

PROMOTING RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S ISSUES IN TANZANIA

The Women's Research and Documentation Project

Le Projet de recherche et de documentation des femmes, siégeant à l'Université de Dar es Salaam, fut établi en 1980 pour la promotion de la recherche sur la question féminine en Tanzanie, surtout en relation aux problèmes du développement. Ce rapport esquisse brièvement le travail éducatif et les activités du groupe.

The Women's Research and Documentation Project (WRDP) was established in 1980 by seventeen founding members to promote research on women's issues in Tanzania in relation to the existing laws and to problems and strategies of development. WRDP encourages documentation, writing, publication, seminars and the mass dissemination of educational materials. The Project is an affiliate of the International Council of Adult Education Women's programme under the African Adult Education Association; it is based at the University of Dar es Salaam.

WRDP is organised as a collective, and consists of Tanzanian and non-Tanzanian members. Approximately half the members work at the University of Dar es Salaam and half work in other institutions. The diversity of disciplines and work experiences of our members has enriched the collective. At the same time, participation in WRDP activities has contributed to the ongoing work of members. WRDP holds weekly meetings, as well as workshops and other pro-



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grammes. Application for membership is invited from any woman who accepts the objectives of WRDP, and is able and willing to participate fully in all of its collective activities.

OBJECTIVES

- The primary purpose of WRDP is to promote the study of women's issues in the context of problems of develop-

ment in Tanzania, the Third World and the global socio-economy.

- WRDP also promotes the production and publication of printed materials, seminars/workshops and other forms of education, dissemination and communication.
- WRDP is inter-disciplinary and focuses on the problems of women and socialist transformation. It critically examines relevant general theoretical

materials and materials dealing concretely with Tanzania and elsewhere.

- WRDP encourages and promotes a participatory approach in its study, research, documentation and dissemination activities.
- WRDP maintains, encourages useful working relationships and networks with other persons or organisations, nationally and internationally, in order to promote the critical study of women's issues. It also develops a supportive context and co-operative framework for members and other concerned individuals and groups.

ACTIVITIES

WRDP is in itself an adult education activity. It now seeks to broaden its adult education base in order to incorporate a wider range of women in its activities. These include a women's documentation centre which is used by members as well as others engaged in women-oriented studies. Individuals and groups within WRDP have written papers based on research and study activities which have been presented in various fora in the

University, and in international and national seminars and conferences. In 1982 WRDP produced a series of half-hour radio programs, in English and Swahili, that focussed on such important women's issues as sex education, school girl pregnancies, contraception, and violence against women. More recently, we held a successful workshop on "Law and Women: Theory and Practice."

The collective is currently engaged in a joint history project called "Changing Patterns of Life and Work in the City." Focussed on Dar es Salaam, the project combines archival research with personal life histories in order to relate personal lives to broader issues of social change (and vice versa). Both old and young women are participating in sharing their life histories. They include community development workers, bar girls and business women, domestic servants and nurses, peasants, landladies and others working in the 1950s. One outcome of the project will be a series of life histories to be published in the WRDP Pamphlet Series.

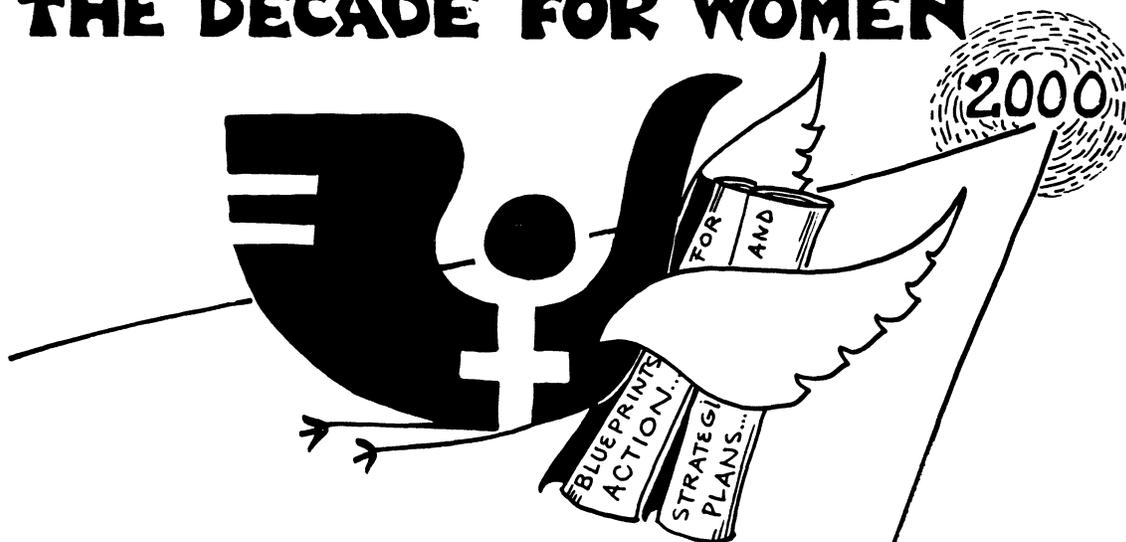
WRDP has now begun mimeographed publications in order to promote the wider dissemination of women's studies. The

intention of all the publications is to enhance the development of serious study about the women's question in Tanzania. A monthly newsletter in Kiswahili called *Muhtasari wa Habari Kuhusu Wanawake* carries news about WRDP and about relevant meetings organised by various institutions; summaries of research reports; book reviews; cuttings from newspapers; and readers' views. It is expected that the readers' views section will become the most dynamic part of the newsletter.

We also publish the Kiswahili Pamphlet Series. Some of the life histories produced during the life history project in Dar es Salaam will be published here, as well as reports on research and other materials. Research reports and working papers are also published in English; these include selections from the many papers presented for seminar discussion in WRDP sessions.

The Women's Research and Documentation Project (WRDP) can be contacted at P.O. Box 35108, University of Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

THE DECADE FOR WOMEN



1985 AND FORWARD TO THE YEAR 2000!

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