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# Participatory Evaluation Among Rural Women: Charting the Birth of Articulation and Power

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**PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION  
AMONG RURAL WOMEN:  
Charting the Birth  
of Articulation and Power**



*photo by Stephanie Martin*

**by Jane T. Benbow**

*Cover photo by Stephanie Martin*

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# **ROSE HALL THEME SONG\***

**The time has come when we must share  
To assist in every way,  
So let us join in unity  
To build up our community.  
Oh what a village this will be  
With benefits for you and me,  
If time and talents we will give  
To build up our community!**

**\* This song, written by the Rose Hall Working Group,  
is sung at the beginning of every meeting to the tune of  
"O Tannenbaum."**



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# FOREWORD

This story describes an impact evaluation of a pilot project for the integration of women in rural development in the community of Rose Hall, St. Vincent, West Indies. The project was originally funded by the Ford Foundation through the auspices of the Women and Development Unit (WAND) at the School of Continuing Studies, University of the West Indies in Barbados. The purpose of the evaluation was:

- (1) to appraise and document the validity of the program's perceived success; and,
- (2) to determine what might account for that success in light of the many WID (Women in Development) programs which have either failed or resulted in limited changes in the lives of the women they were intended to benefit.

The original intention of the project was to focus on income generation as a means of empowering women by providing them more control over monetary resources and integrating them into the economic life of the community. In this case, however, the goal soon came into conflict with the implementing agency's commitment to participatory methodologies. As a result WAND, with the full support of the funding agency, allowed the women of Rose Hall to choose their own path to development. This resulted in a

number of highly successful activities including an adult education program, a pre-school, and the building of a community center. Only recently did the project venture into its first commercially oriented income-generating activity, a community bakery

The evaluation concludes that Rose Hall is much more than a project that succeeded in integrating women into development. Rose Hall is a community where women *do* development by providing the leadership and vision for the community's development efforts. This outcome has important theoretical and practical implications that are addressed in this article.

Benefits derived from the project's activities, such as significant impacts on empowerment, positive changes in the status of women, and improvement in the community's quality of life, are also presented here.





*photo by Stephanie Martin*

Gladys "Tita" Ferdinand

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

In 1980 the Ford Foundation funded the Women and Development Unit (WAND) of the University of the West Indies to initiate a pilot project on the integration of women into rural development. After an initial investigation the communities of Rose Hall and Dickson on the island of St. Vincent were chosen as pilot sites. The goals of the project were to:

- a) encourage maximum participation by the community in the implementation of the project;
- b) influence the women's economic contributions to the development of the community; and,
- c) develop a model that could be used by other governmental and non-governmental agencies interested in Women and Development projects.

The Dickson community encountered many difficulties and never really got off the ground. In the village of Rose Hall, however, the project was not only successful throughout the four year funding period but has sustained itself for over ten years. It is considered a model project by many in the field of Women and Development.

Because of its longevity, Rose Hall offers a unique

opportunity to assess the concrete and meaningful impacts of a WID project. It also offers an opportunity to assess how, and in what ways, the project might offer insights to other Women and Development efforts. For these reasons the Director of WAND, Peggy Antrobus, decided to conduct an external impact evaluation. She was specifically interested in:

- a) any significant impacts the project had on rural development, the roles women played in that development, and the benefits they received from the process; and,
- b) whether the project might serve as a model for similar efforts in other communities, and if so, how and under what conditions?

This focus was used to guide the evaluation process, and to develop the terms of reference with the evaluators.

## **Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation was multi-dimensional. In addition to the general focus provided by WAND, the evaluators were committed to avoiding their own biases about what a successful WID program should look like. Rather, the purpose was to respect the definitions of success put forth by the community as well as the implementing agency. This was important for two reasons. First, from its inception the project had been based on participation and self-

reliance. These values were integral to the interventions employed by WAND as were the decision-making methodologies used by the women leaders of Rose Hall. Secondly, and as important, we wanted to consider the perspectives of women in the assessment of a WID project.

## **Research Design and Methodology**

The research was conducted in two phases. The first phase established the criteria (outcomes and impacts) by which the project's success would be measured. The second phase consisted of a qualitative evaluation of the project's outcomes and impacts.

Criteria for the evaluation of the Rose Hall Project were established from three sources:

- 1) An analysis of the goals and intentions of the original funding agency, the Ford Foundation, and WAND, the agency that implemented the "development interventions." This was done through a review of project documents, and interviews with WAND staff and the original Project Coordinator, Patricia Ellis.
- 2) An analysis of the criteria that the Rose Hall community felt should be used as indicators of success. This was done through interviews and small group discussions with community members in which they were asked: How do you know this project has been a success? What would you like to see this evaluation document regarding your



themselves and had overcome their fear of publicly sharing their feelings, opinions, and ideas. These stories often started with the phrase "I used to be shy" Another example are the terms "solidarity" and "inclusiveness" to replace descriptions by Rose Hall residents such as "people are more together" and "everybody pitches in; we all help the other one."

The Rose Hall project was assessed in terms of empowerment, improvement in the status of women, and improvement in the quality of life. Indicators of these impacts are outlined in the chart on the next page.

The evaluation was qualitative and naturalistic in design. The primary sources of data were interviews, small group discussions and participant observation. While the evaluators were specifically looking for data related to the taxonomy, they were also concerned with collecting information about the project's history as well as the monetary and methodological interventions used by external agencies. They also wanted to gather data in a way that would allow patterns or themes not previously targeted to emerge.

The interviewing process was open-ended and unstructured and varied with each individual. People were not asked directly if they saw evidence of a given impact or indicator. When interviewing someone outside the Working Group the interview started with a question such as, "Do you know about the Rose Hall Working Group?" This would be followed by, "What do you think of them and the work they do? Has the community benefited from their work? If so, in what

**IMPACT Empowerment**

*Categories: Individual and Collective*

Indicators:

- Voice
- Self-Esteem, Acquisition of New Skills,  
Awareness of Competencies
- Sense of Pride in Accomplishments,  
Community, & Culture
- Ability to Meet Challenges & Solve Problems  
on A Daily Basis
- Ability to Deal with Authority, Ability to Control  
Planning & Decision-Making Processes
- Participation, Solidarity, Inclusiveness,  
Creating & Using One's Own Knowledge
- Awareness of the Future, Ability to Think and  
Plan for the Future
- Knowledge About and Access to Resources

**IMPACT Improvement in the Status of Women**

*Categories: Roles and Relationships*

Indicators:

- Diversity in the Roles Women Play
- Recognition and Respect
- Positive Changes in Relationships

**IMPACT Improvement in the Community's Quality of Life**

*Categories: Health, Education, Income, Distribution  
of Benefits*

Indicators:

- Improved Nutrition, Education and Home Life
- Income Savings
- More Love

community benefited from their work? If so, in what way? Have you personally benefitted? In what way? How do the men in the community feel about the Working Group?" With members of the Working Group the interview would start with a question such as, "Tell me about your experience with the Working Group," and proceed from their response.

The data collection also included participant verification or "member checking" (Lincoln and Guba). The evaluation team gave a verbal report of their preliminary conclusions and asked the community to react by elaborating on their agreements and disagreements.

Several other interactive modes of data collection were developed, but a number of constraints, most importantly timing, made them impossible to use. The external impact evaluation was conducted simultaneously with the Working Group's internal evaluations. This meant that both the community and the Working Group were spending most of their scarce free time on an evaluation process that seemed much more pertinent to their immediate needs than did this one. Observations of these evaluation sessions yielded more detailed information about the Working Group's activities than might otherwise have been available in light of the fact that the Working Group kept few process or statistical records.

Two women made up the evaluation team, a white North American and a black Caribbean living in the United States. The evaluators spent a total of ten days in the Rose Hall community; three days during the first

visit and seven days at a later date collecting the evaluation data. In addition, three days were spent in Kingstown interviewing government and NGO officials who had been involved with the project or had knowledge of it. During both visits evaluators spent time with the WAND staff and the original project coordinator. The data from interviews, observations and written reports was later analyzed for themes, patterns and other evidence pertinent to the following:

- 1) a reconstruction of the project's history in terms of project inputs and outputs;
- 2) an assessment of the project outcomes and impacts;
- 3) a theoretical analysis of the project's implications for other women and development efforts; and,
- 4) an analysis of the project's sustainability through an assessment of its major strengths and vulnerabilities.

Data from this evaluation is almost entirely qualitative and narrative in nature. The Working Group did not keep records which focus on numbers and quantities.

The validity of the conclusions reached about the project are based on two criteria: the researcher's conscientious and systematic analysis of the data, and the fact that the people of Rose Hall believe that the improvements and changes in their lives identified in this report are directly related to the project.



photo by Stephanie Martin

Dafflyn Ashton

## **CHAPTER 2**

# **RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PROJECT'S HISTORY**

### **Description of the Community**

Rose Hall is a small rural village on the Caribbean island of St. Vincent. The village is built into the side of a mountain and is surrounded by farm land that provides a living for most of its residences. Rose Hall is scenic and picturesque. In one direction you can see the active volcano, La Soufriere, in the other direction the Caribbean Sea. The people of Rose Hall are known and respected for their independence, hard work and perseverance. Because of their isolated, mountainous location they are mistakenly considered backward by much of the rest of the island.

Unlike the rest of the island which produces primarily bananas, Rose Hall's primary agricultural products are vegetables. Carrots are the major income-producing vegetable. They are grown for local consumption and export. A variety of vegetables, tubers (such as yams, eddoes, and tannia), and ginger are produced for local consumption. Like the rest of the island, yearly incomes are subject to fluctuations in the international market and surplus, and to spoilage problems caused by inadequate transportation and storage.

Kingstown is the island's center of commerce and

government. Rose Hall, 23 miles away from Kingstown, is somewhat isolated. The only road is rough, winding, in disrepair, and, by the time it reaches Rose Hall, is 1,232 feet above sea level. The trip can easily take two hours, depending on the traffic and the number of stops the lorry driver must make. Vans leave in the early morning and return around mid-day. Usually a trip to the capital requires two days away from the fields.

The population of Rose Hall is around 1,500 people. Approximately half are under the age of 30. The size of the average family is six persons. "Families are of the nuclear, single person and extended types. About one-third of all families are single parent types with the majority being female-headed households" (Ellis, August 1983).

In the late 1950s most of the thatch roofed houses were converted to block or wood structures. In 1960 a government primary school was built in Rose Hall. The town now has a police station, health clinic, post office and a Red Cross day nursery. Villagers have access to running water and electricity, but it is still common for toilet facilities to be outside the home. Radios, TVs and even VCRs are common. Currently, the landscape is dotted with the construction of new homes and the enlargement of old ones.

Most women either farm, engage in petty marketing activities, or both. Professional women – a school teacher, a school principal, a social worker and a few others – are the exception. Some women own their own land, but most either work their

husband/partner's land without monetary compensation, or hire out to other farms at minimal wages (Ellis, August 1983).

## **Major Inputs and Outcomes**

The major inputs provided by WAND were the sponsorship of workshops and consultations. The workshops covered issues of self esteem and self development, leadership and community organizing, participatory planning, evaluations and research, as well as skill building related to specific project activities. The Project Coordinator helped the Working Group analyze and solve problems, develop effective action plans, and systematically reflect on and assess their progress. Several other organizations in addition to the Ford Foundation provided important monetary inputs.

### **Getting Started**

In January, 1981, Pat Ellis, WAND staff member and Project Coordinator of the Ford Foundation grant, visited Rose Hall. She toured the village, visited the surrounding farms, and learned who the women leaders from the village were. After a number of such visits, the idea of a Women and Development project was proposed to a group of twelve women.

They discussed it among themselves and decided to put the idea to representatives of the seven groups



which existed in the community. This was done at a meeting and out of this meeting was born the Rose Hall Committee for Women and Development. This Committee was given responsibility for coordinating project activities in the community. They chose as community facilitator, a 33 year old female farmer who [was to be] responsible for the overall coordination, planning, implementation and evaluation of all project activities (Ellis, August 1983).

The young woman was paid a small stipend, through WAND, to facilitate the Committee's work. The original group soon expanded to a membership of approximately thirty. Most of the members were women, but a growing number were men. They represented all segments of the community: housewives, farmers, school teachers and unemployed youth. Some represented other community organizations, others simply wanted to contribute to the development of their community. The name of the group was changed to the Rose Hall Working Group (RHWG).

## **Project Development**

### **Phase One (1981-1984): Education, Training, Participation, Research**

WAND's first intervention, a three week, community-based training workshop entitled

"Participatory Approaches to Community Needs Assessment, Programme Planning and Evaluation", held in March, 1981. Participants included members of the Working Group, other community residents, and a number of government and non- governmental officials.

The workshop focused on needs assessment, planning and evaluation as well as:

personal development and interpersonal relationships in which individuals look[ed] critically at themselves, their strengths and weaknesses, their roles as women and men, and how they relate to others in the family and in the community (Ellis, August 1983).

An experiential model was employed and techniques such as role-play, drawing, story-telling, and small and large group discussions provided the channels for learning.

The collective knowledge, experience and skills of participants served as the basis for analyzing, reflecting upon and evaluating their own personal situation and that of their community (Ellis, August 1983).

After the workshop, the Project Coordinator initiated monthly consultation visits to the community. The visits would last from a few days to a week, depending on what was going on in the community and

the kind of help the Working Group needed. As a result of the workshop and consultation with the Coordinator, the Working Group decided on two initial projects, a Farmers Group and a Sewing Project.

The Working Group saw the Farmers Group as a way to address some of their marketing problems, such as inadequate outlets and surplus produce. The Sewing Project would enable them to gain new skills and reduce the expense of traveling to Kingstown to buy ready-made school uniforms for their children, which some families could not afford.

The Sewing Project was very successful. The group acquired sewing machines, purchased material, and trained two members of the community as seamstresses. Many women learned basic sewing skills and every school child in the village received a new school uniform that year for less than what their parents would otherwise have paid. The Sewing Project also made uniforms for Guides and Scouts, and football shorts for the village football team. The Working Group did not earn a profit from the Sewing Project but they were able to repay all of the start-up costs.

The Farmers Group, however, had difficulty getting started. All agreed that there was a need for the organization, but few were willing to assume the leadership roles necessary for the group to function. The Working Group analyzed this dilemma and realized that individuals were unwilling to participate because they lacked the basic literacy and numeracy skills needed to carry out the tasks and responsibilities

required of them. They decided that an adult education program was needed in the community

Before acting on this decision the Working Group, with the help of the Project Coordinator, organized a community workshop which focused on Research and Community Decision-Making Skills. At this workshop the Working Group developed a research plan which they use to this day

The first step of the adult education program was a community survey. The Working Group surveyed approximately 900 community members to determine if Adult Education classes would benefit the community, and if so, what kinds of classes they would like to see offered. Next they called a community meeting to discuss the survey results. At the meeting it was agreed that the community would pursue Adult Education classes in basic literacy and numeracy, record keeping, and home improvement. In October, 1982, the Working Group began their first Adult Education classes.

Another important workshop took place in July, 1982. This workshop addressed the Role of Men in Development (MID) and was organized in response to significant resistance that some men had developed to the Working Group's leadership. They feared that "women wanted to be on top of men". The workshop focused on: a) raising the awareness of the men to the significance of the development process taking place in Rose Hall, b) helping them examine and understand the process, and c) helping them see themselves in relation to that process (Ellis and Egbert, July 1983).

During this period, several other projects – a pre-school, a community center and a bakery, were initiated. The decision to undertake each project involved research to determine if the community felt the project was needed and if they would participate. This was followed with additional research about cost, feasibility, and available resources. For each new project the Working Group appointed one of its members as the committee chair for the activity. That individual took primary responsibility for the program, but worked with a committee composed of Working Group members and other interested citizens to carry out the planning and implementation. If problems arose, the Working Group would call a community meeting and enlist the aid of the entire community in finding effective solutions.

The Rose Hall project was off to a running start and the first three years were a busy time. During that time the Working Group:

- Was granted a scholarship from Can Save to send a young woman from the community to a six month course in Early Childhood Education, secured funding from USAID to buy pre-school equipment, and after some initial difficulty, secured a place for the pre-school which was opened in February, 1983
- Secured from the St. Vincent government the promise of free stones from a nearby quarry and skilled labor to build a community center. The residents of Rose Hall would provide unskilled labor, including

removal of the stones from the quarry, and materials.

- Attempted to open a bakery but was forced to abandon the activity due to a number of obstacles.
- Organized workshops on the following topics: small business management, appropriate technology, program planning, problem solving, leadership skills, teaching literacy to adults and the meaning of education in development.
- Sent a number of individuals, in addition to the first pre-school teacher, to formal training programs in early childhood development, proposal writing, and social work training.
- Implemented fundraising activities such as sponsored walks, caroling, community fairs, etc. The proceeds from these activities supported small projects such as assisting disabled persons in the community and buying food for poor families at Christmas.
- Initiated the first of a series of internal evaluations to assess the effectiveness of the project's activities and to inform their continuing planning efforts.

**Phase Two (1984-1989): Consolidating Activities, Developing Leadership and Management Skills, Sharing with Others**

In 1984, Ford Foundation funding for the project

ended and Pat Ellis left WAND's staff, although she continues to provide occasional workshops and consultations on a volunteer basis. Another WAND staff member stepped in to serve as the liaison between the Working Group and external organizations. Most of her efforts were in response to specific needs identified by the group, assisting them to contact resources and opportunities outside of St. Vincent. On occasion she facilitated training as requested by the Working Group.

The Working Group continued to conduct regular internal project evaluations and to conduct research which included community surveys on potential development projects. The RHWG continued to operate both the Pre-School Program and the Adult Education classes primarily through volunteer efforts. In addition they established a Chemical Shop, which provided farm supplies, and a Food Preservation Project which provided supplies and training for individuals to preserve their harvest for personal consumption throughout the year.

During this time the RHWG began working with a number of other communities, both on St. Vincent and neighboring islands, to assist those communities organization implement their own local development efforts. Several women leaders traveled widely outside the Caribbean. Among the countries they visited were Mali, Kenya, India, Tanzania, Holland, England, Canada, and the United States.

### **Phase Three (Since 1990): Reassessment and Moving Forward**

In 1990 the Working Group opened a bakery which has been operating successfully since then. They recently they turned their energies to strengthening and preserving the cultural and social life of the community

In November 1991, ten years after the original project was initiated, the Rose Hall community celebrated the opening of the Rose Hall community building, the largest community building on the leeward side of the island.

After months of preparation that involved talking with older citizens throughout the leeward side of the island "to determine just how such a thing was done," Rose Hall held an old-time Tea Party in the new community building. The party involved performancess of dance, song and story telling from the past and present.

In 1993 the Group also organized a camping trip to Barbados open to all community members. They convinced the local airline, LIAT, to give them a special group fare, they packed their own food and spent a week camping together. For many this was the first time they had left St. Vincent. Other activities, beach parties, sports activities, and a number of educational tours to other agricultural and historic sites have also been organized.

The Working Group has sustained all of the projects mentioned above, with the exception of the



sewing project, and continues to send women leaders to work with community groups throughout the island.

In February 1992, members of the Working Group, as part of their tenth anniversary, launched an intensive internal evaluation to assess the project's accomplishments, reflect on organizational strengths and weakness, and plan for its continued operation. As a result they decided to upgrade the record keeping and management procedures for all project activities. They also initiated discussion of a Library Project and a Parent Education Program focusing on the nutritional needs of children.

## **Monetary Inputs, Equipment, In-Kind Contributions**

In addition to educational and training workshops and consultations, the project has received a number of monetary and in-kind contributions.

### Salaries, Organizational and Administrative Support:

The Ford Foundation	\$88,000
<i>Funds covered the Program Coordinator's salary plus a stipend for the community facilitator. The original three-year grant was extended for a fourth year, primarily because a significant portion of the funds were slated for an income generation project which did not materialize until late in the project's history.</i>	

### Monetary Inputs, Equipment & In-Kind Contributions

Organization	Amount
Ford Foundation	\$88,000
Carnegie Corporation of New York	\$7,418
Vinsave	\$238
Community Colleges of Canada	\$613
UNICEF	\$2,000
Canadian Internatl. Development Agency	\$24,455
UNIFEM & OXFAM U.K.	\$7,500

### Formal Training Programs:

Assc. of Community Colleges of Canada	\$613
---------------------------------------	-------

*Workshop in Grenada & study tour of Canada on women and non-traditional skills.*

UNICEF \$2,000

*These funds provided social work training at the University of West Indies.*

Grants:

CIDA \$24,455

*This contribution from the Canadian International Development Agency financed the Food Preservation Project.*

UNIFEM & OXFAM U.K. \$7,500

*This funded WAND's contribution to the project (1985-1989), including travel expenses for advisory services by WAND's program officers and WAND consultants.*

Several other agencies also provided equipment or small grants, including:

- an oven and mixer for the bakery
- equipment for the Fruit Preservation Project
- a needs assessment for the chemical shop
- training for an operator from the chemical shop
- an overhead projector and a typewriter.

The government of St. Vincent provided building materials and skilled labor for the construction of the Community Center.





*photo by Stephanie Martin*

Beatrice "Beta" James

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **ASSESSMENT OF BENEFITS AND IMPACTS**

Before beginning, a few definitions are in order. Benefits of the project are defined as tangible advantages, help or aid derived directly from project activities or operations. Impacts are defined as positive changes in attitudes, feelings, behaviors, opportunities or conditions derived in part or in whole as a result of project activities or operations. The operational definition of development has already been discussed and is inherent in the evaluation criteria.

When phrased in the form of questions, the project's tangible benefits and impacts may be more easily assessed.

- \* What have been the most significant benefits of the project for individuals, and for the Rose Hall community as a whole?
- \* What have been the most significant impacts of the project for individuals or the Rose Hall community as a whole?

In order to answer these questions, data from each of the distinct project activities will be analyzed for the benefits derived. Next the cumulative impact of these activities, using the criteria set forth in the

introduction, will be discussed. Data offered here include stories, quotes, case studies, and other information gathered through observations and analysis.

## **Project Benefits**

Both the evaluators and Rose Hall residents believe a number of benefits resulted from the various project activities.

As a result of the Sewing Project:

- Individuals gained new skills in sewing and tailoring. Every school child, regardless of income level, received a new school uniform that year.
- Families saved income.
- Both the Working Group and the community gained a sense of pride and self confidence.

As a result of the Pre-School Project:

- Four individuals received training and education which prepared them to serve the community and also provided them with marketable skills outside the community
- These four individuals received cash income from the project for varying periods of time.
- About 40% of village children between the ages of two and a half to five received a pre-school education.

- Mothers, relieved of child care responsibility during pre-school hours, are free to work in their own fields or aid their men. This has resulted in an increase in the number of productive labor hours available to both the household and the community
- Older children spend more days in school because they do not have to provide child care during their mother's absence.
- Both parents and teacher believe that the pre-school has contributed significantly to children's adjustment to school and to their academic advancement once in school.

As a result of the food preservation project:

- Individuals have received skills training in the operation and maintenance of equipment.
- A number of individuals have developed managerial and supervisory skills.
- A number of individuals receive cash income periodically for working in the food preservation shop.
- The whole community saves income, because less income goes to the purchase of food from outside sources.
- Some individuals receive cash income from the sale of preserved fruits and other foods in Rose Hall and surrounding villages.
- The nutritional level of the community has improved because families have access to a variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the year.



As a result of the chemical shop:

- Chemicals needed for farming are more readily available, so used more effectively
- Better crops are produced.
- Both income and productive labor time are saved because individuals do not have to make one or two day trips to Kingstown to purchase supplies.
- Plants and animals are sometimes saved because of the immediate availability of needed remedies.
- Volunteers who run the shop have received skills training in how to manage the shop as well as how to use chemicals and other products.
- Because poorer farmers are able to buy only the fertilizer and chemicals needed at a given time, there is more equitable access to these supplies they otherwise could not afford.
- Because children can now buy a few seeds at a time with their pennies (rather than large quantities which are expensive), they are encouraged to farm.

As a result of the bakery:

- Cheaper and better bread is available.
- Women save time and labor since they no longer have to bake bread for their households.
- Children often choose bread as an after school snack. For some children this is a choice over something less nutritional. For other children, bread is more affordable than more expensive options in the shops.

- One shopkeeper claimed the bakery had improved her business. Because good, fresh bread is available after work and school, she now sells more canned meats and cheese.
- A number of community residents have received employment and training.

As a result of the adult education project:

- Basic education and literacy levels have increased.
- Record-keeping and business skills among both male and female farmers have improved.
- Women have gained new and improved homemaking skills.
- It has created new opportunities in terms of employment and exposure to the larger world.
- The adult education classes have often, but not always, provided cash incomes for the young adults who act as tutors. They have also provided these young adults with training and an opportunity to serve and stay connected to their community in a meaningful way

As a result of the community building:

- The community building provides space for the pre-school and the bakery. It also serves as a place for recreation and community gatherings such as weddings or other celebrations.
- All of the projects have provided the Working Group with organization and planning skills, but it

is work on the community building that has provided opportunities for many other citizens to also acquire these skills.

- The community center has been a focal point around which much of the solidarity and cooperation exhibited by community residents was developed.
- It is a source of a great deal of pride, accomplishment and community spirit and in a meaningful way has ushered Rose Hall into a new era of respectability

As a result of travel, workshops and other educational experience:

- Many women of the Working Group have gained skills in areas such as community organizing, proposal writing, participatory research, designing and conducting workshops, and project management.
- They have also had the opportunity to travel widely. This has broadened their understanding of the world and their own work. It has also given them an opportunity to share skills and understanding with others engaged in the same struggle.

## Project Impacts: The Evidence<sup>1</sup>

**Category: Empowerment**

**Indicator: Voice**

There is abundant and compelling evidence that individuals, especially those women and men who have been involved with the Working Group, have become empowered. There are many indicators of this empowerment at both the individual and collective level. First among these is the concept of voice. Perhaps the most predominant theme to emerge from the data was a shift from “shyness” to boldness. Some “shyness stories” are shared below

*Before, I was always very shy, thinking only of myself and my own troubles. But somehow I got involved in this community group. I always felt in my heart there were things I wanted to say, things I wanted to share. When I went to that first workshop people were asked to speak in small group. I love small group 'cause I learned how I could express myself. Before I was afraid people would say 'she's*

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<sup>1</sup>Much of the evidence in this section is in the form of quotes and descriptive passages gathered from interviews and small group discussion. Quotes or stories in italics are the actual words or represent as closely as possible the actual words of an individual. Indented quotes or stories indicate a composite description from a number of individuals. Unless otherwise indicated, the speakers are women.

*not saying this right, she pronounced such and such wrong.' I learned to speak, to care and love others, to be a community leader. In my heart I knew I had something to say, something to give others. Other people saw it in me, but I could not see. They knew, but I didn't. I knew in my heart, but was afraid to let it out, afraid to be criticized or shamed. But, in my heart I always knew*

*I learned a lot from the Working Group. I learned to deal with people and I learned to talk properly, how to talk and when to talk. I learned boldness. I'm no longer afraid to speak up.*

*In the group you learn that even you got something worth saying.*

*I used to be very shy, but when you go to the States you have to keep time and you meet people on the street and have to get things done, so I came out a little. Still when I came back to Rose Hall, sometimes in the group I wouldn't say things. I wanted to say things, but I just listened instead. Then they would ask me questions and bring me out. Now I know I have ideas and I can say what I want, like with you.*

*I used to be a very shy lady. Many times you want to ask questions or to speak your mind but you're not brave. But since I got involved with the Working Group, I tell you that today I am brave. Even if the Prime Minister or President Bush were to come here*

*I'd stand up and tell them what I think and what I have to say And I wouldn't be one bit afraid or ashamed.*

*In the workshops we get into small groups and even we don't want to speak, but each one of us has to speak. And we learn we can speak and that we have things to say*

*[From a man] Two years ago I was invited to join the group. I felt shy, but someone pushed me. I never will turn back. The knowledge I have gained, it benefits me personally I was a dropout from school and I was mischievous. I am now in Adult Education classes. I go to many workshops and I can go to any community and talk about Rose Hall and myself. I have confidence. I can talk for myself.*

*The women from Rose Hall are different. They are self developed and assertive. They say what they want. They demand the help they need and do the rest for themselves. This is quite different from the other groups we are working with. Rose Hall has done much more by themselves, working from volunteers. Many of the other groups have secondored [seconded] workers from the government. When you watch the women from Rose Hall you know that they have acquired a lot of skills from somewhere. Not just Ms. C and Ms. A, the others too. They have self confidence, they have self-esteem. They are not afraid to speak out in a group. This is something we are still trying to develop in the other groups we work with.*

## **Indicator: Self-Esteem and Acquisition of New Skills**

Individuals have also gained a sense of self-worth, acquired new skills and, most importantly, become aware of the many skills and competencies they already possessed. The following selections offer a picture of women who learned to write.

*A woman came to us; she was an older woman and she could not write at all. All she knew was to make strokes on the page. We worked and worked with her and she progressed. Then one day she went away to Kingstown and something happened there and she needed to communicate with her family but it was a private matter and she did not want to tell it to anyone. So, that lady went and bought some paper and an envelope and got herself a pencil, and she went where no one could see her or know what she was doing. She could not write all the words she needed, just some. But she used pictures like we had done in the literacy class. She was so proud, her family understood everything and were able to send her all that she needed.*

*Different folks have different hopes. For me, I learned to know and to meet people and to overcome my fear that people would laugh at me.*

*I learned a lot of things over the last 10 years. I can reflect on myself. I remember at a workshop we*

*had to say the best and worst about us and I learned to value me.*

*[From a man] I've gained lots of skills, like secretarial skills, that I can use outside the group that will advance me a lot.*

*I bring what I learned from the group and the adult education classes into my home. For example record keeping in farming. I learned to supervise people and to keep check on the people I hire, to figure man day and to relate that to time. I know how to make decisions about what I can afford and how to determine what I earned.*

*[From a man] I used to have low self-esteem, I was afraid to speak out. Ms. R, Ms. S, and Ms. C encouraged me to work with them. They worked me into the system. I saw people place confidence in me.*

*There were many things I could not do in school that I learned I could do in adult classes – like maths. I improved in reading comprehension. I didn't know how to lay a table. Now if anyone passes by me I can entertain them with a proper table.*

*When I came to the classes I couldn't write my name. Now I am the one who keeps in touch with the family all over in America, in England and other places.*



*All the things that I couldn't do in school, even the hard maths, I learned quick in the adult education classes and now I know I can learn anything if I just try, try a little harder*

*The group helps us save money cause we know how to preserve fruit and to eat more of what we can grow ourselves.*

*Now I can tell how much I've spent out and how much I've earned. It's a big help in farming.*

*We learned many things about how to make a better home, how to slice up a salad or make a cake. We learned many things. We have had success and we can pass it on to our children.*

*I cook better food for my family and I can do it in a time saving way. And I use more of what I can grow and find right here in Rose Hall.*

*From the Working Group I learned you just can't do things, you have to think and plan 'em first.*

*I've got training as a pre-school teacher I bake cakes and pastry dishes. I have confidence to deal with people. I can now take control of certain situations; before I couldn't. But, now I have leadership qualities.*

*I have not gone to the adult education classes. I completed school myself and came back here to work*

*with my husband. But the classes have been a great help to those women. I encourage any of them to go and I see the results in how they learn to eat better and make better use of their own fruits and vegetables; bake their own little cakes. It saves them money too. They learn many other things that make their lives better I can see it and I encourage them to go.*

*I was in the area in '79 when the volcano erupted. At that time you could easily tell the difference between the educated leaders and the other members of the community. When I went back in '84 with the Community Development division you could really see the change in self-esteem of all the women. They didn't just come and set like before. They were properly behaved and they participated fully*

*I see the womenfolk here in Kingstown and they are no longer talking in dialect. They say to me 'we can use proper English now; when we come to town we can do our business like real ladies.*

The simple awareness that they were the possessors of attributes that could be called skills was significant for many of the women of Rose Hall. This simple but meaningful "naming of the world" came about, in the first instance, as a result of a workshop Pat Ellis did for the community

*Before I went to the group I did not know I had skills. I DID NOT KNOW! I did not know that all the*

*things I did as a wife and a farmer were skills I could use for my community*

*Until that day I never knew I had skills.*

*That first workshop that Pat did, that was the first day of my life that I came to know that I had skills.*

*I learned that even I have skills, what I do here in my home, these things are really skills.*

*When I went out [into the world], the same things that I learned in the adult education class I meet there.*

*Many people before they came [to the adult education classes] were not thinking about moving up or about self employment. But they gained enough self-confidence to go out of the community and find jobs or work for themselves.*

**Indicator: Sense of Pride in Accomplishment, Community, and Culture**

The residents of Rose Hall have a sense of pride in their community, their culture, and their accomplishments.

*We have gained pride and lost our shame about what we can do.*

*This Rose Hall Working Group has done great*

*things. We must keep it going and get the children involved. We must keep the Rose Hall fires burning.*

*Sometimes we go down but we come up again.  
Rose Hall is on the map and we have to keep it there.*

*Rose Hall used to have a bad reputation. We were known as aggressive, illiterate mountain folk who did nothing but agricultural work. Others saw us as coarse and ruff. The first school came to Rose Hall only in 1960; before that anyone had to go to another village to get an education. Now other villages come to Rose Hall and ask for help in getting their development activities started. Even though they are often jealous of us and ask how we could have done such things and made so much more progress, they still see us as a model.*

*The nickname for Rose Hall used to be Vietnam. They were seen as ruffians and uneducated. Now they are the envy of their neighbors.*

*We raised Rose Hall up and we built this community center. We are moldin' our small ones to walk in our footsteps, when we do they will keep the name of Rose Hall high.*

*In Rose Hall there is a special community spirit. We are together; this had been handed down from our ancestors, this spirit of togetherness. The group has revived it, but it is something you can't just learn. It is*

*a part of our special heritage.*

*Cooperation and togetherness is a tradition that comes down from the old folks. They grew up learning it from their parents and we learned it from ours. We weren't educated in this, it is part of us. I benefit from their good name.*

### **Indicator: Ability to Meet Daily Challenges**

The women of Rose Hall and the members of the Working Group meet challenges and solve problems on a daily basis, often turning straw into gold. One cannot do justice to their abilities and strength simply by retelling a few stories. The illustrations below highlight very different aspects of these qualities.

#### *How the Bakery Keeps Running*

The morning starts with someone at Mrs. Y's door. "The water off at the bakery, Mrs. Y " "The sugar not enough, Mrs. Y " The evening ends with someone else at Mrs. Y's door. "The driver don't take the bread to Tremica, Mrs Y " "Mrs. X say she don't get the bread she order today and she going back to the baker in Chateaubelair." Always, somehow, the problems were solved and the bakery got through its daily operations and kept its valued customers.

The bakery employs a baker and pays Mrs. E and Mr. R a small amount to assist the baker and carry out other maintenance tasks. Mrs. Y heads the Working

Group committee in charge of the bakery. The bakery has operated for almost two years and while it has yet to make a profit, it has so far paid for itself and supplied Rose Hall and the surrounding communities with wholesome fresh bread.

A small loan, enough to buy a van, pay a driver, hire a part-time manager, buy supplies in bulk, and even provide some training in business management and bookkeeping, would be a great help and perhaps put the bakery on its feet. The Working Group has not been able to secure that kind of aid to date. They rely on their ingenuity, perseverance, and executive problem-solving skills. If the bakery fails, it will not be because Mrs. Y and her fellow committee members could not meet the problem-solving tasks that face a business executive on a daily basis.

### *Feeding the Family*

*The man left me and went to work in the fields. I did not have even a cent to buy food for the children and to send him in the field. I set down to think what can I do. Then I got the idea to sell cakes. I got the ingredients on credit, baked the cakes and took them to town and sold them. Before too late in the day I had enough to repay the credit and buy food for 3 meals. I fixed the supper and sent it to him in the field. This went on for three or four weeks and he never even asked me how I got to fix the food.*

***Indicator: Ability to Deal with Authority, Control Planning, Make Decisions***

At both an individual and community level the people of Rose Hall have learned that they can deal with authority and have acquired some degree of control over the resources they need to develop their community

***Pre-school Program without a Classroom***

The community building was underway, but it would be a long time before it was ready to use. The plans for the pre-school, however, were complete. A teacher was being trained and parents were ready to send their children. The group requested the use of a vacant room in the primary school but the head teacher refused them. Representatives from the Working Group held a number of meetings with the head teacher and his staff, but to no avail. So, the group called a series of community meetings to discuss the situation.

About seventy-eight people attended the meetings and after discussing the issue at great length their consensus was, "We need a pre-school for our children; the primary school is in our village to serve our children. There is space available in the school, we need the space, the space is there, we must get the space." They all agreed that a petition should be drawn up and that they would all sign it and send it to the Ministry of Education. However, this was not necessary, for shortly afterwards, faced with this kind

of community pressure, the head teacher agreed to let the vacant room be used... (Ellis, April 1983).

### *The Government Stops the Community Building*

*The government said people should be self-sufficient so we took up the challenge. We got all the supplies and materials for ourselves, going down to the quarry at Richmond Hill and digging out the stone and bringing it back to Rose Hall by hand. Then the new government came in and said we had to abide by their rules. They had made election promises and favors to give people certain jobs. So they sent a man from outside the community, one of their supporters, who we had no part in choosing. The government would pay him, but he was the government's man and not someone the community had chosen. We said we would not accept this man and he [the Prime Minister] said that if we didn't obey his word, the government would stop the project. And, in fact the project was stopped for a full year*

In response to this challenge the community under the leadership of the Working Group organized themselves. First they put a letter-writing campaign into effect. Next they demanded an audience with the Prime Minister. They elected and prepared delegates to represent them at the audience and sent them off to Kingstown to demand that they be allowed to continue to take stones from the quarry, and that the government keep its promise to provide them with the skilled labor



they needed. In turn, they would provide the other labor. But they needed the skilled labor and this must be people of their own choosing, not his. The delegation's conditions were met, and by the end of a year the community building was underway again.

### *Dealing with Outsiders*

The citizens of Rose Hall are proud of their self-reliance and their ability to deal with authority. One of the stories they are fond of telling is how they dealt with the evaluators from a certain international development agency. It wasn't that Rose Hall citizens felt threatened or uneasy about what an outside evaluation might uncover; they knew they had done a lot of good work. The problem was that no one in Rose Hall knew who the evaluators were, and these people had not bothered to inform anyone of why they had come. They just showed up one day and started asking questions about what was going on in development work in Rose Hall.

The community facilitator made a call to WAND. If WAND knew about these people and wanted her and the community to talk with them, she would try to accommodate them. But WAND had no idea who they were or why they had come. Within thirty minutes every citizen of Rose Hall knew about the investigators and what to tell them should they be asked if it were alright to "ask them a few questions." A few hours later the frustrated investigators left. Everyone they met had repeated almost verbatim the same answers to

each of their questions.

### *Support for the Farmers' Group*

*The government of X wanted us to start a Farmers' Cooperative and to incorporate us. But it meant we would have to have some director who made all the decisions and it would have to be free of the Working Group to do what these people thought was best. We didn't have that. We wanted to go forward, but we wanted to recognize the whole, not one person. The government didn't give us what we have, we had to unite the community to do what we did. What can one individual do?*

On an individual level many of the women of Rose Hall have learned lessons about dealing with an ever-present authority in their lives.

*At first, my husband even tried to keep me from going to the meetings. But I said, "What? Not go back to the meeting!" Later when he saw all the good things I was bringing into his home because of the Working Group he got his broom and he help me clean up so I have time for the meetings.*

*I never married but one of my men and he never treated me right, but I didn't know how to stop him being mean. After I learned to speak up I got rid of him. In the group you exchange ideas with each other and you get courage to speak your mind and do what*

*you have to do. As the community improved, knowledge was learned to deal with men by women gettin' together talking. Talking different things. Someone would come with a problem, we helped them solve the problem and deal with the man.*

*In the late 70s I use to work in that area with a nutrition program. Most of the women were illiterates and totally dependent on their men; all they did was go to the farms and have children just to prove that their man was a man. Now I see those women with self-worth and dignity. Now they know how to stand up for themselves.*

#### *The Man Under the Window*

*I wasn't supposed to know this story, but it came to me anyway. There was the man who had been having quarrels with his wife and she started coming to the meetings. One night this man went to the meeting himself, but he didn't go inside, he stayed outside under the window and listened. The next week he was in the rum shop telling his friend how he had learned a lesson and was going to start being a better husband and watching how he behaved with his wife. He didn't want all those women knowing **his** business.*

**Indicator: Participation, Solidarity, Inclusiveness, Creating and Using One's Own Knowledge**

There is strong evidence of participation, solidarity

and inclusiveness within all the development activities that the Working Group has undertaken. But the most impressive aspect of these undertakings is the way in which they have learned to create and use their own knowledge.

For over ten years the people of Rose Hall, with the leadership of the Working Group, have identified their own needs and problems, assessed their strengths and weaknesses, and decided what course of action they wish to take in order to improve their community. They have engaged in systematic reflection and analysis of those actions, and made judgements about future actions on the basis of what they have learned. They have not done this in isolation, but rather have engaged their friends and neighbors repeatedly and deliberately in the process. The following vignettes illustrate this point.

### *First Project, First Community Survey*

In the early phase of the project the Working Group identified as a concern the marketing of their fruits and vegetables. Subsequently they decided to form a farmer's organization, but that group floundered. People were reluctant to assume leadership or take responsibilities. The members of the Working Group met together to analyze this turn of events and decided that much of the problem was due to people feeling inadequate to handle the affairs of a farmer's organization. The basic literacy and numeracy level of the more established farmers was very low and

individuals were afraid that they would either fail in their duties or "be found out" as uneducated.

The Working Group thought that an Adult Basic Education program might be a solution to their problem. They organized a survey of the community and canvassed every home in the community. In order to do this, the village was divided into a zone system that is used to this day to conduct surveys, announce important meetings or spread the word about any important news or occurrence.

After determining that the community was in support of an adult education program and identifying the kinds of classes people felt were of most interest to them, they called a community meeting. Community meetings are used to present the dilemmas of the community and the pressing decisions that need to be made by the Working Group to the whole community for their input. They are usually conducted by using popular theater. By the end of the community meeting the Working Group had the endorsement of the community to begin an adult education program. They also had input about which courses of study should be offered and what would be a fair and equitable way to choose the first participants to enter the program.

This process of community survey, collection of data from outside sources (often seeking expert opinion) and then bringing the issues to a series of community meetings for a decision on a plan of action is the Working Group's standard working model. This information is always supplemented by an evaluation of the lessons they have learned from previous

experiences. Many individuals outside the leadership of the Working Group contribute labor, time, advice and other resources to these efforts.

### *The Use of Popular Theater*

The community facilitator was telling me that often when a problem or concern arose they would put together a drama and take it to a community meeting or up to the "works." There they would present the drama and hold discussions.

"How many of these activities have you carried out?" I inquired, still hoping to bolster the report with statistics.

"Oh, it's just a part of the way we do things," she replied.

"But how many? A dozen? A hundred? On what subjects?"

"On lots of subjects. Health care and nutrition of children. Wife beating. All kinds of things; whatever we need to do."

"So you've done dozens of this kind of presentation?"

"Dozens. Hundreds. You don't count something that is just a part of how you do your work."

### *The Community Building*

*The community building was a project everyone got involved in. We started out with self-help and got the whole village to assist by bringin' stones up from*

*Richmond Bay I couldn't help with the stones, but I donated money when I could.*

*When we were building the community center everyone contributed. When we went down to Richmond Bay those who couldn't carry stones would send some little money to buy food. Women who could not carry stones would do the cooking. When we were building the buildings, those who couldn't lay stones would carry water and sand.*

*At the ten year service it was like a holiday The whole community came together and everyone felt together And pride...it was like we all belonged to one church. In the Working Group all the churches come together and it has helped the churches work together*  
*Other Evidence*

*Some of the difference I see because of the Working Group...Togetherness. If there is a funeral we have a holiday and nobody goes to the farms. If someone is in an accident, everyone feels sad and comforts you and talks about how awful it is. If there is a wedding, everyone comes; if they can't come they will still be glad for you. In other villages we don't see this. If you're not speaking to me and I get an accident you won't come to me. Here if anything happens to me, I can't get out of the house for everyone being at my house.*

*At Christmas time the Working Group helps out the*

*poor people. They share gifts and get the whole village together*

*The Working Group is always helping folks out. With me, if I don't have the money for the pre-school up front they always give me a little time or let me go till the next month.*

**Indicator: Ability to Think and Plan for the Future**

The Working Group thinks about and plans for the future of the group and in the process continues the tradition of creating and using their own knowledge.

*Evaluating the 10 Year Effort*

For a full week the Working Group met nightly from 5:00 or 6:00 pm until 10:00 pm or later. The meeting started when it was judged there were enough people present to begin. At the first meeting they had promised to "keep time," but often it was a choice between coming to the meeting after getting in from the fields and washing-up or not coming at all. So we would wait. The make-up of the group would vary from evening to evening.

The attendance ranged from seven to twenty five. Always there were children and youth coming in and out of the meeting, sitting in chairs around the group to observe, then leave, and later return. They would join the small discussion group where they listened or climb on a lap and draw while the adults talked. These



were not *just* the children of people attending the meeting. They came in off the streets, from everywhere, to see what was going on. One of the new officers in the Working Group drew my attention to how involved the children seemed to be and said, "I used to do the same things when I was younger; that's how I got interested in the Group."

During the week, under the leadership of Pat Ellis, the group systematically reviewed each and every project or activity it had undertaken. How had it been initiated? What research was done before it was undertaken? What benefits had come to the community as a result of the project? What were its shortcomings or failures? What lessons had they learned? What could they be proud of and what did they need to change and improve?

By the end of the week two major things had happened. The new officers of the Working Group had been initiated into the history of the group and had a new understanding of both the triumphs and shortcomings of the Working Group's experiences. A plan for tackling what they saw as one of their major weaknesses, in this case the lack of adequate record keeping and systematic management procedures, was in place. The group also had plans for a library and a survey to assess the nutritional and health levels of community children.

### *Development of New Leadership*

The leaders of the original Working Group have

systematically sought out and cultivated new leadership in the working group. They have taken care to see that the group represented both men and women and that promising young people see meaningful ways to serve their community. While the original leaders are still very much present, their major roles appear to be those of wise women behind the scenes. This effort on their part extends beyond the parameters of the Working Group.

[From a man] *At first I ask myself, what am I doing working with all these women. But they sought me out and brought me along with love and respect.*

### *Working with Youth*

At the community meeting where the Working Group presented the results of the week-long evaluation and discussed the dilemmas of the bakery, there was a large contingency of young boys and a few young girls between the ages of about twelve to fifteen. After the meeting, Mrs. R told me this story

*A while back those young boy came to me and said, "We want to start a group and we want you to be the president, but we don't want any girls in the group."*

*I told them that I would help but I couldn't be the president. So I worked with them and finally they were ready to elect the officers, so I deliberately stayed away that night. Later they came to me and said they had elected me treasurer. I told them I already had too*

*much money to hold, but if they would send me the vice treasurer I'd be happy to work with him.*

*So they agreed and they started holding games and organizing other activities. Now they have a habit of coming to me after their meetin' and telling what when on. So a few weeks ago they came and said, "You know we got girls in the group now "*

*And I said, "What! I thought you didn't want girls. "*

*You know what they told me? They said, "Well, we watch the Working Group and you got men in the group, so we thought we could have girls."*

The final meeting of the Working Group's self-evaluation efforts was held the night after the community meeting. To my surprise many of the young boys and girls from the community meeting appeared outside the meeting room. In fact, they were literally hanging over the Dutch doors and the windows. The meeting was stopped and they were asked to come in and take seats. By the end of the meeting each young person had introduced him or herself to the group. They shared with the adults, pictures and stories of their concerns and hopes for Rose Hall.

### **Indicator: Knowledge of and Access to Resources**

With the exception of the initial funding, the Rose Hall Working Group has acquired all monetary grants or in-kind donations for project activities through their

own initiative. WAND often facilitates this process, but the initiative and most of the efforts have come from the Working Group.

**Category: Status of Women Improved**

**Indicator: *Diversity of Women's and Men's Roles***

One of the most famous stories to come out of the Rose Hall experience is about the "Role of Men in Development" Workshop.

When the group just started there was a real, real problem with the men. Women would leave for the meetings and men would say bad things to them and quarrel with them. "You women want to rule over men and be on top of them." The women knew they had a problem. Their assessment was that "the women were developing faster than the men and this was not good for development." So we asked Pat to hold a "Men in Development" workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was "To create a situation which would allow men to recognize and understand the role of both sexes in the development of the community" (Ellis and Egbert, July 1983). It focused on self-understanding, relationships, and participation.

The workshop was conducted by one male and one female facilitator. The first day, only men attended the

workshop. On the second day, couples attended. The third day was open to the whole community. The attendance ranged from 30 on the first day to 120 on the last day (Ellis, July 1983).

There is no way to say conclusively why the men of Rose Hall changed their minds about their womenfolk and the Working Group. Many of the people of Rose Hall believe that change started with this workshop and has been sustained because the women of Rose Hall have proven themselves to be true leaders.

**Indicator: *Recognition and Respect***

The following quotes are from men in the community. They talk about their feelings and perceptions of women's roles and their relationships with the women.

*Men are improving in their understanding of women. Rose Hall was a very backward and violent place. Literacy rates were low. Men came to see that what the women were doing was benefitting them in real ways. They saw results in the home from the things the women were doing. The ideas of women's worth has changed. Men were bosses; women cooked and washed. Women were not capable of contributing to development. The men know that it is women who have developed this community.*

*The way I see it, the women of Rose Hall are more*

*advanced than the men.*

*Women could not be doing these things if the men did not cooperate and support them. Men benefit from the chemical shop and they know the women did it.*

*The women leaders of the group are not only role models for the other women and young ladies, they are role models for the men as well. Men see these women as people with leadership skills, integrity and understanding.*

*Women are more progressive and give more love to the community. Men talk about starting their own group and doing things, but they just talk, they don't do.*

The following excerpt is from a letter written by a man now in Canada that appeared in the *Vincentian* on February 7, 1992.

*I want to congratulate the women of the Rose Hall Working Group for the great success they had on building the community building. In order to do so they had to overcome the government who tried to stop them. The women of Rose Hall are strong women and I am proud to have known and worked with them. If the government of St. Vincent is serious about development, I would recommend that they choose 15 good women and let them run the government.*

Another person told of remarks she overheard a group of young men from Rose Hall make when they came to Kingstown to pick up a mixer given to the bakery by USAID

*The young boys came to help carry the mixer. I heard them talking saying, "The women have worked too hard for this. We can't mess up. We have to show them that we can do our part."*

### *The Forgiveness Story*

It was the Monday after the ten year celebration and the official opening of the community center. A young man showed up at the door of her classroom. He was a young man from the community she knew, not so very well, but they often spoke and she considered herself to have a good relationship with him. He stood at the door and she asked, "Yes, what can I do for you?" He said, "Miss R, I've come to ask your forgiveness." She looked at the man, not knowing what he meant, or why a young man like himself would be standing in a public place asking forgiveness of a women.

He said again, "Miss R, I've come to ask that you forgive me." Still, she only looked at the man. She did not know what to make of his words. And then he said, "Miss R, all this time I really did not like you. I was

against the things you and the women were doing. I thought they were bad and I did not like you at all. But now that I can see all that has taken place I have come to say I was wrong and to ask your forgiveness." He turned and left, and still she didn't know what to say

Some evidence of sharing household duties was found.

*He don't love cleaning and he don't like to cook none, but now he and both my sons do their own washing and ironing.*

*[From a Man] When my wife started comin' to classes I didn't want her to come 'cause I was the one had to keep the children. But soon I saw so much improvement in the home, in things she was learning to do better in the home and in the community that I decided I was happy to keep the children and do my part.*

*Plenty of the menfolks do their own washing and ironing, almost all the younger men and boys.*

*[From a man] Now I stay home with the children so my wife can go to classes. The adult classes have made a big improvement in my home.*

The evidence that men were sharing household responsibilities seemed minimal. But when this



conclusion was presented to the Working Group they raised strong objections and felt that we had simply not been able to "find these things out." Pat Ellis had included a number of remarks from both men and women in regard to men's changing responsibilities within the household (Ellis, August 1983).

*My wife has changed; before she used to bring me my meals, now she is telling me to come for it.*

*I will make supper on Thursdays so that Joan can go to the classes.*

*I am able to resolve more situations now when I talk things over with my wife.*

### **Indicator: *Positive Changes in Relationships***

A reduction in both wife beating and violence toward women was a very significant, yet unexpected result that emerged.

*I used to see women with black and blue eyes. I would hear quarrels and fights in the houses. I knew women who were put out of their homes. I don't see that as often anymore.*

*If someone has been mistreating his wife, the word gets around. Eventually it will be known in the rum shop. Then the other men help him to see that Rose Hall men don't treat their women like that.*

*Before I was very poor I used to go to the fields and work hard and come home and the children be crying and things not going right, and I would just feel bad and take my hand and hit my wife. But, I don't do that again. The Working Group had a part in that. You get exposed to so many things when you go there. You hear new ideas; they make you think about things in a different way. Going there, hearing things, made me think about how I was treating my wife in a different light.*

*We have done some studies of violence against women on the island and the police records and other measures we used said there is less violence in the Rose Hall area than in other districts we studied.*

**Category: Quality of Life**

**Indicators: *Improved Nutrition, Education, Home Life***

The improvement in quality of life must be considered in terms of "proxy" indicators – that is to say, tangible indicators that can be assumed to correlate with, but are not directly equated with, project activities. Many of the quotes and stories provide evidence of such a relationship in the areas of nutrition, better home life and more access to schooling for children and adults.

*I know the food preservation project is helping people eat better 'cause you don't see fruit rotting on*

*the ground like you used to and you see lots more little home gardens.*

### **Indicator: *Saving Income***

The most important connection between quality of life and project activities is to be found in the concept of "saving income." Every activity undertaken by the Working Group is credited with saving either income or time that could be put toward the production of more income. The concept of saving income is not insignificant or inconsequential for the community. Without basic changes in the economic super-structure, which in this case would mean either expanded industrialization or an increase in service jobs through tourism, agricultural production will remain the primary source of all but petty income. Therefore, any income that is "saved," e.g., that does not have to go toward necessities of food, shelter, clothing, or education of children, is income that can be used toward improving the household's standard of living.

Chaney (1987) and others have persuasively argued that in rural, agricultural communities like Rose Hall, saving income can have a more positive effect on quality of life than many income-producing activities typically encouraged by WID or other types of rural development projects.

In such instances, it can also be argued that income savings directly affects the national economy through purchases, or savings toward future purchases, of luxury and durable goods. Improvement in the quality

of life, as well as input into the national economy, is evident in Rose Hall. From the purchase of TVs and VCRs, to the construction of new or improved housing, to new and improved water systems, to increases in the purchase of seeds, fertilizers, and other supplies that go toward expanded and improved agricultural outputs, the economy of Rose Hall appears healthy

### **An Unexpected Indicator: *More Love***

The first time a member of the Working Group said that the project had brought more love into her life, I thought, what a nice expression. Then I wondered what she really meant. The third, fourth, and fifth times I heard it mentioned, I decided that perhaps I should incorporate these descriptions into the concepts of solidarity and inclusiveness. When that did not seem to work, I decided that love had little to do with development, even alternative development. To talk about love might be a very appealing way for people to express themselves, but it had no relevance to this report.

Then a series of incidents caused me to remember an article by Gustavo Esteva, "Regenerating People's Space" (1987). Esteva discusses the concepts of love and friendship, as well as the search for values that people hold in common, not as alternative development, but as an alternative *to* development. By an alternative to development, he means the establishment of a different kind of relationship between man [sic] and nature and between people and

people. This alternative is one where the guiding principle is hospitality rather than domination. For Esteva, the concepts of love and hospitality are integral to the concept of true participation.

Since the success of participation in the Rose Hall Project, as Esteva and others have defined it, will be discussed at length later in this report, it seems appropriate to suggest that love is yet another indicator of the impact this project has had on the Rose Hall community

*It [the project] has brought more love into my home. My husband and I are closer together We share things now We respect, not like before.*

*Here we have love, we love and respect one another more.*

*What I mean by love...Before I could not accept that you, you all the way from America, would be sitting in my home and discussing with me. The project has brought the world to my home. I have shared my life with so many people. And, I have more things to share with my children. Things about how to feed their own children to be healthier and other things that I can share.*

*It is the women who are developing the community, who are bringing more love to the community*

[From a man] *At first I ask myself, what am I, a*

*married man with children, doing working with all these women? But, they picked me out and brought me along with love and respect.*

*I learned to speak, to care, and to love others, to be a community leader*



*photo by Stephanie Martin*

Tante Cuntre

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS

This analysis addresses questions such as: Have women been "integrated" into the development process and, if so, with what results? What lessons can be drawn from the Rose Hall experience? What relevance do these lessons have for other Women and Development efforts? In conclusion I will also discuss the issues of project replication and sustainability

Rose Hall is not a perfect community, neither has the Rose Hall project been perfect.

*Many of the men have changed their mind but there are still plenty that think women are just o uppity for their own good and believe that it says something that none of those lady leaders are married or stay with their men.*

There are people who "aren't against what the group does" but will never join the Working Group.

*It shouldn't be done on Wednesday nights when folks ought to be doing the Lord's work at the Lord's house and not taking membership from every church in town out to discuss its business.*

Of a more serious nature, there are "attitude problems," "people who take and don't give back," discontent, rumors of who has power and who doesn't,



and who benefits more than others. There were indicators on the working list not included in this taxonomy because there was no evidence to support them, the evidence found was weak, or because the evidence was counter indicative.

This evaluation, however, did not intend to determine what the Working Group was doing right or wrong, nor how they should be doing their work. If this portrait does not portray negative aspects or failures of the project, it is not because they were not present. When the evaluation team came across information of this nature, which it felt would be useful, it was shared with the Working Group. It is not discussed here because the purpose of this book is to look at the success of the project.

It is important to analyze the Rose Hall Project in order to determine what factors contributed to its success. An understanding of its success may prove especially important for funding and implementing agencies whose resources and decisions have an impact, not only on how projects are implemented, but on the very meaning of development.

## **Process and Methodology - The Critical Input**

For the conception of this project, WAND deliberately decided to emphasize educational interventions over the infusion of money and technical resources. The **process** and **methodology** for this

project, however, involved much more than training and workshops. While interventions were often educational in nature, they went beyond structured approaches to education such as workshops and specific skills training. Process and methodology were vital parts of this project's success and it is important to discuss them in depth.

The process was shaped by four elements:

- 1) WAND's philosophical and ideological perspective;
- 2) The project coordinator's philosophy and intentions;
- 3) The practice and visions of the women leaders of Rose Hall;
- 4) The operational definition given to participation.

## **WAND's Philosophical Perspective**

WAND's primary concern is with the empowerment of women, and their subsequent participation in an alternative development of their communities, their culture, and their nation. Their work toward this goal is based on participatory methodologies. This, in turn, is predicated on the conviction that development and empowerment must take place with a community of people, as well as on a personal level.

WAND operates on the principle that both individuals and communities will change once they

control the processes that will allow them to govern themselves and name their own realities. They understand that action of this nature

*... is limited by the resources of the community at any given moment to recognize the wider underpinnings of its particular problems; that action is also limited by the degree to which the knowledge of that community process can contend with the constraints upon it. Such knowledge is commonly owned, embodied in the community will to survive...Participatory methods establish a place for the 'facilitators' to enter, temporarily, the community process and to assist a conscious realization of that process (Peacocke, 1988).*

WAND operates from an ideological base that is concerned with the dialectic between human consciousness and social/historical context. Their intervention as active agents of empowerment and development takes its form and function from both feminist and Freirian pedagogies. Theories are therefore derived from praxis (action - reflection - action), rather than from structural or functional explanations (Antrobus, 1990).

## **The Project Coordinator's Philosophy and Intentions**

The project coordinator's commitment to the

principles and methodologies of experiential education meant many things, but there were two over-riding principles to which she adhered. The first was her belief in people's ability to draw from their experience and understanding to solve their problems.

Beyond this, and integral to the theory and practice of the experiential model, was her belief that individual growth and self-understanding are necessary to the collective's ability to work together for the good of the whole. Self-development was the generative part of her educational interventions, and personal growth of the individual participants was seen as an integral part of the process of community development. She did not assume that participation in activities intended to improve social and economic conditions would also bring about self-development as a by-product. Instead, she explicitly worked with participants to build self-esteem and self-confidence. She helped them understand themselves in relation to others, and to develop communication and cooperative skills.

A number of in-depth discussions with the project coordinator concerning her methodology confirmed that she very self-consciously planned and assessed her interventions out of faithfulness to the above principles. I submit that as a consequence of her adherence to these principles, she also intended, consciously or unconsciously, that the project be self-directed and self-paced. That is to say, she believed the project should focus on what the community wanted when they thought they were ready for it. In fact, she repeatedly acted on this principle.

Within the experiential model, the function and role of the intervenor is clear in regard to the principles of self-awareness and interpersonal growth. The function and role of the intervenor is not so clear when it comes to allowing people to use their own experience as the basis for learning and deciding about when to act and what to act upon. Therefore, this will be discussed briefly before delineating the specific methodologies used by this intervenor.

Myles Horton, in discussing the Highlander methodology, often said, "just because a person had an experience doesn't mean they learned anything." One does not learn from an experience unless one **reflects** on that experience, identifies and **names** what one has learned, and **systematizes** that learning for use in new experiences. Thus, the role of the intervenor is to facilitate that process. In the case of Rose Hall, the intervenor facilitated this outcome by intentionally guiding the Working Group through participatory research and evaluation processes.

WAND's philosophical stance, and the philosophy and intentions of the intervenor resulted in the use of the following discrete methodologies.

- Training workshops that focused on self-esteem, self-awareness and the interpersonal skills needed to engage in collective action.
- Consultations that resulted in periodic internal evaluations and the use of participatory research methods. This resulted in the Working Group and the community creating and using their own knowledge

consciously and systematically

- Skills training related directly to current project activities.
- The infusion of external resources, monetary and others, as aid rather than as an answer. This meant that these resources **enabled** rather than **directed** processes and products.
- The participation of all, but especially women.
- Collective, participatory action to influence community attitudes towards women's roles and their contributions to development as well as to enhance the quality of life.

## The Practice of the Women Leaders

The women who provided the primary leadership contributed two essential elements, namely vision and the grassroots practice that enabled implementation of project activities. Their vision was two-pronged. One was of self, a vision of self that transcended the definition of poor, incapable, uneducated and **only** women. To repeat the words of the woman, who at the age of 33 was chosen to be the community facilitator,

*In my heart I knew I had something to say, something to give others. Other people saw it in me, but I could not see. They knew, but I didn't. I knew in my heart but was afraid to let it out, afraid to be criticized or shamed. But, in my heart I always knew*

They also had a vision of what the betterment and

development of their community meant. Much of that vision was rooted in the ideal of maintaining community

Development is something that we can never stop. We have to keep moving; we must continue to follow it to the grave. But the rewards are only satisfying if you bring others along. If you lose your community and your sense of belonging together, what is your development?

Of course the bakery would be better off if they raised [the price of] the bread like the government said, but the Group has got to consider the greater good and keep it in mind. They can't just think of the profit; they have to consider the community and how hard it'll be on people.

The practice that emerged from this vision was rooted in context and connection. As one listens to the "behind the scenes accounts" of how each activity was successfully implemented, always there is the sense of detailed assessments of what the context would bear, and of what connections had to be made if the community was going to participate in the new endeavor. Project implementation was as much concerned with attitudes and personalities as it was with the achievement of material, quantitative milestones. How ownership, commitment and

participation could be engendered was always as important as the realization of a given venture.

Freire, Gran, Tandon, most leaders of the popular education movement in Latin America, and others have argued that this contextual and connected way of knowing and acting on the world is one found in many peasant societies, especially those "on the fringe of civilization." They would also argue that it is a knowledge and practice that must be reclaimed and revalued, for it is vital to solving many of the problems facing both the industrialized and non-industrialized worlds.

This author would further claim, offering the work of de Beauvoir, Gilligan, Eisler, and others as support, that in industrial societies and in westernized (if not yet modernized) societies, it is in those who have been marginalized by gender that this knowledge and ways of acting on the world reside. The success of the Rose Hall project, in a very profound way, is a result of women doing development rather than being integrated into development. Much of this success is specifically related to their focus on inclusiveness, both in contextual decision-making and maintenance of community

The centrality of this "way of knowing" to the women's development activities and their vision, is implied in all their planning and implementation efforts. The most striking example of this is their decision to bring men into the development process, to share ownership with them based on their realization that they "were developing faster than the men and this



was not good for development." Is there an example in any case study or research literature, when a development program funded for and operated by men took such a decision? I feel confident that there is not. Is it, then, possible to speculate that women would do a better job of integrating men into the development process than men have done integrating women?

The practice, the **doing** of development we see emerging from the women of Rose Hall, also relates to another long-standing premise of feminist theory. That premise holds that women, when given the chance, will act on the social world differently than men. Specifically, women will reject the traditional separations between the private and public domains (i.e., between the household and the economy) and between the personal and the political. Furthermore, they will validate and name as useful the role of the subjective and the intuitive.

Much of the critique of WID programs can be directly related to the failure of funders and implementing agencies to either understand or consider these first two issues. WID programs have been criticized for moving women into the economic sector without thought or consideration to how this will effect women's private lives. The results have been to "double the burden" on her time, her energy, and her personal resources. This, in turn, has had detrimental effects on her health, the health of her children and her personal standing within the family.

Regarding the relationship between the personal and the political resulting from many WID projects,

even as women have increased their access to monetary resources, this has often meant they must assume more and more of the burden for meeting the family's subsistence needs. It is the husband's income that is freed for personal needs or luxury consumer items, and it is his political standing that is increased in the community and the family

I submit that, in contrast to many WID efforts, the Working Group shows an implicit understanding of these principles. If we examine closely the kinds of projects that were chosen, we see the following.

The first educational efforts focused on skills that increased the standing of the women in their homes and the fields as well. The pre-school not only served children, it increased women's opportunity to participate in the economic base of the community. The other project activities had three underlying principles in common. They made more effective use of existing resources, they saved time and money as opposed to focusing on growth or expansion, and they served recognized community needs. With each effort the women improved their status in both the home and the community

At yet another level one can recognize that the activities were not simply linear developments. They form a fabric. They are interwoven and integrated activities, each making a contribution to the overall effect.

What then can be said about the decision to build a community center? This activity was initiated at the very beginning of the project. It was used as a

practical and meaningful way for every citizen to contribute to the community's development efforts. At the successful completion of the community center, 10 years later, there was a great celebration that focused everyone's attention, not only on the successful completion of the building, but on the many successes and improvements that had come about in the community because of the efforts of the women. Is it stretching the point too far to suggest that at an intuitive level, the women understood the powerful subjective and symbolic meaning implied in such an outcome?

The specific methodologies employed in this project offers the following guidelines:

- Know your people and their history
- Listen to them; start where they want to start.
- Know that you are going to make mistakes and learn as you go. Learn from what you do; don't think you have the answers.
- Believe in people; let them work at their own pace and learn from their mistakes too.
- Be determined.
- Be self aware; look within yourself.
- Have a vision.
- Go step by step, but keep the overall picture in mind.

## **Other Considerations**

There are at least two other elements that contributed to the success of the Rose Hall project. The

first is the flexibility of the funder. If the funder had insisted on a given set of outcomes in a given time frame, this project would have failed. Even if it had initially succeeded in achieving the externally determined objectives, the continued commitment required to sustain results would not have been forthcoming. The only thing that seems to account for the enduring commitment on the part of the Working Group members is their sense of ownership, pride, and vision.

The project coordinator identified another element that she considers important to an understanding of the Rose Hall phenomena. She calls it readiness. Dr. Ellis thinks that Rose Hall's physical and cultural isolation was significant to this readiness. As a result of its isolation from the commercial and industrial center of the country, the community had to be reliant on its own efforts to meet many of its needs. This isolation also worked to preserve a sense of community

Dr. Ellis thought the reverse was true of the Dickson community; they had easy access to supplies, markets and other capital. The fact that the community was imbued with rival factions who could neither agree on what a program should do or by whom it should be operated were also primary reasons why the project failed or was not *ready* for the project. I will discuss these issues further in a later section.

## **Implications and Significance**

Before the implications or significance of this

project can be discussed, it should be clear that they cannot be considered outside of the evaluation criteria. If one does not accept the criteria of success as valid and meaningful, then application of the principles and methodologies employed in this project cannot be seen as having either implications or significance. If on the other hand, the criteria are seen as valid, the fact that women were in charge of their own development efforts, then the methodology and process used by the intervenors have important implications and significance for other Women and Development efforts.

A review of case study material would reveal a multitude of examples with similar methodologies which yielded similar results. Fredo (May 1989), does an in-depth analysis of three women and development projects in Senegal which exhibited many of the same characteristics as the Rose Hall project. The implementing organizations began with a similar participatory philosophy, which they tried to sustain. The projects were eventually abandoned, however, and activities were considered failures when they could not measure up to externally established criteria based on specific outcomes pre-established by the outside funding agency

## **Participation and the Discourse on Development**

In order to examine this phenomena more deeply we need to examine the concept and application of participants as the guiding force behind both

methodological approaches and explicit project outcomes. The need for participation is taken for granted in development projects today. If not taken for granted in practice, it is certainly central to any discourse about development. The questions to be raised then are what kind of participation and for what purpose? I contend that the answers to these questions are not taken for granted, and that the answers offered by the Rose Hall experience are significantly different than those found in many such initiatives. It is, in fact, the operational definition of participation that allowed the women of Rose Hall to **do** development rather than be integrated into development.

Oakley and Madison (1985) have categorized four basic approaches to the concept of participation into. Each approach is characterized by a set of philosophical and values orientations. These beliefs and values can be extricated by examining the specific goals and objectives that each approach expects to accomplish through participation.

The first approach emphasizes "mobilization." People or groups are mobilized to participate in certain activities and to accomplish an already defined set of objectives. It is believed that both groups and individuals will "develop" as a result of their participation in these activities because of the nature of the activities.

At another level of participation, communities and individuals are invited to participate in second level decision-making efforts. The goals of the projects – improved health, sanitation, micro enterprises,

agricultural innovation – as well as the major mechanisms through which the goals are to be achieved are already determined. At the local level, groups and individuals are allowed to choose from among limited alternatives as to how they will implement these efforts. Through this kind of participation individuals and communities are expected to assume responsibility for their own well-being and to realize that, through their own efforts, they can better themselves.

A third type of participation focuses on the creation and organization of structures and institutions. This approach assumes that disadvantaged groups must have access to and influence over more powerful decision makers. This approach also assumes that once structures are in place, access and influence will occur.

The last kind of participation assumes that people and communities should be in charge of their own destinies; that they should decide what is important to them. This includes what form improvements and changes in their lives should take, and how and when these changes will be brought about. The role of this kind of participation is to empower people to control their own destinies. The process by which empowerment ensues is easy. The foundation of the process is to open *space* and *opportunity* for control and empowerment to occur. This approach is often, but not always, associated with concepts of political consciousness-raising and cultural and social resistance.

The Rose Hall project shows only a few signs of political consciousness-raising (at least in the accepted Freirian definition), although there are some signs of cultural and social resistance. It does show all the other signs which indicates that this fourth definition of participation was in operation. Furthermore, the philosophy, intentions, and practice in operation are derived directly from the values and principles inherent in the fourth definition. What, then, can be said about the lesson learned from Rose Hall?

### **A Reconsideration of Development "Models"**

The first thing that can be said is that methodology is not an answer in and of itself. Methodology is not manifested only in practices and technique. Philosophy, intentions, and values override the application of any given set of methodologies.

The second thing that can be said is that if funder's philosophies and intentions are best represented by the fourth definition, the use of models needs to be seriously reconsidered. Funders should reconsider the use of models in the sense that they cannot support experimentation, evaluate outcomes and then export "program" or "initiative" to another setting in order to achieve the same outcomes. The use of models, in this sense of the word, will of necessity regress into the confines of the first definition of participation (mobilization) at worst and the second definition of participation (participation in second level decision-making) at best.



The role of the external funder, in this case, did serve to open spaces and opportunities. This decision was, at least in part, a function of a historical stage in the funding of WID programs. When the Rose Hall project was initially funded, foundations and other potential funders did not as yet have solid models for WID programs. Approaches like income generation or micro enterprises were not so much models as theories.

Once the application of this theory was given structure in a given context, the drive has been to transport it, as a model, into other contexts. When this happens, regardless of ones original philosophical stance, methodology and process become technique driven. When these techniques succeed, implementing organizations and funding agencies are given credit. When they fail, people, methodologies, and whole value systems are blamed.

The role of WAND and the project coordinator served to facilitate the decision-making and actions that were taken within the spaces and opportunities that were opened. While the community controlled the decision-making and actions, the facilitation process assured that the process was methodical, systematic, and empirical. The decision by WAND to implement the project in this way, however, was not based on a model in the sense described above. The decision was based on a philosophical perspective that was clearly defined and articulated. What is important in a historical context is that funding criteria had not yet forced WAND to comply with an externalized definition of success or process.

What does the discussion above say about the issues of replicability? It suggests that the term is not an appropriate one. It suggests that a concept like transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1986) is much more relevant. Under the concepts of transferability, philosophies and intentions can be transferred from one context to another. Methodologies, practices and impacts, while remaining similar from project to project, would take on contextual forms and shapes. Specific activities, the outcomes and the benefits of a given project, however, would change from site to site and would always be contextual. It would also mean, that contextual and connected ways of knowing would have to be operational factors. This in turn would mean that where Women and Development projects are concerned, the focus should not be on women's integration, nor specifically on economic outcomes, but on their role as leaders and their role in naming and defining development for themselves.

Decisions about where and when to initiate projects would also be made through contextual analysis. Ellis says that Rose Hall was ready. I would say that Rose Hall was contextually ripe. Ellis identifies as significant the fact that Rose Hall was physically isolated and therefore had to be self-reliant, and that a spirit of community already existed in the village. Both of these issues are important and are certainly relevant to contextual readiness or ripeness.

I also suggest caution when considering models of readiness, especially models that are too stringent or well defined. I would add that in my own analysis,

based on the Rose Hall example, in order for projects of this nature to be successful, two elements are essential. First, the context must hold some meaningful sense of community and collectivity. Secondly, there should be a local "leadership element" whose visions and values are in accord with both the funder's and the intervenor's. Having said this, I would advise another caution – elements of community or of leadership may not emerge until after a project has been initiated.

Neither WAND nor Rose Hall are unique. The implications and significance of this inquiry into the efforts of the Rose Hall community, is that development, at least in terms of human betterment, **can** be achieved through participation and empowerment. Development can, and in fact should, be achieved without funders and implementing agencies pre-establishing outcomes and activities. Furthermore, funders and implementing agencies committed to empowerment and human-centered, sustainable development should carefully re-think how agendas are defined lest the funding process make them too narrow. Funding agencies need to be more careful in considering how and in what ways they can open spaces and provide opportunities.

I mentioned above that approaches to WID efforts such as income generation and micro enterprises were originally based on theory. I should also point out that this theory was not derived through analysis of why a given approach had worked, but on what might account for the failure of existing efforts. The Rose Hall

experience offers us an approach based on the analysis of success, not failure, and a theory derived from praxis.

To further test this theory, both funding and implementing organizations need to re-assess the mechanisms through which they fund and implement grassroots program initiatives. If the goal is to open spaces and create opportunities, organizations like WAND should not have their funding tied to pre-established programmatic outcomes or initiatives. Rather, they should be given resources that will enable them to continue a pre-established mission, tied to an explicit philosophical perspective. In Rose Hall the mission was to facilitate the emergence of women who, in spite of their poverty, their lack of formal education and their disempowerment, had the strength, skills and, above all, the answers and visions to solve their own problems, claim their voice, and define their womanhood. This project succeeded.



*photo by Stephanie Martin*

Chris Ashton

## **CHAPTER 5**

# **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUING SUPPORT**

The story of Rose Hall is not over. Much has been said about the success and strengths of the project. Certainly the experience, determination, wisdom, and the concrete leadership and problem- solving skills the people of Rose Hall have developed will contribute to the community's ability to continue and sustain its development efforts. However, whether or not this project is sustainable is rooted in its vulnerabilities and how these are addressed. Two primary vulnerabilities need to be addressed at this time.

The first is the community's reliance on volunteer efforts. While this has been effective in the past, and while voluntarism will need to continue, the project has simply grown too complex and demanding to continue to function solely on the efforts of volunteers. It is important that Rose Hall be helped to find resources to employ individuals who can put full time efforts into basic management issues such as record keeping, supervision and day to day decision making. There are a number of ways to achieve this. They range from loans and grants to the government's practice of allowing communities to second individuals who are employed by the community and paid by the government.

Maintaining the centrality of women is another

potential vulnerability the Rose Hall community faces. It is this researcher's opinion that as the original leadership has worked itself out of jobs, the men who have been integrated into leadership roles are more self assured, skilled and willing to speak than the young women who have taken on leadership roles. WAND and the community need to consider ways to address the issues of "partnership" in development. Riane Eisler's concept of "partnership" (1988) refers to bringing the skills, knowledge and ways of being of men and women into synthesis and harmony as opposed to promoting competitions. She has even developed a series of workshops on this approach.

I am not suggesting that these workshops in their present form are appropriate for the Rose Hall community. I am suggesting that WAND needs to consider a new phase of interventions in Rose Hall. In the 1980's the training in self esteem and small group work was of great significance to the development of women leaders. The 1990's may call for another kind of focus that assures the leadership of the Working Group will be one of partnership between men and women.

# EPILOGUE

by Peggy Antrobus

In 1991 the Rose Hall Working Group celebrated its tenth anniversary. During those ten years the Group met weekly to monitor its projects and developments in the community. Membership also changed. Many new, and younger, members and men began to hold office in the Group.

One recent observation was that as the number of projects increased, the Group focused more on managing these than on engaging the community in the on-going process of needs assessment, project identification, and planning. There are now six major projects – the pre-school, the library, the community centre, the bakery, the van, and the adult education program. A new generation of leaders has been trained by WAND, and there has also been technical assistance to the bakery.

The community is increasingly concerned with issues of unemployment among youth and the spread of drugs among young men. The greater integration of the community into the larger society has been made possible by improved transport and communications technology (more telephones and television sets). This, along with the pervasiveness of consumerism and the market ideology facilitated by increased access to money, leads to an inevitable change in values. The challenge to the Working Group will be how to maintain the values of cooperation and sharing which



were such an important part of the success of this work. The Group is working on these issues.

October 1996

# APPENDIXES

## Appendix A: Individuals Interviewed

### FROM WAND

Peggy Antrobus  
Jennette Bell  
Patricia Ellis

### FROM ROSE HALL

Rodney Adams  
Dolores Ashton  
Doro Ashton  
Mr. Ashton  
Alphen Brown  
Hannah Brown  
Mr. Brown  
Golre Burke  
Millicent Chambers  
Janice Cyrus  
Cecil Ferdinand  
Edith Fedinard  
Mr. Garraway  
Chris Louis  
Mr. Louis  
Cerelyn Mason  
Vernette Mason

Mable Prince  
Norma Richards  
Annesta Rodney  
Wendy Rodney  
Calire Samuel  
Winnifred Samuel  
Kathleen Samuel  
Lenny Samuel  
Chaddis Stapleton  
Don Stapleton  
Donna Stapleton  
Robert Stapleton  
Virginia Stapleton  
Lennie Williams  
Mrs. Younger  
Ena, Lucy, Telidah  
Women at the well  
2 men on the hillside  
Women on donkey  
The Women Farmers  
2 men at Police  
Station  
Others

**FROM  
KINGSTOWN**

Lenny Adams  
Clem Ballah  
Owen Coffee  
Adrian Fraser  
Jerto Green  
Jeanie Mc Donalds  
Yvonne Patterson  
Carlton Williams

## **Appendix B**

### **Original Taxonomy of Indicators**

#### **I. Empowerment**

##### **Categories:**

Individual

Collective (at community level, at systems level)

##### **Indicators:**

Improved self-confidence and self-esteem

Acquisition of new skills (market skills, leadership and interpersonal skills, academic skills, i.e., skills which increase the individual's ability to acquire and use knowledge)

Voice (willingness to express oneself verbally in public, in the family)

Participation (willingness to contribute to community activities and undertakings)

Ability to deal with authority

Ability to meet challenges and solve problems on a daily basis

Pride in cultural and community accomplishments

Orientation toward the future

Cooperation, solidarity and inclusiveness

Knowledge about and access to resources, ability to determine own goals and freedom from manipulation, self-reliance

Ability of the Working Group to:

a) identify problems/needs, assess conditions, plan and carry out appropriate solutions;

- b) make decisions that all members can abide by;
- c) tolerate diversity among its membership;
- d) broaden the group to include others;
- e) share leadership and other responsibilities.

Knowledge about, support for and participation in projects from community members and "key" citizens (i.e., teachers, preachers, policemen, town officials, etc.)

Ability of the Working Group and the community at large to:

- a) acquire funds through grants, loans, etc.,
- b) raise money via income-generating activities;
- c) contact and interact with outside agencies and government officials;
- d) gain recognition for their achievements;
- e) solve problems and overcome adversity;
- f) fend off unwanted interventions;
- g) lobby for needed changes and interventions.

## **II. Improvement in the Status of Women**

### **Categories:**

Roles

Relationships

### **Indicators:**

Increased diversity in and respect for the roles that women play in the community and the family

- a) number and kinds of leadership roles held by women;
- b) regard accorded to women leaders;
- c) variety of occupations where women are found;

- d) ownership of and/or access to land which women can farm;
  - e) access to/control of income.
- Improved relationships between men and women, women and the family, i.e., children and others:
- a) degree of input women have in the family decision-making process;
  - b) quality of communication between spouses/partners;
  - c) degree and kinds of support women receive at home for their community development activities, i.e., assistance with or sharing of household responsibilities.

### **III. Improvement in the Quality of Life**

#### **Categories:**

Health

Education

Income

Distribution of Benefits

#### **Indicators:**

Improved nutritional level

Increased literacy, numeracy and other fundamental skills; children better prepared to succeed in a formal school system

More income, more access to basic needs

Benefits for the project reach all members of the community on an equitable basis, efforts are made to assess economically disadvantaged members of the community

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