities, taking account of social customs, modes of livelihood and resource availability. It is anticipated that the programme would have two main components: 1) training in 'non-traditional' skills related to homestead management and maintenance; and 2) initiating female youth groups for mutual support and income-generating activities. The short-term objective of such a programme would be to disseminate the research findings and innovations arising from preceding local research on the homestead economics of women's working day. The more long-term objective is to provide the future generation of rural women with the ways and means of avoiding much of the drudgerous labour that their mothers have endured. In so doing, it is hoped that they will gain more social choices and economic opportunities.

The homestead economics training could cover a number of non-traditional skills and encompass:

- 1) building skills to improve and maintain living quarters and other functional buildings;
- 2) engineering skills for improving and maintaining village infrastructure such as paths, water supply installations, etc.;
- 3) sewing, plaiting and leather work of heavy duty carrying bags such as knapsacks and animal panniers;
- 4) carpentry for making wood products including improved kitchen utensils, wheelbarrows and other load-carrying devices;
- 5) forestry for the planting and maintenance of woodlots;
- 6) agronomy, including agricultural planning to maximize labour time inputs and land usage;
- 7) convenience food preparation that reduces labour time and can easily be taken and eaten away from the compound to save walking to and from the fields;

8) time management to help them rationalize the time and effort they put into their multiple productive tasks in agriculture and transformation work;

9) accountancy and business skills to facilitate the running of income-generating activities as well as helping them to assert influence on household budgeting in their future adult life; and

10) family life education to assist them to withstand the pressures that are brought to bear on them as young, nubile women as well as preparing them for their future reproductive lives as wives and mothers. This would include: education to prevent the incidence of pre-marital pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS; the advantages of family planning and limitations on family size; and enhancement of their image as women with decision-making power and control over their own fertility.

The formation of girls' groups for mutual support and income-generating activities would complement the training programme. The concept of youth economic groups is not new. In Tanzania, for example, youth economic groups (YEGs) have been promoted by government and donor agency efforts for over a decade. On the basis of restricted starting capital, YEGs have nonetheless been successful in mobilizing the labour of youths in both urban and rural settings. However, the labour mobilized has been overwhelmingly male. Girls' participation has been hampered by a number of factors primarily connected with their nubile status. Parents have had reservations about their daughters involvement in groups containing boys and girls. Because most girls marry young and usually move to their husbands' home locality, their commitment to participation in the group is of limited duration. Finally, girls, more than boys, are expected to hand over their earnings to their fathers which has a disincentive effect on their involvement (Bryceson 1992: 26)

YEGs designed specifically for girls could overcome most of these drawbacks. Initially efforts would be needed to get parents to sanction their daughters' involvement and to reduce pressure on girls to marry early. This would help lay a foundation for girls to use YEGs as a medium for increasing their social roles beyond that of wife and mother. The groups would offer girls an opportunity to earn and manage their own cash which could in turn: 1) make it possible for them to buy the consumer durables such as bicycles and radios that their brothers purchase with

their earnings; 2) give them a start in building up a capital endowment; and 3) enhance their economic expectations of life.

6.2 Sliding into Gender Stereotyping?

The first reservation that no doubt springs to many readers' minds is that a homestead economics programme, dealing with 'women's work' and targeting improvement measures on girls, is promoting rather than eliminating gender stereotyping. Some might try to equate homestead economics training in Sub-Saharan Africa with domestic science training for girls in Western industrialized countries. But are they the same? Domestic science was discredited by Western feminists because it was a subject that only girls were required to take and it was premised on a sexual division of labour which relegated women to being primarily housewives and mothers (Allan 1990). Often girls studied it in place of science and mathematics. It was directed at training girls to be good housekeepers, thereby raising the standard of living of their families rather than being directed at personal fulfillment of the girls themselves.

Homestead economics also deals with 'women's work' and is focussed on girls, but its objectives differ. Acknowledging the existing sexual division of labour, it is premised on giving girls and women the training and technology to change the status quo. Its fundamental aim is to extend women's opportunities in their future adult life rather than to narrow them. It attempts to reduce rural women's workload systematically through the application of technology and organizational improvements that women themselves can control.

It can be argued that Western feminists and donor agency concern has been in line with these principles from the outset. Nonetheless, efforts to attain these goals have been distorted by current Western perceptions. Feminist influence in donor agency operational policies has led to the incorporation of equity goals but several steps in the realization of these goals have been skipped.

It is difficult to identify what is most fundamental to women's work careers 'outside the home' in Western countries when considering the influence of: domestic technology which minimizes housework, limitations on the number of children they bear, state infrastructural support like creches, paid maternity leave etc. and their husbands' willingness to share the burden of housework. Arguably, all have been necessary developments in enhancing women's status and

continue to need improvement to facilitate women's careers. So too, in rural Sub-Saharan Africa, an amalgam of improved domestic technology, reductions in fertility, state infrastructural support vis-a-vis women's production and reproduction and the productive input of men in homestead work are needed. Concentration on any one in isolation from the others makes gains in equity extremely difficult to achieve. Any agency involved in rural women's development should be aware of linkages between these factors and make efforts to contribute to their balanced interaction.

Synchronization is possible and indeed vital in another respect. Donor agencies' development efforts should be established on the basis of women's existing identities, motivations, and priorities. Once rural women's perspectives are incorporated into programme designs and monitored, the programmes are far more likely to be relevant and effective.

7. Conclusion

Throughout this century, women in the female farming systems of Africa have been subject to mounting labour demands. This paper has argued that the nature of their work, a vertical production process including raw material extraction, value added production and distribution to the point of consumption, has not been adequately addressed by donor agencies' piece-meal project intervention. In the main, Western donors have set extremely ambitious targets of raising the status of women in the household and community using Western criteria of judgement. The underlying premise has been that money is power in the hands of rural women. Income generating projects have dominated. Projects directed at labour constraints and gender imbalances in resource allocation have arisen largely to support the goal of women's increased work 'outside the home'.

This paper argues that, in general, the approach adopted by Western donors has not been well-grounded in existing material conditions. Donors' views about the potential changes in the gender division of labour and power balance between the sexes has been presumptuous. Women's projects have focussed on women generally without taking sufficient account of variation in women's productive roles by age. It is often older women, past childbearing age, who are the most able to respond to income-generating projects. Their participation, however, is the least likely to generate multiplier effects.

The homestead economics programme is a strategic way of overcoming these drawbacks. First, women's labour constraints rather than income generation is given precedence. Multi-disciplinary teams of technologists and social scientists working with women of childbearing age would seek time and labour-saving solutions to work bottlenecks through the systematic study of women's working day. Second, teenage girls would be specially targetted for training and income generating activities, with emphasis on creating new economic and social expectations. It is argued that changes in young women's attitudes and skills could have a far-reaching effect. Alleviating women's daily workload through technical innovation and better organization provides a material foundation for women to challenge gender imbalance. The combination of technical improvement in women's working day and different life expectations on the part of youth, could provide an enduring basis for change.

Bibliography

Afonja, S. (1986) 'Land Control: A Critical Factor in Yoruba Gender Stratification', in Roberts and Berger, *Women and Class*. 78-91.

Airey, T. and I. Barwell (1991) 'Village-Level Transport and Travel Survey's and Related Case Studies', I.T.Transport Ltd. Consultancy commissioned for the Sub-Saharan Transport Programme by the ILO/World Bank.

Allan, D. (1990) *Wasting Girls' Time*. London: Virago.

Anderson, M.B. (1984) 'Technology Transfer: Implications for Women' in Overholt, C., M.B.Anderson, K.Cloud and J.E.Austin (eds.) *Gender Roles in Development Projects: A Case Book*, W. Hartford, Conn.: Kumarian Press.

Ardayfio, E. (1986) *Rural Energy Crisis in Ghana: Its Implications for Women's Work and Household Survival*. Geneva: ILO, WEP Working Paper 39.

Bay, E.G. (ed.) (1982) *Women and Work in Africa*, Boulder: Westview Press.

Boserup, E. (1970) *Women's Role in Economic Development*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Bruce, J. and D. Dwyer (eds.) (1988) *A Home Divided: Women and Income in the Third World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Bryceson, D.F. (1980) 'Colonial Famine Responses: The Case of Bagamoyo District, Tanganyika, 1920-1961', *Food Policy*, 6(2), 91-104.

Bryceson, D.F. (1990) *Food Insecurity and the Social Division of Labour in Tanzania, 1919-1985*. London: Macmillan.

Bryceson, D.F. (1992) 'Women Producers: Market Response vs. Household Responsibilities', Agricultural Diversification and Intensification Study, Working Paper No. 8, Oxford: Food Studies Group/Sokoine University of Agriculture, (March 1992).

Bryceson, D.F. and J. Howe (1992) *African Rural Households and Transport: Reducing the Burden on Women?* International Institute for Hydraulic and Environmental Engineering, Working Paper IP-2, Delft, The Netherlands.

Bryceson, D.F. and U. Vuorela (1985), 'Outside the Domestic Labor Debate: Towards a Theory of Modes of Human Reproduction', *Review of Radical Political Economics*. No. 17, 4-27.

Bryceson, D.F., L. Manicom and Y. Kassum (1981) 'The Methodology of the Participatory Research Approach', in Dubell, F., T. Erasmie and J. de Vries (eds.), *Research for the People*. Sweden: Linköping University.

Bukh, J. (1979) *The Village Woman in Ghana*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.

Buvinic, M. (1986) 'Projects for Women in the Third World: Explaining their Misbehavior', *World Development* 24(5) 653-664.

Buvinic, M. (1989) 'Investing in Poor Women: The Psychology of Donor Support', *World Development*. 17(7) 1045-1057.

Cecelski, E. (1987) 'Energy and Rural Women's Work: Crisis Response and Policy Alternatives', *International Labour Review*. 126 (1), January 1987.

Chambers, R. (1992) 'Participatory Rural Appraisal', paper presented at the BRAC Workshop sponsored by NOVIB, The Hague, The Netherlands, September 1992.

Chilver, E.M., (1992) 'Women Cultivators, Cows and Cash Crops in Cameroon', in Ardener, S. (ed.), *Persons and Powers of Women in Diverse Cultures*. Oxford: Berg.

Cowan, R.S. (1976) 'The Industrial Revolution in the Home: Household Technology and Social Change in the Twentieth Century', *Technology Culture* 17, 1-23.

Curtis, V. (1986) *Women and the Transport of Water*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Davison, J. (ed.), (1988) *Agriculture, Women and Land: The African Experience*. Boulder and London: Westview Press.

Ferguson, J. (1990) *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Guyer, J.I. (1986) 'Intra-household Processes and Farming System Research: Perspectives from Anthropology', in Mook, J.L. (ed.) *Understanding Africa's Rural Households and Farming Systems Research*. California: Westview Press.

Hafkin, N. and E.G. Bay (eds.) (1976) *Women in Africa: Studies in Socio-Economic Change*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

ILEIA (1989) *Participatory Technology Development in Sustainable Agriculture*. Leusden, (Information Centre for Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture) The Netherlands, April 1989.

Kaberry, P.M. (1952) *Women of the Grassfields: A Study of the Economic Position of Women in Bamenda, British Cameroons*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Kamuzora, C.L. (1986) 'Population Growth and the Development Problems of Africa: Origins and Implied Solutions', *Utafiti* 8 (1), 1-12.

Kossoudji, S. and E. Mueller (1983) 'The Economic and Demographic Status of Female Headed Households in Rural Botswana', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. July 1983.

Leach, V. (1990) *Women and Children in Tanzania*. Tanzania/UNICEF: Dar es Salaam.

Mbilinyi, M. (1987) 'Co-operative Organisation in Isange Village' in Koda, B., M. Mbilinyi, A. Muro, A. Nkebukwa Kokubelwa, A. Nkhoma, Z. Tumbo-Masabo and U. Vuorela (eds.) *Women's Initiatives in the United Republic of Tanzania*. Geneva: ILO.

McCall, M. (1987) 'Labour Saving Devices and Renewable Energies for Women', in Groen, B.C. and C.R. Huizenga (eds.), *Have Planners Understood Poor People's Energy Development Problem? Socio-Economic Aspects of Energy Technology*. Technology and Development Group, University of Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands.

- McCormack, J., M. Walsh and C. Nelson (1986) *Women's Group Enterprises: A Study of the Structure of Opportunity on the Kenya Coast*. Boston: World Education Inc.
- Moser, C. (1989) 'Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs', *World Development* 17 (11), 1799-1825.
- O'Kelly, E. (1978) *Rural Women: Their Integration in Development Programmes and How Simple Intermediate Technologies can Help Them*. London.
- Orde-Browne, Major G. St. (1926) *Labour in the Tanganyika Territory*. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Rathgeber, E.M.(1990) 'WID, WAD GAD: Trends in Research and Practice', *Journal of Developing Areas* 24, (July 1990), 489-502.
- Richards, A. 1939 (1969) *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robertson, C. and I. Berger (eds.) (1986) *Women and Class in Africa*. New York: Africana Publishing Co.
- Rogers, B. (1980) *The Domestification of Women: Discrimination in Developing Societies*. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Sender, J. and S. Smith (1990) *Poverty, Class and Gender in Rural Africa: A Tanzanian Case Study*. London: Routledge.
- Stichter, S.B. and J.L.Parpart (eds.) (1988) *Patriarchy and Class: African Women in the Home and the Workforce*. Boulder and London: Westview Press.
- Tinker, I. 'The Making of a Field: Advocates, Practioners, and Scholars' in Tinker (ed.) (1990) *Persistent Inequalities*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wagao, J.H. (1988) *Analysis of the Economic Situation of Urban and Rural Women in Tanzania*. UNICEF: Dar es Salaam.

THE AFRICAN STUDIES CENTRE

The African Studies Centre, an inter-university foundation is based in Leiden and cooperates closely with all the Dutch universities. The Centre is subsidized by the Ministries of Education and Science; Foreign Affairs; and Agriculture and Fisheries. The aim of the Institute is to promote scientific research in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular in the field of the social sciences in the widest sense of the word.

The Institute goes out from the premise that the research which is carried out in Africa must be of such a nature that the results are directly or indirectly relevant to the population in the country concerned. Other objectives include the systematic promotion of research and education covering the afore-mentioned areas, and also the spread of the knowledge of African societies and cultures.

The Centre has formal agreements with Institutes and Universities in Africa, viz., the Ministry of National Planning and Development and Egerton University in Kenya; and the Ministry of Higher Education and Research in Cameroon and the University of Yaounde.

In the Netherlands, the Institute has similar agreements with departments of various universities, viz., Human Nutrition of the Agricultural University of Wageningen; Marketing and Market Research of the Agricultural University of Wageningen, Social Geography of Developing Countries of the University of Utrecht and Cultural Anthropology/Non Western Sociology of the University of Leiden.

The research and teaching activities of the Centre take place within the framework of these agreements. The Centre has two research departments, viz., the department of Social and Economic Studies and the department of Political and Historical Studies.

The main emphasis of the department of Social and Economic Studies is on rural development, food and nutrition and trade in agricultural products. The research is policy-oriented; the most important programme for the period 1989-1993 is the Food and Nutrition Studies Programme which has as its main objective to analyse contemporary trends and future needs concerning Food and Nutrition in Kenya.

The department of Political and Historical Studies concentrates on pure scientific research. The main emphasis is on the ideological and economic aspects of the State in Africa. Research takes place within the framework of the Cameroon programme, and in conjunction with the socio-economic department of the Centre. Important subjects are wage labour in the rural areas, land law problems, in particular in the neighbourhood of the larger cities, ethnic articulation and regional incorporation; comparative study of effects on rural development of French and British colonial administration. The department also has a programme focusing on Southern Africa. Here the main objective is to analyse developments in political economy and culture and the effects of these on neighbouring areas. A part of the research in this department falls outside the scope of these regional programmes, viz., the research into peasant movements in general and legal pluralism in Africa.

In addition to the research departments, the Institute has a library and a documentation section.

The library holds the only specialized collection of books on Africa in the Netherlands.

There is also a film library. The films are available on loan for educational purposes.² A catalogue with descriptions of the films and a list of titles of films of other collections in the Netherlands in Dutch is available from the secretariat.

The Centre is responsible for a monograph series which is published by Kegan Paul Int., London. Other research reports and working papers are published by the Institute itself. Periodic publications include an Abstracts Journal with summaries of articles from recently published journals and collections; a list of the latest library acquisitions; and a Newsletter on African Studies in the Netherlands containing an annual survey of research concerning Africa in the Netherlands, which is published in cooperation with the African Studies Association.

The African Studies Association cooperates closely with the African Studies Centre in promoting research and education relevant to African studies in the Netherlands. The Association advises the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) on applications for research funding in the social sciences and the humanities concerning Africa. The secretariat is based in the Institute's offices.

The library is open to the public on weekdays between 9.00-13.00 and 14.00-17.00, tel. 071-273354.

A list of publications, annual reports and research programmes of the respective research departments as well as survey of current research are available free of charge from the secretariat, tel. 071-273372.

Information on the loan of films is obtainable from the secretariat.

In the same series are still available:

1	Laan, H.L. van der	Modern Inland Transport and the European Trading Firms in Colonial West Africa. 1980.	f 2,50
2	Jonge, K. de	Relations paysans-pêcheurs, capitalisme, état. 1980.	f 2,50
3	Hesseling, G	Etat et langue en Afrique. 1981.	f 2,50
4	vRouveroy/ vRouveroy-Baerends	Conciliation et la qualité des relations sociales chez les Anufòm du Nord Togo en Afrique de l'Ouest. 1981.	f 2,50
5	Konings, P.	Peasantry and State in Ghana. 1981.	f 2,50
6	Muntjewerff, C.A.	The Producers' Price System and the Coffee and Cocoa Trade at Village Level in West Africa. 1982.	f 2,50
7	Muntjewerff, C.A.	Produce Marketing Co-operatives in West Africa. 1982.	f 2,50
8	vRouveroy/ vRouveroy-Baerends	La Parcelle du Gendre comploteur. 1982.	f 3,50
9	Merx, B.	Zonder bloed geen vliegen. 1986.	f 10,00
10	Laan, H.L. van der	Cameroon's Main Marketing Board: History and Scope of the ONCPB. 1987.	f 5,00
11	Laan, H.L. van der	Cocoa and Coffee Buying in Cameroon: The Role of the Marketing Board in the South West and North West Provinces, 1978-1987. 1988.	f 5,00
12	Fisiy, C.F.	Palm Tree Justice in the Bertoua Court of Appeal: The Witchcraft Cases. 1990.	f 5,00
13	Laan, H.L. van der/ Haaren, W.T.M. van	African Marketing Boards under Structural Adjustment: The Experience of Sub-Saharan Africa during the 1980s. 1990.	f 5,00
14	Buijtenhuijs, R.	The Revolutionary Potential of African Peasantries: Some Tentative Remarks. 1991.	f 5,00
15	Bryceson, D. F./ John Howe	Rural Household Transport in Africa	f 5,00