
7

The Need for Training and Education

MIGRATION: WOMEN AT HOME, AS MIGRANTS AND AS REFUGEES

The continued importance of migration and an increasing interest in the female migrant reflect the inextricable link between migration and the social, economic, and political facets of development. As migration was central to the changes that occurred in Europe and North America from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, so it is central to today's changes in the rest of the world. International migration, in particular, exemplifies the characteristics of the contemporary international system sketched in Chapter 1: the permeability of nation-state boundaries; modern transportation and communication facilities, which make population movements and long-distance family contacts easier; differential levels of economic growth; and new international structures, including trade, banking, and corporate organizations.

An important difference between contemporary labor migration and earlier migrations from Europe to North America or Australia is the temporary nature of the former. In permanent migration, economic ties, and possibly cultural ties, between migrants and their countries of origin are cut. In "systematic temporary" labor migration, the ties remain, and most workers believe that they will return eventually to their native country.¹ Some areas of the world have experienced this kind of migration for decades—almost a century for workers from Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, and Swaziland laboring in the mines of South Africa—but migration to other areas, such as the Middle East, is much more recent. Taken together, these migrants are changing the social and economic systems of both their native countries and their host countries.

Refugees are migrants or immigrants of a very different kind, although their impact on social and economic structures is as significant in some regions as that of systematic temporary or permanent labor migrants. Because of the large number of women and children refugees, a comment about this global problem is appropriate.

Refugees

The basic difference between migrants and refugees is the assumption that the former leave home voluntarily and the latter are forced to leave because of persecution or fear of persecution. Most governments consider refugees to be people who are vulnerable because of their race, ethnic group, religion, or political belief. Refugees are forced to a neighboring region, or much further, and often leave behind most of their personal possessions, friends, and families.

The distinction between migrants and refugees is less clear when people move because of intolerable economic conditions (or conditions that are perceived as being intolerable). Two groups of people who entered the United States in the early 1980s illustrate the problem: The Cubans were called "refugees," and the Haitians were considered "illegal migrants." It was easier to classify the Cubans as refugees because they were leaving a communist system, even though it was clear by mid-1980 that many of these people had left Cuba to find new or different economic opportunities in the United States rather than to escape political persecution. The Haitians, on the other hand, had left a noncommunist—albeit extremely repressive—state, a state that is perhaps best known as having the lowest standard of living in the Western Hemisphere. For some North Americans, this migration raised the question of whether or not some people might legitimately be called "economic refugees."

War and economic chaos in Southeast Asia in the late 1970s made most Americans aware of the magnitude of the refugee problem in that area of the world. The fact that Jewish people are leaving the Soviet Union has been well publicized, and during the 1970s, the status of some 2 million Palestinian refugees also drew international attention. Less well known is the refugee situation in Africa. Approximately one-fourth of the world's total estimated refugee population of 16 million people is in Africa, where war as well as natural disasters drives people from their homes.² The most severe refugee crisis in Africa is in Somalia, one of the poorest countries in the world. As a result of civil strife and war in Ethiopia, it was estimated in early 1981 that the refugee population in some thirty-five camps in Somalia was over 1.3 million, and 90 percent of these refugees were women and young children.³ Not only is the question of refugees pressing for many developing countries, it is clearly also a women's issue. The implication of the refugee problem is equally clear: Resolution of major political conflicts and maintenance of minimal political stability must precede substantive development efforts.

Women Who Migrate and Those Who Remain Behind

The proportion of the international migrants that is female varies considerably with both the country of origin and the country of destination. Overall, the share of female migrant workers has been highest in Europe, particularly among migrants from southern European countries such as Yugoslavia or Turkey. But women have also been

numerous among the immigrant populations of West African countries, such as Ghana and the Ivory Coast—in the latter case, women constituted 38 percent of the migrants in 1975. Although the proportion is much lower in the Middle East (e.g., less than 2 percent in Saudi Arabia), female workers still make up a significant 13 percent of the immigrants in Kuwait.⁴

Elsa Chaney has argued that migration affects women, as well as men, in a variety of ways. The women and girls who stay behind when their men leave typically live in rural areas, and they invariably have a greater workload as they must both care for the household and children and frequently assume more agricultural tasks. The women who migrate, whether internally or internationally, may be accompanied by their menfolk or migrate on their own.⁵

The motivations for internal and international migration are equally complex,⁶ but the scarcity of data makes it difficult to be certain of the reasons for migration, or even the number of migrants and whether they are accompanied or are on their own. Data problems help explain why more is known about migrants to urban areas than, for instance, about interrural migrants.⁷

A 1978 UNESCO study has reinforced other findings that in Latin America, women are increasingly prominent in rural-to-urban migration, and in most Latin American countries, the trend of female rural-to-urban migration has intensified with urbanization.⁸ This trend helps account for the preeminence of domestic service as a female occupation in Latin American cities.⁹

The female migrant who moves inside her own country is disadvantaged both by her migratory status and by her sex. For female international migrants, there are qualitative as well as quantitative differences between their status and that of the host-country nationals; and in addition to the problems of migratory status and sex, the women face major cultural, linguistic, and citizenship difficulties.

Development policies need to address the situations of the migrants themselves as well as the new problems that confront the people at home when members of their family leave. Of special concern now, from the perspective of world food production, is the impact of male migration on smallholder agriculture, which continues to be the chief source of food for the rural poor.¹⁰ The decline of small farms is one cause of male migration, which, in turn, accelerates the decline of the smallholder sector. Although women have the potential to be as productive or more so than men when they are forced to farm alone, they are generally disadvantaged by overwork and insufficient access to whatever help is available from private and public agencies (credit, technical assistance, etc.).¹¹ Since the role of women in agriculture is now more fully recognized than it was a decade ago, it follows that people who are concerned with food production, rural development, and nutrition must direct their policies specifically to those women who are farming alone because their menfolk have migrated.¹²

In addition to the necessary cultural and social adjustments the female migrants to urban areas must make, they often bear the sole or predominant responsibility for their children. These problems are compounded by the general economic and political instability of many Third World countries. Buchi Emecheta portrays the human dimension of the pressures on migrants in *The Joys of Motherhood*, a novel about Nnu Ego, an Ibo woman who migrates to Lagos to join her husband. The mother of three sons and four daughters, Nnu Ego survives during her husband's absence by street vending (originally in cigarettes and matches), a trade she learns soon after her arrival in Lagos.

Like other husbands and wives in Lagos, Nnu Ego and Nnaife started growing slightly apart, not that they were that close at the start. Now each was in a different world. There was no time for petting or talking to each other about love. . . . In Lagos a wife would not have time. She had to work. She provided food from her husband's meagre housekeeping money, but finding the money for clothes, for any kind of comforts, in some cases for the children's school fees, was on her shoulders.¹³

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that migration does not present opportunities, as well as problems, for many women. In her study of Ugandan migrants, for instance, Christine Obbo concludes:

The women in this study were vocal about why they migrated. They were "tired of rural life": being unpaid labourers on the farms, using outmoded farm tools—the short hoes that "broke the back"—and the lack of farm produce surpluses for sale. In urban areas, on the other hand, they could obtain incomes from their labour. Migration thus changed the women's economic position by increasing their personal responsibility and self-reliance.¹⁴

These migrant women provide us with a double message. People who want to help female migrants must understand the migrant's survival skills and build on them, but they must not forget why she left farming in the first place.

SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY

In 1970, Barbara Ward claimed that the "education of women has probably been by far the most important factor in bringing about changes in their role and status all over the world in the last fifty years."¹⁵ This section summarizes this "most important factor" as it relates to formal educational opportunities by emphasizing the inequality of school enrollments for boys and girls and the importance of literacy and numeracy. The Nicaraguan literacy campaign, which is an example of a public education program with special importance for women and girls, is also discussed.

Male-Female Inequality: School Education

The institutionalization of education for children and adolescents is a major, worldwide, twentieth-century phenomenon, which reflects the strengthening and expansion of nation-state bureaucracies. Although there may be similarities in the administrative or pedagogical procedures used in different countries, gender and cultural differences still have a strong bearing on the form and content of school education. A 1980 UNESCO study on the school education of girls stresses at the outset the importance of both national and cultural differences in educational systems.

In contributing to the development of curricula and teaching methods, modern theories of education and psychology start out from a certain view of childhood that does not usually distinguish between boys and girls and, for nearly a century now, opinion has been urging the school to take in and educate all children in the same way, disregarding sexual differences. But, however we choose to interpret the evolution of human societies, we are obliged to acknowledge the strong sociological differentiation between adults and children . . . the childhood and adolescence of girls and boys are still intimately linked to the male and female attitudes of each cultural group.¹⁶

In view of these social differences, also the considerable variations in the ability and desire of governments to commit resources to formal education, it is not surprising that both literacy and school enrollment figures for boys and girls vary widely from one country to another. Using 1975 data, the UNESCO study just cited calculated school enrollment statistics for over 200 independent countries and dependent territories in Africa; Asia; North, Central, and South America; Europe; and Oceania. If one breaks the statistics down by age group and by sex, it is clear that inequality in male-female school enrollment begins at an early age, which condemns a large proportion of the female population to illiteracy.¹⁷ Table 7.1 draws on data for 223 independent and dependent countries and territories and groups them into regional averages.

An analysis of enrollments by level of instruction, despite differences in national educational systems, demonstrates a similar pattern of inequality, and this pattern did not change significantly between 1965 and 1975. The following quotation summarizes the findings of the UNESCO study.

The ongoing study of the UNESCO Office of Statistics appears to conclude that girls have little hope of catching up with male enrollment ratios. This particularly applies to the developing countries which have to contend with two major problems: a quickly rising population and an initial pattern of schooling very much to the disadvantage of girls. . . .

In regions with a high birth rate, and despite the fact that the general population growth rate is higher for girls, more boys start school each

TABLE 7.1

Enrollment Ratios by Age Group and by Sex in Twenty-three Regions, 1975*

Region	6-11 years		12-17 years		18-23 years		6-23 years	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Eastern Africa	52.5	41.0	33.0	19.8	4.7	1.5	33.1	23.3
Middle Africa	77.9	54.5	51.6	26.5	6.9	2.1	49.5	30.7
Northern Africa	69.5	45.4	42.3	23.0	16.3	7.2	46.3	27.8
Southern Africa	82.4	85.6	73.6	70.4	10.1	4.4	59.6	58.0
Western Africa	43.8	29.9	28.9	15.9	5.5	1.8	28.6	17.7
Caribbean	85.1	86.8	60.3	59.4	16.5	12.1	58.6	57.4
Middle America	84.5	83.1	57.8	45.9	17.5	7.9	57.8	50.6
Temperate South America	98.0	98.1	69.7	73.3	27.4	23.6	66.6	66.7
Tropical South America	70.2	71.6	56.4	54.1	23.6	21.1	52.8	51.8
Northern America	99.3	99.3	94.8	95.2	51.1	45.0	81.4	79.4
Japan	100.0	100.0	94.6	94.7	29.8	14.9	74.4	69.0
Other East Asia	97.9	97.8	70.7	58.1	18.0	9.8	65.4	58.2
Eastern South Asia	70.8	64.9	43.0	34.8	10.4	7.1	45.5	39.3
Middle South Asia	70.0	43.8	35.0	17.4	8.5	2.7	41.8	23.9
Western South Asia	77.9	57.4	53.9	31.8	17.9	6.9	53.5	35.2
Eastern Europe	91.8	91.3	79.7	81.3	17.0	19.1	60.7	61.8
Northern Europe	97.7	98.3	81.6	82.7	28.6	19.7	70.8	68.6
Southern Europe	96.7	97.2	73.4	65.6	34.5	23.3	69.5	63.3
Western Europe	95.3	95.9	87.1	88.8	34.9	23.3	73.3	70.5
Australia and New Zealand	99.7	99.1	79.8	79.5	24.5	16.2	68.7	66.0
Melanesia	46.8	36.3	45.6	24.1	7.6	1.6	35.8	23.0
Polynesia and Micronesia	93.4	96.8	91.5	85.9	12.9	10.0	70.2	68.3
USSR	82.0	82.0	77.3	82.5	22.8	25.2	60.4	63.1

*Ratio between the enrollment of the given age group and the population of the same age group.
 Source: UNESCO Office of Statistics, Trends and Projections of Enrollment by Level of Education and by Age (Paris, 1978), p. 47-50, from Isabelle Deblé, The School Education of Girls (Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1980), p. 37. Reprinted with permission.

year than girls. In absolute terms, the gap between the number of boys and girls at school is widening.

. . . In 1985, if present trends continue, the world as a whole will contain 37 million more boys at school than girls in the 6-11 age group, with 34,780,000 of them in developing countries. It may thus be said that the prospects for equal opportunity for boys and girls are distant, even in primary education.¹⁸

This emphasis on statistics that show an inequity in school enrollments for boys and girls introduces some broader issues that pertain to formal education in developing nations. Six of these issues are discussed briefly here.

First, what considerations govern state priorities for formal education? It is clear that many governments could do more to expand schools, improve the quality of the schools, equalize access for girls, etc. The Nicaraguan literacy campaign, although conducted for only a limited time and not based on formal schooling, nonetheless suggests that with different priorities, governments could do much more than they have been doing. The experience of a twenty-year effort in Tunisia to increase the school enrollment of girls illustrates both the potential and the problems of such government policy.¹⁹

Second, the question of state priorities raises a complementary issue that must be confronted in every aspect of development: the limited effectiveness of any public policy. Education, like most facets of development, has become largely a public endeavor, but even a strong policy commitment does not guarantee successful policy outcomes. Investment in schools must compete with investment in factories, and political and bureaucratic competition may hinder policy implementation. The demand for schooling depends on many factors besides the government's will,²⁰ and the conditions for a successful educational policy remain largely in the private realm of the household, cultural group, or work group.

Given this factor, we need to know what determines the ability and willingness of parents to send their girls to school. The barriers to sending children to school are similar in many countries: Children work; parents cannot afford textbooks or uniforms; school education is not relevant, or not viewed as being relevant, to the future well-being of children and adolescents; population migrations prohibit continuity in school attendance; the language of instruction is not that spoken at home—the list is long. To these widespread barriers must be added some others that are unique to particular regions or cultures, most of which disadvantage girls more than boys.

The fourth issue, in turn, is why the "wastage" of girls in school is greater than that of boys.²¹ UNESCO uses the term "wastage" to apply both to pupils who drop out and to those who do not make normal progress or who repeat grades. Traditional social, cultural, and religious norms are blamed for much of the female wastage, but these norms may also encourage literacy—for instance, to enable girls to read the Koran or the Bible. Economic factors are important when girls have a

significant amount of housework to do, or child-care or farming responsibilities, and are not expected to need education in order to engage in a different kind of work as an adult. In his detailed study of Cameroon, Brian Cooksey found that several factors are responsible for female wastage, such as differential socialization of boys and girls, the examination and grading systems, degree of parental education, socio-economic class, and age of puberty.²²

The content of education typically varies for boys and girls. Many observers have pointed out that traditional family expectations of boys and girls carry over into training and educational practices outside the home. As the first UNESCO quotation in this section noted, modern theories of education stress educating all children in the same way in schools. Whether that goal is either feasible or desirable is still debatable, but it is clear that insofar as traditional cultural expectations dictate educational content, the potential for equalizing the male-female gap in status and well-being through formal education is diminished. In this respect at least, the concern about sex stereotyping is not limited to industrialized countries.²³

Sixth, the search for successful approaches is going on in the midst of debates about culturally appropriate education, equity in the introduction of new educational technologies such as television and micro-computers, the place of politics in formal education, and so on. In short, what is successful will be defined largely by the broader context and priorities of development in a particular country. Alternative methods are as diverse as human imagination and resources permit and range from the use of mass media, such as radio, through small-group learning, with even children teaching children, to the various forms of extension and nonformal education.

The Debate About Literacy

The importance of literacy is taken for granted in industrialized nations but is less clear in many developing countries. Arguing for caution in pushing the goal of literacy too far recognizes that most rural inhabitants may not want or need to read and write to carry out their daily tasks. Kim Craig, a Peace Corps specialist in nonformal education, argues the case this way.

It's too simple to say that a literate farmer is a more productive farmer—therefore let's jump into more literacy programs. Literacy is not important unless the people themselves feel it's important. People in developing countries *do* voice their needs. If they were asking for literacy we'd know about it. Too often we're the ones who are pushing the programs.

You can do a lot without reading and writing. I taught simple furniture making to a group of women as part of my work in Swaziland. They could not read or write, take measurements or do arithmetic. So my first thought was that I had to teach them how to use a ruler and how to read and write numbers before we could start making furniture. What I didn't realize until later was that they already knew how to add and

subtract in their heads from their experiences on buying in the market. They already knew how to measure with a stick or their hands. So after I bombed with my ruler-reading lessons, we got down to making furniture.²⁴

Challenging this view are the studies that increasingly suggest that literacy and numeracy do help increase economic production and that the higher the level of a woman's education, the better nourished her family is likely to be and the lower her fertility rate. Furthermore, underestimating the importance of literacy may condemn the rural poor, and women in particular, to an indefinite, irretrievable second-class status.

If persons are to have the power beyond the immediate household through decision-making that affects their well-being, they must have access to information. Access to information in large part (but not exclusively) is dependent on literacy, i.e., competence in numerical skills, reading and writing. . . . Literacy is a basic competence which is essential in order to meet the demands of modern society and to participate fully in education and market activities.²⁵

The case study on the Nicaraguan national literacy crusade that follows is an illustration of how public policy can foster education and the potential of public education policy for girls and women. The crusade promoted out-of-school education and assumed that literacy was essential if Nicaragua were to rebuild after its civil war. This example suggests one way in which governments can combine their goals of improving people's skills and of mobilizing citizens for participation in development.

The Nicaraguan National Literacy Crusade

The 1980 literacy crusade is significant for women in poor countries for several reasons. Even though it is too soon to testify to the crusade's long-term accomplishments, North American scholars see it as a major success in reducing a formidably high illiteracy rate of about 50 percent.²⁶

The revolutionary government that replaced the Somoza dictatorship in July 1979 set a massive literacy effort as one of its top priorities. Because of the urgency of the effort, and also because Nicaragua was simultaneously confronting postwar reconstruction and long-term development, the Sandinista National Liberation Front-dominated government concluded that it would take too long to increase literacy through a formal or nonformal education infrastructure. Therefore, the government opted for an intensive, short-term political campaign, a "crusade," as the vehicle for the literacy effort. The crusade was to impart not only minimal literacy skills but also a political consciousness of the revolution to approximately 800,000 Nicaraguans.

Preparation for the crusade ran from fall 1979 through the winter of 1980. It was formally launched in March 1980 and declared largely victorious in August of that year when the illiteracy rate had been reduced to an estimated 13 percent. The campaign drew on a military organizational model, and secondary-school students formed the bulk

of the "troops" or literacy instructors, who were called *brigadistas*. The students were committed full-time to the campaign and were dispersed throughout the rural areas. They were joined by the "popular literacy instructors"—workers, professionals, and housewives in towns and cities who kept their regular working schedules while teaching part-time in the afternoons or evenings. Altogether about 180,000 instructors were trained in 1979 and 1980.

The Association of Nicaraguan Women was active in mobilizing girls and women as students and instructors. In Robert Arnove's opinion, women played a key role in the campaign

for they saw it as an opportunity to rectify their previous exclusion from central roles in society. Women were by far the least schooled and most illiterate group. But those who were literate seized the opportunity, and females represented a majority of the literacy workers. . . . Women also constituted the majority of technical advisors and teacher supervisors; and they assumed primary responsibility for the welfare of the *brigadistas* and for integrating them into homes and communities in rural areas.²⁷

The literacy campaign was especially significant for women not only because they benefited from it—having been the most disadvantaged by illiteracy—but because they were central participants. The revolution had shattered many traditional political, economic, and social structures, and the short-term result was that there were new opportunities for people who had been disregarded by the old order. Whether this short-term participation will be translated into long-term equity is far more problematic,²⁸ but it is likely that in retrospect, the literacy crusade will be viewed as a necessary, if insufficient, condition for the integration of women into Nicaragua's postwar recovery and development efforts.

NONFORMAL EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXTENSION

The imbalance in school systems that disadvantages girls is only one drawback in viewing formal education as the underpinning of development efforts. Ivan Illich is probably the best known of a host of critics who have attacked formal schooling for inducing conformity and reinforcing class divisions and for being too expensive, inefficient, or slow.²⁹ These critics remind us that learning and training have always occurred outside formal settings—in the family and other institutions. Extension systems, for example, have long built on the awareness that out-of-school youths and adults can benefit from programs that are tailored to their resources, needs, and interests. The burgeoning interest in nonformal education thus reflects both negative and positive inspiration: negative because of dissatisfaction with the potential of schools to meet the needs of growing populations, and positive because of a recognition of the diversity of human learning environments and educational experiences around the world.

The term "nonformal education" is used here to mean primarily a "method of defining developmental needs and formulating programs of communication and education" with the goal of increasing the participation of people in programs for their welfare.³⁰ Nonformal educational programs seek to satisfy immediate learning needs, and they typically are carried out in close proximity to the learners—in homes, fields, and factories. They are as diverse as extension systems in the United States, India, and Latin America; literacy campaigns in Nicaragua and Brazil; or cooperative community organizations and family planning projects in many countries.

The stress on nonformal education reflects the fact that people interested in the role of education in development have been engaged in a critical debate since the late 1960s about the appropriate strategy for justifying and defining the nature of assistance to developing countries or regions within countries. Until fairly recently, the common approach was to assume that in transferring information or technology, a more developed country had something the recipient society needed. The newer strategy is labeled by some of its proponents an "exploration and discovery approach."³¹ The assumption behind this strategy is that certain functions, such as education, are carried out in all cultures but with variations that are culture-specific. If one sets out to understand what kind of program exists and how it functions and then suggests minor modifications, the ultimate chances of success are enhanced.

The exploration-discovery approach to education and training responds to questions raised earlier about designing programs (in agriculture and for income generation, family planning, etc.) that will be appropriate for the people being helped. To be effective, nonformal education that is motivated by this approach should

1. interlock into the culture and historical traditions of a society;
2. provide experiences for which there is a practical use;
3. use instructional procedures that are recognizable to the learners as being learning experiences; and
4. employ materials designed for the dominant characteristics of the learning styles and mental processes of the learners.³²

It is difficult to argue with the sensitivity and logic of this approach to nonformal education, and presumably such an approach would establish conditions for projects that would be useful to Third World women. Translating the idea of nonformal education into practice is not, however, without controversy. The long-standing role of home economics (or domestic science) in nonformal education for women is highlighted below because it illustrates the difficulty of implementing the theories of nonformal education.

Appropriate Nonformal Education for Women

The debate about the appropriateness and effectiveness of nonformal education strategies is especially intense when women and girls are

identified as the specific group to be helped. At the heart of the controversy is the recognition that many outreach activities have long reflected a male bias or an inadequate knowledge about the kind of training or information women want. The outreach workers have been predominantly male, and their projects have often ignored the productive roles of women, especially in areas such as agriculture, animal husbandry, and marketing.

When educational and technical assistance projects are designed by Western-educated males, they typically emphasize home economics training, and this fact has led some observers to attack such projects as being too narrow in their understanding of female productive roles. Barbara Rogers is one such critic, and she links the growth of home economics in the West to the "domestication of women," a pattern that many development practitioners have unthinkingly transferred to the Third World.

The actual content of many home economics projects and programs remains solidly housework-based, a result of the success of the Western stereotype of women as domestic, which has been incorporated into the expanding education system in Third World countries since the Second World War. . . .

It is not the intention here to dismiss altogether the value in a given situation of the special projects for women; it is, however, much more important to recognize the problems of pursuing this kind of approach as if it were conducive to the "integration" of women in development when too often it achieves the opposite.

An argument can certainly be made for special efforts to help women in the Third World: it would have to involve an unbiased attempt to understand their problems and needs, and the evolution of an approach designed to meet these needs. The main characteristic of the "home economics" approach, however, is the reverse: it applies a Western concept of domesticity to Third World women without attempting to understand their work in any other than a domestic context.³³

opposite

It is tempting to respond to Rogers simply by arguing that if home economics projects have failed, it is because they have ignored the criteria for effectiveness noted just above. But in fact, Rogers's criticisms go beyond the problem of designing sensitive nonformal education strategies to the whole structure of our thinking about development. Not only do her questions recall the microlevel issues discussed earlier about the appropriateness of different income-generating projects for women, but her attack on home economics also takes us back to the more fundamental issues raised initially in Chapter 1.

1. Who determines what a women's project should be—or if, indeed, there should be a women's project? What are the biases (cultural, gender, class) of those individuals at the national and international levels who design, fund, and staff such projects?
2. What are the (dis)advantages of special projects for women?

3. What is the local impact of the Westernization of development thinking and planning?

At the heart of these questions is the ethical problem of how to respond to personal preferences. What should be the role of the outreach worker when he or she is asked by women to provide a program of domestic education and training, whether in nutrition, furniture making, or sewing? Finding the best answer is complicated by assertions that in some societies, training women in nondomestic tasks (e.g., in agriculture) will neither improve their status nor lighten their work load. Some years back, for example, Nadia Youssef concluded from a study of eight countries that "to promote women's inclusion into the agricultural sector will mean allowing women to continue dragging behind males; it will not add to the efficiency of labor productivity; it will only perpetuate the economic and psychological dependency of Muslim women on their men."³⁴ Finally, to deny the importance of household-related training is to ignore the central role of the family as the primary social context within which virtually all women operate and as the fundamental social unit on which development is based.³⁵

In short, there is no sure formula that can be used for determining a priori what constitutes desirable nonformal education. However true this fact is in relation to boys and men, the dilemma is exacerbated in relation to girls and women because of the dual household and non-household roles they often play and because of the greater cultural restrictions on their activities. Hence, the approach to nonformal education that emphasizes exploration; discovery, and gradual change would seem the only defensible one. In accepting this approach, the development worker must acknowledge the very real limits of gradual change. One limit is that gradualism may condemn women to a continued secondary status because it precludes structural change of any magnitude in the foreseeable future.

The remainder of this section offers a few examples of training programs for women and illustrates the variety of projects that have been undertaken in recent years. The Libyan project is discussed in greater depth because it relates to the desirability and limits of gradualism, participants' preferences, and home economics training.

Community Organizations

Nonformal education activities often use community organizations as the vehicle for training or communicating information in a special content area, such as nutrition. The impetus for forming the organization may come from inside or outside the community, but the information to be communicated usually comes from the outside. To be successful, the organization depends on the voluntary participation of community members.

Housewives' and mothers' clubs are examples of community organizations that are used as mechanisms for nonformal education. In

Honduras, a 'movement to establish housewives' clubs was initiated in 1967 by a radio-school monitor and his wife. Catholic Relief Services subsequently became the exclusive sponsor of the effort to use approximately 1,000 of these clubs for simple discussions of a wide range of topics, including local problems, food preparation, literacy, community development, and health. "The goal is to foster a sense of dignity and self-respect among women, to take advantage of the rights accorded women as citizens, to support the family as a social institution, and to encourage community action."³⁶

Mothers' clubs in Korea provide a different illustration of community organization's being used as a basis for nonformal education. Traditional informal associations have long existed to encourage social contacts and create savings pools, and in the late 1960s, the Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea instituted the mothers' club structure, which is based on these customary associations. Initially, the clubs were to encourage voluntary family planning; subsequently, the programs expanded to include improving nutrition, establishing credit unions and community activities, and promoting female equality. These clubs are decentralized and foster village self-development, and by 1977, it was reported that clubs were operating successfully in 50 percent of the Korean villages.³⁷

RWDC-Kufra Settlement Project, Libya

Sociologist Farida Allaghi's examination of a training program for rural Libyan women is one of the few available microlevel case studies of rural Arab women. It also provides insights into educational and training programs for women and girls outside the formal school setting.

The Rural Women's Development Center (RWDC) is part of the Kufra Settlement Project at the Kufra oasis in southeastern Libya. The oasis is about 31 miles long and 19 miles wide and lies approximately 850 miles southeast of the Libyan capital of Tripoli. The settlement project reflects the government's goal of establishing stable settlements with integrated services, and these settlements, in turn, are to increase economic productivity and discourage the migration of farmers to the cities. In a nine-month program, the RWDC trains women and girls in home economics skills, reading, writing, and arithmetic, and religious and sociopolitical training programs are also included.³⁸ The kinds of classes included in the training program and the amount of time spent in each are shown in Table 7.2.

The RWDC opened in 1977, and the first class of fifteen girls and two married women graduated in 1978. Trainees must be at least nine years old, and each must be the daughter or wife of a farmer in the region of the settlement project. Married trainees receive a monthly stipend of 20 dinars (one Libyan dinar = US \$3.20); unmarried trainees receive 15 dinars. Trainees who finish the course are rewarded with items such as sewing machines, ovens, or television sets.³⁹

Allaghi found that the women in the Kufra project believed that the RWDC was the major way they could obtain the skills and knowledge

does ches
what
project
does.

TABLE 7.2

Weekly Schedule of Classes Offered at the RWDC

Subject		No. of Hours Per Week
1. Sewing and embroidery	Curriculum includes clothes made to order for children and for the trainee herself	8
2. Fine arts	Mechanical and hand knitwork	4
3. Housekeeping	Cleaning, ironing, cooking, making pies, cakes, and sweets	4
4. Eradication of illiteracy	Reading, writing, mathematics	3
5. Agricultural education*	Gardening, poultry, sheep, cows, bees, food industries	2
6. Public health orientation	Sanitary habits and personal cleanliness, first aid, healthy food, and insect resistance	1
7. Religious orientation	Studying the Koran plus biographies and stories of the prophets--their beliefs, education, worship	1
8. Social orientation	Rights and duties of individuals and families, habits and traditions, national education	1
Total number of hours per week		24

*Agricultural education is not implemented in the Kufra RWDC.

Source: Farida Allaghi, "Rural Women and Decision-Making: A Case Study of the Kufra Settlement Project, Libya" (Ph.D. dissertation, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, 1981), p. 130. Table originally from a Land Reclamation and Reconstruction Booklet, Women and the Agricultural Revolution in the Country (Libya).

they needed to increase their status and power within the family. Since participation in effective family decision making—which is made more likely if the women have greater knowledge—is the measure of increased female influence for most Arab women, it is not surprising that the RWDC would be viewed in this light. The value of the RWDC training has been enhanced because there are no schools for girls in the project area and the center is the only place that provides specialized training in home economics skills.⁴⁰ The women interviewed by Allaghi expressed a particular interest in learning skills such as knitting and sewing, or

anything that would help them earn money. The chief reason for earning money was that the women were convinced that doing so would give them more status.

The main shortcoming of the RWDC program relates to the nature of the Kufra Settlement Project, because it does not provide any jobs for women, and women who are resettled as a result of the project give up many of their traditional ways of earning income, such as weaving rugs and selling dates. The study was inconclusive in terms of the benefits of the home economics training. A majority of women wanted to learn a traditional women's skill, yet they also identified teaching as the kind of job that really gave women status.⁴¹ In general, Allaghi could find no clear association between the training and more effective participation in family decision making. Consequently, one of her recommendations is that planners recognize the desire of these women for traditional skills and then build on those skills with subsequent training for income-generating activities. The training period should be longer—at least three years—and include basic education and, where possible, management skills.⁴²

The RWDC program reflects the dominant trend in government projects to provide only home economics training to rural women (in this instance, combined with literacy, religious, and political education). In the Libyan case, the women wanted such training, but they wanted it because they saw its potential in terms of income-generation and, hence, increased intrafamily status. One of their major complaints was the lack of work opportunities and the inadequacy of training and education for girls and women. Despite its shortcomings, training such as that provided by the RWDC still has several advantages: It is desired by the rural women, it is culturally compatible, and it could be the first step toward providing the women with real income-earning opportunities.

DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

In many parts of the world, the condition of refugees and migrants is critical. The plight of those people who move, as well as of those who cannot, symbolizes the human costs of economic, social, and political changes. Migration, both forced and voluntary, is as old as human civilization. What varies is the magnitude of the population shifts and the conditions people confront in their new circumstances.

Few governments anticipate migrants or refugees in their development planning, and as a result, few projects are designed to serve the needs of the new arrivals. Those policies that do exist to aid them are typically for direct, immediate services: food, housing, and language and skills training. Since Third World governments are operating with exceedingly limited resources and the migrants have little political power, it is unusual for the migrants to receive more than short-term public assistance, and private agencies and churches share an important part of this assistance burden. Often, the migrants must simply fend for themselves.

Migrants are only one of many groups of people that need special training and education. Both are essential if girls and women are to make progress toward permanent participation in equitable development strategies, but, as in most areas of development policy, the questions of education and training are controversial. Is one more important than the other? Does formal education, or even literacy, really serve the needs of poor women, especially in rural areas? What form should the training take?

In no modern society can girls aspire to partnership in development if they are illiterate and uninformed of the world beyond their immediate experience. Macrolevel policy must therefore include a strategy for female education, and successful nonformal education and training programs have to be multifaceted if they are to help women in both their reproductive and their productive roles. When asked what *they* want, women say they want training that will enhance their status within the family and that will help them earn money.

NOTES

1. Zafer Ecevit and K. C. Zachariah, "International Labor Migration," *Finance and Development* 15 (December 1978):32.

2. Jake C. Miller, "The Homeless of Africa," *Africa Today* 29 (1982):5-30.

3. GIST (U.S. Department of State), "Somali Refugees" (March 1981) and "African Refugees" (April 1981); Sarah K. Brandel, *Refugees: New Dimensions to an Old Problem*, ODC Communique (Washington, D.C.: Overseas Development Council, 1980). In 1983, over 625,000 refugees were reported in Sudan, with hundreds continuing to move in weekly from Ethiopia (*Christian Science Monitor*, April 23, 1983).

4. Ecevit and Zachariah, "International Labor Migration," p. 34.

5. Elsa Chaney, "Women in International Migration: Issues in Development Planning" (Prepared for U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C., 1980), pp. 16-17 and pp. 45-50 of the bibliography.

6. Niara Sudarkasa, "Women and Migration in Contemporary West Africa," in Wellesley Editorial Committee, ed., *Women and National Development: The Complexities of Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 178-189, emphasizes the diversity of factors that cause migration. Melinda Smale's detailed study of Mauritania contrasts the impact of ethnic groups and productive systems on the rules and activities of the women who migrate with those of the women who do not do so (Melinda Smale, "Women in Mauritania: The Effects of Drought and Migration on Their Economic Status and Implications for Development Programs" [Prepared for U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C., 1980]). See also Kenneth Little, *African Women in Towns* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), Chapter 2, and Nadia H. Youssef et al., "Women in Migration: A Third World Focus" (Prepared for U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C., 1979), pp. 82-98.

7. Youssef et al., "Women in Migration," pp. 4-10.

8. Dora Orlansky and Silvia Dubrovsky, *The Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Women's Role and Status in Latin America* (Paris: UNESCO, 1978), pp. 6-7;