

WID *Information*

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RESEARCH NOTES

WOMEN MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE VULNERABLE CHILDREN OF MALAWI

by Brenda Krause Eheart

For ten days in August, through a MUCIA grant, I was able to travel up and down Malawi meeting concerned citizens and members of NGOs. We discussed the country's vulnerable children and the role of women in meeting the needs of these children. I had five objectives: to identify vulnerable groups of children with a particular emphasis on the problems of orphans; to identify services provided to these children; to identify existing policies on permanency for orphans including contradictions, gaps, and degrees of inadequacy; to identify budgetary sources for child welfare; and to identify the role of women as caregivers and change agents. Following is a brief summary of my findings:

I. Vulnerable Groups of Children

- A. 1. 50% of children under 5 are chronically malnourished and 5% reflect severe acute malnutrition.
2. There were 25,000 AIDs orphans in 1992 and it is estimated that there will be 500,000 to 600,000 by 1998.
3. Street children are a growing concern with over half of them being orphans due to AIDs and extreme poverty.

B. The most acute problem of orphans relates to the severe lack of caregivers. Where relatives used to be able to take in and care for these children, today, because of extreme poverty, several years of drought, and the AIDs epidemic, relatives and/or communities are unable to fulfill this function. Parents can not feed the children they have, much less, take in others.

II. Services to Orphans

There is little available for the provision of permanent, nurturing care for the thousands of orphans who exist today, and the prospect of up to 600,000 in just 4 more years is frightening. There is a strong belief that the answers must come from the community, with the help of NGOs. NGOs are very few in Malawi, and communities are too poor to provide solutions to this problem. There has never been a history of orphanages because villages raised their children. Very few, today, seem in favor of group care for the orphans.

III. Existing Policies

In July 1992, the Malawi Task Force on Orphans published a list of draft policy guidelines for the care of orphans. The first one stated that extended family should provide care for orphans and when they can't, the government should, in liaison with NGOs, self-help groups, etc., assist extended families by helping them learn skills to earn income and to provide seeds, fertilizer, etc. to enable them to produce enough food for the family. The problem is that too many families have been devastated by the two-year drought. There is not, in the near future, time to learn new skills and turn these skills into income-producing activities. Moreover, AIDs is killing men, women, and children in alarming numbers. One in three pregnant women is HIV-positive and 1 in 10 of every Malawian citizen is HIV-positive. The people who remain, devastated by poverty, illness, and grief can not be expected to take on several more children (the average family in Malawi already consists of 6 + children) unless they are given, at a minimum, food and clothing for the orphans and for their own children. Policy #2 is to promote foster care in order to recruit more parents.

The problem again is that people are too poor to do this. Currently, the fee paid to a foster parent by the government is the equivalent of \$2 per month. There are only 80 children in foster care. Policy #3 states that institutional care "will be the last resort" and will generally apply to orphans with no known living relatives.

IV. Budgetary Sources

Budgetary sources for the care of orphans are nearly nonexistent. A little money to support pilot programs comes from UN organizations. Churches, mosques, self-help groups, etc. provide funding for a few modest programs. The government has very little monetary resources available.

V. The Role of Women

It is interesting to note that of the 13 interviews I had, only three were with men. Moreover, it is assumed that a child will become an orphan if his mother dies, for it is the women who raise the children. It is also, therefore, female relatives who are expected to raise the orphans.

Moreover, the care and protection of vulnerable children rests in Malawi with what was called, until recently, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Community Services. It also is important to repeat a point Ms. Nyorovai Whande of the U.N.'s High Commission on Refugees emphasized. She said, "To do anything for children and for it to be long-term, you must involve mothers every step of the way." She also said, "You can not address the needs of children without addressing the needs of their mothers, and vice versa." The issues surrounding the orphans of Malawi are indeed women's issues, and it will be women as caregivers and change agents who will be most affected by this crisis and most involved in finding a solution.

I certainly do not have "the solution". There is no one solution, but I do have an idea which can serve as a basis for thinking about possible solutions. It seems pretty clear to me, given Malawi's culture and history in relation to orphans, that most of the children should remain in their villages with their relatives, cultural values, etc. But how can a village take in these children and feed, clothe, and educate them. Maybe an answer would be to help communities care for the children in a manner patterned after refugee camps and Hope For The Children (see discussion elsewhere in this newsletter).

I am not sure who would fund it, but my vision is something like this: In every village there are strong mothers and those who are not so strong. Maybe the chief and a selected number of others could identify a certain number of women who, if given the resources, would be excellent mothers to their own children and to orphans from the village. Over the next few years, until there is, once again, food available, might not a system be established, as in refugee camps, where these women are given monthly coupons for food for their children and the orphans -- not for themselves? Then, as we don't want the remaining children to go hungry, nor for the other mothers to be left out, perhaps these women could be assigned as "helpers" to the mothers of the orphans. In exchange, they could receive food coupons for their children. Clothes, soap, etc. also may need to be made available.

In conclusion, a new option for providing permanent, nurturing care for Malawian orphans is sorely needed. Drawing upon Africa's powerful strength in the practice of having a village raise a child, incorporating aspects of programs that are working (e.g. Hope For The Children and refugee programs), and utilizing the talents of strong individual villagers and community leaders (especially women), programs and policies can be developed and implemented. A solution can be found.

FOURTH UN WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN - UPDATE

● Fourth UN World Conference on Women, NGO Forum for Women '95 in Beijing, China.
Meetings yet to be held:

February 28-March 3, 1995 International Symposium on Women and the Media - Toronto, Canada.

March 9-24, 1995 NGO Consultation on Women '95 - New York, USA.

March 13-24, 1995 39th Session on the UN Commission on the Status of Women Acting as PrepCom for the Fourth UN World Conference on Women - New York, USA.

July 3-6, 1995 World YWCA International Women's Summit - Seoul, Korea.

August 30, 1995 NGO Forum on Women '95 - Beijing, China.

September 4-15, 1995 Fourth UN World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace Beijing, China.

Registration.

Each individual who wishes to attend the Beijing conference must register individually by April 30, 1995. Registration forms must be completed and mailed to the NGO Forum on Women Office with United States \$50 and 2 passport-size photographs. Payment can be made by money order or traveler's checks. The photographs will be incorporated into a forum identification pass which will be available upon arrival in Beijing. No one will be admitted into the Forum without this pass. No registration will be taken on-site.

Hotel Reservation and Travel.

All Hotel Reservations are being handled exclusively by China Organizing Committee in Beijing. Hotels are located within 15 kilometer radius of the Forum site. Hotel reservations will not be made if the individual is not registered for the Forum.

To reserve a hotel room in Beijing

1. Complete the form and send it to the China Organizing Committee.
2. Before reserving rooms, the China Organizing Committee will verify with the NGO Forum on Women Office that you have registered for the Forum.
3. Upon verification, your hotel accommodation form will be processed and you will receive an accommodation arrangement notice.
4. Within 20 days of receiving this notice, send 10% of the total amount to the hotel. The reservation will be confirmed.

Forum Activities

If you are planning on-site Forum activities you must submit an official Activity Request Form to the NGO Forum on Women Office by April 30, 1995.

To get application forms and for more information contact: NGO Forum on Women Office, Suite 1500, 211 East 43 Street, New York, NY 10017, USA or Office of Women in International Development (WID), (212) 333-1994

Source: NGO Forum on Women - Beijing '95 - General Information flier

● **Travel from MIDWEST to Beijing** - Georgia Oswald of the Group Travel Directors in Chicago (Tel. 312-431-1110) is arranging air transportation to Beijing at an excellent group rate in conjunction with the WID Office. If you are interested and would like to make arrangements, please call her and mention the WID office.

OFFICE OF WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AT UIUC

● **WOMEN CHANGING THE WORLD: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THINKING GLOBALLY AND ACTING LOCALLY**, the 1995 Spring Conference jointly sponsored by the Office of Women in International Development and the Women's Studies Program, will be held on Saturday, April 22, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at Levis Faculty Center, 919 W. Illinois Street, Urbana. The theme this year focuses on preparation for the Fourth U.N. World Conference on Women which will be held in Beijing, China in September 1995. The

purpose of our conference is: **TO LOOK AT THE WORLD THROUGH ILLINOIS WOMEN'S EYES** by: a) finding new ways of networking around the issues of critical concern as stated in the Platform for Action to be presented at the Beijing conference; b) linking the concerns as presented in the Platform for Action with the concerns of women in Illinois; and c) helping women in Illinois to learn more about these issues, to exchange information, to act more effectively, and to change legislation. Keynote speakers will be **Kristin Timothy**, Deputy Director and Coordinator for the Fourth U. N. World Conference on Women, Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations, New York and **Connie E. Evans**, President of the Women's Self-Employment Project, Chicago. Discussion Sessions on Theory and Practice will focus on Women's Health, Violence Against Women, Women and Education, Women and Leadership, Women's Economic Roles, and Women, Science and Technology. Discussion facilitators will be from local organizations, campus departments, and state government. Reservations required -- Space is limited.

Program details and reservation forms will be mailed out at the end of March. If you haven't received one by April 1 and you wish to attend, call the WID Office (333-1994) for a reservation form.

● **Professionalizing Parenting--Global Responses to Family Crisis: Hope's Role**

In a continuing effort to remain focused and responsive to the context in which we operate, the WID Executive Board decided to have a goal-setting retreat in the Spring of 1994. One of the issues discussed at this meeting was the substantive focus of the office. For the past five years the foci have been gender training and women, households, and development. Under these areas the Board adopted an area of emphasis on professionalizing parenthood.

Hope For The Children will be a permanent field placement and research site connected to the WID Office. It will serve as a premiere example of a program that is addressing the need for professional parenting. As part of this program, Hope will demonstrate how a variety of communities (e.g. intergenerational, religious, small town) can be used to support parenting, and it will provide case studies of the empowerment of the poorest of resource poor women, who because of their circumstances, are unable to parent. Family crises that include spousal and child abuse, chronic poverty, drug abuse, or abandonment can create social orphans, while wars, famine, and the AIDS epidemic create actual orphans.

Hope is an example of one approach to re-parenting such children, and is providing a basis for international comparison and collaboration. Through the WID Office, there can be an international exchange of ideas and collaboration related to professionalizing parenting, including developing communities to support parenting and empowering women. This can occur through teaching, research, gender analysis, and policy development.

NEWS OF WID ASSOCIATES

● **Dr. Kathleen Cloud**, Director of the Office of Women in International Development, Associate Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and a founding member of the Association for Women and International Development, is currently on sabbatical at The Mary Ingraham Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts. At an Institute colloquium on February 8, 1995, Dr. Cloud presented **Half the Human Race: Public Policy and the International Women's Movement in the Last Half of the Twentieth Century**. The following is an excerpt from the presentation: United Nations data give a striking picture of the rapid changes in the lives of women all over the world: Women today live longer, have fewer children, and are more likely to be literate, to work outside the home, and to have political and legal rights than at any previous time in history. A burgeoning international women's movement is pressing for still greater legal and economic equity, with some success. Since 1980, more than 100 governments have signed the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Recently, women's caucuses at the UN Conference on Human Rights and Population effectively moved their issues into the policy agenda, and 40,000 women are expected in Beijing in September 1995 to draft a World Platform of Action during the Fourth UN World Conference on Women.

Dr. Cloud discussed how these changes mark a profound revolution in history, as half of the human race enters the public dialogue and speaks of seeing the world through women's eyes.

Source: The Mary Ingraham Bunting Institute Flier.

RESEARCH, STUDY AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

● **The Institute for Research on Women** invites applications for their Visiting Scholar Program. The Institute for Research on Women promotes innovative scholarship on women and gender through its interdisciplinary forums, lectures, and conferences. Visiting Scholar appointments carry all faculty privileges, such as access to libraries and recreational facilities, office space and participation in a public presentation and in the institute's fortnightly seminar, "Towards 2000". Postdoctoral scholars in any discipline may apply. Send a letter of intention, a curriculum vitae, a description of the project to be undertaken (5 pages maximum) and two letters of reference to IRW, Douglas Campus, 27 Clifton Avenue, P.O. Box 270, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 08903-0270, Tel. (908) 932-9072. Fax: (908) 932-1180. **Deadline for Spring 1996 is April 1, 1995.**

● **Development and Project Planning Center, University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England BD7 1DP** announces **Course in Community Management of Development Projects - Water, Sanitation and Health from May 7 through July 14, 1995.** Courses will include: 1. **Introduction** -- theories of participation and development; Update on the water and sanitation sector - issues and problems; health and human resource development; and current policy framework, structural adjustment, decentralization, sustainable development and the environment. 2. **Unpackaging Community management:** organizational culture and structure; strategies for local institution building; legal frameworks for community management. 3. **Project Planning techniques:** data collection - participatory techniques; Logical framework; organizational analysis; project appraisal methods; financial planning and management; and monitoring and evaluation. 4. **Project management skills:** working in teams; communication skills; dealing with conflict and change; negotiating and bargaining; and managing meetings. For more information contact: Development and Project Planning Center, University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England BD7 1DP. Tel (0274) 385267; Fax International (44 274) 385280.

● **The School of Developmental Studies, University of East Anglia,** announces a short course on **Gender Analysis and Equity in Development** from July 12 through September 17, 1995. The school is currently offering courses on Gender and Development at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and runs an active research program in this area involving both faculty and research students. For more information contact: Dr. Cecile Jackson or Dr. Ruth Pearson, Course Directors, School of Developmental Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, UK. Tel. (0603) 57880. Fax: (0603) 505262.

● **Office of International Education Exchange, Michigan State University** announces **Women's Studies in London from July 4 through August 4, 1995.** Courses will include WS 201 - Introduction to Women Studies: Diversity of women's situations in social, cultural, historical and international contexts. Focus on women as victims of oppression and as agents. Concepts basic to feminist thought; gender system; patriarchy. WS 490 Independent Study - Individual reading and research on women and gender. WS 492 Women's Studies Senior Seminar - Synthesis and elaboration of ideas and perspective central to women's studies. Current areas of interest and research in feminist scholarship. For more information contact: Overseas Study, 108 International Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1035. Tel. (517) 353-8920. Fax: (517) 432-2082. or Professor Joyce R. Landerson, Director, Women's Studies Program, 310 Linton Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1044. Tel. (517) 355-4495. Fax: (517) 432-1858.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS AND AWARDS

● **Nelle Signor Fellowships in International Relations for International Dissertation Fieldwork.** Fellowships consist of \$2000 for travel and in-country expenses for dissertation field research in any international field. Fellowships are open to any unmarried Ph.D. candidate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign who will have completed all preliminary exams and course work by the proposed date of travel. Application

materials are available at The Fellowship Office or International Programs and Studies, 324 International Studies Building, South Fifth Street, Champaign, IL 61820. Tel. 333-1993. **Deadline: March 1, 1995.**

● **Women's Research & Education Institute (WREI)** announces the Fellowship Program designed to train women in public policy formation and to examine issues from the perspective and experiences and needs of women. A fellow works 30 hours a week in a congressional office as a legislative aide on policy issues affecting women. Applicants should be graduate students with a least 9 hours of graduate work. Any student currently enrolled in a graduate program anywhere in the United States is eligible. For more information contact: Fellowship Program, Women's Research & Education Institute (WREI), 1700 18th St., N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20009 or The Fellowship Office, 209 Coble Hall, University of Illinois, Tel. (217) 333-0036.

● **Rockefeller Foundation Sub-Saharan African Dissertation Internship Awards.**

The Rockefeller Foundation has announced their program to enable African doctoral students enrolled in U.S. universities to undertake supervised dissertation research in Africa. The awards are open to citizens of sub-Saharan countries about to begin research. Priority will be given to research topics in areas of agriculture, health, and life sciences; other proposals will be considered if they relate to economic development or the reduction of poverty in Africa. Research projects must involve field observation or the use of primary sources only available in Africa. Students are encouraged to be in the field for at least twelve months. **Deadline: March 1, 1995.** Send proposals and inquiries to Africa Dissertation Internships, The Rockefeller Foundation, 420 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10036.

● **MUCIA Grants for Travel.** Grants of up to \$1,000 are offered by the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA) and the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs to UIUC faculty and staff members to apply for a travel-fund grant to support international program development. The next deadline is **March 1, 1995.** Guidelines and request forms are available from MUCIA, 324 International Studies Building, 910 South Fifth Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820; telephone 217-333-1993.

● **The Women's Studies Program at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, (UIUC)** provides funds on a competitive basis to support graduate and undergraduate student endeavor in feminist scholarship. Funds might be used, for example, to support travel to a professional meeting, presentation of a paper at a professional meeting, exhibition or performances of creative work, or some costs of research (such as obtaining special resources, travel to archives). **Deadline: April 21** for Summer and Fall, 1995 activities. For more information call Women's Studies at (217) 333-2990.

● **International Programs and Studies at UIUC** announces **International Research Support Grants in the Humanities and Arts.** The grants are intended for UIUC faculty conducting research and writing on topics on international character. Research grants of \$500 each will be awarded for 1995-96. To apply send a description of the research project or activity for which the grant will be used. The description should not exceed more than 500 words (plus budget). Enclose a brief biographical sketch and list your own recent publications that are relevant to the project. **Deadline: March 1, 1995.**

● **The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at UIUC** announces **The Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships, 1995-1996.** Candidates must be U.S. or permanent residents; graduate students enrolled in good standing at the University of Illinois; pursuing advanced training with Latin American area courses or international aspects of professional study. Priority will be given to students studying advanced Brazilian Portuguese or Quechua. Lowest priority will be given to students applying to study Latin American Spanish. Applicants who wish to study Spanish should have completed 12 hours of the language coursework. **Deadline: February 27, 1995.** For more information contact Veronica M. Kann, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, 201 International Studies Building, 910 S. Fifth Street, Champaign, IL. 61820. Tel. 217-244-4708/333-3182. Fax: 217-244-7333.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

● **Council on International Exchange** announces a new program: the **International Network for University Volunteers (INUV)**. INUV is a volunteer information Network on Internet through which university faculty or administrators can contribute their professional expertise to institutions of higher learning in developing countries. The program organizers anticipate that volunteers will be mainly faculty and administrative staff who have retired or those on sabbatical leave. For more information contact Council of International Educational Exchange, 205 East 42nd Street, New York NY 10017-5706. E-mail: INUV@CIEE.org, Fax: 212-972-3231.

● **Northern Arizona University** announces the position of **Chair of Psychology in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences**. They are interested in attracting applications from women and minority candidates. Northern Arizona University has a significant Native American population and a large Hispanic population that offer special opportunities for multi-cultural experiences. They welcome individuals who can add to faculty diversity of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability status. For more information contact: The Chair of the Search Committee, Richard Fernandez at (602) 523-5977 or the current Chair of the Department of Psychology, Virgia Blankenship at (602) 523-5500, P.O. Box 15700 Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5700.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES/PUBLICATIONS

● *Comparable Worth and Gender Discrimination: An International Perspective 1994* by Morley Gunderson, compares programs in the United States (experience of public employees in Washington, Minnesota, Iowa, Oregon and San Jose California , and in policies adopted in the 1980s) and Canada. The author outlines the advantages and importance of comparable public worth policies. The author points out that equal policies and legislation against discrimination in recruitment and promotion must be created, in order to ensure that employment participation of men and women is on more equal basis and in an attempt to reduce the gender pay gap. Comparable worth also known as "pay equal" or equal pay for work of equal value" can deal with pay differences arising from occupational segregation. For example male-dominated and female-dominated jobs in the same enterprise receive equal pay for work of equal value. To order: Contact ILO Publications Center, 49 Sheridan Avenue, Albany, NY 12210, USA. Tel. 518-436-9686, ext.123. Fax: 518-436-7433. Source: ILO flier.

Resources Available from Women, Ink., 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel. (212) 687-8633 Fax: (212) 661-2704.

● *Assessing the Gender Impact of Development Projects: Case Studies from Bolivia, Burkina Faso, and India, 1994.* by Vera Gianotten, Edith Van Awlsum and Linda Zuidberg. The book presents the extent to which specific interests and needs of various categories of women are affected by development projects. The author points out that projects designers should address structural gender inequalities inherent in the social, economic, cultural, and political contexts of project design and development. The Book is an excellent tool for those interested in development projects that will truly empower women. Price: 24.95.

● **Beijing Package** subscribed **International Women's Tribune Center (IWTC)**. This is information from IWTC on the preparations for the Fourth UN World Conference, and for the NGO Forum on Women (Beijing, September 1995). The subscription includes two periodicals: six issues of *Preview '95* -- a bulletin on the events and activities prior to, and immediately after, the conference; and three special issues of *The Tribune*, IWTC's quarterly newsletter on critical themes and priority actions both in the regions and on global level. The Periodicals cover the period from April 1993 through December 1995. The themes highlighted include: bridging the gap between the Beijing Conference and the 1985 Nairobi conference; national reports; the development of women's issues and strategies in the different regions; critical areas of concern from the

regions the "Platform for Action"; the final Commission on the Status of Women and NGO consultation meetings (March 1995); and information on the workshops and activities scheduled during the Beijing meetings. Price: US\$22.00

● ***Making Women Matter: The Role of the United Nations, 1994*** by Hikka Pietila and Jeanne Vickers. Ever since its inception, the United Nations has been working to enhance the status of women as part of its global commitment to peace, human rights, and social and economic development, to ensure "...the equal rights of men and women." *Making Women Matter* documents the change in perceptions of women and their contributions. The book is written from a non-governmental perspective, it surveys the material for all those involved in women and development issues. The book gives the story of how women are making history, how much more needs to be done, and how the United Nations is playing a part in making women matter. Price: US\$17.50. Source: WOMEN INK Publications Catalogue

● **The Center for Scientific Documentation and Information for Development (CEDID)** was created in 1985. It is a computerized multi-media center with a mission of facilitating and gathering information on women in the developing countries. The center is collecting books, documents and periodicals published since 1992 on the themes:

- Women's work in rural or urban areas
- Women's economic role job (e.g. agriculture, breeding fishing, informal sector, enterprise).
- Women's integration in development projects
- Women's health and Women in political life
- Women's daily basis: water supply, energy, food supply, environment

Send a list of published documents to CEDID-ORSTOM, Project documentaire "Femmes Du Tiers-Monde," 213, rue La Fayette, 75010-Paris, France. Tel. (1) 48-03-77-77. Telcopie:48-0308-29.

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