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INT/83/003 - Promotion and Support for Women's Participation  
in the International Water Supply and Sanitation  
Decade

Report on Mission to Honduras

16 - 23 October 1983

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## SUMMARY

### HONDURAS - A PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

INT/83/003

Honduras is among the poorest countries in Latin America, with a per capita income of less than \$520 in 1981. At the same time it stands out in the Latin American context because of a very strong indigenous organized farmers movement and the increasing role of cooperatives in the local development process. Both movements have sparked women organizations in the rural and marginal urban sectors, who are starting to link-up with the more politically attuned and professionally oriented feminist organizations at the national level, who in turn are moving from women rights' topics into developmental oriented activities (see attachment 9).

The farmers unions in Honduras are organized along different union objective lines and group the landless and small farmers into grassroots-based organization patterns, where local leaders, men and increasingly women, are gaining leadership experience. This explains the increased capacity at the local level for organization and communal undertakings. In recent years, women farmers have found their organized identity in women farmers' unions that are affiliated with the organized farmers unions at large.

The above has provided the organized context for INT/83/003 to identify three separate project activities (two in the rural areas and one in an urban marginal area) that although different in their specific activities, share common traits through which a common programme approach is advisable.

#### Criteria

In evaluating possible modes of participation in INT/83/003 several criteria were used:

- Selecting both rural and urban communities;
- Finding rural and urban women;
- Linking water and sanitation;
- Relating where possible income-producing activities;
- Coordination with introduction of new technologies (testing, pilot);
- Cooperating with a variety of women's organizations at national and local levels.

In making an assessment of possible projects which fit into INT/83/003 we first explored possibilities of complementary inputs into the specific proposals already presented.

Two are on-going UNDP projects:

HON/82/030 - Rural Self-Help Housing (see Annex VIII) and HON/82/007 - Incorporation of Peasant Women in the Production Process (Annex IX).

The first new project activity in the rural areas is closely linked with these. The UNDP/Netherlands-financed rural selfhelp housing project is executed through FECOVIL and offers an ideal setting to test and demonstrate low-cost technology approaches that are basically new to Honduras. Women as members of the farmers cooperatives have been active since the beginning, but through INT/83/003 there is a possibility of increasing their participation particularly if a few communities are selected where the other UNDP project, HON/82/007, is operational. Through FEHMUC, women leaders can be selected to be trained as caretakers and repairers of the pumps - and in developing instructions on use and care of latrines once they have helped select the most appropriate models.

Increasing women's involvement in the HON/82/030 project covers various aspects, particularly to involve these peasant women in planning, designing and evaluating improvements in water supply and sanitation. As co-participants in the self-help housing schemes, the women in the peasant cooperatives have already contributed to the building of their outstanding new homes. In fact, a smaller adobe was made which the women could handle more easily. They also have been trained and are constructing the Lorena fuel-saving stove, and are interested in learning more about the Honduran Dry Latrine.

The women, as well as the men, are interested in compost from the "Dry Latrines" to use in their income-producing coops - primarily melons and watermelons. The income from these activities will help make it possible for these poor families to repay the housing loans - which includes their water and sanitation facilities.

A second facet of the housing project is the provision of water - at least one well for each 10-12 homes. Reports from the Ministry of Natural Resources indicate that many of the settlements are in areas with very brackish water

with present wells are not potable, even unsuitable for laundry using regular soap. The water could be used for water-seal latrines if there were enough shallow wells near the homes or for laundry with special soap. Women have to spend from 1-5 hours carrying water and/or going to far-away streams in the long dry season to do their laundry.

The Ministry of Public Health has two types of manually-operated drills, one a driven shaft and the other an augur which can be used to drill wells up to 14 meters in the communities without rocky soil. They can be operated by men and/or women. The women were enjoying the running streams to bathe and do laundry in, but the day the Mission visited a HON/82/030 community women especially were well aware of the need for more accessible and less salty water when the rains stop in November. Several communities indicated places where they had found "agua dulce", fresh water, and felt wells might be dug. They were interested in hearing about the manually-operated drills they might be able to use in their communities.

Finally, this project concerns the introduction of a new type of pit latrine which would also generate organic compost as fertilizer, the use of this in quick-growing trees, the introduction of a maintenance programme for water pumps handled by women, and the collection and use of drinking water through so far unused catchment techniques. (See Attachment 5).

The second project activity in the rural areas, to be located in the Northern part of the country, has very much to do with introducing the type of technology mentioned above. The project was based on a draft proposal presented by PAHO/WHO - Latrination and/or Rural Sanitation in Honduras, based on a project designed by four Honduran women participants at the PAHO workshop held in Washington in April 1983. Since the project proposal had been 90% completed, two other communities proposed by the Unión de Mujeres Hondureñas (UMH) were recommended (see Attachment 11). However, in this case much importance is attached to the fact that this project is promoted by a more politically-inclined national grouping of professional women (Unión de Mujeres Hondureñas) with strong membership representation in the ruling political parties who have understood the importance of linking women activities with developmental objectives.

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As such, they have elaborated, together with a grassroot-level rural women's organization, an infrastructural improvement scheme (latrines, water and absorbent floors) with the expectation that this will spark a process for development and at the national level will achieve the publicity to raise the Government's consciousness to lend even stronger support for initiatives such as these.

The third project activity is in the urban marginal sector of Tegucigalpa, where at the level of the "barrios" people are organized in Improvement Committees. The installment of water, garbage "collection" and waste disposal and a solution to the insufficient, inadequate latrine situation are high on the list of each of these Committees. Again in this case, a project has been identified with the assistance of the other, longer-established and more sedate Women Organization (Federación de Mujeres Hondureñas - FMH) that has played a leading role since its creation in 1951 to advance women rights at the national level and which initiated some years ago a programme of legal council to deprived, poor women from the urban marginal sector. This has now evolved into more developmental-oriented approaches, whereby the selected barrio, Villa Los Laureles, could play a model role for the promotional efforts by the FMH linked with the organized potential of locally-organized women groups. Specific activities, the improvement of the water provision, installment of communal laundry and bathing facilities, latrines and a garbage collection and disposal scheme. (See Attachment 7).

The three project activities fit into a programme where WHO with the Ministry of Health are to provide the technical advice to an execution modality where the responsibility lies at the local level and where promotional support and advice on how to handle the dialogue on Government-provided inputs and services <sup>is with the national NGOs</sup>. WHO/Honduras has already acquired experience in working with NGOs, as has the Ministry of Health, that has even declared it its policy insofar as locally-oriented programmes are concerned. The UNDP/Honduras office is also very familiar and attuned to these types of activities.

Total cost programme in first year: \$78,000

These resources are to be spent in accordance with the following broad categorization:



Research and recording \$ 15,000

This component would involve a local professional or professionals who would analyze the project's situation before and during the execution phase. The same professional should attend both rural projects, another one could be made responsible for the urban one.

Material cost \$ 48,500

The Mission considers it important that in addition to what is available to the community from the Ministry of Health (cement for instance) and other institutions, the project should assume the additional material cost to have the three projects get started with appropriate technologies. The urban project may involve substantial construction costs, but will be an important demonstration.

Training \$ 3,000

Certain courses/seminars with the involvement of the local groups will be required, which will mean per diem of certain staff, and local costs for the participants.

Documentation \$ 1,500

These are very rough estimates and a final budget should be worked out later. A documentation and research schedule from which the pilot activities will derive their meaning and justification can be developed. In this context, it should also be noted that there will be no pilot activities without financing by INT/83/003 of the first year costs estimated above, but a certain amount of resources will also be required to allow for the documentation and research. To make an estimation now would be premature because the specific documentation and research requirements have to be reviewed with the possible candidates after the projects have been finalized.

Only then can a budget be made. The Mission abstained from such a projection now so as not to raise false expectations but it should be pointed out that a national professional at least requires US\$1,500 a month plus reimbursement of costs for travel and field subsistence.

#### Human Resources

##### Social Scientists Resident in Honduras

The Mission obtained a few curriculum vitae of local social scientists while it was in Tegucigalpa (Attachment 10). Once the pilot activities are approved, the UNDP office in Tegucigalpa together with PAHO should establish contact with the suggested local professionals.

##### Non-resident Social Scientists

A list of experts who are non-resident in Honduras, but have specific knowledge of the sector as well as recent and/or continuing research activities there was also prepared (Attach.10). Some of these people could work as short-time counterparts with the Honduran social scientists, as participants in planning workshops and/or as evaluators.

##### Technical Expertise

The importance of close collaboration with Ing. Alejandro Castro, the PAHO Sanitary Engineer in the Ministry of Health, and Ing. Val de Bauset AID consultant at the Centro de Desarrollo Industrial (CDI), cannot be over-emphasized. As far as health education/communication are concerned, among the key people in the MOH in Honduras now are Dr. Oscar Vigano, Field Director, AED/PRASAR and Prof. Luis Cancalis, OES/PRASAR.

##### List of Persons Met

See Attachment 10.

I. An Overview

Honduras was chosen as the one country in Latin America whereby the identification of specific pilot activities link the objectives of the IDWSSD and the Women's Decade, could present an example of meaningful results due to the high degree and variety of organized voluntary groups, particularly women's organizations in the country. These organizations are present in the rural as well as in the urban areas, and can assume responsibility for carrying out the pilot activities foreseen in INT/83/003, in close cooperation with the Government, and drawing where available on its technical expertise. At the same time, Honduras' socio-economic profile (Annex I) and a per capita of US\$520 characterizes it as one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with average health indicators that are far below what is expected in Latin America.

The Government of Honduras in its 1982-1986 National Development Plan has identified the Health Sector and within this, water and sanitation as one of its top priorities, and has presented a more detailed sectorial National Plan that analyzes the requirements and projects the steps to be taken to reach improved coverage for all by 1990 (Annex II).

This National Plan for the Decade was completed in April 1983 by PAHO/WHO with assistance from West Germany through GTZ. The total costs of the DECADE programme amounted to 1 billion two hundred million US\$ in order to raise the coverage for drinking water to 90% and sanitation 79% by 1990. The Plan was discussed, revised and approved by the Minister of Public Health in August 1983 (Annex III). A working seminar held by PAHO in June 1983 contained several specific recommendations of

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relevance to INT/83/003 to be carried out through a National Action Committee (CONAPS). Although in reality this has mainly become an institutional point of reference, with the Ministry of Health and its related decentralized institutions like SANAA (Servicios Autónomos Nacionales de Agua y Alcantarillada) being the one that carries nearly exclusively the workload of the activities for water and sanitation. (For the institutional framework see Annex IV).

Two recommendations from the Workshop can be useful in carrying out the INT/83/003 projects (see Annex V).

1. After identifying all institutions, national and international, a subcommittee of Human Resources for the IDWSSD that depends on CONAPS should be formed to make a diagnosis of all human resources and establish a national programme of training.

2. A special advisory committee for appropriate Low-Cost technology was also recommended and institutions named to evaluate new water supply and sanitation innovations.

The government has been rather successful in attracting foreign resources to enable the execution of water and sanitation plans that are in general formulated for departmental coverage, with the main areas being the target of specific plans (a map representing the situation as per 31/12/81 is included as Annex VI). As of now, one of the main bottlenecks is not the financial requirements but especially the limited absorption capacity both to extend the programme beyond its current time of execution and to maintain acceptable levels of maintenance of completed construction.

UNICEF has a small programme in Honduras which is supervised from the regional office in Guatemala through a local representative. The newly appointed

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Regional Director expressed interest in cooperating with INT/83/003. At the present time she is evaluating the on-going programme and seeks to increase the support activities including training and to approve a communal laundry facility when project designs are completed. (See Annex VII). In this context, pilot activities in the context of INT/83/003 are welcome innovations, even more so because the main emphasis where communal participation is concerned, has been on the male sector of the population, even in a society where it is recognized and accepted that women are the main users and managers of the water (systems) and sanitation in and around their houses.

In the overall national budget, the health sector occupies \_\_\_%, which has not changed in recent years. As international financing is nearly exclusively available for expanding the coverage of water and sanitation services, the point of institutional capacity for support services referred to above is to be recalled again, as well as the fact that the government health budget is mainly directed towards paying salaries of personnel employed. Community participation, in the sense of "barefoot doctors" and health and sanitation volunteers, has therefore become an appreciated component of the Government's approach in expanding its services. In addition, an increased awareness of the need to highlight maintenance programmes is now recognized. The Government, in principle, makes no distinction between the voluntary groups or cooperatives it collaborates with, and the increased activism of organized and/or women-directed grassroot type of organization are equally welcomed to participate. However, if this receptive attitude towards women's participation could be transformed into a well-defined policy to have women participate, using approaches that better suit their specific roles and requirements, additional resources can be tapped. It is in this respect that the pilot activities of INT/83/003 can contribute to show the way.

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In Honduras,  
Women's participation at the national, regional and local level is an increasing phenomenon, formally accepted and with political support, partly due to the growing number of women in political, professional and managerial jobs.\* However, there are still many cultural and socio-economic defined constraints that are more prevalent here than in the higher-income Latin American countries. Perhaps precisely because of these constraints there is a growing group of very opinionated, motivated women/leaders at the grass-root communal level as well as in political organizations who are assuming positions of clear leadership and, while having to deal with a "macho-defined" cultural setting, are increasingly managing to advance overdue "women's rights". A more modern "Family Charter" that undoes "turn-of-the-century" limitations of women entitlements (divorce, legal status, etc.) is now in its final debate in the National Congress and once approved will further the role of women in all levels of the country's affairs.

Political support, formal and informal, for community participation exists, but there are differences between the politically motivated community organizations and the more union-type ones, with the ones organized for a specific cause (building of a road, installation of a water system) occupying the middle ground. These three types of organizations are all, however, at one time or another, actively pursuing local, developmental activities such as infrastructural improvements. It can also be observed that the government in general has shown objectivity in working with all three types of organizations, depending on local circumstances.

In the context of Latin America, Honduras has one of the strongest organized farmers movements (split along different ideological conceptions but with an overriding pragmatic union-type approach to obtain such

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\* For a short summary on the major organizations of women in Honduras see Attachment 9.

essential components as land, credit and agricultural services as well as cooperatives and community-type organizations). All these pursue developmental activities with their members at the community level. In addition, the many years of training courses on different topics has created a group of farmer leaders who consider themselves (and are considered) at a par with the political leaders at community level, while a number of them have risen to national prominence. The recent coming to the foreground of affiliated but separate women farmers organizations, and women-organized political groupings, is adding another element to an already special characterization of Honduras in Central America, and in Latin America at large.

That the recent as well as current governments have been and are positively disposed towards incorporating community and voluntary type of organizations in their development activities is also confirmed through a number of the projects that the government is executing with United Nations assistance in Honduras that count heavily on grassroot organized participation as well as on national and non-governmental organizations. The Federación de Cooperativas para la Vivienda (FECOVIL) is an outstanding example.

## II. UNDP Projects in Honduras

Projects that the government of Honduras and the UNDP agreed upon, which are part of the 1982-1986 Country Programme and which are directly relevant to INT/83/003, are the following:

HON/82/030 - Housing (Habitat): Decent rural housing is nearly non-existent in Honduras, especially in the more tropical zones of the country, houses are rudimentary shacks of bamboo, driftwood and bits and pieces of different materials for roofing. With the help of the vocational training institute, (INFOP)\* and the active involvement of the farmers unions affiliated with FEHCOVIL, the latter has initiated a self-help construction programme of

\* Instituto Fomento Profesional)

8 x 6m houses. These come with tiled roofs, cement floors and adobe walls, plus fuel efficient stove and decent sanitation, for a cost oscillating between US\$400-US\$650 per house. The target is to have 2,500 houses built by the end of the project, in different zones of the country, with the expected result of having led the way for decent rural housing in Honduras, where the process of building and complementary educational/training and income-generating activities will be as important as the physical production of the houses. With 20 groups, each affiliated to a farmers union, the Programme has initiated the first 250 houses in the South and many of these are nearly finished. Women play in all phases of the project a role on par with the men. (UNDP contribution: US\$1.0 million, government of the Netherlands: US\$1.5 million). (Annex VIII)

HON/82/007 - Women Farmers (FAO): The novelty of this project is that it uses at the local level farmer leaders (mainly women) who act as the auxiliaries to the regional promoter, who is a government employee (National Agrarian Institute - INA). The project, like the housing project, is run by a national professional staff, with periodic external consultancies. It promotes community-level productive activities, generating income for the organized women farmers groups that are the executors of the project at the local level. Training is integral to the specific small-scale project the women are to execute and the auxiliary local promoter immediately advises the service level of the required government institutions to permit timely assistance. This project will provide an income-oriented complementarity for the groups of the housing project. (UNDP contribution: US\$1.2 million, WFP within its support for the Women's Decade will allow a 5% sale of its food contribution to Honduras, with the amount of \$275,000 to be used for agriculture production purposes by the groups of this project). (Annex IX)



HON/81/001 - Rural Health (WHO): In its community-oriented public health approach, the government of Honduras for years has been building up and strengthening a pyramidal health structure where each village is to have its local health center/ <sup>(CESAR)</sup> (without a doctor or certified nurse, but instead public health and sanitation volunteers). These centers are to refer patients to the zonal health centers where a doctor and nurse are permanently available, that carry the name CESAMO. Part of the CESARES had been constructed but were never adequately equipped; others saw their equipment fall apart due to lack of maintenance. With a financial contribution from the government of the Netherlands UNDP/WHO have begun to reequip 200 CESARES and provide/ <sup>equipment</sup> maintenance training (with funds from a USAID health loan to the government of Honduras). By using locally made furniture (table, desks, etc.) and by buying in bulk from UNICEF and having the balance placed in Holland, the project has seen its efforts

be rewarded as nearly 900 CESARES are now nearly reequipped. Women play an essential role as health volunteers; they make up the locally organized health committees and are the ones who constantly remind the government of the need to improve its services. (UNDP contribution: US\$300,000, government of the Netherlands \$2,900,000). (Annex K)

The above identified UNDP-financed projects are complemented by the UNFPA-financed HON/77/P01 - Mother-Child project, the United Nations Voluntary Women's Fund activities in Honduras (reaching a US\$300,000 by the end of 1983), the WFP-supported Basic Grain Production programme involving local farmers groups, and the "Nutrition" pilot programme in the Department of Santa Barbara, where the HON/82/030 Housing project is to be operational soon. (See also Annex XI) on UNICEF, WFP activities in Honduras).

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### III. Other Related Projects

The Central American Bank (BCEI)/IFAD/IDB also has an integrated rural development programme, where grassroot impact projects have a specific role to play. Many of their impact-oriented small-scale community type projects follow the successful lead set by the UNDP/Dutch-financed pilot programme in 1979/1982. The Swiss government is financing an integrated rural development programme in the south of Honduras adjacent to the zone where the HON/82/030 Housing and the HON/82/001 Peasant Women are active. It contributes to this latter zone with financing for wells and hand pumps (with the soon-to-be-initiated maintenance training). The government of West Germany is present in the south of Honduras with a Food-for-work Programme, which buys locally produced basic grains which are then distributed in support of community development type of activities.

#### USAID

According to the original Decade plan developed in February 1981, US\$10.5 million was made available for improvements in rural water supply and sanitation in communities of 2,000 people and under. US\$1 million was allocated for preparation and testing of related educational materials with the contract given to the Academy for Educational Development which had prepared an excellent communication campaign with the MPH on LITROSOL (see Eight Myths and other research documents on this. Key researchers, etc. in Attachment 8).

A second contribution of US\$10 million was made in August 1983, also for improvements in water supply and sanitation but the size of the communities to be served was raised to 5,000.

The minimum size community considered for assistance is 200 unless they are within 5 km. of a larger area. The majority of systems are gravity flow with communal standpipes.

The US\$20.5 million has been channelled through SANAA. For details see attachment 2).

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As a part of this programme, USAID is financing a national scheme (the Centre for Industrial Development - CDI) to introduce low-cost rural technology, with the objective of promoting small rural industries. Perhaps because of this philosophy to promote a grassroots, indigenous, small-scale industry, certain weaknesses propagated designs of sanitary facilities ("letrina seca") and handpumps, which have influenced consumer acceptance negatively.

#### IV. NGOs

In addition to the above-mentioned government sponsored programmes, which all rely at the local and regional level on close co-operation between non-governmental organizations like the farmer unions and the voluntary community organizations of government institutions and ministries, we have the national relevant NGOs themselves with developmental activities directed towards the local level. Among these, the religious ones, particularly the evangelic denominations have proven very active in supporting their groups with direct impact/<sup>on</sup> local development projects. These NGOs at times work with other union-organized groups like the farmer unions and cooperatives, but in general they prove more restrictive in their selection of target groups than developmental-oriented NGOs like the Save the Children, Foster Parents and CARE, which have active programmes in Honduras. All the NGOs with a national presence count on international (NGO) financing, be it from the USA or from Europe.

#### CARE

For instance, CARE's programme in DECADE-related activities for fiscal year July 1983 to June 1984 amounts to approximately US\$1,250,000. This is divided into three projects: 55 gravity flow systems with 1,240

bathing/toilet facilities, watershed conservation and management and an outreach program combining training in personal hygiene and nutrition. None of these programs have a specific women's component, but the gravity flow systems include training in operation and maintenance with the provision of tools and establishment of a revolving fund. CARE works on projects with SANAA and the MOH. For fuller description, see Annex I

AED

Another NGO which has special relevance to INT/83/003 is the Academy for Education Development (AED). One million dollars has been sub-contracted to AED from the US\$20.5 million AID Water Supply and Sanitation allocation to prepare the education/training components. As noted above, AED is focussing special attention on strengthening the Ministry of Health's division of health education. (Attachment 1 ).

This is a part of a long-term technical assistance and loan fund over a five-six year period with the goal to develop a cadre of professionals within the MOH capable of "conducting audience research, defining appropriate health messages in behavioral terms, and executing an integrated media strategy to maximize the impact of broadcast, print and face-to-face channels."

During the first phase, 1980-83, a health education methodology appropriate to Honduras was designed and tested in the field, focussing on acute infant diarrhea. Concurrent with this project, the USAID mission is supporting large-scale infrastructural projects in water and sanitation in selected regions (Attachment 2) with health education personnel being trained in the same methodology to join the health education division of the MOH in 1985. Some materials on water use ("El Gotita de Agua") (Attachment 3) and sanitation (Construcción de Letrinas Fosa Simple with

accompanying poster) have been developed. The first training module on environmental sanitation has strong focus on fecal considerations. Copies of sample course materials are in the project files.

In reviewing this material, the possibility of improving the simple latrine model illustrated by incorporating some of the findings of the UNDP/World Bank "Low Cost Sanitation" project such as the black pipe and screen came to mind. The use of the teaching/communication modules being prepared by INT/82/002 might also enrich this culturally specific approach.

As for INT/83/003 the materials developed during Phase 1 of AED's project on decreasing the incidence of childhood diarrhea and related mortality through the use of ORT were aimed specifically at mothers. The messages were extensively tested to assure that their contents were comprehensible and acceptable. With the collaboration of the MOH and the high level of community participation, a one year pilot project was carried out in several areas which resulted in a considerable decrease in infant mortality. In fact, the success of the pilot project led to the incorporation of the materials and the methodology into the regular health sector, including water and sanitation through a special unit of MOH called PRASAR.

#### V. Indigenous Voluntary Organizations

Special reference should be made to the indigenous Honduran NGOs that represent the landless and small farmers interests. These union-organized organizations, with specific ties to the government (FECORAH to the land reform process with the landreform Institute INA and ANACH to the government union-controlled interest), to the Christian Democrat movement (UNC and UNCAH), plus the farmer unions that have become production cooperatives with business capital at par with the biggest landowners (such as the Empresas Asociativas Isletas; the Guanchias banana growing and packaging units; and the Empresa Asociativa Coopalma, growing and processing African palm oil) are all part and product of a land reform movement that is now fading somewhat in the background but continues to maintain a presence unequalled in the other Central

American countries. To this should be added the separate and very active women farmers unions like the one distantly related to UNC, the FEHMUC, and the one related to ANACH, the ANAMUC. (See attachment 9).

VI. A Pilot Programme

Honduras' poverty is evenly distributed over the rural and urban areas with regional differences as compared with the "national average". In this respect, the south of Honduras is a region of extreme poverty, where an unreliable climate plays havoc with the agriculture subsistence level of the marginal rural population, making them nearly permanent "beneficiaries" of governmental emergency measures, be it to avert famine because of extensive droughts in one year, or to help people survive the aftermath of flooding due to excessive rainfalls in another year. It is in this region that the government of Honduras and UNDP have concentrated their "direct impact projects" mentioned before and it is in this region where the mission proposes to piggy-back the rural component of the proposed INT/83/003 Pilot Programme, using the HON/82/002 Housing project and for income-generating complementarity and HON/82/007 Peasant Women as the operational vehicles.

In the urban areas, Honduras, in the context of Latin America, is only recently experiencing the drift of its rural population towards the cities, caused by the well-documented combination of push factors (rural) and pull factors (urban) that result in an uncontrolled growing pattern for cities like Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba, where urban services are already tested beyond capacity and where no alternatives are on the horizon.

The poverty that characterizes the urban barrios marginados seems to be more elusive to solution than

in the rural areas because the very recentness of the urban squatter growth has contributed to weaker social and family structures that serve people as a frame of reference for their actions and expectations. Consequently,

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the urban component of the Pilot Programme is not only to provide the women as the most vulnerable group in this setting an improved level of required and essential services, but it also seeks to promote <sup>and support</sup> an organized structure that could become an example around which women in other <sup>para-urban</sup> barrios could rally and see their role in the urban informal environment enhanced.

A. The Rural Component - I

The HON/82/030 Housing project has identified in the southern region of Honduras a total of 25 grassroot-level organized campesino groups, which are all affiliated to one of the national farmers unions, and which are committed with FEHCOVIL to construct through self-help methods their 8 x 6 m adobe, tiled-roof houses, with cement floors, at a cost not more than US\$700 per house. In carrying out this commitment, including the execution of each of the 15 new houses per group, women play an essential role. They have equally been participating in the two-weeks vocational training course given by INFOP (the governmental-run Instituto Fomento Profesional) where each group was trained in basic construction techniques. As mentioned earlier, the participation of the women also caused the introduction of the small-size adobe to allow women and children to participate in the total construction, lifting the blocks above their height if needed. The women also are constructing and putting to good use the fuel-efficiency stove (Estufa Lorena) which are to be in each house. Women have furthermore contributed to the decisions each group had to make on the grouping of the houses.

The housing project has now reached the critical stage of providing for water and sanitation. The mission initiated a dialogue with the project management (the project is government-executed by FECOHUL with short-term, once a year consultancies by UN/HABITAT) to do away with the traditional carrying out of these provisions, and to concentrate instead on

available low-cost appropriate technology, giving the main responsibility for this component to the organized female participation. Consequently, the idea of having the traditional latrine replaced by the "dry-pit" approach seems now a possible reality; the mission found in its field trip that the campesinos are very receptive to try this new approach. Combined with the latrine, and using the nearly permanent source of heat emanating from the estufa lorena through its ventilation pipe potential might exist to accelerate the decomposure of the organic material, providing in a much shorter period a source of fertilizer. The mission has asked the local representatives of WHO'PAHO, USAID, Peace Corps and the authorities involved in the housing project to review what might be the best design\* combining sanitation considerations with creating a potential source of fertilizer which could have an important effect on garden plot-type of productive agricultural projects. This project could be promoted through the assistance of the project HON/82/007, Peasant Women, providing an excellent vehicle to quickly amortize the credit commitment for the new houses. As there might exist an initial resistance to use this type of fertilizer on the garden plots, the mission proposes the establishment of viveros of quick-growing tree species, to be run by women. This could prove an essential solution to the unsurmountable problem of the shortage of firewood in the region. With this indirect approach, the women can experiment with the production and use of fertilizer; the process could in a further stage also be combined with a garbage disposal pit to increase fertilizer production. Ultimately the acceptance of this methodology and its product will have a beneficial effect on the women-attended/<sup>garden</sup>plots that/<sup>now</sup>produce their biggest cashflow (melon, watermelon) for the selected FEHMUC groups.

In addition to the chain of sanitation initiatives, the mission has also been able to agree with the housing project authorities to broaden their approach to the provision of drinking water (and water in general), giving

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\* Attachment 5 - Appropriate Technologies in Honduras



the women the formal recognition of a responsibility that they <sup>already</sup> carry out exclusively. Two water-related topics were reviewed, and agreement was reached to have specific project proposal elaborated on these.

First. As <sup>mention earlier, the</sup> /region suffers from a rather high-level of salinization and finding drinking water is in many cases a touch-and-go effort. Wherever possible, however, the housing authorities of the project agreed that the women will be very much present in the discussion on where to look for water in making a well. Once established, it should be the women who are made responsible for the maintenance and operation of the (hand)pumps. Consequently each group is to be provided with the basic tools as well as a training course on how to maintain/repair the waterpump. So far, such an approach has not been tested in Honduras, but informal agreement exists that it could work well given the many other tasks around the house and in the field where women are in charge. The INT/83/003 should finance the pilot costs of this new approach (US\$5,000).

The group of peasant women leaders/<sup>who met with</sup> the mission met with at the FEHMUC workshop in Choluteca were extremely interested in being trained as trainers for such a project. They offered to make an informal survey of broken pumps in their respective zones indicating type of pump, problems and the recommended solutions. A simple questionnaire was designed and findings will be sent back to the UNDP project coordinator.

Second. In the south, drinking water of good quality is scarce, but the rather salty (brackish) water is more available. Several options could therefore be explored, all pilot in nature, and for which women could be assigned as the guardians of /<sup>possible</sup> to-be-established systems which they could control and maintain.

a) The self-help adobe houses have rather gentle sloping and large tiled roofs. \* These roofs could be used as a catchment area for rain which, with

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\* The tiles are locally made by some of the farming groups.

a system of gutters, could nourish individual or collective water tanks (subterranean if required or an adaptation of the THAI low-cost bamboo and cement model).

b) Salt-waterwells, not fit for human consumption, could be established close to each house with individual and very low-cost pumps to facilitate the required 3 liters of water to flush the "taza campesina" latrine, a porcelain water-seal latrine imported from Colombia at a delivered cost of \$6.70\*\*. This latrine has been widely accepted here since it was introduced by USAID in 1980. (Attachment 5). This water could also be utilized in the daily washing chores, provided that a special soap that is not affected by a high salt content, could be introduced. Soap making is being explored as an income-generating activity by some of the women's groups. Perhaps it can be fabricated locally, "piggy-backed" to a pig-raising project by some of the FEHMUC groups in HON/82/007 in the Choluteca area.

All the above outlined activities, related to the pilot self-help rural housing project required:

a) The immediate forwarding of technical, low-cost, rural technology documents as developed by UNDP/INT/81/047, Low-cost Sanitation. Detailed drawings of the improved versions are needed in Honduras. Molds of new plastic stool designs would be useful but are not essential for testing and consideration of local manufacture. Interest was also expressed by officials in MOH as well as other Agency personnel in having information on the pump testing, as they seek appropriate models for village level operation and maintenance. The mission recommended this material to be forwarded soonest to the PAHO office in Honduras and requests were made through UNDP headquarters and with the project managers.

\*\* an improved model with a better bowl is now being made in nearby Costa Rica. Similar improved models are also manufactured in Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

b) a solid coordination among 1) USAID-financed CDI (Centro de Desarrollo Industrial) executed rural technology project (which seeks to then establish small-scale industries in the rural areas but has gone beyond its institutional boundary by promoting sanitary technologies untested so far), 2) the housing project and 3) PAHO to come to final conclusions as to what technical options are best and that can be carried out by the women who are already very much responsible on a day-to-day basis for the involved activities.

c) the design of adequate training programmes (following b), for which independent financing should be made available. Some of the material developed by INT/82/002, Information and Training Materials in Low-Cost Water and Sanitation, might be suitable here. Testing of their usefulness in a cross-cultural setting could make a positive contribution to both, INT/83/003 and INT/82/002. Both urban and rural women, such as the FEHMUC leaders, expressed interest in learning and training.

d) the preparation and/or use of appropriate health education/communication materials using all media and coordination with MOH, MOE, UNICEF and non-governmental groups such as AED, CARE and CONSUDE. The special Human Resources Committee set up by CONAP could be actively involved, or the PAHO, women, health and development unit.

A. The Rural Component - Two

In addition to the above outlined areas of possible activities, the Mission also had the opportunity to review the original request as presented by PAHO/Washington on the cooperation of INT/83/003 with Honduras. By now 90% of the originally identified objectives <sup>of this project</sup> have been accomplished in a traditional <sup>the installation of</sup> execution pattern, including / the deep pit letrines which the Ministry of Health so far has been disseminating widely without experimenting with new letrines, except those financed under a US/AID loan. (PRASAR, with US/AID \$10.5 and the Government of Honduras \$10.0 million). However, the organization

that pushed this proposal, the Unión de Mujeres Hondureñas, has been actively identifying additional projects to be undertaken which are detailed in Attachment 11 (Unión de Mujeres Hondureñas - Proyectos para Zonas en Desarrollo, U.M.H.). The Mission's reasoning to support these proposals has mainly to do with factors external to the beneficiaries for whom the projects are requested. First, it is noticeable that the Unión the Mujeres Hondureñas has apparently succeeded in its very short lifespan to attract political support and membership (a considerable number of the female members of the National Congress are members). Secondly, it has as its declared goal to assist the female marginal sectors of the country's population, with project activities that have no link with the classical "do gooding" of the past for these type of voluntary organizations. Consequently, the Mission considers it strategically very important to support this Unión to achieve the goal of a fruitful dialogue and mutual cooperation among the different female sectors of the country. Also, it is apparent that the Unión would provide necessary political endorsement for whatever new technology that PAHO/Ministry of Health would propose, in the field, which require this support if they ever are to be realized beyond the pilot phase.

The Mission recommends therefore to also approve this "Rural Component - Two" of the Pilot Programme. Consequently, through INT/83/003 we would support a female grassroot level type of activity in the South, closely united with the Ministry of Health for its experimental value, and a similar type of activity but more linked to the political attuned NGO (UMH) located in the North <sup>each of which</sup> that might result in an enhanced role of women organizations in the identification and execution of water and sanitation related activities.

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B. The Urban Component

The capital city of Honduras, Tegucigalpa, is located in a rather narrow valley where the available flat land has been taken long ago for urban building. The poor, therefore, have to master the hillsides without any infrastructural amenities and services. In the rainy season, mudslides add a factor of severe danger to the squatter areas on the hillsides. In summer, the problem is no less, as water in Tegucigalpa at large becomes scarce and the price for a 10 liters container (3 gallons) will jump from 5-10 cents of a lempira to 35-50 cents for the same amount. Garbage and excreta become major health hazards.

In Tegucigalpa, of an estimated total population of 450,000 inhabitants, well over 250,000 live in marginal or sub-standard areas, with a varying availability of essential services (health services, public transport, etc.). In nearly all the barrios there <sup>are</sup> locally organized grassroot organization, in general centering around the obtainment of one or more specific infrastructural improvements, with water always as the number one priority. The Mission visited a number of the squatter areas. It was quite obvious that those located on very steep hillsides will have additional difficulties to master the gradual improvements in their barrio. The Mission considered it advisable to first select a small to medium size barrio, Villa de los Laureles, that includes 350 families, located on a more gradual sloped hillside and very much surrounded by other barrios with whom it shares a specific section of the riverbed favoured by the women for their daily washing chores. This barrio also has a strong leadership, is of recent installation (two years ago) and is still very much under the informal "supervision" of the leaders of the nearby barrio San Francisco.

The organizational situation of Villa de los Laureles started out with a "Club Amas de Casa" (Housewife Committee), that organized social events to collect money to make two water projects feasible. The City of Tegucigalpa provided the barrio with two water taps, one for the upper part of the barrio, and one for the lower one. The women organized to have every three months another female head-of-household assigned as "water manager" to control the tap and collect the 10 cents (of a lempira) fee for 10 liters water. With this fee, the Government's water charge is paid as well as the salary of the "water manager" (US\$100.00 per month for a 10 hours day, in the morning in the lower part of the barrio, in the afternoon in the upper part!). The women of the barrio decided also to have a more representative organizational structure and therefore pushed the male members of the community to participate in the creation of the Patronato, with a few women on the Board, but keeping the reigns of the action through the sectorial committees run by them.

Of these Committees, one is related to drinking water (more taps), one to the environment (including the idea of organizing garbage collection), one on education, and one on sanitation. The community of Villa de los Laureles has itself identified and executed specific small projects, like the cultivation of flowers in the garden plots adjacent to the houses to be sold by the Cementerio. An additional element of interest is the stone quarry at the barrio's limit, where the men work to "hand pick" stones used for infrastructural improvements in the community, and to sell to outsiders, charging US\$1 per car load. In the opinion of the Federación de Asociaciones Femeninas de Honduras, Tegucigalpa has many more barrios with the characteristics of Villa de los Laureles, so that whatever pilot experience here can certainly be transferred elsewhere.

The Federación, that took early on an active interest in Villa de los Laureles, was created in 1951 as the first nationally recognized female interest organization, becoming a driving force in obtaining political rights for women's and in legislation more favourable to women's rights. Recently, the Federation has also become increasingly

to assist poor women with legal problems who can find no recourse elsewhere. In this context, the Federation, with recognized scions of leading families on its Board, has moved towards an activist position as many of the female grassroot type organizations from the poor barrios have come for free legal advice when threatened with land evictions or to put their legal land entitlements in order. Nowadays, the Federation also coordinates with the "Office for Squatter Settlements" of the Metropolitan District of Tegucigalpa, mainly in the area of organizing community support for plans for improvements in the barrios.

The Mission, with the technical participation of PAHO, the positive attitude of the Metropolitan District Office that has no programmes for Villa de los Laureles in the next few years because of budgetary constraints, and the Federation, has agreed that an urban pilot programme with the organized women of Villa de los Laureles, and through them with the community at large, is a very promising objective.

The outline for action is recommended as follows:

- 1) At the highest point in barrio Villa de los Laureles a water deposit should be constructed that will nurture the community through a system based on gravity. Apparently, water is seeping out of the rocks in that part of Tegucigalpa and although it seems not to be of drinkable quality this water could lead to:
- 2) a system of concentrated public washing places, combined with showers.

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This unit is to be run by women. A small charge could be applied to amortize the cost of the construction (to be "advanced" by INT/83/003) and for the use of the showers. With this system, women do not need to expose themselves to the hazards of washing and bathing in a contaminated river, and "commercial" washing could become an income generating side line. The community itself was already toying with some vague notions in this direction and reacted very favourably to the idea.

3) The resulting grey-waters of both users' installations can be directed to a few flush toilets to serve the women who are making use of the washing and showering facility. Before leading the "aguas negras" into the river, the construction of a septic tank and/or drainage field is called for.

4) The local women's idea for garbage-collection goes very well with draftboard-ideas worked out on this topic by the Metropolitan District and by the Sanitary Engineer of PAHO. The idea could be further advanced by combining this garbage collection proposal (make several collecting points in the community) with a garbage-pit proposal that in its turn could be combined with the "letrinas-secas" idea for which each plot does have space available. In the end by combining the two they would have compost of inorganic nature. This very well ties in with the community's interest to obtain very high "yields" from their tiny garden plots.

PAHO, with the Ministry of Health, and the Federación for promotional, supervisory activities, will work-out an integrated pilot scheme for which costs are estimated US\$38,000, not counting the community's contribution in work and materials (from the stone quarry).

In the context of the urban proposal outlined above, the Mission observes that:

- a) Tapping a local spring for a communal laundrying area with attached showers and channelling the "grey water" for flushing water-seal



toilets could not only solve a felt need for the women of Barrio Villa de los Laureles, but at the same time help in serving as a functional model for other groups who are less well-organized. (See report field visit, Attachment 7).

Attempts in the past to introduce communal toilet or laundry systems in urban areas have failed. By involving the Amas de Casa and Patronato de Villa Los Laureles in the planning, design, and evaluation of these basic facilities, there is an opportunity to test our theories of the important and essential roles that can be played by women and demonstrate how they can be replicated. The "taza hidráulica", water-seal latrine, has not been tested using "grey water" so this would be an opportunity to evaluate such a combination.

According to the PAHO sanitary engineer there have been several unsuccessful attempts to introduce public laundry facilities into Honduras even though in Guatemala and Mexico they are widely used. One of the critical health problems in Tegucigalpa is the use of the rivers as the sewage disposal system. Most women from the barrios have no alternative to doing their laundry and bathing in the rivers, nearly always with their children. For instance, 56 women who do laundry in the Pedregal area have formed a cooperative with help from FAFH and hope, with funds from UNICEF, to get a building with a day-care center next to it. (Attachment 6).

In Villa Los Laureles the women leaders felt they could work out a plan so that the 350 families can share the facilities and maintain them. (Attachment 7). In El Pedregal, the UNICEF project, there was a much less-organized group with various communities represented. These urban programmes could fill real needs of better health and employment for women. Analysis of the involve activities could be of great use to planners and programme directors as the unmet needs of thousands of women in the marginal urban areas become more acute.

b) A thorough case study of the pump caretaker/<sup>"water manager"</sup>system worked out in Villa Los Laureles showing (1) building of pump house, (2) payment for water, and (3) selection of female heads of household on 3-months rotating basis would be valuable. The dividing of the community into two service areas with different hours is also an innovative idea.

VII. Research and Training Components (See Attachment 8)

A specific observation that has not been made in the report so far is the important role of documentation and research that is to accompany all the steps in the execution of the pilot programme of INT/83/003. |

a) The documentation of women's involvement in DECADE activities and some of the projects in Honduras could be filmed for adding to existing materials especially the dissemination and acceptance of the water-seal latrine in rural areas of Latin America where they were previously unknown. The designing adaptations made to a composting dry latrine for the rural housing project would also be interesting to record. The public acceptance of the use of human excreta for fertilizer in Latin America is of recent origin. Even though its use was not uncommon in the 1970s, discussion of composting and/or use was not acceptable. The search for an appropriate composting latrine and development of training materials for its construction and use would add to DECADE planning. Women's ideas and suggestions in the process should be documented.

b) Comparing the approaches and results in the self-help housing project with the more isolated UMH rural communities in Olanchito (see UMH) will also

be important to document as will be the different motivations, promotion and supervision between UMH and FAFA.

c) Protocols for these studies should be developed in such a way that data will be comparable to that being collected in other geographic areas. Available protocols developed during the Decade such as the questionnaire attached to the World Bank publication No.5 on the Socio-Cultural Aspects of Water Supply and Excreta Disposal by Elmendorf and Buckles in the series on Appropriate Technology in Water Supply and Sanitation, and the TAG, technical Note No.1, "Methods for Gathering Socio-Cultural Data for Water Supply and Sanitation" by Mayling Simpson Hebert were left with the UNDP office after a brief discussion of them with some of the Honduran social scientists.

d) Among the documents needed for both the rural and urban proposals are baseline surveys and questionnaires which will include water and sanitation related uses, behaviours and attitudes.

Specific community leaders in the Barrio Villa Los Laureles were very interested in obtaining a questionnaire which could be used to get basic information about water and sanitation problems as well as important general things, such as people's preference for small income-generating projects. The mission suggested that it would probably be more useful to design a special questionnaire for Villa Los Laureles after discussion with a local social scientist who could help them make it more useful and could also teach/show them how to carry it out. The community leaders were enthusiastic about the idea of such a study particularly if the data was left with them for use in future planning.

As a part of INT/83/003 such a survey, which included detailed interviews, could provide a case study of women's participation in Villa Los Laureles which would be a demonstration of what and how women can plan, promote and participate

in the overall development of their communities with improvements in water and sanitation being important components. One case study would be of the "water manager system" (see VI below).

e) Comparative Data. A comparison of methodology approaches and facilities in the communal laundries and bath/toilet facilities in a multi-barrio project (Attach 7) with a well-organized community such as Villa de los Laureles would be very helpful to planners who have been unsuccessful in obtaining acceptance, use and maintenance in the past. An analysis of women's involvement as planners, managers and users is needed. (See attachment 9 on Women's Organizations in Honduras). The research/training/communication components of the rural projects will be very similar to the urban ones. Tentatively it would seem that time use before and after improvements in water supply and sanitation, combined with decision-making as income-producing activities get underway, would be of great value to national planners and for DECADE data.

f) Health/education/communication materials. As INT/83/003 develops detailed proposals for Honduras, cooperation with AED/PRASAR in designing health education materials or testing new approaches to involve women more effectively should be established. In terms of behavioural changes related to personal hygiene and excreta disposal, the three years, 1980-83, of women-focused village level research related to diarrhea prevention and care is an invaluable resource as are the research team - Honduran and expatriate who worked on this project (Annex 10). The training/health/education components planned or underway by UNICEF, CARE and CONSUDE, should also be explored further to find ways of incorporating women more completely into these programmes.

#### VIII. Organization Structure for Pilot Programme

Honduras has an institutional set up for Water Decade related activities, and within the Government structure there is a positive attitude towards women in development issues.

The UNDP office in Tegucigalpa has shown itself very sensitive and professionally attuned to an active role in putting forward and monitoring

direct impact projects and it is positive to note how grassroot type leadership and farmer unions members feel at ease in the office, know its officers and consider it as much theirs as the Government does. Consequently, the Mission feels confident that the UNDP office in Honduras will perform well insofar as the required backstopping and logistical tasks to see the pilot programme of INT/83/003 become successful are concerned. Essential is also the professional commitment and active interest shown by PAHO/Honduras to associate itself with community oriented activities (see its role as executing agency for the HON/81/001 Rural Health project) will provide the INT/83/003 with the substantive support it requires and also with an in-the-country capacity to present the beneficiaries, as well as the government/institutional authorities with United Nations's accumulated experience in the field of water and women. PAHO/Honduras has also an important role to play concerning the recent results of testing (latrines, handpumps, etc.) of sanitary/water equipment.

The Mission recommends using PAHO as the executing agency, to specifically emphasize the backstopping of UNDP and its involvement to have the INT/83/003 become really coordinated with HON/83/030, Housing, and HON/82/007, Peasant Women. (PAHO will certainly see to it that wherever possible its HON/81/001, Rural Health in the South, will be called upon when needed).

In the rural component, FEHCOVIL will be <sup>the</sup> lead agency in so far as the housing <sup>and</sup> related activities are concerned, with the Ministry of Health and the Centro de Desarrollo Industrial (CDI) as the technical advisory bodies (depending on what technical solution is agreed upon among FEHCOVIL, Ministry, CDI and PAHO). Through FEHCOVIL, that executes on behalf of the Ministry of Planning the housing project, the latter will be involved,

Through their grassroot level organizations, the farmers unions are keeping a close look on the housing project and they, as well as their female national organizations like FEMUC and ANAMUC, will certainly function well as a channel to disseminate positive results. In addition, one should not underestimate the link pin role that the (politically attuned, but voluntary organization) Unión de Mujeres Hondureñas can fulfill, especially in convincing the Government of ultimately applying nationally what the Union finds works well in their project sites in Olancho. All this INT/83/003 will have promoted, as well as introducing to the housing project related new technologies that the Union will certainly be anxious to pick-up and disseminate.

At the urban level, the Federación de Asociaciones de Mujeres Hondureñas will cooperate with PAHO/Ministry of Health in promotional/legal activities and because of its high acceptance in the marginal urban areas, as well as in government agencies will certainly contribute to making the pilot programme become very well known.

No organized structure of committees, etc. is proposed here because the involved organizations at the working and decision-making level are very enthusiastic over the possibility of these specific pilot proposals and each is interested to coordinate well with the others because of a clearly defined self interest!

It has been discussed with PAHO that more specific worked out proposals have to be forwarded to New York soonest. As noted in part VII, Research and Training Components, of this report, the important role of documentation and research that is to accompany in all its steps the execution of the pilot programme of INT/83/003 should not be overlooked. The Mission has been

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made aware of a reduced but very well qualified number of Honduran professionals who, combined, cover the pilot related activities insofar as social and health aspects are concerned. Furthermore, through the HON/81/001 Peasant Women Project, economic aspects will not be overlooked. The Mission has obtained a few curriculum vitae while it was in Tegucigalpa and once the INT/83/003 pilot activities are approved, the UNDP office in Tegucigalpa together with PAHO, should establish with the chosen local professionals a documentation and research schedule from which the pilot activities will derive their meaning and justification. In this context, it should also be noted that there will be no pilot activities without financing by INT/83/003 of the first-year costs.