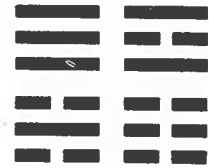




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The Muted Voice: The Role of Women in Sustainable Development

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INTRODUCTION

Women make up about half of the world's population¹ and contribute over two-thirds of all the labor hours worked by the human race.² Throughout the world, women are the primary providers of child care,³ as well as suppliers for themselves and their families of many of the necessities for day to day life.⁴ Increasingly, women are playing a major role in the formal economies regulated by society and are continuing to be a large

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1. UNITED NATIONS, UNITED NATIONS DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK-1989, 118 (1991) (As of 1985 there were 2.441 billion males and 2.413 billion females in the world).

2. See WOMEN'S FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL, *Women and the Environmental Crisis: Women's Foreign Policy Council Fact Sheet 2* [hereinafter *Women and the Environmental Crisis*]; WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, *Address By Dr. H. Mahler, Director-General World Health Organization*, presented at the Safe Motherhood Conference, Nairobi, Kenya Feb. 10-13, 1987, at 2 [hereinafter *Address of Dr. Mahler*].

3. See *Address of Dr. Mahler, supra* note 2 (discussing women's role as childcare providers); UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME, *THE PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENT: THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT 1988*, at 25 (1988) [hereinafter *UNEP 1988*].

4. See *Address of Dr. Mahler, supra* note 2; see also *UNEP 1988, supra* note 3, at 25-30. Rural women account for more than half the agricultural productivity in developing countries and over eighty percent in Africa. *Quotes from Council's Environmental Briefing*, NEWS & VIEWS: A WOMEN'S FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL REPORT (Women's Foreign Policy Council, New York, N.Y.), Aug. 1989, at 6 [hereinafter *Quotes from Environmental Briefing*] (statement of Patricia Baldi, Dir. Population Programs, National Audubon Society). See also, *WORLDWIDE, THE AFRICAN WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY: WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 3* (1989) [hereinafter *WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*] ("[i]n certain parts of Africa women perform between 60 to 90 percent of the subsistence agriculture labor. . .").

part of the informal economies.⁵ Women have begun to influence the outcome of elections by conditioning their vote on whether candidates or parties promise to promote women's interests.⁶ Yet, they are still grossly underrepresented in political decision-making, and women's participation in parliaments, parties, and in formal government is still quite low.⁷

Despite the importance of women's role in society and the advances they have made toward securing equality, a 1988 Population Crisis Committee study of 99 countries found that over 60 percent of the world's women live under conditions that threaten their health, deprive them of choices about childbearing, limit their educational opportunities, restrict their participation in the economy, and deny them civil and political rights equal to those of men.⁸

Women who attempt to change their political and environmental situation are, in many societies, frequently beaten down physically and mentally by their male counterparts, their society's culture and its laws.⁹ For example, the women of the Masai tribe in the Ngornongorno area of Tanzania,¹⁰ traditionally have performed the day-to-day labors required to ensure the survival of their families and their tribe—such as looking after cattle, mending houses, and fetching water and cornmeal—leaving the Masai men free to carry out the warrior tasks of the tribe. However, the warrior days of the Masai have long since ended. Now the men spend their time supervising the work of the women, drinking alcohol, and playing a popular board game called *ba*. When a woman fails to carry out a task required of

5. See UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its Thirty-Fourth Session*, E/1990/25, April 6, 1990, 26 [hereinafter *Report on the Status of Women*] (noting women are now playing a role in the formal economy which was unimaginable 30 years ago, but unfavorable economic conditions in developing countries still cause the majority of women to be relegated to the informal economy). The informal economy is distinguished from the formal by its lack of regulation by the legal and social institutions of a society. See ALEJANDRO PORTES ET AL., *THE INFORMAL ECONOMY* 12-13 (1989).

6. See *Report on the Status of Women*, *supra* note 5, at 24. The result is that decisions on public policies that affect women's equality are still in the hands of men. *Id.*

7. *Id.*

8. Bella Abzug and Kim Kelber, *Women: Still the Second Sex*, in *SIERRA CLUB CALL TO ACTION: HANDBOOK FOR ECOLOGY, PEACE AND JUSTICE* 56-57 (Brad Erickson, ed., 1990) [hereinafter *Still the Second Sex*]. Women are often denied the ability to own or dispose of land and property and, especially in the third world, are routinely denied the right to obtain credit. See ANNABLE RHODDA, *WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT* 101-102 (1991) [hereinafter *WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT*]; THE GLOBAL TOMORROW COALITION, *THE GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK* 52 (1990) [hereinafter *GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK*].

9. See *Report on the Status of Women*, *supra* note 5, at 24-26. See also *Still the Second Sex*, *supra* note 8, at 56-58 ("[F]or a majority of women throughout the world, human rights as defined in the West. . . is the icing on a cake they have never tasted. They seek ordinary bread and water"); Anita Light, *Hysterical Housewives or Committed Campaigners? Women Activists in North America*, *THE ECOLOGIST*, Jan./Feb. 1992, at 14 (statement of Cora Tucker) (discussing acts of violence confronting women activists) [hereinafter *Hysterical Housewives*].

10. See *Women's Work Is Never Done (Not by Masai Men)*, *N.Y. TIMES*, Dec. 2, 1991, at A4.

her, custom and social pressures compel her husband to beat her.¹¹ Seeking to reduce the poverty and malnourishment from which the Masai people suffer, the Masai women have begun efforts to sell traditional necklaces to tourists. Unfortunately, these efforts have been hampered by rules that prohibit women from running a shop or gaining access to capital, which is needed to purchase the beads used for making the necklaces. Men, who have access to capital, have offered no assistance, spending their money instead on homemade liquor.¹²

This scenario is not unique to the Masai women. Around the world, in both developed and developing countries, societal roles deprive women of a voice in decisions that affect the environment, while leaving them as those most immediately and profoundly affected by environmental degradation.¹³ Women seeking to ensure a safe and sustainable future for themselves and their families, generally lack the resources and power to achieve this goal on their own. They receive little or no assistance from their male counterparts, their governments, or institutions of international development.¹⁴ Despite the experience and expertise women have in applying sustainable development techniques,¹⁵ their lack of political power prevents their voices from being heard by the international and governmental agencies that make development decisions.¹⁶ The result is that, in spite of the vital role women play, women have traditionally had little or no say in the development decisions of their countries.¹⁷

Development practices cannot continue unchanged without jeopardizing the future of the environment. The scale of human activities throughout

11. *Id.*

12. *Id.*

13. In the developing world, women serve as the primary procurers and users of water in most communities and often have sole responsibility for waste management and sanitation training, as well as for home and family hygiene. This leaves women at a significantly higher risk of exposure to water and sanitation-related diseases and, generally, in poorer health than the men of their societies. *WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT*, *supra* note 8, at 89-90; *see also* UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 2, 6-9. Women are also exposed to reproductive risks that men, of course, do not face. The roles women play in society and the corresponding effects on women are discussed more thoroughly *infra* part I(A), and in *WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT*, *supra* note 8, at 81-93.

14. *See Report on the Status of Women*, *supra* note 5, at 24-25 (discussing the impediment posed by the continuing lack of economic and political power for women and the need for government action to remove remaining barriers to women gaining such power).

15. Women's experiences with sustainable development techniques are discussed within the text, *infra* part I(B).

16. *WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*, *supra* note 4, at 2 ("international agencies and governments have everywhere ignored the vital part that women play in caring for the environment. . . . Their voice, like their knowledge and experience, is simply unheard.").

17. UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 24 (noting that "[w]omen are rarely consulted about important environmental decisions—let alone allowed to participate in making them—though they are very often the people who will be most affected."); *see also* *WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*, *supra* note 4, at 2 (noting that the female voice in environmental and development issues goes unheard).

the world has grown so large that traditional methods of economic development will soon produce growth that impoverishes rather than enriches.¹⁸ It is vital to the continued well-being of humanity and other species that development become sustainable—occurring at a rate which meets the requirements of the world population without compromising the existence of the resources needed for prosperity.¹⁹ Sustainable development does allow for economic growth, although this growth tends to be slower and on a smaller scale.²⁰ If one were to view the world's resources as a form of natural resources bank account, sustainable development would be analogous to using only the annual interest derived from the principal, while leaving the principal untouched and available to continue generating revenue. The failure to incorporate women in development processes has deprived developers of women's knowledge and experience with small-scale, long-term, resource-efficient development, which could be a valuable tool for achieving sustainable development.²¹ This article seeks to provide a framework of actions aimed at empowering women, so that they may be driving forces toward achieving sustainable development in their countries. Although many of the principles discussed herein can, and should, be applied to increase women's influence over decisions affecting environmental policy in the developed world, this article focuses primarily on efforts to empower the women of developing countries, since future development there will have a global impact on the environment.

The article begins by explaining the relationship between women and the

18. HERMAN DALY & JOHN COBB, FOR THE COMMON GOOD: REDIRECTING THE ECONOMY TOWARD COMMUNITY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE 2 (1989).

19. Development cannot be truly sustainable unless it provides an environment adequate for the continued health and well being of this and future generations. See EDITH BROWN WEISS, *Our Rights and Obligations to Future Generations for the Environment*, in *Agora: What Obligation Does Our Generation Owe to the Next? An Approach to Environmental Responsibility*, 84 AMER. J. INT'L LAW 198, 201-212 (Jan. 1990) (stressing the need for equitable distribution of resources both between members of the current generation and between present and future generations). For a thorough discussion of generational equity, see EDITH BROWN WEISS, IN FAIRNESS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS: INTERNATIONAL LAW, COMMON PATRIMONY AND INTRAGENERATIONAL EQUITY (1989).

It is beyond the scope of this article to provide a complete explanation of the necessity for sustainable development. Among the numerous authorities reaching this conclusion are: THE REPORT OF THE WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, OUR COMMON FUTURE 2-8 (1987) [hereinafter *OUR COMMON FUTURE*]; EXPERTS GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL LAW OF THE WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: LEGAL PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS 42-45 (1986) [hereinafter *ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*]; and Gunther Handl, *Environmental Protection and Development in Third World Countries: Common Destiny-Common Responsibility*, 20 N.Y.U. J. INT'L L. & POL. 603, 603-606 (1988) [hereinafter *Common Destiny*].

20. See *Costing the Environment*, THE ECONOMIST, Sept. 2, 1989, at 52-18 [hereinafter *Costing the Environment*].

21. See UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 2; WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 2-4, 24; GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 52-53.

environment and the special role women have played in advancing sustainable development. Next, the article examines the interrelationship between empowerment of women and achievement of sustainable development. The article concludes by suggesting processes that should be applied to empower women, so that they may help devise and facilitate implementation of sustainable development practices in their societies.

I. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

To understand the symbiotic relationship between women and the environment it is important to understand two components of that multifaceted relationship: how the environment affects women and, conversely, the ways in which women affect the environment.

A. THE EFFECT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON WOMEN

The societal roles of women in developing countries often cause them to be the first to suffer as a result of environmental problems.²² For example, women in developing countries are traditionally expected to obtain water.²³ Development in these nations has caused the available amounts of clean water to deplete rapidly.²⁴ The reduced number of usable sources requires women, particularly those in rural and semi-urban areas, to travel farther and expend greater amounts of time and energy to obtain clean water.²⁵ The lack of available clean water also necessitates the use of contaminated water for washing and bathing, as well as the reuse of water in an effort to conserve it.²⁶ The end result is that women are highly susceptible to the spread of water-related diseases.²⁷

Timber remains a primary source of fuel in many rural and semi-urban areas, and women generally have the duty of gathering the family's fuel

22. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 88-93.

23. *See id.* at 51-54; GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 51-54.

24. Clean water is depleted through the release of fertilizers and pesticides into water supplies and from valley and stream bank cultivation, which can poison water supplies and cause increased sedimentation through erosion. *See* WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 8, 15 (discussing effects of development on water supply); WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 54.

25. The amount of energy spent on water collection can be staggering. For example, in Wayen, Burkina Faso women spend one-third of their daily caloric intake solely on getting water. In rural Egypt nearly thirty percent of the women must walk more than one hour to meet their daily water needs. WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 8; *see also* UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 26-27; WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 51-52.

26. *See* UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 26-27; WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 54.

27. *Cf.* UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 26-27. The use of unsanitary water sources is linked to the spread of schistosomiasis. *Id.* In Zimbabwe, the majority of diseases for which women are treated in rural clinics are linked to unsafe and unsanitary water. WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 15.

wood.²⁸ The lack of fuel wood affects women in much the same manner as the lack of water does: requiring them to travel greater distances, and taking time and energy away from their other activities.²⁹ In addition, the lack of timber hurts women and their societies economically. Women typically use wood to supplement their incomes in a variety of ways including headloading (the gathering of wood and sale of it elsewhere as a commodity), food-processing, beer-brewing, and pottery-making.³⁰ As wood becomes scarce and the effort needed to gather it becomes prohibitive, such activities lose their viability.³¹ The resulting abandonment of these female ventures undercuts the development of their nations' economies.

The health problems of women in developing countries are often exacerbated by improper methods of waste disposal.³² Village waste is commonly disposed of near those portions of the village in which women spend most of their time, thereby increasing women's exposure to unsanitary conditions.³³ As a result, women in such situations experience high infertility rates and a disproportionate number of spontaneous abortions and still births.³⁴

Women often serve as caregivers and in this capacity are exposed to the sufferings of the old, the young, and the sick, who are more vulnerable to harmful environmental exposures.³⁵ In the case of infants, care given by the mother can increase the infants' exposure to "pesticides such as kepone, mirex, chlordane, aldrin, dieldrin, DDT and metabolites" which may be

28. UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 27; WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 47. Some 70 percent of the developing world relies on wood as a fuel source. OUR COMMON FUTURE, *supra* note 19, at 189.

29. See WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 49; WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 15; UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 27. In northern Ghana women require a full day to collect a mere three-day supply of fuel wood. In rural Kenya, women spend roughly 20-24 hours per week at gathering wood. *Id.*

30. UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 27; WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 49.

31. *Id.*; see also generally, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), *Women's Work: The Informal Sector*, in INSTRAW NEWS: WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT, No. 12 (Summer 1989) [hereinafter *Women's Work: The Informal Sector*]. The scarcity of wood also leads to additional problems. In developing areas the demands of a growing population for timber have led to cultivation on marginal lands prone to erosion and to serious deforestation problems. See WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 5 (describing deforestation); OUR COMMON FUTURE, *supra* note 19, at 57-59, 125-26 (describing the loss of soil resources).

32. See UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 26-27 (improper urban planning has led to increased unsanitary and hazardous conditions in and around rural and semi-urban villages); WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 89-90.

33. *Id.*; WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 17.

34. UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 30; WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT, *supra* note 8, at 89-90.

35. See UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 30.

passed through mothers' breast milk.³⁶ A vicious cycle of harm can be created, whereby increasing amounts of care exacerbates the condition of those being cared for.³⁷

Unsanitary living conditions, lack of proper maternal nutrition, and the burdens of heavy physical labor during pregnancy serve to make childbearing extremely hazardous to the women of the developing world.³⁸ Nevertheless, populations continue to expand at rates that threaten to exceed the carrying capacity of the land.³⁹ Population growth illustrates how the role of women in developing nations is inextricably entwined with environmental degradation and sustainable development. When women's economic and social status increases, women have fewer children.⁴⁰ Declines in population rates relieve pressures on the environment.⁴¹ Concomitantly, as the position of women in the societies of developing nations is strengthened, their countries are able to move closer to achieving patterns of sustainable development.⁴²

B. THE EFFECT OF WOMEN ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Women have generally been excluded from large scale development decision-making, yet their daily activities and smaller scale development projects have a tremendous effect on the environment.⁴³

1. Women and Development

The sustained existence of societies in some of the most desolate and resource-poor lands is a tribute to the development abilities of their female "breadwinners."⁴⁴ These women are capable of providing the materials

36. *Id.* Additionally, children are also bathed in stagnant pond or canal water, a practice that is linked to rising levels of schistosomiasis in children. *Id.* at 26-27.

37. *Id.*

38. *Address of Dr. Mahler, supra* note 2, at 2-9. *See also* WORLD BANK, SAFE MOTHERHOOD INITIATIVE: A CALL TO ACTION, 1-3 (1987) (Summary Statement by Dr. Sai). In the developing world there are 800 to 1,000 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, compared to 2-9 deaths per 100,000 live births in the developed world. The lifetime risk of mortality from maternity in the developing world is estimated as high as a 1 in 25 chance. *Id.*

39. *See infra* note 212 and accompanying text.

40. OUR COMMON FUTURE, *supra* note 19, at 96, 106.

41. *Id.*

42. *Id.* If, however, the economic status of women is diminished—for example, through the loss of resources necessary to make traditional crafts—the tendency is for population rates to increase, leading to greater environmental harm. *See* GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 52.

43. These include decisions relating to food production and family planning. *See* GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 52.

44. *See* WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 3.

necessary to sustain life, without compromising the most fragile of environments. The ability of women to practice development activities that maintain the balance between human needs and environmental preservation and conservation goes beyond the capacity to ensure low-level development and survival in inhospitable areas. Women, in both the developed and developing world, in areas of great natural wealth and areas lacking in resources, have shown the ability to cultivate and implement development initiatives that are sustainable over time.⁴⁵

Comparing women's sustainable development initiatives with those undertaken by the organized development process (i.e., actions taken by national governments, multinational development banks, and multinational corporations), reveals that the women's projects tend to be more sustainable.⁴⁶ On the whole, organized development has relied upon large scale, natural resource intensive projects that are environmentally unsound and unsustainable.⁴⁷ These projects often disrupt and harm local populations, rather than assist them.⁴⁸ Ironically, the costs of the projects saddle the nations with large debts that undercut the nations' ability to undertake development activities.⁴⁹ In comparison, women's projects are generally done on a smaller scale, are less natural resource exploitative and more effective at aiding local and effected populations.⁵⁰ Yet, women are almost completely left out of the organized development planning process.⁵¹

Symptomatic of the problems of organized development is the emphasis it typically places on cash crops.⁵² While such crops bring in revenue, they

45. For examples of sustainable projects led by women, see *World Women in Environment*, WORLD-WIDE NEWS (WorldWIDE, Washington D.C.), Jan.-Feb. 1990 [hereinafter *World Women in Environment*]; see also WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 3.

46. See GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 52.

47. See SIERRA CLUB, INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM, (1989) at 2 [hereinafter INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM]. One reason organized development favors large scale projects is that lending banks do not consider smaller scale projects because doing so does not use their staff time efficiently. Interview with W. David Hopper, Regional Vice-President, South Asia, The World Bank, in Washington D.C. (April 1984), cited in Bruce Rich, *The Multilateral Development Banks, Environmental Policy, and the United States*, 12 ECOLOGY L. Q. 681, 742 (1985).

48. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM, *supra* note 47, at 2. For examples of disruptive projects, see Judith Kimerling, *Disregarding Environmental Law: Petroleum Development in Protected Natural Areas and Indigenous Homelands in the Ecuadorian Amazon*, 14 HASTINGS INT'L & COMP. L. REV. 849 (1991) [hereinafter *Disregarding Environmental Law*]; *Quotes from Environmental Briefing*, *supra* note 4, at 6 (statement of Dr. Lenora Foerstel).

49. JEANNE VICKERS, WOMEN AND THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS 3-4 (1991). See also 'Women's Views Must Be Heard', NEWS & VIEWS: A WOMEN'S FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL REPORT (Women's Foreign Policy Council, New York, N.Y.), August 1989, at 2 (statement of Dr. Barbara Bramble) [hereinafter WOMEN'S FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL REPORT].

50. See GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 52.

51. The Bank Information Center, FUNDING ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL DESTRUCTION: THE WORLD BANK AND INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND 1 (undated); see also UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 24; *Women's Views Must Be Heard*, *supra* note 49, at 1 (Statement of Rep. Claudine Schneider).

52. See generally THE GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 82.

take large plots of land away from food production, requiring the developing country to become dependent upon costly imported food, thereby increasing the national debt.⁵³ In addition, cash crops quickly strip these marginal lands of nutrients rendering them effectively dead.⁵⁴ Efforts to replenish these lands require large scale introduction of chemicals which often leach into water tables and poison water supplies.⁵⁵ Moreover, once a cash crop emphasis has been established a destructive cycle forms: the nation's markets become reliant on cash crop revenues, the crops deplete the lands and new lands are needed to keep producing revenue, resulting in the use of marginal lands prone to quick desertification.⁵⁶

Women's grassroots development projects underway in Senegal, Somalia, Colombia, and Uruguay have produced dramatically different results. In Senegal, women have started a pilot fish drying enterprise which serves as a regional model for similar programs now being launched.⁵⁷ Somalian women have been trained in nursery management and horticulture and have embarked on reforestation efforts.⁵⁸ The resulting tree nurseries have spawned enterprises in fuel wood gathering, and honey and vegetable growing.⁵⁹

In Colombia, the women of Bogota have joined together to form a hydroponics program. The program involves over 130 families, making it the world's largest community-based program.⁶⁰ The program's cycle is completely sustainable, as no harmful external elements are incorporated and the wastes from the project are utilized as raw materials to foster other sustainable growth activities.⁶¹ The hydroponics program employs only recycled materials in the construction of the beds that hold the water, in which the plants thrive, and uses no insecticides, incorporating instead traditional methods of plant protection to thwart pests.⁶²

Another example of a sustainable project led by women is the program

53. *Id.*

54. See ZERO POPULATION GROWTH, ZPG FACT SHEET at 1-2 (Oct. 1989).

55. See *id.* at 2.

56. See *Costing the Environment*, *supra* note 20, at 52-8 to 52-10.

57. OVERSEAS EDUCATION FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL, GLOBAL CONNECTIONS: OEF INTERNATIONAL 1987 ANNUAL REPORT 2, 6 (1987). The program being launched includes twenty agricultural projects aimed at increased food yields. *Id.*

58. *Id.* at 7.

59. *Id.*

60. *World Women in Environment*, *supra* note 45, at 2. Hydroponics is an agricultural system whereby plants are grown in nutrient fortified water. *Id.*

61. *Id.* The environmental awareness fostered by the project has led to the undertaking of nutrition programs and a health and cleanup campaign. *Id.*

62. *Id.* The project plants onions and garlic amongst staple crops of celery and lettuce, resulting in a two-fold benefit: harvestable foodstuffs and insect repulsion. Any produce that exceeds the individual family needs is sold to provide income. *Id.*

funded by the Inter-American Development Bank called *Manos del Uruguay*, or Uruguay's Hands, which focuses on increasing the income of women.⁶³ *Manos del Uruguay* is a non-profit organization of 18 cooperatives, with a total membership of 988 people, of which 75% are female.⁶⁴ The cooperatives weave clothing, tapestries, blankets, and carpets.⁶⁵ The project strives to bring these cooperatives into the formal market economies and to slow migration to over-crowded cities by boosting local rural employment.⁶⁶ Thus far, the project has succeeded in meeting its goals.⁶⁷

The projects discussed above were not all designed with sustainability as a primary goal, but they have proven themselves to be sustainable in practice because they: 1) rely heavily on the use of traditional and local knowledge; 2) have minimal long-term effects on the environment; 3) are not energy intensive; 4) do not require extensive changes to local lands; and 5) are not natural resource intensive. Women of developing countries tend to be more successful at incorporating these elements because they have learned and applied them over time through the practices of their traditional societal roles.⁶⁸

2. Women and Environmental Protection

While the involvement of women in environmental protection is not limited to the developing world, women in developing countries have played a key role in protecting the environment from harm.⁶⁹ Their actions in the Kenya Green Belt Movement exemplify this.⁷⁰ The National Council of

63. See IDB, TEN YEARS OF SMALL PROJECTS: BRINGING THE MARGIN INTO THE MAINSTREAM 7-8 (1990).

64. *Id.* at 7.

65. *Id.*

66. *Id.* at 8.

67. The project has become one of the largest employers in the country's rural areas. *Id.* It is worth noting that women have also had success in running large scale projects. World Bank reforestation projects in India and Kenya that had been failures when directed at men, succeeded when women were taught to tend the trees. *Id.* at 53.

68. See WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 3; cf. IRENE DANKELMAN & JOAN DAVIDSON, WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD: ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE 171 (1988) [hereinafter ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE].

69. See WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 2 (statement of Sally Mugabe) (women of the developing world have played a vital role in caring for the environment). Women have played a significant leadership role in third world environmental protection activities. See e.g. Susan Abbasi Fletcher, *Medha Patkar's Fight for the Narmada Valley's Environment and Culture*, WORLDWIDE NEWS (WorldWIDE, Washington, D.C.), Nov.-Dec. 1989, at 1-8 [hereinafter *Medha Patkar's Fight*]; Wangari Maathai's *Lone Battle to Save Uhuru Park*, WORLDWIDE NEWS (WorldWIDE, Washington, D.C.), Jan.-Feb. 1990, at 1-7.

70. See UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 8.

Women of Kenya identified tree loss as the most serious threat of desertification in Kenya.⁷¹ To rectify this problem the Council organized the Green Belt Movement, an alliance of women's community groups, to plant trees within local communities as "green belts."⁷² The Green Belt Movement today includes roughly 50,000 women, who have collectively planted over ten million trees with the eventual goal of planting one tree for each of Kenya's 24 million citizens.⁷³

Women's actions to protect the environment often come at considerable personal costs, including public ostracism and loss of life.⁷⁴ Yet, women continue to serve as watchdogs for the environment⁷⁵ and as a major impetus for the transition to sustainable development.⁷⁶ In addition, women serve a key role in passing on an environmental ethic to future generations, through the education they provide to their children.⁷⁷

The activities for environmental protection conducted by women dramatically demonstrate that women have a great deal to contribute toward transforming current development paradigms into sustainable development paradigms. By bringing to bear the talents of women concerned with the protection of the environment in planning long term solutions to environmental issues, the vicious cycle that simultaneously traps both women and

71. See *id.* Forest loss was identified with both soil erosion and land degradation, the key elements of desertification.

72. *Id.* A "green belt" is an area of over 1,000 trees planted. There are currently over 1,000 such areas in Kenya as a result of the tree plantings by the Movement. In addition some 20,000 mini green belts of less than 1,000 trees have been planted. *Id.*

73. *More Heroes for Mother Nature*, *TIME*, Apr. 23, 1990, at 80. [hereinafter *More Heroes*]. In addition, the movement has established over 65 community nurseries to ensure that it can continue to protect against desertification in the future. The success of the Green Belt movement has spawned numerous similar movements throughout Africa and the world. UNEP 1988, *supra* note 2, at 3.

74. See *Wangari Maathai's Lone Battle to Save Uhuru Park*, *WORLDWIDE NEWS*, Jan.-Feb. 1990, at 1. In response to Dr. Maathai's fight against the erection of a 60-story skyscraper on the current site of Uhuru Park, the Kenyan parliament has condemned her and ordered her to vacate the offices of the Kenyan Green Belt Movement, of which she is the founder and leader. *Id.* It is also believed that the government has used its power to coerce certain women's groups to expel her from their membership. *Id.* See also Cal Fussman, *Why We Care*, *LIFE*, May 1990, at 69 (Chipko Women of India were sliced in half when they hugged trees to stop them from being cut down).

75. See *Hysterical Housewives*, *supra* note 9, at 14.

76. See *WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT*, *supra* note 8, at 109.

One woman, Medha Patkar, has organized tens of thousands of local tribespeople to protest the construction of dams in the Narmada Valley of India which would cause serious environmental degradation and displace hundreds of thousands of people. *Medha Patkar's Fight*, *supra* note 69, at 8. Her efforts against the dams have ranged from organizing protests and filing lawsuits to testifying before the United States Congress. *Id.*

A two year campaign by Belizean biologist and zoologist Janet Gibson has resulted in 13 sq. km of the barrier reef along the coast of Brazil being set aside as the Hol Chan Marine Reserve. *Defenders of the Planet*, *TIME*, Apr. 23, 1990, at 78. Pollution, construction, fishing, shell collecting and tourism endangered the reef's fragile ecosystem and hence its survival. *Id.*

77. As infants, children perceive the world as it is related to them by their mothers. As children grow older, their mothers impart key values, attitudes and ethics. UNEP 1988, *supra* note 3, at 25.

the environment in a downward spiral of political disempowerment and degradation, can be broken.

II. EMPOWERING WOMEN TO REALIZE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The developed world's population has already degraded its environment to such an extent that serious social changes will be necessary before the developed world will be able to stem and, later, turn the tide of its environmental destruction.⁷⁸ People of the developed world are only now beginning to understand that they have exploited their environment to the point that the continued existence of the human species is endangered.⁷⁹ Fortunately, they have begun to take long overdue corrective measures.⁸⁰ The developing world, however, is the wild card in this "game" of environmental protection. It is foolhardy to believe that the developing nations should not, or will not, develop for the sake of environmental protection.⁸¹ Yet, as the poorer countries industrialize, their capacity for damage will overtake that of the developed world, simply because they have more people.⁸² How the developing nations choose to develop will go a long way toward determining the fate of the global environment.

In this age of global interdependence, the developed world must take those actions necessary to encourage the developing nations to develop in a sustainable fashion.⁸³ The developed world's facilitation of this process is

78. See *Planet-Saving Report Card*, TIME, Apr. 23, 1990, at 83 (setting forth social changes required to diminish threat to the Earth with a focus on actions within developed world); *Only Man's Presence Can Save Nature*, HARPER'S, Apr. 1990, at 37-48 (discussing actions which must be taken to save "Nature").

79. See *Environmentalism: The New Crusade*, FORTUNE, Feb. 12, 1990, at 44-52 (discussing environmentalism and focusing on its effect on corporate behavior); *Costing the Environment*, *supra* note 20, at 52-3 to 52-4 (surveying environmental aspects of decision-making and summarizing the need for further action).

80. See, e.g., *Japan: 1992 Budget Outlays for Environment Large Compared to Overall Spending*, 15 INT'L ENV'T REP. 21 (1992); *U.S. Senate Ratifies Treaty on Global Oil Spill Response Network*, 14 INT'L ENV'T REP. 593 (1991); *European Parliament Approves EC Environmental Labelling Proposal*, 14 INT'L ENV'T. REP. 677 (1991).

81. See *Common Destiny*, *supra* note 19, at 607 (for developing nations "economic growth in absolute terms is not an option, it is a necessity.").

82. See *Costing the Environment*, *supra* note 20, at 52-3 to 52-4. China alone, by burning its dirty coal and making polluting refrigerators, could negate the rest of the world's efforts to stop the build-up of atmospheric carbon and damage to the ozone layer.

Id. at 52-4.

83. See *Common Destiny*, *supra* note 19, at 608 (aiding developing nations to achieve sustainable development is "clearly and directly in the interest" of developed nations); Michael G. Renner, *Forging Environmental Alliances*, WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE 8-15, (Nov.-Dec. 1989) (discussing interdependence of nations with regard to environmental concerns).

not only desirable, it is necessary. The large outstanding debts and currently existing systemic impediments to sustainable growth make it virtually impossible for the developing nations to achieve sustainable development without assistance from the developed world.⁸⁴

Empowering women in development decision-making will greatly aid developing countries in their efforts to employ sustainable development practices. As discussed previously, the women of developing countries have a long history of practicing sustainable, environmentally-sound development and have initiated many contemporary sustainable development projects.⁸⁵ Despite their lack of power, women have succeeded in gathering support for the implementation of protections against environmental hazards. In other words, despite their lack of significant power the women of developing nations are managing to have significant positive impact through their efforts to preserve the environment. Empowering women would only serve to expand their positive influence.

A. THE PROCESS OF EMPOWERING WOMEN

There are a number of potential courses of action the developed countries could take that would place increased amounts of power in the hands of those women who now have no power. Each course of action would advance the goals of sustainable development, as it fosters equality between the sexes. The actions discussed in this article focus on the measures taken in the United States as a case study; however, they are equally adaptable to the activities of all developed nations.

1. Making Foreign Assistance Assist Women

The United States unilaterally provides aid to foreign nations under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.⁸⁶ The Act sets forth a wide range of objectives to be considered in the determination of the recipients and amounts of aid to be given.⁸⁷ The breadth of objectives to be carried out leads to a fragmented approach: too many tasks are performed poorly, rather than

84. See *Common Destiny*, *supra* note 19, at 608. Impediments to sustainable growth include: "foreign indebtedness, neo-protectionist tendencies in the industrialized North," and existing barriers to trade. *Id.*

85. See *supra* notes 5-17 and accompanying text.

86. The Foreign Assistance Act is codified at 22 U.S.C. §§ 2151-2429 (1988).

87. Among the diverse objectives to be considered are aid for human rights development, 22 U.S.C. § 2151(n), consideration of environment and natural resources, 22 U.S.C. § 2151(p), and aid for the international control of narcotics, 22 U.S.C. § 2291; see also National Audubon Society, *Sustainable Development and Foreign Assistance*, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACTION PROJECT: MASTER THE SUBJECT, Jan. 1989, at 20 [hereinafter *Sustainable Development and Foreign Assistance*] (noting numerous objectives of the Act).

performing fewer more effectively.⁸⁸

The end product is that foreign aid has become a system of "porkbarreling" that is used by successive administrations to shore up friendly governments in foreign lands and to provide defense-related funding, rather than effective assistance to people in need.⁸⁹ Even when such aid does take the form of social assistance, corruption and graft among the political leaders of many recipient countries prevents this aid from reaching its intended beneficiaries.⁹⁰

The Foreign Assistance Act specifically recognizes that women play an important role in the development of their countries' economies,⁹¹ but the Act's rhetoric rings hollow for several reasons. The \$10,000,000 amount that the President may authorize each fiscal year to "encourage and promote the participation and integration of women as equal partners in the development process"⁹² is inadequate to address the problem and represents an insignificant fraction of the overall amount of aid being given each

88. See *Sustainable Development and Foreign Assistance*, *supra* note 87, at 1 ("the current authorizing legislation has been described as a legislative nightmare with every major and minor constituency tacking on a few sentences to protect their area of concern").

89. See Douglas Waller, *Foreign Aid Follies*, NEWSWEEK, April 16, 1990, at 22-23 [hereinafter *Foreign Aid Follies*]. Of the total aid budget, some 60% is slated for security purposes. *Id.* at 22.

Aid to Greece provides a prime example of what a political porkbarrel foreign aid has become. Greece has a surplus of over \$918 million in unspent United States funds from previous years and the United States is vacating its military bases in Greece, yet because of the potent Greek political lobby, \$346 million in aid was proposed for Greece in 1990. *Id.* at 23.

Even apart from porkbarrel politics the logic behind some of the aid grants is questionable. Luxembourg, which has a higher per capita income than the United States, was allocated aid in 1990 because Luxembourg's 800-man army is "critical" to NATO. *Id.*

90. See, e.g., Jane Perlez, *Aid for Kenya Cut As Donors Cite Corruption*, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 21, 1991, at A9.

91. See 22 U.S.C. § 2151k(a) (1988). This section provides in pertinent part:

In recognition of the fact that women in developing countries play a significant role in economic production, family support, and the overall development process of the national economies of such countries, subchapter I of this chapter shall be administered so as to give particular attention to those programs, projects, and activities which tend to integrate women into the national economies of developing countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort.

Id.

92. See 22 U.S.C. § 2151k(b) (1990). This section provides in pertinent part:

Up to \$10,000,000 of the funds made available each fiscal year under this part shall be used . . . for assistance on such terms and conditions as the President may determine to encourage and promote the participation and integration of women as equal partners in the development process in the developing countries. These funds shall be used primarily to support activities which will increase the economic productivity and income earning capacity of women.

Id.

year.⁹³ The provision fails to require that this funding only go to environmentally sound and sustainable development activities. The Act also fails to integrate the goal of empowering women into the overall aid program. Finally, the act grants the President too much latitude to determine what shall be funded; the use of the funds is discretionary and, thus, the provision for women can be freely ignored and no funds given.⁹⁴

The Foreign Assistance Act must be rewritten in a manner that recognizes the need to empower women in the decision-making process for their respective nations.⁹⁵ In order to empower women, the Act must be amended not only to require that funds given under the Act be given in a manner which no longer discriminates against women, but also to actively require allocation of a portion of funds to projects under the control of women. Amending the act will be difficult: foreign aid is generally viewed as having no constituency and has become a victim of partisan politics.⁹⁶ Legislators seek to link aid to various activities supported by their parties or use it for porkbarrelling within their constituency.⁹⁷ As a result of these forces, all efforts to amend the Foreign Assistance Act are currently bogged down and show little hope of coming to fruition.⁹⁸

Funding women's projects through foreign aid alone is not sufficient. Steps must be taken to ensure that, in addition, women receive training and integration assistance efforts.⁹⁹ The funding of training programs should be conditioned on the proportional representation of women within the classes of trainees to ensure that women receive a fair share of the training being funded. Requiring that aid be supplied in direct relation to female representation, would immediately serve to integrate and empower women within the society as a whole. Empowering women economically

93. The top ten recipient nations of United States direct foreign aid for 1990 each got over ten times the amount set aside globally for women under Section 2151k(b)(1). See *Foreign-Aid Follies*, *supra* note 89, at 23.

94. 22 U.S.C. § 2151k(b)(1) (1990).

95. Congress has acknowledged this need. See Foreign Operations Appropriations for Fiscal 1990, Pub. L. 101-167, part II (1989) (women need to be fully integrated in the development process).

96. See *Sustainable Development and Foreign Assistance*, *supra* note 87, at 3. See generally *Foreign-Aid Follies*, *supra* note 89.

97. See *id.*

98. *Id.* Each year in almost quixotic fashion, bills have been introduced to address the need to further integrate women into development planning. The bills routinely die before they can be enacted. See, e.g., H.R. 951, 101st Cong., 1st Sess. (1990) (died in the House Foreign Affairs Committee); H.R. 2655, 101st Cong., 1st Sess. (1990) (died in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee). The current Congress is considering The Women in Development Act of 1991, H.R. 1360, 102d Cong., 1st Sess. (1991). The bill requires A.I.D. to seek the active participation of local women in A.I.D.'s development activities and to take specific actions to empower women in the development process. *Id.* at § 3. It is currently bottled up in committee with only a slim chance for passage.

99. See WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, *supra* note 4, at 3 (recognizing low literacy, education and training rates among women in developing nations serve as a significant barrier to effective participation of women in the development process).

would both encourage the growth of female participation in the traditional economy (where most women in the developing world have played no role) and facilitate integration of the informal economy (where women already play a major role) within the traditional economy.¹⁰⁰ Encouragement of the informal economy serves not only to advance the role of women, but also advances the goals of sustainable development. The informal economy generally consists of market activities which as a matter of practice, and due to their smaller scale, place less strain on the environment and are therefore sustainable over time.¹⁰¹ Further, efforts to aid integration of the informal economy into the formal economy move more market control into the hands of individuals, rather than the government bureaucracies which often dominate the traditional economies of developing nations.¹⁰² In this manner, the integration of the informal economy serves to promote traditional notions of democratic participation.

a. Women in the United States Agency for International Development's Policy and Programs

The United States Agency for International Development ("U.S. A.I.D.") is the primary government agency providing foreign assistance. Its operations are restricted by the constraints of the annual federal foreign assistance budget and the flaws of the Foreign Assistance Act.¹⁰³ Since the 1973 enactment of the Percy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act,¹⁰⁴ U.S. A.I.D. has been required to make a limited effort to address the needs

100. For a discussion of women's role in the formal and informal economies see *Report on the Status of Women*, *supra* note 5, at 26.

101. See *Women's Work: The Informal Sector*, *supra* note 31, at 1. Despite the fact that the informal market itself may expose women to environmental hazards, the informal market generally makes traditional goods or provides services on a small, sustainable scale. *Id.* at 1, 5-6, 9. Goods such as baskets, rugs, weavings and traditional foods sold on the streets involve small scale practices which have proven themselves sustainable by their performance over the life span of the society. *Id.*; see also INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM, *supra* note 47, at 3 (1989) (asserting that international lending should support smaller scale, appropriate or traditional technology projects to advance sustainable development).

102. See *The Democratization of Development: Partnership at the Grassroots*, in INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION, INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 1989, 16-20 (1989) (grassroots development initiatives democratize development and thus democratize markets).

103. See U.S. A.I.D., DEVELOPMENT ISSUES 1991: U.S. ACTIONS AFFECTING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: THE 1991 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION COMMITTEE 2 (1991) [hereinafter A.I.D. 1991] (Foreign Assistance Act restrictions "hamper and hamstring [U.S. A.I.D.] from getting the job done.").

104. The Percy Amendment was passed to ensure that U.S. bilateral assistance pay particular attention to programs, projects, and activities that contribute to integrating women into the economies of developing nations. U.S. A.I.D., WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT: A REPORT TO CONGRESS BY THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FY89-FY90 10 (undated) [hereinafter A.I.D. REPORT TO CONGRESS]. The amendment is now codified at 22 U.S.C. § 2151k(a) (1988).

of women in its foreign aid activities.¹⁰⁶ To its credit, the agency's policies reflect a credible attempt to go beyond the minimal requirements of the Percy Amendment. U.S. A.I.D. policy recognizes the actual and potential roles of women in carrying out development assistance and commits the agency to developing strategies for explicitly benefiting women in individual projects, within the overall aid strategies for a given country.¹⁰⁸

In its policy paper, A.I.D. committed to supporting the development of institutions and transfer of technology that would ensure: (a) access for women, as well as for men, to appropriate and improved technology; and (b) the existence of institutions which include women and effectively reach women (as well as men) and which permit the dissemination of benefits and information to both sexes.¹⁰⁷ Unfortunately, the agency's policy limits such institutional strengthening efforts to only those cases in which special efforts are required to reach women because of cultural conditions or in which women's groups provide particularly useful vehicles for addressing women's needs.¹⁰⁸ The agency itself acknowledges that its efforts fall short of what is needed to effectively empower women.¹⁰⁹

U.S.A.I.D.'s Women in Development office ("WID") has the responsibility for implementing A.I.D.'s efforts to assist women.¹¹⁰ The primary goal of WID is to "optimize the use and expansion of women's productive capacity to ensure sustainable national economic and social progress."¹¹¹ Within this goal, the office has four primary objectives: (1) to "improve policies, systems and procedures to institutionalize gender considerations;" (2) to train agency personnel to make them more attuned to gender as an issue in development; (3) to monitor the agency's performance on gender issues; and (4) to "strengthen the resource base concerning gender issues."¹¹² WID's efforts are concentrated in four sectors of development: resources and environment, agriculture, education, and private sector development. Efforts within these sectors focus on bettering the status of women with regard to participation in labor, employment, and production;¹¹³ economic policy reform and adjustment;¹¹⁴ and human capital and social

105. See U.S. A.I.D., A.I.D. POLICY PAPER: WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT, 2 (1982) [hereinafter A.I.D. POLICY PAPER].

106. See *id.* at 1. The aid strategies serve as the main vehicles for setting the assistance parameters for any given project and for aid to any given country. *Id.*

107. *Id.*

108. *Id.*

109. See *id.* at 1-2.

110. See A.I.D. 1991, *supra* note 103, at 61.

111. *Id.*

112. *Id.*

113. *Id.* (focusing on women's productive roles, employment patterns, and participation in both formal and informal labor markets).

114. *Id.* (focusing on the linkages between economic policy reform and women's economic roles,

services.¹¹⁵

Since the publication of the 1982 U.S. A.I.D. policy paper, WID has made substantial gains in implementing the priorities it established by the policy paper. WID has worked diligently to institutionalize gender considerations within U.S. A.I.D. generally and, specifically, within the agency's in-country missions.¹¹⁶ These efforts have focused on the development of gender action plans to define, for each bureau and mission the agency maintains, a plan for: increasing gender considerations in its assistance efforts; providing training to agency personnel; and developing a database of indicators to track the progress of women in U.S. A.I.D. programs and development as a whole.¹¹⁷

The agency has made closing the educational gender gap one of its primary goals.¹¹⁸ WID has also succeeded in bringing more women into its other sectoral programs including agriculture, health, population, nutrition, and legal rights.¹¹⁹ Perhaps the most promising initiative has been WID's work to increase women's capabilities in environmental protection and management.¹²⁰ "Nearly half of the [agency's] missions report that their programs involve women in one or more forms of resource management activities."¹²¹ Among these efforts, U.S. A.I.D. is developing an environmental program to focus on the role of women in protecting the Amazon.¹²² In Ecuador, WID efforts have focused on the training of women pre-school teachers in environmental issues.

Despite these gains, WID recognizes that "[m]uch remains to be done."¹²³ Efforts in training U.S. A.I.D. personnel to make them more gender conscious need to be continued and expanded.¹²⁴ Similarly, while the agency has succeeded in increasing the percentage of women in its training programs, the current 27% participation rate is substantially less than the

productive capacity, and response to economic incentives).

115. *Id.* at 61-62 (focusing on the impacts of socioeconomic factors such as education, nutrition, health, and fertility on project outcomes, as well as action to strengthen those impacts; research on the functioning of households and the constraints and opportunities women's role within the household presents).

116. A.I.D. REPORT TO CONGRESS, *supra* note 104, at 17-20.

117. *Id.*

118. *Id.* at 3, 50-56. In 1990, women constituted 27% of the people in A.I.D. training programs, an increase of 12% since 1980. *Id.* at 8.

119. *Id.* at 8, 30-36, 61-67.

120. *Id.* at 45-49.

121. *Id.* at 8.

122. *Id.* at 47. This program as currently envisioned will train women both at the community level, as to the proper uses of cleared lands and the processing of forest products, and as managers in environmental policy positions. The program also seeks to increase women's roles within both governmental and non-governmental institutions. *Id.*

123. *Id.* at 9.

124. *Id.*

roughly 50% of the population women represent. Additionally, the agency must hire staff with expertise in the role of women in development.¹²⁵

Moreover, while U.S. A.I.D.'s efforts to expand the role of women in environmental protection are commendable, the agency must go beyond simply involving women in half of the projects that deal with resource management. Resource management must be transformed into sustainable resource management, and women must be involved in these programs in percentages that reflect women's representation in the populations affected by the program.¹²⁶ These mandates of sustainability and significant participation by women should be applied to all U.S. A.I.D. programs, not just those in the environmental sector. In addition, U.S. A.I.D. must redouble its efforts to strengthen those institutions, particularly non-governmental organizations, that assist women's participation in development planning. Finally, U.S. A.I.D. must endeavor to expand its policy of strengthening institutions that focus on women to make them a component of virtually all of its aid programs, rather than only in special circumstances.¹²⁷

In order for U.S. A.I.D. to be effective in providing aid to women, it must recognize local non-government organizations (NGOs) as institutions that serve women and "provide a particularly advantageous vehicle for addressing women's needs"; the agency must also strengthen the institutional capacity of these groups as a matter of routine practice.¹²⁸ Furthermore, in order to accurately assess the effectiveness of the agency's efforts to aid women, U.S. A.I.D. must expand its monitoring and data collection activities directed toward the effects of its programs on women.¹²⁹ These expanded monitoring efforts should also develop information regarding the role of women as sustainable developers.

2. Including Women in Multilateral Lending

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) are the largest public development lenders in the world.¹³⁰ In the past, MDB lending has often funded large-scale development projects that have not addressed the actual needs of the people in the recipient countries, but instead have inflicted more hardship upon them.¹³¹ Such lending preferences have evolved because the MDB power structure is concentrated outside of recipient countries, and its

125. See A.I.D. 1991, *supra* note 103, at 62.

126. See *id.* at 61.

127. See A.I.D. POLICY PAPER, *supra* note 105, at 10.

128. See *id.* at 1.

129. See *id.* at 9-10; accord A.I.D. 1991, *supra* note 103, at 61.

130. See INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM *supra* note 47, at 2.

131. See generally Bruce M. Rich, *The Multilateral Development Banks, Environmental Policy and the United States*, 12 *ECOLOGY L. Q.* 681, 688-703 (1985).

constituency is homogeneous in nature. This power structure has yielded lending policies which fail to take into account the role of women in development and which are insufficient to protect the environment. MDB policies must be changed to (1) allow for broader participation of women and other affected populations and (2) require that all projects be sustainable in nature.

a. Multilateral Lending

Each year MDBs lend upwards of \$25 billion to developing nations in order to finance various projects aimed at enhancing the well-being of these countries and the quality of life of their populations.¹³² The money that they lend is provided almost exclusively to the governments of these developing nations or to agencies of these governments.¹³³

The ability to influence MDB policies and lending decisions is vital to achieving empowerment of women and sustainable development. Unfortunately, these powers are concentrated in the upper echelons of the MDB structure and are largely insulated from the recipient nations' people, and from women in particular. Lending decisions are made by the MDB president, assisted by the MDB's staff.¹³⁴ Final policy decisions are made by a board of governors made up of representatives from the member nations of the MDB.¹³⁵ The board of governors, in turn, delegates its voting authority to a board of executive directors.¹³⁶ Voting shares of both the board of governors and board of executive directors are based upon the monetary contribution that the individual countries make into the MDB.¹³⁷ Not surprisingly, women are under represented within this hierarchy of MDB decision-making and, therefore, have little say in how projects are developed and funded.¹³⁸

Few, if any, MDB lending or policy decisions emanate from the recipient countries. In addition, people of the nations that provide the funds to the MDBs generally have little knowledge of how their MDB contributions are being used abroad.¹³⁹ Absent any real form of grass roots accountability,

132. See INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM, *supra* note 47, at 2. These MDBs include the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the "World Bank") and its regional counterparts, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, and the Eastern European Development Bank. *Id.*

133. *Id.*

134. *Id.*

135. *Id.*

136. *Id.*

137. *Id.*

138. See HILKKA PIETILLA & JEANNE VICKERS, MAKING WOMEN MATTER: THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS 19-20 (1990) [hereinafter MAKING WOMEN MATTER].

139. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM, *supra* note 47, at 2.

the projects that are funded tend to be "large-scale, energy-intensive, resource-exploitative development" activities such as road networks, dams, power plants, and intense resource development activities.¹⁴⁰ Further, because these projects generate large amounts of debt for the developing nations, the projects not only fail to improve the standard of living for people of the host nations, but also force these nations to shoulder stifling repayment schedules.¹⁴¹ The burden of debt can prevent these nations from being able to undertake sustainable development initiatives. Not only are MDB funded projects destructive to the environment, but they also disproportionately affect the women of developing countries.¹⁴²

Multilateral lending often seeks to restructure the economies of these nations, thereby further disempowering women in the development process.¹⁴³ The economic, structural adjustment activities of these projects tend to have a regressive effect on income distribution and employment, which increases poverty and degrades living conditions among the already impoverished.¹⁴⁴ These effects serve to increase the gap between men and women in status and living standards.¹⁴⁵ The net sum is that structural adjustments, while perhaps creating a certain measure of growth, move women and sustainable development even farther from the priorities of multilateral lending.

MDBs are becoming aware of the wholesale effects that unsustainable development projects can wreak upon the environments of recipient nations

140. *Id.* at 2-3. Listed here are a few projects funded by the World Bank:

The India Singrauli power project produced wind-blown ash contaminating nearby reservoirs, caused severe flooding and air pollution, and has encrusted the region's soil to the extent that agriculture is all but impossible in areas which were once fertile. Since 1977, despite these undeniable environmental harms, the World Bank has committed \$850 million for the development of the Singrauli projects. *Id.* at 2.

The World Bank is also funding power dams erected throughout Brazil. Already thousands of people have been displaced and vast tracts of environmentally valuable lands have been flooded. *Id.* at 3. Also in Brazil, the World Bank is proposing to fund iron ore smelters which will serve iron ore mines constructed by a World Bank loan. *Id.* To fire these smelters some 58,000 square miles of Amazon forests will be converted from the world's richest living, breathing treasure, into charcoal. *Id.*

The World Bank has provided continued funding for the Sadar Sarovar dam. The Sadar Sarovar dam project will forcibly displace 80,000 people, and accelerate deforestation, erosion, and other environmental degradation along the river. *See id.* at 2.

141. *See, e.g.,* WOMEN'S FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL REPORT, *supra* note 49, at 1-2 (statement of Barbara Bramble of the National Wildlife Federation) (\$6 billion of the Philippines \$30 billion foreign debt comes from international money lending for a nuclear plant, which cannot be operated because it is situated on fault line).

142. JEANNE VICKERS, WOMEN AND THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS 15-42, 48-59 (Women and World Development Series, 1991) [hereinafter WOMEN AND THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS].

143. *See* WOMEN AND THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS, *supra* note 142, at 15-41; MAKING WOMEN MATTER, *supra* note 138, at 20-21.

144. *See id.* at 15-41; MAKING WOMEN MATTER, *supra* note 138, at 20-21.

145. *See* WOMEN AND THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS, *supra* note 142, at 15-41; MAKING WOMEN MATTER, *supra* note 138, at 20-21.

and have begun to adopt policies aimed at incorporating concepts of sustainable growth and public involvement into their development planning.¹⁴⁶ Notably, the World Bank has adopted environmental review policies for projects and has begun to provide "environmental" loans for such projects as afforestation and water supply.¹⁴⁷ Despite these minimal gains, MDBs have a long way to go before they can claim that their lending serves to advance sustainable development.¹⁴⁸

The World Bank's environmental lending program entails two primary elements and a lesser third component: (1) loans to free-standing environmental projects; (2) loans for projects with environmental components; and (3) adjustment lending incorporating natural resource management.¹⁴⁹ The Bank contends that practically all of its lending projects in 1989-1990 included an environmental component.¹⁵⁰ A more realistic assessment of the Bank's environmental involvement can be derived from the decline in the number of its free-standing environmental loans. In 1989, the World Bank classified 11 loans as free-standing environmental loans. By 1991, only 8 of its 229 total loans were free-standing environmental loans.¹⁵¹ Pursuant to its 1989 Environmental Assessment Operational Directive, the Bank has taken steps to strengthen its environmental assessments of proposed loan projects.¹⁵²

Three critical flaws remain in the World Bank's environmental assessment program: (1) certain categories of lending activities are exempt from the required preparation of an environmental assessment; (2) the program continues to allow the borrower to prepare the environmental assessment; and (3) there is no effective requirement that the environmental assessments be provided to affected and/or interested populations.¹⁵³ The end result is that the World Bank has continued to fund projects that do not support the lip service it has paid to sustainable development in its

146. See COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, 16TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY 339-340 (1985); *Costing the Earth*, *supra* note 20, at 16.

147. See COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, *supra* note 146, at 339-340; see also *Costing the Environment*, *supra* note 20, at 52-16.

148. HILLARY FRENCH, WORLD WATCH PAPER 107: AFTER THE EARTH SUMMIT: THE FUTURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE 39 (1992).

149. WORLD BANK, THE WORLD BANK AND THE ENVIRONMENT: FIRST ANNUAL REPORT 49-58 (1990). In 1989-1990, the Bank approved 11 loans for free-standing environmental projects. *Id.* at 49.

150. *Id.* at 53.

151. Compare WORLD BANK, THE WORLD BANK AND THE ENVIRONMENT: A PROGRESS REPORT 67 (1991) with WORLD BANK, THE WORLD BANK AND THE ENVIRONMENT: FIRST ANNUAL REPORT, *supra* note 149, at 49.

152. WORLD BANK, THE WORLD BANK AND THE ENVIRONMENT: FIRST ANNUAL REPORT, *supra* note 149, at 62-64.

153. WORLD BANK, *Operational Directive 4.01* in THE WORLD BANK OPERATIONAL MANUAL 4-5 (1991). The bank does suggest that the borrower make the Environmental Assessment available to the public. *Id.* at 5.

policies.¹⁵⁴

In addition to being unresponsive to the needs of the environment in their lending practices, MDBs have also been unresponsive to the needs of women. Since MDB financing generally targets large-scale projects, and because women in developing nations play only marginal roles in the large-scale planning and development of their nations, women remain unempowered by these programs.

b. Reforming MDB Lending

In order to correct the effects MDB lending has upon women and the environment, it will be necessary to give women the ability to make sustainable development choices within the MDB sphere.¹⁵⁵ To this end MDB financing must focus on smaller-scale, appropriate technology projects.¹⁵⁶ Funds for these projects must be placed in the control of practitioners of sustainable development.¹⁵⁷ Increasingly, this will lead to monies being placed into the hands of women.

As part of the populations affected by these projects, women must be systematically involved in the identification, planning, design, implementation, and monitoring of these programs.¹⁵⁸ At the planning stage of any program, efforts must be directed at identifying the affected population and

154. See *World Bank Fiscal Year 1991 Appropriations; Hearings before the Foreign Operations Subcomm. of the Senate Appropriations Comm.*, 101st Cong., 1st Sess. (1990) (testimony of Nicholas Brady, Secretary of the Treasury). During the 1990 World Bank appropriations hearings Senator Leahy noted that although the World Bank's leadership has stated that the environment is a priority, "[s]omeday, [the World Bank is] going to have to start showing they really mean it or else we're not going to fund it." *Id.*

155. See e.g., *Inter-American Development Bank, ANNUAL REPORT 1990 27* (1990) [hereinafter *IDB ANNUAL REPORT*]. The Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB") is a leader in recognizing the need to empower women in multilateral lending. Having recognized that there are over 40 million women in IDB's regional work force and that women play an increasingly important role in the urban informal economy and in food production, in 1990 IDB began a program to incorporate women into its lending. *Id.*

156. See *id.* (IDB, in attempting to incorporate women in its lending has focused its efforts on micro-enterprise lending); see also *INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM*, *supra* note 117, at 3 (discussing the need for small-scale lending); *IDB, TEN YEARS OF SMALL PROJECTS: BRINGING THE MARGIN INTO THE MAINSTREAM 13* (undated). IDB calculates that arrearages in small scale lending average 10 percent or less and the default rate is below five percent. Despite the added difficulties of lending to marginalized groups, such as lack of infrastructure, IDB's small scale lending arrearage and default rates "compare[] favorably with the banking sector in general." These rates could be lowered if training and assistance is provided in conjunction with credit to enable the recipients to overcome their lack of formal training and lack of experience in handling credit. *Id.*

157. See *OUR COMMON FUTURE*, *supra* note 19, at 78.

158. See *INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM*, *supra* note 47, at 3. The need to incorporate affected populations into MDB lending projects has been recognized both by MDBs themselves and by the nation-states that participate in these MDBs, both as shareholders and loan recipients. See, e.g., *IDB ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE, 1990 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES 6* (1991)(discussing role of nongovernmental organizations in IDB lending); 22 U.S.C. §

providing it with enough information to judge the effects of the proposed project.¹⁵⁹ Once identified, the affected populations—in particular, its female members—must be allowed to give significant input in the development of a project.

MDBs are increasingly recognizing that local populations must play a significant role if projects are to be successful.¹⁶⁰ Efforts to include affected populations have begun to focus upon the inclusion of women. The Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB") recently announced its adoption of the "Women in Development Plan of Action."¹⁶¹ For several years IDB has sought to encourage women in development through its microenterprise lending program.¹⁶² The goal of the new Plan of Action is to retain the assistance provided to women microdevelopers by the microenterprise lending program, while at the same time increasing the participation of women in all areas of IDB projects.¹⁶³ The Plan calls for a number of significant reforms to IDB lending procedures, as well as for practices designed to promote the role of women in economic development and increase their participation in the traditional lending activities of IDB.¹⁶⁴ The Plan's reforms include: incorporation of comparative analyses of the situations of women and men in each nation as part of the IDB's reports on economic and social conditions in borrowing countries; within the project analysis component of IDB project lending, inclusion of analyses of the implications of gender issues to the viability of proposed projects (for example, credit programs will be analyzed to determine if lending regulations directly or indirectly exclude women from obtaining loans); and provision of preinvestment and project preparation funds to assist governments in effectively incorporating women into their own projects.¹⁶⁵

IDB's Plan is a substantial first step towards bringing women into the mainstream of development activities and planning. The Plan recognizes

262(m)(7) (1990) (requiring U.S. Directors of MDBs to have access to a summary of the environmental affects of all multilateral development bank actions that come to a board vote 120 days prior to voting on the loan, or else the U.S. Director must not vote in favor of the action).

159. See INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LENDING REFORM, *supra* note 47, at 3.

160. See, e.g., IDB ANNUAL REPORT, *supra* note 155, at 27. In order to effectuate greater public participation in MDB projects, MDBs are adopting environmental policies that require the preparation of environmental impact assessments, which include consultations with local people, and that encourage the public release of these documents. See e.g., IDB ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE, STRATEGIES FOR THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS 5-6 (1990); European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Memorandum On Environment Management: The Bank's Policy Approach* ¶ 23, Dec. 19, 1991.

161. See THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, THE IDB, Dec. 1991, at 7.

162. *Id.*

163. *Id.*

164. *Id.*

165. See *id.*

that it is insufficient to include women in MDB activities only through programs designed to address the needs of women; women must also be directly integrated within the mainstream MDB development process.¹⁶⁶ A fragmented approach that addresses the needs of women only through isolated micro-lending projects and does not incorporate them into MDB lending as a whole serves only to improve the living conditions of a minuscule portion of the total population.¹⁶⁷ Thus, the policy guidelines of MDBs must be modified to require that all projects incorporate women in all phases and at levels consistent with their representation within the population. The number of women in MDB staffs must also be increased, with emphasis upon placing women in positions from which they can assert influence over policy and lending decisions.

B. ENCOURAGING NON-DISCRIMINATION IN PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Simply put, capital equals clout, and American overseas private investment has clout. Private investment represents an enormous opportunity to create a sustainable future for the developing nations. Private investors must recognize that socially responsible investing creates greater profit by channeling money to the most efficient investments and to investments that the growing population of green consumers prefer.¹⁶⁸ Investments should be channeled into those projects which provide equal opportunities for women and which are environmentally sound and sustainable.

1. Private Investment

American private investors in greater numbers are turning to overseas investments in order to obtain higher returns on their invested dollars.¹⁶⁹ Increasingly, such private investments are fueling the development efforts of the world.¹⁷⁰ With the unfettered infusions of private capital for development, large amounts are being provided without regard to the environmental effects of the resulting development. As private investment increasingly becomes globally oriented, the projects created will play a correspondingly

166. The IDB has begun a Women in Development initiative to increase the participation of women in the bank's projects. See IDB ANNUAL REPORT, *supra* note 155, at 27.

167. *Id.*

168. See Penelope Wang, *Finish First: The 50 Best Clean and Green Investments*, MONEY, June 1991, at 130 [hereinafter *Finish First*].

169. See Daniel P. Weiner, *Wall Street's New Darlings*, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, June 10, 1991, at 74; see also *Socially Responsible Investing*, WOMEN'S TIMES, May 1991.

170. See OUR COMMON FUTURE, *supra* note 19, at 85.

larger role in shaping the future of the global environment. Without reforms in private investment, wholesale environmental degradation will continue even if public funding processes are reformed to invest solely in sustainable projects.¹⁷¹ U.S. private foreign investment represents a tremendous opportunity for encouraging business and governments in other nations to adopt non-discriminatory and environmentally sensitive policies and programs. Socially responsible private investment that recognizes the interconnected needs of increased participation of women in governance and environmentally sound management could represent a tremendous amount of "green clout."

2. Private Investment for a Sustainable Future: the Role of Women

Private investment organizations are increasingly recognizing the benefits of green investment and the investing public's preference for projects which are environmentally sound.¹⁷² A number of these organizations are adopting socially responsible investment criteria.¹⁷³ Yet, despite these advances, only the most socially aware managers of investment funds take into account both women and the environment in making their investment policies and criteria.¹⁷⁴

If private investment is really to be "green investment," it must tailor its investment criteria to include and provide opportunities for women. To do so, private investment must: fund smaller scale appropriate technology projects; in the case of government financed projects, fund only those projects which involve indigenous people in the planning and development of the project; in the case of privately funded projects, demonstrate that they will not adversely affect indigenous peoples; and fund only those projects which integrate women into those activities that are at the heart of the project.

An example of an organization doing this is the Women's World Bank. The Women's World Bank facilitates the availability of credit to women in developing countries by providing loan guarantees and improving management skills and technical training, which enables them to undertake entrepreneurial activities.¹⁷⁵ The success of the organization comes from its willingness to discuss the needs of local populations and to mold programs

171. *Id.* at 85-87.

172. *See Finish First, supra* note 168, at 130. Socially responsible investment funds have grown from \$100 billion in assets in 1985 to \$625 billion in 1991. *Id.*

173. *See id.*

174. *See, e.g., CALVERT SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND, CALVERT SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND: INVESTMENT CRITERIA; PORTFOLIO SELECTIONS; TRUSTEES AND ADVISORS, (March 31, 1991.)* at 1-4.

175. *See WOMEN'S WORLD BANKING, WOMEN'S WORLD BANKING 12 (1987) [hereinafter WOMEN'S WORLD BANKING].*

to those needs, not vice-versa. Women's World Bank has demonstrated that opportunities for investors to make money, while also helping to empower women, do exist.¹⁷⁶

3. The Public-Private Dynamic

While private investment, by definition, emanates from nongovernmental or nonpublic institutional sources, these two spheres are not distinctly separate. In reality, private investment decisions are driven to a large degree by the investment choices that public institutions and governments make.¹⁷⁷ For example, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) is a governmental agency which facilitates United States private investment abroad. OPIC does so through two principal programs that: (1) insure overseas investments against certain political risks; and (2) finance such private enterprises through direct loans or loan guarantees.¹⁷⁸ While OPIC does not directly invest abroad, its decisions as to what investments receive protection or financing assistance control private investment, because insured or assisted investments are more attractive to private investors.

Under traditional market formulas, private capital is geared solely to achieving the maximum return on the investment. Still, public institutions that channel private dollars to certain investments should respond to more socially-oriented goals. Governments of developed nations should endeavor to use this public-private investment dynamic to encourage private investment in sustainable projects which incorporate women at a significant level. Institutions can achieve this end by ensuring that before they facilitate an investment, the project satisfies a review of the likelihood of environmental sustainability and of the extent to which women will be integrated in the project.¹⁷⁹

176. Profits in aided women's enterprises have increased by up to 400%, and assets by up to 1100%. *Id.* at 16.

177. While an MDB may provide a project with complete financing, it is equally possible for an MDB to fund a portion of the project cost and leave the remainder to be provided by private sources. See THE WORLD BANK, WORLD BANK ANNUAL REPORT 86 (1990)(discussing World Bank's co-financing programs).

178. See OPIC, OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION: 1990, at 16-17. OPIC financing usually involves medium- to long-term lending, generally ranging from \$2 million to \$25 million, to American investors for use in overseas business ventures. *Id.* at 7. The Environmental Investment Fund is the only OPIC financing program dedicated expressly to the environment. The fund will finance projects in alternative energy, forest management, pollution control, sustainable agriculture and ecotourism. *Id.* at 3. The fund is capitalized with \$100 million dollars in OPIC seed money, a miniscule amount in relation to OPIC's 1990 total investments of \$7 billion in 127 projects. *Id.* at 5.

179. See *id.* at 14-15. OPIC does do environmental assessments of certain projects and reviews certain workers rights issues in approving a project. However, these reviews are inadequate: OPIC prepared environmental assessments for only 73 of its 127 projects in 1990. Additionally, its review of worker's rights does not examine the equality of employment opportunities and employment benefits for women. *Id.*

C. RETHINKING THE PARTICIPATION OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Multinational corporations also affect the development of lesser developed countries through the direct role their operations play in these nations. More businesses have begun to operate abroad and their numbers are likely to increase.¹⁸⁰ These multinational corporations ("MNCs") play a major role through their business practices in shaping the overall development of a country. Given the size of an MNC's operations, they can directly affect large numbers of local individuals who either reside near or are employed by a facility.¹⁸¹ An MNC's policies can influence the practices of other local businesses and the societal norms of the area in which they operate.¹⁸² For sustainable development to occur, it is necessary that these MNCs act responsibly in supporting equal opportunities for women and in protecting the environment.

1. Assuming Responsibility: Voluntary Norms of Conduct for MNCs

Driven by consumer pressure, tougher regulations, "global community" activism, and a new understanding of economics that recognizes the hidden environmental costs of production, an ever-increasing number of companies are recognizing that the international business climate requires them to play a socially responsible role.¹⁸³ In fact, a growing group of MNCs are imposing codes of conduct upon their operations, both at home and abroad, which answer to the corporations' own moral imperatives rather than to external legal requirements.¹⁸⁴

Various United States corporations have previously agreed to bind their

180. See Bernard Wysocki, *Returning to the Third World: Emerging Nations Revive as Investment Hot Spots, But Risks Are Hard to Assess*, WALL ST. J., Sept. 20, 1991, at R1.

181. See, e.g., *Disregarding Environmental Law*, *supra* note 48, at 849.

182. See Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, THE ATLANTIC, Mar. 1992, at 54-55 (discussing the effect of multinational business on local policies).

183. See PATRICK CARSON & JULIA MOULDEN, GREEN IS GOLD: BUSINESS TALKING TO BUSINESS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT REVOLUTION 1-14 (1991); See generally David Kirkpatrick, *Environmentalism: The New Crusade*, FORTUNE, Feb. 12, 1990, at 44-52.

184. See, e.g., *Cosmetics With a Conscience*, NEWSWEEK, Feb. 12, 1990, at 65-66 (discussing the Body Shop). The Body Shop is a half billion dollar cosmetics company, which has remained profitable while abiding by a code of corporate conduct which disallows the use of animal testing and unnatural ingredients and encourages consumers to reuse and recycle their containers. The Body Shop builds factories in areas of high unemployment, and requires all employees to devote two hours per week, at company expense, to social work. *Id.* See also Mark Maremont, *Cosmetics Company With a Conscience*, BUS.WK., May 23, 1988, at 136.

The Canadian and American chemical manufacturing associations recently adopted operating principles to improve the chemical industry's performance regarding health, safety, and environmental protection. Members of the associations are obligated to participate in the initiative. See Alfred S. Farha, *The Corporate Conscience and Environmental Issues: Responsibility of the Multinational Corporation*, 10 NW. J. INT'L L. & BUS. 379, 394-95 (1990).

actions to corporate codes prohibiting forms of discrimination and requiring environmental compliance. The most notable examples of such codes are the Sullivan¹⁸⁵ and Valdez principles.¹⁸⁶ The Valdez principles evolved from the tremendous environmental degradation that resulted from the Exxon Valdez oil spill off the coast of Alaska.¹⁸⁷ The Valdez principles propose a code of environmental conduct to "create a voluntary mechanism of corporate self-governance that will maintain business practices consistent with the goals of sustaining our fragile environment for future generations, within a culture that respects all life and honors its independence."¹⁸⁸ The Valdez principles consist of an outline of specific environmental mandates, such as minimizing wastes and compensating for environmental harms, with which signatory companies agree to comply in their operations.¹⁸⁹

A code of corporate conduct aimed at sustainable development by incorporating women into such development would, in many ways, resemble a combination of the Sullivan and Valdez principles on a global scale. Such a code would embody the anti-discrimination tenets of the Sullivan principles in confluence with the environmental requirements of the Valdez principles. Such a code would help lift the burdens from discrimination and environmental degradation that fall on women, allowing them to spend less time addressing rectification of these harms and more time working toward sustainable development.

Because multinational corporations are playing a major role in development initiatives, requiring MNCs to act in nondiscriminatory and environmentally sound ways would help ensure that a significant percentage of development planning incorporates women and that it is sustainable in nature. Similarly, because MNC policies influence local policies and culture,

185. The Sullivan principles established norms of conduct for corporations doing business in South Africa. In their original form these norms prohibited corporations from discriminating in their employment actions. Daniel H. Pink, *The Valdez Principles: Is What's Good for America Good for General Motors?*, 8 YALE L. & POLICY REV. 180, 181-182 (1990)[hereinafter *The Valdez Principles*]. Over time the principles evolved into a system of norms that required the signatories to take affirmative actions within South Africa to end apartheid. *Id.* At one time over 125 companies subscribed to the Sullivan Principles; today only about 60 do. *Id.* at 185.

186. The Social Investment Forum, Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) Project, Valdez Principles. For a thorough discussion of the Valdez Principles, see *The Valdez Principles*, *supra* note 185.

187. See *The Valdez Principles*, *supra* note 185, at 182.

188. The Social Investment Forum, Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) Project, Valdez Principles Statement of Intent (Sept. 7, 1989), cited in *The Valdez Principles*, *supra* note 185, at 187.

189. *Id.* It is still too early to assess the effectiveness of the Valdez principles. Getting corporations to participate in principles designed to correct corporate conduct may be difficult because participation in the principles tacitly acknowledges that the corporation contributed to the conditions the code seeks to correct. *Valdez Principles*, *supra* note 185, at 190. For a discussion of steps to garner corporate support for the Valdez principles, see *id.* at 193-195.

by setting non-discrimination and environmental sustainability goals for themselves, MNCs will move local policies and cultures toward recognition of these goals.

D. RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

One of the most important tools that has been created to help eradicate discrimination against women is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (the Convention).¹⁹⁰ Nations must move immediately to ratify this convention and make it an operative part of international law.

1. History of the Convention

The Convention was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 18, 1979.¹⁹¹ On July 17, 1980, President Carter signed the Convention on behalf of the United States and transmitted it to the Senate with a recommendation that it be ratified; the Senate, however, has yet to ratify the Convention.¹⁹² Despite the failure of the United States to do so, a sufficient number of countries did ratify the Convention for it to enter into force in 1981.¹⁹³

2. Provisions of the Convention

The Convention provides that the signatories will "condemn discrimination against women in all its forms" and "agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women."¹⁹⁴ The signatories must adopt the principle of equality in their

190. G.A. Res. 34/180, 34 U.N. GAOR, X Sess., Supp. No. 46, at 193, U.N. Doc. A/34/46 (1979)[hereinafter *The Women's Convention*]; see also United Nations, *United Nations Focus: The Quest for Women's Rights*, July, 1991, at 2; MAKING WOMEN MATTER, *supra* note 138, at 101. This paper does not discuss the numerous other conventions and United Nations activities that address the empowerment of women. For an excellent discussion of the avenues for empowering women towards sustainable development in the United Nations, see MAKING WOMEN MATTER, *supra* note 138.

191. *The Women's Convention*, *supra* note 190, at 193; see generally THEODOR MERON, HUMAN RIGHTS LAW-MAKING IN THE UNITED NATIONS 53-82 (1986).

192. Sarah C. Zearfoss, Note, *The Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women: Radical, Reasonable, or Reactionary*, 12 MICH. J INT'L L. 903 (1991). The agreement will not enter into force for the United States until the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, has ratified it or otherwise given official notice of assent to it. RESTATEMENT (THIRD) OF FOREIGN RELATIONS LAW OF THE UNITED STATES § 312 (1990).

193. See MAKING WOMEN MATTER, *supra* note 138, at 123.

194. See *The Women's Convention*, *supra* note 190, at art. 2. The Convention defines discrimination as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the

constitutions, codes, and laws, and ensure its practical realization through the abolition of all existing laws, customs or regulations which discriminate against women.¹⁹⁵

The Convention requires that women be given the rights of citizenship, including: (1) the right to vote in all elections and to be eligible for all elected bodies;¹⁹⁶ (2) the right to participate in international organizations;¹⁹⁷ and (3) the right to acquire, change, or retain nationality.¹⁹⁸ An adequate education is crucial to the exercise of these rights. The Convention provides that women must have equal access to scholarships and grants. Moreover, in light of past efforts to keep school doors closed to women, the Convention also requires that women have equal access to continuing educational efforts, including literacy programs.¹⁹⁹

The Convention addresses inequalities in the work force by requiring that women be allowed equal employment opportunities, including equal access to professions, professional or vocational training, and equivalent remuneration and benefits for comparable work.²⁰⁰ Women must also be able to acquire benefits, loans, and credits, and to participate in sports and recreational activities on a level comparable to men.²⁰¹ The Convention attempts to address the special needs of rural women, with provisions including rights to housing, sanitation, electricity, water, transport, and communications.²⁰² Women are also given equality before the law,²⁰³ which includes broad rights to travel freely and to choose residence and domicile.²⁰⁴

political, social, cultural, civil or any other field." *Id.*

195. *See id.* at art. 2. Articles 3 through 6 give guidance on how these changes are to be made. Article 3 requires the signatories to guarantee basic human rights and fundamental freedoms to women on an equal basis with men. Article 4 discusses temporary measures to achieve equality, including efforts such as education, aimed at eliminating the vestiges of domination by either sex. Article 5 requires measures to modify cultural patterns to eliminate sex roles and stereotypes. Article 6 commits signatories to stop all forms of traffic in women and the exploitation of prostitution. *Id.* at arts. 3-6.

196. *See id.* at art. 7(a). This article would extend eligibility rights to include participation in non-governmental organizations as well.

197. *See id.* at art. 8.

198. *See id.* at art. 9. The Convention provides the same right for children. *Id.*

199. *Id.* at art. 10. In addition, the Convention requires programs to reduce female dropout rates, eliminate discrimination in teaching materials, and provide equal access to physical education, health and family planning courses, and information. *Id.*

200. *See id.* at art. 11. This article also protects equal access to the other benefits associated with employment, i.e., social security, occupational health and safety protection, maternity rights and benefits, and other social services including child care. *Id.*

201. *See id.* at art. 13.

202. *See id.* at art. 14.

203. *See id.* at art. 15. The most important provisions of this article ensure for women an equal capacity to enter into contracts, administer property, and appear before courts or tribunals.

204. *See id.*

Under the Convention, women are given full rights in marriage and family, including the right to: (1) select a spouse and enter a marriage; (2) participate in marital affairs including dissolution of the marriage; (3) retain personal rights, such as to choose a profession or name; and (4) maintain equality with regard to ownership, management, and disposition of marital property.²⁰⁵ The Convention also establishes what may be considered reproductive rights.²⁰⁶ These reproductive rights include the right to: choose the number and spacing of children; receive information regarding family planning options; participate in parentage, i.e., to act as a parent, irrespective of marital status; and act with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children.²⁰⁷ Services relating to family planning are specifically addressed within the Convention's grant of equal access to health care services.²⁰⁸

The Convention establishes the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). CEDAW serves the purpose of monitoring the progress of the signatories in implementing the convention.²⁰⁹ Signatories must issue reports to CEDAW addressing their respective progress toward meeting the Convention's requirements.²¹⁰

By ratifying the Convention, the United States would take a number of important steps toward the empowerment of women. First, ratification would send a clear signal that the United States supports the equality of women throughout the world and is committed to achieving this goal. Second, the ratified treaty would serve as a benchmark for evaluating United States actions abroad. Third, ratification by the United States could provide the impetus for other nations to become signatories, since they would have to abide by the principles of the Convention in their dealings with the United States, whether or not they adopt the Convention. Each of these factors represents a major contribution toward empowering the women of the world and, thus, toward making environmentally sound and sustainable development a reality in the developing world.

Despite its importance, the Convention has been subject to significant criticism. Such criticisms focus on: the ease with which ratifying countries can adopt the Convention with reservations, thereby exempting themselves from certain provisions; the lack of resources devoted to CEDAW; the isolation of the treaty program in Vienna from the mainstream UN Human Rights program in Geneva; and the absence of a mechanism for receiving

205. *See id.* at art. 16. The article also requires signatory countries to establish a minimum age of marital capacity, and declares void any marriage of an individual not of the nationally established age.

206. *See id.*

207. *See id.*

208. *See id.* at art. 12.

209. *See id.* at arts. 17-22.

210. *See id.* at art. 18.

individual complaints against countries that have ratified the Convention.²¹¹

E. PROVIDING MEANINGFUL FAMILY PLANNING ASSISTANCE

Current rates of unchecked population growth are among greatest obstacles to the realization of sustainable development.²¹² As the world's population increases, so does the demand for resources to meet the needs and aspirations of the growing number of people.²¹³ Yet, the earth's resources are finite. These facts inevitably lead to increasing environmental degradation.²¹⁴ Because of the rising pressure of population, family planning is among the most important services needed by women in developing areas for improvement of the conditions of their existence.²¹⁵ Adequate family planning relieves population stresses on vital and diminishing resources. In order for developing countries to provide adequate family planning, assistance in the form of funding and technical support is necessary.²¹⁶ Despite this need, family planning aid to developing countries since the 1980s has been inadequate, and has been used as a political tool rather than as a means for effective assistance.

1. The Effect of American Abortion Political Squabbles on Sustainable Development

The United Nations Population Fund ("UNPF") provides family planning services in more than 140 countries around the world, and is one of the largest providers of such services to developing countries.²¹⁷ The United

211. See Theodor Meron, *Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Prohibition of Discrimination Against Women*, 84 AMER. J. INT'L L. 213-217 (1990); See also, Belinda Clark, *The Vienna Convention Reservations Regime and the Convention on Discrimination Against Women*, 85 AMER. J. INT'L L. 281 (1991).

212. See LESTER R. BROWN ET. AL., *STATE OF THE WORLD 1991* 17-18 (1991)(discussing threat to the environment from population growth); *OUR COMMON FUTURE*, *supra* note 19, at 95-116.

213. See *WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT*, *supra* note 8, at 38.

214. See *id.*

215. See *Report on the Status of Women*, *supra* note 5, at 28. The Commission on the Status of Women noted:

A woman's ability to control her own fertility continues to be a major factor enabling her to protect her health, achieve her personal objectives and ensure the strength of her family. All women should be in a position to plan and organize their lives.

Id. See also JODI L. JACOBSON, *WORLD WATCH PAPER 102: WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: THE SILENT EMERGENCY* (1991)[hereinafter *WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH*](discussing the need for effective family planning, especially within the less developed countries).

216. See *WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH*, *supra* note 215, at 51-57.

217. See *Population vs. the Environment*, *GREAT DECISIONS 1991* (Foreign Policy Association, New York, N.Y.) at 71 (1991) (The United Nations Population Fund is the world's largest intergovernment family planning organization).

States had been a leading contributor to UNPF. However, in 1987, it withdrew from the UNPF in reaction to charges that the People's Republic of China, a UNPF aid recipient nation, engaged in coercive family planning practices to enforce its one-child-per-family rule.²¹⁸ Despite the threat population growth poses to sustainable development,²¹⁹ efforts to re-fund the UNPF have fallen prey to abortion politics.²²⁰

The Mexico City Policy is another result of the American political war on abortion.²²¹ First announced by the Reagan administration in 1984, the Policy denies United States family planning funds to foreign non-governmental organizations that use non-United States funds for abortion services, counseling, or referral.²²² Despite this ban on funding, nongovernmental organizations continue to be major providers of family planning services to developing countries.²²³ Two of the most instrumental organizations are the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the world's largest provider of voluntary family planning services, and Planned Parenthood of America's international division, which assists over 1.4 million individuals in Third World countries in obtaining family planning services.²²⁴ Despite numerous efforts to overturn the Mexico City Policy in both the courts and the legislature, the Policy remains in effect, hampering efforts to bring adequate family planning to those women who need it most.²²⁵

American efforts to restrict the availability of abortion in developing nations have had the ironic effect of increasing abortions. As more and more women in developing nations are denied access to family planning services, they are forced to turn to abortions as an alternative method of limiting

218. *Id.* China's alleged practices included female infanticide and forced abortions. These charges were never substantiated. *Id.* at 72.

219. See *WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT*, *supra* note 8, at 38.

220. Recently the House of Representatives voted 234 to 188 to give \$20 million in aid to UNPF. *House Backs Foreign Aid*, WASH. POST, June 13, 1991, at A22. President Bush vowed to veto this bill if the UNPF funding remains. *Id.*

221. See *PLANNED PARENTHOOD, THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S MEXICO CITY POLICY 1-2* (Apr. 1989) [hereinafter *MEXICO CITY POLICY*]; *PLANNED PARENTHOOD, INTERNATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING ISSUES AND THE 101ST CONGRESS 1* (May 1989) [hereinafter *INTERNATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING ISSUES*]. For a thorough discussion of the effect of the abortion controversy on the environment see *UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND, THE STATE OF THE WORLD POPULATION 1991*, at 113-131.

222. See *MEXICO CITY POLICY*, *supra* note 221, at 1; *INTERNATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING ISSUES*, *supra* note 221, at 1. The Mexico City Policy does not affect American aid through U.S. A.I.D. to governments that use their own funds for abortion services. *Id.*

223. See *STATE OF THE WORLD POPULATION 1991*, *supra* note 221, at 20-21.

224. See *MEXICO CITY POLICY*, *supra* note 221, at 1.

225. See *id.* at 1-2.

family growth.²²⁶ As a result, women suffer from their own efforts to minimize population expansion.²²⁷ Even so, population growth rates continue to increase.²²⁸

While economically empowering women can reduce the pressures on them to have large numbers of children, empowerment is not a substitute for meaningful family planning.²²⁹ Unchecked population growth threatens resource sustainability by requiring the increasing numbers of people to seek sustenance from the limited supply of natural resources.²³⁰

2. Changing Family Planning Aid

International family planning aid policies should not be held captive by the United States' debate on the morality of various methods of family planning. By refusing to recognize the threats of unchecked population growth upon sustainable development, the American government is taking enormous risks with the global future. Given the effects that fertility rates have on women and the environment, the United States must take immediate measures to restore funding to UNPF, to revoke the Mexico City Policy, and to resume aid to nongovernmental organizations providing vital family planning services abroad. In addition, the United States must recognize that its withdrawal from the international family planning community has left a serious gap in this community. To fill this gap, this country should take additional measures to re-establish its leadership in the family planning community to combat the "benign neglect" of a decade of family planning isolationism.

226. WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE, STATE OF THE WORLD 1991, 17 (1991) [hereinafter STATE OF THE WORLD 1991].

227. See STATE OF THE WORLD 1991, *supra* 226, at 17. Each year approximately 200,000 women lose their lives while attempting to obtain illegal abortions; the vast majority of these deaths occur in the least developed areas of the world. Most of these deaths are attributable to illegal abortions being performed by unskilled attendants under unsanitary conditions with outmoded instruments. For each death, an additional 30-40 women suffer serious long-term health effects from illegal abortion attempts including hemorrhaging, infection, intestinal or abdominal perforations, kidney failure, and permanent infertility. *Id.*

228. *Id.* at 16-17. World population was increasing at a rate of 1.9 percent in 1970, slowed gradually in the early 1980s to 1.7 percent, but accelerated to 1.8 percent during the late 1980s. *Id.* However, a recent study has found that population growth rates have dropped in the developing nations. See Dan Oberdorfer, *Fertility Rates in Developing World Drop Sharply*, WASH. POST, Aug. 6, 1991, at A7. This drop in birth rates is attributed to gains made in the education of women and increases in the availability of birth control and family planning information. *Id.* Because of the large numbers of women of childbearing age, even at these diminished rates, the number of people on the Earth will double within roughly thirty years. *Id.*

229. See James McGregor, *A Dash of Capitalism Just Might Help China Control its Population*, WALL ST. J., Jan. 2, 1992, at A1.

230. See OUR COMMON FUTURE, *supra* note 19, at 96-98.

F. THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: FACILITATING
CHANGES TO EMPOWER SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Nongovernmental organizations ("NGOs") play an important role in shaping the path of development in developing countries. The services NGOs provide augment those obtained through governments and international institutions. Often, NGOs are the first to identify and address concerns that governments and international institutions are either unaware of, or are unable to address for economic or political reasons.²³¹ The expert nature of their services makes NGOs an important means for accelerating the process of empowering women to participate in development decisions.

1. The Traditional Role of NGOs

NGOs form a vital link between affected populations and the institutional frameworks of development.²³² NGOs also serve as intermediaries between local communities and governmental entities, thereby facilitating participation of local citizens in the formulation of policies affecting their communities.²³³ In the past, governments and development institutions have viewed NGOs as adversaries, but now NGOs are increasingly being viewed as partners in the effort to achieve sustainable development.²³⁴

NGOs have fostered significant links to the local communities and have developed extensive technical expertise.²³⁵ While NGOs' efforts to open dialogues with governments and institutions have, in certain limited circumstances, compromised their objectivity, NGOs continue to fulfill an important role as watchdogs, ensuring that development initiatives do not compromise the environment or human rights.²³⁶ Because NGOs serve as grass roots organizers, watchdogs, and providers of services, NGOs must be involved in the identification, planning, implementation, monitoring, and

231. Over half the complaints of violations of European Community environmental standards have been initiated by citizen complaints. Peter Sand, *LESSONS LEARNED IN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE* 31-33 (1990)(discussing roles NGOs play in supplementing the work of governments in environmental protection) [hereinafter *LESSONS LEARNED*]; Elizabeth Barrat-Brown, *Building a Monitoring and Compliance Regime Under the Montreal Protocol*, 16 *YALE J. INT'L L.* 519, 544-68 (1991)(discussing the role of NGOs). NGOs play a significant role because they "often have close ties to indigenous populations and access to information lacking to larger, more bureaucratic organizations." *GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK*, *supra* note 8, at 59.

232. *See, e.g.*, *STRATEGIES FOR INTERACTION*, *supra* note 160, at 4-5.

233. *Id.*

234. IDB's efforts at increasing cooperation between itself and NGOs illustrates the trend toward more cooperative relationships between NGOs and development institutions. *See id.* at 7.

235. *See id.* at 8; *GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK*, *supra* note 8, at 59.

236. *See generally* *LESSONS LEARNED*, *supra* note 231, at 31-33; *but see* Mark Dowie, *American Environmentalism: A Movement Courting Irrelevance*, 9 *WORLD POL'Y J.* 67, 68, 84 (1992) (Efforts by national American environmental groups have compromised their ability to protect the environment, acknowledging successes of grass roots groups).

review of projects. Incorporating NGOs as grass roots organizers ensures that the needs of local people are heard in developing and carrying out projects.²³⁷ Incorporating NGOs as watchdogs ensures that projects actually meet the needs of local populations.²³⁸ Incorporating NGOs as providers allows for greater coordination between international organizations, governments, and NGOs, avoids unnecessary duplication of efforts, and ensures that the greatest number of needs are met.

2. Expanding the Role of NGOs to Accomplish the Empowerment of Women

While NGOs play a major role in empowering people, especially women, and in helping our societies to achieve sustainable development, NGOs have perfected neither of these functions. NGOs within the United States and abroad must seek to expand the role of women within their organizations at all levels and positions.²³⁹ NGOs need to refocus their efforts to provide programs aimed specifically at empowering women, both politically, by providing them with a power base, and physically, by providing them with adequate living environments capable of supporting sustainable development.

The efficacy of environmental NGOs would increase by recognizing and strengthening the links between their efforts and those of the expanding circle of women's organizations.²⁴⁰ Environmental and women's groups must cultivate the synergistic effect that cooperative efforts between the two movements can have. Together, these groups can play a far greater role in crafting the development policies of developing nations.

An example of the synergy available in joining complementary social movements can be seen in the combined efforts of the labor and environmental movements to ensure that a North American Free Trade Agreement does not jeopardize either American jobs or the environment. While both the labor and environmental movements could have undertaken these efforts separately, by joining into a coalition, their efforts to affect the free trade negotiations have been more successful than their individual efforts would have been.²⁴¹ Similar synergies could be expected from joint efforts on the part of environmental groups and women's groups to bring about an

237. See GLOBAL ECOLOGY HANDBOOK, *supra* note 8, at 59.

238. See LESSONS LEARNED, *supra* note 231, at 31-33.

239. See *Report on the Status of Women*, *supra* note 5, at 25.

240. For a discussion of the growth of women's NGOs, see IRENE DANKELMAN & JOAN DAVIDSON, ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE 140-147 (1988).

241. See Bruce Stokes, *Greens Talk Trade*, NAT'L J., Apr. 13, 1991, at 862-866. At the time of this writing the North American Free Trade Agreement has not been finalized, so the ultimate efficacy of the joint labor and environment efforts cannot be determined.

increased participation of women in moving toward sustainable development.

NGOs from both the women's movement and the environmental movement can provide a wealth of services to aid in empowering women toward sustainable development, including: (1) providing education in fields such as literacy, family planning, engineering, and law, thus empowering women through knowledge;²⁴² (2) using expertise in dealing with governments, MDBs, institutions, and the business community to facilitate access to capital and appropriate technologies, thereby enabling women to move from the informal economy to the formal economy;²⁴³ (3) providing technical assistance to help remedy past environmental degradation and to ensure that future development follows a sustainable path;²⁴⁴ (4) representing women and women's groups when their rights are threatened;²⁴⁵ (5) representing and advising women and women's groups at negotiations, conferences, and other situations which may affect them and their rights; (6) serving as intermediary institutions to ensure that capital is made available for small scale projects integrating women into the formal economy in a sustainable way; and (7) providing a network for women and environmentalists throughout the world to expedite the transfer of accumulated knowledge among women's groups and their environmental counterparts.²⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

It is now widely recognized that to preserve our existence on this planet we must rapidly adopt sustainable development as the standard for all of our development actions. Fortunately, for literally thousands of years, the women of most societies have been practicing sustainable development through their traditional methods of providing for their families. Unfortunately, our organized development initiatives have paid little heed to these

242. See, e.g. OEF, GLOBAL CONNECTIONS, 1987 ANNUAL REPORT 4 (undated)(OEF Int'l, Wash. D.C.)[hereinafter GLOBAL CONNECTIONS]. OEF was an NGO which conducted educational campaigns designed to address the problems of women in developing countries by enabling them to participate in the political process. *Id.* Unfortunately, a shortage of funds recently forced OEF to close its doors.

243. See, e.g., WOMEN'S WORLD BANKING, *supra* note 175, at 12.

244. See, e.g., GLOBAL CONNECTIONS, *supra* note 242, at 7. OEF provided technical assistance to women in Somalia as part of a reforestation and natural resources management program. As a result of this program, over 7,000 people received training in skills such as data collection, nursery management, and horticulture. Over 300,000 trees were planted by the project in four communities' nurseries. These nurseries provide the basis for enterprises that sustainably produce and market fuel wood, honey, and vegetables. *Id.*

245. See generally OEF, WOMEN LAW & DEVELOPMENT (undated) (OEF Int'l, Wash., D.C.). OEF's Women Law & Development program recognized that economic empowerment in development activities is dependent upon the legal empowerment of women and sought to remove the legal threats to women's rights. *Id.*

246. See e.g., GLOBAL CONNECTIONS, *supra* note 242, at 6.

women, and often stand in the way of their efforts to employ their sustainable development practices in an organized large-scale manner. If we are to realize sustainable development, organized development policies must embrace the contributions these women have to offer.

In order for our societies to achieve sustainable development, we must listen to and incorporate the voices of experience emanating from the female half of the world's population. We must remove the legal and social impediments—such as the lack of educational and economic opportunities and adequate family planning information and services—that presently stand in the way of women's attempts to implement sustainable development practices. We must bring women into the mainstream development process so that their environmental voice can be heard and reflected in the transformation of organized development projects. Moreover, we must facilitate the informal and sustainable economic activities of women around the world and bring these activities from the margins into the mainstream.

Sustainable development is, in essence, a harmony struck between the needs of this generation and the needs of future generations. As in music, if the balance between treble and bass—in this case, development and environmental preservation—is skewed because one voice is muted, a harmony cannot be reached. By bringing the environmental voice of women into development decision-making, we can begin to change our development programs so that they meet the needs of all the members of this generation without compromising the environment for future generations.