

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING FOR WOMEN IN THAILAND*

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I. INTRODUCTION

National policy which is the foundation for national planning may be viewed as an indicator reflecting the level of development in any country.

Such a policy formulated by the Government provides a guide to integrate and to distribute social resources and values among different groups in the society. In the process of policy formulation and in making it legal and legitimate, many institutions are also involved such as the political ones and various interest groups.

According to Yehezkel Dror,¹ the core of policy making depends on decision making to choose the ways for the most suitable implementation of the plan in accord with real conditions. Such a decision should be as reasonable as possible to make the plan most effective. Such an approach is based on the principle of economics of administration.

However, the idea just mentioned is much criticized since it is most unlikely possible in the real world. The reason is that such policy must be coordinated between different views, interests, values and goals held by many groups. Such coordination is most difficult or impossible to carry on. Thus, there is a group supporting the idea of Charles Lindblom,² who says that the formulation of national policy is an issue of complexity and unorderness. Thus, it is impossible to be processed with rationality. Muddling through then results from the bargaining system between different interest groups and such a process cannot be based on rationality. The successful solution of this immediate problem, according to Lindblom, comes from a gradual improvement and adjustment of the past experiences to cope with the new situation which may be called the "incremental approach". The emphasis of this latter view is on the bargaining power associated with democratic concept. This type of policy formulation is criticized because it cannot in reality coordinate the interests of the lower masses of people, but, instead creates rather a plan to integrate the politicians' interests. Besides, it is an imperfect policy, because it seeks only periodical survival and is not really an effort to establish a plan for the future.

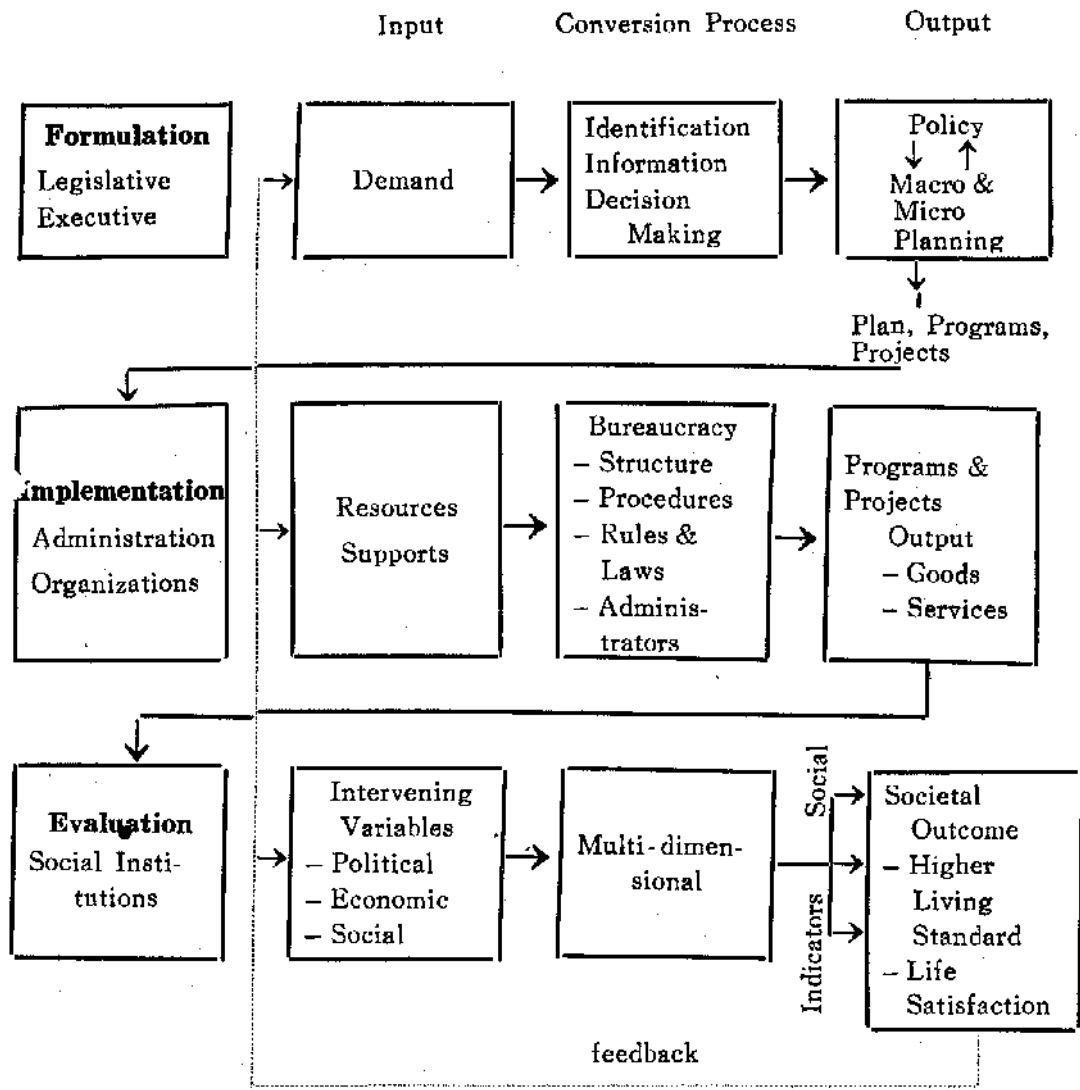
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Traditionally, when national policy has been made by politicians, it then is transferred to the administrative branch for further implementation. At this phase the administrative branch is empowered to formulate basic plans in pursuance of the national policy. The basic or the overall plan lays the framework for the extent and directions of each micro plan.

It is rather normal that in developing countries, even in some developed countries as well which have not yet developed a strong political system, the administrative branch thus in reality seizes complete power to formulate the basic or master plan. In Thailand also, the power of creating the National Development Plan is up to the administrative bureaucracy. There are two reasons underlying this situation. One is that such a system was drawn up during the time when the political system was not fully developed. A second is that the Thai bureaucracy has had stable and strong power for a long time from before the Revolution in 1932 up until now. Hopes arise with the introduction of the democratic ideal of a balance of power among legislative, administrative and judicial powers. Such hopes, however, are rarely realized. In the history of Thailand's democratic eras, the provisional occurrence of political institutions, namely, the legislative assembly and various political parties have not always carried out their duties as real representatives of the people. Most of them have turned out to be rubber stamp for the administrative branch. They approve various policies according to the requirements of the democratic process. Thus, it should not be surprising that the policies statement of any government in Thailand at its inauguration usually comes after and in accordance with that of the development plan rather than being the leading foundation of the plan.

However, such circumstances are not too detrimental if the administrative branch realizes its responsibility for the general good of the people by formulating a reasonable step by step policy as an appropriate guidance in using limited resources leading efficiently towards the goals for the greatest benefit of the whole people, not for the particular benefit of any group. Whether the planning of national policy or the National Development Plan in its parts dealing with women follows in the same pattern just mentioned or not, will be considered in detail in the following part of this paper after basic information on general development planning in Thailand is provided. To be able to understand quickly and clearly the processes of policy planning in Thailand, a model based on the simplified concept of system analysis is presented as follows :



II. PLANNING PROCESS

Generally, important steps in the Thai planning process are as follows :

1. The "top-down" procedure

The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) accepts national policy from the legislative branch, upon which they will complete the substance and contents of the overall plan such as its objectives, overall policies and guideline strategies and then plan each sector.

However, the frequent unexpected change of government permit the NESDB to pursue the planning without having national policy as the first step. Otherwise, the NESDB might accept policy from one government cabinet, but while working to complete the plan, the government might change and the new one might state new policies or even the new emphasis. Thus will affect the process of project initiation and selection, since the target itself or key priorities might change.

2. The "bottom-up" procedure

Implementing units draw up the projects. Afterwards they are sent to upper hierarchical lines for screening before further presentation to the NESDB for reconsideration.

In practice, there are two substantive short-comings at this point. Firstly, the substantive nature of various projects such as objectives, goals, budget, planning implementation including strategies and working methods, speculation of problems and guidelines for solution as well as the evaluation at the ministerial level are not of the same quality. Secondly, there are no efficient screening and selection procedures at the ministerial level. This may be due to a failure to recognize the importance of such reviews or a lack of the screening and decision making ability or even the initial weakness of the project itself.

3. Integrating programs and projects into plans

After the review of programs and projects through cost-benefit analysis and examining their interrelationships, these programs and projects are then classified into categories and priority before integrating them into sectorial and overall plans.

At this point, the Office of NESDB often has to take a long time in reviewing and improving the projects in order to gain enough data for analysis, setting priorities and integrating them appropriately. This is partly the result of the short-coming mentioned in stage two.

Since work performance at the first and second stages are separately done at each implementing unit and ministry, they then often explain the third

stage's short-coming. Most of the projects proposed may deviate to a certain degree from the policy guidelines determined by the NESDB. The solution to this problem is the enforcement of communication channels between the initiating unit and the central planning agency, so that required information may flow two ways continuously before everything is done in an isolated fashion and too late to be adjusted.

4. Publication of the plan

After the NESDB completes its considerations, the Office of the NESDB will add appropriate details to the plan and publish it as the National Economic and Social Development Plan in order to give information to people about the government's administrative directions as well as to inform the concerned units as to their performance and evaluation guidelines during the plan period.

III. PLANNING ABOUT WOMEN

1. The situation of women in Thai society⁸

Traditionally, women were not regarded as a different part of the population, and there was no special consideration for them. However, it was expected that women would benefit from national growth and development as well as men did. This might result from the nearly equal legal status of men and women established for a long time in this society since the legal amendment (1876) permitting women to choose their mates along with the abolishment of the law which allowed men to sell their wives without the agreement of the wives themselves. Moreover, there were clear indications of the better status of women in the first constitutional law of 1932, which called for equal rights and duties of men and women.

In reality, the status of women throughout the country was not equal to men's status, but no problem appeared because of the acceptance of the mentioned circumstance by most women. This also resulted from the clear traditional definitions of roles taken by men and women in Thai society, that is, men were charged with the functions on outside affairs and women had responsibility in home affairs including child rearing. With recognition of the importance of the opposite role, women as well as men always have had room for satisfaction and achievement in their ascribed role as well as in the roles not clearly defined as either's roles, such as the roles of national defense in wartime or creation of art works in peace time.

The success of women's roles in home affairs is not only measured by the happiness of all members of the family, but also from women's ability in helping to build up the economic status of the family by saving money either through expenditure reduction or income increment. In fact, for a long time Thai women have had an invisible role in contributing to the family's economic status, either through saving by growing vegetables for home use, as well as relieving the burdens

of the family's leader, in his own private affairs or in helping increase earnings such as in farming or in labour work to get surplus income for the family.

In more recent times, Thai women have had an opportunity to learn more both in terms of numbers and at higher levels, resulting in more outside roles for women. Being more informed through various media about the ideas and behavior of women in the West has caused Thai women to have less willingness to accept an inferior status. High status women who had had opportunity to learn more, began to form themselves as a group for upgrading women's status. The important change began during the time of Prime Minister Field Marshal Pibulsongkram (1938-44, 1948-57). Madam Laiad, the first lady was the key figure in creating the Women's Cultural Bureau in the National Cultural Council. This was the beginning of the formal movement for women. At that time the Women's Cultural Bureau was the center of numerous leading women in various sectors. The opinions and ideas of these women were articulated through this bureau and were given serious consideration by the government. Thus, this was the starting point of women's participation in defining objectives and steering direction of the government in Thai history. This also resulted in upgrading women's status in reality, such as the appointment of a female member in the amendment committee of Civil and Commercial Codes and the election of women candidates as members of the National Assembly of Representatives.

However, as a result of the strong individualism of Thai people as traditionally characterized and in addition to not being accustomed with the method of such formal grouping at that time, most Thai women formed a loosen and superficial grouping. The activities of such a group were mostly social meetings rather than serious gatherings for discussing problems in depth and seeking solutions. Therefore, when the Government's leader changed, the Women's Cultural Club in each of the provinces as the grouping of women elites in each locality lost their power and some even dissolved.

The modernization of the country has permitted the social institutions to be more involved in the people's lives, while the people are needed to take more roles in response. If the various roles come into conflict, certainly problems will arise.

The introduction of the Economic Development Plan as an instrument of intensifying development of our country has resulted in substantial increments of national income but the average per capita income has not been increasing accordingly. This has caused a wider income gap among various groups, because of a lack of previous measures for a proper income distribution, which in turn, has caused difficulties in living condition for most of our people. During the last decade these difficulties have been doubly increased, because of rising expectations from the demonstration effects of western modernized ways of living. Besides, economic recession occurred in our country in 1972-73 and inflation throughout the world in

1974 resulted in insufficient earnings for most families in Thailand.* So most Thai women have been apparently forced to take a role in seeking earnings for livelihood of the family in addition to their responsibilities at home. The economic role now becomes "a must" for most women rather than "a should" as in the past.

2. Implications of the development plan for women⁴

The main emphasis of the First Plan (1961-1966) was on building infrastructure as a foundation for further progress in various sectors in the future. The extent of the Second Plan (1967-1971) was expanded to cover state enterprise development and local administrative organization. In the national sector, the emphasis was on development in important priority areas which would mostly affect the whole, such as in manpower and employment dimensions, particularly in educational planning according to market demands and social needs along the line with the development plan. However, the first two plans did not identify and stipulate women's problems and solutions as a distinctive part of the plan.

The extent of the Third Plan was expanded with an emphasis on rural development as a base guard for national security. Family planning policy and employment policy were first mentioned in this plan. Economic disorder resulting from domestic and external factors, unjust prices of main export products and reduction of US' expenditures in our country emphasized and more clearly signified women's problems as different from the overall problems of the country. For example, there was the problem of rural women who migrated to urban area for unsuitable "careers" which would provide more earnings for their family survival, since their original agricultural occupation was in difficulties because of the lack of technological advance as well as having no preventive control with respect to the exploiting middlemen. The primary cause of problems related to women was a lack or less earning opportunity which stemmed from two main reasons: **the social value of female inferiority and the insufficient provision by the government of learning opportunities both in quantity and quality.** Thus, these unfortunate women were unable to adapt themselves for other suitable careers.

*First Plan (1961-1966) Gross National Product increased an average 7.2% per annum. In the six year period national income increased 53% totally. The average per capita income annually increased from 2,137 Baht in the beginning year of the plan to 2,787 Baht in the ending year, or around 5% per annum.

Second Plan (1967-1971) GNP increased 7.2% per annum on average, which is lower than the target of 8.5%. The average per capita income increased at the rate of 4.1%, which was lower than the planned target of 4.5%.

Third Plan (1972-1976) National income increased 6.2% per annum on average which is lower than the planned target of 7%. Per capita income increased 3.3% yearly lower than the planned target of 4.5%

Another cause was having many children, particularly in rural agricultural families which earned on average much less than urban people. Thus, in the third plan the importance of encouraging women in education, employment, health welfare and family planning was initially seen by the government.

This plan called for the solution of such problems. However, it was unfortunate that the Government had never done any thing seriously other than what has been mentioned. The government did not even stipulate further the content of the plan necessarily used as guidelines for program and project formulation such as objectives, policies, strategies and goals to be achieved. During this period the government activities concerning women were carried on in the same previous way either in the educational, employment or health areas. The only change might be found in the budget and an incremental number of beneficiaries.

However, during this period, the activities on women which were not mentioned in the plan reflect a much better and encouraging trend. Women were accepted for taking part in important national work. For example, in the year of 1973, regarded as the year of a major turning point in political ideology and national administration, there was the appointment of a National Assembly Council consisting of 2,397 members of which 122 members were women. This Council then elected a smaller National Legislative Assembly which was in charge of setting up national administrative policies. Among 299 members elected, 16 were women. In early 1974, three women were elected as members of the National Assembly. Even though in a smaller proportion than in the previous election of early 1969 when 5 women were elected from 219 members, 8 women were nevertheless nominated as senators. During 1976-1977, two women became Cabinet ministers, which was a remarkably change in Thai history since no women had ever been ministers before. This was regarded as an upheaval in terms of women's participation in taking charge of national responsibilities.

In this period too, non-government organizations of various associations had done certain prominent works on women which affected the mass in many phases, mainly revision of the laws and regulations allowing women to eliminate long suffered disadvantages, such as the already completed rectification of Civil and Commercial Law permitting women to have equal rights as men in any law procedure concerning property after marriage, in divorce case, in asking for guardianship of their children, in decision making to choose any career and residence. Another example was the amendment of the law on abortion to allow pregnant women to take part in decision making in order to prevent in the beginning phase any social problem which might occur later.

In addition, there was same rectification of various regulations, permitting women to have a chance of taking over high levels of administrative posts of which previously women were never under consideration, such as diplomatic posts to foreign countries, the posts of director-general and prosecutor including other high level administrative posts in the private business sector and international agencies.

In the work in other areas, especially in social welfare there is a **Council on Social Welfare of Thailand**, set up in 1960 under the Auspices of His Majesty the King as a non-governmental agency. This Council has been working as the main center in coordinating the work of both governmental and private organizations in this field. For women development activities, there is the **National Council of Women of Thailand** under the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen as a non-governmental agency, established since 1959, in charge of coordinating the work of private organizations in this field, which will be explained in further detail.

For the **Fourth Development Plan (1977-1981)** To the scope of each area under the plan is extended. There is also the introduction of an interdisciplinary approach in practice. For activities about women, a policy guideline has been established to continue work mentioned as serious problem in the Third Plan by modification of the content to make them more clearer through the following steps, which will directly quote from the plan itself.

2.1 Current Situation At present, women make up half of the entire population of the country. There are about eleven million women in the country's labour force (aged 15 years and more). Still, in practice women's rights remain far inferior to that of men in social, economic, and political terms. In order to encourage women's participation in the social and economic development process to the fullest extent, it is necessary to upgrade women's skills and their status in society.

2.2 Problems

2.2.1 As a whole, the Government provides education for boys and girls without discrimination. However, under present circumstances, boys have more educational opportunities, particularly in poor families, than girls. According to a survey carried out in 1970, it was found that the illiteracy rate among women was 25.2 per cent which was significantly higher than the illiteracy rate of 11.1 per cent for men.

2.2.2 Although by law, men and women have equal rights with respect to occupation and pay, in practice, (according to a survey) it appears that women are discriminated against in terms of professional advancement and in terms of salaries.

2.3 Guidelines and Measures The following guidelines are to be used in creating a more meaningful role for women in the social and economic development process :-

2.3.1 Educational Measures

(1) Follow-up study courses are to be organized for women in rural areas to enable them to participate more ably and with more responsibilities in local development activities.

(2) Out-of-school education that will be provided for women will emphasize the equality principle which will be applied to men and women (Ministry of Education, Bureau of State Universities)

2.3.2 Economic and Occupational Measures

(1) Men and women will be given equal chances for promotion in government service and the number of female staff will be increased. Measures will be applied to ensure equal pay and security for men and women.

(2) Government agencies and private institutions will be encouraged to co-operate in organizing training courses for women in order to enhance their skills in accordance with local needs.

2.3.3 Revisions and Modifications of Laws

(1) Laws that prevent a fair and equal treatment of women are to be revised and modified, including legislation to protect female workers in various occupations.

(2) Criminal punishment will be made more severe and suppression will be intensified for those who force or lure women into illegal occupations.

2.4 Objectives and Plans

2.4.1 Short-Term Plans

(1) Training courses for women are to be organized in community development areas in 70 provinces on food and nutrition, cottage industry, family development in agricultural society, the forming of groups and family planning. The following targets have been set for the Fourth Plan:—

(a) Basic training will be given to 1,400 groups or 42,000 people.

(b) Follow-up education will be given to 1,900 groups or 18,900 people.

(c) Vocational training will be given to 710 groups or 26,300 people.

(2) Young girls will be given a better education and will learn skills for future vocations. Targets which have been set are as follows:—

(a) Provision of intensive training courses for young girls : 25 groups for 1,250 people.

(b) Provision of short training courses for young girls : 17 groups for 3,350 people.

(c) Provision of training in special activities : 15 groups.

2.4.2 Medium-and Long-Term Plans. To achieve the above mentioned objectives relating to the development of the role of women, the National Economic and Social Development Board will co-operate with the Committee on Women and Child Development which is going to be set up by the Government in formulating medium and long term plans.

3. Comments on Women Plan

Remarks on plan writing can be put as follows :-

3.1 Problem identification. Real problems on women in current society are identified through collected data such as statistical data for the year of 1970 mentioned above. Also the plan mentioned research results without quoting the sources clearly.

This is a clear way of problem identification. Although reference to data sources is not necessary in plan writing, however, it is supportive factor to facilitate clarity and persuasiveness.

3.2 Guidelines and Corrective Measures Since an emphasis in the current plan is to offer opportunity for women to participate more efficiently in national economic and social development. The guidelines are then outlined as mentioned above.

The determination of corrective guidelines is based on rationality, but has not resulted from the process of optimal choice among alternatives. However, the planned corrective guidelines are well relevant to the problem and are only general guidelines for detailed study before working out programs and projects to be determined by the implementing agencies.

3.3 Objectives and Plans Short-term plans and targets are clearly worked out under subject and type of training and the number of trainees both in light of the effective improvement of living conditions, increment of earnings and maintenance of Thai culture.

Middle and long-term targets are not determined pending the task still to be accomplished of setting up Women and Children Development Committee which will take further responsibility in the determination of middle and long-term targets.

3.4 Plan projection Normally the projection of the plan depends on the following steps.

3.4.1 Collection of data relating to women in their current situation. This will be used as a data base for comparison between existing conditions and the output resulting from the implementation of the plan.

3.4.2 Estimation of expected output at each time period spot and total output after the plan completion, to be used as a decision base for resource allocations for further plan implementation. Such a decision will be a linkage between the current and successive plans.

3.4.3 Estimation of obstacles which may occur in the process of plan implementation and preventive measures and possible related solutions.

Since the plan on women is still in the first stage, the second and third steps thus have to be delayed until the completion of the beginning phase.

4. Strategies and process of planning on women development.

The steps in planning involving women are being carried out as practiced on general planning mentioned in section II. However, the determination of plan content directly related to women has just begin. Two important machineries are still in absence in the process of intergrating programs for implementation with the policy guidelines as determined by the Central Planning Agency, NESDB.

4.1 The Top-down Planning Machinery Normally in arranging various micro plans, the executive committee of the NESDB will appoint the National Policy Making and Coordinating Committee at national levels in various areas. This committee will identify the problems and determine priorities, lay out policy guidelines and state out the necessary contents of the plan, to be used as direction to plan programs and projects by implementing agencies, as well as coordinate and integrate such programs proposed by various agencies before bringing them to the consideration of the NESDB.

Since the introduction of the Fourth Development Plan on Women and Children was announced in March, 1977, The Office of NESDB has proposed recommendations to be considered by the cabinet on appointment of **the National Women and Children Development Committee** (NWCDC). Because of political instability during that time, the consideration is still under the process.

In order to stipulate the progress of the already delayed Women Development Plan towards the planned targets, the Office of NESDB appointed a **Women and Children Development Planning Sub-committee** (WCDPS)⁴ on January 25, 1978 with the following objectives :-

1. To have a central agency in charge of women and children development planning.
2. To help in solving problems resulting from various governmental organizations and private associations doing the same work at the same time and to have programmes set up in a coordinated way and to work more cooperatively.
3. To work out the policy and planned approach on women and children development for government consideration as implementating guidelines for various working agencies to achieve goals more directly.
4. To determine and integrate programs and projects in cooperation with both governmental and private agencies towards the women and children development guidelines as set forth in the Fourth Development Plan.

This WCDPS consists of experts and personnel on women activities, such as experts on education, public welfare, labour, agriculture, industry, community development, and health, including two representatives from the National Council of Women of Thailand, one representative from the Council on Social Welfare of Thailand and one representative from non-governmental organizations which have done prominent work related to women development, as well as representative from

the concerned division in the office of NESDB, such as the Director of Social Project Division and other officials who have direct responsibility in this affair, namely the Chief of Social Development Planning and Welfare Section and its program analyst, also Director of Population and Manpower Planning Division, together with two advisory members from UNICEF and UNESCO, the two international agencies which have predominantly, worked on women and children development for a long time. The WCDPS has functions as follows :-

1. To consider problems and to give recommendations on women development, pre-school and out of school children, especially in rural areas.
2. To advise and cooperate with the agencies involved in arrangement or revision of short-term and long-term plans and projects for women and children development in the context of subject (1) according to the NESDB plan.
3. To coordinate implementation of women and pre-school and out-of-school children development of involved governmental and private agencies to achieve the planned objectives and targets set out in the national development plan.
4. To follow up and evaluate as well as to collect the output and outcomes of the programs and projects in 2 & 3, and to help solve the implementation problems.

The WCDPS has authority to appoint task forces for implementation of the work assigned, WCDPS must report to the Executive Board of the NESDB.

In short, at present the WCDPS is working as the national policy making and co-ordinating committee in the place of the NWCDC while it is in the appointing process.

4.2 The bottom-up planning machinery As normal practice, the implementing agencies work out programs and projects with details and present them to the office of NESDB for consideration along their hierarchical line. Programs and projects on woman development follow the same procedures.

However, there exist implementing agencies on women in various Ministries and Departments, both in the form of being integrated with general activities and being separated explicitly for women development activities. Then agencies will present the program and project proposals on women along with other different kinds of program and project proposals for consideration along their hierarchical line up to the Office of the NESDB.

Because of the broadness of the guidelines in the Fourth Development Plan and because there is neither determination of work distribution between public and private sectors nor within each sector as well, much activities in this field at present time are done by the private sector. Therefore, the screening and deliberations at the ministerial and departmental level are based on previous experiences. That means there are revisions of the original programs by incrementing the number of programs or the number of those who will benefit from each program. It is hard to find the program with new content or new methods planned to solve efficiently different problems resulting from changes in society.

Though private working organizations have had much experience with activities relating to women and have launched new different lines than that of the government, these organization are not official. Therefore, they have no direct line to present various programs to the NESDB. Only member organization of the Council of Social Welfare of Thailand (CSWT) and the National Council of Women of Thailand (NCWT) can send their projects through the councils. Such a Council works as a coordinating center of the member organizations. After screening and reviewing the projects, each Council will present them to the central planning agency, through members of the Council, who were appointed as members of the National Policy Making and Coordinating Committee.

At present there are many sporadic implementing agencies, both government and private organizations, scattered here and there. This causes difficulty in coordination. Besides, these working agencies are apt to do nearly the same kind of work since they are unable to contact one another to exchange ideas and information on their activities.

To solve this problem, the Women and Children Development Planning Sub-Committee, which is also functioning as liaison staff, has recommended that an **Office of National Women Affairs (ONWA)** should be set up under the following guidelines :

Status, composition and functions. To achieve the mentioned objectives, it is considered suitable to set up an ONWA consisting of the Executive Committee to work out national policy to be presented to the government as well as to take care of effective coordinating work. The office of this committee will be an official unit under the Prime Minister's Office and will have sufficient budget and personnel for defined activities.

The members of Executive Committee will be the cabinet ministers in charge of related agencies encouraging women to take roles in national development, chiefs of various women agencies, presidents of chamber of commerces, chiefs of commercial associations in different areas, representatives from related government and private organizations and other persons regarded by the government as suitable.

An Office of National Women Affairs Committee would have the following functions :

1. To collect data on the status of women and living conditions in various areas and occupations to be used in women development planning.
2. To work for the revision of laws and regulations and the eradication of unjust treatment to women.
3. To encourage, support and coordinate various governmental and private organizations in the process of changing attitudes among the general public for adoption of equal status for women in political, economic and social activities.
4. To recommend and advise the Government in working out policies and plans encouraging woman to participate more efficiently in the national development process.

Comments on ONWA According to the objectives, composition and functions of an ONWA as proposed by the Women and Children Development Planning Sub-Committee, it is noticeable that functions one and four are rather the same as those assigned for the Social Project Division of the NESDB and of the Women and Children Development Committee the appointment of which is under consideration. Function three is to coordinate the projects run by those implementing organization while function two is to implement the project by itself.

The government should deliberate carefully before making any decision on the establishment of an ONWA. It is necessary to consider where there is an absence of working machinery in the area of women affairs at present and where such a machinery already exists. In establishing that new agency, the government has to know explicitly which type it should be, an advisory, a coordinating or an implementing unit. It is, of course, possible to establish a new agency with the three roles combined, but such an agency could hardly function effectively. In addition, the new establishment of such an office might result in the already established organizations which used to be responsible for women affairs turning over their responsibilities to the new agency on the ground that there is overlap in function.

Besides, the proposed ONWA with the executive committee of great size consisting of many high level officials as well as experts seems to provide machinery of such importance and strength that it hardly could be included in the existing national planning system. Therefore, the approval of an ONWA is rather impossible both in the light of power structure as well as administrative structure. The proposal seems to reform the national planning system rather than creating the missing machinery in such a system to make it complete and well functioning.

The solution is that the function of the proposed ONWA should be defined for specific work which is not existing at present, that means to coordinate work programs of government and non-government agencies, but not as the implementing agency, with the exception of only pilot projects to try out new ideas or approaches. After that it should transfer the projects to the suitable agency for further active implementation. Besides, the proposed agency should stimulate various agencies to cooperate as much as possible in the implementation of the projects rather than doing those that overlap.

As for the work in the area of women affairs for various government agencies, it may be transferred to be under direct supervision of an ONWA, or it is possible that those government agencies may remain at the same locus where they now belong, but only allow ONWA to coordinate their work. This is an issue about which a decision can be made only after exploration in detail of the work done by those related government agencies.

As for non-government agencies, it should let both CSWT and NEWT still be the main core in screening their work for ONWA. As for the stimulation to make various agencies cooperate, this function must be carried out both by ONWA and through the two councils, CSWT and NCWT as well.

5. Planning implementation : Women and children planning sub - committee, CSWT and NCWT.

At present, neither the Women and Children Development Committee, which will act as national policy making and coordinating committee for the central planning agency, nor an ONWA, which should function as the unit controlling and coordinating projects of various implementing agencies, yet exist. So the Women and Children Development Planning Sub-Committee is temporarily functioning in place of the two missing machineries.

It can be seen that the objectives and functions of the Women and Children Development Planning Sub-Committee were defined so that this Sub-Committee has already a twofold role, namely, the role in place of the central planning agency and also the role in place of a unit controlling and coordinating programs of various working agencies both governmental and non-governmental. The work process of this Sub-Committee in each role is as follows :-

5.1 Role in place of central planning agency.^a Pending the appointment of the National Women and Children Development Committee, in the form of a National Policy Making and Co-ordinating Committee, the Sub-Committee is temporarily functioning as follows :-

5.1.1. Collecting data for analysis. The sub-committee considers that in doing the work of identification of problems, arrangement of problem priorities, specification of the women development plan content and analysis of projects proposed to integrate them appropriately, much primary and secondary data are needed. Therefore, a task force headed by the Director of Social Project Division was established to accomplish the following tasks :

1. To select secondary data through already existing data resources of various agencies such as the Manpower Planning Division, National Statistical Office, etc.

2. To proceed with respect to the collection of missing necessary data such as that on the status of working women in various occupations.

3. To collect research findings as well as different points of views expressed at seminars and related meetings.

4. To publish a collection of articles on the conditions and problems confronting Thai women in different areas, namely, population, education, economics public health, politics and administration under the name of **Thai Women Status Analysis⁷** to be used for problem identification to be addressed in both short term and long term plans as a guideline for seminar discussion.

5. To arrange a seminar on September, 6-9, 1977 to focus on the specific context of the Fourth Plan on Woman, data analysis for which has been delayed for a long time.

5.1.2 To coordinate the projects into a sectorial plan and then integrate them into an overall plan. These two kinds of work have not begun pending the unfinished tasks in 5.1.1.

5.2 Implementing units and their coordinating and controlling agencies

5.2.1 **Governmental implementing units.** The important governmental units of plan implementation concerning women projects are :-

- Ministry of Education, responsible for formal and non-formal education including vocational training.
- Ministry of Interior, focussing mostly on occupation development and work through various departments such as the Community Development Department, Office of Accelerated Rural Development, Public Welfares Department, Labour Department and Labour Skill Development Center.
- Ministry of Agriculture, concentrating on research and technical assistance for training agricultural workers to upgrade the agricultural sector as well as individual farmers.
- Ministry of Industry, concerning on encouragement of domestic industry both as a main or a supplementary occupation.

5.2.2 **Non-Governmental implementing units.** There are, as mentioned before, several non-governmental units, in different forms, at different areas and of different sizes rendering different kinds of services for women. It is impossible to mention the work of all these units. Therefore, it is better to mention only the work of their coordinating and controlling agencies, CSWT and NCWT.

5.2.2.1 **The council on social welfare of Thailand (CSWT).**⁵ The CSWT was established in 1960 as a center for coordinating and promoting social welfare work of 301 members organizations, 136 in Bangkok and 165 in regional areas.

Objectives :

1. To promote and coordinate social welfare programs of the member organizations.
2. To collect, exchange and publicize information concerned and work progress done by member organizations.
3. To initiate social welfare work which has not yet been done or which is not yet wellknown.

Policy :

1. To support and coordinate the work of member organizations in preventing and solving social problems with the main emphasis on living conditions of people and national security.
2. To give technical and financial assistance to relieve the poor from economic pressure through cooperation of member organizations in uplifting the level of health and sanitation, family planning, education and occupational training.

3. To improve women's status and welfare so that they might participate in preventing and solving family and social problems.
4. To stimulate youth to take productive roles in development activities
5. To raise funds for the council's and member organizations' expenditures.

Organization and work process in the year 1975-78

The CSWT consists of a Board of Directors as a highest governing body, with the power of policy formulation and supervision of policy implementation. The Board is composed of a group of representatives from member organization elected at the general meeting for a three year term. The Board of Directors then appoints an Executive Board as its secretariat. There is a Regional Controlling and Coordinating Committee to control the Regional Coordinating Committees of 9 regions.

Outstanding work during 1975-78

1. Suggestions sent to the government, as a result of the group report on "Social Problems and the Roles of Woman" in the seminar on "Social Problems and National Security" (August, 5-10, 1975), as follows:-

- To revise laws and regulations against the equality of women rights, solve the problem of double marriage registration and increase women opportunity for high level posts.
- To revise occupational education curriculum both for school and out of school, so that women can be trained for practical activities, thus to increase their occupational qualifications and to prevent them from unsuitable careers.
- Prostitution residences are to be registered. Effort should be made to exclude the girls under 18 years of age from this "career". To rehabilitate the voluntary prostitutes as well as to limit the number and the physical location of entertainment places.

Besides, the recommendation has been made for the formation of women groups to propose idea to the government and to make contribution to rural development process in various fields.

The council also appoints several working committees to coordinate project implementation in each specific area, but those with activities mainly concerned with women are:-

1. Committee for the Promotion of Women's Welfare. To do and supervise the work of member organizations in vocational training for rural women, female youth and local leaders training, aid service for enticed women, projects for health and sanitary promotion and projects for knowledge dissemination through the mass media.

2. Committee for Rural Development - To render and coordinate projects in occupation training, female youth training and rural housewives groups, as a formation of nuclear groups for community development.

3. Community Service Committee - To organize and assist member organizations to launch projects on promoting community centers particularly in slum areas, training community service officials and volunteers and providing funds for the Youth Association of Thailand to stimulate the consciousness of environmental dangers and to suggest preventive measures.

4. Royal Fund for Occupation Development Committee - To provide loan and technical assistance to those in need via member organizations.

5.2.2.2 National Council of Women of Thailand (NCWT)⁹ The NCWT was organized in 1959 to coordinate work of various associations which emphasize activities particularly for women. At present, there are 94 member organizations with 28 in Bangkok and 66 in different regions.

Objectives :

1. To search and exchange ideas concerning Thai women in various fields between the council, the member organizations and local and international non-member organizations.
2. To coordinate the work process of member organizations.
3. To upgrade the status and living condition of Thai women as well as preventing and overcoming obstacles to the progress of Thai women and women associations.

Policy :

1. To cooperate and coordinate the work of women associations in Thailand in accordance with national needs and U.N. resolutions within the available resources, time and human capacities.
2. To collect and disseminate knowledge, information and work methods so that all forces would be combine to upgrade the living condition of the Thai people.
3. To provide and allocate fund to support member organizations' activities as they deem useful.
4. To promote positive international relations particularly in the Asian region.

Organization and work process during 1975-78 The NCWT consists of a General Assembly and Board of Directors. The General Assembly is composed of representatives from ordinary member organizations while the Board consists of representatives of 19 ordinary members elected by the General Assembly for a two year term. The Board is responsible for policy administration according to the objectives of the Council and the resolutions of the General Assembly. The Board may set up the Executive committee and other various committee as they deem suitable.

At present, there are many committees both standing and *ad hoc*. The followings are committees which have important roles and work results relating to the women development process.

1. **The Committee on Education and Morality** has responsibility for solving problems of learning opportunity for rural women and preventing the enticement of women and children. The outstanding work in this period are proposals for curriculum revision, particularly curriculum related to women, to meet the social requirements of today.

2. **The Committee for Social Welfare** which is responsible for providing education and training activities in the field of social welfare including management of nurseries in rural and slum areas. The work results in this period are studies on human problems in hospitals, surveys of the slum problems and training programs for community development workers both in urban and rural areas.

3. **The Family and Child Welfare Committee** is responsible for studying, disseminating and supporting children centers including day-care centers. The outstanding work result is the establishment of school for child development preparation which trains the concerned personnel including mothers to know how to bring up children to grow up well adjusted both physically and mentally.

4. **The Committee on Women Labor** is responsible for studying women's status and the use of female laborers as well as finding the way to improve and correct the maltreatment of female laborers. In addition, the committee is also responsible for promoting supplementary occupations for women and light jobs for retired women. Work results in this period are, the insistence on the eradication of female discrimination in employment and in opportunities of work progress, the arrangement of seminars on safety motivation for female workers and making moving pictures on Thai women of different occupations as well as of the Thai female labor force.

Besides, during this period, another six committees also were set up :-

1. Committee for the Promotion of Women's Contributions in Community Development.
2. Project Committee for Encouragement of Consumers.
3. Project Committee for and Promotion of Out-of-school Education.
4. Project Committee for the Promotion of Child Development.
5. Project Committee for the Promotion of Women and Youth's Welfare.
6. Project Committee for the Promotion of Population Study and Family Planning.

These committees have published documents such as the books under the titles "Thai Women",¹⁰ "List of Thai Women Elites"¹¹ and "Wisdom in eating"¹² along with arrangement of seminars in each interesting sector, such as the seminar on the theme of "New Roles of Women in Community Development" and an exhibition of Thai women status.

After this detailed consideration, it is noticeable that the work of CSWT and NCWT are characterized by repeated overlapping not only within the working units in each council but between the councils as well. There are quite a number

of similar committees which in turn run many overlapping activities such as the training of community service workers at different levels, training of female youth and local leaders, providing occupational training courses for rural women, forming housewives' groups and establishment of nurseries and day care centers. In the case of using the two Councils as coordinating agencies for maximal benefit, both CSWT and NCWT will have to reorganize their structure, work process and distribution of duties. Further studies are needed for this improvement. However, at present time, it can be said that, both Councils has been performing their duties well enough in collecting data and presenting recommendations to the government for consideration at various levels and steps of planning formulation relating to women, as well as in coordinating plan implementation. This signifies that the Councils have been functioning in both roles while there are no governmental machinery to act for.

5.2.2.3 International Organizations There are various international organizations in Thailand which have an interest in programs for women.

USOM/Thailand (United States Operation Mission of Thailand)

The primary emphasis is on the integration of women as both agents and beneficiaries in the mainstream of the agency's programming. Thus research and technical assistance are provided accordingly by this agency.

ESCAP (The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific)

ESCAP's social welfare activities include training and advisory service related to women, youth, community development and social work education.

SEAMEO (The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization)

SEAMEO's office in Bangkok coordinates a series of activities in non-formal education in member countries. The program is aimed to strengthen existing non-formal education programs in member countries and to help develop manpower to fill the needs of the national plan.

UNICEF (The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)

Since the prime objective of UNICEF is to improve conditions for children, regardless of race or creed, therefore the agency also runs quite a number of related projects concerning women in Thailand such as assistance in adult education with special attention to women and girls, socio-economic community center program, day-care services, youth and women's clubs, home for children and destitute women, non-formal education and simple vocational skills training related to the needs of local industries.

WHO (World Health Organization in Thailand)

The agency emphasizes technical co-operation programs which would contribute most significantly to solving the health problems in Thailand including family planning, maternal and child health, nutrition and health education.

Research projects in primary health care as well as in communicable disease prevention and control are strongly supported.

ILO (International Labour Organization)

The focus of ILO is on employment in particular to meet the challenge of creating sufficient jobs by the year 2000 and thereby achieve full employment. The main strategies to meet this objective focus primarily on training for employment. The distinctive vocational training projects rendered in cooperation with ILO are the Urban Rehabilitation Center at Phrapadeng, the Rural Rehabilitation Center near Khon kaen, the National Institute for Skill Development (NISD) and the National Service for Technical Skill Promotion and Job-Entry Training for Industry and Occupational Health Center at Samrong Tai.

Recognizing that these activities rendered by the international agencies are of great benefits to the Thai people, men and women; the shortcoming is still apparent that information concerning their activities are insufficient to make possible cooperative and integrative plans that would provide optimal results from their activities.

To sum up ideas and information mentioned above, the author would like to propose an overall structure of women planning mechanism as follows:

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Types of Activities

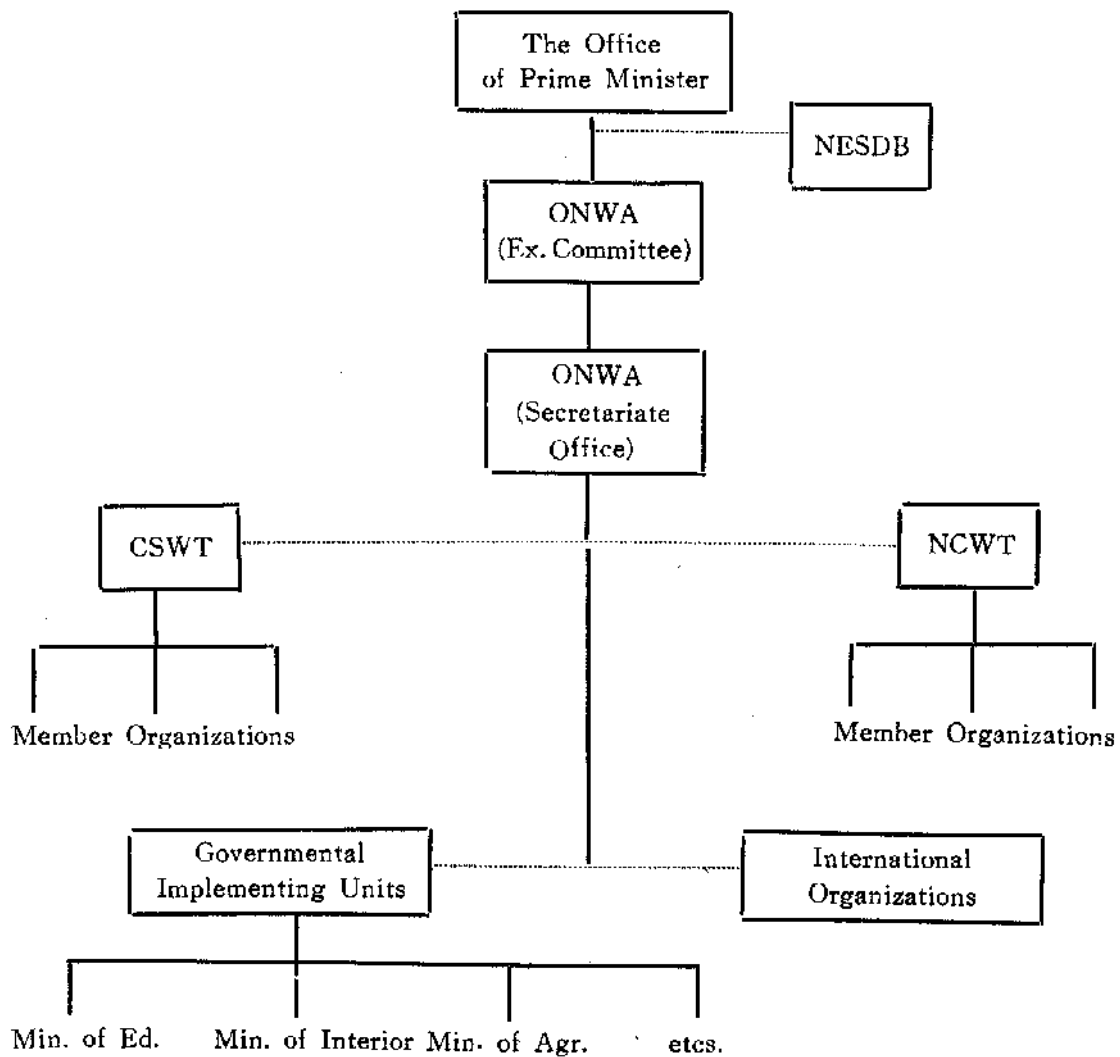
Activities done for women both by governmental and non-governmental organizations can be classified as follows:

1.1 Basic Service which can be grouped as:

1.1.1 **Education.** In general, the gap between boys and girls enrollment on the whole is increasing. It is noticeable, however, that the increasing rate of female enrollment in higher education is more rapid than male since 1969.

1.1.2 **Health.** The increment of health services rendered by the private sector which is quite apparent during this period has direct benefit to women of higher economic class but to those from lower socio-economic background because of rather high service charges. However, it helps lowering the burden of the governmental clinics and hospitals, which in turn give more chances for those of lower socio-economic background to health service.

1.1.3 **Family planning.** Two dimensions of family planning have characterized accomplishments in Thailand. The first approach is to put population studies and family planning in formal and informal education. The second approach is to put family planning into action through governmental and private volunteer units. The success of this program can be seen in the reduction of birth rate from 3.2% to 2.6% at the end of the third plan.



- Remarks :
1. ----- Coordinating line
 2. Governmental implementing units may be put directly under ONWA or still in the same locus but allowed ONWA to coordinate their work as presented in this chart.

1.2 Income Earning Services Much effort has been put in this field through improving existing occupations and to promote supplementary occupations as well.

Various programs and projects have been launched in this field mostly in the form of occupational training courses both within and out of school. However, outcomes are hard to evaluate. The progress reports count only the numbers of trainees ever enrolled. Follow up programs to measure changes of attitudes towards such work and working behavior are mostly neglected. Cost-benefit studies for occupational training programs have never been done especially on rural women as well as men. Even without definite statistical data, migration of labor from rural areas and higher rates of unemployment can be obviously seen. Even though these cannot be solely used as indicators to point out the failure of those occupational training programs, those are, nevertheless, a part of them.

2. Resources

2.1 Financial resource In planning implementation, governmental projects receive financial support mostly from government budgets, and secondly from loans either within or outside the country and finally from donations. Non-government projects mostly get support from donations but they are rarely sufficient.

2.2 Human resources Human resources available for plan implementation are mostly within the country. In government projects, personnel are under government payroll. They work in cooperation with private organization personnel and individual volunteers to some extent. In non-governmental projects, most activities are done on a voluntary basis.

One of the most important reasons causing ineffective implementation is the lack of seriousness of the leadership. The other reason is the underqualification of personnel, but this varies from project to project and can be solved easier than the first one.

2.3 Importation of human resources Importation of human resource from abroad is not prominent in Thailand. However, there are two sources of importation to be mentioned. The first source are experts and technical personnel imported respectively from countries such as the United States and Japan for upgrading the academic executive and skill training. Recent records from the Labor Department, 1977, indicate that there were 1741 personnel of these kind resident in Thailand. No classification of sex or areas had been done from these data. The second source which is rather more a burden than a benefit to Thailand is a pool of refugees from Indo-China. Recent records of the Immigration Division on July, 15, 1978, indicate 95,817 Laotians (males 37,904, females 28,358 boys 15,360, girls 14,195); 13,620 Cambodians (males 6,464, females 3,272, boys 2,083, girls 1,801) and 1,601 Vietnamese (males 468, females 372, boys 389, girls 370 and 2 newborns). It is believed that the real number is much greater than this including Burmese who are illegal border entrants. These refugees and illegal entrants are

nearly all, unskilled laborers. They are mostly non economic productive forces according to their limited ability, Thailand's own regulations on occupation and area restriction.

2.4 Exportation of human resource At professional levels the brain drain is quite a problem for a developing country like Thailand since it represents a big loss both economically and socially. According to estimates of the Thailand Medical Association, there were around 2,000 Thai physicians, mostly males, and 4,000 nurses working in U.S.A. in 1976. Since oil price increases in 1974, the Middle Eastern countries have become more wealthy. Prosperous job opportunities with high salaries have attracted many foreign workers from developing countries including Thailand. According to recent records (1977) from the Labor Department, there are 3,870 Thai labor mostly skilled, work in Bahrein, Saudi-Arabia and Dubai respectively. They are nearly all males.

Female exportation from Thailand though not great in number, are still a problem. They are mostly enticed through fraudulent marriages or employment contracts and may end up as bar girls, etc. No approximation is made about the number and place but they mostly abide in popular tourist cities like Hongkong and Frankfurt.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Thai development plan is not a comprehensive one like those used in state-socialist or communist countries. Thus, it is then difficult to control the output of the private sector. Since most of women development activities are run by private organizations as mentioned above, planning is most difficult, if not impossible. A complete form of evaluation system; not only standard monitoring as practiced now, if introduced and performed seriously, could help, at least partially, to solve this problem. Social indicators, determined to suit the context of Thailand environment, must be treated as an important component factor providing key data on the status and situation of Thai women.

3.2. The concept of development which treats human resources as agents of change and the beneficiaries as well, must be stressed and recognized by the planners, the implementators, the evaluators and others concerned at all levels. With out this idea in mind, projects will be in vain. The government sector seems to be more resistant for improvement along these lines than the private sector because of their bureaucratic clumsiness and rigidity.

3.3. The proposal for the establishment of an ONWA should be considered with special care. A bureaucratic-like-organization setting, as proposed, will hinder the speed; not only of its own activities but the organizations' activities under its supervision as well. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible for a bureaucratic office to coordinate and supervise non-bureaucratic organizations efficiently. A flat hierarchical line organization with a great amount of flexibility should be considered instead of the rigid one proposed-

3.4. The tasks which are done and to be done by the Sub-committee of Women and Children Development Planning may be viewed as rather irrelevant and less useful for achieving major targets. Given limits of time and personnel, the Sub-committee's task forces should work in cooperation with other relevant agencies, both academic and actions in order to obtain perspectives on women conditions and problems in different areas. Then they could propose guidelines for problem solutions instead of writing articles and arranging seminars based on individual or single group experience.

3.5. Eventhough we have tried hard to make policy planning, either on women or others concerned, based upon rational decision making process, according to Dror, aiming towards the most effectiveness, however, infact, we can never go too far from the "muddling through" process as Lindblom pointed out. To be more rational in planning, the seperated powers of state; the legislative, the administrative and the judiciary ones have to be strengthened firstly to function on equal terms. To admit the fact of our own inferiority is not a shameful sin if we will try hard to improve ourselves by adding up rationality more and more through the line of the "incremental approach".

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