

# *“Transforming the role of women in development projects: From sideline to spotlight”*

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Thursday,  
September 8<sup>th</sup>  
Newman Library  
First Floor  
Multipurpose Room  
(Room 101)  
12:30pm - 1:30pm  
Snacks Provided!

This presentation is hosted by Women and Gender in International Development  
of the Office of International Research, Education and Development (OIREd)

**OIREd**

 **VirginiaTech**  
Invent the Future

# My personal context for PARTICIPATION of Women

- ▶ Civil Rights Act
- ▶ Equal Rights Amendment
- ▶ 1862 and 1890 Land Grant Universities
- ▶ Work at VT with Extension
- ▶ Work at Environmental Regulatory Agency

## Foreign Educator Studies Area Extension Program

by Wanda Combs

Mirian Wagner from the state of Santa Catarina in Brazil traveled to Floyd recently to study the county's extension programs.

Miss Wagner, working with the Community Education branch of the State Department of Education in Brazil, is currently trying to develop PTA's and home study groups within Brazil.

Her trip to Floyd was arranged through Partners of the Americans, an alliance for peace between Latin America and North America.

During her five day stay in Floyd, Miss Wagner was a guest of Angela Neilan, county extension agent.

Ms. Neilan took her on a tour of local tourist attractions, including Roanoke's Mill Mountain and Mabry Mill. She was also invited to attend a board meeting at the Old Church Gallery, a housing tour of homes with alternative energy resources, a tour of manufactured housing in Martinsville, and a pressure canning demonstration.

Miss Wagner is no stranger to the rural countryside, since her father, the director of Agriculture Cooperatives in Brazil, owns a farm and raises about 5,000 chickens. Her knowledge of the English language, however, was very limited. She spoke Portuguese almost entirely, making communication



Press Photo-Combs

Angela Neilan, county extension agent, demonstrates the use

# Extension Outreach Education Programs: Income Generation for Low Income Rural Families in Virginia

Many problems could be addressed with additional income and better use of resources

- ▶ Home Based Business
- ▶ 4-H Youth Entrepreneurship
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ EFNEP Food and Nutrition

# Community Organizing-women working together to meet their needs

- ▶ Community Development-Nursing Home
- ▶ Nurses' Training by Community College
- ▶ Women's Shelter
- ▶ Farmers' Markets

# Women in International Development at VT

- ▶ VT Women's Network
- ▶ Office of International Research and Development (OIRD)  
in Litton Reaves Animal Science Building College of  
Agriculture
- ▶ Howard Massie, OIRD Director
- ▶ Laura Jane Harper, Dean of College of Human Resources

# Office of Women in Development- Origins at VT

- ▶ Women's Network Board-Extension Representative
- ▶ Mary Rojas, WID Director
- ▶ Mary brought me from Floyd to VT Campus where I was Extension Specialist in Program Development and Evaluation
- ▶ Association for WID (AWID) Office in Washington DC offered trainings

# Partners of the Americas

- ▶ Volunteer Organization
- ▶ Virginia/Santa Catarina Brazil, WID Committee
- ▶ International Kellogg Fellowship
- ▶ Fellowship focus was WID, Sanitation and Water Supply, Food Production and Consumption

# Farming Systems Research and Extension

- ▶ Mary Rojas, WID
  - ▶ John Caldwell, Horticulture
  - ▶ Angela Neilan, Extension
- 
- ▶ USDA funded project to integrate Family Systems and Farming Systems
  - ▶ Impact of Agricultural Projects on Women and Families
  - ▶ Net Nutritional Benefit along with Net Economic Benefit

# Learning to Involve Women in Development Projects

How to reach women?

- ▶ Ask men to bring wives
- ▶ Provide child care
- ▶ Find convenient time for THEM
- ▶ Provide transportation
- ▶ Feed them
- ▶ Meet in comfortable location
- ▶ Meet separately with women
- ▶ Use radio and pictures



# Evaluation of Participation is Challenging!

## What Change do we Measure? How?

## What are Indicators of Successful Participation?

- ▶ Numbers of women participants
- ▶ Type or level of involvement-how meaningful
- ▶ Actions resulting from women's involvement
- ▶ Women organizing in common interest groups
- ▶ Improvements in personal, family and community- finances and health
- ▶ Unintended consequences, positive or negative

# Where are all the project records? The Archives of work done and lessons learned?

- ▶ This is blank because there were so many projects that I could find no record of!

# International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

- ▶ Overall framework for analyzing levels and types of participation
- ▶ Modified for use with Women in Development projects
- ▶ Progresses from Sidelines to Spotlight!

# Continuum of Participation



# Provides a Method for Participation of Women in Development Projects to be Analyzed

- ▶ Are women simply the recipients of information? (or on the sidelines?)
- ▶ Do women providing input and discuss with the development professional?
- ▶ Do women cooperate by joining together to meet common goals?
- ▶ Do women collaborate with give and take compromise and reach consensus?
- ▶ Are women strengthened to act on their own behalf through delegation of group power and decision making authority? (or in the spotlight!)

# First Level: INFORM

- ▶ One way top down or center out communication aimed at a target audience
- ▶ Goal is to get message across to the Participants (Recipients)
- ▶ Expert is the “Sage on the Stage”
- ▶ Experts or Leaders tell the people what to do or how

Examples: Brochures and posters and radio spots

- ▶ Zika virus warnings,
- ▶ Drinking water contamination,
- ▶ Bridge closed
- ▶ New energy efficient cook stove available
- ▶ AMAREW Project with watershed management-Announcement in Ethiopia

# Second Level: Consultation with Participant

- ▶ Two Way Communication
- ▶ Participant completes survey or questionnaire
- ▶ Feedback received in some way
- ▶ People tell the experts

## Examples:

- ▶ AMAREW watershed women identify critical need for water
- ▶ Spanish Rural Development Project-women talk about burdensome dowries
- ▶ Surveys or interview protocols used in research projects

# Third Level: Cooperating Together with Common Interest to meet Common Goals

- ▶ Women participate based on common interest in problem or issue-  
(power in numbers)

## Examples:

- ▶ Women with children join a child nutrition class
- ▶ Farmers affected by declining tobacco subsidies come to Farming Systems meeting to discuss alternative crops
- ▶ Mexican sisal farmers join discussion group on what to do about competing nylon marine rope

# Fourth Level: Collaboration-Working Together to Find Common Ground

- ▶ Labor Together to identify AND prioritize community needs
- ▶ Takes time and conflict management skills to reach consensus



## Examples:

- ▶ Mongolian exchange with Appalachian Dickenson County VA-common ground was garment industry with female employees
- ▶ Health care workers in SW VA worked with VT researchers to identify key health issues and determine why the women would not seek medical care (see fifth level)



# Fifth Level: Delegate and Empower

- ▶ Women are in charge of the whole process
- ▶ Expert is Guide on the Side, Coach and Mentor, (as opposed to first level where expert is sage on the Stage!)
- ▶ Not easy to reach this level! Experts must give up power to the participating women leaders-Turn it over to them!
- ▶ Women give other women the authority to act on their behalf-delegate their power and authority
- ▶ Key to sustainability-the work and the results belong to the women
- ▶ Can be dangerous because women become more powerful (economically, politically, socially)

## Examples:

- ▶ Appalachian Health Care Project sustainability once VT researchers left and grant was completed-They had their own committee and performed readers theater scripts
- ▶ Brazilian banana paste project leaders used pumpkin and could have poisoned many

# Analyzing Women's Participation from “Sidelines” at level 1 to “Spotlight” at level 5

Helps us benchmark and improve the involvement so it becomes more meaningful for the researchers and the participants!!!

# Stay at the Table!!



# Keep Good Records!



# Appreciate and Enjoy the Culture!



# Include the Young and the Old



# Lighten the Burden on Women and Girls



# Improve Conditions for Women Factory Workers



# Help With the Work



# Find and Expand Markets for Women's Products



# Take a Long View



# Go Where They Are



# Reward Participants



# NETWORK with other PROFESSIONALS



# Continue Research into Better Crops and Marketable Products



# Go Around Obstacles, Don't Give Up!



# Smell the Roses Along the Way



# TELL YOUR STORY!

His story +  
Her story =  
**Our Story**



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THANK YOU!!

▶ Discussion

▶ Q and A