THE NEXUS OF GENDER AND ALTERNATIVE TRADE:

A FEMINIST ANALYSIS

by

Kelli L. Kryzanowski

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Abstract

Coffee is an important and highly traded commodity in the international marketplace. However, the production and sale of coffee has created an unfair trading system where small-scale peasant producers are greatly disadvantaged. In response to this unfair system, a movement called alternative trade, which is directed by the International Federation for Alternative Trade (IFAT), is working to give small-scale producers of coffee a more stable market and opportunities for social development. However, no information is available as to whether the needs of women, who are producers of coffee and labourers on cooperatively owned plantations, are being met. Therefore, the central question posed is: To what extent, if at all, do alternative trade coffee cooperatives have the potential to meet the practical and strategic gender needs of women coffee workers?

The question has been answered through the application of feminist development approaches to three case studies; two focused on craft cooperatives and one on a coffee cooperative. Analyzing three case studies through Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD) lenses, have helped to discern the extent to which practical and strategic gender needs are being met. The information used for the analysis was made available from both written literature and the original research I conducted in Guatemala.

The findings suggest that craft cooperatives and the coffee cooperative do have the potential to meet practical and, to a lesser extent, strategic gender needs. However, meeting strategic gender needs are not of primary concern to both the IFAT and the male cooperative managers. Strategic gender needs are being met to a certain capacity indirectly through participation and occasional awareness-raising in the craft cooperatives. Coffee cooperatives need to learn from the positive outcomes of the craft

cooperatives. This suggests some important implications, both for practical policy direction for IFAT and for further research. The significance of this study is that alternative trade development projects have potential to help women in the Third World meet crucial practical and strategic gender needs.

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INTRODUCTION: THE NEXUS OF GENDER AND FAIR TRADE

I. Introduction

Coffee is the second most highly traded commodity in the world after oil. Modern society is fueled by this rich, dark drink, with Canadians consuming an average of 640 cups per person each year.[1] What this statistic does not reveal is the exploitation that coffee plantation workers and small-scale farmers often experience during the production and sale of coffee. Multinational corporations from wealthy industrialized countries have the world coffee market under their control. During the 1990s, approximately 70 percent of the coffee bought and sold in commodity markets throughout the world was controlled by four multinational corporations: Philip Morris, Nestle, Procter and Gamble and Sara Lee.[2] As a result of this domination, large multinational corporations have the potential to influence the economies of coffee growing countries.

This global domination of the coffee industry forces unorganized small-scale producers of coffee into a financially precarious situation. Due to their power and size, multinational corporations deliberately manipulate the supply of and demand for coffee and therefore control the price. This manipulation of the market is accomplished by maintaining control of contracts with coffee plantations and also through the direct control of the land used for the cultivation of coffee in Third World countries. This domination leaves small-scale producers vulnerable to the influence multinational corporations hold within the international marketplace and the economies of the Third World countries in which they operate. For example, the annual sales of the companies

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[1]Laure Waridel, *Coffee With A Cause: Moving Towards Fair Trade*, (Montreal: Canadian Council for the Arts, 1997), 11.

[2]Ibid., 30.

listed above often exceed the Gross National Product (GNP) of many of the countries that use their landbase to produce the beans.[3]

In response to the inequalities resulting from the domination of multinational corporations in the global trade of coffee, there has been an emergence of alternative trade organizations (ATOs). ATOs are development organizations that work with Third World producers to create positive change in coffee producing communities such as paying a fair wage for labour and produce and increasing access to healthcare and education. ATOs are concerned with creating non-exploitive, direct links between Southern small-scale producers, such as coffee farmers, and Northern consumers. Through education and awareness of the financial, health and environmental issues small-scale farmers and plantation workers experience, ATOs work to empower producers in the Third World and individual consumers in wealthy industrialized countries. This educational process leads consumers to make informed and socially conscious choices about the products they purchase and leads many to make choices that support the work of ATOs.

Guided by the International Federation of Alternative Trade (IFAT), ATOs strive to provide a holistic policy formulation with locally sustainable strategies. Using participatory and self-help measures, they attempt to meet communities' basic needs through flexible community development projects that are relevant to local requirements and customs.[4] Unlike the mainstream international marketplace where multinational corporations operate, northern-based ATOs are not concerned about profits for themselves but rather "aim to pay as much as possible, not as little as possible, to the producer, [while offering] goods on the market at competitive prices or at prices that are

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[3]Ibid.

[4]Joan Archer, "Women's Organizations and Economic Reform: From the Grassroots to International Cooperation," In *Cooperation South United Nations 50th Anniversary Issue: Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries*, (New York: United Nations Press, 1995), 63.

acceptable to consumers because they know that the extra they pay is going to those who are in need."[5] As a result, ATOs circumvent the multinational corporations who control the majority of the world's trade in coffee and strive to increase the standard of living in coffee producing communities in the Third World. However, there is a concern that the development projects supported by ATOs are gender-blind and do not benefit men and women equally.

Given the above, IFAT is interested in power relations between multinational corporations and the poor and in increasing the well-being of the poor. It is stated in its Code of Practice that members must "ensure equality of employment opportunities for both men and women who suffer from the exploitation of their labour and the effects of poverty and racial, cultural or gender bias; and provide an opportunity for all individuals to grow and reach their potential."[6] However, very little research has been conducted on the extent to which women have equal employment opportunities. Therefore, this thesis seeks to answer the following question: To what extent, if at all, do alternative trade coffee cooperatives have the potential to meet the practical and strategic gender needs of women coffee workers? This thesis will shed light on this question by using women in development (WID) and gender and development (GAD), development approaches, alternative trade craft cooperative case studies and a coffee cooperative case study.

Since the United Nations Decade for the Advancement of Women (1975-1985), it has been demonstrated by feminist scholars and activists from both the North and the South that many development strategies implemented by governments and well-meaning non-governmental organizations (NGOs) disadvantage poor women and their

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[5]Michael Barratt-Brown, *Fair Trade: Reform and Realities in the International Trading System*, (London: Zed Books, 1993), 163.

[6]www.ifat.org, June 10, 1999.

children more than any other population.[7] In many countries women perform a high percentage of the agricultural labour required for the production of primary commodities such as coffee, especially low-skilled and unmechanized labour, and receive the lowest pay, work the longest hours and own only a fraction of the world's property.[8] Women are the world's poorest, most exploited and most disadvantaged agricultural workers. In addition, when women work on cash crops for export they have less time to cultivate subsistence crops for family consumption and sale. Does this situation change for women who work with or belong to an alternative trade organization?

Using feminist development approaches and two craft cooperative case studies and a case study of the alternative trade coffee cooperative *La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto*/The Voice that Cries in the Desert, in San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala, this thesis examines the intersection of gender and alternative trade. The craft cooperatives are primarily focused on women and show that when focused specifically on women, alternative trade cooperatives have the potential to meet women's practical and strategic gender needs. Within the coffee cooperative, women are not the primary focus. They work with both men and women as direct cooperative members and casual labourers working as coffee bean pickers and as sweepers and rakers on the drying patio of the coffee processing plant. To discern the extent to which their needs have the potential to be met, this thesis will focus on two areas for analysis: the women who are direct

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[7]For extensive analysis of the ways in which poor women are disadvantaged by many development strategies please see the following: Archer, 1995.; Caren Grown and Gita Sen, *Women, Development and the Economic Crisis: Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1986).; Ana Isla, "Women, Development and the Market Economy," In *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme: Women and the Environment*, Vol. 13, no. 3, (1993), 28-34.; Maria Mies, "Do We Need A New 'Moral Economy'?", *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme: Bridging North and South, Patterns of Transformation*, Vol. 17, no. 2, (1997), 12-21.; Vandana Shiva, "Economic Globalization, Ecological Feminism, and Sustainable Development," *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme: Bridging North and South, Patterns of Transformation*, Vol. 17, no. 2, (1997), 22-27.

[8]Janet Momsen, *Women and Development in the Third World*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 1-2.

members of the cooperative and the women who are coffee bean pickers working as casual labourers.

While 12.6% of the cooperative's membership are women, and women are included in the decision-making body of the coffee cooperative, I will demonstrate that this alternative trade coffee cooperative is gendered and the development strategy in general is gendered. I argue that the cooperative directors do not take into consideration the different needs of women and therefore assume that both men and women benefit equally from their association with the cooperative. Women certainly do benefit from their association with alternative trade coffee organizations. They receive a fair wage for their labour and produce and also have access to healthcare that is less expensive than that which is privately provided, or have access to free healthcare. They also have access to free education for their children. Both basic strategic and practical gender needs are being met in these instances. However, women nonetheless are disadvantaged relative to male cooperative members. Opportunities for advanced agricultural education are limited and basic equity issues such as directly paying women, and not their husbands or fathers, for work performed must be addressed. The disadvantages women experience in *La Voz* coffee cooperative can be primarily attributed to the patriarchal and *machismo* attitude found throughout Central America. However, globalization and the role Guatemalan women played in the thirty-six year civil war have certainly helped advance women's rights and their demands for equality. This thesis and the concluding recommendations are a way in which the voices and needs of women in Guatemala can be heard and hopefully, acted upon.

II. Definitions

The term "gender" refers to the social or material criteria members of a particular population use to identify each other as men, women or any other culturally defined category.[9] Gender refers to the "social meanings given to being either a man or a woman in a given society, and to the expectations held as to the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behavior of men and women."[10] It is important to recognize gender roles because within different societies men and women perform different tasks, fill different spaces and have different needs. In addition, one's ethnicity or economic standing may also determine a person's place within a particular society and therefore male and female roles may differ within that society depending on such criteria. When taking gender roles into consideration, it becomes apparent that development planners need to understand the sexual division of labour and its implications for control over resources. More importantly, they need to consider household dynamics such as issues of power and heirarchy and how these issues relate to the control and distribution of family resources.

Central to this thesis is the identification of needs; practical and strategic. At the most basic level, needs as defined in this thesis are derived from the 1976 International Labour Office standards. These standards were created to guide development planners so that "development planning should include, as an explicit goal, the satisfaction of an absolute level of basic needs."[11] Thus, basic needs are defined as

> the minimum requirements of a family for personal consumption: food shelter, clothing; [they] imply access to essential services, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, transport, health and education; [they] imply that each person available for and willing to work should have an adequately remunerated job; It should further imply the satisfaction of needs of a more qualitative nature: a

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[9]Martha C. Ward, *A World Full of Women*, (Needham Heights: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 278.

[10]Kate Young, *Planning Development With Women: Making a World of Difference,* (London: MacMillan Press, 1993), 136.

[11]International Labour Organization, *Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A One-World Problem,* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976), 31.

> healthy, humane and satisfying environment, and popular participation in the making of decisions that affect the lives and livelihood of the people and individual freedoms.[12]

The basic needs identified above are similar across cultures: an adequate food supply; convenient access to safe water; clothing; and shelter suitable to climate and culture. These needs, among others, are identified in this thesis as practical needs. Needs related but not limited to, participation in decision-making are identified as strategic needs. These will be discussed in detail below.

However, within development projects there is no uniform way of interpreting what is a need. There is general agreement about broadly defined human needs such as food, shelter and water, but the way in which these needs are fulfilled is open to interpretation. WID based approaches have been criticized for taking an "expert needs type approach, which situates women as welfare clients and thus reduces the possibilities for local women of gaining power to influence change."[13] A preferable approach is to let women define what it is that they truly do need. Through awareness-raising and discussion sessions, women are able to define these for themselves. The ways in which this can be done are further defined below.

> Whether through responding to imposed programs, gaining access to new circles, through education, politics or other avenues, women may be exposed to new ways of constituting the meaning of their experiences, ways that appear to address their interests more directly and which help lead to an understanding of the social production of the problems they face as a subordinate group. It is through this process of attempting to identify interests more clearly that women come to interpret their needs and develop the struggle for change. What we are seeing in these situations is the opening to women of the possibility of new modes of subjectivity, new ways of being an individual, which offers both a perspective and a choice. It is from this change of consciousness that resistance and struggles for political change emerge.[14]

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[12]Ibid., 7.

[13]Janet Price, "Who Determines Need? A Case Study of a Women's Organisation in North India," In *International Development Studies Bulletin,* Vol. 23, no. 1, (1992), 50.

[14]Ibid.

While this research does essentially take an expert-based approach, I feel that in this initial analysis the needs defined by me act as a very general starting point for analysis. The purpose of this research is to begin to discern the extent to which alternative trade coffee cooperatives have the potential to meet the practical and strategic gender needs of women coffee workers. Further research will require that one work directly with the women cooperative members so they can determine their needs for themselves.

Maxine Molyneux has outlined the types of gender interests, practical and strategic, that must be considered in gender analysis.[15] These interests are based on women's prioritized concerns and relate to the specific challenges they face within society. Once these interests or concerns are identified they are then translated into practical and strategic gender needs that must be met in order to satisfy the concern. Practical gender interests refer to those conditions that are directly identified with daily human survival and stem from women's subordinate position within the division of labour. These interests are translated into practical gender needs such as access to clean drinking water and food. As Caroline Moser points out, "practical gender needs are therefore usually in response to an immediate perceived necessity that is identified by women within a specific context."[16] Practical gender needs "do not generally entail a strategic goal such as women's emancipation or gender equality...nor do they challenge the prevailing forms of subordination even though they arise directly out of them."[17] The primary difference between basic needs and practical gender needs is that practical gender needs are defined specifically by women and relate directly to their duties as primary caregivers within the family unit.

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[15]Maxine Molyneux, "Mobilisation Without Emanicipation? Women's Interests, State and Revolution in Nicaragua," In *Feminist Studies,* Vol. 11, no. 2, (1985) 227-254.

[16]Caroline Moser, "Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs," In *Changing Perceptions: Writings on Gender and Development*, Edited by Tina Wallace and Candida March, (Oxford: Oxfam Press, 1991), 160.

[17]Molyneux, "Mobilisation Without Emanicipation?" 11.

The strategic gender interests and needs this thesis identifies stem directly from women's subordinate position relative to men. Strategic gender needs generally include: "the abolition of the sexual division of labour; the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and child care; the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination such as rights to own land, or property, or access to credit; the establishment of political equality; freedom of choice over childbearing; and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women."[18]

It is strategic and practical gender needs that are primarily used as potential planning and analytical tools in this thesis. However, this model of analysis is not without criticism. Kate Young states that the usefulness of identifying practical and strategic gender needs as a tool of analysis can become nullified if it is used in a "mechanical, non-dynamic way: as a blueprint."[19] There is a concern that identifying needs in this manner can lead to certain needs being identified as nothing "more than a women-focused set of basic needs."[20] Young further argues that in projects where men are being introduced to WID issues, strategic needs can be set aside as feminist concerns and therefore are essentially irrelevant to planners and development practitioners.[21] She suggests that a third concept, transformatory potential, might be useful when utilizing practical and strategic gender needs as an analysis tool.

Transformatory potential recognizes that women must closely look at the ways in which practical needs can transform into strategic needs. For example, she looks at three ways in which women can earn an income. They can do piece-work within the home, they can set up a cooperative and work collectively or they can work at a factory.

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[18]Ibid.
[19]Kate Young, *Planning Development With Women: Making a World of Difference,* (London: MacMillan Press, 1993), 155.
[20]Ibid.
[21]Ibid.

The first example satisfies the practical need of income generation but it leaves women isolated and can further add to their workday. The third example leads to an unflexible workday where men are likely to be in a position of power.[22] The second example is most likely to add to women's sense of self-worth and agency because forming a locally-based collectivity can provide conditions for a more empowering experience.[23]

I recognize this potential weakness in the analytical model I have chosen. However, the women in the two craft cooperative case studies have already made steps toward empowerment by forming into cooperatives. They have, through consciousness raising, utilized the concept of transformatory potential. As well, when first attempting to understand the roles women perform in the three cooperatives and within the family unit, a systematic and organized scheme, such as the matrix used in this thesis, is necessary for logical categorization. Through careful consideration, I am constantly aware of the ways in which each need informs other issues. I feel that the use of practical and strategic gender needs as an analysis tool in this thesis offer a logical structure to my analysis. However, the use of practical and strategic gender needs is also fluid and I recognize how the two work together to empower women.

This thesis identifies the primary strategic gender interest to be the creation of greater equality between men and women within the case study cooperative. To reach this end, I focus on the extent to which strategic and practical gender needs have the potential to be met through the empowerment or GAD model. This model is preferred because it directly challenges mainstream development approaches that flow in a North to South manner. GAD originates from Third World women themselves and offers a way for women to meet strategic gender needs through "bottom-up mobilization around

[22]Ibid., 156.
[23]Ibid.

practical gender needs."[24] It is a potentially challenging approach that puts the women desiring change in charge of their future. As a researcher and activist, the GAD model allows me to work with Third World women on a level where we can mutually and respectfully benefit each other. Through the expression of their strategic gender interests, connection with funding agencies in the North can be made to help meet the practical and strategic needs that will act as one of many vehicles used for achieving those interests.

III. Case Study

At first glance, alternative trade represents an effort made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to address the imbalances and injustices suffered by the poor in the Third World. Women's crafting cooperatives, such as those analyzed in Chapter One, show that alternative trade projects have addressed women's practical gender needs, and to a lesser extent strategic gender needs, through income-generating, professional development and educational projects. However, analysis of the extent to which women's practical and strategic gender needs are met in coffee cooperatives is especially lacking.

Third World activists have written about the bleak lives of female coffee workers on large Latin American plantations, but there has been no research published regarding the extent to which women are integrated into, and benefiting from, alternative trade associations with coffee cooperatives in Latin America.[25]

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[24]Moser, Theory, Practice and Training, 74.

[25]Margaret Hooks, *Guatemalan Women Speak,* (Washington, D.C.: Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean, 1993), 3-6. Rigoberta Menchu *I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*, Edited by Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, (London: Verso Publications, 1984), 21-27 and 38-42.

The field research conducted at *La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto* / The Voice that Cries in the Desert (hereafter, *La Voz*) coffee cooperative in San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala is the primary focus. This particular coffee cooperative was chosen as the case study for three reasons. First, much of Guatemala's history relates directly to the cultivation of coffee, it produces some of the world's finest gourmet arabica coffee beans and depends on coffee for export earnings. Second, the women's movement in Guatemala has expanded since the end of the thirty-six year civil war. Third, *La Voz* cooperative is a well-established cooperative.

In the nineteenth century, with the expansion of the Industrial Revolution, the consumption of coffee greatly increased. The increase in demand for this stimulating beverage prompted businessmen to search for new sources of supply, which included Guatemala. By 1871 the export of coffee accounted for approximately half of the country's export sales.[26] However, the coffee industry in Guatemala has been an expression of social and economic power since the nineteenth century. This power has created a dynastic elite that has played a decisive role in shaping the country's political institutions. Exploitation of both Mayan land and labour since the late 1800s has been common, and many indigenous people were dispossessed of their land as the government and foreign investors desired their fertile land for coffee plantations. The modern-day results of these measures are the extraordinary power that the coffee elite continues to hold over much of the indigenous population and the ensuing poverty that is experienced by many indigenous peoples. Since alternative trade development strategies have been introduced into lesser developed nations in an attempt to eliminate discrimination and to offer equal employment opportunities for men and women who

[26]David McCreery, *Rural Guatemala: 1760-1940*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 161.

experience economic exploitation, a coffee cooperative that trades with northern-based ATOs and is comprised primarily of Mayan people is a suitable case study.

It is important to note that while the first half of Chapter Four focuses on the brutal exploitation and repression of the indigenous Mayan population of Guatemala, by no means are the Mayan people to be portrayed as helpless victims. Mayan Indians in Guatemala have always been strong and politically active, with sixty uprisings and one revolt documented between the 17th Century and the present.[27] I wish to convey to the reader the strength, pride and courage that the indigenous Guatemalan population has displayed in the face of extreme brutality.

In particular, it is important for the reader to understand that this research took place only two years after the end of the thirty-six year war (1960-1996) and that this posed some problems for me as a researcher. In 1954, the Guatemalan government was overthrown by an American-backed "Liberation Army" defending the economic interests of the United Fruit Company and the Cold War paranoia of the United States. The new right-wing government reversed land and social reforms made the previous decade, had labour leaders and other opponents executed, drove many Guatemalans into exile, repealed universal suffrage, reversed agrarian reform and outlawed labour confederations, political parties and peasant organizations.[28] By 1960 the country was deep in a civil war.

Over the coming decades Guatemala experienced successive waves of state terror, assassinations, "disappearances", torture, and massive military campaigns in the countryside. These were in response to upsurges in popular organization and pressure

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[27]Ibid., 17.

[28]Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes," In *The Women, Gender and Development Reader*, Edited by Nalini Visvanathan, Lynn Duggan, Laurie Nisonoff and Nan Wiegersma, (London: Zed Books, 1999), 83.

for political change. Poverty, lack of land, and political exclusion remained the norm for most Guatemalans, especially the majority indigenous population.[29]

In December 1996, after much negotiation, representatives of the government and the guerilla movement signed the Guatemalan Peace Accords. It is estimated that, by the time the Accords were signed, the thirty-six year civil war had left between 150,000 and 200,000 civilians dead or "disappeared."[30]

This history has left an understandable legacy of mistrust and fear in the indigenous population. The fact that the counter-insurgency program was initiated and supported by the American government created issues for me as a white, North American researcher in Guatemala. I was treated very kindly by the Guatemalans with whom I worked and it is possible that some reacted with excessive kindness and generosity because of vestiges of fear that remained from the war. As well, as discussed in the methods chapter, many indigenous people were forced to sign documents that falsely accused them of crimes. For me as a researcher this resulted in an ethical dilemma because many people refused to sign the consent forms required by the University of Northern British Columbia Ethics Committee. I felt that it was inappropriate to impose the university's specific written form of consent and sought a verbal consent instead.

It is likewise important to express that not all people of Mayan descent have had the same experience and that Mayan women cannot be described as a monolithic group. The use of 'women' as a group is inherently problematic because it assumes an "ahistorical, universal between women based on a generalized notion of their subordination."[31] However, this thesis attempts to understand the place and issues of

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[29]Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America. "Peace, What Peace? Confronting Central America's New Economic War," 1998. Unpublished.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

women coffee growers and agricultural workers within the alternative trade development model so that effective and culturally relative political and social action, according to the wishes of the women involved with the cooperative, can be taken. I am continually aware of the researcher-researched dichotomy and the potentially colonizing nature of such relationships. As an outsider, it is important to recognize that "no matter how good, bad, or indifferent our work is, we will not have to live with the consequences of decisions based on our work."[32] I recognize that I do not and cannot approach this research from an objective point of view. As a member of a dominant society I bring with me a myriad of assumptions viewed through the lenses of my experience and culture. I also recognize that my position in society holds a certain degree of power because of my origin from the dominant global culture. However, the intended purpose of this work is to help to improve the lives of women who are members and workers at alternative trade coffee cooperatives. Therefore, I always work hard to become an ally and I wish to work toward creating equitable relationships that will, through the voices of the women themselves, create the desired change.[33]

Another reason for the focus on Guatemala is that since the end of the thirty-six year Guatemalan Civil war in 1996, the Mayan people have struggled with a peace accord that is designed to create a new society that is stable and truly democratic. There is a generation of young women in Guatemala today who are working to find their place in this new society that is remaking itself. Mayan women from traditional communities have always known 'their place' in society and it has traditionally been the men who are free to come and go.[34] However, during the civil war tens of thousands of

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[32]Linda Archibald and Mary Crnkovich, "Intimate Outsiders: Feminist Research in a Cross-Cultural Environment," In *Changing Methods: Feminists Transforming Practice,* Edited by Sandra Burt and Lorraine Code, (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1995), 113.

[33]Becoming an ally means that I wish to look not only at the ways in which I experience oppression within the society that I live but to also to work to understand and supports the struggles of others. Anne Bishop, *Becoming an Ally: Breaking the Cycle of Oppression,* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1994).

[34]Philip Coulter, "Warp and Weft," *Ideas,* Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, February 17, 2000.

men were murdered by the Guatemalan army, and many ancient traditions have come to an end. During this time, many women fulfilled traditional male roles or left Guatemala to surrounding countries, such as Mexico, for their personal safety. While in other countries they received an education, which changed many women's views on what is fair and reasonable treatment in the world today. As a result, women are seeking greater autonomy, are organizing for change and are recognizing that they have rights as citizens.[35] Increasing secularization of Guatemalan society, ideas about social justice and human rights, and ideas about how the country should be organized have led many Mayan women to begin to make demands about the type of society in which they want to live.[36] Women are playing important roles in the creation of this new society and are questioning how they can keep their culture alive while striving for greater equality within Guatemala. This desire for change makes Guatemala, in general, and *La Voz* coffee cooperative, in particular, an excellent candidate for the examination of the extent to which alternative trade development strategies have the capacity and the right to enact change within the social and cultural fabric of a country.

Finally, *La Voz* is an established cooperative which has completed development projects and has a formal constitution which gives the group both structure and validity. It also falls under the IFAT umbrella. While conducting research in Guatemala, I was directed to *La Voz* by the general manager of the larger cooperative *Groupo de los Catorce* / Group of Fourteen. *Groupo de los Catorce,* which has 4180 members, 90% of whom are Mayan, from twenty-one small-scale farmer cooperatives, is the over-seer of the small-scale affiliated cooperatives.[37] The small-scale cooperatives sell their coffee beans to *Groupo de los Catorce,* who in turn sell a portion of their coffee beans to Equal

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[35]Ibid.
[36]Ibid.
[37]*Groupo de los Catorce* information sheet, given to the researcher by the cooperative manager during an interview.

Exchange, the largest alternative trade coffee distributor in the United States. Each cooperative that sells its beans to *Groupo de los Catorce* is required to adhere to the policies set out by IFAT. Therefore, the extent to which this cooperative complies with the policies of IFAT, and the extent to which women's practical and strategic gender needs are being met by the cooperative can be analyzed.

IV. Chapter Overview

This thesis is divided into six chapters including this introduction and the conclusion. Chapter One contextualizes feminist development approaches and will identify the two main frameworks (women in development and gender and development) in which women's labour, both productive and reproductive, have been utilized by development projects. This theoretical body of literature draws upon the nexus of gender, labour and access to resources and will show that women and men perform different roles in society, have differing levels of control over resources and as a result, have different needs, practical and strategic. These differences must be considered by development practitioners.[38]

Chapter Two identifies the criteria for alternative trade organizations as set out in the constitution of the IFAT and will discuss how the alternative trade mandate attempts "to oppose discrimination and ensure equality of employment opportunities for both men and women who suffer from exploitation."[39] It will examine two projects that have been undertaken by alternative trade organizations and will assess gender-based implications and the impacts these projects have had on women as well as the impacts they have had on the well-being of the community. These impacts will be shown through a set of

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[38]Caroline Moser, *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*, (London: Routledge, 1993), 8.

[39] www.ifat.org, June 10, 1999.

matrices adapted from the work of Caroline Moser. They are developed from the definitions of practical gender needs (PGN) and strategic gender needs (SGN), women's triple burden and feminist development policies. The two matrices are central to the analytical framework and show how these theoretical definitions translate practically at the project level.

Chapter Three discusses the methodologies I used, the ethical dilemmas I faced while conducting the research in Guatemala and provides a chronology of the research process. While doing my research in Guatemala, I was aware of many of these ethical dilemmas but I have only more recently come to the feminist methodologies that heightened my awareness about ethical maters and contributed to my ability to give expression to the dilemmas I faced. As well, I discuss how the use of "gatekeepers" aided me in the development and collection of my research data. This chapter is particularly important because I recognize issues of power and how my personal position in life affected this research.

Chapter Four analyzes the extent to which *La Voz* coffee cooperative has the potential to meet women's practical and strategic gender needs. I do this by discussing the history of the Mayan people in Guatemala in order to set the context for the precarious situation in which many small-scale coffee producers live. This chapter also provides a detailed description of the Guatemalan coffee industry in general and the cooperative *La Voz* in particular. This shows the different ways in which coffee plantations and cooperatives operate and the effects they have on both the community in general and on women in particular.

Finally, the Conclusion discusses the practical and theoretical importance of this research within the field of development and the extent to which it adds to the body of feminist development literature. It argues that ATOs need to have a greater focus on the

fact that women and men perform different roles in society and have varying levels of control over resources. As a result, they have different needs, both practical and strategic, which must be considered by alternative trade development practitioners. It suggests that the craft cooperatives and the coffee cooperative have the potential to successfully meet practical and strategic gender needs even though meeting strategic gender needs are not of primary concern. Strategic gender needs are being met to a certain capacity indirectly through participation and occasional awareness-raising. I revisit ethical and methodological issues encountered during the research process and discuss the lessons I learned while conducting this research. Finally, recommendations are made regarding further research on this topic.

V. Conclusion

In summary, this thesis attempts to answer the question: To what extent, if at all, do alternative trade coffee cooperatives have the potential to meet the practical and strategic gender needs of women coffee workers? Original field research which I conducted in Guatemala at the *La Voz Que Clama en El Desierto* coffee cooperative in San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala comprises the primary case study. Two other case studies that have a particular focus on women are also analyzed from a feminist development approach point of view. The results of this qualitative study can be used to evaluate the possibility for generating new and culturally appropriate approaches to alternative trade development projects in the Third World. The intended goal of this research is to understand how women are affected by alternative trade, the extent to which alternative trade is gendered and the extent to which women's lives can potentially be improved through their association with cooperatives that operate under IFAT principles.

CHAPTER ONE: WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT THEORIES

I. Introduction

In the mid-1980s, scholars, activists and development practitioners began to question the extent to which women in development (WID) policies and projects helped women achieve practical and strategic gender needs. Women in development approaches, as shown in this chapter, have focused exclusively on "the roles, rights and responsibilities *specifically* of women" in the development process while ignoring the power implications of the sexual division of labor. [1] Often women's projects have been slotted into mainstream development projects that subordinate women to men. Many projects have an Euro-North American focus with the values and mores of western culture which the "recipients" are expected to adopt.[2]

Conversely, the gender and development (GAD), or empowerment approach, "is about people taking control over their own lives: gaining the ability to do things, to set their own agendas, to change events in a way previously lacking."[3] It is emancipatory and challenging in nature, and therefore is not widely accepted by many development practitioners or Third World governments.[4] In many Third World countries there is an increase in political and ideological control over the population and a movement toward a GAD approach would greatly affect this high degree of control. Therefore, it often becomes difficult for NGOs from the North to receive permission to work with Third World women's grassroots organizations to help bring about change through an

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[1]Mandy Macdonald, ed. *Gender Planning in Development Agencies: Meeting the Challenge*, (Oxford: Oxfam, 1994), 15.

[2]Marilee Karl, *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making*, (London: Zed Books, 1995), 94-95.

[3]Kate Young, *Planning Development With Women: Making a World of Difference,* (London: MacMillan Press, 1993), 158.

[4]Caroline Moser, *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*, (London: Routledge, 1993), 78.

empowerment model.[5] However, the GAD approach has become increasingly popular with Third World women's grass-roots organizations and a few Northern-based development agencies. The GAD approach not only questions and challenges culturally accepted gender roles and the sexual division of labour, it also "considers women's condition of economic inequality *vis a vis* men in the same cultural strata...[and] attempts to incorporate questions of class, caste, and ethnicity into a gender based perspective."[6] In addition, the empowerment approach strives to create both individual change and collective action.[7] The GAD approach questions and challenges hierarchical structures within the private and public spheres and has helped many grassroots organizations create fundamental change within the patriarchal power structures that are inherent within all societies today.[8] It is the GAD approach that I favour as a development model that has the potential to create change for women in the Third World. This preference will be discussed below.

II. Chapter Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to review the WID and GAD literature and to outline the development approaches that define and give structure to the study of women and development. This information is important within the context of this thesis because these approaches give a systematic categorization of the numerous interventions that have been developed to aid Third World women.[9] Within many development projects concerning women, including alternative trade development projects, there are elements of one or more of each of the following approaches.

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[5]Ibid.
[6]Macdonald, *Gender Planning in Development*, 15.
[7]Young, *Planning Development With Women*, 158.
[8]For an extensive documentation of women's grass-roots empowerment projects see Karl, *Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision Making*, 110-119.
[9]Moser, *Theory, Practice and Training*, 55.

Therefore, a study of the WID/GAD approaches helps to lay the foundation for the analysis of the role of women in the Guatemalan case study in Chapter Three. The GAD approach offers a guideline for potential changes that can be made to the gender-blind treatment of women within the case study alternative trade coffee cooperative.

First, my study discusses the history of women in development starting with Esther Boserup's groundbreaking work and ending with more recent developments resulting from the United Nations Decade for Women. It outlines the predominant assumptions that have historically been made by planners working at the practical level within the mainstream international development paradigm. Secondly my study reviews two development approaches or frameworks: *women-in-development (WID) and gender-and-development (GAD).* It also discusses the *women-and-development* (WAD) approach (the intellectual origins of GAD) and explains why I do not place emphasis on this approach. Within the WID framework my study discusses numerous approaches (welfare, equity, anti-poverty, and efficiency) that have been, and continue to be, used by development practitioners in the Third World. The GAD emancipatory framework, its history and its current usage are also discussed. Through the review of the WID and GAD literature this chapter shows the evolution of feminist development approaches in the WID/GAD field. This information helps to discern the approaches used by the case study cooperative and aids in assessing areas for potential change that will help in meeting the practical and strategic gender needs of women within the cooperative.

III. The Evolution of the Practice

There are a number of events that were critical in bringing the women in development issue onto the agendas of the United Nations and international development agencies. Esther Boserup's pioneering work, *Woman's Role in Economic*

Development, published in 1970 became the touchstone for the already growing women in development field.[10] Boserup's study and critique of the popular concepts of the roles that women were assumed to fulfill in modernizing agricultural societies revolutionized the way many development planners viewed women's economic contributions in the Third World.[11] She emphasized that gender is a primary factor in the sexual division of labour and discussed how this division of labour is considered to be 'natural'. Finally, the numerous case studies Boserup conducted throughout the world began to reveal the particular ways in which women in the Third World are negatively impacted by "the hierarchical and exploitive structure of production associated with capitalism's penetration in the Third World."[12]

Boserup's research has since come under criticism for numerous reasons. First, her research over-simplified the roles and types of work women perform. Second, she focused on the modernization theory as the only theory of development and its singular emphasis on the importance of women's contribution to economic development.[13] Third, she focused only on women's production outside the home and neglected women's reproductive role, which is directly related to women's subordination. Finally, the work lacked a clear-cut feminist analysis of women's subordination.

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[10]Esther Boserup, *Women's Role in Economic Development*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970).

[11]For the purpose of this thesis the term "Third World" is not used as a pejorative for those living in the lesser developed nations but rather is aligned with the post-colonial nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America who adopted this term for *themselves* to differentiate them from the Western democracies, the First World, and colonial powers from whom the Third World nations gained independence after World War II. Sen and Grown in *Development, Crises and Alternative Visions,* state that the term is used "as a positive self- affirmation based on our struggles against the multiple oppressions of nation, gender, class, and ethnicity," 97.

[12]Lourdes Beneria and Gita Sen, "Accumulation, Reproduction and Women's Role in Economic Development Boserup Revisited," In *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 7, no. 2, (1981), 297.

[13]Supporters of the modernization theory believe that economic development can only take place linearly along the same path as the industrialized nations. Modernization theorists adhere to the belief that the Third World will only develop if there is a transferring of economic, political and cultural beliefs from the industrialized North to the poor countries in the South. For critiques of modernization theory see Sing C. Chew and Robert A. Denemark eds. *The Underdevelopment of Development: Essays in Honor of Andre Gunder Frank*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1996).

Despite these limitations, her research was critical in directing academic attention to the sexual division of labour and the ways in which women and men are differently impacted by the modernization and development processes. In spite of the criticisms noted above, Boserup's work generated increased interest on the women in development field. For example, western liberal feminists brought a new stream of research to the attention of scholars and policy-makers throughout the world.[14] They supported top-down legal and administrative strategies as a means to evoke change to ensure that women were incorporated into the increasingly international economic system,

Interest in and awareness of women's particular roles and levels of inequality in development programmes provoked a number of United Nations resolutions. Beginning in 1946, when the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women was formed, the members of the Commission had been unsuccessfully lobbying for an International Women's Conference.[15] In 1974 the UN General Assembly finally passed a resolution declaring 1975 as International Women's Year (IWY). By the end of IWY, and following the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City in 1975,[16] research and statistics revealed the abysmal political, economic and social condition of a vast number of women around the world. For example, this research revealed that globally, compared to men, women were grossly under-represented in governmental leadership positions, they had lower levels of education and fewer job opportunities than men, were found in lower paying and less prestigious jobs, and that in some countries women's

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[14]Eva M. Rathgeber, "WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice," In *Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 24, (1990), 489-502.

[15]Irene Tinker, *Persistent Inequalities: Women and World Development*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 28.

[16]The World Plan of Action and Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace was adopted at this time. The adoption of the World Plan of Action gave the WID movement an internationally ratified document which elaborated on the current obstacles experienced by women and on the measures required for the advancement of women.

social participation in community life was greatly hampered by strong discrimination within the family unit.[17]

In response to these findings the decade from 1976-1985 was declared as the United Nations Decade for Women (hereafter called the Women's Decade), and the three central themes of equality (the primary concern of North American and Western European women), development (the primary concern of Third World women), and peace (the primary concern of women from Eastern Europe) were agreed upon. During the Women's Decade there were two additional international conferences: the Copenhagen World Conference in 1980 and the Nairobi World Conference in 1985. A fourth conference was held in 1995 in Beijing.

There has been some debate as to how successful the Women's Decade was for the advancement of women and the extent to which women's practical and strategic needs were met within the development field.[18] However, the UN Decade for Women drew attention to the previously unrecognized contributions of, as well as constraints on, women worldwide. It was recognized that further data collection and research were needed to document the situation of women throughout the world. Opportunities for research and debate dramatically increased and expanded beyond the United Nations to academics, political and social institutions and grassroots organizations.

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[17]Karl, *Women and Empowerment*, 1-6.

[18]For a well-rounded international view of development and women see *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme: Bridging North and South, Patterns of Transformation*, Vol. 17, no. 3 (1997), 12-21.

IV. Examination of the Development Approaches

There has been much criticism from women in both developed and Third World countries regarding the extent to which women's practical and strategic gender needs are met by the development projects that fall within the parameters of the WID and GAD approaches. These approaches are not static and they do not follow a strict chronological time frame, rather many of them appear at the same time. As well, it is important to note that development agencies have sometimes implemented a combination of the following approaches making it difficult to place projects into rigid categories since one project or programme may have an overlap of two or even three development approaches. However, in order to understand the approaches, their inter-relationship, and the critiques of each, they will be described as ideal and separate approaches.[19] The following development approaches, with the exclusion of the welfare approach, are the result of the research and conventions that took place during the Women's Decade.

It is important to note that these approaches fundamentally grew from critiques of mainstream Western development theories. Western development theory has been shaped by the dominant "Western patriarchal and capitalist notion of economic progress that assumes change is linear."[20] As a result, the development process was viewed solely through the lens of "Western rationality and scientific knowledge."[21] This view is limited to Western cultural values and even today is often considered to be universally valid. The male-biased lens does not consider the specific interests or needs of Third World women and, therefore, does not consider the myriad of ways in which

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[19]Moser, *Theory, Practice and Training*, 58.

[20]Charlotte Bunch and Roxanna Carrillo, "Feminist Perspectives on Women in Development," In *Persistent Inequalities Women and World Development*, Edited by Irene Tinker, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 75.

[21]Sue Ellen Charlton, *Women in Third World Development*, (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1984), 8.

development projects administered in this manner negatively impact women. Those concerned with creating a development model that benefits women have analyzed the negative effects of such projects on Third World women. As the following analysis of the development approaches show, many of the policy approaches have not helped to alleviate the triple burden or women's subordination to men. The following approaches relate to the WID/GAD dichotomy because together they define and give structure to the study of women within development.

a. The Welfare Approach

The oldest and, according to Caroline Moser, still the most popular women in development approach is the welfare approach. Introduced in the 1950s and 1960s to the Third World, welfare is the earliest policy approach concerned with women in developing countries.[22] Welfare, as emergency relief, focused primarily on 'vulnerable' groups, such as the disabled, the elderly, children and women, who were identified as in need of hand-outs such as food, clothing and free medical attention. Practical gender needs were met through the provisioning of relief aid directly to widowed and poor women. The first income generating projects, following strict gendered categories and focusing on women's reproductive roles within the family as mothers and wives, were implemented. It is important to note that the implementation of the welfare process was made possible, effective and inexpensive, through the volunteer work of middle-class women who were responsible for the distribution of the relief aid.[23]

The welfare approach focused on social development. Practitioners of the welfare approach are not concerned with women being active producers and providers of their needs, but consider women to be passive and needy, unable to provide for

[22]Moser, *Planning and Development*, 58.
[23]Charlton, *A World Full of Women*, 58-62.

themselves. Therefore, by viewing women as unable to provide for themselves, women become the problem to be fixed and aided. Practitioners did not view the structures that block women's access to resources as the problem.

Practitioners of the welfare approach make three assumptions about women's role in society and in the development process. First, women are not considered to be full actors in the development process. They are thought to be only passive recipients of development through their husbands and fathers and are not considered to play an active role in the economic development of the nation. Second, motherhood is considered to be the primary role of women in society, and the purpose of the welfare approach is to make women better mothers. Finally, in conjunction with the previous point, the raising of children for the workforce is considered to be "the most effective role for women in all aspects of economic development."[24]

Typical welfare development programmes focus on the mother-child dyad in what are called Mother-Child Health Programmes (MCH).[25] MCH, concerned with pregnant and nursing mothers as well as with women with children under five years of age, teach women about nutrition, family health, and hygiene. Projects that deal with healthcare are important for the creation of healthy families but often this education misses the mark. Concentrating solely on the health of children ignores the fact that issues of power and the unequal distribution of food within the household can jeopardize the health of women and children. By failing to recognize issues of power and the distribution of resources within the household, such projects only treat the symptoms of ill-heath by failing to recognize that healthy and well-nourished mothers produce healthy off-spring.[26]

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[24]Ibid., 60.
[25]Ibid.
[26]Tinker, *Persistent Inequalities*, 36.

Since the 1970s, welfare projects and policies have expanded their portfolio to include population and birth control programmes. Development practitioners attributed much of Third World poverty to rapid population growth and assumed that through the dissemination of knowledge about family planning and contraceptives, the numbers of people living in absolute poverty could be reduced. They failed to recognize the economic value of children to families living a subsistence lifestyle and that "an overworked mother will desire children to help her today and support her tomorrow."[27]

Currently, income generating projects teach poor women skills such as knitting, weaving and crocheting so they can earn "pin-money" to be used for purchasing extra food and clothing. These programmes assume that women are predominantly within the home as housewives, with a male bread-winner, and have extra time to spend learning a new skill. While many income-generating projects have been very successful they must factor in that increasingly poor women are single heads of the household with dependent children who must spend large amounts of time simply providing for their families. Projects must be planned so that they do not add to an already excessively long work day.

A major problem with the welfare approach is that it identifies women as dependent and vulnerable, and does not identify the lack of resources or the lack of access to resources such as land, employment and loans, as the main barrier women face. Supporters of the welfare approach do not question what is often considered to be the 'natural' role for women in society as mother and wife.[28] Handouts, which are characteristic of welfare programmes, have been shown to create and reinforce dependency on development and aid agencies rather than helping to foster self-

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[27]Ibid.

[28]Kathleen Newland, "From Transnational Relationships to International Relations: Women in Development and the International Decade for Women," In *Gender and International Relations*, Edited by Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 97.

sufficiency and independence. It is for this reason that welfare programmes continue to be popular, they do not challenge the status-quo and do not question the traditional sexual division of labour.[29] As a result of the wide-spread dissatisfaction with the welfare approach to women and development, as well as the resurgence of the feminist movement, numerous alternative development approaches were developed, such as, equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment.

b. The Equity Approach

As stated earlier, the original impetus for the creation of WID came in the 1970s from Western liberal feminists. These women believed in the ability of the mainstream politico-economic and ideological structures, namely, the capitalist system, to cure the subordinate position of women in the Third World. The equity approach, which is defined by Moser as the original WID approach, was primarily concerned with the inequality between women and men, the subordinate position of women in the familial structure and the market economy, and with the integration of women into the economy and waged work.[30] This approach recognized that dominant modernization development policies had failed to bring about gender equity. It was believed that in the development process women lost ground to men in the productive sphere and needed to be 'brought into' development through access to wage labour and the marketplace.[31] Women were seen as active participants in development. Top-down state intervention, which would give women greater economic and political power, would reduce inequality between women and men.[32]

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[29]Karl, *Women and Empowerment*, 98.
[30]Newland, *From Transnational Relationships*, 90.
[31]Ibid, 163.
[32]Karl, *Women and Empowerment, 98.*

The equity approach addresses both practical and strategic gender needs by recognizing that women perform double and triple roles within society. The primarily Western feminists who supported the equity approach pointed out that women are not only subordinated within the family but also within the marketplace because women rarely had access to higher-paying and more prestigious jobs. Western patriarchal ideologies about the gendered roles of men and women in society have favoured men in the areas of property rights, access to waged labour, new technologies, credit and education.[33] As a result, many of the rights that women in the Third World enjoyed before colonialism, such as property rights, were stripped from them.[34]

Liberal feminist supporters of the equity approach emphasized the need for women's access to waged employment through legislative and legal measures. International and national conferences, such as those held during the International Women's Decade, and women's bureaux, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) brought their concerns with women's lack of access to resources into the international mainstream forum.[35]

The equity approach was met with a great deal of criticism. Equity supporters acknowledged the inequalities and injustices that are found within the status-quo of the capitalist system but saw these as anomalies that can be changed through legal and attitudinal changes. These Western feminists looked for whatever ways women could be integrated into existing development projects on an equal footing with their male

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[33]Momsen, *Women and Development*, 1.

[34]For one of the earliest academic recordings of women's loss of land through colonialism see Esther Boserup's 1970 work: Esther Boserup, *Women's Role in Economic Development*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970).

[35]UNIFEM was established in 1976 by a resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly and was originally called the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women (VFDW). The Voluntary Fund was created to provide direct funding to projects in the lesser developed South to promote and support local activities for women. In 1985 it was renamed the United Nations Development Fund for Women. For an excellent history and description of UNIFEM's role and mandate concerning WID see: Mary B. Anderson, *Women on the Agenda: UNIFEM"S Experience in Mainstreaming with Women 1985-1990,* (New York: United Nations Press, 1991).

counterparts. Finally, proponents of the equity approach failed to recognize the inherent racism found within the view that Euro-North American forms of "progress" and "development" are the only routes to social, economic and political advancement.

The equity approach was also unpopular with governments, development agencies, and some Third World women for two primary reasons. First, it focused on reducing the inequality between men and women through governmental and institutional means such as affirmative action policies. Governments, predominantly controlled by men, disliked these policies because they called for the redistribution of power through positive discrimination, which meant that men would lose some of their social and economic power while women gained.[36] This would obviously upset the status-quo, challenge patriarchal structures and, it is often argued, interfere with the cultural traditions of many Third World countries. Many development agencies generally avoid taking such strong stands within a society. They fear the backlash that development workers and their program could potentially receive from the male population when gender constructions, which are often closely entwined with cultural traditions, are challenged.

The second critique of the equity approach came from Third World women grass-roots activists themselves. It was seen as representing Western feminist concerns and many women felt that these were irrelevant to both their lives and their most immediate needs. These activists felt that "to take feminism to a woman who has no water, no food and no home is to talk nonsense."[37] Consequently, Third World feminist scholars who supported the equity approach were seen as imperialist sympathizers.

As a result of the critiques from Third World governments, governmental and non-governmental development agencies and Third World women to much of the equity

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[36]Moser, "Gender Planning," 163.
[37]Moser, *Theory, Practice & Training*, 65.

platform, support for this approach has largely been abandoned. Nonetheless, it was effective in helping people working within governments to enact change and increase women's social, economic and political status through top-down legislation.[38]

c. The Anti-Poverty Approach

As a result of the negative response to the equity approach, the second WID approach is less challenging to the status-quo. The anti-poverty approach does not interfere with the recipient nation's gender constructions, which are often, as stated above, reinforced by cultural traditions. Instead of focusing on women's subordination to men, the anti-poverty policy approach emphasizes poverty as the source of women's underdevelopment. During the Women's Decade it became increasingly clear that the First Development Decade was unsuccessful, and that women were most often the 'poorest of the poor' in the Third World. Development agencies devoted to the anti-poverty approach focus primarily on women's productive role. They do this through the creation of income-generating activities supported by access to credit and land, assuming these activities will increase women's productivity. Further, the anti-poverty approach supports the belief that increased access to basic education "could simultaneously increase women's economic contribution and reduce fertility."[39]

The anti-poverty approach continues to be widely implemented by development agencies. Projects supported by this policy often adhere to gendered stereotypes such as 'home economics' projects which teach women domestic sciences, healthcare, nutrition, hygiene, and skills such as crocheting, knitting and weaving for the purpose of generating what is most commonly considered to be pocket-money. This is reminiscent of the welfare approach discussed above, but instead of focusing on women's

[38]Ibid., 66.
[39]Ibid., 68.

reproductive role within the family unit, it focuses on women's productive, income-generating role.

However, critics of this approach state that home economics and handicraft projects take women away from their domestic chores which are crucial for the survival of their families often without securing access to raw materials or guaranteed markets. As stated by Barbara Rogers, home economics projects teach women certain crafts that are "almost all geared to a very limited and unreliable market...and the effect for most women may be to drag them into low-productivity jobs rather than help them find more productive and remunerative employment."[40] Such projects keep women ghettoized in low-paying sectors of the economy where they do not receive advanced training and have little hope of achieving a higher status within society.

While income-generating projects have the capacity to meet women's practical gender needs through access to an income, they fail to meet strategic gender needs if the projects and types of employment do not help to create greater self-determination.[41] Many of the projects make the assumption that women have spare time in which to learn a new craft or skill, which ignores women's triple burden. Practitioners and planners within the anti-poverty approach believe that access to income will be a sufficiently powerful stimulant to encourage women to somehow juggle their time in such a way as to participate in yet another activity."[42] Research shows that these assumptions are misguided as many women in the Third World already work longer hours than men and do not have "spare time."[43]

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[40]Barbara Rogers, *The Domestication of Women: Discrimination in Developing Countries*, (London: Routledge, 1980), 95.

[41]Moser, *Theory, Practice and Training*, 69.; Lise Ostergaard, *Gender and Development: A Practical Guide*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 174.

[42]Rathgerber. "WID, WAD, GAD," 489-502.

[43]John Isbister, *Promises Not Kept: The Betrayal of Social Change in the Third World*, (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1995), 22-23.

d. The Efficiency Approach

Beginning in the 1980s and continuing into the present, the efficiency approach is the most prevalent of all the WID approaches. Due to the deterioration of the economies of many Third World countries, women are considered to be an under-utilized labour force, which must be used to stimulate industrialization and economic growth. In this approach the focus is shifted away from women as the problem and toward development with the assumption that increasing women's role in the market place will lead to greater equality. Under the auspices of structural adjustment policies (SAPs) designed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), women are considered to be both an expendable and expandable labour force which can be utilized for the production of goods at lower costs than those of men.[44] SAPs require that government services are reduced and investment in the social sectors, in particular health and education, are also reduced, thereby affecting the productivity of the family unit."[45] It is assumed that women will fill the gap where public spending has been cut and take up the burden of necessary unpaid community work.

> With increased efficiency and productivity being two of the main objectives of structural adjustment policies, it is no coincidence that efficiency is the policy approach toward women currently gaining popularity among international aid agencies and national governments alike. In reality this approach simply means shifting the costs from the paid to the unpaid economy, particularly through the use of women's unpaid time. While the emphasis is on women's increased economic participation, it has implications for women not only as reproducers but also increasingly as community managers.[46]

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[44]For an examination and discussion of the purpose and effectiveness of SAPs from the perspective of the World Bank see: The World Bank, *Adjustment Lending Policies for Sustainable Growth: Policy and Research Series,* 1990. For analysis and critiques of how SAPs have negatively impacted women in the lesser developed South see Joan Archer, "Women's Organizations and Economic Reform: From the Grassroots to International Cooperation," *Cooperation South United Nations 50th Anniversary Issue: Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries*, (New York: United Nations Press, 1995); Ana Isla, "Women, Development and the Market Economy," *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme: Women and the Environment*, Vol. 13, no. 3, (1995), 28-34.

[45] Archer, "Women's Organizations and Economic Reform," 63.

[46]Caroline Moser, "Gender Planning in the Third World," In *Gender and International Relations Theory,* Edited by Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 104.

The efficiency approach does fulfill women's practical gender needs through the provisioning of waged labour which can, under the right circumstances, lead to greater decision-making powers and an increase in meeting strategic gender needs. However, this is achieved at the cost of increasing the number of unpaid hours women must work in order to make up for the decline in social services which in effect decreases the amount of time women would have to agitate for greater equality.[47]

The efficiency approach has been criticized for its assumption that participation in the waged labour force will increase women's status in society.[48] Practitioners of the efficiency approach fail to recognize two very different but important constraints affecting women's participation in development under the efficiency approach namely, a lack of access to education and dependency on the triple burden. Therefore, this approach meets women's practical gender need of access to paid work, but due to a reduction in resource allocations such as access to free schooling and healthcare, and the excessive reliance on women's unpaid labour which results from these reductions, few strategic gender needs are being met.[49]

e. The Empowerment or Gender and Development (GAD) Approach

In contrast to the WID approaches that are predominantly the result of Western feminist academics and development agencies, the empowerment or GAD approach is derived from Marxist feminists (WAD approach) and Third World feminist writing, research and grassroots organizations.[50] It is important to recognize that situated

[47] Ward, *A World Full of Women*, 225.
[48] Moser, "Gender Planning," 104.
[49] Ibid., 106. For an extensive list of Third World women's grassroots organizations see Grown and Sen, *Women, Development and Alternatives,* 106.
[50] Moser, "Gender Planning," 168.

between WID and GAD theories is the women and development (WAD) theory. WAD emerged from a Marxist feminist "critique of the modernization theory and the WID approach in the second half of the 1970s."[51] WAD theory focuses on the notion that, unlike the assumptions about women's non-existent role in the development process expressed in WID theory, the need to integrate women into development is a fallacy because women have always been part of the development process.[52] The WAD theory contributes to the women, gender and development arguments and perspectives by revealing that women have always been important economic contributors to society. WAD supporters state that women's work in the public sphere is important and that the integration of women into modernization-based development structures work to maintain international structures of inequality.[53]

WAD does offer a more critical analysis of women's role in development than does WID, but "it fails to undertake a full-scale analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production, and women's subordination and oppression."[54] WAD's weakness is that it has a primary focus on women's productive role at the expense of the reproductive side of women's work and lives. WAD further makes the questionable assumption that as international structures become more equitable women's position within society will automatically and greatly improve and that it downplays the role that men play in the subordination of women.[55]

WAD, in conjunction with Third World feminist activism, acts as one of the primary intellectual origins of GAD, the theoretical construct of choice in this thesis. It does so by criticizing Northern-based modernization theory and it also draws upon

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[51] Nalini Visvanathan, *The Women, Gender and Development Reader,* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1997), 18.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 19.
[54] Rathgerber, 493.
[55] Ibid.

issues of class in an attempt to explain women's subordination of women. However, WAD's limited focus on the productive sphere and extensive attention paid primarily to class structures "ignores gender relations and...is inadequate as it leads to policies insensitive to the specific causes of women's subordination."[56] Its failure to question gender roles render it less useful for the purposes of this thesis. The GAD theory allows for a comprehensive study of the ways in which development affects and is affected by not only class, but also looks at issues relating to gender and race.

The GAD approach rejects the assumptions that feminism is a Western, middle-class, urban phenomenon and recognizes that feminism has its own history in the Third World. Third World women's participation in "national and patriotic struggles, working-class agitation and peasant rebellions" has created a history of women's involvement in the struggle against oppressions due not only to gender but also "according to their race, class, colonial history and current position in the international economic order." From the perspective of Third World women themselves, the empowerment approach provides development planners with a "much needed reorientation to development analysis" and reinforces that women, as the poorest and most subordinated, must "challenge oppressive structures and situations simultaneously at different levels."

At first glance the empowerment approach appears to be very similar to the equity approach in its effort to point out "how the empowerment of women can provide new possibilities for moving beyond current economic dilemmas."[57] However, it does not only work within bureaucratic structures to provide affirmative action policies that will integrate women into the existing development paradigms, it also works from a grassroots "self-empowerment" approach that fundamentally questions and critiques the

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[56]Lourdes Beneria and Gita Sen, "Class and Gender Inequities and Women's Role in Economic Development: Theoretical and Practical Implications," In *Feminist Studies,* Vol. 8, no. 1, (1982), 290.

[57]Grown and Sen, *Women, Development and Alternatives*, 18.

dominant economic, political and social structures that are supported by government bureaucracies.

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), a grassroots network of Third World activists, researchers and policy makers is the oldest and most highly cited and respected of the empowerment approach supporters. The founders of DAWN sought to reveal the position of women in the lesser developed South and they have formulated an alternative vision of society. This vision differs from the dominant Euro-North American society that currently exists. They identify this society as follows:

> We want a world where inequality based on class, gender and race is absent from every country and from the relationships among countries. We want a world where basic needs become basic rights and where poverty and all forms of violence are eliminated. Each person will have the opportunity to develop her or his full potential and creativity, and women's values of nurturance and solidarity will characterize human relationships. In such a world women's reproductive role will be redefined: childcare will be shared by men, women and society as a whole...only by sharpening the links between equality, development and peace, can we show that the 'basic rights' of the poor and the transformation of the institutions that subordinate women are inextricably linked. They can be achieved together through the self-empowerment of women.[58]

To reach the new society that is envisioned by DAWN there must be a transformation of the oppressive structures that continue to keep women subordinate to men and the poor subordinate to the rich. For women to attain justice in society, "laws, civil codes, systems of property rights, control over our bodies, labour codes, and the social and legal institutions that underwrite male control and privilege"[59] must be changed. It is crucial to note that while the strategic gender needs stated above are essentially the same as those called for by the equity approach, those who adhere to the empowerment approach recognize that governmental legislation is limited and has only the *potential* to meet strategic gender needs. Therefore, it is important to note that

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[58]Ibid.
[59]Ibid., 81.

GAD is a political issue as well as a development issue. Women have identified other women's organizations, political mobilization, consciousness raising sessions and education as important areas where women can work from the 'bottom up' to raise the awareness of other women and challenge the subordination they experience within the current society.

A major difference between the empowerment and equity approaches "is the manner in which the former seeks to reach strategic gender needs indirectly through practical gender needs."[60] The equity approach proved to be relatively ineffective in confronting oppressive structures through legislative means. By contrast, the empowerment approach avoids direct confrontation and seeks to use practical gender needs as the starting point from which to explore strategic gender needs. For example, women's groups such as the Forum Against Oppression of Women in Bombay, India, organized around issues such as rape and bride burning and in the process discovered that housing issues were of greater importance to the local women. Due to traditional barriers to women's access to their own housing and the high rate of homelessness which was the result of domestic violence and the breakdown of marriages, the practical gender need of housing became a more pressing issue. As a result of the mobilization around women's homelessness, the awareness of the patriarchal structures that disallows women inheritance and housing rights created a lobbying effort of NGOs throughout the nation calling for the government to create a housing charter that would meet women's practical gender need for housing.[61] As the above example shows, the empowerment approach often challenges the hierarchical and patriarchal structures of the status quo and for this reason it is currently not widely accepted by governmental and non-governmental organizations.

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[60]Moser, "Gender Planning," 108.
[61]Ibid., 109.

Although difficult, many NGOs working with poor women in the Third World, such as Oxfam with its gender and development unit (GADU), Novib, an NGO based in the Netherlands, and ACORD, an NGO in Africa, recognize the importance of working from within the empowerment framework.[62] Development agency-based supporters of the GAD movement feel this approach is absolutely crucial for the advancement not only of women but Third World societies as a whole. It challenges patriarchal structures and the status quo regarding the imposition of Northern development policies and questions the type of development the Third World requires to increase the standard of living for the poor.

It must be recognized that the GAD approach does have short falls and criticisms as well. First, the term "empowerment" has been adopted by not only Third World women's organizations but also by the World Bank and many other aid agencies. The term has different meanings to different groups and therefore, it loses some of its strength when it is used to mean different things. For example, the World Bank is primarily focused on the individual and the individual's ability for personal gain and advancement through waged labour and large-scale development projects.[63] However, the way in which empowerment is used in this thesis and by Third World women's groups includes not only individual change but also collective action and advancement.

Second, the empowerment strategy "has to confront the fact that women are politically weak and have little bargaining power at the national, regional and even local level."[64] For example, at the local level, ubiquitous male privilege will make most men unwilling to ally themselves with women's advancement and emancipation. In such situations, it is assumed that the males will lose ground and privileges while the women

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[62]For an extensive study on gender and development organizations see Caroline Sweetman, *Gender in Development Organizations: Oxfam Focus on Gender,* (Oxford: Oxfam Press, 1997).

[63]Young, *Planning Development With Women,* 158.

[64]Young, *The Women, Gender and Development Reader,* 53.

gain. In many cultures there are also kinship and generational issues to consider and a loss of power at any of these levels is considered unacceptable and can be deemed to be against cultural conditions.[65]

Third, the poor and poor women in particular, "are rarely able to tackle the conditions which create their poverty in the first place – these are usually beyond their reach."[66] However, by building upon basic needs and welfare programs, working to fulfill the most basic practical gender needs, organizations working to achieve empowerment can begin to add consciousness-raising sessions. Such sessions would "encompass not only the nature of the structures creating poverty for some and wealth for others, the distribution of social wealth and capital, the unbalanced distribution of political power, but also the structures of inequality between men and women which weaken both in their common struggle for survival and betterment."[67] This need to work with men and elders in the community then returns the reader to the first problem with the GAD model and the unlikeliness of men to want to relinquish power of any type to women.

Finally, there has been an increasing amount of debate regarding the fact that the 'other half' of the gender equation, men, have been ignored or are missing from GAD discourse and projects.[68] Men and masculinity are hotly debated issues on the GAD agenda and they certainly deserve attention.

GAD has always had a particular focus on female subordination and the roles that men play in subordinating and upholding the status quo. However, men and women alike are debating that both women and men must be included in the gender and development arena in order for it to maintain legitimacy. Men involved with consultative

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[65]Ibid., 53.
[66]Ibid.
[67]Ibid., 54.
[68]For an extensive discussion on the intergration of men into GAD, please see *International Development Studies Bulletin,* Vol. 31, no. 2, (2000).

processes have expressed that they feel both "hurt and aggrieved at having been excluded from and silenced in gender arenas.[69] By contrast, some women have responded to this by being "protectionist and defensive: since women have done the pioneering work on GAD, what entitlement had men to step in now that gender has become 'respectable'."[70] Can men join projects as equal partners or will they inevitably seek positions of control?

An argument for including the GAD approach is that men would be required to "take a more active role in shaping interventions, thereby assuming greater responsibility for efforts to change gender relations."[71] Men would have an increased responsibility in agitating for shifts in the status quo. It is argued that in this situation, if men and women do indeed have levels of power within the development project, the poor, both women and men alike, would gain. However, it is argued that by 'bringing men in' there is a clear possibility that the feminist agenda within GAD will be undermined.[72] This is potentially problematic because "given existing associations of men with power men ought...to be giving up power rather than seeking empowerment" through what are currently women-centred projects.[73] Much questioning as to whether men can truly enter into GAD in equal power-relations with women must be done. During my thesis research I feel that in order to discern the extent to which women's needs can potentially be met within the alternative trade coffee cooperative, I must consider women's roles, responsibilities and position vis-à-vis men within the cooperative in isolation.

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[69]Andrea Cornwall and Sarah White. "Men, Masculinities and Development: Politics, Policies and Practice," In *International Development Studies Bulletin,* Vol. 31, no. 2, (2000), 2.
[70]Ibid., 2.
[71]Ibid.
[72]Ibid.
[73]Ibid.

Certainly, there is a need for further research into how men can be successfully integrated at the practical, grassroots level of GAD. An increased involvement of men will be positive and possible only if there is a political commitment from men themselves for changing gender relations. However, little evidence of this commitment can be seen at the present.[74]

Regardless of the above criticisms of the GAD approach, the potential of GAD for helping poor Third World women reach how they themselves have defined empowerment outweigh the criticisms and possible pitfalls of the approach. Starting from basic needs or welfare programs, the GAD approach is the most likely way for women to create political will in their community or country, which will enable welfare to be exchanged for empowerment and reform for radical restructuring.[75]

V. Conclusion

As the oldest and most dominant women and development theory discussed in this chapter, the four WID phases represent the theoretical viewpoint of primarily Northern feminist scholars and practitioners. WID follows the assumptions of modernization theory, as programs tend to stress northern values and notions of a linear path to development. Third World states are seen as highly patriarchal with women regarded as oppressed, passive, and in need of specialized programs. WID approaches do not take into consideration the long and diverse history of the women's movement in the Third World.

The GAD approach has become increasingly popular with Third World women's grass roots organizations and a few Northern-based development agencies. It not only questions and challenges culturally accepted gender roles and the sexual division of

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[74]Ibid., 4-5.
[75]Young, *The Women, Gender and Development Reader*, 55.

labor, it also attempts to incorporate class, caste, and ethnicity into a gender-based perspective. The GAD approach is more holistic and views development as an intricate process influenced by both political and socio-economic forces. By questioning and challenging hierarchical structures within the private and public spheres, the GAD approach can help grassroots organizations create fundamental change within the patriarchal power structures that are inherent within all societies today.

It is for these reasons that I favour the GAD approach as a development model. It offers the potential to create change for women in the Third World. The GAD approach can act as a guideline for potential changes that can be made within the craft cooperative analysis, which follows. As well, it can also act as a more ideal model for both crafting and coffee ATOs, which are the focus of the following chapters. In particular, by attempting to achieve a more GAD-based approach, the gender-blind treatment of women within the Guatemalan case study alternative trade coffee cooperative would greatly decrease.

CHAPTER TWO: ALTERNATIVE TRADE

I. Introduction

Alternative trade is a social justice movement that seeks to balance the inequalities between the North and the South through the creation of trading partnerships that are more concerned with increasing the welfare of producers in the lesser developed South than in profits for Northern companies. The alternative trade market trades mostly in crafts and coffee but it has also expanded into chocolate, tea, honey and rice along with numerous other agricultural products. This chapter will review the alternative trade literature with a focus on crafts and coffee. Within alternative trade development projects, women are most predominant in craft production, therefore a focus on crafts will allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the extent to which women's practical and strategic gender needs are being met. By contrast, women have not been integrated as wholly into coffee cooperatives. Therefore, the analysis of the extent to which women's needs are met within crafting cooperatives serves as a starting place for the potential needs alternative trade development projects can begin to offer women coffee cooperative members.

The following literature review will first give a brief history of how the alternative trade movement came into existence. Second, the purpose of the alternative trade movement is discussed and the Code of Practice and goals of the International Federation of Alternative Trade (IFAT) are discussed. Finally, the extent to which IFAT's mandate and the indirect goal of working with disadvantaged women will be analyzed. The purpose of this analysis is to discern the extent to which women's practical and strategic gender needs are met at the project or grassroots level. To achieve this end, this chapter examines two crafting cooperatives: Jute Works in Bangladesh and the United to Live Better (UPAVIM) cooperative in Guatemala. The analysis will show that

the craft cooperatives are highly successful in meeting women's practical gender needs and are also meeting many strategic gender needs. Both craft cooperatives offer excellent examples of the potential alternative trade craft cooperatives have for meeting women's practical and strategic gender needs.

II. The History of Alternative Trade

The alternative trade movement began in the 1940s when development organizations such as Ten Thousand Villages and Oxfam, which are primarily supported by church groups. These were started to informally sell products from Third World groups which were supported through development programmes. The alternative trading arm of Oxfam, Bridgehead, is one of Canada's best known ATOs. Bridgehead began in the United Kingdom as an ATO in an attempt to move beyond welfare and handouts given to victims of natural disasters, war and famine.[1] Throughout the Third World, relief workers with Oxfam were shown products the poor had produced and wished to sell. They recognized that poverty and starvation could not be solved through handouts but required the creation of markets that paid the producers a fair price for their goods. The goods were purchased at a mutually agreed price and sold in Oxfam shops throughout Britain.

III. The Purpose of the Alternative Trade Movement

The alternative trade movement works at a grass-roots or community level and focuses on providing a more "holistic approach to macro-level policy formulation and more sustainable implementation strategies...through the use of participatory and self-help measures to ensure that [communities] are sufficiently flexible and adaptive to local

[1]Michael Barratt Brown, *Fair Trade*, (London: Zed Books, 1995), 156.

requirements."[2] NGOs and small-scale producers are "experimenting with community development initiatives and alternative trading arrangements that point to broader possibilities for more...socially attractive approaches to economic development."[3] Within the past ten years, the alternative trade movement has become more visible and is recognized as a response to the social and environmental injustices that are the result of the increasingly deregulated international marketplace.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, organizations such as Trading UK, Self Help Crafts USA, and SOS Wereldhandel in Holland, were founded with a focus on offering consumers an alternative to the existing trade system.[4] Currently, there are more than 50 ATOs in the North with alternative trade's share of global revenue totaling approximately US $400 million or about 0.01% of all global trade.[5] While this is a small portion of the global market, the movement is continually growing and is working toward creating new standards that many hope will eventually redefine global trade practices.[6] As stated by the Fair Trade Federation, a conglomeration of mainly European FTOs:

> Fair traders believe that their system of trade, based on respect for workers' rights and the environment, if adopted by the big players in the global economy, can play a big part in reversing the growing inequities and environmental degradation that have accompanied the growth in world trade.[7]

In contrast to the dominant macro-economic structures associated with globalized trade and the loss of power for workers in the lesser developed South, alternative trade focuses on returning power to the people within the community through

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[2]Joan Archer, "Women's Organizations and Economic Reform: From the Grassroots to International Cooperation," *Cooperation South United Nations 50th Anniversary Issue: Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries*, (New York: United Nations Press, 1995), 63.

[3]Glenn Drover and Frank Tester, "Offsetting Corporate Trade: Free Trade, Community Development and Alternative Trade in the South Pacific," *Alternatives Journal,* (January/February, 1996), 16.

[4]www.oneworld.org/oxfam/fairtrad/histft.html, June 10, 1999.

[5]www.fairtradefederation.com/ab_whyft.html, June 10, 1999.

[6]For example, Ten Thousand Villages, which is the largest ATO in the USA, increased its sales by $5 million, from $3 million to $8 million, between 1985 and 1995.

[7]www.fairtradefederation.com/ab_whyft.html, June 10, 1999.

equitable trading relationships and community development projects that are agreed upon by the members of the community. Tester and Drover discuss this in their article, "Offsetting Corporate Trade: Free Trade, Community Development and Alternative Trade in the South Pacific":

> The general pattern of trade tends to benefit the trader, leaving the producer vulnerable to exploitation. Fair trade is about giving the producers a better deal, and strengthening their hand in the trading relationship.[8]

ATOs that are based in the North move beyond just making trade links in the Third World. They also strive to create development projects with their trading partners in the Third World. These projects are ones the producers feel are most needed in their community. It is important to recognize that although alternative trade and grassroots organizing will not replace globalized trade in the near future, ATO literature states that they are working toward creating more extensive, equitable and environmentally sound trading practices that are agreeable to each individual community.

IV. The International Federation of Alternative Trade

ATOs recognized that the alternative trade movement was somewhat disorganized in the North and in order to achieve their educational and equitable trading goals they would need to organize into a more cohesive unit. ATOs had been meeting regularly for about ten years to achieve their common goal through "the exchange of information, coordination of trading arrangements, pooling of resources and support for common campaigns."[9] In May 1989, IFAT was created in the Netherlands by

[8]Tester and Drover, "Offsetting Corporate Trade," 20.
[9]Barratt Brown, *Fair Trade*, 157.

approximately forty alternative trade organizations in order to organize themselves into a more cohesive force.[10]

IFAT is managed by a part-time secretariat and elected board which consists of representatives from 145 ATOs from 47 countries from both the North and South.[11] The establishment of IFAT has created a formal body of ATOs and members that, through a central secretariat, coordinates the activities of ATOs and works to extend their membership and increase their communication with more organizations in the South.[12] While IFAT is not a "directing centre" for ATOs, it is a formal umbrella organization with a general Code of Practice and more specific operational goal to which all members adhere. It acts as a guiding authority within the movement.

The Code of Practice was created so that ATOs would operate according to one specific code which would be applicable for all members. This would ensure that quality, environmental safe-guarding and fairness would be standardized in conjunction with efforts to raise the standard of living for the poor in the South. Within the Code of Practice, members of IFAT agree to follow six common goals: to improve the livelihoods of producers; to promote development opportunities for disadvantaged producers; to raise consumer awareness; to set an example for partnership in trade; to campaign for changes in conventional trade; and to protect human rights.[13] While many ATOs and development projects supported by ATOs were created long before IFAT came into existence, it is important to note that, through the Code of Practice and the operational goals, IFAT is working to create a general set of ethics for ATOs to use as a reference point for the fair treatment of Third World producers.

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[10]Belinda Coote, *The Trade Trap: Poverty and the Global Commodity Markets*, (Oxford: Oxfam, 1996), 176.

[11]www.ifat.org, June 10, 1999.

[12]Barratt Brown, *Fair Trade*, 157.

[13]www.ifat.org, June 10, 1999.

Although it is not directly stated in the Code of Practice or the goals of alternative trade, alternative trade has a commitment to women. For example, the IFAT website states that "IFAT producer organizations...work with disadvantaged people who are vulnerable to exploitation: single women heads of households, displaced people, seasonal agricultural workers and slum dwellers."[14] While in many communities and countries throughout the world women are the poorest and most vulnerable to exploitation, this view of women as a 'special interest group' has been criticized as being patronizing as it does not recognize the strength of the women's movement throughout the South.

However, the fact that a direct statement at the IFAT organizational level has not been made to ensure the advancement and equal participation of women suggests a hesitancy and difficulty in dealing with gender issues generally. At the practical grassroots level, there are many obstacles development planners and practitioners meet in ensuring the advancement and equal participation of women. First, the attitudes of the practitioners is crucial. The extent to which they feel the issue of gender and the related issues of class and ethnicity are important, will affect the strength and success of the project. Second, the beliefs and attitudes of the women involved in the project, their families and the community will also greatly affect the success of the project.

The following craft project analysis is concerned with the way in which ATOs, at the grassroots level, deal with the above attitudinal obstacles. In particular, I am concerned with the inequality many women face throughout the world and the extent to which the development projects ATOs support are successfully meeting practical and strategic gender needs. The bulk of the analysis of the crafting cooperatives is devoted to determining if women's needs are indeed being met by alternative trade development projects or if statements such as the one above made by IFAT are merely lip-service.

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[14] www.ifat.org/what_is_ifat.html, June 10, 1999.

V. Craft Project Analysis

Those concerned with the desired end result of development projects as being an increase in women's strategic and practical gender needs must remember that WID approaches greatly differ from the GAD approach. WID approaches recognize the important role that women perform in the development process but do not necessarily recognize or question women's almost universal subordination to men. By contrast, the GAD approach questions and challenges existing socio-economic and political structures and stereotypes and questions women's almost universal subordination to men.

a. Jute Works

The Jute Works project began in 1973 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, but now operates in numerous districts throughout Bangladesh. It was started by an order of Holy Cross nuns at the time when the Bangladesh post-liberation war had left thousands of women widowed "in a society that does not offer many employment or livelihood options for women."[15] The women had no source of income, were left with their dependent children and were entirely dependent on welfare-oriented relief aid.[16] The purpose of the project is "to provide employment for poor rural women tied to the home by tradition and child-rearing."[17] Jute Works now works not only with widowed women but also with poor, married, predominantly rural women and increasingly their husbands.

The intention of the project is to meet women's PGNs such as food provisioning, access to a clean water source and healthcare training in family planning and nutrition,

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[15]Ten Days for Global Justice Action Guide, 13.
[16]Coote, *Trade Trap*, 167
[17]www.caatrading.org.au/producer/asia/com.html, June 20, 1999.

while also meeting some SGNs, such as increased respect and power in decision-making. The following passage describes this goal:

> Jute Works is trying to...improve the position of the poorest women. The group organizes poor rural women into co-ops and provides training in making handicrafts as well as health and awareness-raising programs for over 6 000 women in over 200 local co-ops. Working at home, women are able to earn a much needed income while caring for their children. This raises their status within their communities and families, giving them more influence in decisions. It also gives an opportunity for women to work together to find solutions to their shared problems.[18]

Jute is a locally grown fibrous plant that is used to make household goods such as mats and hanging baskets. Demand in the North for 'ethnic' products from the lesser developed South have created a market for these handmade products, especially, the 'sika' (which is a hanging basket that in the North is primarily used to hold houseplants). As well as working with jute, the women also utilize other locally produced materials such as bamboo, clay and cotton. The group is self-financing and sells their products to many ATOs throughout the world.

Because of social and cultural mores, Bangladeshi women traditionally have a much lower social status than men do. The United Nations reports that women consume on average 29% fewer calories than men and boy children, primarily because women are expected to eat only after all other family members have eaten, and in poor households there may not be any food left at the end of the meal.[19] Approximately 50% of females study at the primary school level as compared to 70% of males. The majority of women in Bangladesh live within the tradition of purdah which literally means "veil" and is based on a conservative interpretation of the role of women in the Islamic religion. Purdah requires that women are veiled in the presence of any man who is not a

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[18]Ten Days for Global Justice Action Guide, 13.
[19]www.oxfamamerica.org/global/ft/bang/globangtr.html, June 20, 1999.

relative.[20] It is extremely important to note that many changes have taken place in recent years and more women are found in the public arena. However, vast numbers of women are still at a disadvantage and suffer disproportionately from poverty due to sexual discrimination.[21]

Jute Works recognizes that the production of handicrafts for sale to the West will not offer a complete solution to the economic and social difficulties women experience in the lesser developed South; however, they also recognize that such projects "can provide a useful supplementary income, and can be an entry point into education and awareness-raising."[22]

The project has recently experienced difficulties. The most fundamental problem is the dependence it has on the export and sale of jute products. While there is a demand for ethnic products, competition from cheaper synthetic fibers and a heavy dependence on one commodity has made the group vulnerable to market fluctuations and changing consumer desires.[23] To counteract this difficulty, the group has expanded into new product lines such as brass and clay handicrafts, and they have experienced some success with these new products. Unfortunately, traditional artisans who are usually men create such products.

Table 1 offers a matrix that summarizes the practical and strategic needs the development project is addressing, which aspect(s) of the triple role is addressed, important discussion that was drawn from the literature, and finally, which development approach each need addresses. An explanation and analysis of the categories follows.

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[20]Janet H. Momsen, *Women and Development in the Third World*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 30.

[21]There are many critiques regarding western feminist assumptions about purdah and the extent to which the "veil" represents patriarchal domination. The author is fully aware of and recognizes the strong western bias against purdah. For excellent discussions regarding purdah please see Leigh *Mintum, Sita's Daughters: Coming out of Purdah: the Rajput Women of Khalapur Revisited*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) and Nilufer Gole, *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

[22]Coote, *Trade Trap*, 169.

[23]www.caatrading.org.au/producer/asia/corr.html, June 20, 1999.

Table 1 Jute Works: Project Analysis

PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS	R / P or CM	DISCUSSION OF NEED	APPROACH USED
In women's homes	R	Working at home, women earn an income while caring for their children.	Welfare and Anti-poverty
Income earning activity	P	Part-time weaving project -pays women directly which ensures that children are fed, clothed and schooled	Anti-poverty
Healthcare training	R and CM	-family planning, sanitation, health and nutrition.	Welfare
Basic needs (food, water, shelter)	R and CM	-increased income from craft production and sales allows for the purchase of more food -builds bore water wells in rural areas	Welfare and Anti-poverty
STRATEGIC GENDER NEEDS			
Education[24]	P	-literacy training -agricultural training (pineapple gardening) -small animal husbandry (goat and calf rearing) -awareness-raising	Anti-poverty and Empowerment
Access to credit	P	-provides a savings and credit scheme for individuals and groups	Empowerment (emphasizes self-reliance)

Sources: Compiled from: Coote, Moser, Ten Days Action Guide, Jute Works Annual Report

R: Reproductive P: Productive CM: Community Managing

Welfare Focus on women's primary role as caregiver
Anti-poverty Focus is to meet women's PGNs through income generation
Efficiency Focus is to meet PGNs, within the context of decreasing social services, by relying on women's triple role in society.
Empowerment Focus is to meet SGNs through grassroots organizing and utilization of PGNs as a starting point to confront oppression

[24]Education, as a basic need, can be classified as either a PGN or a SGN depending on the extent to which education challenges traditional boundaries. Since, in the case of both craft case studies, traditional boundaries are challenged and the types of education offered allow women greater autonomy, I have chosen to include education under strategic gender needs.

A gender analysis of the project reveals that it is a 'classic' NGO project since "it has manifold objectives, ranging from welfare through anti-poverty to empowerment."[25] The Jute Works project focuses on all three roles of women. First, it recognizes women's productive role and women's need to generate an income. Second, it exemplifies women's reproductive role and focuses on the role of the woman as mother and primary provisioner for household maintenance and sustenance. Finally, it also utilizes women's community managing role in the digging of wells for the community.

The project's primary objective to help women earn an income satisfies the critical PGN to increased employment. By paying women directly for their labour it is meeting the SGN for women to have control over their income. Belinda Coote points out that "it is now widely recognized that paying women directly is the best way of ensuring that children are fed, clothed and schooled."[26] This approach allows women greater control over financial resources and will most likely raise the well-being of the family. However, the project does not challenge, but rather reinforces, the sexual division of labour and women's gendered role as primary caregiver.

While much of the project can be classified as using an anti-poverty approach, the educational opportunities and access to credit and savings schemes that the women receive straddle both anti-poverty and empowerment/GAD approaches. For example, the opportunity for women to receive agricultural training and work outside the home on an agricultural project, in a country where women traditionally do not perform agricultural work outside the home, challenges social and cultural norms.[27] As a result, this creates an opportunity for women to increase their self-reliance and allows a space for women to meet, and discuss and find solutions to their common problems and concerns. Finally,

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[25]Moser, *Theory, Practice and Training*, 220.
[26]Coote, *Trade Trap*, 167.
[27]Ten Days for Global Justice Action Guide, 13.

access to credit and the ability to save increase self-reliance and self-esteem. One woman participant states that during her childhood she survived on very little food, but now, because of her involvement with the cooperative, she and her family are able to eat three times per day.[28]

Jute Works meets a number of both practical and strategic gender needs and consequently can be considered to be a successful alternative trade project. However, there are two main problems that need to be considered. First, since the sale of jute handicrafts depends on an unreliable market, if the project is to continue to successfully satisfy women's needs, the women must be trained in making the clay and brass products as well. Since these craft-work media are traditionally a male preserve, this will require a challenge to the existing status quo, which might be met with strong resistance. Second, because of the sexual division of labour and the time women must spend caring for children and performing other domestic production activities, craft production for women "is very much part-time work."[29] Statistics from the United Nations show women in Bangladesh are already working on average a fourteen hour day. Women do not have any extra time in their day and, unless some of the burdens of childcare and domestic chores are alleviated, the projects will add more time to an already long workday. Therefore, women's triple burden must be taken into consideration. The creation of child-minding facilities and/or the reduction of time consuming and onerous tasks such as doing the laundry, cooking and cleaning the home, would help to decrease the total work day for Bangladeshi women.

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[28]Ibid.
[29]Coote, *Trade Trap*, 169.

b. United to Live Better (UPAVIM)

United to Live Better, is a cooperative that began as a craft income generating project to raise money for a children's clinic in a squatters' settlement outside of Guatemala City. It is a member of the alternative trade development project Samajel B'atz', which means "worker of thread", in Cakichikel, which is one of the 22 indigenous languages still spoken in Guatemala. The project's mandate is to promote the economic self-sufficiency of its member artisans while maintaining Mayan culture by marketing traditional weavings at a fair price. Samajel B'atz' is the umbrella organization for 12 cooperatives and it is supported by the American NGO CONCERN/America.[30]

Consisting of primarily indigenous women, members of the cooperative are weavers and sewers. However, men who are experiencing economic hardship are also accepted as cooperative members. All of the members of the cooperative survived the thirty-six year civil war and many are widowed or displaced from their communities. They state that their motivation to produce traditional weavings is an act of economic and cultural survival.[31]

This cooperative has been chosen as a case study because these people, like the members of *La Voz que Clama en el Desierto* cooperative, are survivors of the civil war. The women in particular have experienced the disruption of war to both their physical well-being and also to the cultural fabric of their society. While hundreds of thousands of men took part in the fighting, and many were subsequently killed, the women had to take on numerous non-traditional female roles to ensure that they and their children continued to survive. Therefore, although the women of UPAVIM are now working within a weaving cooperative which is a more traditional and socially acceptable

[30]Samajel B'atz', *Achievement Report*, 1994-95, 1. Unpublished.
[31]Ibid.

role for women within the indigenous Guatemalan society, these women are nonetheless challenging boundaries. This cooperative acts as an excellent point of comparison as to where alternative trade development projects meet women's needs within the more traditional area of weaving as compared to the extent to which alternative trade development projects within the less traditional field of coffee cultivation meet women's needs. As women achieve higher levels of education and begin to meet more strategic gender needs within weaving and crafting cooperatives, there is the possibility that these lessons can then be transferred, through direct relationships, to the women and men within alternative trade coffee cooperatives in Guatemala.

The representatives from the twelve member cooperatives operating within Samajel B'atz are fully responsible for product design and the implementation of a marketing strategy. The ultimate goal is for each cooperative eventually to maintain direct trade with clients rather than continuing to use Samajel B'atz' as the wholesale distributor. The project distributes to solidarity groups and organizations, retailers and cataloguers in Europe, North America and Australia.[32]

The squatter settlement of Mezquital in Guatemala City is an impoverished community of approximately 5,000 people. Founded in 1989, the women attribute their organizational strength to their early struggles with the municipality of Guatemala City. In the early 1980s, the women who were to form the backbone of UPAVIM were catalysts responsible for bringing running water and electricity to each home in Mezquital.

> Slowly they began demanding attention to their needs – sometimes by force, as were the cases with water and electricity, which they siphoned from the municipal system [in Guatemala City] when denied official services. Water and electricity were provided by the municipality in 1991 and then only communal wells and meters. Water finally came to each house in 1993.[33]

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[32]Ibid.
[33]Ibid., 10.

Through the volunteer services of an American nurse, a doctor, a dentist, a lab technician from near-by Guatemala City and the thousands of volunteer hours of the sixty women who make the crafts and administer the project, a children's clinic and other community support projects are fully operational.

The women are able to raise enough money to construct a large facility for their multi-faceted program. The main floor houses a day care program and is open from six o'clock in the morning to six o'clock in the evening. As stated by one of the cooperative administrators, Angela Bailon, the program provides "excellent structure to children whose lives before were filled with turmoil."[34] The second floor of the building houses a full services medical clinic, including pharmacy, laboratory, and dental clinic. This facility is open five mornings a week, while in the afternoon the space is used to educate women about pre/post natal care, has a La Leche breastfeeding group and also offers women family planning counseling. Finally, on the third floor is a "scholarship and tutoring program [where] UPAVIM pays the registration fees, and purchases uniforms and supplies for children who otherwise could not afford this."[35] Most of the children are offspring of the women who work at the cooperative.

Table 2 offers the reader a matrix that outlines the practical and strategic needs the UPAVIM development project is addressing, which aspect(s) of the triple role is addressed, important discussion that was drawn from the literature, and finally, which development approach each need addresses. As with the Jute Works cooperative, an analysis of the project will follow.

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[34]SERRV International Partnerships, "Fair Trade for the Developing World Newsletter," March 1996, 2.

[35]Ibid.

Table 2 UPAVIM: Project Analysis

PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS	R / P or CM	DISCUSSION OF NEED	APPROACH USED
In women's homes	R	-craft production is done both in private domestic space and also in cooperative	Welfare
Income earning	P	-craft production helps fund children's clinic -income-generation	Anti-poverty and Efficiency
Healthcare	R	-growth monitoring -pre/post natal care - family planning/ breast feeding support group -free eye surgery -medical clinic open in place of work (co-op) 5 mornings/week	Welfare And Efficiency
Basic services	R and CM	-lunches for school children -free education for children	Welfare And Efficiency
Child care facilities	R and P	-open 6:30am -6:00pm -provides structure for children	Welfare and Efficiency
STRATEGIC GENDER NEEDS			
Education	P and CM	-literacy, computer training, accounting, English training, travel -children also educated at cooperative	Anti-poverty and Empowerment

Sources: Caroline Moser, *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*, (London: Routledge, 1993), Samajel B'atz' Update: 1994-95, SERRV Newsletter

R: Reproductive P: Productive CM: Community Managing

Welfare — Focus on women's primary role as caregiver.
Anti-poverty — Focus is to meet women's PGNs through income generation.
Efficiency — Focus is to meet PGNs, within the context of decreasing social services, by relying on women's triple role in society.
Empowerment — Focus is to meet SGNs through grassroots organizing and utilization of PGNs as a starting point to confront oppression.

A gender analysis of this project reveals that it is also a 'classic' NGO project since it covers many development objectives that range from welfare to anti-poverty to

empowerment. The project focuses on three roles performed by women: productive, (the generation of income); reproductive (the woman as mother and primary caregiver); and women's community managing role in organizing healthcare, education and childcare facilities in the wake of public expenditure decreases. The acceptance of low-income males, the strong focus on maintaining their cultural roots through the production of traditional weavings and the focus on expanding women's educational and professional opportunities make UPAVIM an example of an empowerment/GAD project. It recognizes that not only women but also poor men experience difficulties that are based not only on gender but also on issues of race and class.

The project is successful in meeting women's PGNs such as access to healthcare and family planning, child care in their place of work and therefore easily accessible for breast feeding, the ability to earn an income, and the opportunity for older children to have access to education. The community organizing power the women displayed in the early 1980s continues to be exhibited in UPAVIM. Educational opportunities that are available to some of the project administrators can be defined as a strategic gender need. For example, the women have access to accounting, shipping, inventory and quality control training as well as computer instruction and English fluency classes. In addition, selected women from UPAVIM attended both a design workshop in Davis, California, and the 1994 Fair Trade Federation conference in Chicago, Illinois.

There are two potential areas for criticism of UPAVIM. First, the project does not challenge the sexual division of labour and continues to uphold and reinforce women's role as primary caregiver. The provisioning of child care is important for women in meeting their PGN to earn an income,. However, as long as it is in the woman's place of work it will not become a SGN because it does not attempt to give men a greater share of childcare. However, many of the women who are members of UPAVIM are

single parents as a result of the violence during the civil war. As well, further research would be required to find out the extent to which, if at all, women wish for men to have a greater role in childcare. Second, the project continues to take advantage of women's unpaid role as community managers by using women's volunteer time to run the project and as a result, women's already long workday is extended.

VI. Conclusion

As stated in the introduction, the mandate of the alternative trade movement is to reduce the imbalance between the developed North and the lesser developed South and to increase the over-all well-being of communities through the alternative trade market. The goals of IFAT were discussed in order to discern the extent to which crafting projects, which have women as the primary members of cooperatives, meet both their practical and strategic gender needs. Although not an official goal, the analysis of the two craft projects, Jute Works and UPAVIM, have shown that the projects which are supported by Northern ATOs are meeting both practical and strategic gender needs with fairly high levels of success.

At the theoretical level, both within WID and GAD frameworks, the desired outcome of development projects is meeting women's strategic and practical gender needs. As previously stated, this thesis is interested in the extent to which the alternative trade movement has incorporated the issue of gender. It also investigates the trade movement's attempt to define and challenge socially constructed roles that continue to keep women in a subordinate position to men, in their projects at the grassroots level. The analysis of two craft projects identified the practical and strategic gender needs being met by the project and the extent to which the projects supported by the alternative trade movement fall more predominantly under WID or empowerment/GAD

approaches. As the analysis shows, they are "classic" NGO projects as they have numerous objectives that range from welfare, through to anti-poverty and empowerment approaches.

Women's real practical gender need for income-generation and basic needs, such as education, healthcare and childcare, are well supported by the crafting projects. As a result of meeting these basic needs, women are more able to rally at the grass roots level to begin to meet some of the most basic strategic gender needs. These include, access to credit and savings schemes that allow women greater control over finances and family well-being; and non-traditional educational opportunities that help to integrate women into non-traditional sectors of society.

The Bangladeshi Jute Works project shows that through meeting the practical gender need of income generation there is a potential increase in women's status and decision-making power within the family unit. This in turn meets basic strategic gender needs which leads to greater empowerment through self-reliance. The UPAVIM project has successfully created a health services unit that has met women's reproductive practical gender needs through the increased well-being of both women and children in La Esperanza, Guatemala. In addition, UPAVIM has given some women the opportunity to learn skills such as accounting and computer literacy. This gives them more advanced employment opportunities.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND ETHICS

I. Introduction

As an outsider to Guatemala and as a researcher conducting cross-cultural fieldwork, it is important to consider the numerous methodological and ethical issues related to the research process. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the process I undertook, the people I met, the potential impacts that my presence might have had on the community and the impact that had on this research.

One of the challenges for feminists conducting fieldwork is to be continuously aware of issues of "power and the unequal hierarchies or levels of control that are often maintained, perpetuated, created and re-created during and after research."[1] Feminist field research requires that the researcher's self or identity is revealed during work in an unfamiliar society.[2] Revealing oneself in the research process is important as it leads to a consciousness-raising of the researcher and ensures that the researcher is questioning and recognizing issues of ethnocentrism and power. As a white, educated, middle-class woman, I entered the research process with my "personal biography [as] a gendered researcher, who speaks from a particular class, racial, cultural, and ethnic community perspective."[3] I approached the community of San Juan La Laguna with a particular set of ideas and questions that stemmed from my limited understanding of the alternative trade cooperative community. I came to this place as an outsider with many levels of difference that boosted my privileged position when working in this community.[4]

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[1]Diane L. Wolf, *Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork,(London: Westview Press, 1996), 2.*
[2]Shulamit Reinharz, *Feminist Methods in Social Research,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 113.
[3]Norman K. Denzin and Yvonne S Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative* Research, (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 11.
[4]Wolf, *Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork*, 2.

I speak a different language, I am from an economically dominant and colonizing culture and if danger or illness threatened my wellbeing I had the ability to leave at any time. These differences gave me a certain amount of power. This power, coupled with my own cultural perceptions of the world, gave this research a North American perception of the needs of the women in the cooperatives.

Researchers undertaking qualitative studies often assume that "competent observers can with objectivity, clarity and precision report on their own observations of the social world, including the experiences of others."[5] Certain methodologies used by me in Guatemala, such as, interviewing and observation, led me to identify certain meanings in the experiences and situations of the women interviewed and observed. However, I recognize that the interviews and observations were filtered through my personal lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity. My observations can never be viewed as fully objective because I approached this research with a certain set of assumptions as a result of my personal station in life. Shulamit Reinharz reinforces the need to recognize one's position and biases stating that "as a white, middle-class, educated, heterosexual woman and feminist, it would be naive to profess any kind of so-called objectivity to the analysis...; indeed, I do not think such a perspective exists, since as an inquiring subject one must assume a perspective from which to launch the inquiry."[6]

As well it was important to me that in working with women from a minority culture I did not exploit the knowledge they shared with me or place them in any harm.[7]

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[5]Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 12.
[6]Reinharz, *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, 261.
[7]Linda Archibald and Mary Crnkovich, "Intimate Outsiders: Feminist Research in a Cross-Cultural Environment," In *Changing Methods: Feminists Transforming Practice,* Edited by Sandra Burt and Lorraine Code, (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1995), 105.

II. Methodology

My approach to this study and my attempt to answer the research question is situated in the naturalistic approach. This approach requires that the researcher study their 'subjects' in their "natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them."[8] The methodological tools employed to gather the information were interviews, observation, and the review of printed materials. I deployed a range of interconnected methodologies, hoping to get a strong grasp of the subject in order to answer the thesis question: to what extent, if at all, do alternative trade coffee cooperatives have the potential to meet the practical and strategic gender needs of women coffee workers? [9]

It is common for researchers to start with a particular research plan that has been accepted and because of circumstances are forced to modify that plan to meet the research needs. Often, a field researcher must become a "Jack of all trades or a kind of do-it-yourself person."[10] In these cases the researcher must carefully re-assess the research tools to ensure they remain appropriate for the study. It is of utmost importance that the modifications do not lead to harming the subjects in any way.

As this chapter outlines, I was forced to modify my original research plan. I am confident that the careful and conscientious modifications that I made to my research questions and plan did not harm those with whom I was working. The original questions that were approved by the University of Northern British Columbia Ethics Committee can be found in Appendix II of this thesis.

I utilized a feminist perspective in an attempt to discern whether practical and strategic gender needs were being met at the coffee cooperative. While there are many

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[8]Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2.
[9]Ibid.
[10]Sandra Burt and Lorraine Code, *Changing Methods: Feminists Transforming Practice*, (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1995), 9.

feminisms and many feminist approaches to research, I adhered to the perspective that the researcher is accountable "to the persons or groups about, or for, whom she claims to speak."[11] In doing so, I adopted what is termed as double-consciousness.[12] Double-consciousness requires that as the researcher gains knowledge about the lives and issues of women, identifying with them as women, she must always maintain an awareness of the differences. This means that as a researcher, "part of developing a double-consciousness is being able to look at one's own historical and cultural biases and not presume that what one takes for granted...is universally accepted."[13] Within the context of this research, this required that I continuously reminded myself that I had a certain level of, and access to, power which placed me in a specific social category. This led me to being viewed in different ways by those with whom I worked, and I became more aware of the issue of white oppression of minority communities and cultures. I was viewed as a powerful, cultural outsider who had the capacity to negatively or positively affect coffee sales and future potential development projects. However, by adopting a double-consciousness which is mindful and respectful of differences, and the inherent racism that has been perpetuated by the dominant culture to which I belong, I believe I was able to work consciously and respectfully with the women and men at the cooperative. In turn, this has lead to a greater understanding of how the lives of the women fit into the bigger social whole.

III. Chronology of Research

I entered this research project as a member of the ATO, Prince George Bridgehead Committee. I had been involved with the group for almost a year before

[11]Ibid., 114.
[12]Ibid., 116.
[13]Archibald and Crnkovich, 117.

leaving to conduct my research in Guatemala. Through a member of the Prince George Bridgehead Committee, I was approached by a member of the Christian Task Force, and asked to bring $5000 US, a computer, a wheelchair and clothing to the Maquilla Solidarity Network in Guatemala City. This non-government organization works with women factory workers throughout Guatemala to effect positive change. So innocently, and with only good and kind intentions, I agreed to bring these goods to the women who run the Maquilla Solidarity Network.

I was met at the airport by Rosita Mandez, the Chair of the Maquilla Solidarity Network, and taken to her office. As thanks for bringing these items, the members of the Maquilla Solidarity Network offered me a small bedroom in their office while making and confirming my contacts for this project. One day Carlos, Rosita's brother-in-law, took me into the coffee growing sector around Guatemala City to view two non-alternative trade cooperatives. The kindness of the Maquilla Solidarity Network was greatly appreciated as it helped me begin to understand how large my task was and how little time I had to gather so much information.

I understand, in retrospect, that my acting as a courier and bringing money and goods to a group in Guatemala, whom then gave me accommodation and a tour of two coffee plantations, might seem unethical. One might assume that they felt an obligation to do these things for me and then for me, to further reciprocate their kindness. I am sure they did. Like most people, who are on the receiving end of a favor, they probably did feel a certain indebtedness. However, I was thankful for a safe place to stay in Guatemala City, and I believe that my act of kindness does not in any way affect the research I conducted at La Voz cooperative. The people for whom I brought the money and goods did not have any contact or association whatsoever with the *Groupo de los Catorce,* their managers or their seasonal laborers who were my subjects for the case

study. In fact, when I discussed my research topic with them they were completely unaware that that type of development existed.

I believe that I am a feminist and a humanitarian and that my actions helped Maquilla Solidarity Network further their work to alleviate the brutality and poverty that women factory workers experience in Guatemala. I am proud to have helped them further this important and necessary cause. Certainly, if I had been in Guatemala to research maquilladoras my transporting and delivering money and goods would have raised more complicated ethical issues. However, because my actions in this matter and my research are separate and unrelated events, I feel I mitigated any ethical concerns regarding this issue.

Once I left Guatemala City to further pursue my research, I did not have any further contact with the Maquilla Solidarity Network and as far as I know, neither of us had an expectation of additional contact.

I then attended Spanish language classes in Antigua for ten days. In the morning I would practice Spanish and in the afternoon my instructor, Haroldo, took me to visit coffee plantations. The afternoon trips were something the Headmaster of the language school and I agreed upon as a condition of my admittance. Haroldo did not incur any costs as I paid for all transportation to and from the plantations as well as any "entrance fees" requested by security guards. Haroldo had recently completed a university research paper on coffee plantations and therefore had knowledge of and access to many plantations in the area. With Haroldo's assistance, I was able to secure access to, and gain an understanding of, the conditions of large coffee plantations, but I was only able to observe the workers and had no direct contact with them.

On one occasion, Haroldo and I visited the office of *Groupo de los Catorce,* and arrangements were made for me to visit the *La Voz* cooperative. Certainly, my

association with a northern-based ATO could, and probably did, lead the manager of *Groupo de los Catorce* and the managers of *La Voz* cooperative to accommodate my wishes and to answer my questions in a certain manner. At the onset of all conversations, I repeatedly stressed that I was merely a researcher and that I did not have any access to, or influence in, helping them find further markets for their coffee beans in Canada. Even so, I believe the cooperative managers thought that I did have the power to help, even though I consistently denied having any influence in this regard.

Once I reached the cooperative I was faced with my greatest disappointment and challenge of the research trip. Because of the weather phenomenon *El Nino,* the coffee harvest had come in early had almost been completed. The female coffee farmers that I was hoping to interview had already brought their coffee beans to the cooperative and returned to their homes in the highlands. Due to distance and time constraints I could not meet and interview them. I realized that I therefore would have to rely on the male cooperative managers and seasonal female workers for information.

This created an ethical problem for me because the research strategy and questions I had outlined and which were approved by the University of Northern British Columbia Ethics Committee were no longer applicable. I had the choice to either modify my research strategy and questions or terminate the research project and return to Canada without information. I chose to modify my strategy.

While at the cooperative, the managers and I had, from my perspective, a very informal and relaxed interview. During the day I would ask prepared questions in Spanish that would be answered and taped. The only question from my ethics proposal that was suitable to ask the male managers was question No. #4 which asks about the input women have in the way in which decisions are made at the cooperative. I was forced to pose this question to the managers rather than to the female cooperative

members as I had originally intended. It became obvious that my focus changed to reflect the opinions of the male managers on the roles that the women had within the General Assembly and within the co-operative in general. This certainly altered the focus of my thesis and presented me with the problem of having males answer for women. This issue is discussed in Chapter Four.

I had concerns about deviating from my proposed plan for two reasons. First, I was concerned that I did not have approval to ask the questions I was posing. Secondly, I feared that the information I was gathering was less useful because I did not have the opportunity to speak with the women coffee farmers directly and had to rely on the male manager's opinions. However, after careful consideration, I concluded that my questions did not pose a potential for harm to those I interviewed or for the women who were the focus of my questions.[14] I have included the revised questions as Appendix III. While I would have preferred to remain with my original research plan, I feel that the information I received from the male managers is useful as it begins to lay the foundation for further research on this topic. In hindsight I realize that researchers working in the field are constantly faced with these challenges and must always re-evaluate the focus of their research while also always being concerned with the safety of those being 'researched.'

As with the manager of *Groupo de los Catorce,* I do believe that Benjamine Cholo Sis, manager of the *La Voz* cooperative, most likely thought that I could help them find markets for their coffee beans in Canada. While I made it clear to him that I did not have such power, I feel that my contact with others involved in alternative trade led him to believe that there was potential for me to find new markets for the cooperative. This may have led him to give me the answers he thought I would want to hear. Certainly,

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[14]Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW), *Feminist Research Ethics: A Process, (*Ottawa: CRIAW, 1996), 22-23.

this situation skews the data I gathered, and unfortunately presents a weakness in the field research I conducted in San Juan La Laguna.

I was fortunate however, to interview and observe seasonal female workers. Andres Ramos Quic, Agricultural Monitor for the cooperative, introduced me to these women. Like Haroldo and Benjamine, Andres acted as a "gatekeeper" as he, like the others, had the power to grant or block access to the women who could give me the information I was seeking. Such "gatekeepers" are important as they have the power to control my research process. Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson reinforce this stating:

> [s]eeking the permission of gatekeepers or the support of sponsors is often an unavoidable first step in gaining access to data. And the relationship established with such people can have important consequences for the subsequent course of the research...even the most friendly and co-operative of gatekeepers or sponsors will shape the conduct and development of the research.[15]

As Andres Ramos Quic was the highest-ranking cooperative manager the women had contact with, my being introduced to the women by him immediately placed me in a high position within the power structure of the cooperative. I recognize now this certainly had an impact on the way in which the women answered my questions. They were the final and most respected coffee bean pickers. I suspect they may have answered my questions in a manner that helped them keep their own positions of power within the seasonal laborer ranks.

Methodologically, the informal interviews I conducted with the female seasonal labourers deviated much less from my original research plan. While it was not appropriate to ask them about their level of decision-making in the cooperative, I was able to ask them three of my seven questions. The answers they gave are discussed in

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[15]Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 75.

the case study analysis in the following chapter. The other questions I asked regarding their pay and what they bought, strayed farther from the original plan. Their collective response that they were not paid directly for their labour was very matter-of-fact. I do not feel that this line of questioning posed any threats or harm for the seasonal women labourers.[16] If this issue is to be further pursued by another researcher, it is possible that paying the women directly for their labour may fundamentally change income distribution and the power-dynamics within the home. Pursuing such a strategy would require a great deal of consideration for the safety of the women within their family units.

The most pressing ethical issue I was faced with during the information gathering process was that those being interviewed refused to sign the consent forms. I either read this document to them or had them read it on their own. I was cautious to ensure that each person knew the purpose of the research, that they knew their identity would be protected, and that the information would be used only for this thesis. I sought to ensure that each person knew what 'consent' meant and was faced with two responses to my request for a signature. The first response was a refusal to sign the form without explanation. Most often the interviewee responded saying that they did not need to sign papers to talk with me. The second response was less frequent but more informative. It was stated that during the thirty-six year civil war thousands of Mayans were forced to sign documents or blank sheets of paper that dispossessed them of their land or stated that they were guilty of a crime they did not commit. They were, however, willing to be interviewed, most often taking the microphone from me and holding it themselves. In the taped interviews, most interviewees stated their names and that they agreed to the recording. Others just started talking. Originally, I was uncomfortable with the fact that I was not receiving the written consent as required by the ethics committee. I realized,

[16]CRIAW, *Feminist Research Ethics,* 22-23.

that while following the ethics procedures of the University of Northern British Columbia was very important, the comfort and trust of the people I was interviewing was paramount. I decided that to force them to sign my document would have been a coercive and reprehensible act. It was out of respect for the people who agreed to talk with me that I did not force this issue.

IV. Conclusion

The research process undertaken for this thesis was complex and required that I was constantly aware of issues relating to power. As a white, educated, middle-class woman from a dominant society I hold a certain amount of power and this power must not be abused. One must be vigilant that the research being conducted is not coercive or potentially harmful to those being researched. I believe that the research I conducted at *La Voz* cooperative was mindful of these issues and that it was conducted in a respectful and ethical manner.

CHAPTER FOUR: COFFEE PRODUCTION IN GUATEMALA

I. Introduction

The coffee industry in Guatemala has been an expression of social and economic power since the nineteenth century. This power has created a dynastic elite that has played a decisive role in shaping political institutions and the lives of thousands of Mayan coffee workers in Guatemala. Field research conducted at an organic alternative trade coffee cooperative in March 1998 reveals that gender inequality exists at this particular cooperative. However, the quality of life of both small-scale farmers and agricultural workers is better as a result of their association with the cooperative than it would be had these farmers and labourers still been under the control of the coffee elite.

This chapter provides the reader with a history of the unequal class and race relations that have resulted in centuries of brutal repression of the indigenous population in Guatemala. These relations lay the foundation for a comparison of the role of women in the mainstream coffee industry and the extent to which women's practical and strategic gender needs are being met by coffee cooperatives. This information is presented in four sections. First, a broad overview of the geographic setting of Guatemala. Second, the chapter discusses how the coffee industry, which started in Guatemala during the mid to late nineteenth century, was instrumental in the formation of a highly stratified class system that is clearly divisible by race. Third, it gives an overview of the current situation for migrant women coffee plantation workers in Guatemala. Finally, a case study of a coffee cooperative, *La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto / A Voice Crying in the Desert,* is presented. The case study offers an example of how an alternative trade cooperative functions. It is a starting point for the analysis of

the extent to which women farmers' and labourers' practical and strategic gender needs are being met.

II. Introduction to Guatemala

Guatemala is a Central American country located directly south of Mexico, with Belize to the northeast, El Salvador to the south and Honduras to the southeast. The country is approximately 109,000 square kilometers, roughly the size of the island of Newfoundland, and holds within its borders a fascinating diversity of climate, geography and ethnicity.[1] For example, within its borders Guatemala has twenty-two indigenous groups, each with their own language. The indigenous population comprises the majority with 61% of the population.[2] In the past, many Mayans could speak two or three languages, which facilitated barter and trade relations with other Mayan groups.[3]

Running through the centre of the country is a backbone of mountains and volcanoes that make up the Highlands. It is here, on the lower slopes of the Highlands nestled within the peaks and valleys that the Guatemalan coffee industry thrives. The warm days, relatively cool nights, rich volcanic soil and moderate rainfall are perfect for the cultivation of coffee and, as a result, this area grows some of the world's best and most expensive coffee.[4]

The majority of the population in the Highlands are indigenous peoples who, despite over 100 years of dispossession of land by the coffee elite, continue to live on small family plots on which they grow coffee for sale and subsistence crops such as beans, maize, onion and garlic. In this area, especially around areas such as Lake

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[1]Please see Appendix 1 for a map of Guatemala.
[2]server.rds.org.gt/, June 20, 1999.
[3]Margaret Hooks, *Guatemalan Women Speak*, (Washington, D.C.: Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean, 1993), x.
[4] Jim Handy, *Gift of the Devil,* (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 1984), 17.

Atitlan where the case study for this thesis was conducted, the culture of the Mayan population in Guatemala is most vibrant.

III. The History of Coffee Industry in Guatemala

a. 1830 - 1870

As early as the 1830s, coffee was reported as being grown in Guatemala for both internal consumption and trade. By the early 1850s, propaganda in favour of producing coffee was increased and the movement toward coffee production grew substantially. A number of obstacles such as a lack of knowledge about how to grow coffee, a lack of infrastructure such as roads and ports, and the absence of a centralized land or mortgage registry system made the acquisition of land and capital for the increased export and trade of coffee difficult. However, by the 1860s the coffee industry was rapidly replacing other export crops.[5]

During the 1860s, the first substantial appropriations of Mayan agricultural land for the production of coffee took place. At first, Mayans from some Highland communities agreed to rent land to coffee growers but they soon became aware that to rent land for a permanent crop meant that, despite what the laws of ownership dictated, they would lose the land. Generally, however, most communities resisted both renting to coffee growers and growing coffee themselves. The reasons for this were quite simple:

> ...coffee was a permanent crop, and the Indians practiced shifting, slash-and-burn agriculture. Not only was it possible that they would require the land in question at some further time, but, as they repeatedly pointed out, everyone understood that to give land in *censo* (rent) to a permanent crop meant effectively to lose it, whatever the letter of the law.[6]

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[5]David McCreery, *Rural Guatemala*: 1760-1940 (Stanford University Press, 1994), 170.
[6]Ibid., 164.

By the mid 1860s, conflicts between the Mayan population and businessmen were becoming evident. Conflicts resulted between these two groups for three main reasons. First, the Highland properties that the Mayans claimed, and refused to sell, were attractive to non-indigenous businessmen and foreign investors because of their excellent coffee growing capacity. Second, the businessmen were beginning to make demands on the government to pass laws that would require the Mayan populations to take part in coffee cultivation and, in the near absence of roads, to carry the harvested crop to market.[7] Third, when communal coffee holdings cultivated by Mayans prospered, private entrepreneurs found it more difficult and expensive to get the land and labour they needed for their own production. Therefore, the entrepreneurs began to forcibly take cultivable land from the Mayan population while demanding that the government create laws that made this appropriation of land legal.[8]

It was also during the late 1860s that many of the early European immigrants and foreign coffee planters began to voice loudly their discontent with the Conservative government's attitude toward the Mayans. While there were numerous laws in place that could force the Mayan population to work outside of their immediate communities against their will, the Conservative rhetoric at the time admonished such practices. For example, McCreery describes the Conservative position:

> The role of the government was to protect the Indians and to improve their spiritual and material situation: they should be "moralized" with "kindness and prudence." If the Indians were lazy and given to drunkenness, they must nevertheless be protected from themselves and others and not abandoned, and they should not be forced to perform wage labour against their will.[9]

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[7]Ibid., 166.
[8]Ibid., 167.
[9]Ibid., 171.

The emerging group of wealthy coffee growers, who were to become the dynastic coffee elite, felt that the Conservatives were too concerned with the rights of the Mayan population and not concerned enough with their own needs for cheap land and labour. They accused the government of blocking the way of progress in Guatemala and demanded that active measures be taken to increase their access to fertile land for coffee production. In addition, they demanded that the Mayan population that lived and worked this land for subsistence must be made available to them for the production of coffee. It was upon this wave of discontent that the reformist Liberal regime, led by the wealthy plantation owner, Justo Rufino Barrios, came to power in 1871. This Liberal regime "played a decisive role in creating conditions for the development of a coffee economy based on large estates" through the wholesale expropriation of indigenous land.[10]

b. 1871 - 1920

The Liberal regime that came into power headed by the young plantation owner, Rufino Barrios, saw the financial gains that could be made with the production of coffee. They used the power of the state to increase exports as rapidly as possible. Through the production of coffee as a new export crop, which was increasingly in demand in North America and Europe, this Liberal regime ushered Guatemala into the modern age of development with the creation of transportation facilities, new monetary institutions, and a modern bureaucracy. Still, as stated by Jim Handy,

> the particular type of progress they formented ensured vast fortunes for the members of the elite. However, it also curtailed any more equitable type of economic development and demanded a wholesale assault on Indian land. Their vision of progress wedged Guatemala into an economic and social position that ensured incomplete development of the

[10]Verena Stolke, "The Labours of Coffee in Latin America: The Hidden Charm of Family Labour and Self-Provisioning", In *Coffee, Society and Power in Latin America,* Edited by William Roseberry, Lowell Gudmundson and Mario Samper Kutschbach, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995), 74.

> internal market and worked against domestic production of alternate crops. Perhaps of more importance, they forced the retreating peasant villages into a cocoon of mistrust and apprehension.[11]

This new faction of Liberals, the so-called "radicals," did not believe that production for internal consumption and the creation of internal markets was the modernization course that Guatemala should take. They believed in the complete integration of Guatemala's economy into the world capitalist system, as a supplier of primary commodities and a purchaser of manufactured goods.[12] This outward focus on a commodity such as coffee, which holds no nutritious value, demands excessive amounts of fertile land and is subject to the volatility of world market price, fueled economic and social problems in Guatemala in the decades to follow.

The Liberal path to modernization was to be accomplished through the domination and exploitation of both land and labour by the rising coffee elite. Paige observes that since coffee's full emergence as a commodity for export, "there is little disagreement among authors writing about Guatemala or in official statistical sources about the absolute domination of Guatemalan coffee land and total production by large estates."[13] In addition, the coffee production system in Guatemala has been subsidized by various forms of forced labour which have differed only by whether control was undertaken by the state or by individual plantation owners.[14] The expropriation of Mayan land and the exploitation of Indian labour are the legacy of the Barrios regime, causing Paige to conclude that:

> Guatemala is unique not only in the small number of people and vast amounts of land controlled by its coffee elite but also in the elaborate institutionalized system of forced labour and the formal power of the state...Owning Guatemala's most productive land, producing its most

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[11]Handy, *Gift of the Devil*, 58.
[12]McCreery, *Rural Guatemala*, 173.
[13]Jeffrey M. Paige, *Coffee and Power: Revolution and the Rise of Democracy in Central America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 58.
[14]Paige, *Coffee and Power*, 69.

> important source of wealth, and controlling a vast dependent population through state-sanctioned forced labour, the Guatemalan coffee elite became a political force that, both foreign and *ladino*, have profited for centuries from the forced labour and expropriation of land from the indigenous population.[15]

It is difficult to fully comprehend what this meant to the Mayan population. To come to such an understanding one "would at the very least require...approaching the subject from an indigenous point of view."[16] Rigoberta Menchu, a modern-day indigenous woman and social activist, explains the traditional importance of land.

> From very small children we receive an education which is very different from white children, *ladinos.* We Indians have more contact with nature...because it's our culture. We worship -or rather not worship but respect- a lot of things to do with the natural world, the most important things for us...Our parents tell us: 'Children, the earth is the mother of man, because she gives him food.' This is especially true for those of us whose life is based on the crops we grow. Our people eat maize, beans and plants...So we think of the earth as the mother of man, and our parents teach us to respect the earth. We must only harm it when we are in need. This is why, before we sow our maize, we have to ask the earth's permission.[17]

Family plots of land, called "ancestor estates," were passed down from generation to generation and held much more than mere economic significance: "The piece of land which a man had received from his ancestors is sacred; it has its shrine, where offerings are made; [it is] a place where one can approach the supernaturals."[18] In addition to ancestral plots, another form of traditional land use among the indigenous Guatemalan population involved a type of more-or-less free access of both individuals and families on communal land that was loosely defined. This area was available for "slash-and-burn agriculture and migratory stock raising and subject only to the claims of

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[15]Ibid.

[16]McCreery, *Rural Guatemala*, 236.

[17]Rigoberta Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*. Edited by Elisabeth Burgos Debray, (New York: Verso Publications, 1984), 56.

[18]McCreery, *Rural Guatemala*, 237.

subgroups within the community."[19] To lose contact with land that holds strong ancestral and religious ties would be calamitous to those holding such beliefs. As the Liberal regime increased the amount of land available to coffee growers, tens of thousands of indigenous Guatemalan families experienced the devastating loss of ancestral land that had supplied them with their primary food source.

Starting in 1873, the Barrios government started "a massive assault upon Indian land aimed at destroying the autonomy of the highland villages."[20] Communal land that was lying fallow or was used for subsistence farming, which were considered inefficient uses of fertile land, was taken from villages by the government and handed over "to an entrepreneur who will exploit them...for the general benefit of agriculture."[21] During this period almost all of the fertile land that fell within the coffee growing region of Guatemala was taken out of Mayan hands.[22]

Until the Barrios regime, Guatemala had had a land tenure system by which measurements and entitlements were loosely structured and individual communities managed large community land holdings. In January 1877, the Liberal government "issued Decree 170 providing for the redemption, or conversion, of land presently managed by the community into individual private property."[23] The process of redemption required that Mayan peasant farmers using communal lands pay for it at a designated price within six months or forfeit the land. When they either refused to pay or could not come up with the money, the land was then sold at a public auction with the money going to the national government.[24] While some peasant farmers were able to pay for their land, the "majority were simply dispossessed and their land sold to *ladinos*

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[19]Ibid.
[20]Handy, *Gift of the Devil*, 68.
[21]Ibid., 40.
[22]Handy, *Gift of the Devil*, 68.
[23]McCreery, *Rural Guatemala*, 185.
[24]Handy, *Gift of the Devil*, 68.

with either connections to the government or the cash to purchase the property."[25] Many of the present day Mayans live in an economically disadvantaged position because of their dispossession from ancestor estates. From the 1920's through to the present, the division between the coffee elite and indigenous peoples in Guatemala has remained virtually unchanged.

c. The Civil War

The Civil War in Guatemala, which started in 1960 and ended in 1996, took thousands of lives and created an era of terror, primarily for the indigenous population. In 1954 a democratically elected Guatemalan government was overthrown by a CIA-organized "Liberation Army" defending the economic interests of the United Fruit Company and the Cold War paranoia of the United States.[26] The new right-wing government of President Castillo Arama reversed land and social reforms made the previous decade, had labour leaders and other opponents executed, drove many Guatemalans into exile, repealed universal suffrage, reversed agrarian reform and outlawed labour confederations, political parties and peasant organizations.[27] By 1960 the country of Guatemala was deep within a terrorizing civil war.

Violent tactics were to become a familiar pattern over the coming decades and Guatemala experienced successive waves of state terror – assassinations, "disappearances", torture, and massive military campaigns in the countryside – in response to periodic upsurges in popular organization and pressure for political

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[25]Ibid., 69.

[26]Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America, *Peace, What Peace?,* 23. Unpublished.

[27]Ibid.

change.[28] Poverty, lack of land, and political exclusion remained the norm for most Guatemalans, especially the majority indigenous population.

In 1982, four guerilla groups came together to form a coordinating unit, known as the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG), giving new life to the civil war.[29] The development of the URNG provoked a new and even more violent military campaign, in which the army used scorched earth tactics to subdue the civilian insurgency. In response to popular pressure, a civilian government was installed in 1986, but the new president was unable to control the army and unable to initiate dialogue with the URNG.

Finally, in December 1996, after a long process of negotiation, representatives of the government and the URNG signed the Guatemalan Peace Accords. It is estimated that, by the time the Accords were signed, the thirty-six year civil war had left between 150,000 and 200,000 civilians dead or "disappeared."[30]

All of the above political events have worked to create a disadvantaged position for indigenous people in Guatemala. The elites of the coffee industry have always played a dominant role in the repression and brutalization of the indigenous population. It is because of these events that development projects such as alternative trade coffee cooperatives are necessary.

d. The Coffee Industry Today

While the coffee industry cannot be blamed as the singular reason for widespread poverty in Guatemala, the fact that it employs 40% of Guatemala's work

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[28]Emilie Smith-Ayala, *The Granddaughters of Ixmucane: Guatemalan Women Speak,* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1991), 28-29.

[29]Inter-Church Committee, 23.

[30]Ibid.

force does reveal that it is a primary contributor.[31] Statistics indicate that a small percentage of the population, the coffee elite, owns a vast majority of the fertile agricultural land that is used for coffee production. As a result, much of the country's wealth is concentrated within this elite group as coffee accounts for about 30% of the country's national income and 40% of Guatemala's foreign exchange earnings.[32] The majority of the people who labour within this sector do not receive a proportionate share of this wealth.

Some basic quality of life indicators exemplify the fact that many Guatemalans, rural Guatemalans in particular, live in abject poverty. Guatemala has the highest infant mortality rate in Central America with over 70% of rural children suffering from malnutrition, and over half of the rural population does not have access to clean, safe drinking water.[33] Adult women have a literacy rate of 57.2% while the adult male literacy rate is 72.8%.[34] The minimum wage in Guatemala was raised to $2.50 per day in 1993, but the Guatemalan National Institute of Statistics estimates that a family of five requires $8 per day to meet its minimum basic needs.[35] Surveys that have been conducted by agricultural workers organizations show that between 60% and 80% of coffee plantations in Guatemala fail to pay the minimum daily wage.[36]

The way the coffee industry in Guatemala is structured is a reflection of the disparities of both wealth and land distribution in Guatemala. For example, "only 1% of the 44,000 farms that produce coffee account for 45% of total production and average 582 acres while 30,000 farms averaging less than four acres account for only 14% of

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[31]Justice for Coffee Workers Campaign, US/ Guatemalan Labour Education Project (GLEP), 1996, 1.

[32]Ibid., 2.

[33]Tom Barry, *Inside Guatemala*, (Albequerque: The Interhemispheric Education Research Centre, 1992), 170-171.

[34]United Nations Human Development Report, (New York: United nations Press,1998), 148.

[35]server.rds.org.gt/, June 20, 1999.

[36]GLEP, 2.

total production."[37] The families that belong to that 1% are some of the wealthiest and most powerful people in Guatemala. In the agricultural sector, 65% of the land is controlled by only 2% of the population.

Unable to exist on their tiny plots, Guatemalan families must migrate to the large plantations to earn a wage to pay for fertilizer for their maize crops, clothing, books, medicine, education, and food. The work is difficult for both men and women, but women have the added burden of having to care for their children in what have been described as virtually subhuman conditions.[38] The following section focuses on women agricultural workers in the mainstream coffee industry.

IV. Women and the Coffee Industry in Guatemala

One of the most prolific postcards in Guatemala depicts fair-skinned Guatemalan women, dressed in spotless traditional clothing, picking coffee. The lipstick they are wearing matches the bright red coffee beans they are picking. This image, which is displayed brightly throughout Guatemala for tourists, is a grossly romanticized and distorted picture of the reality of women who actually perform this work. Personal observation and many of the stories Guatemalan women coffee workers have shared reveal a much different picture than the one brightly displayed for sale to tourists. The majority of women coffee workers, who represent approximately 25% of the almost 700,000 wage labourers on Guatemalan coffee plantations, are forced by poverty to travel long distances with their families to earn exceptionally low wages during the harvest.[39]

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[37]Barry, *Inside Guatemala*, 104-105.
[38]Hooks, *Guatemalan Women Speak*, 3.
[39]www.igc.org/icg/.wi[illegible]nstall/peacenet/hl/980403405/hl4.html, June 11, 1999.

As a child, Rigoberta Menchu, winner of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, used to travel with her family to the large plantations. She explains the reality of women on the plantations:

> Mothers are very tired and just can't do [the picking] sometimes. This is where you see the situation of women in Guatemala very clearly. Most of the women who work picking cotton and coffee...have nine or ten children with them. Of these, four or five will be more or less healthy, and can survive, but most of them have bellies swollen from malnutrition and the mother knows that four or five of her children could die. We'd been on the finca for fifteen days when one of my brothers died from malnutrition...Two of my brothers died in the finca...They'd sprayed the coffee with pesticide by plane while we were working, as they usually did, and my brother couldn't stand the fumes and died of poisoning.[40]

Rigoberta Menchu worked on the coffee plantations with her family nearly twenty years ago; recent information and the personal research of the author reveal that little has changed in the late 1990s.

Uncrowded and semi-private living conditions, access to clean drinking water and toilet facilities are denied and the amount of food the workers receive is minimal.[41] Migratory workers live in a *galera,* a large open-air shed, where hundreds of strangers are forced to live in unhealthy conditions. Rigoberta Menchu describes an exceptionally large *galera:*

> A *galera* is a house, a large shack, where all the workers live. It's called a *galera* because it only has palm leaves or banana leaves for a roof, and the sides are open, it has no walls. All the workers live there together, with their dogs and cats, everything they bring with them...There are no divisions, they put us in any old house, and with anybody...Just one house to hold four, five hundred people.[42]

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[40]Menchu, *I, Rigoberta*, 38.
[41]Personal observation, March 1998.
[42]Menchu, *I, Rigoberta*, 39.

In addition to having to live without privacy, migrant workers rarely have access to a clean, safe water source or toilets. One woman describes the conditions she experienced:

> In one *finca* where I picked coffee there was no running water so they kept the water in drums that had been used to store petrol, and then they used this water to make our *tortillas.* We had to eat *tortillas* that tasted of petrol. It was awful but we were hungry. There was no water anywhere there, no rivers, no drinking water; only a trickle in a gully but it smelt of skunk...The one thing that I couldn't stand about the *finca* was the dirt...and that there were no toilets- not even a ditch where we could go...Some of the people were aware of the situation and were careful to move away from the rest of us if they needed to go to the toilet, but others didn't care and went anywhere.[43]

Food is also in short supply and, as the quote by Rigoberta Menchu described, many children die of malnutrition while their parents work on the plantation. Only adults who are registered as working on the plantation receive a food ration, which they share with their children. Reports from migrant workers all describe a similar diet, which consists of either tortillas or the corn to make the tortillas and some beans. The proportions are generally small and do not offer a nutritious diet for the workers or their families. One man explained that "the adult workers receive only two pounds of corn [flour] and four ounces of beans per day, which they must share with their children."[44] Margarita, the woman quoted above, explains that one gets "tired of beans, beans, beans," so on Sundays the workers received a small advance on their pay cheques so they could purchase potatoes and some meat to make a stew.[45]

The result of the lack of food is that children on plantations have some of the highest malnutrition and death rates in Guatemala. For example, a recent study of 602 indigenous women who were resident workers on ten different plantations revealed that

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[43]Hooks, Guatemalan Women Speak, 4-5.
[44]www.igc.org/icg/.winstall/peacenet/hl/98043405/hl4.html, June 11, 1999.
[45]Hooks, *Guatemalan Women Speak*, 5.

for 2,424 live births there were 645 child deaths (270 child deaths per 1000 live births). For 127 indigenous women seasonal workers there were 170 child deaths out of 656 live births (259 child deaths per 1000 live births).[46] By contrast, statistics for the general population in Guatemala are not as bleak. Infant mortality rates are 43 child deaths per 1000 live births, 77% of the general population has access to clean, safe drinking water and 27% of children under the age of five have low body weights.[47]

Finally, in addition to exceedingly unhealthy working conditions, women also experience discrimination based on their gender. For example, on many plantations where workers must meet a daily quota, the entire family, including small children, work together while only the father is paid for one day's wage. Women who do not have a male representative are almost always paid less than men.[48]

This information reveals that women who work on coffee plantations not guided by IFAT suffer more than male coffee workers and the general population of Guatemala. Practical gender needs, such as, access to clean, safe drinking water, food, healthcare, or safe housing are not being met. Strategic gender needs, such as, the abolition of the sexual division of labour, the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and child care, the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination such as rights to own land, or property, or access to credit, the establishment of political equality, freedom of choice over childbearing, and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women are not being met either. The historical pattern of power and control the coffee elite had in Guatemala obviously continues in the present with women suffering the greatest.

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[46]www.igc.org/icg/.winstall/peacenet/hl/98043405/hl4.html, June 11, 1999.
[47]United Nations Human Development Report, 146.
[48]GLEP, 2.

How can such inequalities be changed? Land reform is one possibility. However, a demand for land redistribution was one of the myriad of reasons for the thirty-six year civil war and this method of attempting to gain greater equality for the Mayan population proved unsuccessful. Legislation in favour of land reform is not forth coming. Working outside of the mainstream coffee industry with NGOs is another. Alternative trade organizations, which focus on creating equitable and non-exploitive working conditions and trading alliances, have adopted the coffee industry as a venue for change. The case study of the *La Voz* coffee cooperative acts as a point of comparison between the social and economic conditions experienced by indigenous coffee workers working within the alternative trade forum and that of the mainstream coffee industry discussed in this chapter. The description of the managerial structure and operations of *La Voz* prepare the reader for the analysis of the extent to which the cooperative pays attention to the particular needs of women who produce coffee on small plots of land and work as seasonal workers on communal land owned by the members of the cooperative.

V. San Juan La Laguna: La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto Cooperative

The time I spent in Guatemala was brief, just under one month, and by no means do I profess to be an expert on the workings of the *La Voz* Cooperative or of the lives and values of the men and women who live and work in the community of San Juan La Laguna. However, the time spent talking with the management of the cooperative, the women with whom I picked coffee, the women met in the market and on the docks while waiting for transport to other villages along the shores of Lake Atitlan and the woman who opened her home to me, Theresa, has provided a limited but vivid picture of this community. This first-hand experience of San Juan La Laguna and the kind and friendly people who welcomed me into their homes and community give this

thesis a living vibrancy that would never have been possible without the time spent in Guatemala. As stated in the introduction to this thesis, the manager of the large umbrella cooperative, Group of Fourteen, set up the arrangements for me to visit *La Voz* cooperative. It was merely by kindness and chance that I had the opportunity to meet with the managers and seasonal labourers of the cooperative.

The economic structure of the community of San Juan La Laguna is based on the age-old production system of subsistence farming. The cultivation of maize continues on a small scale, but many families throughout the region grow coffee on small plots of land to earn extra money within the market economy.[49] There are many middlemen, or so-called "coyotes", who will purchase the coffee beans from farmers. However, they most often do so at a rate that is at best only 45% of the market price.[50]

In addition to farming, the traditional art of weaving is another common way families in the area around San Juan La Laguna supplement their incomes. Traditional values of the indigenous peoples of Guatemala are strongest in the Highlands and most often along the shores of Lake Atitlan life still follows traditions and customs that are hundreds of years old. San Juan La Laguna is not an exception. Within the community men and women perform distinct roles. Men are mostly farmers. Women are caregivers within the family and weavers of traditional textiles for the extensive tourist market in Panajachel, across the lake from San Juan La Laguna.

However, it is not a stagnant community and traditional roles are changing. Like much of modern-day Guatemala, it is evolving, perched between two worlds, the old Guatemalan world of traditional Mayan culture and the contemporary world where

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[49]Paul Demarest, "The Operation of a Death Squad in San Pedro La Laguna," In *Harvest of Violence: The Maya Indians and the Guatemalan Crisis*, Edited by Robert M. Carmack, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 119.

[50]Michael Barratt Brown, *Fair Trade: Reform and Realities in the International Trading System*, (London: Zed Books, 1993), 8.

Mayan women express critical views on what Mayan culture is and what it should be.[51] In addition, San Juan La Laguna did not go untouched during the thirty-six year civil war. Many husbands and sons either joined the ranks of the "rebel forces" and died fighting or were killed by the government's soldiers in their counter-insurgency project. As a result, many women were left as the single female head of the household which has led to women taking on more male-oriented roles such as farming and coffee cultivation.

The following description of the *La Voz* cooperative discusses the history of the cooperative and the role that women seasonal labourers and female small-scale farmers perform in the cooperative. This allows for a preliminary analysis of whether women's practical and strategic gender needs are being met by the cooperative. This will be accomplished by using as units of measurement the extent to which women are incorporated in the management of the cooperative and the roles women perform at all levels within the cooperative. Again, a matrix will be used as a tool to organize and summarize what I learned during my stay at the cooperative.

a. History of La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto Cooperative

In 1977, there was a number of individual coffee producing groups in San Juan La Laguna. Each of these groups had been working in isolation for decades, helping both men and women in the community by providing them with small scale loans for agricultural and handicraft production.[52] Eventually, it became apparent that the individual groups did not have the capacity to cover the needs of the members and the

[51] Alberto Esquit Choy and Victor Galvez Borrell, *The Mayan Movement Today: Issues of Indigenous Culture and Development in Guatemala*, (Guatemala City: Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences, 1997), 72.

[52] "A Voice Crying in the Wilderness: Small Coffee Growers Cooperative," information brochure, English version.

community decided to consolidate the individual groups into a single cooperative. The original group of 35 men and women decided that the principle objective of the cooperative would be "to procure the economic and social improvement of its members and develop agricultural activities, especially coffee, onions and other regional crops."[53] This same group discussed what to name the cooperative. The members of the cooperative wished to have a name that honored their patron saint, Saint John the Baptist, and decided to call the cooperative, *La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto* / A Voice Crying in the Wilderness, because John the Baptist preached to his followers in the desert.

The cooperative operated on its own through direct partnerships with an American ATO with a relative level of success.[54] Hoping to prosper further, *La Voz* became a member of a larger cooperative, *Groupo de los Catorce* or Group of Fourteen (hereafter referred to as *Groupo)*, when *Groupo* was founded on January 18, 1990. *Groupo* has 4180 members, with 90% Mayan membership, from 21 small-scale farmer cooperatives throughout the Highlands. *Groupo* provides administrative and managerial training to the managers of the cooperatives and training in organic farming for the producers. In addition, *Groupo* is responsible for the role of promoting and marketing the affiliated cooperatives' coffee.[55] The small-scale cooperatives sell their coffee beans to *Groupo de los Catorce,* which in turn sells a large portion of their coffee beans to Equal Exchange, the largest alternative trade coffee distributor in the United States. Each cooperative that sells their beans to *Groupo* is required to adhere to the policies set out by IFAT.

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[53]Ibid.

[54]Direct conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis, general manager of La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto, March 12, 1998.

[55]English translation of *Groupo de los Catorce* information pamphlet as supplied to the researcher by Alonso Silvestre Diaz, General Manager of *Groupo de los Catorce,* March 4, 1998.

The current number of people who benefit from the work of *La Voz* cooperative, including indirect beneficiaries such as family members and children, encompasses approximately 800 people or close to half the population of San Juan La Laguna. In addition to the cooperative members and their families, many seasonal coffee pickers come from the surrounding communities of Santa Clara La Laguna and San Pueblo to work for the cooperative during the harvest season.[56] These seasonal pickers, most of whom are women, also benefit to a certain degree through their association with the cooperative.

La Voz is governed by a democratic structure of the 95 direct cooperative members; 12 of who are women, many of whom are single female heads of household. This translates to 12.6% of the membership as being female. Interestingly, the percentage of women as representatives in parliament in Guatemala is 12.5%.[57] Therefore, if we view the cooperative as a microcosm of Guatemalan society, the representation of women at the governing level is on par with the national percentage of women in government. No data could be found to discern the number of indigenous women who hold seats in parliament in Guatemala. Guatemala's percentage of women in parliament is higher than France (9.0%), the United States (11.2%) and Japan (7.7%).[58] The number of women in parliament for the countries stated are on the low side for countries with high and medium human development. This shows that throughout the world women are not highly represented at upper levels of decision-making. Certainly, this will have spillover effects into all areas of a society, including the extent to which women and their needs are taken into consideration in development projects.

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[56]Personal conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis.
[57]United Nations Human Development Report, 135.
[58]Ibid.

The structure of the cooperative is shown in diagram 3.1. The General Assembly is the entire membership of La Voz cooperative. Each member within the General Assembly has a vote. The Management Board is the next layer of governance that encompasses the Administration Committee, the Credit Committee and the Education Committee. Two female members belong to the Management Board in the Administration Committee. Directly below the Administration Committee is the Vigilance Commission where another female member holds a position. Benjamine Cholo Sis, the general manager of *La Voz,* describes the functions of these governing bodies as follows:

> The women who are on the Management Board are in the Administration Committee; those are the ones that make the decisions about what the cooperative does, like all of the management tasks. The Vigilance Commission is the one that watches over everything in the cooperative and they are responsible for making sure everybody is complying with the organic farming principles.[59]

The Management Board meets once a month throughout the year, excluding the month of December, to ensure that the entire cooperative is functioning.

The next level in the cooperative belongs to the general manager who is currently a young Mayan man. He is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the cooperative. Under his direction are the Agricultural Monitor, Andres Quic Ramos; the Secretary, Jesus; the Assistant Manager, Haime; and the *Beneficio,* or processing plant, manager. The *Beneficio* manager oversees the machine operators, the patio supervisor and the packaging supervisor. Each of the managerial positions is ultimately under the direction and scrutiny of the General Assembly, which meets a minimum of twice a year.[60]

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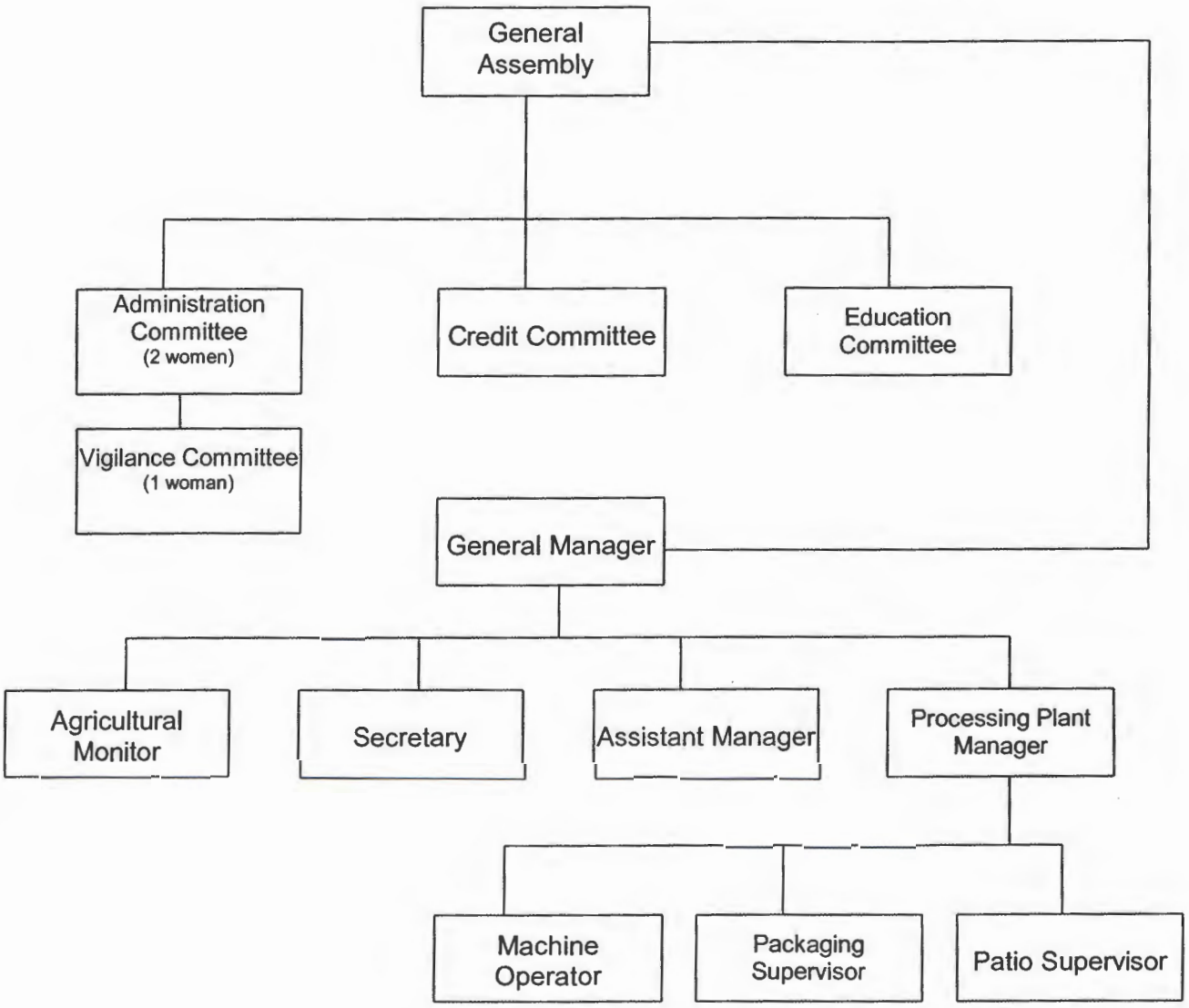
[59]Personal conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis.

[60]The general manager stated that it would be preferable to meet more often but for many members, who live on small farms outside of San Juan La Laguna, it is a financial burden to travel to San Juan La Laguna more than twice a year. Personal conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis, March 12, 1998.

Below is diagram 3.1 of the organizational structure of the cooperative. This information was copied from a flow-chart that was displayed in the meeting room at the cooperative.

Organizational Structure of Cooperative



The other nine women members in the coffee cooperative are part of the General Assembly. The majority of the 12 female members are older women who either became widows due to the violence during the recent civil war or through natural, non-violent causes.[61] Within the general community of San Juan la Laguna, men are still the primary deed-holders of property and are considered to be the head of the household which does help to explain why women represent only 12.6% of the cooperative's membership. However, since the civil war, which took place from approximately 1960-1996, indigenous women have contributed tremendously to the struggle for peace, justice and equality. This has resulted in the active participation of indigenous women in the social and political life of Guatemala.[62] The male members of *La Voz* recognize the strength and economically difficult situation experienced by widows and therefore, these women have been accepted as full members within the cooperative.[63]

It is important to note that the cooperative works to increase the well-being of the individual as well as increasing the general well-being of the community. For example, the cooperative has built a school within the community of San Juan La Laguna, which is accessed by all children within the community. The school pays particular attention to 'integrated education' which means that the children learn both Spanish and their native Mayan language, Tzuhile. This not only teaches children to read and write their traditional language, but also helps the children's parents become more literate. For example, Theresa, the woman I lived with while conducting this research, only spoke Tzuhile and was being taught how to write the language by her daughter. I communicated with Theresa in basic Spanish through her daughter.

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[61]Personal conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis, March 12, 1998.
[62]Hooks, *Guatemalan Women Speak*, xii.
[63]Personal conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis, March 10, 1998.

Through their association with the cooperative, illiterate adult members are offered the opportunity to learn to read, write and do accounting. The cooperative works with ANACAFE, the Guatemalan government body that regulates the production of coffee, to bring a teacher to the village and often into the homes of the cooperative members. Benjamine Cholo Sis, the general manager of the La Voz cooperative, believes that educating the adult members is crucial because with the ability to read, write and do accounting they are capable of "learning more about the cooperative" and will become more capable of taking part in the decision-making within the cooperative.[64]

Currently the members have limited access to adequate healthcare. However, in addition to supplying the members with literacy and accounting training, the cooperative is working with ANACAFE, international NGOs such as AB International, a Dutch NGO, and governmental agencies such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), to build a healthcare centre as part of the cooperative. In addition to the healthcare centre, ANACAFE had promised in 1998 to help the community members of San Juan La Laguna build a small hospital in 1999.[65] The hospital will be located within San Juan La Laguna but will serve as the primary hospital for the immediate surrounding communities of San Pablo, Santa Clara and Santa Maria. In my last communication with the cooperative in November 1999, the hospital was under construction.

As my research progressed, it became more apparent that the *La Voz* cooperative was the driving force within the community. The administration and members work to raise funds to build infrastructure, such as the hospital, which is open to all community members. They have a communal plot of land and the earnings from this plot go into the general revenues of the cooperative for operating costs. The

[64]Personal conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis, March 12, 1998.
[65]Ibid.

cooperative purchases coffee beans from the member farmers at a price that allows the producers to meet their basic needs. Through the cooperative the members also have increased access to healthcare and education.

However, it also became apparent that while female small-scale farmers are integrated into the cooperative, their needs, in particular those relating to their triple role as income earners, caregivers and community managers and volunteers, are not directly considered.

b. Seasonal Female Coffee Harvesters

Because of the unusual weather created by the phenomenon known as *El Nino,* the bulk of the coffee harvesting had already taken place, one month earlier than usual. As a result, all of the farmers had returned to their homes to celebrate the harvest and I was not able to make contact with them. However, four young female coffee harvesters from a near-by community were picking the final ripe cherries from the cooperative's communal holdings. I met these women through Andres Quic Ramos, the Agricultural Monitor, who took me into the coffee fields with him. Andres would leave us and, with another man, would prune the coffee trees. I communicated with the young women in basic Spanish as three out of the four women spoke Spanish as their second language. We would pick coffee beans and talk. During most breaks, I would record our conversations. I would also discuss what I learned from the women with Andres on the walk home. He would clarify for me, from his male perspective, what some of their responses meant. The following research was conducted over two days while working with these women.

The four women coffee harvesters were from Santa Clara La Laguna, five kilometers from the work site, on the other side of the mountain. Their names were

Maria, 14, Yolanda, 14, Esther, 18, and Juana, 20. Andres Quic Ramos, Agricultural Monitor, stated they had the honour of being the final four coffee bean harvesters because of their reliability and good work.

When asked how many hours per day they worked, Esther, the most outspoken of the four, replied:

> We spend eight hours each day picking coffee. We start picking at seven in the morning and we are finished at three in the afternoon. At one we eat the lunch we bring from home for one half hour. But we have to walk five kilometers over the mountain to get here and that takes about one hour and at the end of the day we have to carry what we have picked to the *beneficio* to be weighed and processed. The walk to San Juan with all of the beans takes about 45 minutes to one hour and then we have to walk home again. So, I believe that we really work about 11 hours each day.[66]

They also all stated that they wake up at 5 am each morning to help their mothers prepare breakfast for the family and to do household chores such as feed the animals. Not factoring in any chores the women would perform at the end of the day, their work day is approximately 13 hours long. They keep this work schedule for the duration of the coffee harvest, which can last up to three months, if they work both the first and second coffee pickings.

Three of the four women responded to the question, "Do you like picking coffee?" Esther stated that she did not like having to walk so far each day and would prefer to work at home with her mother and sisters. Maria and Yolanda both replied that they enjoyed working outside picking coffee and they enjoyed the walk each morning. Yolanda stated:

> My mother is not happy, she is always angry, I think because she has to work so much and she makes me work very hard when I am at home. I like it here with my friends and the music. We laugh and sing. It is good.

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[66]Personal conversation with female coffee harvesters, Thursday, March 12, 1998.

Unlike the reports from Rigoberta Menchu, the women were picking the ripe beans leisurely.[67] I learned that when the majority of the coffee beans have been harvested the final four pickers are not paid by weight but by the day. The women were earning 16 *quetzals,* USD $2.61, 11 cents more than the government imposed minimum wage. Esther stated that being paid by the day rather than by weight was much better since they "do not have to work as hard and [they] make good money." By contrast, on large plantations, pickers, both men and women, are paid 5 *quetzals* per *quintal* with one *quintal* equaling 3 baskets filled to the top. That would mean that plantation workers would have to pick 9 baskets to equal the amount of money the cooperative workers were making. Each young woman picked approximately 3 baskets or 1 *quintal* each day that I observed.

When asked what level of schooling they had received Esther replied:

> I went to school until grade six. The rest of the girls studied until grade three. It is expensive to go to school because you have to buy books, pencils, and clothes. Then your mother does not have you to help her. My mother needs help with the house. I am lucky, I have level six because I am in the middle of the family and my older sister helped and I went to school.[68]

Of their mothers, Esther's has attended school until grade two and the others' had not attended school at all. None of their mothers spoke Spanish, they spoke only their Mayan language Cakichel.

One of the most interesting conversations revolved around the issue of the way in which the women were paid for their labour. The women would receive their cheques from the cooperative but they would be made out in their father's name. They never had control of their pay cheques and they did not question this. Before I knew that they did not receive their pay directly, I asked them if they buy themselves nice things. Esther

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[67]I do not know what the rate of picking is during the peak harvesting season or how women labourers are treated during that time. This certainly is an area that requires further investigation.

[68]Personal conversation with female coffee harvesters, Thursday, March 12, 1998.

replied, "We don't but things for ourselves. We give our *quetzals* to our fathers and they decide what the family needs. Everything is for the whole family." When asked how she felt about having to give her money to her father she looked perplexed and stated, "Everything is for the family. We are poor, we all work so all can eat and so the boys can continue to go to school."

As the following analysis of this research will show, hired female agricultural workers within the cooperative experience advantages in comparison to those working on non-alternative trade plantations. For example, while the women interviewed still work long hours, they had proven to be excellent workers and therefore, in the final days of the harvest, were rewarded with a daily rate higher than the state minimum wage. However, they did not have control over their financial resources that could prove to have negative repercussions on their personal health and well-being. These points will be further analyzed in the following section.

VI. Analysis

Table 3 offers the reader a matrix that outlines the practical and strategic needs the cooperative is addressing, which aspect(s) of the triple role is addressed, important personal observations, and finally, which development approach each need addresses. An explanation and analysis follows.

Table 3 LA VOZ: Female Seasonal Labourers and Small-Scale Female Farmers

PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS	R / P or CM	DISCUSSION OF NEED DRAWN FROM RESEARCH	POLICY APPROACH USED
Income earning activity	P	-Seasonal labourers not paid directly so cannot ensure that women or dependents are fed, clothed and schooled. -Small-scale farmers paid directly so better chance that women and dependents are fed, clothed and schooled.	-potentially Anti-poverty for seasonal labourers -Anti-poverty for small-scale farmers.
Healthcare accessible	R	-all basic services	Efficiency (women's time used as volunteers)
Basic needs (food, water, shelter)	R	-increased income allows for the purchase of more food	Anti-poverty
STRATEGIC GENDER NEEDS			
Education	P	-literacy training (for both seasonal labourers and farmers) -agricultural training (farmers only) -accounting (farmers only)	Anti-poverty and Empowerment
Access to credit	P	-provides for savings and credit (male and female farmers only)	Empowerment (emphasizes self-reliance)

Source: Personal research conducted at *La Voz Que Clama en el Desierto* coffee cooperative, March 1998. Interviews conducted with cooperative manager, assistant manager, agricultural monitor and female seasonal labourers.

R: Reproductive P: Productive CM: Community Managing

Welfare	Focus on women's primary role as caregiver.
Anti-poverty	Focus is to meet women's PGNs through income-generation.
Efficiency	Focus is to meet PGNs, within the context of decreasing social services, by relying on women's triple role in society.
Empowerment	Focus is to meet SGNs through grass-roots organizing and utilization of PGNs as a starting point to confront oppression.

An initial analysis of the coffee cooperative shows that it is a classic development project as it encompasses aspects of WID approaches and has the potential to fall within an empowerment/GAD approach. It is a WID project as it covers all approaches with the exception of welfare. Without proclaiming to be feminist in any way, it also has the potential to be an empowerment/GAD project because of its integration of women into the Management Board. However, direct interviews with the women Management Board members and general women cooperative members is the only way to analyze if the cooperative can move beyond having the *potential* to be an empowerment/GAD development project.

A deeper analysis of the extent to which women's practical and strategic gender needs are being met through their association with the coffee cooperative is more difficult to determine than when analyzing crafting cooperatives specifically focused on women. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the coffee harvest arrived almost one month early due to the weather phenomenon *El Nino,* which meant that the coffee farmers had already harvested and sold their beans and attended the monthly meeting. These women live outside of the community on small plots of land and, due to travel and time constraints, were not accessible during the time I was at the cooperative. The result of this was that I did not have the opportunity to interview any of the women personally and had to rely on the opinion of the cooperative manager, Benjamine, as to whether women's specific needs were taken into consideration. This is an obvious weakness that requires further research.

Secondly, the alternative trade coffee industry does not have a particular focus on women. Therefore, women's distinct needs, in relation to productive, reproductive and community managing roles, are not addressed. Unlike the crafting cooperatives that have a specific concern regarding how the lives of women can be made better through

their association with cooperatives, the coffee cooperative has a "gender blind" approach, assuming that through membership and participation both men and women benefit equally. For example, both men and women receive equal pay for their beans and women have the opportunity to take on management roles. It is then assumed that women have equality and that their needs are being met.[69] Proposing ways to make Equal Exchange more effective and to increase the impact of alternative trade on small-scale farmers, a research paper commissioned by Equal Exchange makes the following observations:

> Men are the primary decision-makers in most Latin-American coffee cooperatives. They tend to make family decisions on farm production and spending. Research suggests that when peasant women have access to money, they will spend a higher proportion of it on children and family nutrition...Our own experience confirms that the strong women who rise to leadership positions in coffee cooperatives add vitality and stability to their organizations. We can consider lending more support to co-ops that encourage women's involvement and empowerment.[70]

While this statement by Equal Exchange is a crucial step toward meeting women's strategic gender needs, it is important that women's competing demands between reproductive, productive and community managing roles are fully recognized. For women, my assessment is that the primary issue is the relationship between wage labour, agricultural work, child-care and community managing work and the time each of these roles require. The burden of balancing these roles simultaneously greatly constrains women's time. Development planners often ignore these constraints. In order for the alternative trade coffee industry to create a more equitable system, all three areas within women's triple burden must be addressed. They are required to work

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[69]Personal conversation with Benjamine Cholo Sis and assistant cooperative manager, Jaime, March 1998. This assumption was constantly re-iterated by both the manager and assistant manager of the cooperative. They both agreed that women worked harder than men but accepted that this is the way of their culture and that women enjoyed their numerous roles within the family and the community. This is certainly an area that requires personal interviews with women cooperative members.

[70]Equal Exchange, *Never Underestimate Hope: The Impact of Fair Trade on Coffee Farmers,* Unpublished Research Report, 1998.

outside the home and to perform duties within the home as well. As female members of the household they do indeed still perform many of the same tasks that their mothers perform and share, to a perhaps a lesser extent, the triple burden nonetheless.

The seasonal female coffee harvesters present another area that Equal Exchange recognizes as an issue that alternative trade must address. Both small-scale farmers and cooperatives with communal holdings hire seasonal labourers during harvest and their treatment must be considered. For the *La Voz* case study, the fact that the women coffee pickers were not paid directly is an area of concern. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, when women have greater control of family resources they tend to spend a greater proportion on the family's basic needs.[71] The former situation leads to women and children being chronically under-resourced and since gender-based family responsibilities are almost universally placed upon the woman, it is more appropriate to allocate economic resources directly to women if children's well-being is of priority.

Secondly, it is important to pay women directly for their productive work so that they have access to savings and are thereby not wholly dependent on the male head of the household for support. The risk of divorce, the loss of economic support and the threat of violence against themselves or their children makes economic independence crucial for survival. It is for these precise reasons that *La Voz* cooperative in particular, and the alternative trade movement in general, must implement policies at the IFAT level so that all payment for productive work be paid directly to the worker, regardless of gender. Alternative trade literature states that ATOs "wish to emphasize and recognize the...role of women... in the process of the work..."[72] One of the best ways to recognize

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[71]Belinda Coote, *The Trade Trap: Poverty and the Global Commodity Markets,* (Oxford: Oxfam Press,1996), 167.

[72]Michael Barratt-Brown, *Fair Trade: Reform and Realities in the International Trading System,* (London: Zed Books, 1993), 165.

women's role within the process of work is to pay them directly for the work they perform. This might challenge what is considered a 'cultural' issue where men, husbands and fathers, are traditionally in control of the family resources. However, paying women directly for their labour ensures at the most basic level that women's productive labour is recognized and that they have a level of economic independence.

VII. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how the coffee industry in Guatemala has become a social and economic power and how this power has created a dynastic elite that still exercises control over the lives of thousands of Mayan coffee workers in Guatemala. By contrast, my field research has revealed that, while not without some challenges, the general well-being of female seasonal labourers and small-scale farmers can be considered to be better as a result of their association with the cooperative. The female cooperative members have both practical and strategic gender needs met through their access to culturally appropriate schooling for their children, adult literacy, accounting, healthcare, credit, transportation for their harvested beans and a fair price for their product. None of the above are readily available to unorganized small-scale coffee farmers or agricultural workers. The seasonal workers have access to fewer resources but still have more practical gender needs met than if they were not associated with the cooperative.

La Voz cooperative has the potential to create an alternative society like the one voiced by DAWN. They can do this by striving to eliminate inequality based on class and race and to create a community where basic needs are basic rights.[73] However, the cooperative currently does not extend itself further to examine and acknowledge

[73]Caren Grown and Gita Sen, *Women, Development and the Economic Crisis: Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), 73.

inequalities between women and men within society as a whole. In order to achieve and improve women's practical and strategic gender needs within the community, the inequalities women experience because of the triple burden must be addressed. The management must become educated about the triple burden and the ways in which equality between women and men will not be met until women's time is not so severely constrained.

Focus groups and personal interviews with the women farmers themselves are required. Focus groups and personal interviews will help to further identify the strategic gender interests of the women cooperative members. Strategies to meet those interests through grass roots organizing aimed at meeting gender needs could then be implemented. This would lead to a greater achievement of both practical and strategic gender needs.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to answer the following question: To what extent, if at all, do alternative trade coffee cooperatives have the potential to meet the practical and strategic gender needs of women coffee workers? This has been done through the use of feminist development approaches as the analytical framework and three case studies, two focused on craft cooperatives and one on a coffee cooperative. By looking at these three case studies through WID and GAD lenses, the extent to which practical and strategic gender needs are being met can be identified. The information used for the analysis was garnered from both written literature and original research conducted in Guatemala. The findings of this work suggest that craft cooperatives and the coffee cooperative have successfully met practical and, to a lesser extent, strategic gender needs even though meeting strategic gender needs are not of primary concern to the male cooperative managers and IFAT. Strategic gender needs are being met to a certain capacity indirectly through women's participation and occasional awareness-raising in the craft cooperatives. The findings also suggest some important implications, for practical policy direction for the International Federation for Alternative Trade and in terms of further research. The purpose of this chapter is to address the implications of the findings, examine the methodological and ethical issues experienced and suggest areas of further research.

The positive effects of alternative trade coffee cooperatives are numerous. Primarily practical in focus, they attempt to alleviate poverty by providing income to poor women. Alternative trade is a response to the social and environmental injustices that are the result of the increasingly deregulated international marketplace. Development projects sponsored by ATOs are focused on returning power to the people through equitable trading relationships and community development projects that are agreed

upon by the members of the community. ATOs work with small-scale producers using IFAT principles to create more socially responsible approaches to economic development.

Utilizing the feminist WID/GAD development theories has proven to be useful. Each phase within the framework, from welfare through to empowerment, suggests different foci ranging from northern-based liberal modernization theory to alternative visions emanating from Third World scholars. While I prefer the empowerment/GAD approach, because it offers women the greatest opportunity for meeting both practical and strategic gender needs, within each case study varying degrees of both WID and GAD approaches are transferred to the practical project level. This suggests that alternative trade development projects, like the approaches themselves, are not static but operate in a multi-dimensional way. It is crucial that the International Federation for Alternative Trade work at the grassroots level with cooperative members to create and implement gender aware policies.

Women's productive income-generating capacity is the primary focus of alternative trade craft cooperatives. Programme planners recognize the crucial need for women to earn an income. Crafting projects are most prevalent because they are consistent with women's reproductive roles as they allow women to work at home while tending to children and performing other reproductive duties. In addition, as in the UPAVIM project, weaving is a traditional craft and it is culturally important within the Mayan community that the designs and methods continue. Craft markets are subject to trends and fashions, but the crafts that the women create take their meaning from traditional practices. This can leave the cooperative members in an economically vulnerable position if demand for their product sharply declines and can also lead to a decrease in traditional practices such as weaving traditional symbols. The expanded

product line of the Jute Works project shows that alternative trade planners and cooperative members are aware of this possibility and are working to diversify their product lines to minimize dependence. It is important that the cooperatives continue to diversify their product lines and that both women and men are given the opportunity to benefit from diversification.

One of the main problems found with the crafting cooperatives is that they heavily rely on, and reinforce, women's triple burden. It is crucial that alternative trade project planners work directly with women in an effort to lessen the burden of reproductive tasks through awareness-raising programs with both women and men. While it is almost certain that such measures will initially be met with resistance and possible confrontation from the males and more traditional elders within the community, awareness-raising work is necessary if practical and strategic gender needs are to be met. The Jute Works project is an example of how awareness-raising works in a positive manner as women who were involved with the cooperative and earning a greatly needed income gained respect within the family unit and the community. Initially, men were not pleased with the women's new income earning capacity as they felt it to be threatening.[1] Discussion in the community led to an understanding of mutual benefits and the meeting of the practical gender need, earning an income. Eventually, dialogue between the female cooperative members and the males and elders in the community led to meeting the strategic gender need of increased status and greater respect for women cooperative members in the community.

Women's reproductive role as primary caregiver to children and adults within the family unit is a central focus. Mother-child healthcare programs, child-minding facilities and income-generating projects within the home were to be found within each of the

[1]Belinda Coote, *The Trade Trap: Poverty and the Global Commodity Markets*, (Oxford: Oxfam Press, 1996), 176.

projects. While it is important for women to have access to good healthcare and daycare facilities, the structure used by the alternative trade craft projects continue to reinforce women's role as primary caregiver. The ideology that domestic work and maintenance of the working and future workforce are the sole responsibility of women places severe constraints on their time. In addition, domestic work is not seen as 'real' work and is, therefore, invisible. This results in women continuing to wake earliest to prepare meals for the work force, they continue to perform household duties and they are still going to bed last. It is important that alternative trade practitioners discuss with women this situation and try to discover ways in which these burdens can be lessened.

The alternative trade craft industry also relies heavily on women's unpaid volunteer community managing work. At both the IFAT policy level and at the grassroots program level, alternative trade program planners need to become focused on these struggles if they are to truly fulfill their mandate to "encourage equal rewards for men and women."[2] Particularly in areas where structural adjustment programs have forced the removal of the social safety net, community-managing work ensures that essential services such as access to clean water, education and healthcare are available to the community. This work is seen very often as an extension of women's reproductive work and is therefore unpaid. By contrast, community work conducted by males tends to be political in origin and is usually paid work. For low-income women, the added burden of community organizing role greatly adds to the number of hours they work each day. However, community organizing is important for building capacity and increasing awareness of strategic gender needs within women-centred cooperatives. Building capacity within the cooperative strengthens the projects and moves them along the continuum from efficiency to empowerment.

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[2]Michael Barratt Brown, *Fair Trade*, (London: Zed Books, 1993), 183.

The field research conducted at the coffee cooperative in Guatemala must be divided into two categories: research relating to the female small-scale farmers and research relating to the seasonal female agricultural workers. First, the small-scale women farmers' practical gender needs such as access to healthcare, education for both adults and children, and income generation are being met. Interviews with the cooperative manager reveal that women are considered to be equal members within the cooperative with three of twelve female members holding positions within the management structure. They also have equal access to credit. This suggests that women's strategic gender needs are being met to a certain capacity, indirectly, through their participation in *La Voz que Clama en el Desierto* coffee cooperative in San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala. However, as discussed below, having interviewed only the male cooperative manager about the role that the women small-scale farmers perform and the level of acceptance they have within the cooperative is limiting.

Unfortunately, because of the weather phenomenon *El Nino* women farmers were not interviewed. This leaves room for continuing research. Women small-scale farmers should be interviewed directly in order to fully understand their opinions on strategic gender issues. This would include gathering information regarding their level of acceptance and ability for advancement within the management board and their general feelings about work and equality. These findings would directly relate to women's triple burden and would reveal ways in which the alternative trade coffee industry could work to alleviate some of the severe time constraints and reproductive burdens many of the women are surely experiencing.

The findings related to the seasonal female coffee pickers present the most problematic issue within the case studies. The fact that the women are not paid directly for their labour is troubling. It is also important for women to have access to funds so

that they are less economically vulnerable to changes within the family structure due to divorce, violence or death.

While the alternative trade coffee industry does not have a direct focus on hired seasonal labour, at the very least these women should be paid directly for their labour and have access to personal savings schemes. This change in income distribution within the household is likely to cause discontent within the family unit and the cooperative could be accused of upsetting traditional family structures. Both the mothers and fathers of the coffee harvesters may not be pleased with the young women being paid directly for their labour. However, once again, dialogue and awareness-raising of related issues can help to bring the above parties to a place of understanding. Finally, and at the most basic level, IFAT must become aware that the distribution of resources within the family unit is not always equal, with women most often on the losing end. By paying women directly for their labour, the well-being of women and of the family unit is most likely to increase.

A direct statement and policy in IFAT's principles in regards to gender equity is required. Such a policy would not only guide IFAT at the broad organizational level of procedures, activities and regulations, but would also, through diligence and planning, work to transform those words into real outcomes at the grassroots level. This has to be done through a long process of education and commitment from development planners and Third World partners. Gender training and consciousness-raising, mentoring and role-modeling, and strategic planning sessions have to be attended by all partners in the development process. This would include the husbands and/or male family members of women development project participants in order to raise the male population's understanding of issues relating to gender equity. As with the Jute Works project, such consciousness-raising sessions attended by males in the community helped lead to an

increased acceptance of women's new income-earning capacity which in turn lead to a generally increased level of respect for women in the community.[3]

This thesis contributes to the women and development literature for three main reasons. First, it shows that alternative trade is a form of economic development that is more in line with what many Third World women feel is appropriate for them. Craft cooperatives in particular do this by working at the grass-roots level to meet the needs that the women themselves identify as important. Second, by allowing women to identify their needs it gives a voice to poor women who often live on what can be considered the margins of mainstream society. Finally, there has been little work done in the area of meeting women's practical and strategic gender needs within ATOs. Thus, this thesis begins to expand research and dialogue on the ways in which alternative trade cooperatives have the potential to meet women's needs.

Broadly speaking, alternative trade can be placed in contrast to dominant macro-economic structures associated with globalized free trade and the multi-national corporations that are increasingly in control of the global market place. The general pattern of trade tends to benefit the exporters, leaving the producer vulnerable to exploitation. Alternative trade is about giving the producers a better deal, and strengthening their hand in the trading relationship.[4] For example, eighty-five percent of the workers in export processing zones are women. Women are hired for light industry factory work because they are considered to be unskilled and therefore, can be paid less. Third World women *maqilladora* factory workers must work faster and longer than women working in factories in the west and they will often earn up to fifty percent less

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[3]Coote, *Trade Trap*, 176.

[4]Glenn Drover and Frank Tester, "Offsetting Corporate Trade: Free Trade, Community Development and Alternative Trade in the South Pacific," *Alternatives Journal,* (January/February, 1996), 20.

than men doing comparable work in the same factory.[5] Women working in factories, often sewing clothing or putting together small electronics, live under similar conditions as coffee harvesters on plantations in Guatemala. By contrast, women working with alternative trade craft cooperatives have greater control over their lives, are less likely to be subjected to excessive work hours and have an increased access to healthcare and education.

People who live at the margins, or lower rungs, of modern society are those who lack public power and are at the mercy of others with power. Cynthia Enloe describes the way 'margins' are maintained by those at the 'centre'.

> No individual or group finds themselves at the 'margins' of any web of relationship...without some other individual or group having accumulated enough power to create the 'centre' somewhere else.... There is the yearly and daily business of maintaining the margin where it currently is and the centre where it is now....Those who reside at the margins tend to be those deemed 'silent'. They are imagined either to have voices that simply cannot be heard [by those at the centre], or they are portrayed as lacking language and articulateness altogether: the taciturn Indian, the deferential peasant, the shy woman.[6]

The international marketplace is an example of how the centre is maintained while those at the margins, like small-scale coffee farmers caught in a cycle of debt and poverty, are silenced. Alternative trade development projects begin to upset this balance by circumventing the international marketplace. This thesis shows that alternative trade development projects identify those at the margins and give them voice and an increasing amount of power within their communities. The crafting projects also give voice to women, which exemplifies the potential capacity for alternative trade projects to create change.

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[5]V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues: Dilemmas in World Politics*, (London: Westview Press, 1993), 101-102.

[6]Cynthia Enloe, "Margins, Silences and Bottom Rungs: How to Overcome the Underestimation of Power in the Study of International Relations", In *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Edited by Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysa Zalewski, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 186.

As with the issues of the maintenance of power and keeping those at the margins without a voice, while I conducted fieldwork I was continually aware of my personal power as a white, middle-class, educated, Western woman. I did not want to maintain or perpetuate potentially unequal hierarchies or levels of control that are often created and re-created during and after research.[7] While awareness-raising for the women "subjects" is an issue in my conclusions, my own recognition and awareness-raising around issues of power relations ensured, to my best ability, that I questioned and recognized my ethnocentrism and power within the situation in which I was researching.

I came into this research with a personal history. I have a great deal of privilege, even within my own society, as I come from a particular class, sexual and racial perspective. In San Juan La Laguna I was an outsider and the many levels of difference that separated me from the community members boosted my privileged position when working in this community. These differences gave me a certain amount of power. As stated in Chapter Three, I am aware that my power, coupled with my own cultural perceptions of the world, have been projected onto this research. The result is, to a certain extent, a North American-based analysis of the needs of the Third World women in the cooperatives.

The findings of this work have brought forth a number of implications, but they also raise a number of questions. These questions can only be addressed through further research. Have the policy-makers within IFAT received gender-awareness training? Are they aware of both practical and strategic gender needs and how meeting these different needs lead to enhanced well-being? Are they aware of the issues of resource distribution within the family unit and how these are related to the gendered

[7]Diane L. Wolf, *Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork,(London: Westview Press, 1996), 2.*

division of labour within both the family and the community? Direct research into the level of awareness of gender issues at the IFAT policy level is important for further progression in meeting not only practical but also strategic gender needs.

To what extent are women's needs, when working in non-traditional projects, taken into consideration? Direct research on women's needs must be undertaken in order to discern if, or what type of, further support is needed to alleviate women's triple burden.

Alternative trade projects do represent a shift from macro-level international trade where the small-scale producer is at a disadvantage to an alternative market where the needs of the producer are more important than profits. Because of alternative trade's focus on social justice it has the potential to empower women. The strength and dedication of program planners, project managers and the women and men they work with from the lesser-developed South have the potential to continue to meet both practical *and* strategic gender needs. Greater attention to working directly with both women and men about issues relating particularly to women's strategic gender needs will continue to enhance already successful development projects.

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APPENDIX I

MAP


MEXICO
PETEN
BELIZE
HONDURAS
EL SALVADOR
Guatemala
International boundary
Department/o boundary
National capital
Department capital
Railroad
Road

APPENDIX II

Ethics Documents – Original

Ethics

Letter of Introduction and Confidentiality
Guatemalan Gender and Fair Trade Research Project

Dear _____.

My name is Kelli Kryzanowski and I am a graduate student at the University of Northern British Columbia in the International Studies program. I am concerned about social justice, Fair Trade and Guatemalan women coffee growers and their families.

I am visiting your coffee cooperative to find out if, or in what ways, your life and your community has changed since you started to trade your beans with Fair Trade groups. One of the main reasons for conducting this research is to help increase awareness about Fair Trade coffee in Canada and teach Canadians about the different ways people live in other parts of the world.

I understand that you are very busy so I want to thank you in advance for accepting to take part in this interview. I will only take up about one-half hour of your time. You will notice that there is a consent form attached to this letter. The University requires that all participants sign a consent form that allows the findings of this interview be used in my thesis.

Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential and the study will be conducted according to the University of Northern British Columbia's ethical code of conduct. The recordings I will be taking of our discussion will only be heard by my supervisor in Canada and myself. They will be kept in a locked box, in a locked filing cabinet in my home in Prince George, British Columbia, Canada, and will be erased immediately upon the successful defense of my thesis. Under no circumstances will your identity be revealed unless you agree to be identified. As well, you can choose to withdraw your statements at any time.

Thank you again for your participation.

Respectfully,

Kelli L. Kryzanowski

International Studies Graduate Programme
University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way
Prince George, British Columbia
Canada, V2N 4Z9
Phone: (250) 960-5671
E-mail: <kryzanok@unbc.ca>

Participant Consent Form
Guatemalan Gender and Fair Trade Research Project

I, _____, consent to participate in the Guatemalan Fair Trade Research Project described by Kelli Kryzanowski in the attached letter. My signature below indicates that the information supplied by me during the interview may be used in Kelli Kryzanowski's graduate thesis.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Interview Questions
Guatemalan Gender and Alternative Trade Research Project

1.) Describe what you usually do over the course of the day. For example, what time do you wake up in the morning? What types of work do you do during the day? What time do you go to bed at night?

2.) Has your life changed, either positively or negatively, since you joined the cooperative and started to trade your beans with Fair Trade groups? Please describe for me how it has changed.

3.) Has your work-load changed since you started trading with Fair Trade groups?

4.) Do you feel you have a say in the way decisions are made by the cooperative? Why or why not?

5.) If changes have taken place since you started trading your beans with Fair Trade groups, why do you think these changes have taken place?

6.) Do you think your daughter's life will be different from yours? If so, in what ways and why?

7.) What are your age and ethnicity?

Carta de Presentacion y Confidencia

Proyecto de Investigacion de la Feria Comercial y Geuero Guatemalteco

Estimado _____

Me llamo Kelli Kryzanowski soy estudiante del Programma de Estudios Internationales en la Universidad del Norte de la Columbia Britanica. Estoy interesada en la justica social, Feria Comercial, y en las mujers Guatemaltecos que laboran en las plantaciones de cafe y sus familias.

Visito su cooperativa porque quisiera conocer en que formas sus vidas y comunidades han cambiado desde que comenzo el comercio del cafe con los grupos de la feria comercial. Una de las razones pricipales que me conducir a esta investigacion os para ampliar en Canada el conocimiento de la feria comercial del cafe y ensenarle a los canadienses las diversas formas en que viven los peublos en otras partes del mundo.

Comprendo que estan muy ocupados par lo que quiero agradecerlos de antemano en aceptar esta entrevista. Solo les tomare media hora. Observaran que adjunta a esta carta hay una carta de aprobacion. La universidad requirere que todos los participantes firmen esta carta de aprbacion para poder utilizar los resultados de esta entrevista en mi tesis. Por favor asegurensen que sus repustas sean extrictamente confidencial, y que el studio sera dirigido de acuerdo al codigo etico de conducta de la Univesidad del Norte de la Columbia Britanica. Las grabaciones que realizare en nuestra entrevista sosl seran escuchadas por mi y mi supervisor en Canada. Estaran guardadas en una caja cerrada, en un archivo sellado en mi casa en Prince George, Columbia Britanica, Canada y seran destruidas inmediatamente despues de la defensa exitusa de mi tesis. Bajo ninguna circunstancias se revelaran sus indentidades a menos que esten de acuerdo con ser identificados al igual que en cualquier momento pueden retirar sus declaraciones.

Una ves mas, muchas gracias por su cooperacion.

Con mucho respito

Kelli Kryzanowski
Programma de Estudios Internationales
Universidad del Norte de la Columbia Britanica

Yo, _____, estoy de acuerda en participar en el proyecto de investigacion de la feria comercial de Guatemala descrita por Kelli Kryzanowski en la carta adjunta. Mi firma debajo indica que la informacion proveida por mi durante la entrevista puede ser utilizada en la tesis de graduado de Kelli Kryzanowski.

Firma_____

Fecha_____

1.) Describe que hace usted normalamente durante el dia? Por ejemplo, a que hora se despiert en la manana? Que tipo de trabajo reliza durante el dia? A que hora se aquestan usted en la noche?

2.) Ha su vida camiado positiva o negitivamente, desde que usted integro la coperativa? Como ha cambiado?

3.) Ha cambiado la cantidad de trabajo desde que comenzo el comercio con los grupos de la feria comercial?

4.) Piensa usted que tiene voz en la via de decisiones que se han tomado por la cooperativa? Porque o porque no?

5.) Si han realizado cambio dedse que comenzo el comercio del cafe con los grupos de feria comercial, porque se han hecho tales cambios?

6.) Piensa usted que la vida de su hija sera diferente a la suya? Si es asi, en que formas y porque?

7.) Que edad tiene y qual es su grupo etnico?

APPENDIX III

Revised Interview Questions

Revised Interview Questions at La Voz Coffee Cooperative

1.) Here in Guatemala, is the cultivation of coffee equally the work of women and men?

2.) What role do women play in the General Assembly?

3.) What jobs do women perform within the General Assembly?

4.) Do you feel women have a say in the way decisions are made by the cooperative? Why or why not?

5.) Why aren't there more women in the General Assembly?

6.) Earlier you stated that men do one type of work and women do another and that this is your culture. Can you tell me more about who does what work?[8]

7.) Does the co-op offer access to healthcare?

8.) Does the co-op offer education for co-op members and their families?

[8] Earlier in the week Benjamine Cholo Sis and I were having a casual conversation about life in the village and he made a statement about the sexual division of labour in San Juan La Laguna. This conversation is the basis for this question.

Revised Interview Questions at La Vos Coffee Cooperative Spanish Translation

1.) Here in Guatemala, is the cultivation of coffee equally the work of women and men?

Aquí en Guatemala, ¿ las mujeres trabajan de una manera igual que los hombres en el cultivo del café?

2.) What role do women play in the General Assembly?

¿Qué papel demepeñan las mujeres en la Asemblea General?

3.) What jobs to women perform in the General Assembly?

¿Qué clases de trabajo hacen las mujeres en la Asemblea General?

4.) Do you feel women have a say in the decisions made by the General Assembly? Why or why not?

¿Cree usted que las mujeres tienen un rol en las decisions que toma la Asemblea General? ¿Por qué o por qué no?

5.) Why aren't there more women in the General Assembly?

¿Porqué no hay más mujeres en la Asemblea General?

6.) Earlier you stated that men do one type of work and women do another and that this is your culture. Can you please tell me more about who does what work.

Anteriormente, usted dijo que los hombres hacen una clase de trabajo y que las mujeres hacen labores distintos y que éste es parte de su cultura. ¿Puede elaborar sobre quién hace qué clase de trabajo?

7.) Does the cooperative offer members, male and female, access to healthcare?

¿Ofrece el cooperativo a sus socios, hombres y mujeres, acceso al seguro de la salud?

8.) Does the cooperative offer educational opportunities to cooperative members and their families?

¿Ofrece el cooperativo a sus socios las familias de los socios oportunidades educativas?