

**CHANGING ACTORS, UNCHANGING POLICIES: A CASE STUDY OF
GHANAIAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND THE STATE**

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ABSTRACT

Recurring debates on enhancing efforts to improve women's status focus on women's coalition building, women's engagement with the state and multilateral organizations, institutional and organizational transformation, and, most importantly, interactive relationships among various development actors. The ultimate goal of these debates is to offer suggestions that will help promote women's status within the development process and its impact on women. Using a qualitative case study approach, this study examines the relationships among the state, multilateral organizations and three categories of women's organizations in Ghana, and explores the intra- and inter-relationships among these women's organizations. The main argument of the study is that governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations control women, and this control is noticeable through the theories and development policies they prescribe to women. Instead of being critical of these theories and policy prescriptions, often women's reactions either directly or indirectly support these technologies and reproduce or perpetuate women's marginal status. Therefore, neither new approaches to women nor institutional and organizational changes, aimed at improving women's status, serve the intended purpose. Data were collected through primary and secondary sources.

The analytical framework of this study are two models on women's engagement and disengagement with the state, while the rationale behind the establishment of multilateral organizations, four theoretical approaches to women and development, notion of governmentality and analytics of government themes serve as the study's theoretical strands. Ghana serves as a useful case study in efforts to improve women's status, because it is a model country for the multilateral organizations in terms of its

political governance and economic performance and response to women's development concerns. Above all, the state, multilateral organizations and women's organizations continue to pledge their commitment to improving women's status. What this study reveals, however, is that an immense gap exists between the rhetoric of commitments and the reality of the efforts to improve 'women's status'.

KEYWORDS: Ghana, women's organizations, the state, multilateral organizations, donor funding, feminism, governmentality, analytics of government, development, gender, triangle of empowerment, policy-making processes, development actors, advocacy, coalitions building, representation, participation, case study method, qualitative research.

DEDICATION

To my late parents, Mr. Sebastian Kwami Aggor and Mrs. Esther Afua Aggor who, I believe, did not fully understand the benefits of formal education, but invested all they could into educating us, and reminded us that we could attain any heights when we work hard enough; and, to my daughter Edinam for the difference she has made in my life.

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I sincerely thank my research participants. Without your participation, this thesis would not have been possible. Hopefully, the findings will facilitate a better understanding of the relationships among the state, multilateral organizations and

women's organizations, not only in Ghana, but in other countries in attempts to improve women's conditions. I am also grateful to the authors of the several sources cited in my work, which enhanced my understanding of my research focus.

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ACRONYMS

CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CONGO	Conference of Non-governmental Organizations
CPP	Convention People's Party
FIDA	Federation of Women Lawyers
GATT	General Agreement on Tariff and Trade
GES	Ghana Education Service
GNCC	Ghana National Commission on Children
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MOFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MOWAC	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
NCWD	National Council on Women and Development
NDC	National Democratic Congress Party
NETRIGHT	Network for Women's Rights in Ghana
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
NRC	National Redemption Council
NPP	National Patriotic Party
PfA	(Beijing) Platform for Action
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Family Planning Agency
WB	World Bank
WGO	Women's Governmental Organizations
WNGO	Women's Non-governmental Organizations
WQUANGO	Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
31DWM	31 st December Women's Movement

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. 1 THE PROBLEM

“The political actors have changed, but the policy priorities of the actors have not” and “Nothing changes. There are new politicians, but they come in to do the same things,” are quotes from two research participants, which sum up the persistent challenges of women’s organizations in their relationship with the Ghanaian state, the problem that this Ph.D. thesis sets out to investigate. The significance of the problem is due to the slow and marginal progress made since the claim in the 1970s that women have been excluded from the development process.¹ To address this problem of the exclusion of women, the United Nations (UN), since then, focused its attention on women, and directed the state and women to play a more prominent role in integrating women into a development process couched within a modernization approach. The modernization approach involves the transformation of non-Western countries through a process of Western industrialization (i. e., social change and economic development accompanied by technological innovation, extensive economic organization and attitudinal change), which have had mixed (i. e., positive and negative) consequences for women, especially those in the global south.

The modernizing process relies on scientific and rational knowledge in solving problems, which are not always applicable to social problems in different contexts (Parpart, 1995: 223). For this reason, instead of bringing about progress, the

¹ I am aware of the low status of some men (Bannon and Correia, 2006: 4; Sernau, 2006: 65). However, to do an in-depth analysis of men’s status is outside the scope of this thesis. Usually, it is men who control development processes, and unless men are pursuing their career in women’s organizations, they are often excluded from the activities of these organizations.

modernization approach often functions to create risks (i. e., exposing people to harm), and then targets those who are at risk for assistance (Wallace and Wolf, 2006: 63; Lupton, 1999: 9). There is a vast body of literature on risk (Wallace and Wolf, 2006; Lupton, 1999; Douglas, 1992; Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991), a discussion of which is outside the scope of this study. Risk is being used in this study to explain how interventions in risk situations create more risks, because what constitutes risk is not only culturally constructed, but also the dominant group sees its members as experts, determines individuals or groups that are at risk, and then organize, monitor and regulate them (Lupton, 1999: 24-25). According to Lupton (1999: 85), powerful actors use this technology to promote the welfare of citizens, increase their levels of productivity and also raise levels of accumulation of wealth.

The UN's focus on women was because they were identified as one of the groups exposed to risk, and require organization, monitoring and regulation. The type of risk women face fundamentally falls under one of Lupton's prominent risk categories, namely "interpersonal risk", related to intimate relationships, social interactions, love, sexuality, gender roles, friendship, marriage and parenting..." (Lupton, 1999: 14). 'Interpersonal risk' exposes women to economic risks, which include lack of investment, unemployment or under-employment, failure of business, and 'medicare risk', under which childbirth and reproductive technologies fall (Lupton, 1999:13-14).

Informed by the scientific and rational knowledge of development experts, women have been offered different kinds of assistance intended to reduce their risk level particularly economic risks. To date, not only has the assistance failed to achieve this goal, but also new risks are created in attempts to remove existing ones (Tinker, 1990;

Dolphyne, 1991; Assibey- Mensah, 1998; Win, 2004; Tinker, 2004a). Thus, the process of offering assistance to women becomes uncertain and complex over time. A complex hierarchical relationship develops among different actors – the state, multilateral organizations² and women’s organizations – in the process of offering assistance to women, which limits women’s freedom to act. Bilateral donors also fund some Ghanaian women’s organizations. Undoubtedly, their donor assistance supports efforts to improve women’s status. However, their relationship with women’s organizations is not the focus of this thesis. Instead, the discussion on donor funding is limited to multilateral organization in the thesis, because of the various global socio-economic policies of these organizations. These policies not only put women at risk, but they also have a huge impact on the state’s relationship with women’s organizations, and the relationships both within and among these women’s organizations. Lupton (1999) offers insight into the characteristics of risk, which explains the unintended outcome of assistance to women so far. According to her, “Risk meanings and strategies are attempts to tame uncertainty [of modernity], but often have [the] paradoxical effect of increasing anxiety about risk through the intensity of their focus and concern” (Lupton, 1999: 13). The overall concern of this Ph.D. thesis is to examine the relationship between the state and women’s organizations, and among women’s organizations themselves in efforts to promote the status of women in Ghana by reducing the impact of risks of modernity on them. This reduction occurs through a change of organizational rules (i. e., institutions).

² Multilateral organizations are major non-state political and economic actors, therefore I focus on these organizations. For the purpose of arguments advanced throughout this thesis, I also refer to them as donors and international actors because of their role as international actors and the fact that they also fund development activities.

Organization is a social arrangement separated from the general social environment, which pursues its goals and controls its own performance, while an institution is a set of rules for achieving social and economic ends (Rao and Kelleher, 2003: 142). Institutions involve decisions about distribution of resources, and change through the actions of organizations, and, therefore, organizational culture helps to determine the nature of some kinds of relationships. This research focuses on the nature of relationships and organizational and institutional change.

1. 2 RESEARCH FOCUS

This Ph.D. thesis examines how the various categories of women's organizations that have been set up for the benefit of improving women's status have not effectively delivered on their mandate. Despite the changes in global policy to promote women's development, and despite the changing national political regimes and the rhetoric of their gender policies (or the response of women's organizations to these policies), the status of women in Ghana has not improved as expected since the mid 1970s when women became a special focus in the development process (Government of Ghana, 2002; The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004). Women's access to resources and decision-making processes continues to be limited. This study investigates how Ghanaian women's organizations operate as opposed to how they *should* operate, the challenges that they face while attempting to gain access to the state and decision-making processes, and the impact that their approach has on their overall status.

Underpinning this study was the initial argument that, while spearheading efforts to improve women's status, the state, and multilateral organizations control women

through the suggestions and development policies they prescribe to them. Instead of rejecting these suggestions and policy prescriptions, women often operate within the framework of these policy prescriptions and suggestions and support the state and multilateral organizations to either reproduce or perpetuate women's low status. Therefore, neither do new approaches to women nor the restructuring of women's organizations responsible for improving women's status serve the intended purpose of promoting gender equality. Explained within the framework of Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality, it could be argued that these women's organizations constitute technologies for governing women through the state and a UN directed agenda, instead of enhancing women's autonomy and freedom of action. The following research questions foreshadow this argument.

- a) What is the nature of the relationships among the various actors that ostensibly aim to improve women's social, economic and political status as a result of governing technologies that the state uses to direct the Ghanaian government, women's organizations (e.g., Women's Governmental Organizations (WGOs), Women's Non-governmental Organization (WNGOs) and Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organization (WQUANGOs), and project participants?
- b) In what ways do government and multilateral organizations act, intervene and direct women's organizations towards the national policy agenda, which either promotes and/or obstructs the enhancement of women's status in Ghana?
- c) What forms of knowledge, expertise, know-how (i. e., narratives and discourse), and authority does the government employ to institutionalize or marginalize WGOs, WNGOs and WQUANGOs?

- d) Which alternative forms of knowledge, know-how and expertise (i. e., counter-narratives and discourses) do women's organizations have to counter state domination and change technologies of governance?

The theoretical themes of governmentality and analytics of government underpin much of the discussion, as it offers an insight into the operation of the state, and the state's attempts to govern citizens through various technologies. Foucault (1991: 102), who popularized the theory of governmentality, identifies three components of the concept which are: (1) a collection of institutions, their procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations and tactics that facilitate the use of power by the government, but the government relies on political economy as its sources of knowledge and state apparatuses to ensure state security; (2) the use of the Western form of power, conceptualized as government, which also uses government apparatuses to protect itself; and, (3) an explanation of the process through which justice developed over time and was transformed into the modern administrative state. Foucault's conception of the state and governance focuses on the institutions of government (i. e., the conduct of conduct) and its objective to facilitate state domination, and processes in attempts to maintain social order. This study examines the experiences of Ghanaian women's organizations within the framework of governmentality.

To some feminist African scholars, Foucault has nothing to offer in their attempts to theorize about women (Okeke, 1995: 229). Their fears lie in the inadequacy of Western theories in explaining non-Western women's issues (Tinker, 2004a: xxii-xxvi, Parpart, 1995: 222). Some Ghanaian feminist scholars, in recent times, have become open about their frustrations in framing their research within Western theories, which do

not reflect the actual experiences within the Ghanaian context (Manuh, 2007: 140-141). These scholars observe that postmodernism and poststructuralism, for instance, are a fad (i.e., a temporary pattern of thought and an associated behavior of deconstructing existing forms of knowledge) (Manuh, 2007: 142). Therefore, such scholars will be even more frustrated if they have to consider Foucault's notion of governmentality, which falls within a postmodern and poststructuralist category (Okeke, 1995: 229).

Despite these valid concerns, not all aspects of Foucault's notion of governmentality are irrelevant to African women's experiences. This is especially true when women's goal is to engage with the state. Dean (1999: 24) observes that Foucault contributes to our understanding of the nature of government because he was concerned with "the irrationality and excessive nature of government, and frugal government, and suggests plural liberalism that involves other forms of knowledge." To be sure, this characteristic of government will be of interest to both Western and African feminists. Further, the technologies of governance that the state uses to manipulate African women can be explained within governmentality (Longwe cited in Gordon, 1996: 118-119). Furthermore, African countries applied modernization theory to development when they were yet to industrialize, and postmodernism is a critique of modernization theory (Parpart, 1995:225). Such critiques could serve as useful tools for explaining African women's experiences within a neoliberal development framework.

Women and Neoliberal Development Approach

Feminist arguments on women's low status are often explained within liberal and neoliberal frameworks. It is, therefore, instructive to explain liberalism and neoliberalism

here to bring out their meanings. Liberalism advocates freedom, promotes the rule of law, ownership of private property, free exchange of goods and ideas (Levitt, 2006: 2). Neoliberalism, a new form of neo-conservatism, was promoted by the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom, the World Bank and the IMF in the 1980s ostensibly to promote global economic interdependence; however, they rather intensified the economic dependency of the global south on the global north. Kermath (2005: 1) defines neoliberalism “as a political-economic philosophy and set of policies that established development priorities along austere capitalist paths of free trade, market expansion, and privatization, and free of governmental intervention and regulation and the concept of the public good.” Neoliberalism is important in our understanding of the relationship between the state and women, because economic and political thinking underlies current relationships globally. The state is implicated in neoliberal approach since the policies are imposed on it. Above all, the state always plays a role in economic and political organizations (Chang and Gabel, 2004).

In Dean’s (1999: 58) commentary on Foucault, he observes that Foucault focuses on liberalism, and suggests that we view the concept of liberalism as “a manner of doing things” rather than as a theory. This study follows this suggestion in the conceptualization of neoliberalism as a process and method of approach, not as a theory. This conceptualization is useful in analyzing the process of state intervention rather than the outcome of the intervention. For these reasons, if African feminists extend their discontent for Western and postmodern theories too far, it will amount to the proverbial throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

The Gap between the ‘Ought to be’ and the ‘Reality’

The aspects of Foucault cited above and others to be discussed in Chapter Four should offer an insight into how women’s organizations, the state and multilateral organizations operate in their attempts to improve women’s status. Exploring how these actors operate yields information that is different from the usual focus on how they should operate in order to improve women’s status. In addition, it has become increasingly difficult to deconstruct Western development experts and their hegemony in knowledge construction; hence, it is the inadequate rational scientific knowledge, which continues to inform development practice (Rist, 2002: 8; Chang and Grabel, 2004: 7). The concern about ‘how’ the organizations should operate focuses on the directives in policy documents and suggested scientific and rational theories, which take priority over how the organizations operate using other forms of knowledge. One goal of this study is to examine the gap between how feminist oriented women’s organizations³ in Ghana and even governments should operate and how they actually operate.

Feminist scholars focus on their own expectations, and point out how the various actors should operate, but their expectations are far removed from the actual reality of operation. Also, Western development planners tend to minimize actual experiences of women and are therefore unable to identify the limitations of the processes of interaction (Parpart, 1995: 222; Mohanty, 1997: 97; Goetz, 1988: 477). While Mohanty (1997: 79) suggests that Western feminists start deconstructing their constructed knowledge about non-Western women, Parpart (1995: 221) thinks theories of all Western development experts should be deconstructed. Indeed, the theoretical approaches to women suggest

³ These are women’s organizations, which claim that their goal is to help improve women’s status in the development process.

how they should approach efforts to improve women's status, but experience shows that the outcome of these approaches produce unintended rather than the intended consequences (Parpart, 1995: 223; Kevane, 2004: 44).

The outcomes of development prescriptions of multilateral organizations also have similar unintended consequences (Charlton, 1997: 12). Models on women's engagement with the state are no different (Everett et al., 1989; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998). These models suggest how women's organizations should act when they (dis)engage with the state, without considering any deviations from this (dis)engagement. This study investigates how Ghanaian women operate when they (dis)engage with the state, and impact of how they operate on efforts to promote women's status. It also explores how women are unable to follow the directives on how they *should* operate to (dis)engage with the state and their experiences when they (dis)engage with the state.

All women's organizations are not the same. When women organize they are either categorized as being part of the government or part of civil society. These locations, in turn, either facilitate or obstruct their development efforts. The locations of these organizations are explained further in Chapter Four. Civil society participation is somewhat more difficult to define, as there is still lack of consensus of what civil society means (Edwards, 2008: 1). However, within the context of this Ph.D. thesis, it implies the sector of society that is outside government organizations, and is expected to serve as a catalyst through exercising its agency in efforts to limit the power of the state, to promote democracy or its opposite and bring about positive and negative social change (Van Rooy, 2002: 490-492).

The remaining section in this introduction outlines the pertinent background information on the global status of women from a feminist theoretical perspective as well as the feminist models of women's (dis)engagement with the state. The discussion also explains feminism and the importance of women's (dis)engagement with the state, which is purported to facilitate women's access to state resources. This is then related to the status of women in Ghana and highlights the challenges that women are up against in trying to (dis)engage the state. The discussion continues with the definition of development and women's status as concepts, the trends in the debates on global development processes and women, background information on Ghana and a description of the study locale. The last two sections in the introduction highlight the sources of my interest in this study and outline the organization of the study respectively.

1.3 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN'S ACCESS TO THE STATE

Historically, women in the global south have been regarded as passive recipients in development who rely on external development organizations for resources to promote their involvement *in* their development (Visvanathan, 1997: 17-21 my emphasis). This approach requires change in order to reduce the risk of development to women (Mohanty, 1997: 97). Strategies for changing the approach - the redistribution of resources, a change in development planning, women's active participation, and gender sensitivity – require efforts of the state, women's organizations and multilateral organizations to create a political space for the inclusion of all categories of women in development. Theoretical approaches to women since the 1970s, which reflect the shift from women's passive to

active participation in development are labeled: Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD) and Gender Mainstreaming (GM), as discussed in Chapter Three. This reflection is based on how feminist oriented organizations *should* transform gendered and risk creating institutional structures rather than *how* they actually transform these structures.

Feminists are self-defining (i. e., those who identify themselves as interested in improving the status of women), and with different interests (Reinharz, 1992: 4; McLaren, 2002: 5). Despite their interests, though, it is not all feminists who define themselves as such that genuinely address women's development concerns. This is due to the fact that they get too caught up in the recognition they receive in their role as civil society gender activists, and/or because of their positions in the state and their political party affiliation. To further enhance women's opportunities for achieving their goals, some feminists suggest three-dimensional models, which are identified below, that could consolidate women's efforts in their approach to the state in fights for their rights (Everett et al, 1989: 177; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). Two analytical models on how women engage or should disengage with the state were used as the analytical framework of this study, and are as follows:

1. Everett et al.'s (1989: 177) three-dimensional model consists of: (1) insider; (2) outsider; and, (3) autonomous channels to the state. The model simply identifies specific channels that women follow to engage with the state.
2. Vargas and Wieringa's (1998: 3) approach identifies the membership of different women's groups and the procedures that they follow to

(dis)engage the state and how the various groups relate to one another.

These groups are (1) feminist civil servants; (2) feminist politicians; and, (3) feminist women's movements.

In spite of the differences between the models, each one enhances our understanding of how the state regulates women through various governing technologies, how women relate to the state, and the potential for positive outcomes from this relationship.

In their attempts to improve women's status, women generally target the state through governments. It is significant to follow the specific channels through which women pursue their government to limit state power over women. However, similar to governing technologies of the state, directives through theoretical approaches to women, and the external governing technologies (i. e., development prescriptions) of multilateral organizations also determine how women operate in these channels in attempts to influence state policies and the development process. As noted above, the overarching theoretical themes of governmentality and the participation of civil society in development processes are explored throughout this Ph.D. thesis. These themes along with the models of women's (dis)engagement with the state (i.e., empowering women through different channels to the state), and the four major development approaches (i.e., WID, WAD, GAD, GM) concerning how women should operate provide the theoretical strands and analytical framework for this case study on Ghana. Empowerment is women's ability to develop their agency, and take control over decision-making processes (March et al., 1999: 93-94). These theoretical strands are delineated in Chapters Three and Four, highlighting their intended and unintended roles in the development process.

1. 4 DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN'S STATUS

'Development' is a difficult concept to define, because it was originally used within post Second World War development efforts to connote progress (McMichael, 2004: xvii). Progress, as used in development, is often measured in terms of industrial and economic success (Rostow, 1990: 4; Chang and Grabel, 2004: 7). Whereas growth to the neoliberals is 'positive' progress made in capitalism, they often ignore the risk that it creates, the value of local knowledge and the views of the poor who really are the target for development (Ferguson, 1990: 15; Parpart, 1995: 221). The failure of development has motivated individuals and groups to react, which also has necessitated several scholarly contributions, series of conferences and dialogues among various actors in the development process. These scholarly contributions, conferences and dialogues generated development discourses (Escobar, 1995). Women became an integral part of these discourses from the 1970s (Visvanathan, 1997: 17).

Feminists have actively participated in these scholarly contributions, conferences and dialogues to explain the impact of development on women, and also suggested alternative development approaches that would help transform development to meet their need and improve their status (Boserup, 1970; Sen and Grown, 1987; Beneria, 2003; Fraser, 2004; Jain, 2005). These conferences and dialogues are intended to change existing approaches to development over time. Women's involvement is due to the fact that women, especially those in the global south, face more social, political and economic obstacles than men (Long, 2005: 74). These obstacles are the risks emerging from development, and constitute the main factors for women's marginalized status.

“‘Women’s status’ may be defined as the economic, social, cultural and political position that women occupy in society” (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, Canada, 2007: 1). Although there are differences among Ghanaian women based on regional, rural and urban location, and their level of education, religion, political affiliation, ethnicity, class and personality, generally, women occupy a marginalized status compared with men. Furthermore, the women’s organizations studied address women’s concerns generally – not by their socio-economic and political status or region, religion, or ethnic group differences. However, political expression, work and mobility, family formation, education, and cultural expression affect an individual’s freedom and are used to measure the status of both men and women (Geile, 1977: 4). The varying emphasis that each society places on these variables depends on the cultural values of the society, internal and external policies and the socio-economic experiences of women in that society.

This variation is a major source of difference between Western and non-Western women. Nonetheless, social, economic and demographic variables significantly determine women’s status, and combine to influence their cultural and political participation (UN, 2001c: 6 -7). The impact of these variables can either be positive or negative. While women are supposed to benefit according to their contributions through participatory processes, the socio-economic structure of society still determines the nature of that input. Yet, the benefits that women do get from their input contribute towards their attainment of higher levels of dignity, recognition, and leadership (see Appendix K, a UN document on the levels of women’s input and benefits). The higher

women's level of output and benefit, the more effective their efforts are to improve their status, but global development processes continue to limit women's opportunities.

1. 5 WOMEN AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

Global economic processes, which are male-biased, economic growth and profit-oriented, have so far been detrimental to the majority of women (e.g., women are marginalized in decision-making processes and lack the control and distribution of resources). In this regard, the GAD approach (Gender and Development), which is discussed in Chapter Three, takes both men and women into account, and focuses on the impact of global economic organizations on women and the state. For this reason, the discussion in this Ph.D. thesis also examines the role of significant multilateral organizations (i. e., the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) in perpetuating women's marginal status. Well aware of the continual, but non-transformative liberal approaches to development, feminist scholars have turned their attention to the governing processes of these multilateral organizations, which perpetuate women's marginalized status (Sen and Grown, 1987: 50; Elson, 1991: 1; Sparr, 1994a; Beneria, 2003: 10-11).

In order to transform these organizations, feminists are told to focus on women's activism to develop their agency through women's organizations (Sen and Grown, 1987: 89; Molyneux, 1998: 65; Moghadam, 2005). But the state also plays activist and interventionist roles through various technologies (Dean, 1999: 58), which counteract women's activism. Other areas of concern are the education of men (Elson, 1998: 155) and the appeal to moral considerations of multilateral organizations in their global

governing procedures through policy descriptions for poor countries (Beneria, 2003: xii). Using Foucault's (1991) notions of governmentality, this study explores how these suggestions work in reality. In most part, while the WID (Women in Development) and GM (Gender Mainstreaming) approaches are non-confrontational, the WAD (Women and Development) and GAD approaches aim at challenging the national and international governing procedures that are sources of risk to women.

As both activism and education have not yielded satisfactory results, Beneria (2003: 161), for example, pleads with decision-makers in the development process to take into account the fact that 'all people mattered'. As women have been marginalized the most, they matter the most. No doubt, it is difficult to respond to this plea because the states and multilateral organizations tend to rely on their moral obligations to women rather than re-examining the governing practices and processes⁴ regarding women's rights to state resources. Similarly, the nature of funding depends on the political will of countries (Beneria, 2003: 166). Women's participation in the decision-making process is alleged to be the central theme of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PfA) and state policy agenda. This priority is reiterated in the more recent World Bank's and the IMF's 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper' (PRSP) guidelines for highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) (World Bank, 2002). The PRSP Source Book underscores the role of effective participation of civil society as one of the crosscutting issues for the transformation of socio-economic institutions. The taken for granted participation would enable the state to better promote development through good governance. Simply, good

⁴ Practices means the actions taken by actors, while processes connote how actions are taken, who takes the actions, when and where the action is taken. Who takes an action, how, when, where s/he takes the action can change existing practices.

governance involves an inclusive political participation and social change by focusing on processes and not only on the outcome of institutions (Lemke, 2007: 14).

To enhance this transformation process, women's participation in world conferences on women, often combined with activism, as well as their presence in established policy-making organizations, purportedly serves as a training ground for new women leaders (Tinker, 2004b: 66). Motivated by the negative impact of governing technologies, women have faith in such involvement as a powerful mechanism for improving women's status (Beneria, 2003: 11; True, 2003: 368). This suggests that, as long as women organize and follow a set of directives, they will succeed. Furthermore, building national and international alliances are intended to enhance collaboration among women to promote gender equality and, ultimately, improve women's status (Conference of Non-governmental Organizations, 2000; Anand and Slavi, 1998)⁵. Yet, individual countries rarely depend on external alliances for improving women's status. The background on Ghana that follows highlights the processes through which development creates risks for Ghanaian women.

1. 6 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON GHANA

Some background information on Ghana is presented here in order to contextualize this study and to enhance the understanding of the state-women relationship that exists there. Ghana (Map 1) is located in sub Saharan Africa. Britain fully colonized Ghana in 1901 (Owusu-Ansah and McFarland, 1995: xl-xli; Ward, 1966: 311-312). The country gained independence from Britain in 1957 under Kwame Nkrumah and the

⁵ Anand and Slavi's book is a collection of articles on the experiences of women in both academia and development practice, while the Conference of Non-governmental Organizations shares the experience of a coalition of NGOs that work with the UN.

Convention People's Party government. According to the World Bank, Ghana was the "shining star" of Africa in both its political and economic performance since independence (World Bank, 2007: 1). At independence in 1957, Ghana was a multi-party state, but in 1965 it became a short-lived, one-party state, which ended abruptly in 1966 (Owusu-Ansah and McFarland, 1995: lviii; Ayensu and Darkwa, 2000: 4-7; Oquaye, 2001: 1-3). Due to ineffective governing practices, after Nkrumah, Ghana had nine national governments, which were either military or democratic governments (see Table 5:1 in Chapter Five). While the one-party government was partly socialist oriented and characterized by limited political pluralism, the military governments were authoritarian and often made ad hoc decisions that undermined both socialist and pluralistic ideologies,

Map 1: Map of Africa, Showing Ghana's Location and Accra the Study Area



Source: Rand McNally (2010: 253)

which favour the wide participation of citizens. The one-party authoritarian government thus limited equal opportunities for political participation and rendered the state more repressive.

Commentators on authoritarian states view such authoritarianism in some Asian countries as having a positive impact on development, because it ensures political stability (Wiarda, 2004: 83). In Africa, however, such authoritarianism is cited as a factor of the poor socio-economic development of the continent (Reed, 2005: 160). Usually, feminist scholars regard the state as repressive and, therefore, are confrontational in their relationship with the state (Kantola, 2006; Rai and Lievsley, 1996; Everett et al., 1989). Yet, using effective governing practices, the state under Nkrumah promoted social growth and women's political participation, reflecting a positive impact of authoritarianism. The multi-party system may be regarded as more democratic; however, without the state's political will to genuinely review and change the processes that regulate the participation of women, women are still limited in decision-making processes. It is such limitations and their impact on women that motivated my interest in this study on how women's organizations (dis)engage with the state.

1.7 STUDY AREA

This study was conducted in Accra, the capital of Ghana (see Map 1), because it is the center of government administration. The rationale behind conducting the research there is that Accra is the site of important state policy decisions for purposes of governing citizens, and of non-governmental organizations' (i. e., part of civil society) activism that

aims to change governing technologies regarding women and gender issues (Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and United Nations System, 2001). It could also be argued that the state performs its activist and interventionist role in Accra, the capital, more than in other parts of the country. Also, even though the Ghanaian state has been promoting a decentralized administrative policy since 1988 (Oquaye, 2001: 36), governing technologies are centralized; centralized administrative features also persist within women's organizations.

The research participants in this study were those closely involved with the state and the women's organizations. They were aware of the activist and interventionist role of the state, the gap between the state's promises and the actual women's status and the challenges that these gaps pose for women. As well, gender programs are directed at and led by elite women, the majority of whom live in Accra (Agyemang-Mensah, 1998: 39). As Accra is an urban area, the majority of those interviewed from women's organizations had post secondary education and were employed. This group is able to describe the conditions of poor women, but may not necessarily prioritize these needs in favour of the poor.

Further, many of the income generating projects for women are located in Accra, some organized as limited liability companies, because of Accra's ready markets and funding opportunities. Furthermore, women and state officials in Accra were readily accessible for the study interviews, which helped in terms of the cost of conducting the research. Considering all these factors, Accra was the most advantageous location for the study. The study also examined the views of project participants of two of the organizations studied, politicians and administrators from different state organizations, as

well as participants from multilateral organizations and the public who had knowledge about the activities of women's organizations and the state in Ghana. The purpose of these interviews was to explore how the different actors operate.

Limiting the study to Accra, however, meant that the respondents were all urban women. Therefore, rural women, who constitute not only the poor but who are also a major proportion of the Ghanaian population, had to be excluded. Apart from this, they are not only the popular targets for development, but are also the participants in various development projects aimed at improving their status. Their exclusion, though, was due to the fact that the study primarily focused on the macro level, political party and NGO gender issues, and national and global governing policies that constrain women. Admittedly, to some extent, the lack of direct participation of rural women does limit this study with regard to the breadth of information and the insight that was gleaned about women, gender and inclusive development. Nevertheless, the study does address the dearth of knowledge on governmentality and women, the actual relationship between multilateral organizations, the state and women, the power of elite women, and the intra- and inter- relationships of women's organizations. As a result, the organizations studied were selected based on their physical location, the type of risk they responded to, their status, the nature of their techniques of (dis)engagement with the state, and their relationship with the state and with multilateral organizations.

1. 8 GHANAIAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

The relationship between women and the state is exclusionary. The whole idea of collaboration between the state and women's organizations has focused more on the

urban areas and elite women. Three distinct categories of women's organizations were investigated: (1) Women's Governmental Organizations (WGOs), which include the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC); (2) Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organizations (WQUANGOs), which includes the 31st December Women's Movement; (3) Women's Non-Governmental Organizations (WNGOs), which includes the Network for Women's Rights for Ghana (NETRIGHT).

As the three types of organizations all had their headquarters within Accra, their activities were directly affected by feminist orientation to change, state activism and intervention such as changes in state policy and governing technologies. The WGOs are located within the state and subject to state restructuring in terms of policy direction. The restructuring has an impact on the other two types of organizations, the WQUANGO and NGOs. The WGO deals with the risk of women's exclusion from policy-making processes, the WQUANGO focuses on the risk of women's lack of involvement in development while mobilizing women in support of the state. The WNGO pays attention to the risk of lack of women's ability to monitor the state in policy-making, implementation and evaluation.

The research aims to determine whether or not changes in state policy and practices, the attempts at collaborative efforts, as well as changes within selected women's organizations in Ghana have an impact on women's status based on the way they operate in attempting to limit the risks of development on women. The study also provides insight into the channels that women's organizations pursue to the state to pressure the government to revise its governing technologies in attempts to direct

women's efforts towards state agenda in gender and policy-making processes. An understanding of women's (dis)engagement with the state is important, as it helps to contextualize the past and present efforts to redress issues of women's marginalization and their lack of influence in policy- and decision-making. This study further explains the role of men in the process, as well as the relationships between men and women.

In Ghana, state-affiliated women's organizations are the ones that benefit from conference participation and policy formulation and implementation processes. In spite of the various opportunities for women's involvement, and high profile national and international efforts to improve women's marginalized status, Ghanaian women's struggles at the national level have not yet garnered the necessary support from the international network of women's organizations. This falls short of the feminist goal of preferred coalition building (Antrobus, 2004: 137; Win, 2004: 19). Further to this, subtle, yet powerful governing technologies within the Ghanaian context exist that not only divide women as a whole, but also undermine their alliance-building efforts and their policy-making impact on the state.

1. 9 SOURCES OF PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE STUDY

My interest in this Ghanaian case study is to try to understand how WNGOs (i. e., women's civil society organizations), WGOs and WQUANGOs can work within the entrenched state structures to achieve the goal of improving women's status. This interest stems from a variety of experiences: personal, academic and work related. First, I worked as a volunteer handicraft instructor with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). I was one of the instructors who were sent to three rural

communities to equip ‘unemployed’ women⁶ with skills that would enable them to generate incomes for themselves. I had the opportunity to go back to visit the group of women I had trained, but the organized group had broken up, and the skills were not put to further use as expected by project organizers. When I questioned two of the women who had been enthusiastic about the training, they said it was not profitable to use the skills, and that they wanted to have the privilege, too, of traveling outside their town and just coming back on visits as I did. The implication was that despite learning a new skill, these women were constrained by the handicraft project’s limitations, and the implementers that regulated their learning activities.

Despite this regulation and the women’s lack of interest in using the skills acquired, I realized that the resources spent on training them had helped open their eyes to other opportunities. I, therefore, kept searching for alternatives that would help poor women to satisfy their developmental needs. In retrospect, I realize that while the organizers of the projects had not involved the instructors (all women) in the planning of the project, we, the instructors, also had not involved the women in decisions about which skills would be offered them. The “skill/training” had been imposed on both the instructors and the women trainees, and the instructors and trainees operated within the existing WID theoretical approach to women, and followed the directives of the organization’s experts and donors. Such a lack of “involvement” by participants in their own development was a challenge to the development governing technologies then and remains an obstacle today.

⁶ I use the term unemployed as it was used during the period. What the project organizers meant was women who were not employed in the formal sector.

Besides this experience, I learned more about women from my Master of Philosophy thesis in which I evaluated a World Health Organization (WHO) functional literacy, health, education, and income generation project for women in two rural communities in Ghana. The findings of my research revealed that the challenges of helping women out of poverty using micro-level income generating and other strategies, implicit in the WID model, might not improve their status, because women play a very marginal role in the identification, planning, implementation and evaluation processes.⁷ The development experts were in charge of the process. Inspired by the findings, this Ph. D. thesis focuses on the macro-level issues, using women's involvement in policy-making processes within existing governmental structures, and how such an involvement can affect women's organizations and project participants back at the micro level. This research focus is relevant in an era in which participation has moved from the levels of beneficiary to citizens, project implementation to policy formulation, mere consultation with women concerning their involvement and the new focus on macro level development processes instead of micro-level issues (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999: 5; Zuckerman, 2001: 88).

1. 10 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This chapter introduces the study, its research focus and women's organizations studied, and identifies the theoretical approaches to women and the analytical framework for the study. The chapter also explains the concepts used, outlines the study area and states the sources of interest in the study. Chapter Two provides the details and an in-

⁷ Usually, when women are dissatisfied with the project plan, they adopt new strategies for survival of which the project donors are unaware.

depth description of how I went about the study, outlines the qualitative methods and the case study approach used and my experience in conducting the research. The theoretical focus and analytical framework for the study are discussed in Chapters Three and Four. Chapter Three begins with a discussion on how multilateral organizations influence the decisions of both women and the state, and limit the state's capacity to satisfy women's demands. Also, Chapter Three discusses four main theoretical perspectives on women and development: Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD) and Gender Mainstreaming (GM). The theoretical perspectives on women are situated within two broad development theories: modernization and dependency theories. Following this, Chapter Four contains the analytical framework, which consists of two models that women use to engage with the state. A discussion of the thematic underpinnings of the study covers notions of governmentality, and how it has been expanded on in analytics of government themes. Both the notions of governmentality and analytics of government themes provide the basis on which to compare how women's organizations operate, rather than how they are supposed to operate in efforts to improve women's status.

Chapter Five provides an overview of efforts to improve women's status in Ghana. The chapter situates the discussion on the strengths and weaknesses, as well as on the successes and failures of the women's organizations in Ghana's recent post colonial history. It also explains the historical context of the study. The research data and analysis are found in Chapters Six and Seven. The discussions in Chapter Six focus on emerging opportunities for Ghanaian women to (dis)engage with the state, and the challenges they face in the process. It provides an in-depth analysis of the women's

organizations studied, and highlights the rationale for their establishment within specific periods, the channels through which each (dis)engages with the state. It further examines their goals, strengths, limitations and challenges of the organizations regarding leadership, accountability, ethnic affiliation, and techniques of mobilization of women. Chapter Seven focuses on the persistent challenges in terms of discriminatory state support and women's relationship with the state. Some persisting challenges are the lack of effective and politically neutral leaders, competition among women, changes in government and policy orientation, and differences in the participation of men and women. The chapter ends with participants' suggestions for sources of change. Chapter Eight provides an overall summary of the main findings, limitations of the study, suggestions to enhance future efforts to improve women's status and additional research areas to be explored.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides details and an in-depth description of how this study was conducted. First, it provides a brief overview discussion and background to the study, restates the research argument, and addresses the limitations of the study. Following this, the chapter describes the methodological approach taken and the rationale for this, specifically highlighting the qualitative methods and the strengths and limitations of the case study approach used. The rest of the chapter focuses on the sources of data, assumptions underlying the methodological approach, ethical considerations in the research process, how the data were analyzed, and issues of validity.

2.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

As noted in the introduction, the dissertation considers different theoretical strands. Foucault's (1991; 2007: 121) notions of governmentality is useful in understanding processes of knowledge construction, the origin of modern administrative practice, the rationale behind the exercise of power, the nature of social relationships, and the relationship between society and the government. Governmentality establishes the link between academic theory, public policy and political power, and also clarifies our understanding of the nature and functions of power and processes involved in neoliberal governing technologies (Sauer-Thompson, 2004: 1). It is through these governing technologies that government and multilateral organizations provide for and also regulate individual citizens, especially the vulnerable. Yet, this regulation of

conduct is often rationalized as beneficial to individual citizens. While governmentality is about the regulation of conduct, which according to Foucault (1991) renders active individual citizens docile, it also creates opportunities for the individual citizen to exercise his or her agency in the pursuit of liberties (Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2008: 12-14). It is this emancipation component of notions of governmentality that supports a feminist political agenda. Other strands of theoretical underpinnings of this Ph.D thesis, relating to women and development, are explored in Chapters Three and Four.

Underlying this study was the initial assumption that the restructuring of the organizations responsible for improving women's status and their relationship with the Ghanaian state and multilateral organizations would enhance their collaborative efforts despite their different political party leanings and their ideological orientations. The research aimed to determine whether or not the governing practices, state rationalization for the regulation of the conduct of women's organizations, the attempts at collaborative efforts, and changes within selected women's organizations (WGOs, WQUANGOs and WNGOs) had an impact on efforts to promote women's status.

The field study was conducted from June to September 2002 in Ghana. Preceding the actual fieldwork, there were two periods of preliminary investigation into the topic during visits to Ghana in 1999 (June–December) and 2001 (November–December). These visits helped me to identify various structures, the characteristics of women's organizations and individuals, and to further refine research questions and my scope of the study. The research involves Ghanaians, in general, and women, in particular, therefore, it also concerns gender issues and power relations. Prior to going to the field, I had approval from the Carleton University Ethics Committee to conduct the research on

Ghanaian women's organizations. However, the Ethics Committee asked me to simplify the language used in the questionnaire designed for women who participate in the projects implemented by the organizations studied.

This research study was conducted in Accra, the national capital of Ghana because most significant state meetings and decisions concerning women and/or gender issues are held there (Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and United Nations Systems, 2001). Also, any gender programs are directed at and led by educated women, the majority of whom live in Accra (Agyemang-Mensah, 1998: 39). Research participants were closely involved with the state and the women's organizations as current or former employees, politicians and/or members of the following: the women's governmental organizations (WGOs) – National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC); Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organizations (WQUANGOs) – 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM); and the Women's Non-governmental Organizations (WNGOs) – Network for Women's Rights for Ghana (NETRIGHT). Participants in this study were all well aware of the rhetoric and the reality of the various efforts being made to improve women's status, the opportunities women have to engage with the state, and the challenges and limitations facing the state, and women's groups.

The study also examined the views of politicians and administrators from different state organizations, as well as participants from multilateral organizations and the public who had information on the activities of women's organizations and the state in Ghana, as well as development project participants. Some of the project participants were also research participants. Although the Ghanaian state has been promoting a

decentralized administrative policy since 1988 (Oquaye, 2001: 36), centralized administrative features still persist within women's organizations. Considering all these factors, Accra was the most advantageous location for the study as women and government officials were readily accessible for the case study interviews. Needless to say, this location also helped in terms of the cost of the research.

For these various reasons, and as already highlighted in Chapter One, a limitation of the study was that it excluded rural women, who constitute the bulk of the Ghanaian population and who are the primary targets for development. This means that rural women were, at the time, also participants in various development projects aimed at improving their status. Their exclusion was due to the fact that the study primarily focused on women at the macro level and gender issues, and national and international regulatory practices and processes, which constrain efforts of women's organizations. As a result, the organizations studied were selected based on their status, nature of activity, and their relationship with the state and with multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The following section discusses the rationale for using qualitative research. This study employed a variety of qualitative methods, including the case study approach, semi-structured interviews, and the impact of gender on qualitative research described below.

2.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative methods can be used within different settings and can include both individuals and groups (Berg, 2001: 7). The methods are thus adaptable in the field.

They are especially useful when one studies a phenomenon that can be described and evolves throughout the research process. To understand individuals, groups and their situations, the researcher has to give meaning to what is heard and seen (Stake, 1995: 35-40). Other useful characteristics of qualitative methods relate to the researcher's interest in an uncontrolled, but empathic "understanding of complex interrelationships", and also the researcher's treating the uniqueness of individuals, not as an error, but understanding their individual views (Stake, 1995: 37-9). As a result, qualitative researchers emphasize the peculiarities of cases, while also trying to understand each case through both the researcher's and the participants' experiences. Both the generalities and the uniqueness of participants' experiences not only enrich the data, but also confirm a tenet of the case study approach, that is of yielding multiple perspectives on a case (Stake: 1995: 64).

Researchers are situated subjects, so, being a Ghanaian woman with preconceptions of indigenous Ghanaian culture and the relationship between women themselves, and with the government, could have influenced my interpretation and analysis of data. This may unconsciously be a source of insider bias, which can be avoided with an awareness of its existence. As this potential bias was recognized during and after my fieldwork, I consistently challenged my ideas by seeking out new sources of literature and/or responses to queries that might uncover or challenge any bias. However, I believe that having 'insider' knowledge has strengthened this study, as it facilitated my better understanding of the relationships among women's organizations and between women's organizations and the government. The data were triangulated by verifying information from other participants in order to eliminate any potential bias in the ways that the data were gathered and crosschecked. The responses were also compared for

consistency. Nonetheless, any identified bias is not unique to this study, but, rather, it is a recurring challenge of a researcher's situation within a social and historical context (Hedley, 2001: 66).

The information in this study was gathered mainly from in-depth interviews, open-ended conversations and discussions supported by data from observations, documents, and public records. These techniques help the researcher investigate a case 'inside out', that is, from the perspective of individuals or groups involved, as well as from the researcher's perspective (Gillham, 2000: 11). Van Maanen (1983: 9) also describes qualitative methods as a number of interpretative techniques, which describe, decode and translate data in order to understand social phenomena within a specific context.

In this study, the data collection was based primarily on women's experiences since women constitute a marginalized group at risk, and based also on the fact that it is mainly women who are responsible for women's issues (Tadele, 1999: 36; Crewe and Harrison, 1998: 56). Therefore, their own experiences and views are paramount in attempts to unravel the challenges that women face in their efforts to improve their status.

Women and Qualitative Research

In qualitative research, individuals are the main source of data collection, and the ensuing data, that is, "people's own written or spoken words and observable behaviour" (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984: 5). In this study, such data provide insight into relationships between women and the government. Two analytical models, outlined in Chapter Four, help to contextualize these relationships in terms of women's empowerment and their

ability to gain access to the state through various channels of engagement (Everett et al. 1989: 177; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). By necessity, this focus of engagement expanded to include the relationships between women and their organizations, among women within their organizations, as well as between women and men in general. Thus, the interpretations of women's experiences, in particular, and those of other participants, give meaning to the data collected.

DeVault (1999: 33) asserts that women can reveal sensitive information through qualitative methods using face-to-face unstructured interviews.¹ However, in this research done on women's organizations, men also revealed sensitive data, which suggests that the willingness of participants to participate is more important than their gender. Revelations vary from case to case depending on the participants' level of comfort with the interviewer, their educational level, their knowledge of trends in women and gender debates, and whether or not they are aware of the political significance of the data. These revelations also depend on the participants' positions within the various groups, their political party affiliations, their personal experiences and their perception of the interviewer. This is the case for both local researchers who might not be trusted because of their ethnic ties or political party leanings, and foreign researchers because participants might not want to disclose their feelings about any sensitive local issues (Hale, 1991:125).

Reinharz (1992: 197) states that qualitative methods allow for a greater thoroughness in data collection, which is not a given, but rather depends on the

¹ See also Patai's (1991: 137) experiences in interviewing women who are willing to share their experiences. Although men also share their experiences in qualitative research, women may interact and understand each other on issues that concern them as a group.

researcher's skills. In order to strive for thoroughness, a researcher has to be reflexive, flexible and adopt a holistic approach. Reflexivity and flexibility are evident in the researcher's ability to adapt to different situations in the field, to collect data from different sources during the research and to examine data within a wider context. Stake (1995) articulates that:

The epistemology of qualitative researchers is existential (non-determinist) and constructivist. These two views are common accompanists to an expectation that phenomena are intricately related through many coincidental actions and that understanding them requires looking at a wide sweep of contexts: temporal and spatial, historical, political, economic, cultural, social, and personal.² (Stake, 1995: 42)

The holistic feature of qualitative methodology is what really ensures thoroughness. It is useful when trying to understand organizational and institutional ambiguity, and the complexities of women's organizations and the state, which constitute part of the focus of analysis in this Ghanaian case study.

2.4 CASE STUDY

Babbie (1983: 338) defines a "case" as a unit of analysis that is concrete. According to Hedley (2001: 65), these units "are empirical indicators used to measure theoretical concepts and variables". He adds that it is difficult to have a perfect measurement. In order to use units of analysis, Babbie and Benaquisto (2002: 308) suggest that one focuses on a single social phenomenon and a case within a specific period of time, which is a suggestion that fits this study. The case could be about a person, a social setting, an event or a situation that allows a researcher to gather enough information on how the case operates or functions (Berg, 2001: 225). Stake (1995: xi)

² I did not cover the spatial contexts as the study was conducted only in Accra. The remaining contexts were covered to the extent that data were available.

defines a case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single event, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances.” This study focused on the particularity and complexity of women’s organizations and how each operates.

It was indicated above that the theory of governmentality establishes links among academic theory, public policy and political power. The impact of these links to policy formulation can be examined through qualitative methods, because policy research provides “insights, explanations and theories of social research” (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994: 174). Ritchie and Spencer (1994) add that policy research examines the nature of a case, the reasons for the existence of the case, the effectiveness of a case, and identifies new theories, policies and plans of actions. In this study, both primary and secondary sources of data were used to accomplish this goal, since, according to Gillham, the purpose of data collection in a case study is to have evidence from different sources to establish a case (Gillham, 2000: 20-21).

This study investigates an important and complex social phenomenon – the rhetoric, processes and practices of various actors to improve women’s status. Therefore, it focuses on people, events and situations in order to examine the nature and the dynamics of interaction, the relationships among various actors, and the roles they play. Gillham’s (2000) definition of case study, indicated below, supports the difficulty of having a perfect measurement in research (Hedley, 2001), the importance of maintaining a single research focus (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002), and the complexity of the case study method (Stake, 1995) highlighted above. Gillham (2000) defines a case study as an investigation about an individual or a group in order:

To answer specific research questions (that may be fairly loose to begin with) and which seeks a range of different kinds of evidence, evidence

which is there in the case setting, and which has to be abstracted and collated to get the best possible answers to the research questions. No one source of evidence is likely to be sufficient (or sufficiently valid) on its own. (Gillham, 2000: 1-2)

However, since groups and individuals engage in actions that need to be observed for evidence, Babbie and Benaquisto (2002: 308) argue that case studies focus on specificities to provide rich detailed data. In this study, the specificities relate to the rhetoric, processes and practices in attempts to improve women's status, especially involving women's engagement with the state, and the technologies of government that affect women and their efforts to improve their social, economic and political status. Berg's (2001: 225) conception of the case study is similar to Stake's (1995), cited above. However, Berg (2001: 225) cautions that a case study is not a data gathering technique, but rather, a methodological approach, which may combine different data collecting techniques.

Several authors suggest different stages for doing research, which are each relevant to this study. The research process for this study was neither as distinct nor as straightforward as outlined by Stake (1995: 52-53), Berg (2001: 18-19), or Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 151-152). Rather, the research process necessitated shifting back and forth between the various stages. Berg calls this a "spiral model" in which, as a researcher:

You begin with ideas, gather theoretical information, reconsider and redefine your idea, begin to examine possible designs, reexamine theoretical assumptions, and not only redefine these theoretical assumptions, but also the researcher's original or already redefined ideas. Thus, with every two steps forward, you take one or two steps backward before proceeding any further. (Berg, 2001: 18-19)

One strength of the case study method is that it can be used retrospectively (Zucker, 2001: 2), which allows for participants to recount their experiences. The researcher can also use existing secondary data, which can be used as the basis for triangulating data through historical analysis. Historical analysis suited this study because “human actions and institutions are produced collaboratively by people who share the same history” (Ashley and Orenstein, 2005: 39). The products of interaction in organizations further shape people’s ideas and values (Turner et al., 2007: 118). Besides, research participants are individual citizens who inter-subjectively construct reality through history, as exhibited by women in this study. The sources and motives behind people’s actions need to be examined in order to differentiate between those that are due to economic, social, political and inter-personal tensions, and those that are due to influences of government regulation. Such insight supports the objective of a case study, as argued by some, as a problem solving method (Gillham, 2000: 10; Bromley, 1986: 2). A strength of the case study method stems from its ability, in this study, for example, to reveal the opportunities and challenges of various actors as they differ in their opinions and priorities over efforts to improve women’s status in Ghana. By following women’s and governmental organizational and institutional transformation, this study identifies ongoing coalitions and underlying tensions in the various relationships among actors who purport that their objective is the empowerment of women.

Although there are criticisms of the case study approach for its inability to establish cause and effect relationships, Garson (n. d.: 5) argues that it can reveal “causal paths and mechanisms” through detailed investigations that identify causes and interactions. This case study on Ghana informs us about the political, economic, social

and cultural struggles that women endure in their attempts to engage with the state and with each other in order to promote women's status and development. As well, it exposes state regulating processes and practices and the factors that enhance women's engagement with the state. It also reveals the nature of women's interactions that suggests ways that women may be helped out of their positions of vulnerability, as noted in Chapter One.

Sociological studies are supposed to make generalizations (i. e., the application of knowledge about one group on another), and facilitate the understanding of events in other groups. Several other authors indicate that a case study can be used for generalization (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002; Gillham, 2000; Garson, n. d; Bromley, 1986; Yin, 2003a; Yi, 2003b). Yin (2003b) points out the difference between analytical generalization (can be used in a case study) and statistical generalization (used in experiments). Analytical generalization, fits this study, because it involves being critical in the process of understanding social phenomena, and one can develop a case law that establishes rules (Bromley, 1986: 2). Furthermore, the assumption of behavioural science research is that human behaviour is predictable, but each case is unique, idiosyncratic and spontaneous (Berg, 2001: 232). The ability to generate relevant knowledge in predicting the nature of women's organizations and states' regulating processes and practices depends on several factors including identifying the appropriate sources of data, triangulating, interpreting and analyzing data, and thus reducing elements of bias. The following section addresses these factors, which enhance the generalizing strength of the case study method.

2.5 SOURCES OF DATA

This Ghanaian case study has the potential of contributing to knowledge on state regulating processes and practices, the opportunities women have and the challenges facing Ghanaian women's organizations. These state regulating processes and practices and opportunities and challenges of women's organizations may resemble and/or contradict the experiences of women's organizations in other African countries and elsewhere. As indicated earlier, the study utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. The emphasis placed on these was influenced by the knowledge that a research idea or topic determines the target population for the study (Berg, 2001: 29). The literature review included both academic and non-academic sources on women, the state and multilateral organizations. These sources were used in order to better understand national and international governing processes and practices, and women's development concerns within the framework of global efforts to improve women's status, which facilitated a holistic analysis of the Ghanaian case study on women.

In order to collect the required primary data for the study, government departments, multilateral organizations and women's organizations were targeted. This included three categories of women's organizations, which are, as noted above, governmental (WGO), quasi non-governmental (WQUANGO) and non-governmental (WNGO). These organizations have all done significant work worthy of consideration when discussing issues related to improving women's status. Women's governmental organizations are those established by the state; women's quasi non-governmental organizations are women's organizations that claim to be non-governmental, but have strong government affiliation and operate closely with the government; and women's

non-governmental organizations are autonomous civil society organizations with no direct affiliation with the state. Project participants of two organizations were also identified and interviewed. These were: (1) the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD, a WGO), and (2) the 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM, a WQUANGO).

A fourth category of participants emerged during the research process. This category is labelled "Other", that is, people who were not initially selected for the study. This category consists of a group of research participants who were identified through 'snowball' sampling as useful informants during my fieldwork.³ Their views have contributed to a fuller understanding of the issues and concerns related to women, development and gender issues in Ghana. I also followed one parliamentary debate as an observer. This experience revealed useful information regarding Ghana's decision and policy-making processes at the highest level, and the nature of power and gender dynamics in the parliamentary process.⁴

This Ghanaian case study on women's status is both exploratory and descriptive in its approach. However, a specific focus through an exploratory study provides preliminary data that may serve as a starting point for more elaborate research (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002: 309). This case study approach was selected in order to explore the roles of multiple players in the relationships under investigation, and to use multiple data sources as evidence and, importantly, details from the view point of the participants. The case study's "characteristic is a triangulated strategy that employs a multi-

³ Snowball is a multistage sampling process in which locating one participant leads to getting to others. This helps exhaust the participants for interviewing in the population and prevents rigidity in the research process.

⁴ There was only one parliamentary sitting throughout the period of the research.

perspective analysis” (Tellis, 1997: 1-2). Nevertheless, the researcher should be aware that each of the sources of evidence has its strengths and weaknesses (Gillham, 2000: 2). The multiple sources of data in this study complement each other because they were useful for the purpose of triangulation, which facilitated a more comprehensive analysis of the women’s organizations and related issues.

Documentary Sources

Critical information that could not be collected through the interview process was gathered through content analysis of secondary sources. Documentary sources included academic literature on the concept of governmentality, theoretical approaches on women and development, models on women’s engagement with the state, feminist perspectives on the state, and the governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations. Grey literature⁵ provided another perspective on Ghana and women’s issues, and insight into policy and decision-making processes. This included parliamentary proceedings (Hansard), state publications on women and gender, state policy documents, and information pamphlets from both state departments and NGOs. Other sources included research and conference reports, newsletters and minutes of meetings of the NCWD and NETRIGHT. I also reviewed articles from both private and state newspapers on the 31DWM, MOWAC and the NCWD, which were particularly important with regard to the effect of changes in government policies on women’s organizations during my fieldwork.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 173) acknowledge that documents are useful sources of data, but they caution that researchers should be reflexive in using them by asking questions about the context, purpose, author, occasion, and identifying omissions.

⁵ Literature from non-academic sources such as official government reports, the media etc.

Consideration of these factors was useful in understanding the literature on women, gender and the government.

2.6 DATA COLLECTION

Data for this research were gathered from numerous and varied sources as indicated above. These sources were useful for data triangulation to identify differences and similarities. Denzin (1989: 236-238) identifies time, space and persons as key ingredients for triangulation.⁶ This helps a researcher to see things from multiple sources as well as from various people's perspectives both historically and in terms of place (see also Borma, LeCompte and Goetz, 1986 cited in Berg, 2001: 5). The process helps researchers draw on different perspectives to eliminate the danger of relying on their own knowledge, or accepting individual accounts as experiences of organizations as a whole (Stake, 1995: 107). Also, triangulation helps to establish validity (Yin, 2003a: 33), an issue discussed later in this chapter.

Semi-structured interview schedules (see Appendices E, F and G) guided the interviews with participants from women's organizations (31DWM and the NCWD) as well as participants from government. Key informants in each category of participants highlighted other people who were potential interviewees, who were useful for crosschecking the data. These were not pre-selected, but rather emerged as willing participants during the research process. It is important to recognize that such self-selected participants could introduce bias into the research, and this resulted in some missing information. Nevertheless, their involvement and insight were also useful to the

⁶ See Denzin (1989) for detailed description of the types of triangulation.

study, and led to the identification of other participants.

In order to have firsthand information pertaining to the organizations, I also used 'observation' as a data collection technique (Yin, 2003a: 87). In particular, I paid regular visits to the NCWD, MOWAC and the 31DWM. It was not possible to visit NETRIGHT regularly because it was inaccessible for the intended purpose, because the organization had only one full-time staff member at the time of the study. Instead, I attended one of NETRIGHT's monthly scheduled meetings in order to gather information on the nature of interaction among its members, and to identify key issues raised at the meetings. I also attended one NCWD Women's Monthly Meeting (WOMM) to learn about the organization and the type of issues discussed. My attendance offered me a sense of connectedness, helped to establish rapport with the women involved, and the information gathered from these meetings complemented other sources of data discussed above.

Selection of Cases

It is important to recognize that any attempts to improve women's status are affected by larger development plans and challenges in Ghana. Moreover, within the framework of current post-Beijing debates on coalitions and solidarity building for change, Ghanaian women lack the material and non-material resources to be more effective in their efforts. The material resources include, for example, funding, office space, staff and vehicles while the non-material resources are lack of representation, the levels of influence and legitimacy to act on behalf of women. These two sources fragment women's efforts because they lack effective coordination of their activities, even within their own organizations.

In a case study there are no set rules for selecting cases or the number of research participants (Bromley, 1986: 3). Yet, as pointed out by Tellis, selectivity is one of the features of case studies (Tellis, 2001: 2). Stake (1995: 4) identifies certain criteria for the selection of cases, which I took into account.⁷ The relatively short duration of the fieldwork (i.e., three months) did not allow the respondents to comment on my analysis of the data after the fieldwork. Tellis (1997: 2) supports Stake's (1995) idea of selecting cases to maximize what is to be learned. Nonetheless, selecting cases has a downside, as it focuses only on a narrow group. There are ways to offset this weakness, which are discussed below.

The consideration of cases selected for this study was based on the evolution of different women's organizations, their theoretical orientation and objectives, and the nature of the organizations' impact on the improvement of women's status in Ghana. Overarching theoretical considerations, including governmentality and the analytics of government, helped to reveal important issues related to the emergence of women's organizations and their relationship with the government and multilateral organizations.

Tellis (1997: 2) advises selecting cases beyond those of interest, when she argues that "... the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of the actors, but also of other relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them." She suggests that to better understand a case, a researcher should not limit his/her data sources to the groups or individuals directly related only to the case under study. All people interviewed are regarded as important data sources, as suggested by Zucker (2001: 2) and Tellis (1997:

⁷ These criteria are: (1) the cases should be representative of the other cases; (2) the representation should be strong enough to understand the cases; (3) selected cases should maximize what is to be learned; and, (4) cases picked should be interested in the study and should be connected to other actors willing to comment on draft material.

2). As noted above and elaborated on below, the views of “Other” relevant groups and individuals are included in this research, even though they fell outside the three identified categories of women’s organizations (e.g., WGOs, WNGOs and WQUANGOs) that were originally identified and sampled for this study.

Garson (n.d.: 1) emphasizes the theory driven selection of cases (e.g., governmentality, analytics of government and approaches to women and gender in this study), by suggesting that, “[w]hen theories are associated with causal typologies, the researcher should select at least one case which falls in each category”. Within the framework of the approaches to women, the three categories of Ghanaian women’s organizations studies and individuals interviewed reflect these causal typologies. The examples from each category of women’s organizations contributed to the understanding of the efforts aimed at improving the status of women in Ghana. Garson (n.d.: 6) also recommends that researchers use multiple cases to achieve the required differences or representativeness in the object of study.

Research Sample

Besides Stake’s (1995), Tellis’s (1997) and Garson’s (n.d.) suggestions on the selection of cases, my own field experience highlights the fact that the researcher’s financial constraints and the views of participants can also influence the selection of cases. For example, in designing research, Berg (2001: 28) suggests striking a balance between the cost of research and what the researcher can afford. My financial constraints limited the duration of my study and restricted the location of my research to organizations in Accra, the capital of Ghana. Also, based on suggestions from the initial

participants targeted in the study, I used six categories of participants instead of the four that I had envisioned at the start of my research. In all, I collected data from 46 individuals: 34 women and 12 men. Out of this number, I had in-depth interviews with 31 people, and contacted the remaining 15 for specific information when required. The categories and the breakdown of research respondents follow:

1. Women's Governmental Organizations (WGO)

(i) National Council on Women and Development (NCWD),

- Six serving staff members (five women and one man)

- Two former staff members (both women)

(ii) Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC).

- Three staff members (one man and two women)

2. Government employees

- Two government officials who oversee the administration of the NCWD (both men)

3. Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organization (WQUANGO):

(i) 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM).

- Three current members (all women)

- One former member (a woman)

4. Women's Non-governmental Organization (WNGO):

(i) Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT).

- Five members (all women)

5. Project participants of the NCWD (WGOs) and 31DWM Women's Movement (WQUANGO)

(i) National Council on Women and Development (NCWD)

- Three participants (all women)

(ii) 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM).

- Six participants (one man and five women)

6. Other:

This category was made up of people from the government who were not targeted, but were consulted to verify data, and people from the public (eight women and seven men).⁸

- Three people from a multilateral organization (one man and two women)

- Seven from government organizations (six men and one woman).

- Five from the public (all women).

What is striking about the breakdown of participants into male/female categories is that out of nine participants in senior level positions from the government, eight were men. The only women among this group were from the Ghanaian Education Service (GES), a female dominated organization. This distribution illustrates how men dominate decision-making processes and influence government decisions.

The inclusion of the fifth and sixth categories of participants requires further clarification. Participants were included from both the NCWD women and the 31DWM projects in order to better understand the impact of the relationship between the government and women's organizations. In category five, I interviewed nine participants of the NCWD and 31DWM's specific projects. Those in category six designated as

⁸ This category of participants was found through 'snowballing' and referrals from initial research participants.

“Other” not only satisfy Tellis’s (1997) and Zucker’s (2001) recommendations for including all relevant groups in a case study, but also regard each participant as an important source of information. Yin (2003a: 24) also observes that the actors outside the potential research group provide the context for the case study. They can offer either a subjective or an objective perspective on the women’s organizations. Participants in this “Other” category, who either had information on the operation of women’s organizations or on the reorganization of women’s organizations (involved in improving women’s status and changes in government policies), helped to clarify data collected from other sources.

In attempts to understand state governing technologies, Lemke (2003) advises that we focus on processes of establishing institutions rather than on the institutions themselves. This advice, discussed further in Chapter Four, ties with the values of case study approach. Unlike other research methods, the unit of analyses in a case study is a “system of action” rather than individuals or a group of individuals (Gillham, 2000; Tellis, 1997: 2). The system of action, as a unit of analysis, includes the efforts of the different actors involved in improving women’s status and responses of the state to women’s organizations. The activities and responses of women’s organizations differ in their perspectives on how to influence state policy, transform power relations, and efforts to improve women’s status and empower them. Understanding these differences is crucial to the interpretation and analysis of data concerning women’s (dis)engagement with the state and theoretical perspectives on women and development in Ghana.

Categorizing Participants

I am aware that both the NCWD and MOWAC staff members are government employees; however, for the purposes of this study, I treat these organizations as two distinct categories of participants based on their very different histories and their duration as WGOs. Also, the organizations are examined within the context of their mandates. The NCWD was studied in view of its position as the first women's arm of the state to promote women's status from 1975 to 2001. As a result of its lengthy existence, I felt that the staff members would be able to share their views on women's relationship with the state, especially in terms of their past and present attempts to influence policy-making processes by engaging with the state. MOWAC, on the other hand, only emerged in 2001 under President Kufuor's New Patriotic Party government⁹ as a Ministry in the Government of Ghana's new agenda to further enhance efforts to improve women's status, which minimized NCWD's overall importance historically. The establishment of MOWAC, however, is in line with the NPP's manifesto for positive socio-economic change in the country. As well, it is a fulfillment of the NPP's promise to the electorate to acknowledge women's contributions to the family and to the economy and to ensure that all state policies on women are implemented (New Patriotic Party, 2000: 33).

By this reorganization, not only has President Kufuor's government elevated women's policy-making institution to full Ministerial status, but the government also heightened its profile because a Cabinet Minister heads MOWAC (MOWAC, 2007: 1). This means that it now gets budget allocation, is relatively autonomous, and has a separate physical location, which the NCWD did not have. There are national and

⁹ The change of National Democratic Congress Party to National Patriotic Party government is discussed in Chapter Five.

international political advantages for elevating the status of the women's arm of the state and establishing a Cabinet Ministerial position, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six. Prior to the establishment of MOWAC, there was another significant women's focused organization - the 31DWM, a WQUANGO. The 31DWM was positioned below (i.e., worked under the NCWD), then alongside the NCWD (i. e., competed with the NCWD) during the Rawlings regime. However, between 1982 and 2000, the 31DWM effectively gained control over the NCWD, rather than working with it (Addo-Adeku, 2002: 4; Oquaye, 2001: 61; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 22).

The 31DWM was the largest, most vibrant and well-organized women's organization in Ghana from 1982 to 2000 (Ibrahim, 2004: 2). It is categorized as a WQUANGO because of its historical identity as a registered NGO, and because of its close affiliation with the NDC government, as highlighted in Chapter One and elaborated on in Chapter Six. Indeed, Greico (1998: 6), a World Bank gender resource person for Africa, who was a university professor in Ghana in the 1990s, asserts that the president of the 31DWM, Mrs. Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings (wife of the Head of State from 1981-1992 and the country's President from 1992 - 2000), was a key figure in administrative decision-making regarding women's issues. As she was the wife of the Head of State, even though 31DWM only had official status as an NGO, it still attracted funding meant for the NCWD from international development agencies.

Sarpong (2001: 55) claimed that the 31DWM was the best revolutionary WNGO in Africa. Revolutionary movements are aimed at significant change. Therefore, the 31DWM was worth investigating in order to examine the impact it had on women's (dis)engagement with the state, and the process of improving women's status in Ghana

over time. Through data triangulation (Denzin, 1989: 237), we can determine that the three types of organizations in this study (WGO, WQUANGO, WNGO) contribute to our understanding of the challenges women's organizations face in their effort to improve women's status. However, there are differences in the sampling size of each organization as explained below.

2.7 FIELD RESEARCH

Time of Research

Although the field research and interviews for this study were carried out between June and September 2002, preliminary visits to the offices of the NCWD (July and December 1999; December 2001) and MOWAC (December 2001) offered me an opportunity to observe interactions among the NCWD and MOWAC staff members. This opportunity provided a sense of who has influence with regards to decision-making in these organizations. As well, other potential participants were interviewed from each WGO. I did not visit the 31DWM office because of the political party tensions created by the change from the NDC to the NPP government in January 2001. Also, I did not know about NETRIGHT's existence during these preliminary visits, because at the time it was not well known among Ghanaians.

Sampling and Interviews

The differences in the number of interviewees in the three organizations were due to research constraints beyond my control. I went to the field in mid-2002, at a time when there were political party tensions because of the defeat of the NDC government in

December 2000, subsequent change of government in January 2001, and the reorganization of women's organizations in early 2001. These organizational changes were accompanied by institutional changes and shifts in some women's accessibility of their channels to the state, which had an impact on the participants targeted by my research. As a result, some participants were either reticent or unsure whether or not to grant me an interview. Also, some gender activists, whom I thought would show interest in the research, did not show any enthusiasm at all for participating in the study.

I interpreted this in three ways, namely: (1) some of the gender activists had started identifying with the newly established MOWAC, and were likely to be assigned some responsibilities by either MOWAC or the NPP government; (2) some of the women were not receptive to my research idea, which could be explained as an issue of power and control over areas of research;¹⁰ and (3) the attitude of some women choosing not to participate contradicted their proclaimed interest in promoting women's status, as they appeared to be unwilling to contribute towards understanding women's issues. This could also mean that they feared potential repercussions for speaking to me as an outsider, from their employers, organizations, family and spouses. However, I followed Stake's (1995) suggestions for the selection of cases, as mentioned earlier, that selected respondents should be interested in the case study. The lack of access to data from some women limited the number of respondents interviewed from each organization.

Similarly, the number of participants from NCWD and 31DWM projects was restricted. Between 1982 and 2002, the NCWD had become a policy formulation agency (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 24), while the 31DWM became the main women's

¹⁰ This experience with power is not new to women anticipating cooperation from fellow women with information. Hale (1991), mentioned above, also had a similar experience in her interview with a powerful Sudanese woman.

organization responsible for policy and project implementation from the same period. The only active project the NCWD had at the time of the research was its Women's Monthly Meeting (WOMM). The views of participants from WOMM and the 31DWM are incorporated into the analysis of data in Chapters Six and Seven.

Interview Methods

A researcher's intention in an interview is to elicit information from the research participants, as, according to Stake (1995: 64), an interview is the "main road to multiple realities." To get to these realities, the interview should be well structured in order for the researcher to achieve his/her objectives. Different authors offer suggestions on how to make the interview process effective. For example, Whyte (1982: 111) asserts that interviewees are better able to answer questions when they know what is expected from them. Similarly, Denzin (1989: 102-3) notes that the interview process is an important stage of research because it allows participants to express their opinions.

Three different interview schedules were developed. The first schedule was comprised of semi-structured questions, which were both open ended and closed. The open-ended questions gave the participants the freedom to express their views, while the closed-ended ones were intended to elicit specific information.¹¹ The intention was to understand the experiences of the participants, and to describe and interpret the challenges of women's organizations in their purported attempts to influence decision and policy-making processes, institutional transformation, which could improve the lives of women.

¹¹ See Denzin (1989: 103) for a detailed discussion on the forms of interview schedules.

According to Whyte (1982: 111), it is more important to listen than to talk during the interview process as it prevents the researcher from interrupting the participants. However, Denzin (1989: 102-103) suggests that in a sociological interview one person should not do the talking, but both the interviewee and interviewer should ask questions. Both suggestions are important. Occasionally, some of the answers had to be clarified by the participants. An important aspect of the research process was to make participants as comfortable as possible in terms of protecting their identity and the location of each interview. All participants chose a convenient location and time to be interviewed. My initial plan was to audiotape the interviews, but many participants did not want their interviews recorded. Participants' refusal to give written consent or to have their interview recorded could be attributed to the 'culture of silence' in which Ghanaians operate. This simply means that people are afraid to voice their real concerns and thoughts, for fear of reprisal from authorities, which is a concern exacerbated by years of military rule in Ghana. In some cases, silence over a question communicates the participant's view on an issue. Fallon (2003: 525) had similar experiences in her interview with Ghanaian women, especially regarding political issues.

With the exception of two participants from the NCWD and one from the 31DWM, all were interviewed in their offices. Three participants who were interviewed at home appeared to be more relaxed. The duration of each interview ranged from two to three hours. As the interview process proceeded, the interview session became shorter due to the fact that my understanding of the participants' experiences had increased. As a result, my questions and need for clarification decreased. The participants also asked

questions on issues that baffled them. This made the research process educational, not only for me, but for the participants as well.

Seeking Consent and Some Unanticipated Consequences

The participants in the study from MOWAC, NCWD and the 31DWM were approached through their heads of organizations with a letter of introduction, and consent forms to request their participation in the research (see Appendices C and D). As noted above, they were also identified through snowball sampling and referrals. For the 31DWM, some of their members were involved in identifying project participants for this study. I then contacted the participants individually to get them to consent to being a part of this research.

The code of ethics for research demands that all participants endorse a consent form as evidence of their voluntary participation. The initial participants contacted refused to sign the paper form, however, they gave their oral consent. After this initial experience, the others were not asked to sign the consent form to ensure uniformity. The varying levels of education of the staff in each organization, and the project participants, required two different consent forms. The language was simplified in the consent form for the women participants of projects.

Participants' Involvement

The research was conducted at a time when some women wanted to express their views on the reorganization of organizations that purport to contribute towards the improvement of women's status in Ghana. However, when women feel threatened by

interviews that aim to gather information about their gender activism, they hesitate to grant interviews (Tripp, 2000: 221). Women initially resisted being interviewed because the research was conducted at a time of a change in government in 2001, as indicated earlier. This created a sense of insecurity among some participants, as they were not sure of my political affiliation. Once participants were convinced about my non-partisan and academic status, they were motivated and willing to participate. Some comments I received were, “We need something like this”; “What have you found out?”; “This research is timely”; “Have you contacted [A, B, C]?” The participants wanted to know how these organizations actually operate. Such comments were indicative of the relevance of the research focus and participants’ involvement and interest in the research.

Participants were involved in the research process, to the extent that some helped me to redefine the scope of the research. For example, NETRIGHT was not a focus of my research when I went to the field, as I was unaware of its existence. However, during the interview process, participants from the NCWD kept on referring to NETRIGHT as a ‘real’ NGO, compared to the 31DWM. Some thought my research on women’s organizations, state regulation of the conduct of organizations, and the collaboration among different actors interested in improving women’s status, would be incomplete without including views from NETRIGHT. I followed this suggestion, and chose to include NETRIGHT in my research after an initial investigation into its background and activities. Expanding on the number of participants is not new to the qualitative research process, nor is shifting one’s focus slightly as new information emerges. Tripp (2000: 221) enlarged her sample when her participants directed her to other sources of information in her study of women’s groups and politics in Uganda. This is an interactive

way of conducting research, and includes participants in the decision-making and power-sharing process.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is not a distinct phase, but an ongoing activity (Zucker, 2001: 2; Bryman and Burgess, 1994:217; Taylor and Bogdan, 1984: 128), by which the researcher generates concepts that are building blocks of theory (Bryman and Burgess, 1994: 219). In the process of generating concepts, as noted above, although there is no perfect measurement (Hedley, 2001), the goal is to maximize what is to be learned (Stake, 1995). This implies that qualitative data analysis is a means to an end (i. e., to contribute to the construction of theory). I analyzed the data for common themes as the research proceeded. I did a comparative analysis of the women's organizations using the research questions. The data sources were complemented by information from other organizations studied and from other people (i.e., categorized as "other") who were not members of staff of these organizations or the government. As the NCWD and the 31DWM have projects for women, the views of their "beneficiaries" (project participants) were incorporated on how changes in government policies and the organization of the NCWD and the 31DWM affected the women who are targets of their projects.

I carefully considered some of Kvale's' (1996: 204) suggestions on ways of making meaning through an inter-play of techniques.¹² With these techniques in mind, I

¹² Kvale's (1996: 204) reveals an interplay of techniques, which includes making patterns of themes; counting; making contrasts and comparisons; subsuming particulars under the general; relationship between variables, finding intervening variables and, and making conceptual/theoretical coherence. These suggestions were useful in my analysis, especially in making comparisons and noting relations

read through and transcribed my handwritten interview notes after each interview session. I then organized and numbered them according to the six categories of participants. This revealed an emerging pattern of themes, which I highlighted and numbered for each category of participants. I also noted differences and similarities among the participants, and contradictions in their views. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, I avoided using names when coding the data – referring to participants only in coded reference (e.g., - for male and female categories).

Various theoretical issues were considered throughout the analytical process. These were channels of women's engagement with the state, governmentality and analytics of government notions (i. e., government processes and practices, state regulation of the individual citizen), and theoretical approaches - women in development, women and development, gender and development and gender mainstreaming), and models on women's engagement with the state (insider, outsider, autonomous, feminist politicians, civil servants and women's movements channels of access to the state). The theoretical approaches to women are discussed in Chapter Three, while models on women's engagement with the state, notions of governmentality and analytics of government are examined in Chapter Four.

The themes that emerged from the data are as follows:

A. Women's organizations and the state

1. Channels of women's engagement with the state;
2. Types of governing technologies employed by the state;

between variables. Similarly, Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 130-131) suggest three ways of leading to discovery of knowledge: (1) read and reread your data; (2) keep track of themes, hunches, interpretations and ideas; and, (3) look for emerging themes.

3. Funding and resource allocation (from the state and other sources);
4. Recommendations to improve upon the work of the NCWD and MOWAC (WGOs).

B. Collaboration among/with women's organizations

5. Challenges of women leaders;
6. Reactions from women's organizations
7. Networking among women's organizations;
8. Men's collaboration with women

These themes, discussed in Chapters Six and Seven, reveal how women's organizations operate. The themes that emerged from both women's organizations and project participants overlapped. Both groups identified factors that either enhance or obstruct their efforts to improve women's status in Ghana. These included their relationships with the state, the persistence of state regulation of women, the liberal development approach to women, access to resources, lack of collaboration, and the limitations of their efforts. Participants from these groups made recommendations that would reduce the impact of state regulation to improve women's status overall.

Participation and empowerment were problematic concepts in the analysis, so it was difficult to measure the women interviewed concerning their specific level of participation and empowerment. However, to determine whether or not the activities of women's organizations empowered women, I used Longwe's empowerment framework

for “levels of equality” (Longwe, 1995 cited in March et al, 1999: 92, see Appendix H)¹³ and Andrea Cornwall’s (1995, see Appendix I) conceptions of ‘levels of participation’,¹⁴ which reveal the dynamics of power relations in participation.¹⁵ These analytical frameworks for empowerment and participation were useful in the analysis of the interaction between women’s organizations and government, intra- and inter-women’s organizational interaction, and the relationship between men and women’s organizations.

Validity

Validity is determining the degree to which the method used investigated what it was intended to test, and whether or not the observations reflect the variables of interest (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002: 137; Kvale, 1996: 238). Validity is an important aspect of qualitative research. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984), qualitative methods are:

Designed to ensure a close fit between the data and what people actually say or do. By observing people in their everyday lives, listening to them talk about what is on their minds, and looking at the documents they produce, the qualitative researcher obtains first-hand knowledge of social life unfiltered through concepts, operational definitions, and rating scales. (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984: 7)

Needless to say, participants may give a false first-hand account of themselves, which could then be crosschecked through triangulating data as a test for validity. For example, as indicated above, triangulation, as a self-validating process, is an integral part of the research process (Yin, 2003a: 92). A single in-depth interview could be used to validate

¹³ Women’s increased participation in the decision-making process, in policy-making, planning, and administration leads to increased equality and empowerment.

¹⁴ Levels of participation are hierarchical. The higher the level, the more project participants gain control over participation processes.

¹⁵ Longwe is an internationally recognized African gender and development consultant who has contributed to the literature on women and government relationships. Andrea Cornwall is a British research practitioner and academic, who has been involved with research on gender and participation for many years (UNRISD, 2004). She also works with the UN and at the University of Sussex.

information. I ensured validity by identifying the contradictions and/or confirmation in participants' responses from other informants, and by reference to existing literature. I also relied on key informants to test the usefulness of my methods. Based on the interactive nature of the interviewing process, I am confident that the interpretations of the data reflect my understanding of the experiences, concerns and opinions of the various participants.

2.8 RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

As indicated above, the participants did not allow me to audiotape the interviews because of fear of the repercussions of disclosing their identity. One participant said, "I don't want to hear that "A's" voice has been recorded giving information about her organization." Others initially resisted my taking notes because their training as government officials made them cautious of people asking information about the government. If the interviews had been recorded, though, it would have made it possible to replay the tapes to capture the exact information during transcription. Since some participants wished to remain anonymous, their views could not be directly attributed to them. However, the confidentiality of all participants was guaranteed because of how I initially coded the data, transcribed the interview notes and wrote up my findings.

It was interesting that some participants, especially those who were in senior positions in their organizations, gave two versions of information -- one official and the other unofficial. This second version represented the "deep structure"¹⁶ and cultural

¹⁶ Hidden rules in organizations (how certain decisions are made), jobs that are important for the smooth functioning of organizations, but do not count towards promotion in the workplace (e.g., preventing crisis, coordinating activities, counselling, building relationships, and calming down situations).

practices of the organization fundamental to running the organization that are unofficial and undocumented and, therefore, private (Rao and Kelleher, 2002: 6; Kabeer, 1999: 23). In contrast, the information that is made 'public' is the official version based on bureaucratic conventions of giving information within an organization. Although participants were not against my using the "unofficial version" in this dissertation, they did not want to be openly acknowledged for their comments. This created some problems when presenting the findings.

Organizations have unofficial norms (i. e., the deep structure) that may operate behind the scenes and influence organizational decisions. This public/private dichotomy is evidence of governing technologies, which has negative implications for those striving to improve women's status. Through this process, some participants may conceal relevant information from the larger groups involved (Chevalier, 2001). This kind of concealment also has ethical dimensions, which created tension for me, especially, as a researcher from an academic community that requires knowledge to understand the nature of social relations in order to improve women's status. While I have analyzed the data as reported to me, I do realize that some Ghanaian women and others both inside and outside Ghana may not agree with my analysis and interpretations.

2.9 SUMMARY

The goal of this chapter was to discuss the research methodology, including various qualitative methods used, such as interviews, observations and the case study method. Three categories of women's organizations, (WGO, WQUANGO, WNGO) were studied regarding their experience in engaging with the state's policy-making

process as it relates to women and gender issues in Ghana. Project participants were used as examples from the 31DWM and the NCWD to examine the impact of changes in state policies and women's organizations on the status of women. People from the public and state organizations who had information about the research topic were also interviewed and categorized as "Other". The research data were cross-referenced among the three types of women's organizations and triangulated with information from other sources. The data were analysed within the framework of models on women's engagement with the state and notions of governmentality and analytics of government, as overarching concepts which constitute the focus of discussion in Chapters Three and Four, which follow.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE AND THE BIRTH OF THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to develop strands of the theoretical framework for the study. In order to achieve this objective, the chapter examines the role that multilateral organizations and the state play in efforts to improve the status of women, and four major theoretical approaches to women and development after the Second World War.¹ This discussion identifies policy prescriptions of multilateral organizations, state control of women, and the theoretical approaches to women and development as forms of governing technologies. It then examines the impact of these governing technologies on women.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section examines how multilateral organizations and the state operate; how multilateral organizations influence the state, and the impact of these on women's status. The discussion identifies multilateral organizations as instruments of domination, which is a source of risk to women. The second section provides a background to women and development, examines four theoretical approaches to women in development processes to reveal they constitute governing technologies, the power inherent in knowledge construction, and creation of subjects out of autonomous citizens through development processes. The chapter ends with a summary and conclusions from the discussion.

¹ There is a gap between what multilateral organizations and the state claim they want to do for women and what they actually do for them. However, it is only through a comparison of the goals of these organizations and how they actually operate that one can identify the gap between rhetoric and reality.

Although it is important to acknowledge the support that bilateral organizations offer to some women's organizations in Ghana, for the purpose of this study, the discussion that follows focuses on multilateral organizations. As will be seen in the analysis chapters (i. e., Six and Seven) and the conclusion (Chapter Eight) of this thesis, multilateral organizations' policy prescriptions are very influential on how women's organizations operate. Despite the critical influence of multilateral organizations, this study concentrates on what is happening within the state rather than outside the state. As a result, the discussion emphasizes the relationships among women's organizations and the state, rather than their relationships with multilateral organizations.

3.2 MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE STATE

Despite the alleged increased interest in collaborative efforts between multilateral organizations and the state to promote development, both mainstream and feminist scholars are critical of the governing technologies involved, because of the firm control that multilateral organizations have in determining the nature of such collaborative efforts (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 1998; Harrison, 2001; Beneria, 2003). Instead of partnership and collaboration, the relationship develops into a hierarchical power structure between the two (McMichael, 2004: 43). Indeed, it was through multilateral organizations that Ghana was incorporated into development processes couched in firstly, liberalism since its official independence from colonial rule in 1957, and later neoliberalism in the 1980s (Hutchful, 2002: 1).² This section examines multilateral organizations as significant

² Ghana's development history did not start from the 1950s. It dates back to the 15th century when Ghana first came into contact with the global north. Ghana became a British colony in the early 20th century, and gained political independence in 1957, but it continues to experience the negative impact of colonialism on its socio-economic development. However, I contextualize the discussion on Ghana and multilateral

development actors, because not only do their decisions override those of sovereign states, but, in principle, multilateral organizations (particularly the United Nations) also play an instrumental role in conceptualizing and adopting the universal theoretical approaches to women to be discussed below.

Multilateral Organizations, the State and Approaches to Women and Development

The approaches to women referred to above include: women in development (WID), women and development (WAD), gender and development (GAD) and gender mainstreaming (GM) (Mama, 2007: 150). These approaches have gradually evolved from treating women as passive recipients of development to recognizing them as active development agents. Feminist scholars also support the changing models of women's (dis)engagement with the state to enhance their participation in policy-making processes (Ryan, 2009: 324; Rai, 2003: 6). As revealed in the discussion below, both the theoretical approaches to women as well as national development policies (e. g., Structural Adjustment Policies/ Economic Recovery Program and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) imposed by multilateral organizations largely ignore the increasing importance of focusing on human well-being and the transformatory initiatives in governance.

All states are not the same due to their different histories. But many states in the global south are subjected to manipulations of the colonial masters through colonialism and multilateral organizations through neocolonialism (Weatherby, 2005: 19-30; McMichael, 2004: 2-61). Both histories involve processes and practices through which

organizations within post Second World War development efforts to reflect debates on women, gender and development concerns.

neoliberal economies are introduced into these countries. Colonial history imposed foreign state structures, which interfered in the political and economic functions of states in the global south. In Africa, colonial experiences influenced the nature of the state and its relationship with women (Mikell, 1997: 16; Stewart, 1996: 23). Furthermore, the integration of African states into a global market and subject to policies of multilateral organizations has limited the functions of the state. This is reinforced through development policies imposed on them by multilateral organizations such as the UN, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at both the regional and global levels. All three undemocratic multilateral organizations were established after the Second World War, as organizations led by Western consultants with expertise in development, to promote post-war reconstruction, global development and peace (Evans, 2005: 55; McMichael, 2004: 40).

The idea of forming the UN developed between 1939 and 1945, but it officially came into existence in 1945, as an international body with a mandate to promote world peace among countries and facilitate development through other UN agencies (e.g., World Health Organization, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) (UN, 2009). The World Bank³ and the IMF, inter-governmental support systems, were specifically established to promote the reconstruction of post-war Europe. While the IMF is responsible for monetary cooperation among countries, the World Bank was initially responsible for investment in the development of post-war Europe. The Bank later extended development assistance to independent countries in the global south. The IMF and the World Bank, known as the Bretton Woods organizations, are two

³ The World Bank is made up of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association (Bank Information Centre, 2009).

powerful multilateral organizations that, with their expert knowledge and technical language, facilitate the exploitation of the poor, which promotes an unequal socio-economic development (Parpart, 1995: 222; Beneria, 2003: 4).⁴ Instead of promoting development, the technologies of governance and the expertise of multinational organizations, actually create negative consequences for countries in the global south by focusing solely on Western models of economic growth (Beneria, 2003:4; Afshar and Barrientos, 1998: 2; Parpart, 1995: 223; Charlton, 1997: 9). This focus on economic growth has created risks for the majority of women.

For instance, in the 1950s, to facilitate the delivery of their mandates, these multilateral organizations used the state as the framework for post Second World War global development (McMichael, 2004: 24). This period also coincided with the struggles for independence of previously colonized countries, with most of them gaining their independence from the late 1950s. However, these countries experienced problems with their legacy of resource bondage to the West, through the colonial division of labour (McMichael, 2004: 39), and superficial organizational structures, which poorly supported the proper administrative functioning of these post-independent states (Wiarda, 1999: 87-88; Stewart, 1996: 23). During this new phase of external interference in the state, the level of women's marginalization became even more evident (Boserup, 1970). This was due to the introduction of new technologies (use of ploughs, fertilizers, etc.) that only targeted men. By the 1970s women had become specific targets for development assistance, and theoretical approaches, specifically for women, were propounded to

⁴ The World Trade Organization (WTO), previously known as General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT), which is supposed to promote and stabilize international trade is also one of the governing technologies used to control trade in global south while supporting trade in the global north (Sernau, 2006: 58-59).

address risk issues that development posed for women (Tinker, 1997: 34: xiii). The strengths and limitations of these approaches are discussed later in this chapter.

Both the application of the theoretical approaches and the influence of multilateral organizations on states have been inconsistent. Although multilateral organizations supported state intervention in development from the 1950s, during the introduction of liberal modernization theory, they changed their policy to limited state involvement in development in the 1980s, justified by the fact that excessive state involvement in development limits a country's economic performance (Harrison, 2001: 530; Wiarda, 2004: 120; Amoako, 2005: 8). This shift in the technologies of governance reveals the limitations of Western development experts whose prescriptions are couched in rational and scientific thought.

Considering the state controlled development experiences of newly industrialized Asian countries (e. g., Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, see Wiarda, 2004: 83) no clear distinction exists between what is normal and what is excessive in the functioning of the state, or when the state should be in or out of the development process in order to better promote national economic growth. One criticism against the state is the top-down decision-making process, however, most of the successful Asian countries are top-down in their approach to development (Wiarda, 2004: 70). As well, the World Bank itself still operates within a top-down decision-making framework (Harrison, 2001: 530; Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 1998). A difference between the state and the multilateral organizations is that, unlike the state, multilateral organizations do not have citizens to protect. Consequently, such multilateral organizations claim they favour neoliberal economic and democratic reforms and freedom of rights, but they

impose undemocratic and unrealistic political and economic reforms on poor countries (McMichael, 2004: 40-43; Chang and Grabel, 2004: 17-18).

The multilateral organizations claim they advocate country ownership, and equality of participation between them and the state. However, this equality only allows these organizations to be a partner if they interfere in a country's affairs by offering development prescriptions and advice (Harrison, 2001: 542). As well, these organizations do not create a level platform for participation in development negotiations, and there is little tolerance of failure in the implementation of suggested prescriptions, even though development is essentially an experimental process (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 1998). To ensure the success of their projects, multilateral organizations prefer the expertise of foreign consultants to local elite in an era when feminists suggest a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach to women's development (Parpart, 1995: 222). According to Parpart (1995), the PAR approach is important, because local elite (i. e., the powerful and informed citizens) understand local conditions and the context of local knowledge.

Within the African context, multilateral organizations claim to favour country ownership of development planning and processes through their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Undoubtedly, the PRSP approach is to reduce the level of the north's involvement in the regions development. For instance, Harrison (2001: 533) points out that there were more Western development consultants in Africa in the 1980s, during the SAPs era, than there were at independence in the 1950s and 1960s. He describes this experience of poor countries with foreign involvement in their development as limited custodianship, not ownership (Harrison, 2001: 543). Harrison's

view not only supports Rose and Miller's (1999) that political power is beyond the state, but it also reveals how multilateral organizations use strategic games of liberty (i. e., the means of convincing people they have liberty while limiting that liberty) to control less powerful actors. This idea is expanded on in Chapter Four. This limitation extends to global economic organization.

This limited custodianship blocks opportunities for African states to govern themselves and control their own development through experience (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 1998: 1). The importance of limited custodianship negates Cornwall's (1996: 96) typology of ideal participation in development that describes level of ownership of the development process from a feminist perspective, which evolves to transfer control by external experts (outsiders) to local participants (insiders) in the development process. Furthermore, in theory, the multilateral organizations claim they favour democratic regimes but, in practice, they work more successfully with authoritarian regimes (Harrison, 2001: 529). Authoritarian regimes are, in fact, identified as one of the several factors that contributed to the successful development of Asian countries, an experience that other countries are encouraged to emulate (Wiarda, 2004: 70). This view on authoritarian regime contributed to the successful implementation of Ghana's Economic Recovery Program under Rawlings to be discussed in the section below. Such policy inconsistencies and their impact on the state further limit efforts to transform the state to be more responsive to women's role in development concerns.

As a case in point, shortly after creating an administrative space for women within the state to govern women (i. e., by having states establish a Women's Arm of the State), multilateral organizations unilaterally changed the protective and productive roles of

states in the global south through a series of economic and political restructuring through Structural Adjustment Programs (Harrison, 2001: 532-534). This change permitted NGOs that multilateral organizations legitimized as development actors to become responsible for socio-economic concerns and women's issues (Pfeiffer, 2004: 149; Hira and Parfitt 2004: 20; Love, 2007d: 70). These changes in state functions became a precondition for World Bank loans to poor countries. The consequence was that state provision of social services (especially education and health) declined from 1983 and was replaced by user fees or services were withdrawn, which had a detrimental impact on poor women (and men) and their families (Manuh, 1997: 277). Yet, the NGOs that stepped in to fill the void in social services for poor populations often cannot act in certain areas without permission from the state (Love, 2007d: 71). As a result, today, the state still plays a central role in the global development process by creating an environment conducive to the growth of global capitalism (McMichael, 2004: xxxvii).

This influence of multilateral organizations has been ensured through a variety of technologies of governance: the opening up of national markets, as well as the enforcement of free trade regulations. These factors are central to the success of global capitalism, which benefits developed countries and transnational corporations (Gore, 2000; 793; McMichael, 2004: 120; Evans, 2004: 62-64). Through open markets, states are pressured to sell or privatize their state-owned industries, including the profit-making ones, to mostly private foreign companies, and are pressured to transfer national resources to foreign capitalists (Hutchful, 2002: 97). In some instances, according to Hutchful (2002), national elite, including women, bought state-owned companies. The privatization of the economy, however, does not necessarily improve the private or

informal economy sector where women dominate (Hutchful, 2002:100-101; Yeboah, 1998: 158).

When the state is pulled in opposite directions to satisfy multilateral organizations and to promote capitalism on the one hand, and to provide basic services for citizens on the other hand, it further creates tension in the state's claimed commitments to women's rights and in the delivery of its mandate to its citizens as a whole (Tsikata, 2001a: 259-272; The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 10-12; Elson, 1991: 3). When all its citizens are affected, targeting only women for assistance, as a risk category, becomes problematic for both the state and for multilateral organizations, because the poor of both sexes do not receive the attention they need. The tendency, now, when discussing gender issues and the focus on women, is to insert men in parenthesis to indicate that poor men are also included as victims of development. The adding on of men recognizes their marginalization, which, in turn, has the effect of reducing the significance of women's marginalization. The approach, though, highlights the overall poverty among vulnerable groups (Beneria, 2003: 161).

Incorporating countries in the global south into the global economic system, especially, in the case of Africa, has come at a cost to these countries and to women in particular (Boserup, 1970). While working on promoting women's status, these countries and their citizens have to then cope with debt crises and political instability due to economic hardship (Reed, 2005:168). The World Bank and the IMF, the most powerful organizations, impose gendered development prescriptions on the state in specific ways. To begin with, multilateral organizations determine decisions at the national level via the development advice and support that they offer to poor countries through the World Bank

development economic investment model (McMichael, 2004: 152; Hutchful, 2002: 6-20). So far, in countries in the global south, the policy advice that these organizations offer has been more of a source of poverty and inequality among women in particular (Elson, 1991: 1; Sparr, 1994c: 13), as highlights below from Ghana demonstrate.

3.3 GHANAIAN WOMEN AND EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

PRESCRIPTIONS

The World Bank's suggested structural reforms under Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) for Ghana, indicated above, and known as the Economic Recovery Program (ERP), have had a great and diverse impact on vulnerable groups, and especially in terms of women's access to income generating activities, civil service employment, education and health care delivery systems (Brown and Kerr, 1997: 27; Manuh, 1994: 61, Clark and Manuh, 1991: 217). Ghana had implemented the ERP longer than any other African country. The introduction of "user fees" for education and health care, for example, is a case in point. The number of families that are unable to provide for their needs has doubled and the burden of poverty has fallen on women (Rempel, 1996: 3). In times of limited resources, the needs of girls become secondary. In addition to the country's poor socio-economic statistics, in the 1990s Ghana, among poor countries, was the third largest recipient of aid from the International Development Association, the soft loan unit of the World Bank (Ross and McGowan, 1993: 22- 24). Despite these development problems that the tough implementation of ERP created, in the 1980s the World Bank identified Ghana as a success story in the implementation of SAP related economic strategies (Brown and Kerr, 1997: 27; Ross and McGowan, 1993: 22).

However, this success story is not reflected in the socio-economic conditions of its citizens, particularly those of women (Hutchful, 2002: 91; Brown and Kerr, 1997: 40).

Granting that Ghana was successful in restructuring its economy and repaying its debts, according to World Bank criteria, its success could not be sustained over a ten-year period, as economic growth declined, the socioeconomic conditions of the poor deteriorated, and the country became heavily indebted to the World Bank. For example, despite the World Bank's prior claim of Ghana's success in economic restructuring, in 2001, Ghana qualified for World Bank support under the program for Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). The HIPC is supposed to help solve the crises of poor and heavily indebted countries. Ghana is one of the 70 low-income countries in the world receiving this debt relief (World Bank, 2006: 1). The fact that Ghana fell within this category, despite its alleged success with the previous SAP/ERP processes, is an indication that the social and economic impact of the program was negative. The impact on Ghanaian women was most severe, and efforts to reduce the deteriorating conditions of women caused by the ERP were framed within the WID approach (Brydon and Legge, 1996: 126). As discussed below, the WID approach neither transforms institutions and organizations nor promotes gender equality, but it has not been abandoned.

Just like Ghana's ERP, the HIPC program was instituted by the World Bank to "support" fragile economies in conjunction with a new economic policy prescription known as the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP), which Ghana developed according to World Bank guidelines (Government of Ghana, 2002).⁵ Considering the impact of structural adjustment and World Bank conditionalities on women, and the gendered GPRSP prescriptions, a coalition of women concerned about

⁵ The GPRSP is a new economic policy guideline for Ghana.

women's status in the country objected to these new governing technologies, and described the GPRSP as a continuation of ERP policies (The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 12).⁶ The implication of this observation is that the GPRSP, Ghana's current economic policy framework, will not only worsen the already poor socio-economic conditions of women, but it will also raise Ghana's debt level.⁷ The observations of the women's coalition are no different from those of Hutchful (2002) that, "while affording some debt relief, [the HIPC program] is also likely to lock Ghana even more firmly into SAP policies" (Hutchful, 2002: 247). The locking of Ghana into restructuring its economy is a governing technology through which the country is controlled by external forces.

Under pressure from a slew of external economic prescriptions, and global economic restructuring, the Ghanaian state has not been able to support the vulnerable poor adequately, the majority of whom are women. As well, there is little hope that Ghana will break its ties with these organizations when the country is governed and controlled through their policies in an era of globalization. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's

⁶ The Coalition started in 2004, after the fieldwork for this study had been completed. It is made up of women from the media, parliamentarians, women's groups, NGOs, Assembly women, representatives of political parties, and senior female executives in various ministries and departments. The meeting of the group was initiated by a member of NETRIGHT, the WNGO studied. The significance of the coalition to this study is that it has criticized the government for its lack of gender policies. An important achievement of the group is that it wrote a manifesto for Ghanaian women – an achievement which could compare with other Sub-Saharan African countries such as Zimbabwe, Uganda, Zambia, South Africa, Nigeria, Botswana and Tanzania. The Coalition describes the manifesto as a political document, and identifies certain areas of concern similar to those identified in the Beijing Platform of Action.

⁷ By 1988, Ghana, with a population of 15 million at the time, became the third largest recipient of World Bank development loans in the global south. Ghana ranked lower in its debt status than China and India with a population of two billion (Ross and McGowan, 1993: 22). Policy prescriptions from the 1980s coincided with a period of declining economic production in the global north, the relocating of factories in the global south, and the debt collection of international organizations. Within this period, the World Bank and the IMF asked the global south to adopt strict financial policy measures under the world economic restructuring program within the development framework of globalization and/or the internationalization of capital (Patterson, 1999: 151-158).

leader at independence described this kind of governance as neocolonialism (Nkrumah, 1969). Neocolonial governance and the dependency of states on multilateral organizations continue to hinder efforts to improve women's status. These development inequalities occur because of ahistorical liberal development policies, which consistently focus on economic growth and open market policies at the expense of the social well being of the people that the state has a mandate to protect (Beneria, 2003; Gore, 2003; Nsim, 2004).

Interestingly, the very multilateral organizations responsible for the policies that, through undemocratic means, have undermined the social well being of the people in developing countries are also engaged in promoting gender equality and women's status through democratic efforts (UN, 1995). Thus, some of these organizations are actually a source of degradation of human well-being, which contradicts their pledge to promote gender equality and improve women's status. As Prugl (2004: 71) notes, "international organizations provide the template for states to follow in enacting these laws in the post World War II era, and for embedding gender issues into rationalized bureaucratic infrastructures in the context of the UN Decade for Women." The impact of the decade on women (1976-1985) was mixed (Jain 2005: 73), but the ultimate goal of improving women's social, economic and political status was not achieved. The focus on the equitable distribution of the world's wealth not only resulted in a top-down approach to governance, but it also promoted shaky alliances among women, and motivated the search for alternative approaches to women. While women in the global south focus on community and the family, women in the global north were interested in individualism and women's issues only. According to the global south feminist scholars, the

feminization of poverty and gender biased economic policies emerged, in part, from individualism and the focus on only women (Tinker, 2004a: xxvi). What is even more ironic is that African women had earlier identified the impact of economic policies on women during the colonial period, reacted against it, and were able to organize in their communities to somehow reduce this negative impact through community support systems (Snyder and Tadesse, 1997: 76). This is the role the UN now assumes, but without having the required power over the process.

One challenge for women is that the UN is unable to effectively intervene in decisions on global economic policies because it lacks power, and is controlled by its own institutional power structures, the World Bank and the IMF, in a hierarchically structured system (Steans, 2000: 99). Nevertheless, the UN coordinates and directs states towards its agenda of improving women's status through the adoption of global declarations and goals for women (United Nations, 1996b; Tinker, 2004a: xxi). Through this process, the UN is able to govern and direct women in the direction of global development. Beyond the Decade for Women (1976-1985), the latest and most significant of these declarations was the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (PFA) adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 1995). Despite this technology of governance, Abzug, an influential gender and women's empowerment advocate at UN world conferences, was optimistic and described it as "a Contract with the World's Women", observing that:

Specific recommendations in the Platform for Action adopted at the Beijing Conference constitute the strongest consensus statement on women's equality, empowerment and justice ever produced by the

world's governments [on paper]. In addition, we [participants] label this as a 'conference of commitments'. (Abzug, 1998: 238)

Yet, due to both internal and external factors, there remains a gap between the 'on paper' commitment to change by multilateral organizations, the state and women versus real actions taken by the actors. For example, despite the promising nature of the PfA for women, a major weakness identified by critics is that it has no legal backing (Tsikata, 2001a: 264; Abzug, 1998: 237). This factor limits the extent to which women can hold their countries accountable for their lapses in implementing PfA policies.

This lack of legal backing is because UN conventions rely on their moral persuasion regarding women's status in order for their policies to be implemented, and the "good will" of states, which have not been effective. Indeed, the 2005 Human Development Report underscores that, without legal support, the poor will be unable to claim their rights to 'development' (UNDP, 2005: 71). The lack of legal reinforcement for PfA policies is a serious concern that affects women's rights and freedom, as well as their levels of participation in policy-making processes. Without legal backing, effective women's involvement or participation is undermined, which further limits their engagement with their states and multilateral organizations. The UN and state-level contract with women through the PfA Declaration is, therefore, primarily symbolic and rhetorical. It is simply another policy document, but different from the usual legal contracts in law so that women cannot advance strong arguments on the abrogation of the said contract by states.

The PfA is, thus, both the current bridge as well as the source of tension between women and the state as it "is remarkable for the strength of language and the ways it [the PfA] builds common ground among diverse groups of women and men, committed to

gender equality” (Staudt, 2003: 46). The key words in Staudt’s statement are ‘commitment’ and ‘common ground’, which suggest the acceptance and the common interests of the views of all actors. The PfA can, therefore, be regarded as the most comprehensive and important document for improving women’s status globally. However, it must go beyond the symbolism and rhetoric of inclusion, and open up a window for enhanced commitment, participation and collaboration among the different actors that are interested in women and development (United Nations, 1996a; Anand and Salvi, 1998: 15-20). Furthermore, the successful implementation of the PfA requires institutional transformation, yet little attention is being paid to transforming global or state-level institutions (Thin, 1995; Staudt, 2003). This concern is discussed below under the approaches to women and development. Through their development policy prescriptions and through their marginalization of the state, multilateral organizations are further destroying the existing supportive state structures concerned with health, the economy and education, for example, which has a negative impact on poor women. Although the UN’s interest may be geared towards delivering its peaceful development mandate, increasingly it is losing control over the decision- making process, whereas the World Bank and the IMF have increasingly gained control over the process (Steans, 2000: 98).

Under harsh economic conditions, women expect the state to honor their commitments as signatories of the UN universal declarations on women. This expectation usually creates tension between women and their states, as experience in Ghana reveals (Tsikata, 2001a: 265; The Coalition on the Women’s Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 8). The tension arises because the state lacks the capacity to fulfill its commitment

to women, and the fact that multilateral organizations emphasize building state capacity to support global economic activities, rather than contributing towards the social well-being of its citizens, and in this case study, its women. The section that follows discusses how women's role in the development process was either ignored or undervalued, which led to women's diminished their status. It also examines how the theoretical approaches to women and development that were intended to improve women's status rather served as governing technologies and constrained women.

3.4 BACKGROUND TO WOMEN'S ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

In the early 1970s, some feminists pressured the UN to include in its governing agenda the plan of transforming existing gender biased development, which had a negative impact on women in particular (Tinker 2004a: xviii). This pressure resulted in the organization of the first global conference on women in 1975, which became marked as the largest meeting aimed at addressing women's development concerns, particularly within the state (Fraser, 1987: 17). Between 1975 and 1995, the UN organized four world conferences that focused on women as a risk category. These conferences were intended to protect groups against the risk that the development process had presented to various actors, particularly women.

These conferences offered women institutional space to highlight their ideas on the development process (Jain, 2005: 43). The goal of these conferences was to create a common platform to bring together the various actors interested in women's development concerns (Tinker, 2004a: xxi). Feminist theories on women's marginalization in the development process have influenced decision-making at the conferences for the past 30

years. These theories are seen as coming from Western feminist development experts whose ideas, as indicated above, are regarded as universal, rational and scientific (Parpart, 1995: 227).

Discussed at length in the following pages, these theories are summed up in four approaches: women in development (WID), women and development (WAD), gender and development (GAD) and gender mainstreaming (GM) (Mama, 2007: 150).

Although these feminist approaches to women are important in discussing gender and women's development issues, their significance lies more in the similarities in the political and transformatory agenda and identification of sources of oppression that these feminist theories share with Foucault's notion of governmentality (McLaren, 2002: 6-11), the theoretical framework for this study, which is discussed in Chapter Four. Four feminist approaches to women and development are discussed in the rest of this chapter, but their features, which constitute governing technology, are highlighted throughout this thesis.

The WID, WAD, GAD and GM, theoretical approaches to women, are discussed below, highlighting their emergence, strengths and limitations. Their emergence is significant as they are supposed to mark a shift from focusing on women as individual actors and passive recipients of development programs outside the state and non-state actors. The shifts are intended to recognize women as a collective force and active agents who can transform institutions with the cooperation with men and those in state organizations and institutions (Young, 1993: 131). Besides women's collective action, these theoretical approaches to women have now evolved to focus on addressing women's development concerns within mainstream policy formulation processes in

bureaucratic institutions (Standing, 2007: 103; UNDP, 2008). Rathgeber (1990: 489) draws attention to how the underpinnings of these theoretical shifts are often forgotten in development practice.

As passive recipients of development programs (e. g., WID), women have little political engagement with the state. To be active agents, though, women require a working relationship with men and with the state, as well as with multilateral organizations when possible. Consequently, the success of this cooperation has become a critical factor in improving women's status. These relationships are of primary importance as they serve as the channels through which women can have access to resources that will enhance their development efforts. As discussed in Chapter Four, some feminist scholars suggest a three dimensional channel through which women can collectively engage with the state, which serves as a useful analytical framework for this study (Everett et al., 1989: 177; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). It is important to recognize that women's engagement through associations is an outcome of technologies of the state and development prescriptions and policies of three multilateral organizations: the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Tsikata, 2007: 219-220).

Theoretical Approaches to Women and Development

Women in Development (WID)

The Women in Development (WID) approach to women and development was the first global strategy adopted by the UN, and accepted by development agencies in an effort to improve women's status in the 1970s (Young, 1993: 129; Meena, 1992:20;

Tinker, 2004b: 69). Essentially, the WID approach examines women's role in the development process. The approach is rooted in Western liberal feminist thinking that women are excluded from development planning, but are used in the implementation of the projects. Western feminists argue that women should be integrated into the planning process (Tinker, 2004b: 69). The argument for integration is based on liberal development theory, which postulates that all human beings are rational, and seek their own self interest when free from constraints (Young, 1993: 129). When women are free from constraints, and supported by legal reforms and education, they participate in public life as men do. This suggestion is based on arguments on equality of opportunity between men and women (McLaren, 2002: 6). As Bryson (1999: 2) notes "the importance that liberalism attaches to rationality, self-determination and equal competition is also said to be the result of a male perspective which denies the value of qualities traditionally associated with women such as empathy, nurturing, and co-operation." The existence of these competing male and female values in planning development means women and men are pulled in opposite directions in the development process.

The WID approach is rooted in a Euro-centric liberal modernization paradigm. This was a theoretical perspective that the United States had adopted for world development in 1947, as a post Second World War world leader, and relied on scholars as development experts to propound a theory and also draw up a plan that the US could use to govern the world (Patterson, 1999: 113; So, 1990: 17). To better understand the discussion on the WID approach, I digress here, briefly, to explain the origin and tenets of modernization theory. The main objective of this theory was to consolidate Western

power and knowledge, and transform the global south through economic growth, using principles of the universalistic, rational, scientific and individualist liberal capitalist approach (Kerr et al., 1973: 276; So, 1990: 33-35; Rostow, 1990: 4).

Modernization theory is an evolutionary one relying on a structural-functionalist analysis, which brings countries from the global south together under the direction of Western experts rather than allowing them to operate independently. Structural-functionalist analysis justifies the interdependence of actors, organizations and societies, without paying attention to their different histories (i. e., constitution and reproduction of the state) or their differing resource capacities (i. e., material and symbolic devices) that influence various levels of development (Hoogvelt, 1978: 50-51; Wiarda, 1999: 30-32). This interdependence involves ideas, material resources and the (re)organization of labour. Furthermore, modernization theory posits that the benefits of economic growth will trickle down to the poor (Jain, 2005: 43; Webster, 1992: 56). Therefore, when the modernization approach was adopted in the 1950s, there was no question of women developing their agency or questioning the governing processes and practices of the state and multilateral organizations, because they had hopes that they would also benefit from the development process (Snyder, 1995: 6, Chowdhry, 1995: 34-38). Women's unquestioning attitude was a manifestation of their docility and faith in the development experts' advice, a concern that is reflected elsewhere in this thesis, and as identified in Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality.

Not everyone benefited equally from the gains of modernization. Its impact on the global south was mixed. The negative impact was more severe for women than for men. For example, if non-Western women accept the project of modernization, their

societies regard them as allying with the West (Long, 2005: 78). If they reject it, feminists regard them as being conservative (Jain, 2005: 51). When women resist oppressive cultural practices and state policies, the state labels them anti-nationalists. This conflict is because of pluralist ideas that national rights take precedence over group and individual rights (Long, 2005: 78). Modernization theory continues to attract several criticisms, especially for the Eurocentric principles that it promotes (Sen, 2006: 103; Webster, 1992: 58). Being the dominant development paradigm, modernization theory influenced proponents of the WID approach.

Western women development practitioners coined the term Women in Development (WID) in the 1970s,⁸ to draw attention to the deplorable condition of Third World women (Moghadam, 1995: 2; Peet and Hartwick, 1995: 180). In terms of its strengths, WID had the first feminist impact on development because it was the first time that development practitioners consciously targeted women as a group in the development process. In Jain's (2005: 139) view, the WID approach was the UN's rational response to women's microcredit requirements needed to fast track women's economic development. Fraser (2004: ix) defines the WID approach as "taking women into account, improving their status, and increasing their participation in the economic, social, and political development of communities, nations and the world." This definition covers a much broader scope than what WID projects actually offer women. Also, taking women into account involved more of a symbolic recognition than real efforts to improve women's marginal status (Rathgeber, 1990: 490). The WID approach brought understanding to gender relations in terms of how changes in the economy either offer or

⁸ Specifically, it was coined by the women's chapter of the International Development Group in Washington, D. C (Rathgeber, 1990: 490)

limit opportunities for men and women, and how men and women organize collectively when tensions arise. More importantly, WID highlighted the need for more support for women in the development process (Young, 1993: 130). The weaknesses of WID, though, outweigh its strengths.

Limitations of WID Approach

The state and multilateral organizations support the WID approach, and limit the development of women's agency. These organizations do not normally consider including women in their development planning processes (Buvinic, 1986; Parpart, 1995: 223; Beneria, 2003). Therefore, proponents of WID did not rely on any official openings in institutions that women might be incorporated into or openings for them to work within organizations (Young, 1993: 131). Instead, the proponents of WID and development experts looked for opportunities within the mainstream that would integrate women, with the hope of bringing about small, but progressive, changes. Arguably, this is a slow process. However, this strategy of implementation was adopted because, according to Young (1993: 131), the gender biased development process was not questioned. Thus, WID retains the Eurocentric hierarchical power structure characteristic of the modernization process. This unquestioning experience reveals the docility of women as subjects to conduct themselves and also be governed (Foucault, 1991: 99). In the 1970s, some women in policy-making positions in Ghana, for example, did not have gender training. Additionally, their male counterparts were hostile to efforts to highlight women in policy-making processes in the face of scarce resources (Brydon and Legge,

1996: 129). As well, despite women's few gains from the WID approach, women have not been able to forcefully resist male dominance and state domination.

Another, major criticism of the WID approach is that it focused only on women in development and attempted to 'modernize' them (Snyder, 1995: 7; Rai, 2002: 63). Goetz (1988: 482) points out the contradiction in integrating women into development while in reality they are being separated from the development process. This modernization agenda also caused a division between Western (global north) and non-Western (global south) feminists, and also between men and women. Usually, women from global north are regarded as more knowledgeable than women in the global south, thus, the former are seen as the development experts for women from the global south (Mohanty, 1997: 76; Parpart, 1999: 221; Tsikata, 2001a: 265). Similar to modernization experts, Western feminists also based their advice on their development experiences from the West to dominate non-Western women (Goetz, 1988: 478). Thus, the WID approach limited women's broad participation, because some women were excluded from policy formulation, the identification of women's needs, and the implementation and evaluation stages of projects (Mbilinyi, 1992: 30-49).

The isolation of women for development projects within the WID approach avoids addressing the gender dimensions of development (Kabeer, 1994: 54). The focus only on women also usually leads to their being treated as add-ons in development practice, especially when organizations lack resources for improving their status (Porter et al., 1999: 7). The separation of men and women further poses a limitation. Cornwall (1998: 3) argues that the negative perception of gender relations by development agencies may not exist in reality. In part, the focus on women, either as a group or as individuals,

also creates inter- and intra- gender relation tensions. The overall WID approach is, thus, individualistic and segmented (not a holistic or systemic approach, as argued by structural-functionalists). Focusing more on consensus than on conflict, the WID approach ignores competition and conflict among women participants, themselves, as well as between men and women (Assibey-Mensah, 1998: 288; Dolphyne, 1991: 67).

The Western origin of the WID approach provided a defensive argument for state bureaucrats and men in the global south, who wanted to preserve their privileged status. They, thus, regarded projects for women as a foreign imposition, and the responsibility of external donor organizations and of development agencies (Young, 1993: 132, Moghadam, 1995: 8). Apart from establishing a women's arm of the state within the WID approach, governments also lacked the political will to improve women's status. Critics argue that the WID approach is rooted in dominant Western modernization and liberal ideas on promoting capitalism (Moghadam, 1995: 3). Governments in the global south drew the global north's attention to the risks of dependency that were created through the 'development' process (The South Commission, 1990: 4-10). The WID approach does not aim to transform institutions that serve as sources of power in the organization of capitalism (Ferguson, 1984: 34; Weedon, 1987: 7; Donavon, 2000: 17; Kantola, 2006: 5). Within these institutional structures, the actors make choices that may either be deliberate or not, as will be discussed under analytics of government explored in Chapter Four (Lemke, 2007). Whether these choices are deliberately made or not, they have a severe negative impact on the efforts to improve women's status, and do little to improve the lives of the marginalized poor and women (Kevane, 2004: 44). The WID emphasis in the development process, within modernization framework,

usually perpetuates inequality among people, focuses on economic growth, and ignores the importance of people's well being and the political dimension of the process.

Chowdhry (1995: 31-35), for instance, argues that integrating women into the development processes means that they are being integrated into both the state and global capitalist development process. While the economic empowerment of women aims to make women independent and increase their level of confidence, the WID approach fails to emphasize structural transformation -- the political dimension of change (Jahan, 1995: 8; Sen and Grown, 1987: 80 - 81). To this end, Chowdhry (1995) concludes that the capitalist process could be more responsive to women's concerns through institutional transformation. The transformation should be cultural, political and economic -- not only economic (Sen 1999: 3). As indicated below, proponents of subsequent approaches to women and development incorporated these broader development views into their theories.

Tinker (1997: 38) attributes a fundamental weakness of the WID approach to the lack of consensus, because of the different and diverse backgrounds of its original proponents. Advocates, scholars and practitioners could not easily reach a consensus, because of their varied interpretations of women and development. Tinker adds that, although the groups had good intentions because of their loyalty to the larger groups they represented, they were pulled in opposing directions. This lack of consensus limits effective communication among experts and groups, which aims to promote a holistic understanding of women's issues (Hartsock, 1997: 93; Porter et al., 1999: 8).

Critics of the WID approach, cited here, contend that its ahistorical analysis of the development process ignores the practices underlying the artificial creation of gendered

social institutions and women's reproductive roles. Rather, WID emphasizes women's productive roles through income-generating activities without securing markets for their products (Buvinic, 1989: 653; Rathgeber, 1990: 492; Macdonald, 1994: 16; Chow and Lyster, 2002: 38). The ahistorical analysis is the strongest of the criticisms and is exposed by the concentration of WID projects in the global south (Young, 1993: 130).

In terms of the focus on economic growth, various studies reveal that many WID income-generating projects have not achieved the desired results, and that international and national bureaucrats use these projects to justify their attention on women (Young, 1993: 63; Hutchful, 2002: 195). Critics of the projects say they are small, discrete, under-financed, and welfarist in their approach to raising women's income (Buvinic, 1989: 653; Young, 1993: 132; Assibey-Mensah, 1998: 277; Sibbons, 1999: 194). Despite assistance, such small projects do not adequately promote economic growth that could raise a country's economic performance (House-Midamba and Ekechi, 1995:178). Yet, for political reasons, the state uses these projects to avoid criticisms from women, and women continue to look to the state for assistance. In effect, though, these projects constitute governing technologies to maintain women's subordination, not to support their advancement socially, politically and economically.

Generally, development agencies support women's income generating activities, literacy and credit scheme projects (Agyemang-Mensah, 1998: 38-50). This preference is due, in part, to women's need for income, but the WID approach has not adequately increased women's income levels to make them economically independent of men, as some liberal feminists suggest (Bryson, 1999: 10). The negligible gains from the WID approach are accounted for by how development agencies and the state tactically avoid

tampering with indigenous cultures, because of the complications that can arise from trying to transform the existing structures (Rogers, 1980: 82; Young, 1993: 21). Further to this, the social and political values of these external experts and organizations usually differ from that of the country they are trying to assist (Michael, 2004: 115; Parpart, 1995: 223). The result of these decisions is the concentration of poverty among women in the global south; which limits prospects of developing consensus through solidarity building among women (Sen and Grown, 1987; Tinker, 2004: xxvi). Notwithstanding, in Ghana for instance, this focus on WID projects and programs continues today (Agyemang-Mensah and Apt, 1998: 38; Assibey- Mensah, 1998: 277).

Reliance on Western development experts, however, has a negative impact on gender relations. Dolphyne (1991: 67-68) and Assibey-Mensah (1998: 295) reviewed WID focused projects that aimed to equip poor Ghanaian women with skills for income generation that could promote their becoming more autonomous. Both concluded that many of the projects were unsuccessful. The women preferred to work individually instead of in groups, as proposed by the top-down project plans. The discrepancy between women working individually instead of in groups is because they had no input into the planning of projects. This experience from women's projects is a limitation of the liberal approach, which is based on individualism and rational and self-interested human nature (Bryson, 1999: 12). This concept of rationality and self-interest, when applied to women, threatens men, and does not also necessarily translate into the collective interest of all women.

Specifically, men feel threatened when projects have the potential to raise the family income and reverse gender income imbalances in households (Hutchful, 2002:

192). Men's resistance resulted in their incorporation into the WID project in Mafi-Kumasi (Dolphyne, 1991: 68).⁹ In particular, men feel powerless when women have control over the children, especially their sons, as a result of women's new economic independence (Assibey-Mensah, 1998: 288). This independence is crucial for women's emancipation. Due to men's resistance to this independence, Hutchful (2002: 192) contends that unless the gender division of labour is restructured, women may not gain from WID projects. Hutchful does not suggest any form of restructuring, but his view on gender relations implies that women still lack the required security to transform their relationship with men. The WID approach, thus, raises issues about women's rights and freedom with regard to the West and local relationships.

Gordon's (1996) views on gender relations in Africa also differ from the usually held views of Western liberal feminists. Gordon (1996:14) argues that men in the global south rarely enjoy democratic rights; therefore, the emphasis on women's rights alone is not enough to support and promote women's position in society. She also asserts that the existence of strong patriarchal structures in African countries suggests that women's rights may be unattainable. Gordon's explanation draws attention to the link between patriarchy and capitalism, but argues that civic and social rights are not only related to women's issues. Gordon (1996: 10) further observes that planners not only ignore the differences between women, but they also ignore the necessity for women to build solidarity with men. Building such solidarity has the potential to liberate women because

⁹ Men in Mafi-Kumasi, one of the NCWD project communities, refused to cooperate in supplying the raw materials needed for the smooth running and successful implementation of the project for women. The reason was that the project marginalized men, while the women had an opportunity to make money in a community where cultural practices and values support men's economic leadership roles.

patriarchy and capitalism have negative consequences for women (Eisenstein, 1981: 187-188; Nelson, 2010: 87).

Although the WID approach overlooks gender and lacks institutional transformatory potential, the approach has become the *standard* development orientation. It is the perspective that influences project planning in most international development agencies and in many countries, especially those that depend on foreign assistance (Connelly et al., 2000: 6; Jahan, 1995: 1). Development practitioners are unwilling to abandon it, because it is implemented outside of organizations; therefore it is seen as less threatening to power relations (Staudt, 2003: 48). Moreover, such development agencies that have only a limited perspective of gender relations cannot adequately address gender issues. Yet, interest in WID projects has increased and feminized poverty (Jain, 2005: 104-109), which largely detracts attention from the poverty among both men and women.

The weaknesses of the WID approach served as a springboard for subsequent theoretical arguments on women and development – WAD, GAD and GM. The limitations of the WID approach prompted feminists to reexamine gender, class, state structures and social and economic policies and the collective impact of these factors on women (Heward, 1999:1). It is these structural elements that ensure the survival of the state and women's domination by the state (Foucault, 1991: 102). The issue of how to collectively these factors into women's programs components led to the emergence of the women and development (WAD) approach.

Women and Development (WAD)

The theoretical underpinning of women and development (WAD) is based on dependency theory, and extended to feminist arguments on marginalization in the development process (Hettne, 2002:7; So, 1990: 110; Larrain, 1989: 147). Proponents of the WAD approach, also known as the alternative approach to women and development (Rathgeber, 1990: 492), draws on the historical analysis of economic relations between the global north and the global south, and attributes “underdevelopment” to the exploitative activities and domination of the global north (Frank, 1967: 34). Andre Gunder Frank, one of the leading proponents of dependency theory, criticized modernization theory for its western-based explanations that take only the internal economic and cultural conditions of the global south into account (Webster, 1992: 84-91).

Emerging in the second half of the 1970s, WAD proponents also included neo-Marxists and socialist feminists (focus on gender and class in relation to political economy and patriarchy) and radical feminists (who focus on global capitalism and patriarchy - sexism - and patriarchy’s associated male violence) (Crow, 2000: 12; Weedon, 1987: 19; McLaren, 2002: 10; Hughes et al, 2003: 19; Peet and Hartwick, 1995: 183). On the one hand, radical feminists concentrate more on patriarchy and described it as the ‘oldest, most universal, most pervasive, and deepest’ form of women’s oppression (Nelson, 2010: 87). On the other hand, socialist feminists identified the socially organized material system of production, sexuality, childbearing and family responsibilities, as well as discriminatory gender socialization, as sources of women’s oppression (Nelson, 2010: 89-90). To put it differently, women’s reproductive role and

unpaid domestic work are what capitalist economic organization relies on, and are sources of women's oppression (Visvanathan, 1997: 21). WAD advocates identified some of the major differences created between the global north and the global south throughout the under-development process, and advocated for more egalitarian relations between the two regions. During the period of WAD approach advocacy, a southern feminist group, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) became advocates for non-western poor women's inclusion in decision-making as a solution to women and development challenges (Sen and Grown, 1987).

WAD proponents have developed their argument from two major criticisms of the WID approach - its modernization approach and the non-integration of women into the development process (Rathgeber, 1990: 491). They put forth the contention that women have always been integrated into the development process through their productive and reproductive roles. What they did differently was to focus on the relationship between work and exploitation processes. Furthermore, WAD proponents add that it is the integration of subsistence economies into the capitalist economy that has reduced women's position in society (Chow and Lyster, 2002: 38- 39). For example, exploitation during colonialism and other forms of economic organization gave birth to a new international division of labour. This change imposed a forced division of labour on countries in the global south, affected subsistence economies and turned women's labour into 'docile and cheap' labour (Mies, 1998: 36-37). Therefore, the WAD approach drew people's attention to capitalism and its destructive effect on women's lives. Proponents of WAD saw, as well, the need to analyze both women's work within the household and

how it is linked to the development of capitalism (Sen and Grown, 1987: 50; Rathgeber, 1990: 493; Porter, 1999: 10). This radical approach also has limitations.

Limitations of WAD

WAD's solution to women's subordination was superficial because its proponents argue for the withdrawal of women from men's world (Weedon, 1987: 9). It could be argued that this solution would not be popular among women in the global south, where the relationship of women to men is a source of social recognition for women (Fatton, 1989: 49; Tamale, 1999: 93), and women have to produce more children to be able to face the challenges of destruction of subsistence economies and the appropriation of peasant land by capitalists (Beneria and Sen, 1997: 48-50). Also, sub-Saharan Africa, especially West Africa, has the lowest level of gender inequality; therefore women's oppression is not as marked as it is in other regions (Geile, 1977; Oppong, 1983).

Despite the recognition of multiple sources that contribute towards women's marginal status, WAD proponents focused more on social justice than on gender and capitalism, but they advocated that women in the global north support those in the global south (Meena, 1992: 21-22; Moghadam, 1995: 7). Nonetheless, WAD proponents still categorized women as a group and addressed their 'practical needs' (i.e., basic things women require to survive) rather than on their strategic needs (i.e., the elimination of factors that subordinate women to men) (Moser, 1989: 1799). As a result, women returned to the performance of their traditional roles (Parpart, 1995: 234).

In Chow and Lyster's (2002: 39) view, though, the WAD approach focused more on class than gender. It was, therefore, unable to holistically address the sources of

women's oppression. It further failed to analyze comprehensively the relationship between the different modes of production and women's subordination and oppression. Thus, the negative impact of patriarchal and capitalist structures persists despite the emergence of the WAD approach. Very little has been documented on the WAD approach so that, at times, it is completely absent in discussions on theoretical approaches to women. However, according to Meena (1992: 21), WAD's theoretical focus helped to generate an increased interest in research on women, so it further enhanced our understanding of women's issues. Its short existence, nevertheless, prepared the ground for gender and development (GAD) as a more holistic approach to women.

Gender and Development Approach (GAD)

The goal of the GAD approach was to move away from focusing on women and to take the whole of society into account, especially, the social relationship between men and women and with governments (Rathgeber, 1990: 491-492). Emerging in the 1980s and popularized in the 1990s, Young (1993: 134) traced the origin of GAD to a group constituted mostly of experienced women development workers and political activists at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), at the University of Sussex, England. From the history of its emergence, the GAD approach was based on experience in development processes and governing practices rather than on abstract theoretical explanations. Its proponents combined a "Marxist feminist analysis of social change and a feminist analysis of patriarchy" (Young 1993: 134). Commentators on GAD, though, have not been able to place it within any feminist framework (Baden and Goetz, 1998: 19; Lyster, 2002: 39). In Rathgeber's view, GAD analysis begins with feminist views on

development through which gender is identified as an important variable in understanding women and development issues (Rathgeber, personal communication, July 2009). It is, thus, a holistic feminist approach to women and development (Parpart, 1995: 235; Rathgeber, 1990: 493).

Besides focusing on gender relations, proponents of GAD also contested the development practice of grouping all women into one category, as they can be divided according to class, race and beliefs (i.e.; social values). This categorization and same treatment for all women was one of the concerns of feminists from global south (Mohanty, 1997: 79). They further argued that women's roles cannot be set apart from gender relations. Therefore, GAD attracted people's attention to the social structure and its differential impact on women and men (Peet and Hartwick, 1995: 187). For example, while WID proponents do not question the sexual and gender division of labour, this is a major concern for GAD proponents. GAD's proponents also recognize that a male dominated society is because of the privileges men have. As some men tend to have more social, economic and political power, it gives them control over women in general. Since these male dominant structures vary from one society to another, different societies require different approaches to dealing with women, and experts should not offer the same advice to all of them. The approaches to transforming institutions, drawn up by western feminists, does not fit the experiences of all women, particularly those in the global south who suffer from the impact of colonial and neocolonial processes and practices, which further exacerbates gender inequality (Tinker, 2004: xxi-xxvi).

Whatever approach is used to address issues of gender equality, the GAD approach identifies the sources of change. It recognizes women as actors/agents who

could influence social change through activism. The proponents of GAD acknowledge the value of understanding the realities of the partnership between men and women in the change process (Rathbeger, 1990: 494; Young, 1993: 135; MacDonald, 1994: 17; United Nations Population Fund, n.d:1). For this reason, the GAD approach also captures the gendered dimensions of macro-economic policies, environmental conservation, microcredit and women's empowerment issues (Pearson, 2000: 385-395). It also underscores the significant role that the state must play in the change process (i. e., changing the governing practices discussed above). For example, the political will of the state with regard to women, and its ability to adopt gender sensitive state policies (i. e., new governing practices) could improve women's status. The GAD approach exposes the complexity of the development process, which involves social, economic, and political factors (Heward, 1995: 1). This insight through GAD helps us to explain and analyze governmental practices, cultural dimensions, and existing unequal international economic system within the context of modernization and governmentality.

Heward (1999: 2) observes that "giving voice" to women, as a strategy to empower them, has revealed the multi-layered nature of women's experiences in the household, community and the state. Furthermore, the GAD approach also forces NGOs (i. e., civil society as favoured development agents) to realize how costly it is to transform the structures of gendered society; to make them more critical about their approaches; and, to rethink both their organizations and the suggestions they offer to their Southern development partners (Macdonald, 1994: 16). Focusing on a global perspective, GAD proponents believe in international solidarity and networking, through

associations, as a strategy for finding lasting solutions to women's development challenges (Young, 1993: 134). These coalitions have not been very successful.

Limitations of the GAD Approach

Although the GAD approach is an attempt to address the limitations of WID and WAD, it has not been able to fully achieve this goal (Young, 2002: 321). In the views of some scholars, GAD approach has not been able to overcome the modernization framework of the WID approach, because it also focuses on projects for poor women instead of on the necessity of structural transformation (Young, 1993: 321; Reeve and Baden, 2000: 33; Parpart, 1995: 236). Nonetheless, motivated by the tenets of the GAD approach, women formed organizations to challenge the sources of oppression at the national and international levels. In Africa and elsewhere, associational processes are fraught with challenges (Geilser, 1997; Esim and Cindoglu, 2000: 178; Esim, 2000: 140; Moser, 2004; Win, 2004). One limitation identified is that women's organizations operate largely in isolation, and are unable to work across the organizations (Esim, 2000: 140). Governments also tend to support government-affiliated women's organizations, which creates divisions among women's organizations, and affects their ability to engage collectively with the state (Caldeira, 1998; Nzomo, 1997). Experiences are mixed regarding the progress made at attempts to consolidate women's efforts.

Critics such as Elson (1991b: 1), Young (2002: 321) and Tinker (2005: xv) observe that the shift of focus from women to gender detracts attention from the more crucial women's issues. Both men and women, who are uncomfortable with the progress women have made in their efforts to empower themselves, see this shift as a political

attack on women's organizations. On the part of NGOs, Macdonald (1994: 16) indicates that there is considerable difficulty in transforming social and bureaucratic organizations. Hence, it is more convenient for NGOs to institute various WID projects (i. e., literacy, health, civic participation, and income-generating) for women, but the goal is most often limited to increasing women's income-generating capacity. While these are also short term goals of GAD, the long term goal to develop women's agency is rarely achieved. Women encounter difficulty in their attempts to persuade development planners and practitioners to change their governing practice of planning within the WID and GAD frameworks instead of using the GM approach (Moser 1995: 210). Some feminist critics would prefer that approaches to women focus just on women, and some women's NGOs and GAD advocates are still more comfortable working only with women (Baden and Goetz, 1998: 19). This division is certainly a source that perpetuates unequal gender relations and limits women's efforts as participants and advocates.

The perpetuation of gender relations in organizations is relevant as, in order to be successful, the GAD approach requires institutional transformation, a different approach to gender relations and a change in attitude of both men and women. As indicated above, multilateral organizations have identified NGOs as the preferred vehicles of development and to serve as links between development agencies and the poor (Hira and Parfitt, 2004: 20). The ability to transform these organizational structures and institutions of government implies that NGOs and development agencies would obstruct the exploitative development processes and weaken the hidden governing culture that supports existing institutional practices (Rao et al., 1999: 2; Rao and Kelleher, 2002: 4). Similar to modernization theory, the GAD approach also tends to be a slow process. This slowness

defies the business model of governments, development agencies, local and international NGOs who want immediate results (Reeves and Baden, 2003; Staudt, 1998). The short time frame given to initial development projects makes it difficult to identify and correct mistakes in the development process.

Kabeer (1999: 3) suggests that the family, the basic unit of society, could be a starting point for initiating the change that would support transformation of other institutional sites. This suggestion could be attributed to the view of radical feminists that patriarchy manifests itself in the family, marriage, sexuality and biological reproduction (Nelson, 2010: 87). While this suggestion is useful to consider, it has both negative and positive implications for women, especially, when the current focus of change is on decision-making in the public sphere. Using Ghana as an example, 60.5% of women are heads of households (Government of Ghana, 2002: 4), which means that a large proportion of Ghanaian women live independently, because they are widowed, divorced or never married or have left in search of jobs elsewhere. When couples do not live together, children only know about the roles of one gender (Parrenas, 2006: 185). Even where married men and women live together, usually boys and girls are treated differently. This differential treatment perpetuates gender differences.

It is important to note that men and women tend to cooperate with one another, even when there are unequal economic, social and political benefits (Young, 2002: 324). Indeed, the socialization process in African countries focuses on cooperation and communal life as integral to all forms of valued social relations (Gyekye, 1998: 35). Therefore, women count on men as allies. Yet, some western feminists caution that when women build alliances they should avoid women in the capitalist class, because these

women support their husbands instead of women (Connelly et al., 2000: 64). This caution when taken seriously may deny women access to male members of the family and elite women in higher positions who may be able to help them. For instance, some African First Ladies and elite women successfully mobilize poor women but do not forcefully use their positions to advance *all* women's interests (Ibrahim, 2004: 2; Mama, 2000; Tsikata, 2000). The participation of First Ladies in the process adds another dimension to African women's mobilization in the development literature. Overall, the limitations of the approaches to women led to an interest in a focus on women's participation within bureaucratic organizations and their institutions, through the Gender Mainstreaming (GM) approach to women and development.

Gender Mainstreaming Approach (GM)

Gender Mainstreaming redirects women back to the state, which requires creating a space for both men and women. Therefore, Rao and Kelleher (2003: 142) describe GM as gender infrastructure. It emerged in the late 1980s, but only became popularized after the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 (Berger, 2007: 124). Gender Mainstreaming's popularization was because the UN, other multilateral organizations, development agencies, governments and women's organizations adopted it, in principle, as the new theoretical approach to women and development (Baden and Goetz, 1998, 155; Cornwall and Brock, 2005: 1; Subrahmanian, 2007: 113). Despite the differences in wording and language in definitions, all GM advocates underscore the importance of acknowledging gender differences, recognizing women, focusing on understanding gender issues, and the significance of bringing women into mainstream policy-making

and decision-making processes (Thin, 1995: 25; Jahan, 1995: 13; Chen, 1995: 10; United Nations, 1997 cited in Rao and Kelleher, 2002: 3; Akpalu et al, 1999: 8; Gibbs, 2001: 6; Reeves and Baden, 2000: 12; True, 2003: 368; Staudt, 2003: 56; Jain, 2004: 152). The UN's definition of GM focuses on the outcome of actions, legislation, policies and programs, and the equal treatment of men and women (United Nations, 1997 cited in Rao and Kelleher, 2002: 3). The focus on outcomes of actions exposes the various technologies of government that serve to subordinate women.

Despite its laudable goals, some institutional analysts have made some significant observations. Thin (1995: 29) raised three questions related to structure, participation, power and change, when he asked, "Who is to be brought into whose mainstream? Why? And, in what ways should the mainstream be modified by this process?" He argues that it is women who are to be brought into a male-dominated mainstream, but not much attention is paid to changing the mainstream. Thin's rhetorical questions alert us (and development agencies) about the myths of the GM process, wherein government processes and practices, which include bureaucratic structures, remain unchanged, because of the rhetoric about mainstreaming gender issues.

Rao and Kelleher (2003: 144) identify the following issues regarding any attempts to mainstream gender: (1) government and other organizations who control the mainstreaming process are not enthusiastic about it; (2) organizations use the effective approach of "adding women" on and addressing only women's practical needs; (3) the GM process gets lost in existing organizational development concerns; and, (4) the GM process does not focus on women's rights, which would address women's strategic interests. In view of these obstacles, Rao and Kelleher (2002: 19) suggest that

organizations should prioritize institutional change over GM in order to address larger economic, political and social conditions that would contribute towards improving women's status through collaboration.

Implicitly, this suggestion demands concentrating on the agenda setting model, discussed below, and building unity among men and women, women and development agencies, and governments and with elite women who control the distribution of resources. The usual technique is to assign women such responsibilities, but, often, women do not behave differently from men (Crewe and Harrison, 1998). For instance, Antrobus (2004: 164) and Goetz (1997: 7) argue that some women in leadership positions conform to a male leadership model, thereby accepting the status quo. Women are dominated and conformity is imposed by institutional structures within a bureaucratic system. They thus need a different but a consolidated approach to institutions, especially when they engage with the state, which the GAD and GM approaches favour.

It should be noted that there are two strategic approaches to Gender Mainstreaming - *integration* and *agenda setting* (Elias, 1995: 224; Kabeer, 1999: 33). Rooted in the WID approach, the integrationist model is similar to the liberal approach of bringing women into the development process. It recognizes the differences between men and women, but can only achieve short-term goals rather than broad and long term institutional change. Agenda setting is strategic planning, with political implications. Similar to the integrationist approach, it recognizes gender differences, but unlike it, agenda setting aims to transform the development agenda itself, and help women to become proactive as agents of 'development'.

Elias (1995: 224) suggests that one should begin first with *integration* and move on to *agenda setting*. Kabeer (1999: 41) observes that the integrationist model is a process that aims at bringing women into the development process, which focuses on women only. Yet, Kabeer (1999) is hopeful that it can be incorporated into agenda setting to address both the manifestations of gender inequality and its causes. Unlike Elias (1995) and Kabeer (1999), Jahan (1995: 216) criticizes the use of both models because they lead to internal contradictions within organizations. She favours agenda setting over integration because the integrationist model perpetuates and/or increases women's workload, and organizations waste time on defining integration instead of setting agendas. Already, the heavy workload of women is a problem for the majority of women in the global south (Brydon, 2002: 346). It is important to recognize that the integration model is a feature of the WID approach.

Limitations of the Gender Mainstreaming Approach

Jahan (1995: 215) and Macdonald (1994: 21) note that organizations are quick to use the integrationist approach, which is less threatening to existing structures and also faster in addressing women's practical needs without indicating the right time to incorporate women's ideas through agenda setting. This is dangerous as organizations get bogged down with the integration model. Jahan (1995: 215) further contends that there is no distinction between the means and the end of GM. It is also difficult to clearly implement the goal of the GM approach, because it means different things to different development agencies and to governments. It is evident that the definitions and guidelines for GM implementation are not streamlined the same way development

prescriptions are, which safeguard the desired results of economic oriented organizations. Furthermore, agencies may not state their goals in measurable terms nor indicate targets and timetables within which to achieve them. Thus, the GM process could be endless, with no specific time frame for assessing actual results.

In examining the obstacles within the GM approach, Staudt (2003: 50-51) notes that the GM approach was adopted before it was really thought through, therefore, it lacked a comprehensive working definition. Also, women are unable to revolutionize institutions because bureaucratic procedures are resistant to change and there is no emphasis on changing them (Berger, 2007: 124). At best, project proposals that incorporate gender in GM are often designed to pass through the screening process for approval of projects and funding purposes, without being implemented (Staudt, 2003: 57; INSTRAW, 2000: 22). Zuckerman (2001: 6) terms this governing technology 'policy evaporation'. Staudt adds that the GM approach was also introduced at a time when multilateral institutions asked governments to reduce government expenditure and also downsize staff, which limits the number of qualified and adequate staff to deal with women's issues within institutions. These restrictions and others that follow, reveal the technologies of domination by these multilateral institutions and the state. Similar to the PfA, GM also has no legal backing, and the process is funded by donors. When funded, it has implications for women. Kevane (2004: 160) describes funding for women's projects as a technique of paying people to take donors' advice, but the GM implementation process is also funded by donors, which is a source of women's control. Similar to GAD, in most cases, the advocates for GM are disconnected from those

employers who occupy a central point of action within bureaucratic structures (Rao and Kelleher, 2002: 3).

Other criticisms are that GM is being talked about at a time when economic elites are forming alliances, at national, international and multilateral organizational levels, to further promote capitalism (Staudt, 2003: 51). These same elites, who favour the withdrawal of the state from the provision of services, aim to replace state support with NGOs as development agents. As a result, women attract more support from development organizations, which facilitates the proliferation of development NGOs, and so intensifies development of Western consultancy work. Baden and Goetz (1998: 20-21), for example, argue, that the GM approach has become a lucrative approach because it attracts funding, to the extent that individuals, consultants and NGO members, with no allegiance to feminist research, or who may not be familiar with feminist methods, have hopped onto the GM bandwagon. In this case study, 'lucrative' means that GM, as an approach, is funded by development agencies, particularly from the global north. Such funding may also support a wealth of NGOs, individual consultants and even governments. Thus, NGOs that purport to support women's social, economic and political rights could also have their own personal agenda for participating in women's work.

NGOs are civil society organizations that might not necessarily support efforts to improve women's status, as they still operate within the modernization approach that focuses on "traditional gender concerns" (INSTRAW, 2000). According to the INSTRAW study, even when civil society organizations, which include NGOs, support

the idea of improving women's status, in principle, this does not transform the institutional structure that would enhance the GM process. Furthermore, the majority of civil society organizations also lack qualified and an adequate number of staff members to plan a comprehensive gender strategy. Zuckerman (2003: 88) also stresses this limitation of the GM approach. In the absence of a comprehensive plan, civil society organizations tend to succumb to political pressure from government and international development agencies, as most civil society organizations are more accountable to the government or to their donor agencies than they are to women. They are, thus, more likely to respond to political pressure, as well as to seek their own self-interests rather than listen to their project participants who have little power (Marren, 1997: 240). Crewe and Harrison (1998) contend that the implementation of GM and the ideas underlying it go in the opposite direction. That means that gender policy implementation has not been effective, and could be effective through a step by step process (Zuckerman, 2003: 88). In extreme cases, governments terminate women's projects at will, therefore, Moser favours women controlled projects instead of government control in the mainstream (Moser, 1995: 212). In the global south, policies change with governments (Bydawell, 1997: 45), so Moser's view has some negative implications for women, as women may lack access to resources, if they do not engage with the state. The preferred technique for achieving this goal is for women to approach the state as a unified force.

3.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to develop a strand of theoretical framework for the study. Specifically, it focused on the theories underlying the operation of multilateral

organizations and the theoretical approaches to women and development. It first examined the role of multilateral organizations and their impact on the state and women.

Although multilateral organizations intended to coordinate the development process after World War II, they in fact limited the political and economic capacity of states, over time, through their various development policy prescriptions. Informed by the political economy of development, these prescriptions are economic growth oriented and have a negative impact on both the state and women. This negative impact has created risks through the modernization approach. Ghana has followed these prescriptions, but the impact on women's well-being was negative. The failure of development and the marginalization of women in the process led to focusing attention on women. Therefore, the chapter discussed at length the WID, WAD, GAD and GM theoretical approaches to women and development, which are intended to improve women's status. Table 3 below is a summary of the discussion of the WID, WAD, GAD and GM theoretical approaches to women and development.

While the WID and WAD, focused on women only, the GAD and GM, were more holistic feminist approaches, which focus on women, men and gender, and were intended to influence governing technologies of the state and reduce their level of risk to women. The approaches have not improved women's status as intended, but women have some faith in the approaches, they continue to work within their theoretical frameworks. The discussion on the approaches highlighted their origin, their main arguments and the theoretical underpinnings of each argument. It also identified their suggested focus and locus of change, as well as their strengths and limitations that reveal

Table 3: A Summary of the Four Approaches to Women and Development

APPROACH	WID in 1970s	WAD in Latter Half of the 1970s	GAD in 1980s	GM Evident in the 1990s
Focus	Women	Social relationship in the development processes Marginalized groups, including men Structural constraints such as patriarchy, the family and the state and class	Gender relations (women and men), patriarchy, the state, the family, women's legal rights	Women and men, the state, international economic institutions
Main Features	Integrates women into development. Restructuring development.	Addresses women's concerns, issues of patriarchy, global capitalism, race, ethnicity sex and other forms of inequality. Advocated for an alternative development that includes all people.	Analyzes the social, economic and political organization of society. Gender relations between men and women. Women's emancipation Transformation of patriarchy, capitalism, racism and other forms of inequality, women as agents of change	Integrates men's and women's issues into policy-making processes Mainstream gender concerns into all aspects of development (planning, processes, policy) Remove focus on women only
Feminist Approach	Liberal	Socialist, neo-Marxists and radical	Socialist and Marxist	Liberal and radical
Roots In	Liberal and modernization theories of development	Dependency theory	Feminist theory	Feminist theory
Major Limitations	Targets only women, but lacks historical analysis of women's marginal status. Projects do little increase women's income level, and men take over projects that have a potential to transform household income in favour of women, Increases women's workload.	Focuses on women, sex, social justice and class more than gender relations Suggests that women withdraw from men's world	Institutions are resistant to change Still focuses on women's income-generating projects (economy) The focus on gender detracts from women's issues Slow in implementation	Lacks comprehensive definition, and legal backing. Institutions in the mainstream are not being transformed Relies on external sources of funding Suggested during a period of downsizing of staff and cuts in government budgets on social amenities.

sources of women's subjectivity. Most, importantly, the discussion contributed to our understanding of how liberal and neoliberal theories that support the state and government practices continue to compete with and limit radical transformatory ones that offer women a glimmer of hope for social justice.

The WID approach, which is welfarist in nature, emerged in the 1970s in the global north. Consequently, many governments in the global south regarded it as a foreign imposition; its implementation was the responsibility of external development agencies. Although women attracted attention globally through the WID approach, as a group at risk in development, it was women centred with efforts to modernize and integrate them into the capitalist economy through small-scale projects. However, the projects lacked both funding and the capacity to raise women's level of income. The WID approach also ignored the analysis of the historical basis of women's marginal status. These limitations paved the way in the mid 1970s, for the often ignored WAD approach in the women and development literature. This approach was rooted in dependency theory, which identified the historical factors of women's marginalization. Despite its radical and broader analysis of the factors of women's marginal status, its analytical tools could not stand the test of time due to its focus on overall social justice and class rather than gender. Notwithstanding its short existence, the WAD approach generated an increased interest in research and made way for an even more holistic approach – GAD (Gender and Development).

Also rooted in feminist theory, but unlike the WAD approach, the GAD approach laid emphasis on the different sources of women's marginalization. Based on the experiences of development practitioners, the proponents of the GAD approach contested the liberal and welfarist approach to women and demanded a transformation of society with regard to patriarchy, capitalist exploitative development and the unequal distribution of resources (Snyder, 1995: 7). Instead, its proponents analyzed how the social, cultural, economic and political organization of society differentially affects women and men.

They argue that institutional transformation is difficult to achieve through relying on only external agencies and civil society structures. Gender and Development proponents focused on states as the locus of change, but women themselves should collectively and proactively engage with the state to make a positive impact on governing processes and practices that create social inequality. A major problem with the GAD approach is that government practices are resistant to change. Proponents of the GM approach extended the arguments of the proponents of the GAD approach. The GM approach focuses on addressing women's concerns within the mainstream organizations with a goal of changing their governing processes and practices, and by involving women and men in decision-making processes.

The emergence of the theoretical approaches to women reveal the beliefs of development advocates and practitioners, politicians, and feminist scholars that women's collective and constant engagement with the state would place pressure on both the state and other governing organization to fulfill their promises to women (Ray, 1986: 96; Sen and Grown, 1987; True, 2001; Antrobus, 2004). This suggestion came during a period when theoretical approaches to women identified them as active, not passive, participants in the development process. As it turned out, though, the active participation of women has been limited due to structural factors such as: divisions among women because of their commitment to different organizations; reverence for and acceptance of indigenous cultural practices regarding the perception of women's status in society; and, the lack of political will by the state or the restriction that multilateral organizations on the state. Women have formed organizations, but each group tends to seek funding either from donor agencies or from the state, or protect their own interests instead of women working

collaboratively as a group. Some of these organizations also owe allegiance to political parties rather than to women, per se (Oquaye, 2001: 60), which further fragments women's efforts and limits their goals. Capitalizing on these limitations, governments in power tactically use some of these organizations to satisfy their political ends.

Without being discouraged by unfair governing processes and practices and other structural factors such as indigenous cultural practices, some feminists have offered suggestions on how women can work collectively to engage with and have an impact on state development processes. An examination of two models for women's engagement with the state, notions of governmentality and analytics of government themes is the objective of Chapter Four that follows.

CHAPER FOUR

TECHNOLOGIES OF GOVERNANCE AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion in Chapter Three focused on the theoretical underpinnings of multilateral organizations and the birth of approaches to women and development as a set of strands of the theoretical framework of this thesis. This chapter examines the analytical framework and the remaining theoretical strands of this study. It delineates models on women's (dis)engagement with the state, and highlights the complex structure of women's access to the state. While the analytical framework focuses on women's organizations and their access to the state, the discussions on governmentality explore the nature of the state and governing technologies (Foucault, 1991). Foucault's (1991) notions of governmentality focus more on liberalism than on neoliberalism, therefore, the discussion expands to situate issues of governance within analytics of government themes. As indicated in Chapter One, the proponents of the analytics of government examine governing technologies of multilateral organizations and the state, and the nature of established relationships within neoliberal contexts.

The chapter first looks at two different models on women's engagement with the state that aim to empower women and also enhance their access to the state. Following this, it discusses the theoretical themes of governmentality and the analytics of government, highlighting the relevance of these themes to this study on the relationship between the state and women's organizations.

4.2 MODELS ON WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE STATE

Everett et al.'s Model: Women's Channels to the State

Women's collective engagement with the state takes different forms. Everett et al. (1989) and Vargas and Wieringa (1998) have partly contributed to our understanding of women's collective engagement with the state. Their contributions expose some state governing technologies, and women's reactions to them. In studies on the experiences gained from women, the state and development concerning women's forms of engagement with the state, Everett et al. (1989: 177) lean more towards the perspective that views the state as a significant force and a coercive entity. This challenges Rose and Miller's (1992: 10) argument (discussed later in this chapter) that political power is beyond the state. According to Everett et al., state elite compete in international economic and military systems and adopt practices that support the achievement of their goals to govern citizens. The authors also argue that the state plays a significant role in perpetuating gender relations, and women respond to state coercion by either engaging with it or disengaging from it. Everett et al. (1989: 186-187) indicate that women who engage with the state either want to have access to it or want to transform it. In both instances women want to address their practical and strategic needs. In order to transform the state, women demand access to resources, reproductive rights, legal equality, as well as the elimination of sexual exploitation and violence against women. These demands require either women's direct or their indirect engagement with the state.

Everett et al. (1989) also note that, in some cases, women who engage with the state participate in collective social movements to fight for their rights. The use of the collective movement implies the development of women's agency within organizations

with repressive structures (Prugl, 2003: 74). This view on developing women's agency does not mean that women now have the required power to influence state level decision-making processes or to act on their own. This is due to the fact that women's interaction with both government and multilateral organizations usually reinforces the status quo in terms of gender relations, instead of transforming the nature of women's access to material resources (Stewart, 1996: 23; Steans, 2000: 91). Access to resources and participation in state decision-making processes is to enhance women's power in the development process. However, this conception of women's access, engagement and transformation does not address the limitations of women who *disengage* with the state, but who are also interested in transforming the patriarchal state from the outside. Feminists describe this working outside the state as a radical approach (Kantola, 2006: 6-8).

Everett et al. (1989:186) point out that those women who disengage with the state use four different approaches in the process, namely: "suffer-manage, insulation, escape, and reactive collective actions."¹ These are not discrete categories, but could be combined together in women's response to the state and in women's coping mechanisms in their attempts to gain access to the state. An "escape" from the state (or what Fatton, 1989: 52, calls an "exit" from the state), "insulation" and "suffer-manage" may not totally remove the impact of the repressive state from the women's minds nor offer them the desired freedom to operate. The disengagement or exit strategy is a non-liberating

¹ In "suffer-manage", women employ strategies that will help them to cope and survive under poor conditions. While the state and multilateral institutions control the whole society, the concept of "insulation" describes situations in which women rely on family and kin groups to avoid the influence of the state. "Escape" is when women totally withdraw from the state. "Reactive collective action" is a situation in which women reject the intervention of the state in their lives through boycotts (Everett et al., 1989: 185-187).

process viewed against the background that when women decide to remove themselves from engaging with the state, they not only complain about their exclusion, but also about their powerlessness and frustration (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 25; Tsikata, 2001a: 264 – 265; Caldeira, 1998: 75). Moreover, disengagement is a form of protest, because it negatively implies that people cannot effectively influence decisions (Hirschman, 1970: 4). “Reactive collective action”, for example, is directly geared toward social change, while the other three are indirect methods of attracting state attention.

The literature on women describes the impact of state-women’s relationship as being more on women than on the state. Everett et al. (1989: 190), however, note that whether women engage with the state or not, their actions have consequences for the women-state relationship. The state can also benefit from women’s engagement, because it needs women’s assistance to transform institutions effectively as the discussion on GAD and GM reveal. Women who disengage with the state rely on non-state structures, such as their own resources and donor agencies. In Africa and elsewhere, women are constrained because the state also controls non-state structures, and brings women again under state domination to limit their autonomy (Callaway, 1986: 186; Nzomo, 1998: 234; Oquaye, 2001: 60).

Women utilizing different channels to access the state can transgress the arbitrarily determined boundaries set by the state. Those who engage with the state are either co-opted or incorporated into the state, which is an act that tends to reduce their level of autonomy (Callaway, 1986: 196; Caldeira, 1998: 75; Sikosma and Kardam, 2000: 1). Although Everett et al. (1989: 189) identify co-optation and incorporation as ways of women gaining access to the state, they also note that there is difficulty in

differentiating between the two. Based on this challenge of how to differentiate, they advise that the changes brought about by women's involvement with the state can be used as indicators of the benefits of their co-optation and incorporation. The positive impact of engagement is, thus, more important than the type of channel utilized.

Everett et al. (1989) do not explain the concepts of co-optation and incorporation. Co-optation can precede incorporation and vice versa. The difference between them is that while co-optation can lead to incorporation, incorporation may not always result in co-optation (Caldeira, 1998: 79). Using Cornwall's (1996: 96) levels of participation (Appendix H), under co-optation those in positions of power retain control, while those who are co-opted become docile, so that they do not have the required agency to act.

According to Everett et al. (1989: 177), there is value in women's engagement and disengagement with the state. These authors identify three channels that women can use to engage with and transform the state, namely: the outsider, the insider and autonomous channels. They indicate that the *outsider channel* allows women to confront the state and challenge it in order to transform it from the outside. The *insider channel* allows women to access the state, and challenge it from within by working within state institutions and structures. Therefore, women who use this channel are non-confrontational. In the *autonomous* channel, women think they are able to develop their own decentralized political economy (i. e., develop their own economy) apart from the state. This channel may be ineffective, because the state has control over distribution of resources. Even though women are able to use three different ways to access the state, they still share the similar goal of improving their status. The similarity of goals implies

that women must collaborate among themselves as the WID, WAD, GAD and GM approaches discussed in Chapter Three suggest.

The distinctions of the outsider, insider and autonomous channels imply that women who use the autonomous channel enjoy real autonomy, which is never the case. Such a decentralized model does not necessarily protect women against repressive state institutions, because of various limitations set by the state and the lack of support from other women (Nzomo, 1997: 232; Stewart, 1996: 23). Furthermore, the autonomous channels are not only based on the political economy, but also on institutional transformations to the extent that women themselves tolerate alternative voices. For example, some seemingly women's autonomous groups claim they use decentralized administrative models to avoid male-dominance and institutional bureaucracy (Stewart and Taylor, 1997: 212; Chigudu, 1997: 38-39). Yet, male dominant policy-making groups, inside and outside the state, can either allow or interfere with the women's decentralized system. When women access the state through the outsider and autonomous channels, they attract a negative response from the state (Callaway, 1986; Nzomo, 1997; Geilser, 1997). Also, through these decentralized channels women are unable to meet the requirements of hierarchically structured institutions that facilitate financial accountability set by development funding agencies, so they have to forgo donor resources (Stewart and Taylor, 1997: 212).

Everett et al. (1989: 190), however, do not explain how women utilizing any or all of these three channels should combine their efforts to transform the state. Esim (2000: 140) enhances our understanding of this gap in the literature when she observes that some women organize in the informal economic sector (i. e., outside the formal political

economy and state regulations) and develop their agency, but they do so in isolation from other organized women's groups. This isolated collective action, thus, becomes more of a challenge to some women in terms of solidarity building. Everett et al. (1989) assume that insiders (i. e., those working in government) are pro-state (i. e., either incorporated or co-opted), while the outsiders are anti-state (i. e., autonomous and conflict oriented). The perceived idea that all women who are outsiders are anti-state is based on a false premise that mars the relationship between change-oriented women's organizations and the state. This false anti-state premise can be used to justify (or attract) state violence against women, and defeats the argument that both the insider and outsider channels can have potential benefits for women (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3; Halsaa, 1998: 183). Everett et al. suggest that further exploration of the three-channel model should be done to find out how it works to enhance women's relationship with the state. This study attempts to clarify how and when women's groups in Ghana utilize specific channels to (dis)engage with the state in order to bring different categories of women's organizations together to access the state, transform it, and meet their practical and strategic needs. How these needs are being met through the various channels was investigated in this study.

Everett et al.'s (1989) model is somewhat limited in that it does not specify the complexity of women's groups and their engagement with the state, as clarified in this study. Similarly, the authors do not address the potential for cooperative cross-channel efforts to work with women in other categories. Thus, they describe women's direct relationship with the state, but fall short of examining the potential strength of integrative and interactive relationships among women's organizations and change oriented

organizations, and the potential for their collaborative efforts for a common cause. In the following discussion, this issue is addressed by Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 3), who propose a model that involves collaboration among different categories of women's organizations.

Vargas and Wieringa's Model: A Triangle of Women's Empowerment

Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 3) synthesized studies on the Caribbean, Latin America and Europe to explain three ways in which women can collectively have an impact on the state. Unlike Everett et al.'s (1989) model, which predates the Beijing Platform for Action (PfA), Vargas and Wieringa model is a post-Beijing PfA analysis that proposes a framework called the 'triangle of empowerment' intended to meet the challenge of developing women's agency, and solidarity building. This triangle of empowerment includes the collaborative effort of the feminist women's movement, feminist civil servants and feminist politicians. Despite feminist differences, according to Vargas and Wieringa (1998), this interaction among the feminist women's movement, feminist civil servants and feminist politicians establishes a triangle of actors that promotes women's presence, solidarity and a critical mass when they engage with the state. Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 4) caution that we should not imagine the alleged triangle of relationships as the usual triangle. This implies that the relationships among women's organizations may not necessarily fit into their triangular description, hence, the model might have been simply called empowerment through three categories of women's organizations. Also, the focus is only on women, but men too, could be feminists, especially within the GAD and GM approaches, as discussed in Chapter Three. This

model is nevertheless useful, because it describes “the processes and actors in the making of public policy for women” involved in political struggles (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). Such processes are of interest in analytics of government perspective.

Vargas and Wieringa’s (1998) triangle of empowerment model is more specific than Everett et al.’s (1989), channels of access model, as it identifies women’s membership in specific categories, and shows evidence of the desired collaborative efforts. As indicated above, a limitation of Everett et al.’s model is that it does not clarify how women should engage with the state to achieve their goal, therefore it overlooks the potential for women’s collaboration. Vargas and Wieringa (1998), however, suggest that it is the dynamic interaction among the three feminist groups that offers the necessary support for women, who are in different social, economic and political positions, and have different interests regarding their engagement with the state. Women’s ability to collaborate for a common goal, despite their differences and their commitment to their separate groups, is critical in this model.

According to Vargas and Wieringa (1998), the feminist movement plays a crucial role in this model by providing women with pertinent information that could help them to transform the state. One reason attributed to the success of this triangular relationship, in Vargas and Wieringa’s (1998: 5) view, is that members and groups involved in the women’s movement (i. e., the political force in the alliance) are heterogeneous. Some are against the state and others speak a language that can be understood by state bureaucrats. Yet, the various voices within the women’s movement share the common experiences of being marginalized. None of them, though, is said to support a political party in government, as is the case of the 31DWM of Ghana. Also, women constitute a

marginalized category, but their experiences differ. With the combined efforts of the feminist women's movement, feminist civil servants and feminist politicians, though, they are said to access the state via this triangle of empowerment. However, as discussed below, the success of the triangle of empowerment concept has been challenged.

The triangle of empowerment model is also useful because it underscores the importance of women's autonomy. Viewed as a strategic concept, autonomy is a means by which women can express themselves, and negotiate with people in other autonomous positions. The idea of autonomy serves as a strong mechanism in collaborative efforts. However, this concept of autonomy conflicts with that of Everett et al.'s (1989: 177) autonomous channel, which reflects a separate decentralized system, and is to some extent individualistic, not collective. Women cannot boast of such powerful politically oriented autonomous women's organizations in Africa because of state control. Vargas and Wieringa (1998) caution that autonomy is by no means individualistic or separatist, which tend to limit women's collective action and reduce solidarity building among them. They also note, however, that solidarity building is not a given, but rather it is developed over time and serves as the most effective mechanism for transforming society.

Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 3) also point out the dual position of civil society (which includes NGOs) in shaping the state and being shaped by the state. This dialectical relationship between the state and civil society cannot be avoided, but the state wields more power than civil society. While on the one hand, the state needs civil society for its legitimacy, on the other, civil society also requires the state to perform its functions effectively (Pasha and Blaney, 1998: 412). Pasha and Blaney (1998: 412) note

that civil society functions effectively under a strong state, because a soft (weak) state cannot effectively implement its policies. It is through this dialectical relationship that civil society develops the capacity for transforming the state, not being controlled by it. It is important to recognize, however, that the development of this capacity depends on the extent to which civil society organizations are self-supporting and not totally dependent upon the state (Michael, 2004; Love, 2007a: 82). Such self-supporting and independent civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, are rare. It is important to note that the dependency of women's organizations on donors and the state limits their political participation.

Other scholars have also problematized divisions among women along political party affiliations (McKenzie, 1998: 60-62; Oquaye, 2001: 60-62). Those who lead these divisions are feminist politicians themselves. According to Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 4), despite these divisions, feminist politicians are expected to represent women and assist them through decision-making processes. The relationship between women members of different political parties is often characterized by conflict among women, especially if they are not motivated to work across political party lines (McKenzie, 1998: 60). Also women politicians do not necessarily support each other based on their gender or class affiliation or feminist leanings, but their cohesion is based more on their allegiance to the political parties they support rather than their common interests as women. Thus, not all women politicians are feminists as imagined by Vargas and Wieringa (1998). Their divisions based on party affiliation, in turn, influence their voting patterns, which can limit the choices women make regarding women's representation and solidarity building across political party affiliations (Mckenzie, 1998: 60-62; Allah-

Mensah, 2007: 268-269). Consequently, Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 14) recognize the importance of women's political participation, but they caution that the mere presence of women in political space is not enough to transform society. The implication of this is that women in such insider positions do not necessarily utilize their presence to influence policies in favour of other women, to manage emerging conflicts, or to work towards common goals for women. This situation raises questions about Vargas and Wieringa's triangle of empowerment model and its ability to help feminists to transform politics and society to improve women's status. To understand the nature of women's political participation, Geile (1977: 4) for example, suggests we question whether women have the right to join in decision making and whether they hold public office. This is because of women's record of low political participation globally (International Democracy Centre, 2008).

Vargas and Wieringa (1998) acknowledge that the triangular relationship is not easy, but they understate the impact of conflict among the women's movement, feminist civil servants and feminist politicians on women's solidarity in their triangular interaction. Solidarity building among African women is at risk, because it was strong before the proliferation of NGOs within neoliberal development framework (Snyder and Tadesse, 1995: 185-190; 1997: 76-78). Instead of past successful solidarity building, conflict among African women is evident in ongoing research on African women (Win, 2004: 19; Geilser, 1997: 545). Similarly, Halsaa's (1998: 183) study on Norway that aimed to support the triangle of empowerment model acknowledges that tension and conflict do arise in interactions, but that the three sets of actors – feminist politicians,

feminist civil servants and the feminist movement - in Norway find ways to resolve them quickly in order to achieve their set goals.

Competition over resources in Norway, however, may not be as intense as in Ghana where state resources are inadequate, which means that Ghanaian women have to struggle more intensely over them. Women's NGOs may not be feminist; therefore, they might not always use their presence in government to influence politicians as assumed. This struggle could be reduced if women attract state support, and also rely on other advocacy groups (e. g., workers' unions) within the civil service, instead of relying on women's solidarity alone, as practiced in Australia (Chappell, 2002: 90). It is women within the state who can best promote this kind of advocacy work, but self-motivation of women can be in conflict.

Notwithstanding some strengths of the triangle of empowerment model, Kantola (2006: 11) observes that when women collectively engage with the state, the state does promote their civil rights, but not their social and economic rights. She bases her arguments on identified limitations such as male dominance in decision-making processes. As well, how the state perceives women as a group motivates policy-makers to think more about all women as equal, and overlook the diversity among them. Kantola's observations suggest that governments (and donors) still categorize women as a group, which discontented feminists such as Mohanty (1997: 79) are against, and proponents of the GAD approach also reject. Thus, even in countries where the triangular relationship is employed, women still occupy subordinate positions (Kantola, 2006: 11).

Critiquing the Two Models

In the Everett et al. (1989) and Vargas and Wieringa (1998) models, women engage with the state to struggle for their rights through collective social actions. Such collective efforts require women to develop their agency and power with which they can confront repressive institutions (Prugl, 2003: 74). However, Cornwall et al. (2007: 6) point to the risk in seeing women as powerful, because women cannot simply rely only on their own agency, as they are still limited by the state and multilateral organizations. This limitation makes it difficult to improve women's status (Steans, 2000: 91; Cornwall et al., 2007: 6). As indicated above, women's interaction with the state and with other organizations usually reproduces unequal gender relations instead of transforming them, revealing the overall tendency to uphold the status quo – socially, politically and economically – despite efforts to effect changes.

While men benefit more than women from unequal gender relations, Everett et al. (1989) and Vargas and Wieringa (1998) ignore the marked influence of policy prescriptions of multilateral organizations on gender relationships. Neither model highlights the challenge of the coexistence of rights of both the state and women nor how this coexistence perpetuates women's dependency on state organizations and institutions as women fight for these rights. On the one hand, both the state and women's governmental organizations depend upon the development assistance and funding of multilateral organizations to function; on the other hand, the state restricts NGOs, while decisions of multilateral organizations affect the state. Both the state and NGOs are, however, expected to deliver on their mandates within the framework of development prescriptions that multilateral organizations offer. The nature of the relationship between

the state and multilateral organizations, thus, also plays a significant role in women's engagement with the state and limits the triangle of feminist actors, as will be demonstrated in Chapter Five.

Multilateral organizations, which have largely influenced policies on world development since the 1940s, rely on the scientific and rational knowledge of Western development experts, as discussed in Chapter Three. The application of this scientific and rational knowledge can actually create some risks for society as well as benefits as highlighted in Chapter One. For example, an outcome of modernization processes is the diminished status of some men and the majority of women, but it also opened up some opportunities for women. It could be argued that for over three decades, the UN accepted responsibility for women to correct the negative impact of development on women. Instead of devising a new strategy for dealing with women's development, the UN adopted the same approach of mainstream development experts by relying on the scientific and rational knowledge produced by Western experts and applied this to reducing development risks for southern women (Parpart, 1995: 221). The theories on women by development experts have more limitations than strengths, but their significance is that they move both powerful and less powerful development actors in the same direction (Dolphyne, 1991; Parpart, 1995: 221; Win, 2004). It is, therefore, instructive to explain the purpose these theories serve in efforts to improve women's status when they have not been effective in transforming the hierarchical social structure. Examining women's experiences within Foucault's (1991) notions of governmentality and analytics of government perspective, is useful in that these expose the controlling of subjects of the state, including women, through governing technologies (Lemke, 2003;

2007), and reveal weaknesses and assumptions built into the models for women's empowerment and access to the state (Everett et al, 1989; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998). As a result of the weaknesses of the models, and the wrong assumptions that underlie these models, women are unable to collaborate effectively in attempts to weaken the governing techniques of state as explained within governmentality and analytics of government framework discussed below.

4.3 NOTION OF GOVERNMENTALITY THEMES

Bowman and Patrick (2003: 113) note that governmentality and analytics of government concepts mean the same thing. Notwithstanding, the two concepts are treated differently in this discussion, because, despite their similarities, they also have some differences (Dean, 1999). Foucault (1991: 87) popularized the concept of governmentality in the 1970s to explain the genealogy of the modern state and its administrative practices in its attempts to maintain social order. Focusing on 19th century history and the nature of government, Foucault (1991) used the concept of governmentality to establish the link between the constitution and reproduction of the state, on the one hand, and the suppression of autonomous citizens on the other hand. The suppressed citizens then look up to the state for assistance. The state accomplishes its goal of suppressing citizens first by attracting their attention as the provider of their needs for existence, and then rationalizing its practices of domination through a network of institutions created based on science and rationality.

In Foucault's (1991: 100) view, the sovereign state disciplines individual citizens through the government to maintain order. Foucault (1991: 90), however, identifies the

sources of domination as war and struggle not through consensus. Overlooking the role of consensus is problematic, because sociological analyses focus more on order through consensus than on conflict (Wallace and Wolf, 2006: 16). Although one can argue that war once served as a tool of domination in agrarian societies in Europe during the formation of the state (Palmer, and Colton, 1971: 462; Blumberg, 1978: 43), in the modern era, war is not a preferred form of domination. Equally important to highlight here is that disciplinary measures of governments are gendered. Studies reveal that the gendering process emerges because regulations of governments and multilateral organizations in the development process tend to have unintended negative effects on women more than on men, in both liberal and neoliberal approaches to governance (Boserup, 1970; Blumberg, 1978; Sparr, 1994c; Beneria, 2003). Through this process, according to these authors, women are marginalized, oppressed and dominated. Women, though, still look up to the state for the satisfaction of their needs because they lack other alternatives. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, governmentality facilitates the understanding of hierarchical relationships characteristic of liberal and neoliberal approaches to development (McLaren, 2002: 6; Lemke, n.d).

Notions of governmentality reveal how hierarchical power relations are established in both political and economic spheres (Sauer-Thompson, 2004: 1), which the state controls. This understanding is possible because governmentality attempts to understand the different mentalities of government, the ideas and the history that underlie these mentalities (Dean, 1999: 16). Mentalities can only be understood from a system of thought, according to Dean (1999: 16), because a form of thought cannot be understood from its own perspective. This suggests a functionalist approach, which looks at the

whole of the social system instead of the parts constituting it (Wallace and Wolf, 2006: 17).

In terms of women's emancipatory projects, Western feminist reactions to Foucault's governmentality are mixed. There are feminists who acknowledge the benefits of Foucault's conception of power and subjectivity through history and the development of techniques and practices of domination and subjectivity (Ramazanoglu, 1993: 3; McLaren, 2002: 2). Others challenge Foucault's notion of governmentality, which sets limits to women's emancipation by rejecting the existence of norms, and the ideas that truth and knowledge are constantly produced, thereby undermining the development of women's agency and resistance by the female subject (Ramazanoglu, 1993: 4-7; McLaren, 2002: 2). According to these authors, the notion of governmentality depoliticizes women's agenda for change. This fear of depoliticization of women's agenda is due to Foucault's conceptualization of power as diffused in society, and blurs the differences between the dominator and dominated, and deflates feminist arguments on the nature of unequal relationships (Ramazanoglu, 1993: 4-8; McLaren, 2002: 1-3). This is a post-structural feminist approach (Kantola, 2006: 12-13), which conceptualizes the state as incoherent with different forms of power relations, and differences among women's experiences, but lacks focus on institutions, policies and the challenges in changing the status quo. Both sides of the feminist argument are relevant to this study, because on the one hand, notions of governmentality help us to understand the emergence of the modern state, the nature of discourses of power, the creation of the subject, and

how power continues to limit the development of the subject's agency.² On the other hand, this understanding suggests that women also have power, and are able to exercise it without any constraints. In this study, the expansion of governmentality themes by proponents of the analytics of government (Lemke, 2003; 2007) is useful helping us to understand the nature of the relationship between women's organizations, government, the state and multilateral organizations, and when and how women, as subjects, are both limited and free to act. This expansion is useful in identifying the various processes involved in women's engagement with the state, multilateral organizations, and exploring how women's organizations function in the process.

Analytics of Government

Some scholars (Rose, 1996: 37; Rose and Miller, 1992: 173; Lemke, 2003; 2007) critique and expand on the theory of governmentality under the theoretical theme of the 'analytics of government', which focuses more on neoliberal governing processes. A significant contention within analytics of government framework is that the state is not real and that political power, which underlies all neoliberal interactions, is beyond the state (Miller and Rose, 1992: 172). The authors suggest that sociologists focus more on multilateral organizations in analysing governments than on nation states. Their view contrasts with the usual feminist perception of the state as powerful. Curtis (1995: 575) challenges this view of looking outside the state, because the state still wields political power in neoliberal interactions. Both arguments are valid. States, particularly those in the global south, have some control over their citizens, but are also limited in their

² There are staunch and moderate feminist critics of Foucault. While staunch feminists use Foucault's work with serious reservations, moderate feminists use it with minor concerns (McLaren, 2002: 14).

decision-making processes, and their organizational structures keep changing according to the demands made on them by multilateral organizations, and how they take into account the dominant political economy of development. Therefore, one can better understand the emergence of governing technologies and its processes, how they exist and change, and how the parts constituting government are assembled to achieve the goals of government (Dean, 1999: 20)

In a recent contribution to the debate on governmentality and the analytics of government, Lemke (2003; 2007) draws on specific analytical themes to explain the neoliberal approaches to political and economic governance. Lemke further shows how one can identify a space for intervention in the process in order to end the impact of government practices (e.g., citizens' unequal participation in decision-making processes; discriminatory exclusion of women in decision-making), and open up space for an observer of government practices to offer ideas on the constitution and reproduction of the state. He adds that as proponents identify the political practices of the state and self, they view the state as both an instrument and effect that defines not only public (men's space) and private (women's space) spheres, but also the relationship between the state and civil society. As well, the analytics of government perspective focuses on the internal structure of the political institutions and state apparatuses. It is instructive, at this stage, to highlight some of the similarities and differences between Foucault and Lemke before outlining further arguments of various other proponents of the analytics of government.

Theorists of the analytics of government go beyond the state to incorporate multilateral organizations, analyzing the relations of power. Like Foucault, the

proponents agree that power is unstable, mobile and flexible in social interactions and networks (Lemke, 2007: 12-13). As indicated above, this concept of power baffles both feminist critics and sympathizers of Foucault, because of the conception of the state as incoherent (McLaren, 2002: 4-5; Ramazanoglu, 1993: 4-6). Viewed against the role played by multilateral organizations in neoliberalism, discussed in Chapter Three, these organizations are important in the analysis of power relations within the state and beyond.

It is instructive at this stage to make distinctions between the state and government. The state is a geopolitical institution that governs over a well defined territory, and has the ability to generate and apply force (Johnson, 1995: 275). Its other functions include maintenance of law and order, resolution of conflicts, and protection of the welfare of its citizens and those who reside within its territorial jurisdiction (Charlton et al., 1989: 3). An important feature of the state is that it endures and is difficult to change, because other social institutions, policies and state officials work together to protect the state against both internal and external challenges, which pose as a threat to its existence and stability (Charlton et al., 1989: 6). A government is a collection of people who occupy positions of authority at a given time within the state (Johnson, 1995: 275). It projects the interests and values of the state through the administrative functions it performs on behalf of the state. While the state endures, governments are transitory, because they come and go as depicted in the discussion of different governments in post-independent Ghana since 1957 in Chapter Five. Significantly, government functions consist of a set of calculated actions by those in power to support the state, which derives from certain forms of reasoning assumed to be rational, neutral and scientific (Lemke,

2003: 7).³ This kind of reasoning with regards to the functions of government emerged from the Enlightenment, which has as its goal liberating human beings from all forms of domination (Parpart, 1995: 222; Turner et al, 2007: 1-6). Such calculated actions regulate the power of others, direct and guide them in ways to enhance individual self-discipline (Dean, 1999: 10). The assumed rational actions of government are executed through different government practices that are based on the aspirations, interests and beliefs of the governed (i. e., subjects). Some of these interests result, for example, in the imposition of policies on women to achieve a set goal of the state, and also to dominate women through calculated actions and knowledge construction. Due to the transitory nature of government, calculated actions differ from government to government. The approaches to women's development serve this purpose (Goetz, 1988: 477; Parpart, 1995: 222; Mohanty, 1997: 79). Lemke (2003: 8) points out that rationality is based on historical processes and practices instead of reason. Rist (2002: 13) shares similar views, but also points out that the irrational reasoning in development practices over time, results in the domination of the less powerful and reproduces the status quo in society. It is not surprising that women's low status is reproduced despite implementing and/or relying on the suggested approaches to women and development (Goetz, 1988; Rathgeber, 1990; Parpart, 1995; Tinker, 2004a).

³ It is the government in power, which makes decisions and administers the state. However, this study follows feminist literature on women and the state, which lays emphasis on the relationship between the state and women, rather than between the government and women. Feminists view the state in a broader term as an embodiment of government (Afshar, Haleh, 1987; Charlton et al., 1989; Parpart and Staudt, 1989; Rai, Shirin. M. and Lievesley, G., 1999; Kantola, 2006). More importantly, this study examines the relationship between the state (rather than government) and women's organizations, because the state outlasts governments.

Lemke (2003: 3-4) agrees with Foucault (1991: 96-97) that, when the government is used as an instrument of power, it induces docility in autonomous individual citizens through discipline, to the extent that these citizens are able to exercise self-control in the process of domination. What is crucial to recognize, according to Lemke, is that these relations of power and state domination are tied together by government practices, and not the functions of the state (i.e., protection of citizens), as postulated by Foucault (1991: 97). Lemke implies that the state is capable of changing its practices, which produce its effect of domination, and perform its functions better. Such changes, however, continue to serve the interests of the state, but not necessarily its women subjects. While Foucault (1991: 100) identifies functions, institutions and government technologies as sources of state control, which mould a disciplined individual, Lemke (2007: 17) argues that it is the processes through which practices, strategies and technologies occur that facilitate the government's regulation of individual citizens. As depicted throughout the discussion on multilateral organizations and approaches to women in Chapter Three, increasingly, and although difficult, both the dominator (the state and multilateral organizations) and dominated (the citizens) agree on focusing on processes and practices to bring about change. Foucault (1991: 97) views state coercion as a source of power, but Lemke (2003: 3) argues that both consensus and coercion are instruments of power, not the source of power. In governmentality and the analytics of government literature, both the government and the autonomous individual play conflicting and complementary roles in suppressing individual citizens.

The complementary roles that the government and individuals play in creating docile individual citizens justifies why individuals can develop and exercise their agency

to regain their autonomy (Dean, 1999: 12). It is the possibility of gaining such autonomy, which is of interest to the feminist agenda that aims to limit women's control by the state and by men (IEP, 2008: 12-14). Feminists, however, fail to recognize they lack the 'real' consciousness to act autonomously, and include in their agenda how to free women from being dominated and *irrationally* led by development experts. African gender scholars have identified the limitation of feminist knowledge produced in the north, which serves as a source of women's domination (Manuh, 2007: 125). As indicated above, although Foucault identifies the sources of domination as war and struggle, but not law and consensus, Lemke (2003: 3) argues consensus also exists through war and struggle, and that it is through consensus that governments regulate the conduct of individual citizens. Ironically, while it is the lack of consensus among categories of women's organization that limits their struggles, consensus between the state and some women promotes the domination of other women (Tsikata, 2000: 18).

Lemke (2003: 5) discusses the theory of governmentality by identifying Foucault's three sources of power. These are conceptualized as strategic games of liberties, government and domination. Strategic games of liberties are practices that are integral to interactions between the government and individuals, and take several forms (e.g., ideological manipulation, rational argument, moral advice, and economic exploitation). Through strategic games of liberties people are convinced of their freedom while under domination of the powerful. Strategic games of liberties can have a positive or negative impact, and are important to recognize because they describe the mechanisms through which the liberties and options of individual citizens are limited.

Notwithstanding, the arguments on strategic games of liberties and manipulation of

liberties fail to point out that the liberties of groups and individuals can be arbitrarily removed by the state (through governments) and beyond the state (through multilateral organizations) as pointed out by Rose and Miller (1999) above. This discriminatory process results in differential privileges enjoyed by groups or individuals based on government calculations. In the approaches to women discussed in Chapter Three, the state removes women's liberties before men's, and women who do not affiliate with the state are those that have their liberties removed.

It is important to point out that historical practices of domination vary from government to government, but the ultimate goal is to develop a disciplined individual capable of exercising self-control. Consequently, according to Lemke (2003: 6), one of the functions of government is that it brings together strategic games of liberties and domination. It is this bringing together of strategic games of liberties and domination, which serves as a key institution in governance. Domination is characterized by a difficult to reverse unequal and hierarchical social and power relationship. The difficulty in changing unequal relationships is due to government restrictions on the liberties of marginalized and less powerful groups, and particularly those who might challenge its practices. In Lemke's (2003: 7) view, government practices are the source of power, not state domination.

Informed by neoliberal economic development, the analytics of government are more specific than Foucault (1991) on the construction of knowledge through certain practices and strategies of both governments and multilateral organizations. It is this constructed knowledge that is used in governing women. Using governing processes as a unit of analysis, the analytics of government rejects Foucault's (1991) functions,

practices of government and 'institutions' as state sources suppressing the individual. Yet, following Foucault (1991), Lemke (2003: 2) reiterates the importance of historical and systematic knowledge construction in the formation of the state. As pointed out above, the emergence of science and scientific reasoning facilitates the construction of the modern state, therefore, constructed knowledge is regarded as neutral, systematic and rational (Lemke, 2007: 7). Lemke goes on to argue that accepted scientific reasoning consists of people's narratives and world-views, which are constantly subjected to negotiation. The implication is that other subjects can justify the inclusion of their narratives in discursive practices while also rejecting subjects' narratives that do not fit. Lemke (2007: 8) further indicates that ideas resulting from these negotiations help in the constitution and reproduction of the state; therefore what is deemed political rationality is the governed reality (i. e., outcome of political techniques of governance). He concludes that the state and policy-making processes cannot be separated. Yet, the state separates itself from policy-making in order to justify the neutrality of government policies. It could be argued that, the negotiations serve the interests of the state, which is the political reality. Therefore, political reality is the same as the governed reality, and rarely changes to promote the interest of the dominated.

Lemke (2003: 6; 2007: 4) identifies multilateral organizations as significant, because these organizations serve as world or non-state institutions that govern and exploit hitherto relatively sovereign states and their individual citizens through development policy prescriptions. Lemke (2007: 12) focuses on governance, the new buzzword that connotes participation and taking responsibility for actions in neoliberal processes (Cornwall and Brock, 2005: 1). Through diverse and distinct practices the

government facilitates processes of individualism and institutionalization. Individualism of the West is one of the differences between feminists in the global north and the global south as highlighted in Chapter Three. Investigations into the diversity and distinctiveness of the various processes of governance reveal the dynamic relationship between the dominators and the dominated, and help to link up micro and macro forces of state domination and exploitation. For instance, it was noted in Chapter Three that multilateral organizations, through various prescriptive economic programs, have restricted state governance in social service sectors such as education and health. Yet, improved educational and health status are two of the life options that promote gender equality (Giele, 1977: 4)

Proponents of the analytics of government also conceptualize “the state as an effect and instrument of political strategies and social relations of power” (Lemke, 2007: 10). Lemke argues that the state emerged as a complex institution through conflicting and contradictory practices of the government (through certain processes), and that state practices are not determined by existing “political theories or abstract ideologies.” Through certain processes, the government selectively uses technologies that facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the state and controls all forms of power relations. This is a manifestation of strategic games of liberty. ‘Consent’, ‘contract’ and ‘compromise’, according to Lemke (2007: 10), are the responses of citizens to the state, because state actions demand compliance of citizens and not vice versa.

For this reason, Lemke (2007: 10) adds that the results of actions of all states are not the same, because different types of states are suitable for the achievement of different political and economic roles. Whether states are different or not, their

governing processes create and/or support unequal relationships. Indeed, the dynamic and mobile interaction between state structures and the strategies that the state adopts determines the impact of the state on women, and among different women's organizations (Nzomo, 1997: 238; Oquaye, 2001: 53-63; Kantola, 2006: 3). The implication is that the state has control over change processes more than citizens as agents of change. This view contrasts with Cornwall's (1996) model on participation, which gradually creates space for participants in development to assume responsibility for the process (see Appendix K).

Neoliberalism, Civil Society and Governing Technologies

Lemke (2003, 2007) applies the processes of constituting and reproducing the state to explain unequal power relations (i. e., relationships established through governance). He justifies the application of governmentality to our understanding of new mechanisms for exploitation and domination that emerged in neoliberalism. According to Lemke (n.d: 9), governance in neoliberalism promotes self- regulation, forces citizens to bear responsibility for social well-being through associations, the collectivity and families, which are all created within the state. Neoliberalism also exposes the political dimension of privatization and deregulation as having more of a political agenda than an economic one. There develops new mechanisms of exercising power to link up both micro and macro political and economic spheres. This link is instrumental in the understanding of further suppression and domination of women (Clark, 1991: 217; Elson, 1991a: 1; Manuh, 1994: 61, Beneria, 2003: 2). The link also promotes access to precarious jobs, and excludes them from decision-making processes (Lim, 1997: 216).

Lemke (2007: 6) states three criticisms against neoliberal economic organization. All of the criticisms refer to factors that influence women's relationship with the state, and also promote citizen responsibilities through associations (e. g., women's organizations). The first is 'manipulative wrong knowledge' of economic organization, which is treated as scientific and neutral, expands the sphere of control and regulation through economic processes. In the processes of regulation and control, neoliberals link political and economic institutions together, but they claim that their "development" policy prescriptions treat these institutions separately. Lemke (2003: 9) acknowledges that some of the political and economic processes and constructed knowledge have intended consequences, but their unintended consequences also become institutionalized into practice. The institutionalization of the unintended consequences is not surprising since according to Parpart (1995: 226), the unintended consequences are the main characteristic of development practice. To illustrate, as discussed in Chapter Three, when the WID approach was used in Ghana, some men resisted the fact that women's economic opportunities were being enhanced.

Granting the validity of the argument on unintended consequences of development approaches, as discussed in Chapter Three, the state also reflects on its actions (Foucault, 1991: 102). It means that the state can identify this impact and reverse it if it wants. Instead, the state problematizes its activities through its response to failed projects to suit only its political agenda (Miller and Rose, 1992: 10). Escobar (1995) also identifies problematization poverty as one of the governing technologies of multilateral

organizations.⁴ Problematization further facilitates the creation of more risks by these organizations, which they focus on reducing, through identification and introduction of development projects that support the agendas of development experts (Hoogvelt, 1978; McMichael, 2004). But, the difficulty in making changes to policies is because those who are against these practices, for example, NGOs, are already part of the process, which supports Foucault's argument on the state's creation of docile subjects.

Neoliberals assume that the separation of economic and political institutions implies the retreat of the state and an end to politics. Yet, neoliberalism is one strategy that governments use to enact laws to govern citizens (Lemke, 2003: 6). These governing bodies include nation-states and multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and their practices constitute and reproduce the neoliberal state. While the state controls its citizens through laws, neoliberals, multilateral organizations in particular, focus on making the individual responsible for their failed rational actions and decisions. Lemke (2003: 6) therefore, contends that neoliberalism is a process through which capitalist organizations take over the functions of the state, and this process is characterized by anti-human policy prescriptions and enhanced individualism, which have an impact on existing collective bonds, and family values. The breakdown of such values perpetuates a male biased, gender socialization (Eitzen and Zinn, 2006: 178). The breakdown of family values also leads to the creation of institutional gaps to which both states and multilateral organizations are unable to promptly respond (Love, 2007c: 304)

During the process of the breakdown of social values, citizens strive to be responsible, moral and economic-rational individuals (Lemke, 2003: 12). To reverse the

⁴ Poverty is a significant risk element in women and development debates

impact of policies on sovereign states, neoliberals also encourage the participation of individuals and groups in governance processes, but government practices still control and limit the inclusion and participation of individuals and civil society organizations. Structural Adjustment Policies and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers of multilateral organizations discussed in Chapter Three are examples of the superficial inclusion of governments in global decision-making processes (McMichael, 2004: 227). Civil society organizations have also become the favourite development agents of multilateral organizations, and are mandated by these organizations to bring about change in the development process (Rooy, 2002: 489). Although some see civil society as a separate political sphere (Diamond, 1999: 221), Lemke (2007: 12) argues that the private sector, where civil society belongs, is not separate from the state, because the state has the power to define and regulate the private sphere. Indeed, the limits and the survival of the private sector are determined by the state (Lemke, 2003: 11). In Lemke's (n.d., 9) observation, "the differences between the state and civil society, national regulation and transnational agencies do not represent the basis and limits of practices of government, but rather functions as their elements and effects." Based on these views on the state, proponents of the analytics of government, such as Dean (1999) and Lemke (2007) suggest that one focuses on the processes of the constitution of the state instead of accepting the autonomous existence and idealist accounts of the state. Such an analytical focus can help to explain the relationships among women's organizations, multilateral organizations and the state, because it reveals a range of government processes and practices and their impact on citizens. When and how government limits or frees

women's organizations to engage in political and economic processes of governance are examined in this thesis.

4.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to develop the analytical framework and second, the theoretical strands for this study. The chapter examined two models of women's engagement with the state, as well as Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality and Lemke's (2007) and Dean's (1999) analytics of government. Each model on women's engagement with the state provides three channels for women to collectively engage with the state and make an impact on it. Everett et al. (1989) suggested insider, outsider and autonomous channels through which women could gain access to the state, and Vargas and Wieringa (1998) offered a triangle of empowerment that brings three different sets of actors (feminist civil servants, feminist politicians and feminist women's movements) together. Both models offer insights into our understanding of how women might gain access to the state and its practices and processes of governance.

While Vargas and Wieringa's (1998) model indicates an interactive relationship among the different actors, Everett et al.'s does not. Most importantly, women's groups in both models are not discrete, but are overlapping, which reduces the intended impact women can collectively make on the state. This research further explores the strengths and weaknesses of these models by using them as the analytical framework for data analysis, with the goal to identify their potential influence on government control practices that will help support a shift from WID to GM. The failure of development theory and practice, the dominance of multilateral organizations, and Ghana's

experiences in the development process can all be explained within notions of governmentality. Similarly, governmentality helps us to understand the inability of the approaches to women and the complexity of employing models of women's engagement.

Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality and Lemke's analytics of government constitute overarching theoretical themes that help to explain the state, its governing technologies, and the social relationships that are characteristic of neoliberal socio-economic organization. Focusing on the emergence of the state and unequal social relationships from the 18th century, governmentality explains the links between the state and the government and the practice of domination (Foucault, 1991: 98-99). Through specific techniques and various processes of government, the state is able to discipline and create docile individuals, whom it then dominates. Whether deliberate or not, the governing processes become the standard and "resistant to change" administrative practices.

Governmentality has a mixed theoretical influence on feminists that pulls them in different directions. However, both the critics and sympathizers of governmentality themes have much to offer in social change processes to support the diverse interests of feminists (McLaren, 2002: 5). While governmentality explains the processes involved in the emergence of the state, and how the state functions through government and its practices to dominate citizens, the analytics of government share these views, but go further to identify how multinational organizations manipulate both the state and its citizens, yet demand responsibility of citizens for example, through the formation of civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations to change society (Lemke, 2003: 12; 2007: 3-4). Applying these themes to women's relationships with the state, the

chapter also examined the technologies of governing by multilateral organizations, and the impact on women's status. It continued with an analysis of their governance through development prescriptions of multilateral organizations for Ghana, and the socio-economic consequences of these prescriptions for the country's development, and highlights the impact on women's status. Having developed the theoretical and analytical framework for this thesis, Chapter Five examines the efforts of multilateral organizations, women's organizations, and the state, and the processes and practices of the state (through the government) to improve women's status in Ghana.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES IN GHANA'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF WOMEN

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Ghana, women have not achieved the same social, economic and political status as men have (Government of Ghana, 2002: 4). Therefore, men, as a category, occupy a higher social status than women. This is due to various factors including the differential socialization of males and females, indigenous cultural perceptions of women, and the differential impact of colonialism on men and women. However, it is also important to recognize that such gender disparities are reinforced by multilateral organizations (e. g., the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations) promoting liberal and neoliberal policy prescriptions, and through the ineffectiveness of the Ghanaian state to support its citizens, as highlighted in Chapters Three and Four. This gender inequality results in women's and men's differential access to political participation, formal education and salaried employment opportunities, the lack of which disadvantages women, and puts them at risk socially, politically and economically. Multilateral organizations, the Ghanaian state and women's organizations have acknowledged the impact of these risks and women's ongoing marginalized status, and have shown some interest in addressing these problems. The efforts made by the state and women, and the influences of multilateral organizations constitute the discussion in this chapter.

The chapter begins with a discussion of national and international agendas that, ostensibly, aim at improving Ghanaian women's status. It continues with an analysis of the various opportunities for women's organizations to improve women's status, and the impact of changing political regimes and their policies on the efforts of women's organizations. Following these, the chapter provides an overview of the relationship between the Ghanaian state and women, and the vision and promises of Ghanaian women's organizations to improve women's status since the 1980s. The chapter further identifies the differences among women's organizations and the mechanisms through which some actors are excluded from or included in the process of improving women's status in Ghana. The chapter ends with a discussion of the plan of action, resource allocation to women and also identifies the challenges that persist. Overall, the discussion in the chapter reveals the constraints of women's organizations, which force them to conduct themselves and operate within the framework of governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations.

5.2 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S AGENDA

Since Ghana's independence in 1957, efforts have been made to address concerns about women's marginal status through women's collective action (Tsikata, 1989: 73). This has been stressed even more since 1975, which served as the official international turning point with regard to the concerns about global status of women (NCWD, 1994: 1; Mensah-Kutin, 2000: 1). This point was reached through women's activism and research, which exposed male-biased and gender blind development efforts and their impact on the status of women (Tinker, 2004a: xiii-xxi). Gender blind development refers to the

condition in which development policies do not take into account how the impact of development differs for men and women. This exposure initially influenced the United Nations (UN) and, later, national governments to recognize the failure of gender blind development planning to help women in their overall development practice and processes. The recognition of this gender blindness gained prominence on the international stage in the 1970s, which then prompted calls for change and culminated in the UN's first conference on women and development in 1975 (Tinker, 2004a: xxii; Jain, 2005: 65).

The UN initiated a plan of action in 1975 to improve women's status. Through this process, the UN is better able to direct state's response to women, and also how the state governs women. Similar to states, the UN uses strategic games of liberties, which make women feel they have freedom and autonomy to act while being constrained to act in specified ways (Foucault, 1991). As discussed in Chapter Three, the UN and states promote specific approaches to women, which have not been effective, despite the widespread acceptance of their theoretical underpinnings in development circles. The UN governing processes were spearheaded by Western feminist consultants despite the cultural, political and economic differences between Western and non-Western women. These consultants use their feminist/gender knowledge and expertise in prescribing a particular and universal form of action for women, especially those in the global south (Parpart, 1995:221; Mohanty, 1997: 79; Goetz, 1988: 477). As indicated in Chapter One, by relying on Western feminist theories, the development focus of Western consultants does not necessarily address the realities of women in Ghana (Manuh, 2007: 125; Tsikata, 2001a: 265). Ghanaian gender scholars, such as Manuh (2007: 125) and Tsikata

(2001a: 265) have pointed out how such Western ideas do not reflect African women's experiences, therefore do not fit with women's and gender concerns within the Ghanaian context.

Drawing on lessons learned from world conferences on women, there are disparities in the international perspectives on women's rights, and the situation of women in the global south, including Ghana. Women in the global north focus on women's issues and are individualistic in their analysis; those in the global south are more community and family-oriented and focus more on the negative impact of exploitative international economic organization, colonialism, racism and poverty on women (Tinker, 1997:34; Stewart, 1996: 23; Ryan, 2009: 305). According to women in the global south, these factors are at the root of feminization of poverty and gender-blind development planning. This feminization of poverty puts women in the global south at risk, because liberal and neoliberal governance links up capitalist markets with the community and the family through women's unpaid domestic work (Beneria and Sen, 1997:48).

To return to the discussion on UN governance through prescriptions to women, the initial domination of women through the UN was the establishment of a governmental organization (i. e., the 'national machinery for women' or 'the women's arm of the state'), which was responsible for women's development and policy issues concerning women (Government of Ghana, 1975; Tsikata, 2000: 5). The significance of a women's arm of the state, however, remains a contested issue, as it has not demonstrated its effectiveness through the improvement of women's social, political and economic status. In fact, as revealed in this study and elsewhere (Tsikata, 2000: 42; Mama, 2000b: 23,

Dawuni, 2009: 1), the state interferes with the activities of women's organizations through this machinery. Thus, following Foucault (1991) and Lemke (2007), the national machinery for women constitutes one technology of governance that brings the power of women's organizations into a contained and controlled space of the state. Besides this state-level machinery, the global conferences held for women serve as a platform for disciplining women and states through the adoption and ratification of a universal declaration of women and states, which directs women's political energy along the lines of the UN priorities and the state. Due to this disciplining of women through the UN and the state, women's revolutionary potential and their efforts at institutional transformation are deflected elsewhere and/or thwarted.

At the fourth women's conference held in Beijing, China in 1995, the UN again responded to this constraint, by mandating that women's non-governmental organizations play a more active role in order to complement the efforts of the women's organizations within the state (UN, 1995; Tinker, 1997: 33). Yet, organizational and institutional structures have not changed to facilitate the operation of women's organizations (Thin, 1995: 26). The suggested role of women's non-governmental organizations falls within neoliberal plan of making already economically disadvantaged groups responsible for reducing the risks that neoliberalism has helped to create through the development process (Lupton, 1999: 100). The focus on reducing risk is the technology used by powerful actors to ensure the welfare of citizens, increase productivity and accumulation of wealth (Lupton, 1999: 85). In the case of women, the main risks that development experts focus on are women's marginalization and the feminization of poverty. The Ghanaian state and its bureaucrats have not effectively addressed anti-state reactions and

other demands from women. Furthermore, the formation of women's organizations can be viewed as a technology of governance, because women's power to act is brought into this same contained and controlled space of the state by asking women's organizations to play an active role in post-Beijing efforts to improve their status.

The impact of this collaborative effort to promote women's status within a controlled space not only varies among women within the same country, but it also varies from one country to another. This variation is due, in part, to location, history, and access to resources (Kantola, 2006: 3; Chappell, 2002: 85). Generally, in Africa, instead of powerful women's organizations focusing on broader views related to promoting women's status and gender issues, such groups are forced to channel their political energy into areas determined by the state or in state-interested directions (Win, 2004; Hutchful, 2002; Mama, 2000; Nzomo, 1998; Geisler, 1997). Usually, the state supports women's organizations that are affiliated with it. For this reason, the expected gains of implementing this initial state-centered action formulated by the UN (1975), and subsequent gains expected from women's non-governmental organizations (WNGOs) becoming more involved, have not been forthcoming. The impact of WNGOs continues to be limited by partisan politics, and global and national development policies. The governing practices, gender blind development approach and the theoretical perspectives on redressing these limitations were discussed in Chapters Three and Four. What is contradictory in assigning women's organizations the responsibility for women is that, instead of the state planning for its citizens, it is the citizens who are forced to make demands on the state to deliver its mandate to them. State bureaucrats do not adequately support women in this process, because, according to them, there are very few resources

that can be extended to women alone (Brydon and Legge, 1996: 129). This excuse of bureaucrats is no different from how some developed states, which follow a similar system of government as Ghana, treat women (Chappell, 2002: 85). This study, thus, focuses on the varied impact of how various actors operate in their efforts to improve women's status according to UN initiated plans in 1975, and revised plans in 1980, 1985 and 1995, as if women's development concerns really mattered (Tinker, 2004: xxi; Jain, 2005: 103). The following section focuses on Ghanaian women's interaction with the state.

5. 3 WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S STATUS IN GHANA

This study examines how the varied relationships between Ghanaian women's organizations and the Ghanaian state affect women's efforts to improve their status. These organizations were established in order to promote women's social, political and economic participation. Before discussing the selected women's organizations, it should be noted that despite the increased interest of the state and organizations concerned with women's social, economic and political status, Ghana has no definitive "gender policy" (The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 64). Arguably, this lack of policy is a means of controlling and constraining genuine gender advocates in both civil society and in governmental organizations. In order to achieve the objective of the study, three types of women's organizations that purport to address Ghanaian women's concerns and improve women's status were examined for their experiences. The

organizations are listed below with a brief introduction to each and placed in the context of Ghana's political regimes.¹

The three categories of organizations are:

- (1) Women's Governmental Organizations (WGOs): a) the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD); and, b) the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC);
- (2) Women's Non-Governmental Organization (WNGO): the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT); and
- (3) Women's Quasi Non-Governmental Organization (WQUANGO): the 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM).

Women's Governmental Organizations (WGOs) refer to the arms of the state that address women's issues while those in the second and third categories are considered to be civil society organizations. The establishment of these various organizations was motivated by the United Nations' interest in women, and its concern to enhance efforts to improve women's status globally at different but progressive stages (Tinker, 2004a: xxii). Ghana responded to this interest in women by establishing the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) in 1975 (Government of Ghana, 1975). Besides the women's arms of the state, the World Bank also sees civil society organizations in Ghana as having the potential to strengthen governance and social accountability (World Bank, 2007: 1). However, due to the controlled and contained space within which civil society organizations operate in Ghana (Ninsin, 1998: 49; Sandbrook and Oelbaum, 1999: 18),

¹ Chapter Six, which follows, provides in-depth details on the history of the organizations, their goals, how they are funded and managed, and the ability of these organizations to implement actual programs and projects for women. The discussion also covers the links among the organizations and between the organizations and the state as well as the nature of the state control over them.

and elsewhere (Lemke, 2007: 13; Love, 2007d: 68), they are not necessarily organizationally free nor strong enough to achieve their goals. Within this context, as some Ghanaian scholars have observed, the state regulates the conduct of women's organizations to suit the political agenda of the state (Tsikata, 2000; Mensah-Kutin, 2000; Oquaye, 2000; Hutchful, 2002).

Prior to 1982, the original women's governmental organization (WGO) in Ghana, the NCWD, was an arm of the state with a mandate to promote the status of women (Government of Ghana, 1975). After 1982, though, there was a shift in NCWD's level of influence in decision-making. This was due to the sudden appearance on the scene of the Quasi Non-Governmental Organization (WQUANGO), the 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM), a women's organization formed to support the Rawlings government that came to power in a military coup d'état in 1981. As a result, the 31DWM had a close affiliation to Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings's military regime, which was in power at the time (see Table 5:1 below for the different regimes in Ghana). The 31DWM was a women's organization, ostensibly an NGO, led by Mrs. Rawlings, the wife of the head of the military regime.

Changing Political Regimes, State Policies and Women's Organizations

After 11 years of Rawlings' military regime, Ghana returned to civilian constitutional rule in 1992, but still under his leadership (See Table 5: 1).² In 1995, in between Ghana's transition from a pseudo-civilian democracy to a real democratic

² The list of Political Regimes and Selected Women's Organizations in Ghana is presented as it was at the time of the study. However, it is worth noting that Professor J. Atta Mills of the National Democratic Congress Party defeated Mr. J. A. Kufuor in presidential and parliamentary elections in December 2008, and became the President of Ghana.

Table 5:1. Political Regimes and Selected Women's Organizations in Ghana

Date	Type of State	Leader (and Party)	Women's Organizations
1957-1964	Multi-party	Dr. K. Nkrumah (Convention People's Party)	—
1964-1966	One-party	Dr. K. Nkrumah	Ghana's first affirmative action to promote women's political participation
1966-1969	Military	Gen. K. A. Kotoka, Lt. Gen. J. Ankrah Lt. Gen. A. A. Afrifa (National Liberation Council)	—
1969-1972	Multi-party	Dr. K. A. Busia (Progress Party)	—
1972-1979	Military	Gen. I.K. Acheampong Lt. Gen. F.W.K. Akuffo (National Redemption Council, changed to Supreme Military Council 1 & 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) (1975) (WGO)
June - Sept 1979	Military	Ft. Lt. J. J. Rawlings (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCWD
1979-1981	Multi-party	H. Limann (People's National Party)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCWD
1981-1992	Military	Ft. Lt. J. J. Rawlings (Provisional National Defence Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM) (1982) (WQUANGO) • NCWD (WGO)
1992-2001	Multi-party	Ft. Lt. J. J. Rawlings (National Democratic Congress Party)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31DWM (WQUANGO) • NCWD (WGO) • Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT) (1999) (WNGO)
2001-2009	Multi-party	Mr. J. A. Kufuor (National Patriotic Party)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) (2001) (WGO) • NCWD (WGO) • NETRIGHT (WNGO) • 31DWM (WNGO)

Note: The women's organizations are listed in order of their emergence, and for the period of 1982 to the present, the various women's organizations are ranked in order of greater to lesser state support.

regime, the United Nations again influenced the preparation of an important document -- the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (Pfa), which emphasized a more holistic and integrated approach to women (UN, 1995).³ The NDC government, through the 31DWM, controlled the preparation of this Pfa important document (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000; Tsikata, 2000). The Network for Women's Right (NETRIGHT) - Ghana, a coalition of NGOs and a non-partisan women's organization, emerged to support this process of implementation of the Pfa. NETRIGHT's other goal is to monitor and also be involved in policy-making process to ensure that policies adequately address women's development concerns.

In 2001, a new actor in the national machinery for women emerged -- the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC). Under a new government led by President John Agyekum Kufour and the National Patriotic Party (NPP), MOWAC was established as another new women's arm of the state, which reduced the level of influence of the 31DWM. Nevertheless, these two categories of women's organizations are both important, as they share similar goals regarding the mobilization of women in Ghana. While MOWAC has the official mandate to operate, the 31DWM forcibly assumed this role in the past, sidelining the NCWD prior to MOWAC's arrival on the scene.

Thus, the ten-year span (1992 to 2002) under the UN's influence, the change of regime as well as the state's restructuring brought about significant shifts with regard

³ The Pfa was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. It points to 12 critical areas for development that require attention if women's status is to improve. These areas are: 1. Women and poverty; 2. Education and training of women; 3. Women and health; 4. Violence against women; 5. Women and armed conflict; 6. Women and the economy; 7. Women on power and decision-making; 8. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; 9. Human rights of women; 10. Women and media; 11. Women and the environment; 12. The girl child (UN, 1995).

to women's access to resources and channels to the state (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 22). These shifts also transformed the nature of women's level of influence regarding their decision-making and access to state resources. These shifts not only helped to identify the differences among the women's organizations, but they also revealed the changes that had occurred in the state's control of women's access to resources, how women's organizations conducted themselves, and the varying degrees of recognition that they received based on their appropriate conduct in their attempt to improve women's status (Oquaye, 2001: 61).

All three types of women's organizations (the WGOs, the WQUANGOs and WNGOs) have shown some interest in collaborating with the state, and with one another, in order to influence the decisions made concerning governing technologies with regard to women. The efforts of these organizations to improve women's status, despite state regulation of the conduct of women's organizations, have been used in this study to examine the effectiveness of the different channels they pursue to improve and strengthen their access to the state. The various explanations regarding these channels constitute the analytical framework for this thesis, as explored in Chapter Four. The following discussion further contextualizes these women's organizations and the state's efforts to improve women's status in Ghana.

5.4 WOMEN AND THE STATE

Attempts to improve women's status are not new to Ghanaian men and women. Dr. James E. K. Aggrey, a prominent Ghanaian scholar, noted that the nation benefits more from improving women's status than improving men's. According to him, the

education of women benefits a nation, while educating a man benefits one individual (Aggrey cited in Jacobs, 1996: 1). This statement has had a profound influence, not only in Ghana, but also in many African and Western countries in terms of the importance of focusing on improving women's social, economic and political status. In fact, the first government after Ghana's independence (1957), led by the Convention People's Party (CPP) under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, recognized the importance of women's engagement with the state as a means of closing the gender gap between men and women (Ayensu and Dankwa, 2000: 4).

This affirmative action took place almost ten years before the status of women gained the United Nations' official attention in 1975, as well as the subsequent establishment of the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) the same year. Some women during Nkrumah's regime were appointed to ministerial positions; however, these positions, such as Minister of Social Welfare, still reflected women's gender roles (Dankwa, 2002: 4). From 1982, the NCWD barely survived under the various political regimes as the women's arm of the state. The 31DWM emerged in 1982 and received more recognition from the Provisional National Defence Council government than any other women's organizations. This recognition was because the 31DWM promoted the state's agenda (Aubrey, 2000: 87). It operated officially as a women's NGO (WNGO) although, unofficially, it operated as a women's quasi-NGO (WQUANGO), because it was affiliated to the PNDC military government in 1982 and the NDC "democratic" government in 1992, both led by Rawlings (see Table 5: 1).

The Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT), established in 1999 during Rawlings' NDC government, is considered to be a WNGO because it has no

political party affiliation, and operates apart from the state, which is an indication that it uses a feminist approach of working outside the state to address women's concerns (Kantola, 2006: 6). President John Agyekum Kufuor's National Patriotic Party (NPP) defeated the Rawlings National Democratic Congress (NDC) government in a parliamentary election in late 2000 and came to power in 2001. This new government established a Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) in 2001 as the new women's governmental organization (WGO). This was in fulfillment of the NPP's promise to improve women's engagement with the state in policy-making processes. MOWAC co-existed with the NCWD (established in 1975) at the time of this study in 2002. The various regimes established new administrative structures, and justified their governing technologies and ostensibly as a means of creating greater political space for women's participation in decision-making processes.

Thus, to date, women's engagement with the state in Ghana has become more institutionally, organizationally and structurally complex over time. This is the direct result of pressure at both the national and international level to improve women's status. The nature of the complexity is perpetuated through the impact of global economic organizations, the UN declarations concerning women, partisan politics and the interest of some elite. As a result of this pressure, the state has adopted women-focused policies and programs, and has initiated various courses of action, but it can be argued that there has been no real follow through to implement and/or evaluate the impact of these efforts. Adequate measures are still lacking that would protect women's positions and levels of influence regarding their relationship with the state (Anyinah, 2009: 1). This neglect is a means through which the state manipulates women. Longwe (cited in Gordon, 1996:

119) describes the state's neglect of women as part of its governing technologies of only paying lip service to addressing women's concerns. However, in 2009, the state has for the first time appointed women to three significant positions of power (i.e., the Chief Justice, the Speaker of Parliament and the Inspector General of Police) (Irin, 2009). Despite this remarkable achievement, critics are skeptical about the usefulness of the establishment of MOWAC and women's presence in top policy-making and security forces as an improved process in enhancing women's social, political and economic status (Irin, 2009: 1; Anyinah, 2009: 1).

The 31DWM has made the greatest effort, by far, among the four women's organizations studied, since it did try to mobilize women for about 18 years. To some extent it also addressed women's development concerns through small scale income generating activities, and by creating women's awareness about their potential political participation. However, under the partisan leadership of Mrs. Rawlings, its efforts were made in order to support the Rawlings government through regulating the conduct of women's organizations (Oquaye, 2002: 61; Hutchful, 2002: 194). In addition, all its efforts were mostly within the Women in Development (WID) approach, which does not have much potential for transforming gender relations. The WID approach and three other approaches (WAD, GAD and GM) to women's development and improving the status of women also constitute theoretical perspectives for this study and were explored in-depth in Chapter Three.⁴ Arguably, the 31DWM's preference for the WID approach was partly due to its close affiliation to the state from 1982 to 2000, and the 31DWM's focus on promoting government policy rather than women's status (Hutchful, 2002: 194).

⁴ Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD), and Gender Mainstreaming (GM).

Until 2001, the intimidating nature of the 31DWM constrained Ghanaian women's efforts to improve women's status. The experiences of women sharply contrast with what various women's organizations had promised to do for women.

5.5 THE VISION AND PROMISES OF GHANAIAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

The complexity of approaches and efforts to support women impedes the alleged goal of improving women's status. This has limited the state and Ghanaian women's expectations and commitments over three significant periods with regard to improving women's status. These significant years were: (1) 1980, which was mid-United Nations Decade for Women; (2) 1982, the beginning of the longest ruling (Rawlings) government, which had the most powerful, but intimidating approach to other women's organizations in the history of Ghana; and, (3) 1984, was the end of a decade (1976-1985) identified by the United Nations to recognize the important contributions of women and also improve their status.

During the mid Decade for Women's Conference in 1980, Justice Ruth Annie Jiagge, Chairperson of the National Council for Women and Development (NCWD) and the leader of the Ghanaian delegation to the conference, noted:

[The year] 1975, the International Women's Year saw the birth or establishment by the Government of Ghana of the National Council on Women and Development. For the first time in the history of Ghana, government machinery was set up to accelerate the elimination of discrimination against women on the grounds of sex. The Government of Ghana considered this machinery necessary if women were to enjoy equal

economic, social and cultural rights de facto with men.⁵ (Jiagge, 1984:110)

The expectation in 1975 that this new “machinery” would help to achieve women’s equal rights ‘de facto’ with men has amounted to little more than rhetoric given the limited resources, institutional and organizational challenges and conflicts that are involved in promoting women’s status in Ghana (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 2). The preferred approach to women, since the establishment of the NCWD in 1975, has been limited to the WID approach, as there have been no earnest attempts to *transform* those very organizations and institutions or change policies that keep women disadvantaged. Despite the state’s regulation of the conduct of women’s organizations, these organizations remain the preferred approach to improving women’s status in Ghana, (Manuh, 2007: 127; The Coalition on the Women’s Manifesto for Ghana, 2004). To African gender scholars, like Longwe (cited in March et al.; 1999: 93-94) women are conscientized⁶ through “collective participation in the process of women’s development”. Such collective participation requires coalitions of women and other actors as well as the state’s coordination to be effective (Love, 2007c: 318).

To promote this collective participation, the largest and most powerful and only WQUANGO, the 31DWM, the largest WGOs, and unidentified WNGOs showed their intention to collaborate with each other to improve women’s status when they promised that “[a]ll women’s organizations are anxious to see that women contribute effectively towards solving the socio-economic problems of the country” (NCWD, 1984: 90). This

⁵ UN conferences on women have not effectively improved women’s status. However, their importance in the discussion of women and development issues is that they serve as a reference point and influence how women’s organizations operate in effort to improve women’s status.

⁶ Conscientization is a process through which individuals and groups identify the contradictions in social, political and economic processes and react toward them (Freire, 2007: 35). It helps the oppressed to reject the ideas of the dominant group and develop their own through education as a process of empowerment (Wallerstein and Professor, 2007).

statement appeared as a glimmer of hope to Ghanaian women at the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. It is important to recognize, though, that the promised women's collaborative effort still focuses more on helping Ghana solve its national development problems, rather than specifically addressing women's problems and transforming power relations.

Furthermore, in 1984, the Chairperson of the NCWD, Florence A. Dolphyne was optimistic about the benefits of NCWD's establishment as she indicated in its report at the end of the Decade for Women in Ghana that:

[I]t may be said that the scepticism with which some people, especially men, viewed the idea of the Decade for Women and the whole issue of women's emancipation, has now given way to a keen awareness of the value of women's contribution to national development, when given the requisite education and training. As we get close to the end of the UN Decade for Women, the NCWD can confidently say that it has initiated a process which will continue to gather momentum so that long after the UN Decade is over, the women of Ghana will continue to become more and more involved in national development, so that the country can derive the full benefits from all its man-power resources – including its women's power. (Dolphyne, 1984: iii)

This NCWD statement also focused on national development and the WID approach, not solely on women's status.⁷ The vision of momentum and the involvement of women in the 'development' process through the NCWD and other efforts, have not been maintained nor have concrete steps been taken to address the problems related to women's status in all areas. Some elite Ghanaian women are very disillusioned and somewhat disheartened by this lack of progress regarding women's political, social and economic freedom (The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004). The

⁷ The mandate of the NCWD includes development and women and therefore it must target both aspects in its work.

disillusion of elite Ghanaian women is viewed against the background of the NCWD's role and the governing technology of marginalizing some women leaders.

Sen (1999), a gender sensitive liberal economist, whose work on social justice and freedom is often cited in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2005), reiterates the importance of women's equality and full participation. As he states: "[n]othing, arguably, is as important today in the political economy of development as an adequate recognition of the political, economic and social participation and leadership of women. This is indeed a crucial aspect of 'development as freedom'" (Sen, 1999: 203). The views of the state, Ghanaian women and Sen all sum up women's concerns that must be addressed through transforming various organizations and institutions. However, this study reveals that in Ghana, through governing technologies, women's vision of national development and Sen's focus on women's freedom remain locked within the non-transformative liberal development framework preferred by multilateral organizations. In other words, despite these various opportunities for women's involvement and the high profile national and international efforts to improve their marginalized status, Ghanaian women's struggles at the national level do not as yet have the political and financial support from the state and multilateral organizations. As demonstrated in Chapters Six and Seven, this study reveals that subtle, yet powerful, mechanisms in the Ghanaian context exist that not only divide women as a whole, but that also undermine women's alliance-building efforts, minimize their policy-making impact on the state, and ultimately lessen their ability to challenge the state to improve women's status.

5.6 DIFFERENCES AMONG WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Due to the influence of diverse feminist orientations (Kantola, 2006: 3), various women's organizations interested in improving women's status are often diametrically opposed in their choice of women's channels of engagement with the state. The state, multilateral organizations, WNGOs and WQUANGO tend to be pro-capitalist and neoliberal and use the insider channel to the state (i. e., working within the state), NETRIGHT, a coalition of elite women, is somewhat radical or anti-capitalist, and uses outsider channels to the state (i. e., working outside the state) and autonomous channels (i. e., does not relate to the state but wants to influence the state) channels. Although NETRIGHT, as a WGO, aims to transform organizations and institutions to improve women's status, it also serves as a platform for some of its elite women members to gain social and political recognition on the national and international stage. It could be argued that NETRIGHT provides a mechanism through which women create a political space to project their national, international and/or public image.

Political party affiliation serves as a channel to access resources in countries in the global south such as Ghana. Often the resources available cannot satisfy the needs of all categories of women's organizations. This being the case, in practice, both the state and foreign donor development agencies tend to fund women's organizations that are state affiliated. Therefore, in Ghana, these state affiliated women's organizations (i. e., insiders) are the ones that benefit from substantial resources and services such as funding, decision-making processes, and conferences organized by the government or by multilateral organizations. Arguably, the state and multilateral organizations achieve their goals by supporting each other.

The rationale behind the partnership between the state and multilateral organizations (i.e., donors) is that both serve each other's interests. According to Ferguson (1990: 260), this shared interest is because each acts as an instrument of control for the other to pursue their unstated development agenda. Such an unstated agenda constitute, what Rao and Stuart (1997: 10) describe as the deep structure of organizations. Within the context of this study, the presence of multilateral organizations provides an opportunity for the state to either take advantage of the opportunities provided by multilateral organizations and external donor organizations through suggestions and policy prescriptions for women's organizations or control them. The funding policies of multilateral organizations inadvertently often discriminate against women's organizations operating outside the state (i.e., WNGOs), because the state's governing technologies are used to disrupt the activities of some non-state affiliated women's organizations. This disruption further creates conflicts between women's organizations that may be differentiated along class lines and political party affiliation.

Addressing the issues of different levels of influence and a diversity of interests only tends to complicate the situation. For instance, in spite of the fact that WNGOs gain some influence through engaging in advocacy and policy formulation, just like WGOs, the level of influence they have over decision-making processes depends upon several factors that relate to governing technologies: (1) how closely WNGOs engage with and support the government of the day; (2) how they are able to fit into government policy goals; (3) how government policies are transformed to support women; (4) the nature of collaboration among women, between men and women, and the relationship between women's organizations and multilateral organizations; (5) the impact that these

relationships have on how women engage with the state; and, (6) the personality of the women leaders of various groups. These factors are addressed in Chapters Six and Seven.

When there is conflict, it perpetuates some women's exclusion from decision-making processes by withdrawing potential funding to them at both national and international levels (Tinker, 2004a: xxiv). Such actions are manipulative and constrain women, who tend to lack control over the distribution of resources (Kingsolver, 1996: 445). This results in WNGOs' fear and reduces the impact of some radical feminist voices (Brym et al., 2007: 136). Conflict between women and the state also affects foreign donor funding, state resource allocation, cooperation among WGOs, WQUANGO and WNGOs, and women's participation in policy-making processes at the national and international levels. These divisions among women create *unspoken tensions* not only among themselves, but also between women's groups and other interest groups involved in improving women's status. In the face of tensions among Ghanaian women themselves, and the state's regulation of their conduct, the success rate of women's advocacy and policy formulation efforts continues to be constrained and temporal, and suffers from a lack of institutionalization. It is only when women's actions are institutionalized that they can have a lasting impact on how Ghana's somewhat self-interested and transitory governments operate. From the nature of ongoing relationships, it is only through policy intervention and the actual weakening of state regulations over women's conduct that women's groups are able to influence decisions. Women do not have adequate influence and/or access to the political process that would enable them to participate as equal actors.

5.7 MULTIPLE ACTORS AND MECHANISMS FOR INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

As indicated above, women's organizations promised to complement each other through collaborative efforts, but tensions arise regarding their exclusion, marginalization and their lack of access to resources. These underlying tensions not only undermine consensus, alliance-building and collaboration among them, but they also weaken women's overall efforts to attain gender equality. This factor has had an impact on gender relations in Ghana, and is to the detriment of all interested women's organizations becoming involved in state decision-making processes. This kind of collaborative effort remains somehow weak (Government of Ghana, 2002a: 4; Mensah-Kutin, 2000, 2; The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 10).

The impact of women's engagement with the state and the relationship among women's organizations were documented right up to the turn of the 21st century by both the state and independent critics (Government of Ghana, 2002a; Tsikata, 2001a; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000). While some women's organizations engage with the state, others move between engaging and disengaging with it. Arguably, the activities of both of these categories of women's organizations tend to perpetuate the marginalization of women through limited collaborative efforts. As indicated above, a significant development is that the previous NPP government headed by President Kufuor established a Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC), which is purported to elevate the status of WGOs, or what is usually referred to in women's development literature as 'the national machinery for the advancement of women' (NMW)⁸. Its mandate is to spearhead

⁸ This collaborative effort is sometimes called the national machinery for women or the national machinery for the advancement of women (NMW). The concept originated from the United Nations (UN) in the

women's decision-making processes within the state. Considering the nature of women's engagement with the state, however, the elevation of this women's arm of the state may further distance some women's organizations from the state instead of bringing them closer for participation in decision-making processes.

Prior to President Kufuor's coming to power in 2001, some WNGOs in Ghana, organizations of civil society, coalesced under the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT), in order to engage with the state to ensure that it delivered on its commitment to women. The objective behind NETRIGHT's demand was for the state to speed up its efforts to redress the gender imbalance in the country by systematically implementing the recommendations of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, outlined above. NETRIGHT's engagement with the state is significant, because participatory development approaches, from the 1980s onward, underscored the importance of inclusive development through the involvement of NGOs (Parpart, 1995: 221; Love, 2007d: 68). This relationship between NGOs and the state epitomizes the emerging character of the new interaction between women and the state (Tsikata, 2000: 7).

In view of this important relationship, the need exists to search for ways that would help to establish a platform, not only between WNGOs and the state, but also among women, the state and multilateral organizations. Establishing such a platform for

mid-1970s, is defined as "a set of coordinated structures within and outside government, which aim to achieve equality in all spheres of life for both men and women" (United Nations, 1999, cited in Mensah-Kutin et al, 2000: 1). Within the African context, the term is defined as "a single body or a complex organized system of bodies, often under different authorities, but recognized by the government as the institutions dealing with the promotion of the status of women" (Third World Network- Africa Secretariat, 1995 cited in Wangusa, 2000: 1). The Coalition on Women's Manifesto for Ghana (2004: 42) defines NMW as public institutions with the responsibility of promoting women's rights and gender equity. However, I avoid using any of these definitions for various reasons. First, there is lack of consensus on the definition, which, therefore, becomes problematic with regard to the coordination of efforts. Second, there is no clear evidence of coordination among the public institutions and non- public bodies that can also participate in the NMW processes. The third reason is that the membership of the MNW gives the government and women the freedom to decide who to partner with in their efforts.

the participation of multiple interest groups continues to be a challenge for those attempting to influence women and gender issues positively at various organizational and institutional levels. This platform from which these actors could voice their concerns on Ghanaian women's development is important, since gender and African women's issues are prominent in development debates across the continent (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000: 27; Meena, 1992: 36).⁹ This will be useful in determining whether power is diffused among various actors as Foucault (1991) claims. Besides, many of the debates on improving women's status underscore the need for a close collaboration among the relevant interest groups. The monitoring role of WNGOs is a strategy for persuading the state to change its governing technologies in order to fulfill its commitments to women.

Nevertheless, the growing literature on the status of women and Ghanaian women and development concerns, particularly following Ghana's adoption of the PfA, suggests that there is a gap between the promises made by the state and women's organizations and the state's policies on women aimed to promote efforts to improve women's status (The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 8-9; Government of Ghana, 2002a: 4). The literature, in part, highlights women's weak engagement with or disengagement from, the state, the lack of adequate resources for women, the deliberate exclusion of some women from the process, and the limited collaboration among the various women's organizations that are, ostensibly, involved in the process of improving Ghanaian women's status.

⁹ I also referred to other works of Ofei-Aboagye (2002) and Meena's (2000) on the importance of multiple actors in addressing issues of hierarchical power structures with reference to women. In fact, all 11 reports of research sponsored by Third World Network – Africa, under the name National Machinery Series, share the same views on the importance of multiple actors in addressing women and gender issues in development.

5.8 PLAN OF ACTION, RESOURCES AND CHALLENGES

Women do play social, economic, and political roles in the country's economic development. Despite some improvement in their lives, like the experiences of women elsewhere, women in Ghana are largely marginalized in the country's socio-economic development processes (NCWD, 1994: 1; Government of Ghana, 2002: 5).

Consequently, the majority of Ghanaian women still live in poverty, and carry a heavy workload, and occupy a marginalized status as a group compared to men (Brydon, 2002: 346; Government of Ghana, 2002a: 5). Ghana's development challenges and the low status of women are worth exploring as Ghana was identified as a model country in terms of its development pace and availability of resources while a colony of Britain (Reed, 2006: 157). As well, in the 1990s Ghana was considered to be a model country, by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with regard to economic and institutional transformation policy prescriptions and structural adjustment programs (Brown and Kerr, 1997: 27).

Ghana adopted a new constitution in 1992 under a newly formed democratic state (Government of Ghana, 1992), through which the state promised to adhere to the rights of its citizens and promote an all-inclusive development (Government of Ghana, 1992: 37-41). However, the 1992 democratic process lacked wide participation, and was as repressive as the same military government under Rawlings, who was returned to power without any opposition party in parliament.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the World Bank views Ghana as a model African country with regard to this democratic transition (World Bank, 2007: 1). To emphasize the impact of the relationship between Ghana and multinational

¹⁰ Other political parties boycotted the 1992 election due to alleged electoral malpractices (Owusu-Ansah and McFarland, 1995: lxxxviii).

organizations discussed in Chapter Three, despite the World Bank's prior acknowledgement of Ghana's success in economic restructuring in the global south, in 2001, President Kufuor under the NPP government was among 70 low-income countries that adopted the World Bank's policy initiative directed at supporting Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) (World Bank, 2006: 1). Ghana's experience of falling from a status of high to low economic performance challenges the World Bank's own indicators for evaluating the performance of its development policy initiatives.

5.9 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The objective of this chapter was to examine the gap between the rhetoric of women's organizations and the state to improve women's status and the actual efforts made by these actors. The discussion revealed that the purported fulfillment of Ghana's promises to women and its international recognition as being a model country, economically and politically, should have translated into its formulating and implementing effective development policies regarding women that move beyond the WID paradigm. Yet, as indicated in the literature so far, gender critics of state policies continue to appeal to the Ghanaian state to address policy issues that would improve women's status in the country. Such critics argue that Ghanaian women still require more gender friendly state interventions in women's efforts to improve their status, or that the state is not fulfilling its constitutional obligations to women in Ghana (Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 17 – 27; Anyinah, 2009; Irin, 2009). It is important to note that the Ghanaian state claims it values the rights of its citizens and the

inclusion of all in its development policy, which follows the development goals of multilateral organizations such as the United Nations (UNDP, 2002: 51-52).

Although Ghana has made efforts to improve women's status after independence, five main factors continue to undermine these efforts. These are:

1) Constraints of national and international governing technologies

First and foremost, various male-biased (gendered) international development prescriptions of multilateral organizations (e.g., the World Bank and the IMF), and Ghana's *gendered* socio-economic planning, for example, the Economic Recovery Program, which benefit men more than women, and actually impede the process of promoting women's status (Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 17 - 27).

2) Internal political instability:

Between 1966 and 1981, Ghana experienced immense political instability (see Table 5:1 above for the different political regimes), which had a negative impact on the country's development planning for the future.

3) Dominance of the WID approach to women:

Although theoretical approaches on women and development have changed over time, Ghana's response to these approaches remains relatively unchanged. Political attention to women's concerns has, at times, been predominant, but there has been little effective action, and organizational and institutional structures remain largely unchanged.

4) Ineffective collaboration among different categories of women's organizations:

Different categories of women's organizations exist that either establish projects for women or engage in policy advocacy work aimed at improving women's status. However, there is little collaboration among them. These organizations are also problematic because of their different levels of political party affiliations and their formal and informal organizational structures, both of which influence their capacity to mobilize women. There is also ineffective collaboration among women actors and organizations, because of divisions along ideological and class lines, and other inter- and intra- organizational conflicting interests.

5) Persistent cultural practices:

Some indigenous cultural practices (i. e., women's marital status, and gender roles) limit efforts to improve women's status. For example, society respects married women more than single women, which also perpetuates women's gender roles within the women's organizations.

To find ways of reducing the impact of these factors, this study delineates the alliances between women leaders, members of women's organizations, men, in general, and multilateral organizations. It further identifies the varied channels that these women's organizations use to engage with the state for the purpose of improving women's status. One objective of this study is to explore these issues and relationships and, thereby, facilitate a better understanding of the challenges associated with how women operate. An overall aim is to encourage further discussion among Ghanaian women's organizations, between women themselves as well as relevant governmental and non-governmental actors.

Having provided the background information to women's (dis)engagement with the state, the discussion in Chapters Six and Seven focuses on the experiences of the three categories of Ghanaian women's organizations. These chapters investigate the attempts of these WGOs, WNGOs, and WQUANGOs to (dis)engage with the state and its governing technologies on the conduct of women's organizations in order to improve women's social, economic and political status.

CHAPTER SIX
GHANAIAAN WOMEN'S ACCESS TO THE STATE:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Women's organizations access the state either through isolated insider, outsider and autonomous channels (Everett et al., 1989: 187) or, as a group, through a triangle of empowerment model - feminist civil servants, feminist politicians and feminist women's movement (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). While these channels offer women opportunities to engage with the state or otherwise, they also pose some challenges. Some women's organizations gain by securing resources, but the state controls other women's organizations by either enhancing or limiting their access to the state. State control creates tensions within women's organizations, and/or between women's organizations and the state. These tensions cause divisions among the three categories of women's organizations studied. The lack of tolerance, limited solidarity building and networking help to promote these divisions, and limit women's organizations effectiveness' in gaining access to the state and engage with it. The various governing technologies through which the state controls women can be explained within Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality and the analytics of government perspective (Lemke, 2007).

This chapter examines women's governmental organizations (WGOs), women's quasi non-governmental organization (WQUANGOs) and women's non-governmental organizations (WNGOs) and the channels that they pursue to engage with the state in

Ghana. The discussion is motivated by the contention that despite the state's governing technologies, the state is neither oppressive nor sympathetic to women's concerns (Kantola, 2006: 6), and the lack of consensus among feminist scholars over whether women should engage with the state or not, and how they should approach the state (Stamp, 1991: 808; Stewart, 1996: 23; Rai, 2003: 20). Yet, this engagement is necessary as political participation ranks highest in the options available to women in their efforts to change governing practices and processes in order to transform organizations and institutions to improve women's status (Geile, 1977: 15; Beneria, 2003: 167-168).

In order to understand women's organizations and their access to the state, this chapter examines the following: the nature of the relationships among the various actors whose aim is to improve women's status; the governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations that direct women's organizations (e.g., the Ghanaian government; WGOs, WNGOs and WQUANGOs; and project participants); and the ways in which the state and multilateral organizations act, intervene and direct women towards a national policy agenda, which either promotes and/or obstructs the enhancement of women's status. It also investigates the forms of knowledge, expertise, know-how, power and authority the state employs to institutionalize or destabilize women's organizations (i. e., WGOs, WNGOs and WQUANGOs), and the alternative forms of knowledge, know-how and expertise that women's organizations have to counter state governing technologies. Exploring these issues revealed the various channels that Ghanaian WGOs, WNGOs and WQUANGOs pursue to engage with the state, and the different challenges that each organization faces when utilizing these channels in its effort to improve women's status. The organizations studied are diverse in their

membership and affiliations, have different objectives, and experience different challenges in their efforts to engage with the state. What links them all, however, is their primary focus on improving the status of Ghanaian women through policy-making processes.

The first part of the chapter states the reasons for selecting the three categories of women's organizations studied. Each organization is subject to the constraints and influence of the "global development paradigm", and the several challenges posed by the failure of development (Peet and Hartwick, 1995: 65; Beneria, 2003: 161-164). As discussed in Chapter Five, this failure establishes the political and socio-economic conditions in the country, which tend to have a negative impact on women's status. Of these sets of challenges, the policies, processes and practices of multilateral organizations, state governing technologies, and feminist approaches to women help to determine each organization's objectives and, over time, the channels it pursues to engage with the state (Ray, 1986: 96; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 11; Manuh, 2007: 133). All the factors contributing to women's opportunities and challenges are relational and, therefore, require cooperation of various actors to be met.

The second part of the chapter focuses on how the utilization of different channels to the state can impinge upon the image of women leaders, both positively and negatively, and the implication this has for women's relationship with the state and other actors. This section also examines the challenges of effectiveness of those in positions of power (e.g., the leaders of the WGOs, WNGOs and WQUANGO, the impact of a broad mandate of leaders, and accountability to women as leaders), in supporting women to

transform organizations and institutions to improve their status. Some of these challenges pose further risks to women, and are highlighted throughout the discussion.

Foucault's (1991) and Lemke's (2003, 2007) explanations on governing technologies and sources of state power provide us with a useful theoretical framework to examine women's engagement with the state. Similarly, the emphasis on women and gender in development in the 1980s and 1990s (i. e., gender and development – GAD; gender mainstreaming - GM) identifies the state as an important institutional site that can promote women's political, social and economic rights. Thus, these approaches underscore the relevance of engaging directly with the state to address women's issues, and to change governing technologies (Staudt, 2003: 40).

The discussion in Chapter Four revealed that women engage with the state through separate channels (Everett et al., 1989: 189; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). Each channel, or combination of channels, can be useful to facilitate women's participation in the decision-making processes within the state. It is critical to understand that these separate channels can also be a source of conflict among women, and, therefore, sites for women's continued marginalization. The various models for women's engagement with the state further reveal that women generally engage collectively with the state, that is, from within organizations rather than as individuals. However, the success of their engagement depends, in part, on the qualities of those who head up their organizations, as well as women's ability to work together to ensure their access to the decision-making processes of the state.

As argued in Chapter Four, Everett et al. (1989) and Vargas and Wieringa (1998) identify different models for these channels, and fit women's organizations into discrete

categories (i. e., Everett et al.'s insider, outsider and autonomous; Vargas and Wieringa's feminist politicians, feminists women's movements and feminist civil servants). These categorizations are problematic when trying to understand the various channels and strategies women utilize to access the state, and the challenges that women face in their relationships with the state in Ghana. Women's choices for gaining access to the state or withdrawing from it and, the emerging relationships can be complex, depending on the goals of the organizations, the nature of women's concerns and on the openness and ability of the state to deal with all women's organizations and their concerns. It is important to note that women's access to the state is limited by the (re)construction of knowledge through academic theories and policy prescriptions. Foucault (1991) argues that the construction of knowledge is dominated by the powerful. This is reflected in the influence of actors (e.g., multilateral organizations, governments, influential civil society organizations, academics, advocates and practitioners) that control the construction of knowledge and formulation of policies on women. The different influences of these actors are a source of tension in efforts to promote women's status, as discussed in Chapter Three (Tinker, 1997: 33). The tenuous relationships underscore knowledge construction as a fundamental governing technology (Foucault, 1991). The section that follows provides a more in-depth discussion on the three categories of women's organizations, touched upon in the previous chapter, and positions them within their historical context in relation to the state and one another.

6.2 WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND THE STATE

Women's Governmental Organizations (WGOs)

The National Council on Women and Development (NCWD)

In 1975, the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD), a women's governmental organization (WGO) emerged as the official women's arm of the Ghanaian State, under the National Redemption Council military regime ruling at that time (Government of Ghana, 1975). The NCWD functioned as part of, and under, several other military and civilian governments until January 2001 (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 17-20).¹ The NCWD was established by National Redemption Council Decree 322 (Government of Ghana, 1975). It emerged through women's active engagement with the state (Snyder and Tadesse, 1995: 18). This was one of the few regimes under which the NCWD had adequate financial resources and autonomy to deliver its mandate (interview with NCWD participants, June-September, 2002). The NCWD's support came largely from international development organizations that they (the staff) relied on for consultancy and for implementing projects (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 07/08/2002). From NCWD's inception in 1975 and its experiences up to the early 1980s, multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, had not yet implemented strict economic policies (such as SAPs), which had dire consequences for social development, and people's well-being, particularly women's (Sparr, 1994c; Elson, 1991a; Elson, 1991b)

The initial autonomy that the NCWD enjoyed can be attributed to the fact that a women's arm of the state was new to the Ghanaian state, and, relatively, the NCWD had

¹ See Appendix A for the official functions of the NCWD at the time of its establishment in 1975.

the freedom to operate. After this period, various governments curtailed the NCWD's freedom to operate. In fact, the NCWD was placed under the administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, initially, which was an indication that it was considered by the state to be outside national development plan priorities (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 17). The negative effect of this positioning of the NCWD was that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was uncertain about how to treat women's issues within its foreign affairs mandate (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 07/08/2002).

As the women's arm of the state and the only organization representing all women at the time, the NCWD was able to exploit the "insider" channel to the state (Everett et al. 1989). This is comparable to the place of NCWD staff as members of the feminist civil servants category in Vargas and Wieringa's (1998: 3) triangle of women's empowerment model. It is important to acknowledge, however, that the mere presence of feminist civil servants' within the state does not necessarily mean that women have access to the state as "insiders" (Chappell, 2002: 90). Nor does it mean that they are able to influence or participate in critical decision-making processes or policies on women. Nonetheless, Rai (2003: 4) points out the perception of some feminists that women's presence in the state gives them political clout. This political clout is not a given, however, but must be achieved through women's collaborative efforts, as proponents of the triangle of empowerment model suggest (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). As insiders (i.e., as civil servants and/or politicians), some women tend to promote, or are seen by feminists outside the state as promoting the state's governing agenda (Chappell, 2002: 90). The leaders of WGOs with political party affiliation have difficulty criticizing state policies, or making demands on the state to fulfill its promises to women. This pro-state

agenda limits the leaders' efforts to improve women's status, as seen in women's relationship with the state in developing regions like Latin America (Caldeira, 1998: 75) and Africa (Geisler, 1997: 545; Tsikata, 2000). Women's autonomy, however, without any ties to the government, could actually undermine their prospects for success, unless they find alternatives for improving women's status (Caldeira, 1998: 75).

The NCWD was originally mandated to coordinate the activities of the emerging sector of women's non-governmental organizations (WNGOs), which tended to operate quite separately from the state (i.e., occupying 'outsider' or 'autonomous' channels to the state) (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002). There were far fewer WNGOs in the 1970s compared to the 1980s and 1990s, because, in the 1970s, it was the state rather than the NGOs that were the targets for foreign development funding (McMichael, 2004: 32; Chang and Grabel, 2002: 16). Nevertheless, with proliferation of the WNGO sector in the 1980s, discussed in Chapter Three, the need for NCWD to coordinate their efforts became ever more important because: (1) donors regarded funding to NGOs as funding to the Ghanaian state; and, (2) when the WNGOs failed to deliver, the donor organizations asked the state to investigate the recipient WNGOs (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002). Drawing on the non-intervention of the state stance, which dominated development prescriptions from the 1980s (Sparr, 1994b: 2), some of the WNGOs that emerged after this period, especially since 2000, however, neither valued the coordinating role of the NCWD nor its capacity to serve as an insider channel to the state.

NETRIGHT participants in this study thought that the coordinating role of the WGOs (such as the NCWD, which utilizes the "insider channel" to the state) would weaken NETRIGHT's autonomy and its advocacy work. As one NETRIGHT member

asked, “If the government coordinates and controls me, where is my [sic] autonomy as a civil society organization?” (Female, NETRIGHT member #2, 09/02/2002). This respondent’s perception of autonomy is that it is necessary for a WNGO to operate unencumbered by the state. According to Love (2007c: 318), an institutional analyst, this approach is ineffective, because NGOs and the state can together garner resources to be more effective.

Vargas and Wieringa’s (1998: 8) triangle of empowerment model implies that it is possible for WNGOs to be autonomous yet still be able to negotiate with the state and others to achieve a desired goal. In Africa, in particular, complete autonomy without any state interference is unattainable. For example, in Ghana, the state governs the affairs of powerful women’s organizations in order to weaken their attempts to avoid state control (Callaway, 1975: 195; Oquaye, 2001: 60), as witnessed at its zenith under the Rawlings regimes from 1981 to 2000 (Oquaye, 2001: 60-64; Hutchful, 2002: 193-195).² Techniques of control range from bringing some women’s organizations (and individual women) under an umbrella organization, establishing affiliations with some of them, withholding funding to others, and including some while excluding others from decision-making processes. These governing technologies fragment women’s organizations, create tensions, and frustrate some women.

State control is possible through the network of some actors involved. For example, the leaders of the NCWD, the state and the multilateral organizations play significant roles in the success and/or failure of women’s attempts to engage with the state through various channels. When the leaders of the three categories of women’s organizations (WGOs, WNGOs, WQUANGOs) are politically neutral in their work, they

² The nature of control by these regimes is explained throughout this thesis.

are somewhat ineffective in pursuing the goal of improving women's status. After the arrival of the Rawlings regime in 1981, however, women leaders were either controlled by the state, as 'outsiders', or they chose to become closely affiliated with the political party in power, thereby assuming the status of 'insider' vis-à-vis women's groups gaining access to the state. According to participants from the NCWD, this is especially true from 1992 to 2000, as the Executive Director of the NCWD developed a close relationship with NDC politicians and with the NCWD Governing Board. The most significant of the NCWD's political affiliations was with the 31DWM, a WQUANGO.

Communication is key in Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality, and open communication is important for successful partnerships, coalitions and networking and in any collaborative efforts, especially when women themselves emphasize political participation as an important element of social change processes (Beneria, 2003, Tsikata, 2001a). Participants in the study, however, variously described how the NCWD 15-member Governing Board disrupted women's communication and access to the state. As a governing technique during the Rawlings era, politicians and 31DWM members dominated the Board and constrained the NCWD civil service staff. The presence of the 31DWM (WQUANGO) headed by Mrs. Rawlings, and state governing technologies (Foucault, 1991) that limited women's direct access to the state are reflected in the following comment by a member of the (then) recently established Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs:

The NCWD was too much of a political playground for staff. The government always appointed politicians as the Executive Director and Governing Board members. The Executive Director was a friend of the chairperson of the Board and Mrs. Rawlings. Everything the NCWD had to do was done by Mrs. Rawlings. The 31DWM dominated the NCWD, and

the board chairperson was performing executive functions. (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002)

One NCWD staff member's description of the role the NCWD Board played in limiting women's communication and access to the state from 1982, when the 31DWM was formed is "The NCWD Governing Board briefs the President on women's issues, and then the President reports [on] women's issues at Cabinet meetings, . . . But this administrative structure posed problems for the NCWD" (Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002). The indirect line from the NCWD Board of Governors to the President meant that women did not have direct access to the state or to the Governing Board, which linked them to the state. According to participants in this study, the NCWD Board members rarely kept the NCWD staff informed of their direct dealings with the state on behalf of the NCWD. NCWD participants (i. e., the staff members and women) who participate in the Women's Monthly Meeting (WOMM) that the NCWD organizes for women), especially politically neutral civil servants and community-based organizations, were concerned about women's inability to access the state directly. Study participants from the NCWD were concerned, as well, about the political party affiliation of many of the Executive Directors and the Governing Board members to the NDC government from 1992 to 2000. This was the period of political democracy in Ghana after 11 years of an authoritarian military rule (see Table 5: 1).

The relationship between the NCWD's Executive Director and Board of Governors points to inherent problems in WGOs, as actors compete for access to the state through the "insider channel" (Everett et al. 1989). This position may or may not be occupied by feminist politicians or civil servants aiming to empower women (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). Indeed the official executive function of the 31DWM resulted in a

division of functions between the NCWD and the 31DWM (Brydon and Legge, 1996: 127). One NCWD staff member described the political activities of Executive Directors and the NCWD Governing Board as an example of partisan politics. She noted that, “Between late 1998 and early 2000, the Chairperson of the [NCWD] Governing Board was a staunch member of the 31DWM, [and a] former Executive Director wore the 31DWM uniform and mounted platforms at 31DWM rallies” (Female, NCWD staff member #4, 08/08/2002). While the Chair of the NCWD’s Governing Board assumed more power it appears that, after the emergence of the 31DWM, the NCWD’s Executive Director was increasingly marginalized from decision-making processes (Male, government official #2, 08/28/2002).

Collaboration and the flow of information between the NCWD and feminist politicians was made more complex by the presence of 31DWM members within the NCWD. The 31DWM, a women’s “movement” that was very politicized in its leadership and support for the Rawlings regime, added a third potential channel for women to gain access to the state, beyond the two existing channels (i.e., feminist civil servants and feminist politicians). The 31DWM was a homogeneous group with regard to its support of the state, and could not challenge the state. The other channels to the state (via feminist politicians and feminist women’s movements) compounded the already existing constraints inherent in bureaucratic structures that feminist civil servants, and workers’ unions who work within the state, were up against in their pursuit of the insider channel to gain access to the state for women’s benefit (Chappell, 2003: 89-94; Yeatman, 1990: 80).

Three of NCWD's staff members assumed that their concerns about women issues were left hanging at the NCWD Governing Board level, and were never actually forwarded to the state for action. The link between the state and women was weak. While some NCWD staff members demonstrated a commitment to help women, others affiliated with the political party in power were less inclined, as they pursued their own political agendas, rather than women's (or NCWD's) agendas. The 'triangle of empowerment' model (Vargas and Wieringa 1998) does not highlight this limitation of civil servants, nor the potential for tensions to arise among the various governmental and non-governmental actors. From the narratives of research participants, feminist politicians, who were supposed to advance women's interests, instead used their position to control the civil servants who were working to improve women's status. This practice inhibited the role of the NCWD staff members, and obstructed the overall goal of the NCWD.³ As one NCWD staff member argued, "Despite the problems we had with the Rawlings NDC government, women had a stronger voice [than under the NPP government]" (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 07/08/2002). This idea of a strong voice, however, did not apply to all women (Ibrahim, 2004: 2; Aubrey, 2001: 88).

While some of the feminist civil servants working within the NCWD were interested in improving women's status, the feminist politicians and the 31DWM focused on pursuing the agenda of the NDC government and women in the NPP also promoted the NPP government's ideas. Thus, the inability of NCWD civil servant staff members to deliver their mandate effectively, from 1982 onwards, limited their efforts to empower

³ At the time of this study, women's governmental organizations were undergoing a major reorganization under MOWAC, and it was evident to this researcher that women's voices and access to the state were even more limited than in previous regimes.

women and contributed towards a high rate of staff turnover, as the experience of one NCWD former staff member indicates:

I was never given the opportunity to empower women due to the politicized nature of the NCWD. I only interacted with women at the monthly meetings [WOMM]. I was transferred from [the NCWD] headquarters to the regional office because of my innovative ideas, which threatened the politicized establishment. I became frustrated, which forced me to look for another job. (Female, NCWD former staff member #2, 08/1/2002)

Such exclusions of women civil servants were done with the consent of the political party in government. Therefore, they reflect the governing technology of excluding politically neutral and change-oriented civil service staff members from decision-making processes. Their duplication of roles due to the lack of well-defined duties for each of these women's organizations under both the NDC and NPP governments, in part, allowed political leaders and the state to control decision-making and policy-making processes. One participant expressed that "[Ad hoc] decisions and the duplicate role⁴ of the 31DWM, MOWAC and the NCWD affected staff performance" (Female, NCWD staff member #4, 08/08/2002). All categories of feminists (politicians, civil servants and movements) marginalized some women. It means that the establishment of new women's organizations alone is not a solution to women's problems, as indicated in the discussion below on MOWAC.

Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC)

Women's organizations require organizational, institutional and structural transformation to be able to address gender concerns, but changes in women's

⁴ The duplication of roles reflects an obvious lack of clarity in the division of labour between the two categories of women's organizations.

representation within the state do not automatically promote women's status (Erin, 2009: 1, Anyinah, 2009). For example, despite concerns expressed by research participants, the intention of the NPP government, under President Kufuor - the establishment of Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) - was to reduce the constraints that the NCWD faced regarding organizational ambiguity, bureaucracy and the marginal position of women leaders (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002; Male, MOWAC staff #1, 07/31/2002). There is obvious disagreement among both NCWD and MOWAC staff (past and present) participants in this study about the benefits of having a Ministry for addressing women's concerns. Out of the six serving NCWD staff members interviewed, one of them openly supported and justified the state's decision to establish MOWAC, as well as its relationship with the NCWD. She argued that MOWAC is headed by a Minister with Cabinet status, who is able to coordinate gender mainstreaming programs, and elevate the WGO efforts to the Ministerial level. According to her, this comes with financial and material benefits that are directed toward women's issues (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002). Similarly, one MOWAC staff member also justified the rationale for establishing MOWAC, and its relationship with the NCWD.

MOWAC's mandate is derived from the President's vision that women are represented at the highest level of government through a Cabinet position. It will champion the conventions to promote women's issues, international efforts as well as traditional problems to bridge the gap between men and women. The government ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1986, and [this] is covered in the 1992 constitution. So, the government decided to set up an administrative staff to be responsible for women. (Male, MOWAC staff #1, 07/31/2002)

MOWAC's other function to coordinate activities and promote women's status is significant, but this can only be achieved when supporting organizations and institutions

are simultaneously transformed for this purpose (Tsikata, 2000: 14; Boadi, 2002; Ofei-Aboagye, 2004: 753). The lack of organizational and institutional transformation is a crucial factor in the state's weak relationship with women, and helps the state govern and promote its agenda (Staudt, 2003: 45; Lemke, 2007: 9).

While the above observations by NCWD and MOWAC participants are based on the ideals of what a Ministry can do for women, various studies on WGOs in Africa have revealed that there is no difference between the performance of a Ministry, a Department or a Council on women, because of state manipulation of women's organizations (Tsikata, 2000: 43; Mama, 2000b: 10). When women have "insider" access to the highest authority of the state they are still limited by the state's political agenda, its non-support of women, and the women's organization's limited access to state funding and reliance on external funding. Therefore, this insider access is not always an effective mechanism for change in women's favour (Tsikata, 2000).

MOWAC relies on civil servants in the performance of its functions, and, therefore, has access to the "insider" channel to the state in its work on behalf of women. Since its creation in 2001, MOWAC has assumed responsibility for Ghanaian women (and children), and for overseeing all women's organizations in the country. MOWAC's mandate, which was published after the fieldwork for this research, includes children in MOWAC's mandate (MOWAC, 2008). Combining children and women's issues, in an attempt to improve women's status, is contentious as it connotes infantilizing women and sharing resources between women and children. MOWAC stresses women's 'traditional' role as mothers rather than as women. MOWAC took over the NCWD's mandate, and operates and shares its meager budget allocation of one per cent of the national budget

(Dawuni, 2009: 1). Therefore, similar to its relation with the 31DWM under the Rawlings regime that saw the NCWD (WGO) and 31DWM (WQUANGO) battle for superiority, the NCWD has been relegated to a yet another subordinate position under the new Ministry. The NCWD has since been renamed “Department of Women” under MOWAC, and restructured to become an implementing agency for MOWAC (MOWAC, 2008), whereas the 31DWM usurped that role during its prominent phase.

Study participants complained about their exclusion from the WGO restructuring process. In terms of mobilizing women, influencing policies on women, and controlling women’s resources, MOWAC had gained control over women as a WGO, and because of its close relationship with the NPP government. Both the NCWD staff members and the women who participated in its Women’s Monthly Meetings (WOMM) said the attendance at the meetings started to drop before the change over to the NPP government in 2000, and declined even further after the change. One of the reasons offered was that women were frustrated with the diminished status and role of the NCWD under both NDC and NPP regimes, and felt that it no longer had the mandate to effect change for women. Out of frustration, the study participants suggested that the NCWD should be closed down, because it had outlived its usefulness.

Despite the apparent decline in status of the NCWD, the establishment of MOWAC signaled that the government had actually elevated the women’s arm of the state to a ministerial level to enhance women’s participation in decision-making processes (NPP, 2000). Furthermore, for the first time in the history of Ghana, a Cabinet Minister headed a WGO, unlike the NCWD, which had been somewhat limited as a department under various government Ministries and the Office of the President. All of

the study participants acknowledged that the Minister of MOWAC was a strong member of the NPP. NCWD participants, though, were divided over the benefits of the political status of the Minister for MOWAC. Political affiliation causes division among women (Nzomo, 1998; Mama, 2000b). While some of the women saw the political party affiliation of the Minister as an asset, others criticized it as another means of promoting the agenda of the political party in power. The obvious political affiliation of the Minister introduced a political dimension to the administration of MOWAC. MOWAC's affiliation to the NPP was a source of division among the three categories of women's organization studied.

Organizational and Institutional Strengths and Limitations of WGOs

Current development debates revolve around the strengths and limitations of organizations and institutions (Goetz, 1997; Rao and Kelleher, 2003; Love, 2007c). These strengths and limitations are often mixed (Love, 2007c: 309). The discussion below focuses firstly on the limitations of WGOs. Sikoska and Kardam (2000: 13) and Goetz (1995: 8) observe that that states generally establish WGOs in order to satisfy the demands of the multilateral organizations, but there are no guidelines for the multilateral organizations to follow in order to ensure that these WGOs are effective.

Within the Ghanaian context, there is no evidence of the multilateral organizations holding the state accountable for the non-performance of WGOs or the lack of inclusive participation. One NCWD staff member highlighted the rhetoric and lack of clarity in the UN's suggestion for the establishment of the WGOs (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002). This lack of clarity makes it difficult to oversee these

organizations. According to her, each country has the option to decide on the modalities of its WGOs, therefore, the UN is unable to control how states approach the role of WGOs. Contrary to the views of analytics of government proponents (Rose and Miller, 1999), therefore, the state does wield some power. The NCWD staff member did not acknowledge the rhetoric and lack of clarity of the NPP government's establishment of MOWAC, and the marginalization of some organizations such as the 31DWM. Instead, because of her profile in the NCWD, she justified the establishment of MOWAC as a strength in improving women's status by emphasizing MOWAC's national and international benefits to women.

MOWAC's coordinating role has been a source of strength for women. MOWAC is a focal point for playing politics. Through it, women can project themselves. The Minister is vocal and dynamic. Donors are responding to MOWAC's financial needs. We are soliciting with MOWAC, the NCWD's new role and mandate to achieve our aim. There are certain UN meetings that one cannot attend if one is not a Minister of State. NGOs lobby with the Minister at such meetings. Prior to 2001, the distinction between NGOs and WGOs was not clear [because of the political positioning and privilege allocated to the 31DWM]. (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002)

The NCWD staff, NETRIGHT and 31DWM members have their own perceptions of the Minister as a member of the political party in government. According to the various categories of the participants in this study, the establishment of MOWAC has made the distinction between WNGOs and the WGOs clear. Some of them were also of the opinion that the Minister of MOWAC's affiliation to the ruling party (the NPP from 2000 to 2008) could weaken women's autonomous position. One gender analyst who belongs to an opposition party, and recently became a high profile minister of state observed, "The [MOWAC] Minister has attributes that women could use, because she is an inner member of the NPP, [and] Ghanaian women's status will diminish if they do not

make use of the opportunity” (Female, Other, #2, 09/03/2002). Although critical of how MOWAC may be able to address women’s concerns effectively, research participants’ support transcends partisan politics to acknowledge the benefits of having this Cabinet status for women.

The Cabinet is the decision-making body of government and centre of policy-making processes. According to the Constitution of Ghana, the Cabinet is constituted by the President, the Vice-President and between 10 to 19 Ministers of State, who assist the President to determine the general policy of the ruling government (Government of Ghana, 1992: 62). Cabinet status, according to a government official, is a reward one receives if one is a loyal party member, that is, someone who contributes toward the success of the political party in power (Male, Other, civil servant #5, 09/04/2002). Thus, Cabinet Ministers should be submissive (i. e., inducing docility), have good working relationships, and support the government if they want to keep their positions and political status. As a Cabinet member, the Minister of MOWAC has to work closely with the government and within the strictures of the state’s policy priorities (Schacter and Haid, 1999: 1-3). This arrangement can be either a strength or a limitation for improving women’s status (Rai, 2003: 20-22). Placed in such a position, between the state on the one hand and women on the other, the MOWAC Minister has potentially conflicting roles to fulfill (Schaefer and Smith, 2004: 120). That is, the Minister is a loyal member of the NPP and a leader of women, which means that the bureaucratic ambiguity that plagued the NCWD/31DWM relations in the past, still persists within MOWAC as a WGO.

Prior to the establishment of MOWAC, the lack of attention to gender relations was evident, particularly when leaders of the NCWD were given an opportunity to utilize their 'insider' role to address the Cabinet. These NCWD leaders were intimidated by the mere presence of the President (Rawlings and others prior to them, see Table 5: 1) and by the male dominated Cabinet, so much so that it had an impact on NCWD presentations (Male, Other, civil servant #5, 09/04/2002). It is evident that these NCWD leaders were at a political disadvantage in Cabinet sessions as, prior to Cabinet meetings, male Ministers lobby among their colleagues for their support for specific demands on the state. In the absence of a Minister representing the NCWD and women's concerns at the time, the NCWD leaders were excluded from this lobbying process. Cabinet meetings represent a crucial forum for policy and decision-making discussions, and thus women's representation and involvement in them are crucial. Women may be intimidated by the presence of the male Cabinet members, but it is important to recognize that because of women's only occasional presence at the meetings, they are perceived as "strangers" by Cabinet members. Therefore, they lack exposure to this decision-making body (Johnson et al., 2004: 8), whereas their continuous involvement in Cabinet meetings is important, and MOWAC offers this opportunity.

Focusing on its strengths, however, one can see that MOWAC can potentially enhance women's direct communication with the state and coordinate the activities of women's organizations, because it opens a window for lobbying with other Ministers and women's representatives at international levels. Foreign states and multilateral organizations also prefer negotiating with Ministers of high standing in order to influence state policy making processes (Male, Other, civil servant #5, 09/04/2002). This means

that the MOWAC Minister can effectively lobby with foreign states and multilateral organizations and other donor agencies. Such lobbying enables multilateral organizations to provide funding, and helps to promote the donors' agendas. The appointment of a woman Minister with Cabinet status increases the prospects for women's effective involvement in policy and decision-making processes. It is, therefore, a step in the right direction, but it is essential that the Minister responsible for women's issues be cognizant of development debates and approaches regarding both women and gender. This does not appear to have been the case for the new Minister responsible for MOWAC. Rather than addressing gender and gender relations and women's political participation, as issues directly connected to women's development concerns, the Minister focused solely on women (Female, Other from a donor #1, 07/17/2002). This emphasis reflects the ongoing influence of the WID approach in Ghana's development processes, and the limits this places on addressing women's participation in development concerns through MOWAC.

As indicated above, the establishment of MOWAC, nonetheless, provides a unique opportunity for women's concerns to be brought forward through the 'insider' channel to influence decisions within the state. Having the same high status as other Ministers in the Cabinet, the MOWAC Minister is able to participate in lobbying for women's concerns with other Ministers. A limitation of MOWAC, however, is found in the procedures used for appointing its staff members, which stem from the focus on the governing technology of protecting staff members within organizations in time of change (Love, 2007c: 318). The new staff appointments for MOWAC do not come from the ranks of the NCWD but, rather, these appointees come from the ranks of staff members

from other Ministries, according to existing civil service regulations. Therefore, in 2002, the newly appointed MOWAC staff members were inexperienced in both gender concerns and women's issues while the much more experienced NCWD staff members were marginalized. These appointments gave priority to those who were experienced in other areas, such as ministerial rules, rather than those with gender expertise. NCWD staff members were not involved in the appointments process, and, thus, they were unable to comment on the qualifications required for appointing MOWAC staff members. What is worrying in relation to these appointments is Mama's observation (2000: 10) that it is often "substandard and disinterested staff" members that are posted to women's Ministries in Africa.

The notion of governmentality suggests that the state pursues its own agenda, and uses the government to achieve the goals of the state (Foucault, 1991; Dean, 1999). Arguably, the process for staffing MOWAC, whether intentional or unintentional, facilitates the government's role in marginalizing women's issues by ensuring that the most qualified staff members remain within the subordinated NCWD.⁵ At the same time, however, the NPP Government also used this governing technology to gain public recognition and support (both inside and outside Ghana) by appearing to advocate and promote women's concerns through giving them increased prominence under the new Ministry.

Staff capacity building is an important aspect of organizational change (Zuckerman, 2002; Love, 2007c). Similar to MOWAC's state appointees, NCWD (now a women's department under MOWAC) staff members are also regarded as unqualified

⁵ Although the implementation role of the NCWD is significant, the staff members described it as disempowering, and a governing technology the NPP government used to limit the NCWD's participation in policy-making processes.

and lacking the required standard for the performance of their jobs (Male, MOWAC staff #1, 07/31/02). NCWD staff members recognize this shortage of skills among their ranks as well, though, and indicate that NCWD staff members require training to be effective, but that the organization lacked funds for the training (Female, NCWD staff member, #1, 08/08/2002). They note that when rare funding is made available for training for NCWD staff, however, the nomination of trainees is biased towards men, who occupy positions within the NCWD that are actually subordinate to women's positions. MOWAC, however, has the opposite problem in that men dominate the topmost hierarchy of its administration, and women are relegated to more subordinate positions. Consequently, women appear to lose out to the privileges and opportunities enjoyed by male staff in both organizations. As discussed in Chapter Three, GAD and GM approaches advocate a transformative approach to development and emphasize the equal participation of men and women in efforts to promote women's status. These staffing compositions, however, demonstrate that the tenets of the GAD and GM approaches are not being prioritized in the internal organization of either the NCWD or MOWAC (Young, 1993: 136; 1997: 51). No doubt, this has an effect on their external operating procedures, and their ability to influence state policy processes and practices related to women and gender.

Specific examples of problems encountered by the NCWD and MOWAC follow, and point at the protection of 'unqualified' staff in organizations, and the marginalization of qualified staff members. As indicated above, the appointment of men in MOWAC to the senior positions of Chief Director, accountant and advisor was influenced by civil service policy, which NCWD staff members questioned.⁶ As one NCWD member noted,

⁶ The appointment of men to MOWAC was based on qualifications, seniority, or prior contact with the civil service.

“The advisor to the Women’s Minister is a man, and the Minister listens to him more than to women” (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 07/08/2002).⁷ Another pointed out the anomaly of having a man, who had no formal gender qualifications or experience, representing MOWAC at meetings. According to this individual, when the advisor was questioned about why he was the MOWAC representative, “He [claimed that he] was gender sensitive, because he had a wife and children. He did not even have a gender expert on his [consulting] team” (Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002).

Admittedly, the advisor at MOWAC is a bureaucrat who is developing the institutional and organizational structure of MOWAC, yet he is in a position to represent MOWAC and, thus, women’s issues at state meetings. The Chief Director is also a bureaucratic administrator and the gatekeeper for the MOWAC Minister.⁸ Women’s groups and the NCWD must make their recommendations to the Minister through him (Female, NCWD staff member, #4 08/08/2002). At one level of abstraction, the presence of men within MOWAC could be seen as promoting the gender goals of GAD; at other levels, this male presence in a so-called WGO only serves to reinforce the privileged position that men occupy within the state’s governing structures (Charlton et al., 1989: 3-4; Elson, 1998: 155; International Women’s Democracy Centre, 2008). However, being a woman is no guarantee that a person will address women’s concerns (Goetz, 1997: 7; Crewe and Harrison, 1998: 65; Chappell, 2002: 85). This is especially true of the roles of feminist politicians and the people that the state appoints to WGOs, such as the NCWD and

⁷ The advisor is an institutional development expert not a gender expert. He was appointed before the Ministry was set up and assigned to help structure MOWAC.

⁸ The Chief Director is a civil servant and has administrative functions in the Ministries and government departments. Although the position is not political, usually it tends to be so because implicitly Chief Directors have to work for the government of the day.

MOWAC. That is, whether or not women have access to the state from the ‘insider’ or ‘outside’ channels to the state, they and the state require the political will to help women.

It is apparent that women in Ghana who are situated within WGOs, such as MOWAC and the NCWD, do not wield sufficient power on their own to be regarded as significant actors in the major decision-making processes that directly affect women. As indicated in Vargas and Wieringa’s (1998) model for women’s empowerment, women in Ghana require the political will of feminist politicians to join other women working from within WGOs, that is, those trying to utilize the ‘insider’ channel to the state (Chappell, 2002: 90; Everett et al., 1989). Some participants claimed that some women invited to help the Minister refused to assist her to succeed in delivering MOWAC’s mandate. As one study participant observes:

Since women elites refused to assist the Minister, men [who are described as being gender insensitive], and the old NCWD staff [who are alleged to be corrupt] moved in to help. By the time some women had agreed to assist the Minister, men and the old NCWD staff had already influenced her vision. [She observed that] the actors have changed but the [political] priorities have not. Just, like the NCWD leadership, the Minister also has a political agenda. (Female, Other from a donor #1, 07/17/2002)

This attitude about MOWAC being unduly influenced by state insiders (e.g., men, former NCWD staff), affects how WNGOs, such as NETRIGHT, see themselves in relation to MOWAC. For example, NETRIGHT’s reputation as a women’s rights activist WNGO could be weakened if the organization is viewed as being aligned too closely with MOWAC (Female, NCWD former staff member #1, 07/10/2002). The perspective of one NETRIGHT member was expressed as follows:

We are interested in a gender policy while the Minister is talking about loans to women. Gender is a technical area so it is not everybody who can work in it. The Ministry should have experts in gender. When a male consultant in the Ministry argued that he is married, has worked with

women and can lead women, it is like saying that somebody who has worked for 20 years in the court should be appointed as a Chief Justice. (Female, NETRIGHT member #2, 09/03/2002)

Since the 1970s, there have always been tensions, regarding the development focus on women, among different categories of women working to improve women's status (Tinker, 1997: 33; Rathgeber, 1990: 490-495). There are differences in how practitioners, advocates and scholars approach women and development issues. Practitioners, those who work within organizations, focus on integrating women into development by giving them credit and establishing small projects for them (Tinker, 1997: 33). Another source of this tension is that while some focus on satisfying what women require to function effectively in the performance of their socially assigned gender roles (practical needs), others focus on the resources women require to transform power relations (strategic needs) (Moser, 1989: 1799). Although both needs are important to women, strategic needs often rank higher among the options available to women to improve their status, and it is the preferred approach in attempts to improve transform gender relations (Ryan, 2009: 324; Beneria, 2003: 167; Blumberg, 1977: 16).

It is difficult to change core functions of organizations (Love, 2007c: 311). One NETRIGHT member compared the similarities of the governing technologies and efforts to enhance women's status under the NDC and NPP governments.

MOWAC is not setting any policy agenda, although, the political environment is free [compared with the period of the NDC government]. There is no law on domestic violence. Gender has not been mainstreamed. Women's leadership is not focused, although it is strong and has the President's ear. (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002)

One male staff member from MOWAC thought the Ministry's composition of staff was appropriate, and argued that, "First, the Ministry has to conform to the Ghana Civil

Service guidelines before focusing on women and/or gender experts” (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002). These guidelines consist of governing technologies and, therefore, they usually reflect state policy priorities and the techniques for promoting them (Schacter and Haid, 1999: 3; Love, 2007c: 310). The new MOWAC structure follows bureaucratic principles, such as meritocracy, a hierarchical structure and established institutions (Turner et al., 2007: 206). These principles lack creativity, and are usually constraining and somewhat insensitive to women’s concerns (Ferguson, 1984: 23; Sweetman, 1997: 5; Goetz, 1997: 7). The requirement that MOWAC should follow the established civil service bureaucratic administrative structure results in further entrenching a structure that disadvantages and subordinates women, which is precisely what women are fighting to transform (Elson, 1998; Rao and Kelleher, 2002; Beneria, 2003; Fraser and Tinker, 2004a: xxvii). This problem exists, though, because the civil service protects the interests of its personnel, missions, functions and its standardized operating procedures (Love, 2007c: 310). A rigid reliance on such entrenched bureaucratic procedures reflects unchanging policies, and effectively reduces creativity and flexibility, which could promote new awareness to enhance gender sensitivity in governing technologies, and increase the inclusion of a triangle of actors in decision-making processes, as suggested by Vargas and Wieringa (1998).

It is important to note that staffing MOWAC with men is not new to women’s governmental organizations (WGOs) in Africa. In fact, men sometimes outnumber women, as was the case in Nigeria’s WGOs in August 1997 – which had 270 men to 186 women (Mama, 2000a: 22). Mama does not indicate the positions held by the men but, in the case of MOWAC, men occupy positions in its top echelon. Arguably, men may be

seen as having the skills to perform the job, but women, as a marginalized group, should be encouraged and given ample opportunity to participate and work their way up to the upper ranks, especially, as it is their Ministry (Johnson et al., 2004: 8; Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 1998: 223; Canadian International Development Agency 1985).

Individuals function within familiar existing structures (Love, 2007c: 314). When women have the opportunity to lead, each woman leader pursues her own political party agenda (Mama, 2000a: 19-20; Tsikata, 2000: 21-22). This is due, in part, to the controlled political environment, as well as to differences in ideological and/or political party affiliations. As the following statement by one study participant charges, “The political actors have changed, but the policy priorities of the actors have not. The Minister of MOWAC [like Mrs. Rawlings] also has a political agenda” (Female, Other, #3, 07/31/2002). Similarly, one NETRIGHT member proffered that, “Mrs. Kufuor [the President’s wife] has a foundation for women, and has started taking money [just like Mrs. Rawlings]. Nothing changes. There are new politicians, but they come in to do the same things” (Female, NETRIGHT member #2, 07/31/2002). While ideally MOWAC offers women an opportunity to utilize an ‘insider’ channel to the state to change state policy-making processes, at the time of this study, it was largely an ineffective body that did little to convince the various groups (WGOs, WNGOs, WQUANGOs and others) to come together for their common cause – that is, to improve women’s social, economic and political status, as the discussion in the following section on Women’s Quasi Non-Governmental Organization (WQUANGO) and Women’s Governmental Organizations (WNGOs) indicates.

Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organization (WQUANGO)

The 31st December Women's Movement (31DWM)

The state relies on networks to govern (Bayart, 1993: 228), but power is not as diffused as postulated by Foucault (1991). State affiliated women's organizations wield more power than those which are not. The most controversial power issue throughout this study is the powerful status position of the 31DWM between 1982 and 2000.⁹ This controversy was due to the fact that during the Rawlings regime, the NCWD had the official mandate to make policy decisions about women, but the 31DWM, a Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organization (WQUANGO), gradually usurped the NCWD's role from 1982 to 2000. The 31DWM role was the governing technology the NDC government used to control and marginalize the NCWD and other women's organizations.

Since its establishment in 1982, the 31DWM operated as an unregistered 'WNGO' until 1991 (Male, Other, civil servant #4, 09/02/2002). As indicated previously, it was closely affiliated with the governments in power from 1982 to 2000, due to the fact that the leader of 31DWM, Mrs. Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, was the wife of the military Head of State, Flight Lieutenant John Jerry Rawlings from 1981 to 1992 (See Table 5: 1 in Chapter Five). Rawlings later ruled as a democratically elected President and head of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) from 1992 to 2000. Ghanaians, academics and international institutions recognized the 31DWM as the most powerful women's organization in the history of Ghana, with regard to the mobilization of women through state structures (Ibrahim, 2004: 2; Oquaye, 2001: 61).

⁹ The 31DWM derived its name from the 31st December 1981, the date on which Rawlings staged a military coup and came to power

The 31DWM is purported to be a WNGO, and the Government of Ghana requires all NGOs to register with the Department of Social Welfare (Male, Other, civil servant #4, 09/02/2002). However, the 31DWM as well as some other NGOs (i. e., those with access to the state via an insider channel due to their political partisanship) did not register and flouted the regulation, because of their political backing from the PNDC government.

Through its successful exploitation of different channels to the state, the 31DWM's role in reinforcing and extending the state's apparatus for the governing of women remains unparalleled. By 1989, the NCWD's role was limited to coordinating women's groups, while the 31DWM became its executive arm (Brydon and Legge, 1996: 127). One study participant from the 31DWM attributed the 31DWM's dominance to the identification, by the Workers' Defence Committee (WDC), of administrative malpractices within the NCWD that were brought to the attention of the Rawlings government, which subsequently invited the 31DWM to monitor the NCWD's activities (Female, 31DWM staff member #3, 08/14/2002). The Workers' Defence Committee was a governing and revolutionary organ, and a state-watchdog at workplaces during the Rawlings Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) military regime (Ray, 1986: 79). Brydon and Legge (1996: 18) describe the Workers' Defence Committee, headed by men, "as vehicles of revenge, malice and self-aggrandizement" (on behalf of the government) during the Rawlings regime. Notwithstanding the possible involvement of the WDC in the initial marginalization of the NCWD, the major influence limiting its operations was the rapid rise of the 31DWM, which worked directly with the Rawlings regime to achieve control over women's issues and resources directed towards women's concerns. While the 31DWM veered into the policy-making role of the NCWD, its

leader, Mrs. Rawlings wanted a minimal project implementation role of the NCWD (Female, NCWD staff member #4, 07/08/2002).

Although the 31DWM was established on May 15, 1982, it was only registered as an NGO with the Department of Social Welfare on June 14, 1991, eight years after its inception (Male, Other, civil servant #4, 09/02/2002). The PNDC, the military government that 31DWM supported, declared its intentions to take part in the elections of 1991. Therefore, it is significant that the belated registration of the 31DWM as an NGO coincided with the period when the country was preparing to return to constitutional rule, after eleven years of military rule headed by Rawlings. The 31DWM's formal registration was meant to declare its NGO status, which would secure its legitimacy as an NGO, despite its contrary status as a WQUANGO during the PNDC government. Despite the 31DWM's registered status, it did not submit any financial statements or program activity reports to the Department of Social Welfare from 1982 to 2000 (Male, Other, civil servant #4, 09/02/2002). Yet, during this period, the 31DWM kept reporting to its foreign donors, but not to the appropriate government financial department or to the NCWD, which had oversight of the 31DWM's activities as part of its official mandate (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002). The 31DWM's preference for foreign donors was important, and it meant that if the 31DWM wanted to secure funding from these donors, as with any other WNGO, it had to be in good standing in terms of its financial accountability (Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002). The Executive Director of the NCWD and the NCWD Governing Board did not question the 31DWM because of the latter's affiliation with the NDC government. Despite the 31DWM's utilizing a privileged insider channel and its close relationship to the Rawlings regime,

foreign donors recognized the 31DWM as a civil society organization. Donors funded its activities as an NGO, because of its declared NGO status (Addo-Adeku, 2002: 6) and, because, in their view, it was the most active women's organization. According to Brydon and Legge (1996: 18), however, donors initially preferred to fund other NGOs, because of the anomalous status of the 31DWM as a WQUANGO. This preference changed over time when the 31DWM emerged as the most visible women's organization in Ghana, largely through the manipulations of the state.

The 31DWM's Access to Resources

The 31DWM's unique relationship with the Rawlings government from 1982 until January 2001, categorized it as an organization that accessed Everett et al.'s (1989) "insider" channel to the state. When the NPP government came to power in 2001, the 31DWM was pushed to the "outsider" channel. When 31DWM had an insider access to the state, some of its workers were civil servants on government payroll. According to Oquaye (2001),

[The] 31DWM specialized in exploiting state resources and claiming undue credit. Particularly, thousands of school teachers were compulsorily seconded from the Ministry of Education to work in its day nurseries spread throughout the nation. The Ministry paid the teachers and the 31DWM took the credit for what was done. Hundreds of civil servants were seconded in a similar fashion to help build an empire for the First Lady. It was necessarily discriminatory since, apart from the wife of the President, no person could enjoy such a state facility. (Oquaye, 2001: 61)

A civil servant from the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), the administrative District for the capital, recounted how the 31DWM operated using government staff members and other resources.

The 31DWM collected fees without rendering any accounts to the AMA. When the building used for the 31DWM school ran down, [the] 31DWM called on AMA to repair it. AMA also paid the water and electricity bills for the schools. The AMA recruited and paid teachers, cooks, cleaners, and watchmen for the 31DWM. They used state funds, but the profit was not ploughed back [into running the school]. (Male, Other, civil servant #6, 09/09/2002)

Although teachers on secondment were normally paid by the receiving organization, in this case by the 31DWM it was the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the AMA that paid teachers employed by the 31DWM. One GES staff member described the post-2000 dilemma of the GES regarding assistance to the 31DWM. “When they [NDC] were in power [we] had verbal instructions from the Minister of Education to either grant or extend the years of secondment of teachers to the 31DWM. Now that the NDC [government] is out of power, we cannot help them [i.e., the 31DWM]” (Female, Other, #1, 09/02/2002).

The state used its force to promote the image of the 31DWM (Johnson 1995: 275). Several senior civil servants suggest that civil service employees (e.g., teachers, nurses) flouted government regulations when they went on secondment to the 31DWM for more than four years instead of the four years limit (Obeng-Adofo, 2002; Ghana Civil Service Law/PNDCL, 1993: 24; Obeng-Adofo, n.d, 101-103; Sai, 1986: 1; Arthur, 1980: 1). They succeeded in doing this because they had the consent of those in positions of authority within the NDC regime. This relationship defies the policy of these organizations to separate the state and NGOs in development processes (Edward et al., 2000; Grabel and Chang, 2004). According to 31DWM participants, NGOs in developed countries get support from their national governments, and therefore, there was nothing wrong with an NGO being funded by the government (Female, 31DWM #3, 08/14/2002).

While it is true that governments in developed countries fund NGOs, unlike the 31DWM, these NGOs use the ‘outsider’ autonomous channel to get access to the state; they are not led by politicians (or their spouses) (Smillie, 1993: 16-18). The 31DWM’s status as an organization that utilized multiple channels to get access to the state enhanced its communication with the state, multilateral organizations and other donors more than that of any other WNGO in Ghana (Fallon, 2004: 76).

Before 2001, the 31DWM enjoyed privileges that other WGOs and WNGOs did not enjoy (Addo-Adeku, 2002: 4; Oquaye, 2001: 61; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 24). Its sudden change in status is significant when one examines governing technologies of the state and the privileges that it had as an insider (i.e., a WQUANGO) under the NDC regime, as well as the challenges that it faced as an outsider under the NPP government (i.e., WNGO). This sudden shift in the 31DWM’s status and privileged access before 2001 had an impact on Ghanaian women, as after 2001 31DWM’s projects at the grassroots level were either not functioning well, or stopped due to a lack of access to resources from the NPP government and from donors. Also, it is evident that there is hostility from the public toward the 31DWM (personal observation). In the minds of many Ghanaians, including the participants of this study, the 31DWM has been substantially reduced in status and influence, and is essentially defunct as a WNGO. The 31DWM’s experiences stand in stark contrast to that of NETRIGHT, a coalition of WNGOs in Ghana that has had only limited access to the state (i. e., via the “outsider” channel) since 1999, as the discussion below reveals.

Women's Non-governmental Organizations (WNGOs)

Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT)

Coalition building is the current technique for promoting social change (Cakmak, 2007: 1; Love, 2007c: 318). NETRIGHT, a WNGO, employs this technique, and feminists have marked its significance in improving women's status (Beneria, 2003: 168; Antrobus, 2004: 144). NETRIGHT is different in terms of its overall aim, composition and structure when compared to the NCWD, MOWAC or 31DWM. Established in 1999 as the first and only women's rights movement in Ghana, some of its members admit that it is made up of elite women. Specifically, NETRIGHT is a coalition of NGOs formed about five years after Ghana adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) (NETRIGHT, 2002: 6).¹⁰ Its stated mandate is to promote women's rights and social transformation through participation in national policy dialogue on poverty reduction policies and programs (e. g., PRSP), and to submit papers on women to the National Development Planning Commission (Capacity Org, 2008: 1). NETRIGHT plays the role of a civil society organization, which monitors the government and advocates effective governing practices and processes, and the proper implementation of the Beijing PFA (1995). The NCWD's weak capacity to implement the PFA in Ghana motivated some elite Ghanaian women to form NETRIGHT. Its formation coincides with the new governing technology that focuses on civil society as a central actor in the development process (Fisher, 1997: 439; Edwards et al., 2000: 1; Love, 2007d: 68).

¹⁰ As of 2002, the 14 member NGOs constituting NETRIGHT were: 1. Ark Foundation, 2. Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre, 3. Third World Network, 4. Action Aid, 5. Abantu for Development, 6. Women's Studies Programme, 7. SNV (Netherlands Development Organization), 8. Advocate for Gender Equity, 9. Wildaf, 10. Federation of Women Lawyers, 11. Women's Initiative for Self Employment, 12. General Agricultural Workers Union of the Trade Union Congress, 13. Multi-disciplinary African Women's Health Network, 14. Women in Broadcasting. NETRIGHT now has over 40 member organizations (Dawuni, 2009: 1).

Considering the reasons for establishing NETRIGHT and the abilities and experience of its members, the organization offers Ghanaian women a glimmer of hope in their policy negotiations. NETRIGHT represents a strong civil society organization that can present women's interests to the state and advocate for the state's improved commitment to women. Such NGOs are regarded as a source of people's power in civil society's efforts to transform institutions (Love, 2007d: 71). One participant stated, "Contact NETRIGHT. It is the *real* NGO" (NCWD former staff member #1, 07/10/2002). Given its status as a WNGO and representative civil society organization, it is important to examine NETRIGHT's experiences with the state and donors in order to understand the challenges (i. e., emerging from governing technologies of the state and women's organizations themselves) that autonomous woman's organizations face.

Despite the participation and transformation oriented mandate, NETRIGHT is not very popular among some study participants (Fieldnotes, June to September, 2002). Many participants expressed concerns about its radical ideas, and the domineering nature of some of its members. This radical approach is a feature of feminists who operate outside the state (Kantola, 2006: 6). Other challenges emanate from its lack of well-defined avenues for inclusion, and its weak collaboration with other organizations supporting women. The goal of NETRIGHT's elite women members is to act as a watchdog for women. However, it is limited in its ability to do this, as NETRIGHT does not have access to resources from the state or from major foreign donors to support its activities. The major resource that the organization has at its disposal is its well-educated and professional women members (academics, lawyers, etc.). Several of these women are gender analysts who are critics of government policies, but they do not always have

the time to participate in NETRIGHT's advocacy work, because some are students and others are full-time employees. Not only are they knowledgeable about recurring theoretical debates and research on women and gender, but they also actively contribute to these debates and knowledge construction on issues, such as the role of the state and multilateral organizations in development processes focusing on women and gender concerns. These women are, thus, well aware of the criticisms against the state and the multilateral organizations in terms of lapses in their policies related to women, that is : manipulative governing technologies, the government's rhetoric of focusing on women; and, its unfulfilled promises to improve women's social, economic and political status (The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004).

Feminist civil servants use trade unions to lobby the state effectively in their attempt to counteract state control (Chappell, 2002: 93), which is a feature of NETRIGHT's composition. The composition of NETRIGHT's members reveals that some are civil servants (i. e., General Agricultural Workers Union of the Trade Union Congress, and Women in Broadcasting – which is state run). As NETRIGHT members occupy both the position of insiders (i. e., civil servants) within the state, as well as outsiders, they have direct access to the state and understand state bureaucratic procedures. The location of NETRIGHT members in various governmental and non-governmental organizations enhances their chances of success in promoting women's issues through the triangle of empowerment model put forth by Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 5). These NETRIGHT member NGOs satisfy one of the conditions of Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 5) triangle of empowerment, such that the heterogeneity of membership in this women's movement is effective for engaging with the state because it brings

together different women's groups. Those who are not civil servants within NETRIGHT are individuals and NGOs that are located outside the state, and who are thus forced to pursue 'outsider' and 'autonomous; channels to get access to the state to lobby for women issues (Everett et al., 1989: 189).

Everett et al.'s (1989) analytical model for examining women's engagement with the state, acknowledges that women who pursue the outsider and autonomous channels develop their own political economy. Everett et al.'s (1989) conception of political economy suggests that women raise funds for themselves and avoid funds from donors and the state. NETRIGHT's autonomous status is the most significant factor that separates it from the other women's organizations studied. NETRIGHT used the autonomous channel to get access to the state for three reasons: first, in order to avoid state domination and the utilization of state resources, and also the demands that donors make on donor recipients (Stewart and Taylor, 1997: 212). Second, despite the transformative value of conflict (Foucault, 1991), NETRIGHT members did not want to be involved in the conflict-oriented politics of the NCWD and the 31DWM during the latter part of NDC regime and at the start of the NPP regime. Third, NETRIGHT could not establish a good working relationship with MOWAC, early on, due to the two organizations' conflicting perceptions of women's issues. Therefore, NETRIGHT decided to work on its own. NETRIGHT's members accepted the state's decision to establish MOWAC, only after they realized that MOWAC was already institutionalized.

One participant said that:

Initially we had difficulty in feeling good about MOWAC. In the end we agreed to have the responsibility to make it work when we realized it was going to stay. We got off [to] a bad start [with MOWAC], so the Minister became hostile. We are divided on how to proceed. We do not know

whether to go to the Ministry or [if] the Ministry should come to us.
(Female, NETRIGHT member #3, 09/02/2002)

This experience reveals the potential of the state to exert its power over women, and influence their effectiveness as agents of change. Vargas and Wieringa (1998) suggest that women must have active involvement with the state, but NETRIGHT removed itself from engaging directly with the state, and began to play its advocacy role in the margins. This purposeful distancing is not an effective way of participating in the policy-making processes for which it was established (Capacity Org, 2008). NETRIGHT members recognize the danger in this exit approach, as so much work needs to be done to promote women and gender in Ghana, especially since Ghana did not yet have a definitive gender policy in place at the time of this study. One NETRIGHT participant observed that:

We could be an advisor, coordinator or [NETRIGHT could] monitor activities of groups engaged with women, but if the Ministry has no gender policy we will be going around in circles. [However,] there are many ways to have a working relationship. We will continue writing what we feel is right. We were invited to comment on a national policy. We held a forum and invited the Minister to speak at our meeting. (Female, NETRIGHT member #4, 09/03/2002)

This kind of relationship is creative, but it is not the desired genuine collaboration among women's organizations. Howell and Pearce (2000: 80) observe that enthusiasm by WNGOs that is not backed by a social base cannot be sustained. This social base should be broad to be effective (Antrobus, 2004; Love, 2007d; Cakmak, 2007). There are obvious tensions between NETRIGHT and MOWAC that was not resolved at the time of this study. For instance, although NETRIGHT members claim that their organization is willing to have a relationship with MOWAC, MOWAC challenged this claim when one employee said that the Ministry invited two NETRIGHT members to assist in structuring MOWAC, but, as indicated above, they turned down the invitation (Male, MOWAC staff

1, 07/31/2002). The challenge remains, however, about how NETRIGHT can gain access to the state via its autonomous and outsider channels, and effectively influence the state's policy processes and practices related to women and gender. NETRIGHT's self-exclusion from MOWAC's activities affects its ability to advocate successfully on behalf of Ghanaian women. Despite these shortcomings, NETRIGHT's role has been significant (Capacity Org, 2008); therefore it has the potential for improving women's status. NETRIGHT's experiences as a coalition reveal how important it is to understand the challenges that *real* NGOs face. Also important are the multiple rather than single only channels that women pursue to the state. These channels create more risks for women, which threaten their efforts.

6.3 PURSUING MULTIPLE AND OVERLAPPING CHANNELS TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE STATE

Feminists advise that women expand on their channels and techniques to influence the state (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3; Chappell, 2002: 90). The purpose of this section is to examine how those seeking to address women's issues pursue the state through the various channels open to them, as *insiders* (working within government or WGOs), as *autonomous outsiders* (i.e., from WNGOs), and those that straddle these two positions (e.g., WQUANGOs). Gaining access to the state depends partly on the effectiveness of those in positions of power (i.e., leaders of WGOs, WQUANGO, WNGOs), and how they mobilize themselves and work with others to achieve their objectives. The differing potential for the women in these three types of organizations to deal successfully with the state is affected by the following interrelated factors: 1) their

access to resources; 2) their organizational structures; and, 3) their relationships with government and multilateral organizations.

NETRIGHT does not have access to resources, except through its members, and has a flat organizational structure that does not privilege one member group over others. It does not affiliate with the state because of its outside-the-state approach. The government's response to women's demands and women's collaborative efforts in decision making processes depends, in part, on how women leaders in government and women parliamentarians are able to put pressure on the ruling government to deliver its mandate to women (Female, Other, journalist and a member of parliament #2, 08/12/2002). This requirement is difficult, because African women frequently owe their leadership positions to their political affiliation with the government in power (Mama, 2000a: 20-21), or to privileges gained through their fathers' or husbands' positions (Fatton, 1989: 49). Therefore, as women in positions of power and as insiders, they have mixed allegiances but, most often, they promote the state's agenda, rather than challenge it to improve women's status. This lack of mutual support among women is rooted in governing technologies, and an issue that undermines women's efforts to make demands from the state via women's organizations that fall both inside and outside state structures.

The following section examines these organizations (WGOs, WQUANGO, and WNGOS) more closely in an effort to better understand their capacity to provide strong representation and lobbying for women.

Leaders of WGOs and their Impact on Women

The following discussion outlines how the NCWD (a WGO), was subjected to state interference in the administration of the organization. This is a reflection of how state governing technologies perpetuate state power (Foucault, 1991). For example, the curtailing of the Executive Director's role, discussed above, was due to state interference that allowed the Chairman of NCWD's Governing Board to wield power and perform the executive functions of the NCWD (Brydon and Legge, 1996: 127). Frequent administrative changes within the NCWD meant that decisions were taken without the input of the Executive Director, who was not adequately informed about the issues (Male, government official #2, 08/28/2002). While supporting Brydon and Legge's (1996) assertion above, that the Executive Director was essentially stripped of her powers through state interference, the following statement by one staff member of the NCWD implies that the rapid turnover of NCWD staff (both the Executive Director and Governing Board members) created major problems and hampered the NCWD's efforts to support women.

There were frequent changes of Executive Directors of the NCWD and the NCWD Governing Board, and [the] wrong people were put in positions of power. Most of the Executive Directors were not knowledgeable and some were incompetent. The government appointed people without advertising the positions. Those that were competent had the wrong political orientation so could not last in the position. Also, there was interference from the 31DWM. However, the change in government in 2001 was the worst. (Female, NCWD former staff member #1, 07/10/2002)

While the NCWD civil staff members were limited in the triangle of WGOs, WQUANGOs and WNGOs, leaders were imposed on the NCWD, and if they were politically neutral, the state marginalized or co-opted its official administrative heads.

In ranking levels of women's empowerment that make women's efforts effective, Longwe (cited in March et al., 1999: 93 – see Appendix H) identifies participation as a stage at which marginalized women take control of the decision-making process regarding having control over efforts to improve their status. Such participation can be quite limited within WGOs, especially when clientelism and patronage are the methods used to recruit staff members to carry out particular tasks within the organization. An example of this is when senior people (e.g., Ministers or Executive Directors) randomly select staff members with whom they like to work, thereby signaling that official duties may be assigned on the basis of subjective criteria and personal relationships (within the 'insider' channel), rather than justified on the basis of objective criteria and the qualifications of staff members, as suggested in interviews with both NCWD and MOWAC study participants. Bureaucratic structures, in which WGOs are embedded, are expected to follow the assignment of duties based on impersonal relations (Turner, et al., 2002: 206). When staff members recognize that there is preferential treatment given to some, they are reluctant to assist the selected staff (Female, NCWD staff member #4, 07/08/2002). This problem is complicated by the fact that once institutionalized, such bureaucratic structures (and patronage practices) become instruments of domination (i. e., a governing technology), which rarely change (Ferguson, 1984: 6-10).

It is important to recognize that such practices and processes are alienating for some and detrimental to teamwork and collaboration among staff members. In terms of the restructuring of WGOs in 2001, some NCWD staff members resigned, and other staff members were transferred out of the NCWD national headquarters to NCWD Regional Office to limit their involvement in decision-making processes. Clientelism and

patronage practices marginalize some staff members, resulting in frequent staff turnover and feelings of job insecurity, which ultimately weaken the overall effectiveness of WGOs (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 31). This is a strategic use of “insider” power to oust those perceived as detractors.

Such unofficial bureaucratic procedures constitute effective governing technologies in organizations. Rao and Stuart (1997: 12) describe these unofficial bureaucratic procedures as the ‘deep structure’ of organizations, which are also a source of women’s oppression. Women who use insider channels and feminist politicians to gain access to the state and ostensibly to empower women (e. g. models by Everett et al., 1989; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998) also rely on such deep structure of organizations to succeed in their attempts to marginalize those viewed as opponents or critics. Such marginalizing techniques, however, result in some women further distancing themselves from the state (Caldeira, 1998: 79; Nzomo, 1997: 240). Those who do not leave the state are co-opted.

According to Everett et al. (1989: 189), “co-optation” can be beneficial when properly managed, yet there is the danger that women leaders who are co-opted simply serve the interests of the state. Arguably, both the NDC and NPP governments’ preference for hiring only women that support its political agenda, and the 2001 NPP government’s termination of the Executive Director of the NCWD who the NDC government appointed in 2001 through formal means.¹¹

13. Vargas and Wieringa (1998) suggest a triangle of empowerment model, which brings together feminist politician, feminist women’s movements and feminist civil servants for the purpose of having access to the state with united front.

¹¹ The dismissed Executive Director was a well-educated and a high-ranking civil servant. Until her appointment she had served on the NCWD Governing Board. Although, she was the best candidate at the interview (Male, government official #2, 08/28/2002), the NDC government did not officially appoint her because, according to another civil servant, she was not the NDC government’s choice. The NDC

As noted above, women handpicked as NCWD Executive Directors by the PNDC/NDC governments under Rawlings were not necessarily those who were most competent and interested in women's issues. In fact, some handpicked Executive Directors subsequently resigned from the NCWD after only short terms (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 31). This technology of governance still exists (Male, NCWD staff member #1, 08/15/2002). Between 1980 and 2002, there were nine NCWD Executive Directors who served between one and five years (Male, NCWD staff member #1, 08/15/2002). One NCWD staff member summed up the impact of the frequent change of leaders on efforts to improve women's status as follows:

The new changes affect the structure and status of the organization. Changing leadership naturally affects the staff of the organization. It leads to changes in the functions of the staff and head of the institutions. [Different] leaders have different administrative styles. It signals that the place has been politicized. Those who do not want to be political leave the institution. (Female, NCWD staff member #4, 08/08/2002)

Furthermore, new governments, starting with the Rawlings regime in 1981, generally tend to dissolve the existing NCWD Governing Board and remove the Executive Directors (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 15). In 2001, apparently following previous practice, the NPP dismissed the NCWD Executive Director and also dissolved the NCWD Governing Board, thereby marginalizing the 31DWM and NDC members who had a privileged "insider" role under the Rawlings NDC regime. NPP restructuring of the WGOs left the NCWD in the hands of an Acting Head minus a Governing Board, with the result that the NPP government allocated authority over women's issues to the new

government appointed the Executive Director after it had conceded defeat in 2000 parliamentary and presidential elections. According to the NCWD staff, the NPP government thought she was an opponent being imposed on the new regime so when it came to power, her appointment was terminated.

Minister of MOWAC, thereby positioning MOWAC to usurp the role of the NCWD almost completely.

The state appoints leaders who are political party members, and , therefore, such leaders promote the state's interest. Unlike substantive Heads, acting Heads hold temporary and insecure appointments, and respond to external pressure from the state more than relying on their own initiative. Sai (2002: 44), a senior civil servant in Ghana, observes that even though both acting and substantive heads enjoy the same financial benefits, the difference between them in the Ghanaian civil service is that acting heads live in fear of losing their positions should they challenge the state, so they tend to cooperate with the state. When there are acting Heads, the governing technologies, especially the strategy of impermanency can create docility and/or sycophancy within WGOs, which inhibits the effective promotion of women's issues.

Wangusa (2000: 23) observes that frequent restructuring of the WGOs serves as an obstacle to improving women's status in Africa. This observation underscores the negative impact that numerous changes in the leadership, priorities and operations of Ghanaian WGOs have on women's effective participation in the decisions and policy-making processes that affect them. Frequent changes in leadership, institutional and organizational operations result in a culture of *ad hoc* administrative practices. The lack of administrative success can be attributed to the political orientation of some of the leaders, according to one NCWD staff member (Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002), a perspective also shared by male government officials interviewed. If the organizational culture keeps shifting due to features of leadership¹², this, arguably,

¹² I.e., rituals, commitments, values, image, attitude and socio-political innovative ideas, power structure, leadership and decision making processes (Anonymous, n.d: 12)

undermines the desired systematic institutional and organizational transformation that is beneficial for women and responsive to their concerns (Mama. 2000a: 21).

The views of the NCWD staff members suggest that, while it is critical to have women occupying the “insider” channel, it is essential that the women (and men) working in WGOs have adequate experience and understanding of gender, women’s issues, and technologies that underlie the operation of the state. It is evident that discontinuity in policies, programs and staffing within WGOs, that result from organizational instability obstruct efforts to improve women’s status. Ideally, the relationship between women leaders, the NCWD and the state should be one of co-operation. In practice, however, this somewhat tenuous relationship is a cause for a power struggle within the NCWD and between the NCWD, the state and other women’s organizations. This has led to frequent changes in leaders and, as one NCWD staff member observed, “Frequent changes in the leadership is [sic] a setback to the NCWD. For a Head to be effective, she should serve for at least three years” (Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002). Another commented further on this issue of leadership: “When Heads are appointed from outside the NCWD, they mess up the place. To function effectively, one has to learn about the organization” (Female, NCWD staff member #2, 08/15/2002). In order to ensure that WGOs are staffed properly and have leaders and staff members who are knowledgeable, the appointment period for the Heads of WGOs should be adequately long to allow them time not only to learn about the culture, and the technical, social and political aspects of the organization to be able to function effectively, but also to have sufficient period to monitor and effect positive policy and practical changes, and to enhance organizational stability. This is a contention

supported by some NCWD staff members and NGOs in Ghana as well (Anonymous, n.d: 12). Overall, ineffective policies and troubled leadership limits both women's leaders and the state's accountability to women.

Women Leaders and Accountability

Feminists assume accountability to women enhances organizational efficiency (Goetz, 1997: 22; Zuckerman, 2002: 88). One consequence of state governing techniques that have repeatedly destabilized the efforts and operations of the NCWD is that the NCWD did not submit regular annual reports for a number of years (Fieldnotes, June to September, 2002). This signals that organizational accountability is somewhat weak for this WGO, although it is often a technique employed by military and newly elected governments. In 2001, the NCWD Executive Director, a recent NDC appointment, had started a financial and an annual report, but these reports were shelved by the elected NPP government in 2000 when it terminated the Executive Director's appointment (Fieldnotes, June to September, 2002). One NCWD Women's Monthly Meeting (WOMM) participant attested to this lack of regular record keeping, stating that, "[Most] leaders of the NCWD do not keep records, otherwise most of the information you [i.e., this researcher] are looking for would have been on record" (Female, WOMM participant #1, 07/18/2002). Another said that some leaders treat official files as personal documents, and do not allow other staff members to have access to them (Male, NCWD staff member #1, 07/15/2002).

Many state departments and civil society organizations were politicized during the Rawlings regime based on political party affiliations (Sandbrook and Oelbaum, 1999: 20-

21; Oquaye, 2001: 53). This practice continues under other regimes as a technology of governing civil society. One NCWD staff member argued that the politicization of WGOs in Ghana is not likely to change, since they involve civil servants, and the appointments in the Ghanaian civil service become increasingly more political as one gets closer to the top in his/her career (Female, NCWD staff member #2, 08/15/2002). This politicization is one of the governing technologies that the state uses to achieve its goals. Alongside political partisanship in WGO appointments, another issue raised by study participants that they believed had an impact on the effectiveness of WGOs is ethnic group membership, and opportunities to listen and pay attention to women's concerns.

Ethnic Affiliation and Listening to Women's Voices

Study participants thought ethnic affiliation or the lack of it is one of the technologies used in governing women. However, the actual number of people losing their jobs in the NCWD because of ethnicity is negligible, which supports Fallon's (2003: 536) findings that ethnicity does not play a crucial role in dealing with women's concerns in Ghana. Only three of the NCWD staff members cited ethnicity as a critical issue with regard to appointment of leaders in the restructuring of the WGOs in 2001. In their view, the termination in 2002 of the NDC-appointed NCWD Executive Director by the NPP regime, after only a year's service, was due to the fact that she was not from the same region as the President of the NPP government who was in power.¹³ Due to the power

¹³ Although, the NCWD Executive Director was not from the same ethnic group as the Presidents in the NDC or the NPP government; she did come from the same region as the President in the NDC. Critics perceived that as a form of alliance based on ethnicity. Despite this alleged alliance, the Executive Director was not the NDC government's initial choice.

struggle in the past, with the changeover of government, NCWD staff members had hoped for more effective cooperation and collective action with the establishment of MOWAC. The staff had hopes of being listened to by the women's Cabinet Minister since MOWAC was created to promote women's channels of communication with the state, as indicated in the comments of one NCWD staff member.

According to people, the Minister will listen to women's problems, but to me it is the same old problem. We now get directives from the Minister through the [Acting] Executive Director. If the staff members are not assigned duties then they become idle; which leads to a lack of job satisfaction and low morale. (Female, NCWD staff member # 2, 07/15/2002)

Although it is a new arm of the state dealing with women, MOWAC emerged late in the state's gender mainstreaming process, but it is still modeled on Ghana's Civil Service bureaucratic structure, with its well-defined channels of communication that exclude effective bottom-up participation. The discussion below focuses on broad mandates of leaders as a governing technology.

Women Leaders and Broad Mandates

One technology of governance is that there are too many responsibilities placed on leaders and women whose work involves promoting women's status (Afshar and Barriento, 1998: 7). For instance, a serious restriction in MOWAC's ability to fulfill its mandate on women is directly related to the merger of two departments - the NCWD and the National Commission on Children - under MOWAC. These two demanding and differing sets of responsibilities keep the Minister more occupied than she should be (Male, government official #2, 08/28/2002). When comparing the old administrative structures with the reorganization under MOWAC, NCWD staff members observed that

the Minister's busy schedule was no different from that of previous leaders of the NCWD. Despite their busy schedules, former NCWD Executive Directors did not delegate authority to staff members nor assign them duties either, because these leaders wanted to be in charge of every administrative process and monitor the staff members' performance personally (Female, NCWD former staff member #1, 07/10/2002). These methods reveal that NCWD leaders either lack the understanding and willingness to delegate power and assign duties, or that they use such techniques to maintain control over staff and activities. No matter what the underlying rationale is, this strategy undermines the proper utilization of the skills of all staff, and does not allow them to participate fully in the work aimed at addressing women's concerns or to take on supervisory roles (Female, NCWD former staff member #1, 07/10/2002). This unofficial, non-bureaucratic and top-down approach also creates tensions among NCWD staff members, because it is non-participatory.

As Mohan (2002: 51) indicates, participation is about "the powerful fighting to retain their privileges", which results in conflict. This conflict is characterized by an underlying tension that, while it may not be confrontational, it does promote domination and instill fear among the less powerful (Brym et al, 2007: 186). Del Rosario (1997: 77) and Yeatman (1990: 80) also observe that, women who work within state are generally silent over such tensions in order to preserve their state jobs. When people are silent, though, power is always reconstituted to benefit the dominant class (Kelly and Duerst-Lathi, 1995: 259), which, ultimately, increases the power of those who are already powerful. This "culture of silence" in WGOs and the many duties of leaders were sources of power, not only evident in the operations of the NPP government, but also for the

Ghanaian WQUANGO (i.e., the 31 DWM) and its leader (Mrs. Rawlings), who were even described as intimidating other women during the Rawlings regimes, and revealed in this study and others (Fallon, 2003: 353).

WQUANGO Leaders and Insider-Outsider Channels

The success of local NGOs depends on the quality of their leaders (Michael, 2004: 151). Almost all of the participants in this study identified the strong leadership qualities of Mrs. Rawlings, who headed up the 31DWM. They felt she possessed these qualities because of her position of privilege and the sense of security it provided during her husband's regime. There were no governing and administrative boundaries to limit Mrs. Rawlings' activities (Aubrey, 2001: 87). Although Mrs. Rawlings was actively involved in her work, her presence intimidated NCWD staff members and some clashed with her in the field (Female, Other, #2, 07/31/2002). Fallon (2003: 535) supports this notion of her intimidating nature, which was particularly evident when Mrs. Rawlings was dealing with other women's organizations. Being a First Lady in an authoritarian regime allowed her to use her intimidation to silence alternate voices not only among women, but also among Ghanaian citizens (Aubrey, 2001: 102). What is so contradictory here is that President Rawlings, her husband, preached against the 'culture of silence' that results from intimidation in Ghana, claiming that the inclusion of voices would support democratic development (Brydon and Legge, 1996: 23)

Despite having influence due to her position as First Lady, the President of the 31DWM was a politically strong woman compared with other First Ladies, not only in Ghana's political history but also throughout Sub Saharan Africa (Ibrahim, 2004: 3). Her

husband's position, her wide scope of networking, and her own leadership skills contributed to her recognized leadership. As a former student leader during her undergraduate studies, Mrs. Rawlings maintained the support of others who had been her friends when they were students, and who worked with her. Over and above these factors, some women civil servants, politicians and a Minister of State supported Mrs. Rawlings in the performance of her leadership roles (Hutchful, 2002: 194). For instance, one 31DWM General Secretary was at the same time a Deputy Minister of State in the NDC government. She performed these roles simultaneously. The composition of Mrs. Rawlings' supporters reveals the 31DWM's access to and exploitation of multiple and overlapping channels to the state to dominate other women's groups. As a result of these opportunities, Mrs. Rawlings was able to mobilize women on a massive scale, and with unrivalled success among women's organizations in the country.

Unlike the lack of support for other women leaders, which plagues the other women's organizations studied, loyal 31DWM members said they do not have any problem working with their leaders, particularly with their President. This view of the 31DWM members could be attributed to the culture of silence and the docility it generates or that the participants were suspicious about the research. One of those who support the 31DWM said "the Head of the 31DWM has been very helpful. She is interested in the work and it has been a pleasure working with her" (Female, 31DWM member #2, 08/13/2002). Another acknowledged her strength and justified her weakness. "The First Lady is very dynamic. She is human and she might also have shortcomings" (Female, 31DWM member #1, 08/08/2002). Yet, none of them mentioned any particular weakness of the 31DWM President. The 31DWM members'

praise for their leader is either a sign of unity gained through consensus building, patronizing or it can be a way of protecting themselves and the positions they occupy in the organization (i.e., a sign of the ongoing presence of a ‘culture of silence’). The 31DWM members, who were full of praise for their President, looked forward to the NDC party’s re-election to power to continue with their ‘good projects’.¹⁴

Beyond Mrs. Rawlings authoritarian role and her acceptance within the 31DWM organization, she also had an influence politically in the wider public sphere. Aubrey observed that, “The President [of the 31DWM] is an enigma for many. She was not an elected official of the state structure, yet she wields power. She is the wife of the President, yet a woman who has more control than many powerful men [in Ghana]” (Aubrey 2001: 102). Despite Mrs. Rawlings’ influence, the support from her 31DWM team, and the size of her organization and programs, it is important to recognize that Ghanaian women still occupy a low status in society (Ghana Government, 2002d: 4; Yeboah, 1998: 1960). Given that the 31DWM and NDC government at the time of this study were supporting opposing political parties, and had differing agendas, women’s key organizations were unable to collaborate under the NDC regime. This lack of collaboration stems, in part, from the 31DWM’s exclusionary practices (Oquaye, 2002: 61; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 24), and the fact that Mrs. Rawlings combined partisan politics with her stated goal to improve women’s status.

¹⁴ The NDC government was re-elected into power in January 2008. Certainly, the 31DWM will become active and resume work on its projects, but whether it will also marginalize other women’s organizations cannot be determined unless we follow the processes of governance. Mrs. Rawlings has already visited the market to re-establish contact with women.

Mrs. Rawlings used these assets strategically in her relationship with state officials. One government official interviewed for this study commented on her influence, authority in state administration, and her politicization of women's issues.

As a First Lady, when you run people around, that is where the politicization is. The First Lady's position and that of the President of the 31DWM are different. But as a President of an NGO, Mrs. Agyeman Rawlings requested her staff [for the 31 DWM to be seconded] from the civil service. Maybe we [Ghana civil servants] were part of the political problem. You could resist the request [for seconded staff and/or material resources, but only] if you did not care about the consequences. (Male, government official #2, 08/28/ 2002)

Although women should have the freedom (Sen, 1999:203) to pursue their development agenda, this can get complicated by other factors, such as when First Ladies exploit their insider status and privileged access to political channels to influence and control WGOs (Ibrahim, 2004: 3; Tsikata, 2000: 20-23). For example, during the Rawlings regime, there was no clear distinction between Mrs. Rawlings' official and unofficial roles, which was a problem for the participants in this study who were not members of the 31DWM. No one, however, had the courage to confront her about this, because the state used her and the 31DWM in its mobilization of women (Hutchful, 2002: 195). Civil servants ran the risk of losing their jobs, if they ignored her orders. Therefore, her intimidation techniques created fear in people and weakened collaborative efforts, while promoting her own political agenda.

State support for violation of women rights is either through omission or commission (Mackinnon, 2006: 183). The state's support for the 31DWM was through inaction, as it ignored that the majority of 31DWM's staff members were from Ghana's civil service, as indicated above - teachers, nurses and civil servants. While some of them were transferred from the civil service to the 31DWM, they remained on the

government payroll. Others combined their official state duties with their work at 31DWM (Male, government official #2, 08/28/2002). However, it is not uncommon for women to combine their regular work with efforts to improve women's status through additional work in NGOs (Afshar and Barriento, 1998: 7), although such arrangements obviously extend women's workday and increased workload. Some of these state employees also used state vehicles in their assignments with the 31DWM (Male, Other, donor agency member #1, 09/03/2002). The state also bore the travel costs for the President of 31DWM (Sandbrook and Oelbaum, 1999: 21). The state's subsidized costs were great considering the size of her entourage and the frequency of her visits because Mrs. Rawlings was active in the field. A female former 31DWM member described her travels:

As a District Chief Executive, when 31DWM members were going on conferences, we paid their Transport and Travel allowance or fuelled their vehicles [for them to take use for travel to conferences]. When they visited project sites, we gave them vehicles. When their President and her entourage was [sic] visiting the region or district, their expenses were borne by the district or region. Her entourage was always large from Accra and, as she moved into the district [to visit], every [other] nearby district joined. This was done at the expense of the district and region and at the national level too. She was given logistics whenever she wanted to inspect her projects. If 31DWM had paid its staff, it would have collapsed like other NGOs in the country (Female, former 31DWM member #4, 08/10/2002).

These are costs that the state bore on behalf of so-called NGO 31DWM, a practice that clearly justifies this author's use of the term "Women's Quasi-NGO" (WQUANGO) to describe the 31DWM. Bearing the cost of activities and the travels of First Ladies and their organizations is not a practice peculiar to Ghana. Mama (2000b: 21-22) found that First Ladies in sub Saharan Africa, who assume the responsibility for improving women's status, generally take this role on board and get publicity at the cost of the state

and the women who support them. Depending on who is considering the benefits of the 31DWM's easy access to state funding and staffing support in the past, this could be seen as either positive (i. e., securing resources for women) or negative (i. e., misallocation of state funds or privileging one NGO while ignoring others). The annual gross salary of the seconded workers was 228,165,394 Cedis in 2001 (approximately CAD\$ 50,000).¹⁵ If this figure is multiplied by the eight years that the AMA paid the 31DWM staff; it cost the state about CAD\$ 400,000).

The state endures so do its governing technologies (Johnson, 1995: 275), but its allegiance to organizations does not because it is determined by the government in power. When new state appointees to the AMA in 2001 questioned why it (i. e., the state) was responsible for the cost of running the 31DWM day care centres, the AMA stopped paying the teachers. However, during the NDC regime it had been an unquestioned obligation for AMA to pay them.

Our responsibility in the [Accra Metropolitan] Assembly is both administrative and political. We receive political directives, which we cannot challenge. These political directives were verbal. The 31DWM took over the schools during the PNDC [revolutionary] regime. When they (the same government) returned to power in a constitutional regime, [the] AMA could not claim the schools back [but stopped paying the teachers] because it didn't have a constitutional right [to do so]. (Male, Other, from government institution #6, 09/09/2002)

Administratively, verbal directives are powerful governing technologies, because they are used informally to convey state plans that require immediate action, but without written evidence that could be used against the state. One staff member from the Ghana Education Services (GES) said that GES staff members acted upon verbal directives to release teachers to the 31DWM, most often through telephone calls and informal written

¹⁵ Precise costs for government staff secondments (e.g., reallocation of teachers the 31DWM Day Care Centres managed by Accra Metropolis Assembly) to the 31DWM were not available for this study.

notes (Female, Other #1, 09/02/2002). This arrangement reflects the deep structure of organizations, which contradicts the official or formal institutions of bureaucracy outlined by the civil service guiding principles of transparency, justice and fairness (Ghana Civil Service, 2009: 4). Such deep structures are governing technologies used to control women, and helped the 31DWM's mobilization of women.

Governing Technologies and Mobilization of Women

Mrs. Rawlings' approach to women is exemplary of the state's collective force (1995: 275) and Foucault's (1991) pastoral approach to governing in which followers look up to their leader for direction. Those who worked at the District administrative levels also attested to the significance of the leadership and authority of the President of the 31DWM. Praising Mrs. Rawlings was used as a strategy of self-preservation among civil servants and 31DWM members. As one female former 31DWM member¹⁶ described it:

She dictated what should be done to District Chief Executives. If one did not give in to her, one's appointment was terminated. ... Many people thought Konadu [Mrs. Rawlings] virtually ruled the country. (Female, former 31DWM member #1, 08/10/2002)

Mrs. Rawlings' privileged position and access to state resources did not necessarily translate into sustained benefits for all women in Ghana (Yeboah, 1998: 1960; Oquaye, 2001: 61). Rather than being a means to bring women together to work to improve their status, tensions arising from the partisan and top-down style of leadership actually served to divide women. This notion of divisiveness among women is supported by a former

¹⁶ She knew about the operation of the 31DWM because of her experience as a former District Chief Executive in the Rawlings NDC regime. She was a former district organizer of the 31DWM, runs her own NGO and is a senior educationist in Ghana Education Service.

31DWM member, quoted above, whose perceived that opportunities for women to work together were lost, as women with potential leadership skills were too often marginalized by (and within) the 31DWM (Female, 31DWM former member #1, 08/10/2002). The President of the 31DWM not only protected her authority, but also centralized it, which negated the decentralization approach that could have actually enhanced the inclusion of alternative voices and people at the grass roots level (Oquaye, 2001: 36).

The 31DWM largely stifled the initiative of the Ghanaian woman. The movement thought, planned and acted for its membership. It also sowed seeds of unnecessary jealousy and rivalry in a number of women's organizations in our institutions. Several women interviewed by the writer expressed unhappiness about their having been compelled to join the 31DWM and for that matter the NDC. The 31DWM became an instrument of disempowerment of Ghanaian womanhood rather than empowerment. The 31DWM perpetuated the personality cult and members were expected to bow to the First Lady. The leadership was not accountable to anyone because no one could question the all-powerful First Lady of the Republic. The disempowering effect of this movement was seen in the docility it created. All eyes awaited the First Lady to provide the needs of Ghanaian womanhood. It also contributed to the growth of impudence and impunity in the society, as close collaborators and associates perceived themselves as untouchables and acted as such. (Oquaye, 2001: 61)

De la Gorgendiere (1993) and Hutchful (2002: 194) also made similar observations.

Nonetheless, many 31DWM members hold Mrs. Rawlings in high esteem and still accord her the status of the First Lady in her role as 31DWM's President, even though her husband is no longer Head of State. Undoubtedly, this was a factor that actually led to cooperation and a strong sense of group solidarity among those who looked up to her for direction. This group of followers had a common vision, was affiliated to the NDC government and supported Mrs. Rawlings' position of authority and her leadership style. Other leaders of organizations studied lacked this kind of support. For other participants, the 31DWM was a source of income.

Many participants in this study also mentioned that the NDC government engaged the services of some 31WDM women as its informants, and cited the economic reward that 31DWM members received by supporting the state. In difficult economic times, some people are quite strategic and self-serving in their support for or association with the political party in power, as this association offers 'insider' opportunities for them, and access to jobs and other resources not available to 'outsiders'. Although economic hardship motivates some women's political participation and partisanship, it also demonstrates how some women can claim resources for themselves and their families at the expense of poorer women (Caldeira, 1998: 75; Moser, 1993: 207). In fact, being politically neutral and non-partisan can serve to exclude women from important conferences, policy-making discussions and opportunities (Tsikata, 2001a: 265), as experienced by some NETRIGHT and NCWD staff members elite women in this study.

The lack of institutionalization of women's efforts is a challenge that women face (Antrobus, 2004: 137). Due to the transitory nature of government, the authority and sense of entitlement of the 31DWM changed quickly with the election of the NPP government in 2000. Prior to the elections, the 31DWM mobilized women through male and female traditional leaders, a strategy that broadened its base (Addo-Adeku, 2002: 8; de la Gorgendière, 1993: 221). The influence of these traditional leaders had a positive impact on the 31DWM's effort to promote women's status, but it was also a governing technology used to control women. One 31DWM member explained that, as agents of women's mobilization, the 31DWM used traditional political leaders to offset the obstacles that some cultural practices pose for women (Female, 31DWM member #1, 08/08/2002). Yet, NCWD staff members interviewed in this study also observed that it is

women in positions of authority who support the more traditional cultural practices that actually tend to perpetuate women's marginal status.

Within Ghanaian indigenous culture, traditional political leaders¹⁷ are the embodiments of ancestors who are considered as belonging to a community (Brempong, 2001: 2; Gyekye, 1998: 163; Nukunya, 1992: 68). As a result, they command more cultural respect than elected politicians, and their power and authority operate in different ways and spheres of influence in comparison to state based politics. These leaders are a social and cultural political force to reckon with, and showing disrespect for traditional leaders is regarded as disrespect for one's revered ancestors (Gyekye, 1996: 163-164). Since Ghana's independence in 1957, the perception of the state is that traditional political leaders have immense influence in their communities, and are an important means for mobilizing communities towards local and national development goals. This strong influence is due to the fact that traditional political leaders secure resources for their communities by supporting the government of the day; they also act as liaisons between the local government authorities and their communities (Brempong, 2001: 108-109). It is expected that a change in government shifts the political allegiance of traditional leaders, and subtly pressures their subjects to support the new government. Certainly, the role of some traditional leaders leads to cooptation of their members of their communities.

According to Cornwall's (1996: 96) description of levels of people's participation in the development process (discussed in Chapter Two, see also Appendix I), co-optation is the lowest level of participation. Co-optation could, however, be used to enhance

¹⁷ These are political leaders (Chiefs, sub-Chiefs, Queen Mothers, et al.) before the introduction of the western form of government.

women's participation in state decision-making processes (Everett et al. 1989: 189). In the case of the 31DWM, once it co-opted women through traditional political leaders, the women were unable to criticize the state for fear of incurring the displeasure of their local traditional leaders. Both traditional and modern governing administrative structures, therefore, continue to induce women's submission to the state. The use of traditional political leaders to recruit members for the 31DWM was a way of co-opting women (via the 'outsider' channel) to support Rawlings NDC government when it was in power. However, this partisanship and politicizing women's issues through the 31DWM rendered other women's community-based organizations and women's non-governmental organizations (WNGO) in Ghana powerless (Oquaye, 2001: 60). This strategy facilitated 31DWM's co-optation of some civil society women's organizations, and helped to extend the 31DWM's area of influence.

Although not all traditional leaders supported Mrs. Rawlings' leadership, especially if they were involved in the mobilization of women in their own communities, this category was also silent, hence docile. One female traditional leader (a Queen Mother) who had almost 30 years experience of involvement in women's issues, was involved in the preparatory meetings for the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women and was a participant at the conference. At the time of this study, she was a regular participant in the NCWD organized Women's Monthly Meetings (WOMM). In her interview with this author, she highlighted the negative impact on the NCWD Governing Board, because of the attitude of some NCWD leaders as follows:

It is politicians who attend conferences. The Chairperson of the NCWD Governing Board was a staunch 31DWM [supporter], but she used her position for her own personal gains. They [politicians] go to conferences without writing reports [when they return]. They had the

power so their attitude was ‘to report to whom?’ The rest of Ghanaians are not human beings?¹⁸ The conference travels were not discussed at meetings. Most of the time, the 31DWM was in control of women’s travels. [For instance] Konadu [Mrs. Rawlings] was the First Lady, so she was very influential in selecting the women to the [Beijing] conference. She selected some women to be the government delegation. The 31DWM group [instead of the NCWD] became the government delegation. This [selection] resulted in the breakdown of women participants from Ghana. (WOMM participant #1, 07/18/2002)

The fact that WOMM participants were excluded from the discussion of the nomination of delegates to conferences created the impression that conference attendance was the preserve of politicians and 31DWM women, that is, those who have access to the state via various insider channels.

To a large extent, the President of the 31DWM, as the wife of the Head of State, influenced the 31DWM’s partnership with the state and other organizations. In this position, “The First Lady lobbied for both women and the government. When the First Lady traveled, she fed her husband with information on the state of roads and other development issues. It was because of her hard work that her husband held her in high esteem” (Female, 31DWM member #1, 08/08/2002). She performed these lobbying and observer roles in an unofficial capacity. However, due to lobbying at international levels, many of the participants in this study thought that Mrs. Rawlings worked more for her husband and his NDC government than for women. These views imply that the President of the 31DWM was also focused on general development issues, not just on women. It is essential to understand, however, how this focus translates into improving women’s status, as First Ladies in Africa have become increasingly important agents in determining access to development resources for promoting women’s status (Ibrahim,

¹⁸ This statement portrays the perception of WOMM participants that they feel that they are not important enough to be included in discussions about women’s issues that are being addressed at the international conferences.

2004: 3; Tsikata, 2000: 21-22). Their influence has become a governing technology in improving women's status; however, in the long run, some gender analysts regard this influence as obstructing rather than promoting women's efforts (Ibrahim, 2004: 4; Aubrey, 2001: 102; Tsikata, 2000: 21-22). First Ladies carve out political empires for themselves in their husbands' regimes, and, at times, behave as if they have official duties within the state, which causes divisions among women. The First Lady in the 2001-2008 NPP regime became a patron of a women's based organization¹⁹, which was in its formative stage at the time of this study. Nigeria and Ghana stand out among sub-Saharan African countries with regard to the power of First Ladies leading women's organizations. This enables First Ladies to have greater access to resources than other women's organizations, when their husbands are in power, but this also can limit women's political participation (Ibrahim, 2004: 1; Mama, 2002a: 22).

Donor funding is part of governing technology. According to participants, the two major development organizations that funded the 31DWM during the Rawlings regimes were the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the African Development Bank (ADB). Study participants questioned the allocation of these resources, suggesting that the latter should have gone to the NCWD not the 31DWM, as the ADB's preference is to support governmental organizations. During the Rawlings regime, it is evident that the 31DWM usurped the position of the NCWD in terms of access to and control over ADB funding by being closely implicated with the government in power. One 31DWM

¹⁹ This writer made efforts to meet with Mrs. Kufuor, the First Lady in the NPP regime, but due to state protocol and bureaucratic constraints she could not. From the writer's research experience, the First Ladies are not easy to contact, and their inaccessibility is a limitation to other women and, therefore constitute a governing technology. However, the organization focuses on mothers and children, but because of the non-disclosure about this organization during this study, there is no clear understanding of its relationship with MOWAC, and whether or not these two organizations would work together or be in competition for government resources.

member interviewed said that, after the NPP government came into power, she returned to work in the civil service because the ADB funding to the 31 DWM had ended (Female, 31DWM member #2, 09/13/2002). She and other study participants hoped that ADB funding would return to the 31DWM. This is an indication that women, who benefit directly from state support, resist changes that serve to obstruct their personal access to such resources. Often this category of women benefit from the state based on their class or political partisanship, which are sources of divisions and tensions between women and women's organizations. Similarly, the UNFPA stopped its funding to the 31DWM, administered through the UNDP Country Representative in Ghana, on the grounds that its projects should be self-sustaining after having been funded for 10 years (Female, Other, #1, from a donor agency, 07/17/2002). The 31DWM members challenged the decision that they deemed was politically motivated, as a technique of the politics of exclusion in Ghana. When queried about the loss of UNFPA funding, one UNDP staff member interviewed for this study explained that the agreement between the UNDP executive board and the country of Ghana is "to the extent resources are available."²⁰

If international donors do not give us money we cannot give it to NGOs. America withdrew US\$34 million in July [2002], which was a big blow to the UNFPA. We cannot force America to reverse its decision. So how can we have money to give? The money is a voluntary contribution for projects, not [a] subscription [i.e., core funding] for running the staff office. (Male, Other #1, from donor organization, 09/03/2002)

This explanation indicates the tenuous nature of donor funding, and highlights the extent to which NGOs and the state both depend on these resources (Michael, 2004: 109). It also reveals a well coordinated control of foreign donors in collaboration with the state.

²⁰ I did not have access to the document on the funding agreement. The UNDP staff members only read out the portion cited here to me.

To return to the problem of the 31DWM's loss of UNFPA funding – one study participant from the UNFPA argued that the 31DWM had received funding for two five-year project cycles, extended funding that should allow these efforts to reach a level of sustainability. However, 31DWM practices might not actually favour sustainability. As one study participant observed, “The 31DWM weaned projects when they were not at the level of sustainability, but they do not have the staff [now] to go out to the field [to oversee these projects] when given the funds” (Female, Other #2, 07/31/2002). Despite this allegation of the 31DWM weaning projects prematurely, the UNFPA and other donors still funded the 31DWM up to 2000, but without devising any real formal mechanisms to monitor its activities adequately. For example, Sikosma and Kardam (2002: 10) observe that the international development community, including the UNFPA, lacks mechanisms for monitoring efforts to promote women's status. The UNFPA cannot display ignorance of other activities of the 31DWM since 1996 that had amounted to the 31DWM's combining their projects with party politics, but still had secured sources of funding. Based on the nature of women's relationship with the state and multilateral organizations, the actual reason for the UNFPA finally withdrawing funding from 31DWM the funding was because of the change from NDC to NPP government in 2001. One participant described how the 31DWM combined political campaigns with managing the UNFPA project.

The [31 DWM] person who coordinated the UNFPA project stood for elections in 2000, lost and went to Rome. While she was campaigning, nobody was in charge of the project for a year and a half. Because of the election campaigns, when the UNFPA was drawing up the country program in 1999 with all the stakeholders in Ghana, the 31DWM representatives were not regular at the meetings. In 2000, they never asked for advances from the UNFPA because they were busy campaigning. For a whole year, the 31DWM did not collect the money. It

only submitted a proposal when the sources for the funding dried up in 2001 after the NDC had lost the election. In 1995, the same coordinator of the project wrote to the UNFPA that she would be on leave. [During her leave of absence] she campaigned for parliamentary elections in 1995/6 and used the project vehicle [and UNFPA donors knew that she used the vehicle for this purpose]. (Male, Other #2, 09/05/2002)

As indicated in previous discussions, donor funding and the link between the government and donors are governing technologies (Ferguson, 1990), because not only did the 31DWM combine the UNFPA project with party politics, but also its project activities became secondary during political campaign periods. The state and the UNFPA could not stop the 31DWM from abandoning projects during these times. As revealed through this study, donors form alliances with the government in power and set their criteria for funding in support of state interests. The sudden reduction or stopping of donor funding to recipient countries obstructs policy implementation processes. 31DWM's experience with UNFPA shows how major donors not only decide on eligibility for funding, but also control participation in the decision-making process (Michael, 2004: 109; Mohan, 2002: 53). It was based on such factors that NETRIGHT decided against donor funding and adopted a policy of having no single leader or hierarchical structure. Through these strategies, NETRIGHT hopes to mobilize women and influence unchanging actors.

NETRIGHT, Non-Leadership Model and Outsider/Autonomous Channels

NETRIGHT, an umbrella organization for NGOs and individuals, focuses on women, gender and broad development issues such as poverty reduction. NETRIGHT, as a coalition of NGOs, has had leadership and structural administrative experiences different from those of other women's organizations examined for this study. Its

members are proactive, articulate and critics of the undemocratic leadership of WGOs, WQUANGOs, the state and multilateral organizations. To discuss the leadership of NETRIGHT seems to be a contradiction in terms, because NETRIGHT prides itself in operating with a 'flat structure' rather than a hierarchical one – hence, it does not have a single 'leader' as such. The NETRIGHT structure poses challenges for the organization, though, and threatens the ability of NETRIGHT to retain its members. According to the members, NETRIGHT is administered through a rotating Steering Committee to offset the issue of power being concentrated in the hands of only a few members, like those of hierarchically structured, male-dominated organizations that empower only a few people (Stewart and Taylor, 1997: 215; Love, 2007c: 319).

Despite this somewhat egalitarian organization, some of NETRIGHT's members are concerned about the hierarchical power structure within the organization. Some elite NETRIGHT members interviewed in this study (i. e., such as professors, journalists and civil servants), felt marginalized and excluded because they were left out of the organization's decision-making processes. Unlike the exclusionary processes seen in the cases of the 31DWM, NCWD and MOWAC, exclusion in terms of NETRIGHT is not based on partisan politics. Those excluded from the activities of NETRIGHT did not regard those who spearhead its administration and control its decisions as more knowledgeable than other women. One female university professor remarked, "A few people [in NETRIGHT] have hijacked women groups. If you do not see this group, it means you do not know anything about Ghanaian women. The usual question when looking for information on women is, "Who have you talked to?" (Female, Other, university professor, #3, 09/10/2002). This study participant used to attend NETRIGHT

meetings, but stopped ostensibly because she felt that NETRIGHT lacked focus, and because she perceived that some members tried to dominate the organization and its operations.

Like the state and multilateral organizations, it is evident that NETRIGHT is faced with challenges in promoting and upholding democratic participation, which supports the more general critique that NGOs have democratic deficits (Love, 2007d: 71). This concern was supported by another NETRIGHT member who observed that, “Some members have dominated the association, and this has discouraged others from attending our meetings” (Female, NETRIGHT member #1, 07/30/2002). In fact, during my fieldwork a select number of NETRIGHT members’ names kept appearing in my list of those recommended to me to be contacted for interviews. Some of these knowledgeable women did not grant permission to be interviewed, even though I had explained to them that the purpose of my research was to understand the role of women’s organizations in Ghana. Therefore, their views and personal experiences are missing from this study.

While some NETRIGHT members were against the manner in which a few individuals dominated issues relating to gender, others did not see anything wrong with it as some members were unable to participate on a regular basis. “Individual members are working in their [own] organizations. NETRIGHT is a loose organization. Most of the people who initiated it are studying, so they do not have the time. The expectation from the public is too high” (Female, NETRIGHT member #4, 09/03/2002). This view of the public’s high performance expectation of NETRIGHT supports its more widespread concern that society has “unrealistic expectations” of NGOs (Fisher, 1997: 443). It also implies that NETRIGHT does not meet the leadership and development needs of women

across organizations. Another member did not openly admit to dominating the organization (although she was not one of the people who were mentioned as dominating it), but simply said, “Those who do the work [at NETRIGHT] emerge as leaders, but a number of people [in NETRIGHT] are outspoken” (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002). Considering the concerns of the marginalized members who thought that their participation was not fully recognized, being outspoken alone does not always translate into inclusion in the decision-making process.

NETRIGHT relies on volunteer staff, while those who represent the state on women’s issues are paid. NETRIGHT members are committed, but are constrained by both time and financial matters, when attempting to combine work with running the organization (Female, NETRIGHT member #2, 07/31/2002). As a voluntary organization, though, NETRIGHT members do not have sufficient time, money, political influence, and volunteers, and access to the media to be effective (Schaefer and Smith, 2004: 590). This kind of access differs from access to channels, because it involves access to people.

Relying on only a select few to make decisions to improve women’s status was a criticism leveled by some elite women against Mrs. Rawlings (Tsikata, 2000: 265; Oquaye, 2001: 61; Hutchful, 2002: 194). Yet, some members view NETRIGHT’s flat organizational arrangement as a limitation, because still most decision making is concentrated in the hands of a small select group of women. The centralization of authority in a segment of NETRIGHT reduces the enthusiasm for participation. It is important to identify the centralization of authority and the lack of time that limits the involvement of the elite in theorizing about women (Manuh, 2007: 142) and non-elite

poor women at the grassroots level in Ghana (DISCAP, 2002: 4) and elsewhere (Afshar and Barrientos, 1998: 7; Buvinic, 1989: 1045). This organizational challenge is not unique to NETRIGHT, but it is a feature of many development oriented NGOs (Edwards et al., 2002: 1). In the case of women's NGOs (WNGOs), for instance, women experience similar challenges with regard to sacrificing their time to running NGOs, because time spent on their involvement is unpaid for (Afshar and Barrientos, 1998: 7).

NETRIGHT's experience implies that those who sacrifice their time emerge as leaders. Therefore, some members become leaders based on their knowledge. Others may sacrifice their time for their involvement, but are not perceived as knowledgeable. Knowledge about Ghanaian women has become the preserve of a few women perceived as 'experts'. In Ghana, the exclusion from the construction of knowledge on women and gender issues exists because those newly entering these debates are labeled "small girls" (Brydon and Legge, 1996: 129).²¹ Access to resources and being part of an already organized community enhances participation (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999: 8-12). NETRIGHT, though, has neither this community advantage nor a sound organizational capacity, and lacks the resources to enhance its members' collaborative efforts, although they started offering Ghanaian women a glimmer of hope as a means of mobilizing women in a non-partisan way.

When development fails, those most affected are regarded as being at risk, and often made responsible for correcting the impact of the failure (Parpart, 1995; Lupton, 1999). Lemke (2007) notes that such 'victims' lack the resources to support their efforts.

²¹ In the cultural context of Ghana, younger women are expected to defer to senior women, and this reference to 'small girls' reinforces this cultural expectation, despite the obvious contradiction it presents to NETRIGHT's goal of pursuing women's equal status and rights.

It is evident that participation by both NETRIGHT and individuals may be differently limited because of a lack of resources, whether it be time, personnel or funds. Those who work with the government, or universities, and elite women are at an advantage because they are generally able to organize their work so that they can make time for the meetings. Some of those in the universities, though, complain about the constraints of having to combine gender work with their teaching and research responsibilities (Manuh, 2007: 142). Three important issues concerning women's involvement that cannot be overlooked relate to: (1) the amount of time at one's disposal for participation; (2) an individual's leadership skills (e. g., verbal and written skills; awareness of the issues; ability to network); and, (3) a member's status in society. Arguably, NETRIGHT's constraints limits its ability to mobilize women on a large scale to participate effectively in policy-making process in ways that will weaken governing technologies in order to influence actors who are resistant to change.

6. 4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The discussion above helped us to understand the relationship between the state, women's organizations and multilateral organizations in attempts to promote women's status, state governing technologies and experiences of women's organizations. It also reveals the various channels that women's organizations pursue to engage with the state (insider, outsider, autonomous), state reactions to women, women's reactions to the state, and how power remains in the hands of the already powerful. The distinctions among women's organizations with regard to these channels are both within and between organizations. All three categories of women's organizations - the 31DWM (a

WQUANGO), the NCWD and MOWAC (WGOs), and, NETRIGHT (a WNGO) - used multiple and overlapping channels to either avoid or gain access to state material resources and decision-making and policy-making processes. This study reveals that none of these women's organizations have been able to combine these channels in sufficiently effective ways that would enhance efforts to improve women's status during periods of changing regimes. The involvement of feminist politicians, as seen in the women's 'triangle of empowerment' model presented by Vargas and Weiringa (1998), is utilized by organizations closely affiliated to the state.

To be sure, a WQUANGO such as the 31DWM was able to rely on its direct access to politicians and donors in order to pursue its agendas during the Rawlings PNDC and NDC regimes. The NCWD and MOWAC (both WGOs) also relied on the state, but at the time of this study they were not as strong as the 31DWM, and were constrained by their positioning within bureaucratic state structures. However, with the arrival of the NPP government in 2001, and the weakened state and foreign donor support for the 31DWM, MOWAC and the NCWD cannot boast of a broad based civil society and strong state affiliation. The 31DWM's and Mrs. Rawlings' access to the state was very effective, but only in the short run. The NCWD has not been effective since 1982 due to the presence of the 31DWM, which essentially usurped its role. MOWAC is more powerful than the NCWD because of its political affiliation to the NPP government (after 2001), while NETRIGHT is the least powerful women's organization, because it is not state affiliated, and is uncertain about how to structure itself to satisfy its NGO membership.

All of the organizations have leadership challenges as well as challenges concerning the exclusion of some women from decision-making processes. Through the distribution of resources, both multilateral organizations and the state can either enhance or limit Ghanaian women's NGO participation in policy-making processes (Michael, 2004: 26). A loose NGO coalition, such as NETRIGHT, can both promote and inhibit women's progress and their capacity to promote change, not solely based on governing practices and processes, but on the will and motivation of women to initiate and promote change not for personal gain. Whether or not a woman's organization benefits from donor funding or not does not guarantee that organization's autonomy, no matter what the class or the level of recognition of its leader. Leaders, though, can act more effectively with state support, ready access to political circles and resources, as seen in the case of the 31DWM and its President, Mrs. Rawlings. Most often, it is elite women who are identified as those who benefit from state resources (Ibrahim, 2004: 2; Mama, 2000: 25-28; Bujra, 1986: 117). This study reveals that while elite women may benefit in some situations, this is clearly not reflected in the situation of NETRIGHT members, or members of the 31DWM during the NPP regime. Some women's groups are effectively denied access to resources because of their non-affiliation to the state, and also due to ineffective leadership problems. The state manipulates women's organizations through various governing technologies to achieve its political and economic agendas.

Notwithstanding these challenges, Ghanaian women's organizations have many opportunities to access the state, but the challenges (i. e., outcomes of governing technologies) attached to these opportunities are numerous. These challenges limit efforts of women's organizations to improve women's status. The opportunities of the

three categories of women's organizations – WGOs, WQUANGOs and WNGOs – studied vary according to the goal of the organization, the era in which it was established and, the resources available to the organization. The opportunities and challenges of the organizations are affected by the channels they pursue to the state. Although each organization claims to be pursue a single channel to the state, all three organizations use multiple channels. The use of multiple channels either enhances or obstructs women's opportunities to access the state, because the channels are a means of governing and controlling women through the state or multilateral organizations. This control affects women's organizations' access to resources, contributes to broad mandate of leaders, and strengthens or weakens the capacity of those who lead the organizations. The control women's organizations also contributes to the lack of accountability to women, fear of relying on ethnic affiliations in policy making processes, and leaders' inability to listen to some women's voices. Most significantly, women's class and partisanship are significant governing technologies, which influence women's access to the state.

Drawing on these experiences of women's organizations, Chapter Seven examines the challenges that remain regarding women's access to the state via the various overlapping channels, and the extent of state control through governing technologies. The chapter also explores various ways to address these challenges, from the point of view of study participants.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CHALLENGES OF GHANAIAI WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND DECISION-MAKERS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines ongoing challenges in efforts to improve Ghanaian women's status in the face of policy, institutional and organizational changes. It also considers those who should address these challenges to promote functional relationships among multilateral organizations, the state and women's organizations. The first section provides a brief overview of efforts to target women as agents of change through the state, multilateral organizations and women's organizations. The chapter further examines the persistent challenges that women's organizations face as they operate in their efforts to improve women's status. The discussion incorporates the different views of project participants in this study.

The discussion, so far, has identified the rationale behind targeting women, as a category at risk but with untapped economic resources in the development process (from the mid 1970s), aimed to improve their status to enhance their productive capacity and participation in decision-making processes. As indicated in Chapter Three, four main approaches to women and development emerged to influence development decisions on women and enhance their access to material and non-material resources: Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD) and Gender Mainstreaming (GM). This discussion revealed that the WAD, GAD and GM approaches were not employed as intended, due to bureaucratic organizational and institutional constraints, perpetuation of negative indigenous cultural practices, acceptance, in-fighting and limited collaboration among women, and the limited political

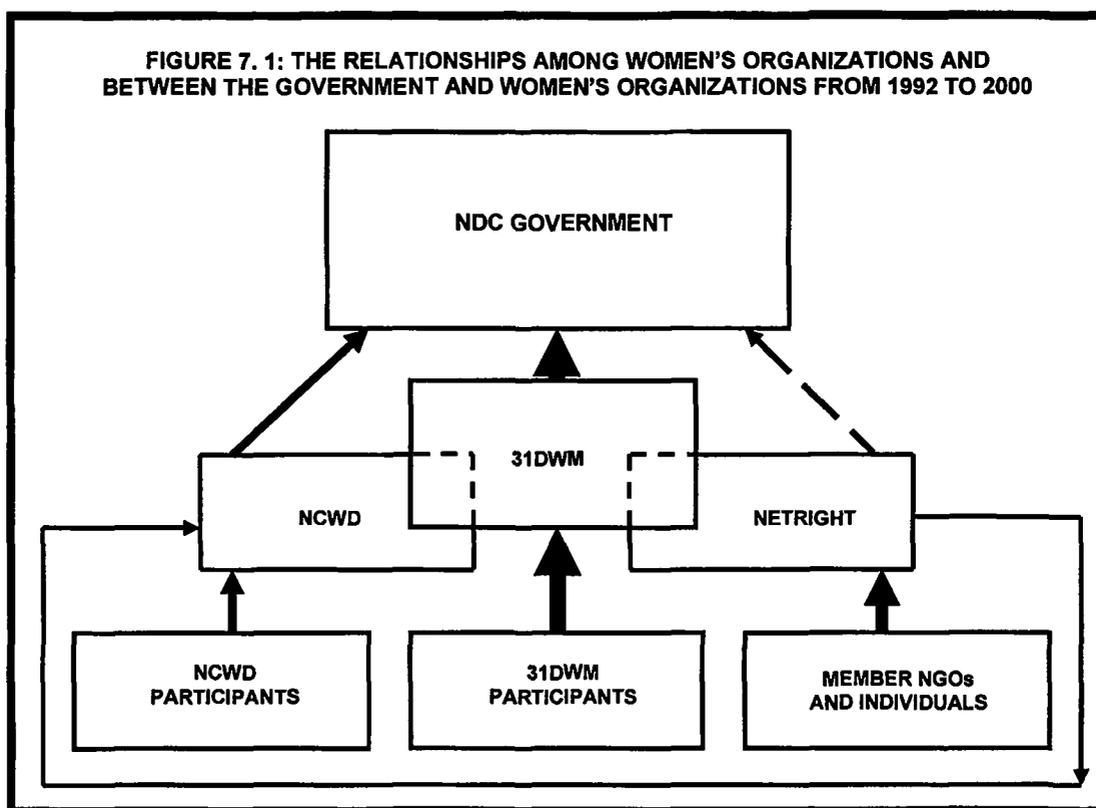
will on the part of governments and multilateral organizations to change governing technologies.

Discussions in Chapter Four identified two models for women's potential engagement with the state - i. e., Everett et al.'s (1989) channels to the state and Vargas and Wieringa's (1998) triangle of empowerment models for women. The two models for women's empowerment were intended to weaken the state's governing technologies, and also to enhance women's ability to influence decision-making processes. These models were further examined in Chapter Six using the research data and revealed that they are not effective within the Ghanaian context, because the complex nature of Ghanaian women's experiences challenge the usefulness of the models. Overall, despite the varied efforts and theorization on women and development since the 1970s (Tinker, 1990: 1; Boutros-Ghali, 1996: 3; Jain, 2005: 130), rather than seeing major improvements in women's social, economic and political status, women still lag behind men in development processes. The National Patriotic Party (NPP) government, which came to power in 2001, focused on the ineffectiveness of the various approaches in 2002, when it continued with a program with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to re-evaluate government approaches to women and development, which have failed to work, and also to identify new strategies for improving women's status. While the state explores new techniques to approach women and development issues, women have also made attempts to consolidate their efforts, through various models to engage and weaken technologies of the state. The rest of this chapter examines the challenges that persist in the face of various models of engaging with the state, and explains why these problems persist for Ghanaian women.

The following sections examine the challenges that remain in efforts to address women and development issues in Ghana. The chapter addresses issues of women's autonomy and affiliation to the state by examining affiliation with the state and autonomy of the different women's organizations studied as the state's governing tool in development processes. The sections further discuss the nature of women's integrative and interactive relationships, the obstacles created by institutions as sources of conflicts and tensions among women's organizations, and the lack of effective women's leadership to resolve these conflicts and also minimize tensions. Following these, the chapter examines the state's discriminatory allocation of resources to women's organizations, the unequal representation of women and men in decision-making processes, and discusses visions of potential sources of change to address the issues of persistent challenges facing Ghanaian women's organizations.

7.2 WOMEN'S AUTONOMY AND AFFILIATION WITH THE STATE

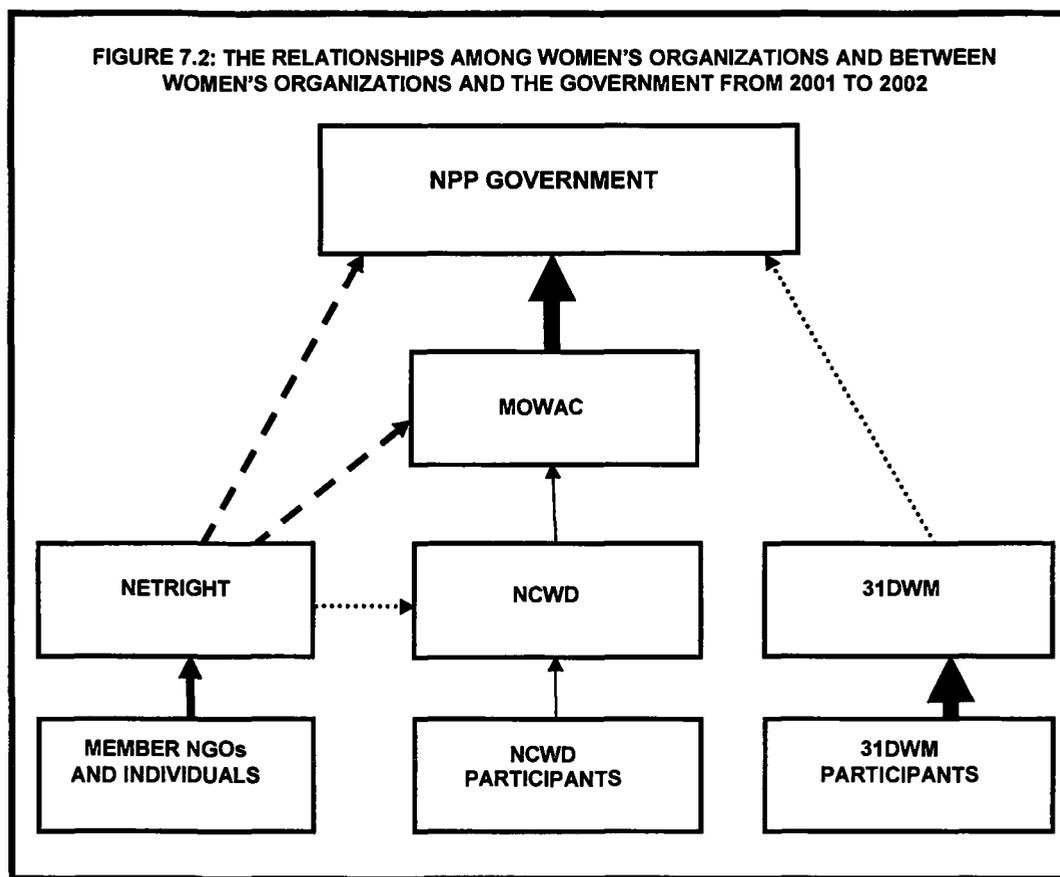
The nature of the relationship between the state and women's organizations can create a conducive working environment for some women, but limit others (Caldeira, 1998: 82, Mama, 2000: 18; Oquaye, 2001: 60). For instance, when women affiliate with the state and still want to maintain their autonomy, this tension puts them in an ambivalent position (Antrobus, 2004; Vargas and Wieringa, 1998). This is because the state often fails to protect women, and those who are supposed to protect them within the state also violate their rights (MacKinnon: 2006: 189-191). These assertions are more complex than the simplicity with which they are stated. The complexity is revealed



through¹ the following discussion on the nature of the relationship between the government and the three categories of women's organizations studied: the women's governmental organizations (WGOs) - the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC); women's quasi non-governmental organizations (WQUANGOs), (31st December Women's Movement, 31DWM); and women's non-governmental organizations (WNGOs) (Network for Women's Rights in Ghana, NETRIGHT) from 1992 to 2002. Figures 7.1 above and 7.2 below illustrate the changing nature of these relationships.²

¹ As indicated in Chapters One and Three, this thesis focuses on internal relationships – the state and women's organization- more than on external relationships - women's organizations and multilateral organizations.

² The bolder and thicker the lines and dots, the stronger the relationships among women's organizations and the state, and the direction of the arrows shows the hierarchical power structure in the relationships.



As Figure 7:1 indicates, the close affiliation of the 31DWM to the Rawlings government between 1992 -2000 (and before), meant that the NCWD as an arm of the state machinery for women and development, was marginalized. Similarly, the newly emerged WNGO coalition, NETRIGHT, neither had a strong nor a direct access to the NDC government, but it did have elite and broad range of NGO support. From 2000 to 2009, as Figure 7: 2 indicates, MOWAC had the strongest ties with the state because it was headed by an influential member of the National Patriotic Party (NPP) government in power at the time. NETRIGHT's relationship with the state did not change with a change from NDC to NPP government. Comparing the changing nature of the ties some women's organizations had with the state; it could be argued that the state has the capacity to manipulate women's organizations through the government. This

manipulation involves exclusion or inclusion of some women's organizations from state decision-making processes, which is discussed later. For example, the presence and absence of a women's organization's affiliation with the governments in power, as well as the strength of the relationship are crucial factors that facilitate or obstruct women's organizations' efforts to improve women's status (see Figure 7. 1). The 31DWM was affiliated to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government in power from 1982 to 2000, and therefore had the strongest ties with the state as elaborated on below.

31DWM's Autonomy and State Affiliation as Technologies of Governance

The 31DWM has evolved through three political phases since its establishment, as highlighted in Chapter Five (see Table 5: 1). Each phase determined the nature of relationships - conflict, the competition and the cooperation among women's organizations and between women's organizations and the state. In the first phase (1982 to 1992) the 31DWM enjoyed unprecedented success in its program of activities under the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) military government. This era was marked with local power concentrated in the hands of Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs), which were revolutionary organs of the PNDC government that increased women's passivity. According to Oquaye (2001: 1-3), the CDRs were harsh toward rebellious civil society organizations (CSOs) that had to be silenced.

The government silenced these CSOs³, but it protected the 31DWM, which was also officially defined as a CSO despite its partisan relationship with the Rawlings PNDC regime (Hutchful, 2002: 194; Oquaye, 2001: 60; Addo-Adeku, 2002: 23; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 24). As noted previously, the 31DWM was one of the 'undeclared'

³ Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are part of civil society organizations.

revolutionary organs of the PNDC government (Sandbrook and Oelbaum, 1999: 21); its protected quasi-NGO status meant that its activities and development projects ran smoothly. During this phase, Ninsin, for example, described the 31DWM as an “alternative” CSO because of its privileged position at the time (Ninsin, 1998: 53). However, the term used throughout this thesis to describe the position and status of the 31DWM is “women’s quasi-NGO” (WQUANGO) from 1983 to 2000 and a women’s NGO (WNGO) from 2001 onward.

As noted in Chapter Five, in the early 1990s there was pressure from both national and international circles – the US, the UK, the World Bank and the IMF - for Ghana to return to democracy. The purpose of this presence was to promote liberal democracy in Ghana to ensure good governance, and to encourage the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in governing processes (Hira and Parfitt, 2004: 20; Lewis and Wallace, 2000: ix; Ninsin, 1998: 49). In the latter part of 1992, Ghana accepted the World Bank and the IMF’s suggestion to transition to a democratically elected government. This change marked the beginning of the second phase of the 31DWM. This transition was not a *real* democratic political transition phase for Ghana, as the country was neither under military rule nor was it entirely democratic, because the former Rawlings PNDC military government became the newly elected National Democratic Congress (NDC) party, and Jerry John Rawlings continued ruling Ghana (Oquaye, 2002: 2). As the Rawlings NDC government did not have an opposition party in Parliament, as noted in Chapter Five, in effect the ‘democratic regime functioned like a one party state’ (Ninsin, 1998: 49). However, the changes from the first to the second phase somehow altered state technologies of governing, which encouraged and increased

the participation of citizens in government of other CSOs in efforts to bring about socio-economic change.

In the second phase, 1992 to 2000 (see Figure 7: 1), distinguished by a return to democracy, the 31DWM continued to operate as usual under the newly elected NDC government, which returned Rawlings to power. However, CSOs, the public, political parties, academics and women's organizations all criticized the 31DWM and its self-definition as a 'WNGO' (Oquaye, 2001: 60-61; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 24). Since members of the former PNDC military government, loyal to Rawlings, constituted the bulk of the NDC, the outsider criticism did not change 31DWM's privileged protected position.

The third phase of the 31DWM started from December 2000, when Kufuor's National Patriotic Party (NPP) defeated the NDC in the election, and took over the administration of the country in January 2001. As this study reveals, this election defeat in 2000 greatly affected the role and programs of the 31DWM, which had drawn its political, social and economic strength, from the former NDC government (see Figure 7: 2). By 2001, under the new political regime, the 31DWM lost access to its privileged 'insider' channel to the state (Everett et al., 1989), as already discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six. This fallout of the 31DWM made clear the distinction between WNGOs and WGOs, compared with the lack of it during the NDC regime, and effectively removed the 31DWM's status as a women's quasi-NGO (WQUANGO).

One of the 31DWM member/employee cited District Assembly elections as a factor that introduced politics into the operation of the 31DWM, when she observed, "In the beginning, the 31DWM projects did not have any political dimension. [It was] when

the country started the District Assembly [in 1988] and parliamentary elections [in 1992] that politics entered the operation of the 31DWM” (Female, 31DWM member #3, 14/08/2002). It should be emphasized that the 31DWM had always been a political organization (Ray, 1986), but due to a controlled political environment from 1981 to 1992, only few Ghanaians could challenge the discriminatory practices of the government until the District Assembly elections which took place in 1988.

The District Assemblies’ election was the first step in Ghana’s return to political democracy, but the process was still controlled by Rawlings’s military regime and later under his NDC government without any effective opposition in parliament (Ayensu and Darkwa, 2001: 7; Aryee, 2007). Although parliament could not effectively challenge government policies, the election affected the operation of the 31DWM, because the change ushered in a pseudo-democratic political process. This change was an opportunity for Ghanaians to regain some of the political freedom that they had lost under the PNDC’s military government. This change somehow limited the 31DWM’s privileged mobilization of women. Of all these changes, the year 1992 marked an important landmark in governing Ghanaians. It was the year that Ghana returned to a democratic government after 11 years of military rule (see Table 5: 1).

According to the three 31DWM members/employees interviewed for this study, the organization’s projects did not have overt political dimension until 1992 when party politics created divisions among women (Interview with 31DWM participants, June to September, 2002). Because of the 31DWM’s political affiliation to the NDC government, women lacked the freedom to challenge its operation. The narratives of these participants illustrate the 31DWM’s dilemma in terms of its authority and the

organizational freedom that it had enjoyed before 1992, as well as the post 1992 changes that affected the organization.

Until democratic politics began in 1992, everything had worked smoothly for the 31DWM. From 1992, some women groups did not want to associate with it. Despite the resistance, the 31DWM still had control over its projects. After a change of government in 2000, though, it started having conflicts with the government. Some women stopped their membership because of their husbands' association with the NPP and others distanced themselves [from the 31DWM]. (Female, 31DWM member #1, 08/08/2002)

Only one research participant therefore, referred to 1992 as a significant threshold that enhanced the relationship among women, their organizations, the state and civil society (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002). However, the democratic environment with regard to women was still limited, because of the pseudo-military governmental structures and the influence of the 31DWM, which continued to intimidate other women's organizations instead of networking with them. While the political democratic transition restricted the freedom of the 31DWM, it also marked the beginning for freedom of political participation, although women did not fully enjoy it (Fallon, 2003: 533; Hutchful, 2002:185; Oquaye, 2000: 60-61). This study, for instance, revealed that the NCWD never regained its administrative autonomy in 1992 or 2001. Also, the impact on women from the change from military rule to democratic and constitutional rule was not as significant as the change in government from the NDC to the NPP in 2001.

Considering the privileged position that the 31DWM occupied under the NDC government, all of its members interviewed criticized the Kufuor's NPP government for having marginalized their organization, and continuing to regard it as a women's wing of the defeated NDC party. These criticisms stemmed from the fact that, while the NDC

party is the major opposition party, the 31DWM had lost all of the economic and political privileges it had enjoyed from both internal and external sources prior to December 2000, as an insider and a politically co-opted women's organization. The limited political process prior to December 2000 was much different from the expanded political freedom in January 2001, an era in which:

All women have become gender advocates because of the freedom enshrined in the 1992 Constitution. Development agencies and [the] UN system started promoting gender mainstreaming. [In essence] the outburst of women's NGOs is an external push. There is more money [available from donors] in the area of women. (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002)

It is significant to note that the state control of women lessened in 1992.

However, when there are legislation and constitutional provisions addressing women and development issues, these protect the state against criticism from women (Zuckerman, 2002: 88; Stewart, 1996: 41), because policy-makers assume gender issues have been 'taken care of' through legislation. Yet, legislation and constitutional provisions on their own cannot promote political freedom if they are not enforced and respected by the state or other actors. This perception of the state, thus, serves as a technology of governance. The political will of the state to enforce laws in support of women is crucial (Tsikata, 2001a: 266). It is important to make a detour at this stage to establish a link between governing technologies of multilateral organizations and the performance level of the Ghanaian state on women and development. Due to the various top-down development prescriptions of the World Bank and the IMF, states lack autonomy regarding development policy formulation (Staudt, 2003: 42). Instead of the state being able to formulate its policy independently, international and multilateral institutions promote the service delivery capacity of the NGOs (Love, 2007d: 82). For instance, the springing up

of NGOs in Ghana is an outcome of structural adjustment policies. As part of this policy implementation process, CSOs were asked to play a significant role in development processes (Hira and Parfitt, 2004: 20-21; Wallace et al., 2000: 1-5). This role generated competition rather than collaboration among all categories of women's organizations. In this study, WQUANGOs such as the 31DWM were not significantly affected by this competition, because of its political party affiliation at the time.

The 31DWM members were uncertain about the organization's political stance. One of them commented, "I have been criticized for politicizing women's issues. But I only wanted to do away with the myth surrounding politics as a man's domain" (Female, 31DWM member #3, 08/14/2002). Dispelling this myth certainly means strengthening the 31DWM's relationship with the state, although this marginalized other women's organizations from decision-making processes and their access to resources. Interestingly, the same 31DWM participant pointed out the difficulty in separating women's issues from politics (i.e., women's affiliation to the state).

It is impossible to separate politics and women's issues, because of the difficulty in making a clear distinction between the two. One cannot do anything if women's issues are separated from politics. [Moreover] the difference an individual makes at a particular time could only be attained through association with others. One can only associate with party members with political power to make a mark. (Female, 31DWM member #3, 08/14/2002)

This view is not new in the women's development debate (Fatton, 1989). It is also Everett et al.'s (1989) and Vargas and Wieringa's (1998) proposed strategy for women's effective engagement with the state. The Gender and Development (GAD) approach to women and development posits that women can *only* gain by being in partnership with the government (see Table 3: 1), and that women's position in the state

gives them political clout (Mikell, 1997: 31; Rai, 2003: 18-25). Notwithstanding, the state is male dominated, and does not holistically promote women's status (Kantola, 2006:12; Stewart, 1996: 41). Mikell (1997: 31) notes that in Africa men do not regard women as political agents or authority figures in their relationship with the government. This is because of men's perception that their role is to manipulate and shape women's organizations, through various governing technologies, instead of empowering them (Hutchful, 2002: 193).

Governments, headed by men, use their various governing technologies to manipulate and shape women's organizations through the exclusion of others. In Ghana, as this study reveals, governments that have the support of feminist politicians and a politically co-opted feminist women's movement usually co-opts feminist civil servants as well. This implies that any individual or organization that is politically co-opted (or partisan) might actually limit the potential of the so-called women's 'triangle of empowerment', which includes feminist civil servants, feminist politicians and feminist women's movements (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 3). Nonetheless, women's interaction with the state brings changes that are somehow beneficial to women (Chappell, 2000: 85; Zukerman, 2002: 88). As witnessed in the case of the 31DWM, from 2001 the 31DWM's staff members worked with women, but within a marginal position and a politically controlled environment. This experience differs from that of members of NETRIGHT (WNGO) and some staff members of the NCWD (WGO), who have not been affiliated with any government.

Autonomy and Non-affiliation of Women's Organizations as Technologies of Governance

In Ghana, both WNGOs and WGOs face challenges in securing their autonomy when they engage with the state (Mensah-Kutin, 2000: 41-44). In particular, WGO staff members are expected to be politically neutral (i. e., non-partisan) civil servants. Although it was not stated in the 1992 Ghana Government Constitution, civil servants are not supposed to openly engage in partisan politics, because such an engagement could affect the services that they offer to the public. This political neutrality, though a state governing technology, is a requirement for civil servants in states which follow a British parliamentary system (Chappell, 2002: 90). According to Chappell (2002), when the state is not strong on political neutrality, women are able to influence decision-making processes. Arguably, NCWD staff members, who are feminist civil servants, cannot achieve much for women unless they associate with the political party in government. Civil servants are thus limited in their political action against the government, which also extends to women that civil servants support.

The NCWD's Women's Monthly Meeting (WOMM)⁴, serves as an apt example of such limitations on feminist (and other) civil servants. WOMM participants pointed out how the NCWD staff members govern and restrict them from street demonstrations and protests against government policies and practices because of their civil service status. The restrictions, according to WOMM participants, do not promote women's agenda. It was revealed through interviews with research participants that the state often associates critics with the official opposition party in parliament, because they either challenge the status quo or question policies. While confrontation between women and

⁴ The origin of the WOMM is discussed later in this chapter.

the state can be a source of change, usually African states feel threatened by mass organizations, especially by those that oppose state policies (Osaghae, 1994: 2). Such demonstrations are regarded as anti-government (Win, 2004; Antrobus, 2004), and this is how the state describes NETRIGHT's reactions and criticism of national policies. One NETRIGHT member illustrates NETRIGHT's relationship with the government and the lack of collaboration among women's organizations due to state control as follows:

NETRIGHT organized a meeting of women to protest against the killing of women, in 1999, [who were] under the influence of the NPP [before the NPP came into power]. Mrs. Rawlings organized the 31DWM in a counter demonstration to undermine our petition to the government, because we were regarded as NPP women. When we [NETRIGHT] criticized the agenda of MOWAC at a consultative meeting in May 2002, supporters of the NPP government said we were NDC women. (Female, NETRIGHT member #1, 07/31/2002)

This concern reflects the underlying tensions between women's organizations and the impact of the state's use of political partisanship to govern women's political participation. The state's reaction to Ghanaian women is not new (Tsikata, 1989). Women's criticisms usually focus on economic policies, how the state neglects women and the negative impact on vulnerable groups (The Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004).

Hashemi (1996) sums up the tension between NGOs and government, when these NGOs oppose government practices and policies.

When NGOs analyze poverty in terms of structural causes and define their objectives in terms of structural transformation, they intervene directly within the political space that defines the status quo. In so doing, development oriented NGOs are clearly "political." ... [W]hen the poor are organized to articulate their demands, fight for their rights, and struggle to change the structural basis of their subordination, a challenge to the status quo is definitely implied. (Hashemi, 1996: 125)

Tension between women's organizations and the government is made worse when women are divided along party lines. As indicated above, the 31DWM supported the NDC government and challenged women who were against its policies. The government's partisan reaction is evident in the complete acceptance of the 31DWM under the Rawlings regimes, and its subsequent rejection by the Kufuor NPP regime.

This study reveals, nonetheless, that the persistent efforts of the WNGOs to gain access to the state do have some desired impact on the state. Government control, as a governing technology, does not completely silence autonomous women's organizations such as NETRIGHT. Its members boast of their success in organizing street demonstrations in 2002 to protest against the NPP government to try to force it to intervene to stop the increased violence against women in Accra. According to NETRIGHT members, the state perceives these protests as anti-government and threatening to its power, and is violent towards women. As Rai (1996) observes, the only time Third World women feel the presence of the state is when it is violent towards them. Rai is partly correct in that the state reacted negatively towards the leading organizers of the NETRIGHT demonstration by using state law enforcement agencies to govern women and to clamp down such activities. For example, the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI), a specialized government unit, investigated some of the key organizers of the protest from NETRIGHT (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002).

One NETRIGHT member regarded the government's actions, a form of governing technology, as a sensitive issue, which should not be discussed or documented (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002). NETRIGHT members shying away

from pointing out the repressive governing technology of the state is an example of the culture of silence in Ghana as well as how the state induces women's docility.

Particularly, this culture of silence challenges NETRIGHT's perceived strength as a feminist women's group in pursuit of justice and equality for women. Other NETRIGHT members simply refused to comment on the government's action against women, which connotes women's lack of autonomy to pursue their political and social freedom (Sen, 1999: 203). So even if NETRIGHT operates as an 'autonomous' entity, it is still very much constrained in its efforts by Ghana's bureaucracy, which constitutes technologies of governance. NETRIGHT's experience undermines collaborative efforts among the three categories of women's organizations studied. Most importantly, remaining silent undermines NETRIGHT's confidence in their efforts to develop a strong working relationship with the state.

Several other authors identify state governing technologies used by bureaucrats as technologies that: cause divisions among women; exclude some women from decision-making processes while including others; control only some women's access to resources; co-opt women into state structures; or, that only superficially assume responsibility for women (Longwe in Gordon, 1996: 118; Tsikata, 2001a: 264; Manuh, 1993a: 110; Callaway, 1976: 189). As a case in point, Mrs. Rawlings's 31DWM's support for the NDC government on the one hand, and competitiveness in relation to the NCWD, NETRIGHT and other WNGOs on the other, betrayed both her position as a women's leader (the unofficial title of national women's leader) and the 31DWM's rhetoric of empowering women. Such a divisive approach to women's concerns supports the views of some authors that when women leaders are politically partisan of state

affiliated women's organizations they are unable to fight forcefully for women's interests (Ibrahim, 2004: 4; Aubrey, 2000; Tripp, 2000: 9). Even the 31DWM, the closest organization to the NDC government did not perform the instrumental role of expanding women's political space and fighting forcefully for women, as suggested in Vargas and Wieringa's (1998: 4) triangle of empowerment, which is assumed to enhance women's collaborative efforts. The limited collaboration among women obstructs many women's organizations, which is the subject of discussion in the following section.

Women's Organizations and State (Non-)Support

Due to the importance of women's engagement with the state, state (non-)support has an impact on women as evident in the experiences of the 31DWM, the NCWD, NETRIGHT and MOWAC. The 31DWM's experiences and, to some extent, MOWAC's, best reveal this impact. The administration of the 31DWM, the most prominent and vibrant women's organization in Ghana's history, was done in collaboration with both men and women who occupied positions of authority in government. The partnership between male politicians and a women's organization such as the 31DWM, constitutes a governing technology of the coming together of a network of politicians and policy-making bodies for the purpose of the distribution of resources (Fatton, 1989: 56). This kind of partnership illustrates that when women follow the government's established rules, they can benefit from its resources. The 31DWM leaders played significant roles in the partnership from 1982 to 2000, but they failed to bring all women on board. As activities by women's organizations are defined, promoted or constrained by either perceived or actual political party affiliation, all of the participants

in this study cited partisan politics as the most significant challenge that Ghanaian women face in their efforts to improve their status. Several members of women's organizations and some of the women interviewed, women who benefit from WGO, WNGO and WQUANGO programs expressed their views on the negative influence of political partisanship in improving women's status. These views suggest a lack of grassroots participation and collaboration between the state and women, and that invitations to women participants by government were conspicuously absent in both the NDC and NPP regimes (see also Tsikata, 2001a: 266-268).

Women who participate in NCWD's women's monthly meetings also feel controlled by the government because of their desire for political neutrality. Major concerns that all WOMM participants raised during this fieldwork related to state interference, structural limitations and top-down policies. These are governing technologies that prevent women from having access to the state in their efforts to transform institutions. Exclusion of women was the main technique that the state employed as WOMM participants thought that it did not have a wide consultation with women before the (re)organizing of WGOs (MOWAC, NCWD) or when appointing leaders that are intended to serve women. To reduce the level of women's marginalization, women's monthly meeting (WOMM) was an NCWD activity aimed at involving women through wide participation of women in decision making, but became a divisive tool. According to participants, the MOWAC Minister made promises to provide WOMM members with micro-credit to support their income generating activities (Interview with WOMM participants, June – September, 2002). When this monetary

support was not forthcoming, there was a drop in women's attendance at the NCWD's WOMM.

While women want to engage with the state, in the past the NDC government's interference in the administration of the NCWD (i.e., between 1982 and 2000) affected how the NCWD's WOMM participants perceive the MOWAC Minister's visit and promise of offering women loans. They viewed this somehow a staged event as the NPP government's attempting to co-opt women just as the 31DWM had done under the NDC government. Co-optation is a weak form of participation, which does not benefit all women (Cornwall, 1996: 96; Caldeira, 1998; Win, 2004). This weakness challenges Everett et al.'s (1989: 189) view that women who are co-opted into government are willing and able to use their position to promote women's status. The WOMM women concluded that both the NDC and NPP governments had failed them. This failure is because women look up to the state as their provider, as pointed out by Foucault (1991). Another positive interpretation of the Minister's visit is that it was an attempt to initiate a collaborative process. This initiative could also bring politicians, civil servants and women's movements together as suggested in Vargas and Wieringa's (1998) triangle of empowerment model. Love (2007c: 320) describes the coming together of all actors as a post-bureaucratic interactive and integrative relationship, which will promote change.

Partisan politics is the most effective governing tool, because it divides women and also determines their perception of the state (Mama, 2000; Aubrey, 2001). The perception of women participants in the 31DWM's programs differed from the NCWD's WOMM women's perceptions. This difference is because the 31DWM members had no direct relationship with the NPP government. Despite having formerly benefited from

working closely with the NDC government, the 31DWM participants now describe the NPP as playing partisan politics with women.

The NPP new government says it is for positive change [referring to the NPP manifesto], and is committed to keeping everybody employed. Why should it stop those who are already in employment? The new government wants to suppress the [image of the] 31DWM. The government should not politicize everything. Workers from different political parties should not be enemies. (Female, 31DWM participant #3, 08/20/2002)

The frustration of 31DWM participants can be attributed to the fact that they have had privileged access to the “insider” channel to the state, which enhanced the organization’s image. The views of the 31DWM’s participants support Moser’s (1995: 209) observation that, when women rely on the state, the state can end women’s projects without any prior warning, through various governing techniques. Similarly, when women are mobilized under the state, their projects can be disrupted or ended with a change of government, as this study reveals. As a result, the 31DWM members said that the new NPP government had marginalized and limited the operation of organizations affiliated with the PNDC and NDC governments. One of them acknowledged that:

In Africa there is a debased way of running politics. Anybody who is not in one’s camp is an enemy. The new government only concentrates on Asante and [NPP] party members. There is no continuity of policies. The United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA] is afraid to say that the 31DWM has not performed well on their projects. [As a result,] the Ministry of Finance has written to the 31DWM that they are not on the new list of recipients of UNFPA’s funds for 2001-2005. The 31DWM’s partnership with the African Development Bank [ADB] has been suspended. With these changes, women’s rights have been shelved and [are] not being recognized. (Female, 31DWM member #3, 08/14/2002)

Employing technologies of governance, the Minister of MOWAC has stopped the 31DWM from implementing projects using ADB funds since the fund was originally intended for WGOs not NGOs or WQUANGOs. This demonstrates the government’s

influence over resource allocation decisions, to be discussed later, that aim to benefit select women's organizations, which have access to the state through the insider channel. Although the 31DWM has not abandoned the ADB funded projects, it does not have adequate financial resources to continue with the projects (Female, 31DWM member #2, 08/13/2002). As the President of the 31DWM (Mrs. Rawlings) observed, "Politics in Africa is a hindrance to development in that [any] opposing political affiliation can be used against a person in a business or organization in a way that damages the country" (President of the 31DWM, Daily Guide, 08/16/2002).

No other women's organization in Ghana has been as visibly involved in development activities as the 31DWM has, nor have other NGOs been as strategically supported by feminist politicians and feminist civil servants. However, once the state has marginalized an organization, other development organizations have difficulty associating with it, because their association implies lack of support for state decisions on governing. This perception greatly affects women's collaboration, and undermines their social, political and economic influence and role in the development process. To be sure, the politicization of women's development interventions by the 31DWM, under the NDC regimes, contributed to its own marginalization and limited access to resources that help it operate effectively.

Partisan support for women's organizations, such as this, has been a feature of many governments in the global south (Hutchful 2002: 194; Caldeira, 1998: 75; Nzomo, 1998: 232; Geisler, 1997: 545). For instance:

The concerns of the 31DWM do not get anywhere. The Ministry is creating new women's centres.⁵ The NCWD is the implementing agency of MOWAC, although it does not have the staff. ... There is an allegation

⁵ MOWAC plans to establish women's centers in the Districts, where women will be educated.

that Mrs. Kufuor's [the NPP President's wife] organization is the first of its kind, which is not true.⁶ (Female, 31DWM member #1, 08/08/2002)

The public and the NPP government do not recognize the 31DWM's self-defined WNGO status. The views of some of the 31DWM study participants suggest that it is more efficient operationally as a WQUANGO (insider) than a WNGO (outsider). Despite its past prominent status prior to 2001, it is excluded from MOWAC's meetings (Female, 31DWM member #1, 08/08/2002), and lacks updated information on women. According to a member of the 31DWM, "We do not know what MOWAC is doing. If 31DWM wants information; MOWAC thinks they [the 31DWM members] are fishing for information to sabotage the NPP government" (Female, 31DWM project participant #1, 08/08/2002). The 31DWM's access to information within the NPP regime would only be possible if the 31DWM declared itself as non-partisan (Female, MOWAC staff member #1, 08/29/2002). The exclusionary governing technique of Ghanaian governments regarding women's organizations challenges Assibey-Mensah's (1998: 290) suggestion that multiple parties should be able to work together to enhance women's status.

The 31DWM's members expected that their organizations would become an implementing agency for MOWAC. However, according to various participants in this study, several drawbacks exist in its delivery capacity due to the outcome governing techniques: (1) It does not have adequate staff to do the work since, after the defeat of the NDC regime, government departments recalled their staff from the 31DWM offices; (2) the 31DWM cannot effectively carry out its implementation role under MOWAC or in the hostile social, economic and political environment in which it works; (3) it lacks a

⁶ Due to state protocol procedures, I was not allowed to obtain an appointment with the First Lady, Mrs. Kufuor to learn about her organization.

ready market for its products (i.e., bread and kenkey⁷) and access to resources such as staff and funding; (4) the NPP cannot entrust women issues to the 31DWM, the well-known offspring of its former political opponent. The conflicts and tensions between women's organizations and between women and the government also limit women integrative and interactive relationships aimed at enhancing women's collaborative efforts, which the following section examines.

7.3 WOMEN'S INTEGRATIVE AND INTERACTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

This section focuses on women's collaborative efforts, which enhance the achievement of women's goals (Win, 2004; Antrobus, 2004). Efforts to collaborate, however, also result in divisions between some women's organizations. This study reveals that women's inability to work together under the NDC and NPP regimes stems from two sources of governance: firstly, state interference in women's mobilization; and, secondly, individual women and women's organizations privileging their own individual or group interests over women's interests in general (i. e., to maintain their class status and secure their own organizations' sources of funding). Although networking and coalition-building are identified as key in promoting change (Cakmak, 2007: 5; Love, 2007c: 318), the Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations for Development (GAPVOD - NGO organized by the UNDP) was the only NGO that the 31DWM had a working relationship with prior to 2001 (Female, 31DWM member #2, 08/13/2002). Considering the successful union between the two organizations, it is instructive to elaborate on the origin and nature of their association that served as governing technique of the state.

⁷ Kenkey is a steamed fermented corn-dough dish -- one of the staple Ghanaian foods.

Established in 1980, GAPVOD was intended to be a politically neutral umbrella organization for both local and foreign NGOs (Gary, 1996: 160; Sandbrook and Oelbaum, 1999:18; Ghana Association of Voluntary Organizations in Development, 2008). Its mandate is to bring together local, national and international NGOs with an objective of enhancing NGO development and the private sector where they operate (Ghana Association of Voluntary Organizations in Development, 2008: 1). Its existence predated the PNDC/NDC governments, but its non-partisan status became questionable during the NDC regime. GAPVOD became politicized and controlled by some NDC members, because of a US\$600,000 grant to the association by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) between 1990 and 1992 (Sandbrook and Oelbaum, 1999: 18; Gary, 1996: 160). As it was controlled by the NDC party and the UNDP, it could be argued that, the NDC party and 31DWM members used this control as a technique of governance in dealing with other NGOs and WNGOs. In Sandbrook and Oelbaum's (1999: 18) view, the NDC government used the politicization of GAPVOD to check the upsurge of opposition from some NGOs, including WNGOs, and to take over control of the distribution fund GAPVOD had received.

Tripp (2000: 10) notes that African governments restrict NGOs by registering and co-coordinating them through umbrella organizations in an attempt to co-opt them. GAPVOD's politicization is a good example of how the NDC government monitored and controlled NGO activity, and by extension, women's NGOs. Arguably, the existence of GAPVOD, as a NDC co-opted organization, limited the freedom of certain NGOs to collaborate and strengthen civil society organizations. This co-optation negates the assertion that co-optation can be useful for women's engagement with the state (Everett

et al., 1989: 189). Furthermore, Ferguson (1990: 252) argues that the expansion of development organizations and individual NGOs enhances state control over different sectors. In Ghana, the absence of a broad-based range of member NGOs and the state's technique of obstructing women's efforts undermined the participation of NGOs in the development process (Gary, 1996: 158). Except for the 31DWM, this state influence over GAPVOD certainly affected WNGOs' involvement in decision-making processes.

The 31DWM's relationship with some community based WNGOs affected networking among women, in general, and particularly women at the grassroots level who were project participants (Oquaye, 2001: 60). The 31DWM project participants said that they had never networked with any other women's organizations. Besides being employees of the 31DWM kenkey and bread factories, women engaged in other social activities in support of the NDC government. One 31DWM project participant said, "We are invited by the First Lady to cook for the 31st December anniversary celebrations" (Female, 31DWM project participant #2, 08/13/2002).⁸ Women's participation in such a celebration was a manipulative technique that the NDC government used to co-opt women employees of the 31DWM. From its inception in 1982, other women's groups merged with the 31DWM, and were absorbed by it instead of networking with it (Addo-Adeku, 2002: 5-6; Oquaye, 2001: 60-61). The 31DWM, operated like an umbrella organization for women, but it did not encourage networking because it was self-sufficient with regard to resources and partisanship.

⁸ The 31st December celebration is an annual anniversary of the 1981 military revolution that brought J. J. Rawlings to power. These celebrations were intended to raise the image of the PNDC and NDC governments, not for women to make demands or negotiate with the government.

The NCWD, on the other hand, tried to bring women together to influence policy-making processes in mid-1980s. The organization of women under the NCWD was a women's initiative in response to governing technologies of multilateral organizations (i. e., there was a restriction placed on the state by multilateral organizations, through structural adjustment policies, to not implement women's projects, but rather to concentrate on policy formulation as discussed in Chapter Five). The restriction removed the NCWD's policy implementation and operational mandate. Some women participants in NCWD activities thought that for the NCWD to be effective in its implementation role, there should be broad participation by women in decisions that affect them (Female, WOMM Participant # 3, 13/08/2002). This suggestion by women led to the NCWD establishing a women's monthly meeting (WOMM), which serves as a platform for the involvement of women in the decision-making process, and for information sharing. Everett et al.'s (1989: 189) model is supposed to give those outside government access to the state to express their views on policies regarding women. If well coordinated, the WOMM could serve as one part of Vargas and Wieringa's (1998: 3) triangle of empowerment, as it attracts feminist politicians, feminist women's movements and feminist civil servants in women's attempts to limit governing technologies of the state.

The influence of a Western-driven agenda in women's networking, as well as the inability of the NCWD to involve women, and also convey women's concerns to the government are some issues that frequently hinder women in their efforts to improve the Ghanaian women's status (Mensah-Kutin, 2000: 22-24). According to WOMM participants, though, the impact of this collaborative effort has been minimal in terms of

limiting state governing technologies. The meeting creates a forum for information sharing about what Western women have accomplished, and does not usually focus on Ghanaian women's issues. The WOMM participants do not know what benefits they derive from attending WOMM meetings (i.e., accessing the state from the insider channel). The information sharing tends to be uni-directional, non-interactive and non-integrative, and therefore non-participatory.

We meet to discuss issues about government policies [which are of little relevance to women] and international women's programs. However, we are not involved at the highest levels [of decision-making]. Every decision is left with the NCWD. This arrangement means that women are not motivated to come to the meetings. There are too many items on the agenda to be discussed and participants cannot ask questions. (Female, WOMM participant #2, 08/26/2002)

However, another WOMM participant noted that women exhibit their agency by *not* attending these meetings. This non-attendance and non-violent resistance implies that women are not passive or docile as argued by Foucault (1991). As Fatton (1989: 52) notes, women use such 'exit' strategies when they want to voice their discontent or avoid the repression of the state. However, such strategies cause further divisions among women, and remove them from decision-making processes (Win, 2004; Caldeira, 1998). This may be viewed as counter-productive unless this resistance is followed up by other means of addressing the existing diversity of issues relating to women and development processes.

Diversity of interests of women's organizations and non-support among women's organizations are important challenges to women's collective action (Win, 2004: 22; Tinker, 2004a: xxv). While some WOMM attendees require loans to engage in economic activities, other attendees want information on women's involvement in decision-making

processes (Female, NCWD staff member #2, 07/15/2002). Yet, the focus is usually on offering women credit, which also tends to be exclusionary. One of them observed:

When the government introduces a loan scheme, it supports only poor women; when it is women's conferences, it nominates women who are party affiliates to attend. The government's nominee from the NCWD who went to the Beijing conference was a member of the 31DWM, and she resigned from the NCWD on her return (Female, WOMM participant #1, 07/24/2002).

The state's governing technique is to marginalize the large number of women who fall between the poor and party affiliates. According to participants from the WOMM, the state's divide and rule strategy is successful due to weak leadership among women's organizations.

7.4 INSTITUTIONS, CONFLICTS AND TENSIONS IN WOMEN'S

ORGANIZATIONS AND (NON-)LEADERSHIP MODELS

Both mainstream and feminist scholars identify leadership as key in finding solutions to the risks of inequality and diversity created through development (Antrobus, 2004; Love, 2007c), and for building a relationship between government organizations and NGOs. This section examines institutions as sources of conflicts and tensions among women's organizations, and the effectiveness leadership models used by women's organizations in this study in their efforts to improve women's status.⁹ Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality, the various theoretical approaches to women and development (WID, WAD, GAD, and GM), models of women's empowerment and access to the state neither pay the needed attention to the challenges nor offer suggestions for addressing issues of conflict and tension among women in the development process. As this study

⁹ The institutions are the rules that guide and restrict human behaviour with a goal of shaping experience (Sweetman, 1997: 2).

reveals, some women choose to align themselves with men, because of partisan politics, women and men's class allegiance, and/or simply to remove themselves from the women's intra/inter-group conflicts that thwart the advancement of women.

In this study, several factors come into play that cause the conflicts and tensions between women and women's organizations that undermine their efforts to promote women's issues with the government. These relate to: gendered institutional factors; the role of bureaucracy in women's relationships; problems regarding women's leaders and leadership; sabotaging women in leadership positions, and problems with leaders. In particular, women have continuously pointed out how bureaucracy conflicts with women's expectations of policy-makers, and the impact of institutional constraints on women (Ferguson, 1984; Goetz, 1997; Rao and Kelleher, 2002). Considering the nature of these constraints, one could argue that bureaucratic rules are technologies of governance, which limits women's choices and shape their actions. Such constraints are attributed to the fact that men usually make bureaucratic rules, therefore these rules tend to be male-biased. Importantly, rules made during the establishment of organizations endure, and when these rules change it is the core rules that remain (Love, 2007c: 311). According to Love (2007c), the powerful also support each others' agenda, which limits change. The ratification of UN conventions on women and human rights automatically expands the authority of multinational organizations in the affairs of the state. One UNDP employee noted that Ghana has ratified all UN conventions on women and human rights and development, and, therefore, the UNDP could monitor the government's decisions on women (Female, Other, #3, 07/31/2002). In Ghana, the government, MOWAC and the UNDP work in concert with one another to promote each other's

agendas, which serve to preserve the gendered institutions that disadvantage most women.

A centralized administrative model is motivated by the hierarchical governing state structures, which limit networking and the mobilization of resources from NGOs (Love, 2007c: 311). In terms of the state, a high profile NCWD ex-staff member also pointed out that to be more efficient as a government organization, to adopt the Ministry of Local Government structure on decentralization of administrative structures (Ghana Districts, 2009b). MOWAC, however, is adopting the old governing technique of centralized administrative styles. The following comment indicates how one study participant viewed the changes to the NCWD's positioning and the role under the newly established Ministry (WOWAC), and reflects how the government (and others) control women.

The stakeholders in gender issues objected to the dissolution of the NCWD and the Ghana National Commission on Children in May 2002. The cabinet also decided that the NCWD should be retained, but the Minister objected to it in September 2001. Having a Department under a Ministry is a colonial method of administration. The new way of administration is to have commissions, councils and boards [under a Ministry]. There is a policy of restraining Ministries from implementing projects and programs¹⁰ for efficiency in service delivery. (Female, NCWD former staff member #1, 07/10/2002)

Aspect of the NPP government's centralization of administrative structures, MOWAC staff and the NPP government decided to structure MOWAC without consideration for clear channels of representation and/or engagement opportunities for other organizations as suggested by the Ministry of Local Government (Ghana districts, 2009). This would allow the various categories of women's organizations to optimize the potential benefits

¹⁰ The policy being referred to here is that of the World Bank Economic Recovery Program (ERP), which restricts government departments from implementing policies (Hutchful, 2002). The ex-staff member cited the Ministries of Social Welfare and the Local Government as the only two Ministries with departments under them in Ghana.

of Vargas and Wieringa's (1998) interactive triangular empowerment model. Despite the preference of some NCWD staff members to use a decentralized administrative strategy, experience shows that when administrative functions are assigned to commissions, councils and boards, no one civil servant or politician is prepared to be accountable or accept responsibility for failure (Government of Canada, 1984). This shirking of responsibility undermines the potential strength of the preferred decentralized modern form of administration being advocated by some NCWD participants. However, as discussed in the section on allocation of resources, the Ministry of Local Government administrative structure also involves centralization as a governing technology (Ghana Districts, 2009a).

Based on the past experience of NCWD staff members, one former female government official and a former Minister of State underscored the constraints of not having a Ministry for women for the purpose of change. She was skeptical, however, about the success of MOWAC, when she observed that "MOWAC is new and there is nothing at stake for women. The Ministry is going to compete with the established ways of distributing resources. MOWAC (as a WGO) is [still] not legally established [to lead women's organizations]" (Female, Other, former government official #1, 07/28/2002).¹¹

In order to reduce the constraints of bureaucracy and promote change, women require a good leader to bring women and men together through networking and coalition-building. Yet, the appointment of women leaders is a contentious issue among

¹¹ The lack of legal status of MOWAC was cited by almost all the participants, including the above a government official implies that some bureaucratic conventions (i. e., a hierarchical structure with well defined duties) have been ignored in the establishment of MOWAC. Some of the participants said that the decree that established the NCWD should be repealed in order to accord MOWAC its legal status. This decree has been repealed, and the NCWD has become a decentralized department under MOWAC (Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, 2007).

women, and between women and the state. These appointments can generate conflict and limit women's participation (Geilser, 1997; Mama, 2000a; Win, 2004). Although conflict can either have negative or positive consequences depending on how it is managed (Goodwin and Scimecca, 2006: 152), women experience the former more than the latter. Conflict emanates from norms that women bring with them into organizations, because of their class, gender socialization, and/or their political orientation (Win, 2004). This negative conflict is manifest in competition with, and condemnation of, other women in the workplace (Chigudu, 1997: 35). NCWD and MOWAC participants identified different sources of conflict among women. In the words of one NCWD staff member,

Some women started to condemn the Ministry [MOWAC] before it took off. If a woman is a leader men do not like it because of her status as a woman. [Therefore] women leaders can only count on the support of fellow women. Most women, though, do not seem to be interested in other women's achievements, or do not want to acknowledge them. (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002)

Although this participant's view suggests essentializing women, and assuming their mutual support, it supports the view by some that women's development is generally the responsibility of women (Young, 2002: 321; Crewe and Harrison, 1998: 58). It also enhances arguments about the benefits of women gaining access to the state through varied channels (Everett et al., 1989) or through other collective avenues of empowerment (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998). Both models require strong leadership to help to promote integrative and interactive relationships, and also to coordinate the collective efforts of women, government and non-governmental organizations. Although this kind of leadership model requires the strong support of women, the state can play an overall coordinating role (i. e., with other governmental organizations) in enhancing its

success (Love, 2007c: 319). Contrarily some women in both governmental and non-governmental organizations tend to sabotage women leaders through their non-support, which undermines the unity (sisterhood) of African women in collective action (Van Allen, 1999: 513; Turner and Brownhill, 2004: 2). Oyewumi (2005: 1) argues that the term, 'sisterhood' as used in feminism is a foreign concept with no connection to a unifying force such as the term 'mother' connotes within the African context. Women's agreement on a common course of action is more important than affiliation to a mother.

It is evident from interviews with various study participants that women compete over resources (both material and non-material resources) rather than working toward a common goal. The NCWD staff showed their non-support for the Minister of MOWAC by removing office equipment from the office that the Minister had wanted to occupy. One NCWD staff member described the experience of the Minister of MOWAC, whom many of the NCWD staff members did not support.

The temporary location of MOWAC was [in] the documentation centre of the NCWD. The Minister inspected the office and found it was furnished as her office. After the visit, the NCWD staff [members] went and removed all the equipment and furniture in the office. The Minister felt it was a deliberate action to thwart her efforts, and undermine her work. According to the Minister, she had to write [letters] on her lap on her first day in office. She concluded that 'women are their own [worst] enemies'. For a Minister of Women and Children's Affairs to make such a statement is a serious one [for Ghanaian women]. (Female, NCWD staff member #4, 08/08/2002)

This is a symptom of divisions between WGOs, whose role is to promote interaction among women's interests via the various available channels (Everett et al., 1989) and networks of empowerment (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998). Nonetheless, the Minister's search for office space to locate MOWAC is a state governing technique, which causes divisions among women, and also an example of Mama's (2000: 10) contention that

governments do not accord women's Ministries the same recognition that it gives other Ministries.¹²

This action of the NCWD could be attributed to jealousy and petty rivalry at the inter/intra-group and individuals. One participant from MOWAC also described such incidents as those that inhibit progress among women (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002). For instance, the new MOWAC Minister attributed the action to the fact that women are their own worst enemies, and supports Tamale's (1999: 97) finding among Ugandan women that despite attempts to work together, they still lacked each other's support. Similarly, despite the NCWD staff members' favouring a women's Ministry long before it was established, five of the staff members were not sure of MOWAC's importance. Participants in the 'Other' category, current and ex-NCWD staff, identified backbiting, a lack of opportunities to attend conferences, and a lack of collaboration as some sources of conflict, which undermine teamwork. Due to these divisions, a female gender advocate thought that when Ghanaian women fail, it is because of their own attitudes (Female, Other, journalist and a member of parliament #2, 08/12/2002). The consequence of these obstacles is that women become discouraged when aspiring to progress within the WGOs structures (Female, NCWD former staff member #1, 07/10/2002). One male participant also expressed disappointment about the way women condemn everything that MOWAC does, and that women are unwilling to assist the Ministry to transform women's organizations (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002). Such non-support from other women not only frustrates women who occupy leadership positions in women's organizations, but it also leads to the victimization of some women (Mama, 2000; Geisler, 1997).

¹² See Longwe (cited in Gordon, 1996) for the list of tactics that governments use to silence women.

One former NCWD staff member commented, “the NCWD has always asked for a women’s Ministry so the leaders should not have disconnected the phone” (Female, NCWD former staff member #2, 08/01/2002). Another NCWD staff member questioned how other leaders would have behaved if they were in the Executive Director’s position, which highlights the state’s governing technique. One NCWD staff member simply questioned, “If you were the Executive Director of the NCWD, what would you have done? She was expected [by the state] to account for all the office equipment under her care [on termination of her appointment]” (Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002). Her question suggested that the Executive Director acted in accordance with bureaucratic rules, but found herself in an ambivalent position. While the Executive Director’s action satisfied the demands of bureaucracy, it also amounted to the technologies of governing, which causes divisions between women and between women and the state. This issue is discussed further under the section on allocation of resources later in this chapter.

Women are able to undermine state governing technologies through non-violent forms of resistance (Turner and Brownhill, 2004: 39). The unity of purpose, albeit somehow negative, exhibited by NCWD staff members shows that not all women are passive and docile. As indicated above, partisan politics also affects women’s collaborative efforts. As this study reveals, women leaders, although controlled by political parties, are more effective under the umbrella of a political party in power as they are then able to secure access to resources. Thus, some women leaders are gaining their access to the state strategically when their channel to the state is the political party. Despite the apparent advantages of women having access to the state, a challenge to

women's leaders is women's non-support for their political appointment and political partisanship. With regard to political appointment and partisanship, women can collectively fight and defend their rights to have a voice in decisions that affect them when they identify a common threat (e.g., an imposed leader) to the achievement of their goal. Some of MOWAC's and NCWD's staff members commented on the nature of the unsupportive work culture among women at the NCWD when the state imposed a Head on them. One of them observed, "Any time a new Head was appointed [from outside the NCWD], the old staff came together and fought her till she failed" (Female, NCWD former staff member #2, 08/01/2002).

The nature of the (non-)support gets complicated when the state imposes a women's leader, affiliated to the political party in power, on the NCWD. This imposition usually leads to divisions among women to the extent that some women either resign or detach themselves from the state. Many NCWD staff members resigned out of frustration (Kutin-Mensah, 2000). Some NCWD participants thought they would prefer working with men rather than with women. Although feminists suggest building ties with men to achieve their goals through the GAD approach, it does not mean weakening their ties with women, which has been the experience of African women's organizations (Geilser, 1997; Mama, 200a; Win, 2004). One NCWD staff member pointed out the danger of relying on men for support when she observed, "When women are condemning women leaders, men capitalize on our differences and destroy us" (Female, NCWD staff member #5, 08/15/2002). Similarly, a female staff member from a development agency, who works with both WGOs and NGOs, observed that there is petty jealousy and rivalry among women because:

Women do not support women. They destroy other women instead of building them up. Women should learn to criticize constructively if they want to succeed. Ghanaian women have not reached where their men are [in terms of skills and knowledge], so, therefore need men in the gender fight. (Female, Other from a donor agency #1, 07/17/2002)

If men are more knowledgeable than women in the bureaucratic system, what kind of knowledge do they have? From the point of view of institutional analysts such as Goetz, (1997) and Rao and Kellher (2002), it is men's experience, knowledge and skills that they have derived from bureaucracy that tend to perpetuate gendered institutions.

Women leaders also face issues of class allegiance (relationship with men) over gender allegiance to the extent that some women do isolate themselves from women's issues, hence the absence of grassroots and mass participation (Aubrey, 2001). In the case of Ghana, the gendered administrative model has not changed with the establishment of women's organizations (Hutchful, 2002; Oquaye, 2001). Somehow, the techniques of women's organizations also reflect male biased models, which cannot be solely attributed to men's actions. To be sure, some of the problems are due to constraints of institutional structures, while others are women's own making. For instance, women who have reached the top in their careers are socialized into the bureaucratic culture, which is primarily dominated by males. This is why many women tend to prefer working with men, as it means they can also avoid the conflict of working with other women. Undoubtedly, this weakens women's collaborative effort. Granted the fact that men can help women to acquire skills, it also reinforces their power over women.

As reiterated throughout this chapter, coalition-building and networking have become significant features of promoting change through collective efforts. NETRIGHT is an example of a most recent coalition among women's organizations and individuals.

NETRIGHT's approach to leadership differs from that of MOWAC and the NCWD. However, NETRIGHT's leadership and membership model also reflect a male-biased approach of exclusion, although its features are the most interesting out of the three categories of women's organizations. As indicated in previous chapters, NETRIGHT emerged as a coalition of NGOs. This composition implies enhanced participation and collaborative efforts among women to effect change. Although an ideal coalition should involve the state and grassroots to be effective in a neoliberal era (Love, 2007c: 318), NETRIGHT does not include the state or poor women at the grassroots level for broad participation. Despite this exclusivity, NETRIGHT's members recognize the marginalization of some women in Ghana. According to its members, the challenge of overcoming the marginalization of women has not changed with the change from the NDC to the NPP government. One NETRIGHT member summed up the marginalization of some women, particularly those who are outspoken, as follows:

Certain knowledgeable women are excluded from women's issues. Once a person is identified as vocal and criticizes government policies, the government marginalizes the person. In particular, [during the PNDC and NDC regimes] Mrs. Rawlings did not want some knowledgeable women to be around her, because it threatened her position. [As a result,] organizations and individuals interested in women and gender were excluded from participating, especially those who were not members of the 31DWM or the NDC party. The exclusions affected everybody interested in women's work. You either went with Mrs. Rawlings or you were out of the system. When it came to policy formulation, we [NGOs] were excluded so we did our work in isolation. Organizations are now working in collaboration, and we will not abandon the Ministry. We are still struggling around how to work with the Ministry. We are interested in what the government is doing. (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002)

The exclusion of NETRIGHT members is not new. Usually, in governing, governments prefer to work with women who are described as conservative, because they are not radical in their approach to women and development, which is taken as support for the

government (Nzomo, 1998: 239). Thus, members' interests and activism, alone, do not effectively promote their participation in decision-making processes. However, the inclusion of all hitherto marginalized groups is crucial in all participatory development relationships. Yet, effective participation is lacking in many development relationships (Hickey and Mohan, 2002: 3; Beneria, 2002; Rist, 2002; Love, 2007c).

The exclusion of NETRIGHT from decision-making processes concerning women is not only limited to its relationship with the government and MOWAC, but, in 2001, it was also marginalized from multilateral organizations such as the UNDP, which WNGOS should engage with to transform institutions. NETRIGHT's marginalization is due to its radical approach to women and development issues. In 2002, NETRIGHT made attempts to meet with the UNDP's country representative concerning the structuring of MOWAC, but the UNDP rejected NETRIGHT's request to meet on the basis of its rumored anti-government agenda (Female, NETRIGHT member #1, 07/31/2002). The rumored anti-government agenda is used to control the organization's activities. Yet, NETRIGHT members saw this engagement as important because the success of MOWAC in promoting women's status, promotes the (elitist) agenda of the NETRIGHT and women's groups.

Hira and Parfitt (2004: 22), note that southern NGOs are usually elitist, and perpetuate the problem of the lack of grassroots representation. According to MOWAC and NCWD participants, besides marginalizing poor women at meetings, NETRIGHT members dominate and override the concerns of both elite and non-elite women from non-NETRIGHT groups. NETRIGHT finds itself between a rock and a hard place because it lacks the political space to transform the UNDP's and the state's control over

women's issues, and NETRIGHT also uses its elitist composition as a tool for domination. While some NETRIGHT members justified its elitist composition, others saw it as a weakness. "It is true that NETRIGHT is elitist. That was not our aim, but the people who started the group are intellectuals. [Nevertheless], we think about activities that will sustain people's interests" (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002). Such interests are diverse. Another member supported the elitist composition of NETRIGHT.

The criticism about elitism is not a valid point. All over the world, change has never come from the poor. It comes from those who are knowledgeable. So we cannot take our elitism as a good criticism. We are working within the structures in place, but our success depends on our personalities as well. (Female, NETRIGHT member #4, 09/03/2002)

The exclusion of grassroots women not only contradicts the promises and expectations of Ghanaian women's organizations (as noted in Chapter Five), but NETRIGHT also ignores the importance of including the three categories of women's/feminists' organizations (as suggested by Vargas and Wieringa, 1998: 4). Some individuals, as well as some governmental and non-governmental women's organizations, also support the idea of a more inclusive approach (Tsikata, 2001a: 264-265; Governmental and Non-governmental Women's Organizations cited in NCWD, 1984: 90). Indeed, NETRIGHT's formation was in response to the call of the UN for the participation of civil society organizations to promote women's status and their involvement in policy-making processes (UN, 1995; 2000). The experience of NETRIGHT, in terms of its intended vision to be non-bureaucratic, and then becoming bureaucratic over time, is not an isolated case. Usually, social movements become bureaucratic, as the leaders tend to dominate the decision-making processes (Schaefer and Smith, 2004: 590).

NETRIGHT members reflect on its organizational challenges, but are still divided on whether its approach to its membership and activities is the best strategy. In order to broaden its membership and its scope of participation, and to incorporate women at the grassroots level, in 2001 NETRIGHT organized a forum at Cape Coast, a regional capital. However, the forum failed to mobilize all categories of women such as women from all over the regions (Female, NETRIGHT member #1, 07/30/2002). It is important to point out that Cape Coast is an urban center, which means that the poor and marginalized rural women would still have been excluded from the NETRIGHT forum and activities. According to the above participant, this unsuccessful attempt to bring a broad range of women together was because NETRIGHT did not have the resources to support its expansion to areas outside Accra. NETRIGHT's lack of resources is not an isolated case, as the following discussion on the nature of resource allocation to women's organizations reveals.

7.5 DISCRIMINATORY RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Women's access to resources will be facilitated when governmental and non-governmental organizations pull their resources together (Love, 2007c: 320). Instead, each actor is pulled in a different direction. It should be stated up front that the lack of resources is not unique to Ghanaian women's organizations. It is a limitation that generally plagues gender and women and development work in Africa (Mama, 2000: 23; Tsikata, 2000: 42), and elsewhere (Rai, 2003: 26; Chappell, 2002; Moser, 1998: 65; Macdonald, 1994: 27). Yet, the availability and equitable distribution of resources is key to the success of CSOs, which include women's organizations (Michael, 2004: 43).

These resources include personnel, equipment, skills, funding for both governmental and non-governmental organizations. These resources are even more important in an era when gender mainstreaming is being advocated (Staudt, 2003: 42; Zuckerman, 2002: 4).

Afshar and Barrientos (1998: 1) and Shiva (1997: 22) have underscored the challenges and differences in the development focus and priorities of WNGOs, which serve as the state's technology of governance. These differences lead to disunity and non-support for women leaders, competition over resources, jealousy and petty rivalry at the level of inter/intra-group and individuals, as indicated above. It is actually a cause of the fragmentation of women's efforts. Similarly, Edwards et al. (2000: 1) identify resource allocation as a source of competition among NGOs. Such fragmentation is a source of conflict since each organization wants to be the most recognized development actor in a specific area for women (Female, NETRIGHT member #1, 07/30/2002). In this study, one MOWAC participant also identified the focus on NGOs and their involvement as development actors in Ghana, as the cause of the proliferation of NGOs and the increased competition between them (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002). Furthermore, according to Fisher (1997: 439), development donors' agencies are aware of this funding competition, but they are silent over it because this competition between NGOs is a governing technology used to promote their own development agendas.

While WQUANGOs, WNGOs and WGOs benefit from government and donor funding, NETRIGHT (a WNGO) relies on mainly contributions and payment of membership fees. These membership fees actually pose an obstacle to the recruitment of women at the grassroots level. For example, in 2002, NETRIGHT's membership fees

were listed as 300,000 Cedis (US\$37) for individuals and 120,000 Cedis (US\$15) for Community Based Organizations with full membership status (NETRIGHT, 2002: 11).¹³ Within the Ghanaian context, the membership fees are too high for poor women. NETRIGHT's membership is thus limited to the upper class and elite women in Ghana as only this category of women can afford the individual membership fees. This supports the general view that it is those with high socio-economic status who can participate in voluntary associations (Schaefer and Smith, 2004: 158-159).

The current emphasis is to have women's grassroots participation in decision- and policy-making concerning women and development (Zuckerman, 2002: 4). NETRIGHT members are aware of this new development focus. Indeed, it is the grassroots women whose experience and perceptions bring to bear the realities of their day-to-day lives. NETRIGHT's efforts to mobilize women at the grassroots level through a rally in Cape Coast, as indicated above, follows the current governing technology of the state and multilateral organizations that underscores inclusion of those marginalized from decision-making in the development process (World Bank, 2006: 1; Antrobus, 2004; Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999: 5). To say that it is only elite *women* that can bring about change weakens NETRIGHT's own argument on the importance of inclusivity in decision-making processes. Since Ghana's independence in 1957, grassroots women have supported the political process of change through women's organizations. A classic example was the Market Women's Association in the 1950s and 1960s that was actively involved in political participation (Callaway, 1986: 195). Since the early 1980s, the 31DWM has also worked with women at the grassroots level, instead of being mobilized

¹³ There are also associate members whose fees are less than the regular members' fees. In 2002, the Cedi-US\$ exchange rate was approximately 8,357.7 Cedis to US\$1.00 (Bank of Canada, 2009).

under men, as indicated in Chapter Six. In particular, the 31DWM's mobilization of poorer women was one of its success stories. Others highlighted the negative impact of 31DWM's inability to work cooperatively and coalesce with all women's organizations, and all research participants cited the 31DWM's success in this area, but it failed to promote a women's coalition.¹⁴

Cakmak (2007: 6) suggests that the purpose of coalitions is to pull resources together, have access to the UN and the state in order to influence decision-making in the development process, share information at a reduced cost, and to make a greater impact on multilateral organizations.¹⁵ However, unless these organizations share common values and principles, the diversity among coalition members minimizes their potential strengths (Cakmak, 2007: 5). This is evident among NETRIGHT's NGOs and individual members, who have different perceptions of NETRIGHT's purpose, its diverse composition, and leadership challenges, which are at the root of its internal divisions. In order to avoid a duplication of efforts, NETRIGHT, as a coalition of WNGOs, does not want to usurp the roles of its member NGOs.

NETRIGHT does not [want to duplicate what its] member organizations do. Member organizations feel their area of work, roles and programs will be taken over by NETRIGHT. All the member organizations want to be seen as major players in the field, and want their work to be unique, not being done by NETRIGHT. (Female, NETRIGHT member #2, 07/31/2002)

As indicated above, member organizations also want to protect their funding interests and development focus, which is a negative outcome of governing technologies of donor organizations. The conflict over NETRIGHT's focus is a challenge because each member NGO concentrates on a specific development area for women. Thus, instead of

¹⁴ The political motive of the 31DWM was a source of the organization's motivation to help women.

¹⁵ See also Win (2004: 19) for a discussion on the potential benefits of coalitions

member NGOs seeing NETRIGHT's coalition as a strength for improving women's status, they see it as a liability because of its potential threat to their individual sources of funding.

With the exception of one person, NETRIGHT members focused on the idea that the organization is about networking, lobbying, advocacy and transforming institutions rather than about engaging in specific projects. One of them observed that NETRIGHT threatens member organizations because of the (mis)conceptions about networking when she explained:

We do not understand the concept of networking [in Ghana]. As a network, people are supposed to be working around the themes of the network. When there is an issue, we are to come together, but once it is over, that is it. We should only mobilize people when there is the need. [In this country, though,] this is not so. People see networking [among different organizations] as an establishment of an organization that should be doing something [for women]. (Female, NETRIGHT member #3, 09/02/2002)

This view reflects the lack of unity of purpose among NETRIGHT members, which limits its potential for transforming institutions. Cakmak (2007: 6) suggests that coalition NGOs focus on an important single issue and avoid controversial ones. Although NETRIGHT has identified an issue of women's status to focus on, it still poses some challenges due to unavoidable and related controversial issues. Indeed, networking of women's organizations and the achievement of women's goal of promoting women's status are inseparable (Antrobus, 2004). Within the African context, Mama (2000: 23) concludes that,

African women's organizations, whether they governmental or independent, need to articulate a clear gender agenda and to develop greater capacity and stronger networks if they are to successfully influence civil society, government and international agencies in directions favourable to the pursuit of gender equality.

Furthermore, NETRIGHT lacks strong organizational networks outside its own member organizations to be able to influence other organizations. Another NETRIGHT member said: “A lot depends on our definition of the coalition. NETRIGHT could be an intellectual ‘think tank’ that can provide information and produce policy papers for the government. We need the think tank” (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002). However, NETRIGHT is seen as a loosely structured organization, which affects its internal mobilization strategy. Cakmak (2007: 4) observes that the looseness of coalitions is the source of their fragility. A close examination of the nature of its coalition is needed to understand coalition from a feminist perspective.

O’Leary’s (1997: 65) description of a coalition connotes working from within one’s home (i.e., one’s location in an interactive process) and able to influence decisions. She adds that it is a temporary arrangement that is embedded with conflict. It is important to add that temporary locations lack coherence and undermine women’s ability to institutionalize their women’s gains. For example, wide participation and power sharing among NETRIGHT members are problematic, because of working from one’s home. The outcome of NETRIGHT’s coalition should benefit larger social grouping (The Council for the Arts, 2006: 2), but members’ unresolved differences pose a limitation. As noted above, NETRIGHT’s focus is unclear to its members and non-members alike in terms of unresolved issues about whether or not it should become ‘a think tank’, and how to avoid duplicating the work of its member NGOs. NETRIGHT’s outsider channel to the state remains a challenge, and women’s organizations that pursue the insider channel also have not been able to overcome their constraints.

While utilizing the insider channel (NCWD and MOWC) alone does not necessarily guarantee women's access to state and donor resources, organizations that use the outsider channel (NETRIGHT) also struggle with raising funds for their operation, as this study reveals. This supports arguments that underfunding is one governing technology that governments and donors use to limit women's organizations (Tsikata, 2000; Mama, 2000). One NCWD member articulates the importance of funding to organizations when she explained,

If an organization or institution is funded its image goes up in both civil society and in the state, while the lack of funding automatically kills its image. If an institution does not have funds its plans cannot be executed -- no matter how good the plans are. (Female, NCWD staff member #2, 07/15/2002)

All the women's organizations studied were variously affected by the lack of resources over a ten year period, 1992-2002. Yet, because of the culture of silence and competition, none of them quoted specific amounts that they had received from the government or donors. Governments marginalize and divide women by not including them in socio-economic debates (Zuckerman, 2002: 88). One participant commented on the state's governing techniques of women's exclusion and women's lack of adequate knowledge regarding specific amounts given to their organizations. She said:

When the budget is being discussed by the media, women are ignored because they are perceived as not having anything to say. Women need to be confident and to build up a critical mass to defend their budget allocation that women are *limited in discussion on budget allocation*. (Female, Other, journalist #2, 09/03/2002)

NETRIGHT has been able to eliminate certain conditions for funding and the negative impact that donor funding has on women, but it lacks adequate funding to operate. Unlike NETRIGHT, MOWAC seeks funding from undisclosed external donors

(Male, MOWAC staff member #1, and 07/31/2002). Usually, such donor funding, as discussed in Chapter Three, are used for WID programs, which perpetuates women's marginal status and limits institutional and organizations transformation. According to NCWD participants, there is flexibility in using government funding. While government funds could be re-diverted to other programs when required, donor funding was only used for what it is allocated for (Female, NCWD staff member #2, 07/15/2002). Yet, as mentioned in Chapter Six, women constitute over half of Ghana's population, but MOWAC draws only 1% of government budget (Dawuni, 2009: 1). Certainly, this is a powerful governing technology as 1% of the national budget is meager, therefore opens up a space for donors to govern women through their conditions for funding. Importantly, both state and donor funding are used for women's non-transformatory projects, a governing technology that perpetuates women's low status.

Agyeman-Mensah and Apt (1998: 38) observe that most state and donor funding goes toward promoting women's economic empowerment as the most common strategy used to address gender equality concerns in Ghana. MOWAC promotes women's economic empowerment through a credit scheme, which responds to the constraints of women's poverty (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002). While economic poverty is one of women's constraints, other forms of poverty (e. g., lack access to information, and women's exclusion from decision-making processes due to the lack of transformation of institutions), which might be addressed through Gender and Development (GAD) and Gender Mainstreaming (GM), have been ignored. Therefore, the NPP government and MOWAC offer nothing new to poor Ghanaian women to promote their rights in terms of political participation. In fact, women's representation

in parliament dropped by 2.2% in 2008, seven years after establishing MOWAC (Dawuni, 2009: 1). While poor women are content with MOWAC's credit scheme, acculturated women resist it (Male, MOWAC staff member #1, 07/31/2002).¹⁶ In the global south women engaged in feminist work are regarded as anti-male and anti-family (Antrobus, 2004: 143). However, participants in both the 31DWM and NCWD projects do not focus on gender issues and political advocacy as much as they do on the importance of credit schemes and income generating activities for women.

The difference in how poor and elite women perceive the credit scheme stems from the fact that the more educated women are against the liberal-welfarist approach to women, since it neither enhances the economic opportunities of women (i. e., WID approach) nor transforms gender and power relations (i. e., GAD approach) (Assibey-Mensah, 1998: 289; Dolphyne, 1991: 67). More importantly, the welfarist approach represents the lowest level of women's economic empowerment (Longwe cited in March et al, 1999: 93). Credit scheme projects neither attract budget allocation nor are they a source of budgetary revenue (Assibey-Mensah, 1998: 290). While elite women are against credit schemes, they do not have alternatives to meet the material needs of poor women. Moreover, this heavily criticized welfarist approach isolates poor women and concentrates on their needs independent of men, which distances them from the state, and limits collaboration among different groups of women. The welfarist approach does not take men (or gender) into account in project implementation (Mbilinyi, 1992: 48; Dolphyne, 1991: 67). When there is a potential for Ghanaian women to improve their

¹⁶ By acculturation, this participant meant women whose lifestyles have changed through education and the adoption of Western values.

economic, social and economic status, men tend to resist it (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 36; Assibey-Mensah, 1998: 288; Dolphyne, 1991: 69).

The NCWD staff members, who were critical of the credit scheme approach to women's development, doubted its usefulness to women in an era when the emphasis is on institutional and organizational transformation through the proposed GAD and GM approaches. One staff member observed that Ghanaian women are in search of effective strategies that would lead to structural changes. These would favour non-partisan politics in dealing with women, the inclusion of women in decision-making processes, and the allocation of adequate resources to women, as well as the transformation of gender relations in society (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 07/08/2002).

Contrary to the suggested non-partisanship, MOWAC's credit scheme allocation, for example, is alleged to have a political undertone. Usually, the government in power appoints District Chief Executives based on their political affiliation to the political party in government (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 07/08/2002).¹⁷ A third of the members of the District Assemblies are appointed by the government in power and two-thirds elected through elections (Ghana Districts, 2009a and 2000b). These appointees and the elected members are under the direct control of the state through DCEs and therefore technology of governance. The District Assemblies screen the applicants for MOWAC's credit scheme loans, and the DCE has control over the process of selection. These DCE appointments and functions support Oquaye's (2001: 37) idea that, in Ghana, governments use the District Assemblies to carry out their intentions of controlling decision-making and the allocation of resources at the local level. The functions of the

¹⁷ The District Chief Executive (DCE) is the head of government administration who represents the central government and coordinates the implementation of government policies at the district level.

DCE in state governance weaken some NCWD staff members' preference for a decentralized approach to women and development. Another NCWD staff member questioned, "Why is MOWAC implementing micro-credit for rural women? When there is money involved, everybody wants to implement projects" (Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002). This comment, however, may be a reflection of discontent among some NCWD staff members, since their "operational" work has been withdrawn first by the 31DWM and then by MOWAC. Similar to the NDC government, controlling access to funding and other resources, and decision-making processes, is a governing technology that the NPP government also uses to divide women. This micro-credit implementation benefits MOWAC and the NPP, as this raises both MOWAC's and the government's public images, both politically and socially. Women who get the loans see the NPP government as responding to their needs. This is reminiscent of the 31DWM's approach to women from 1982 to 2000, which co-opted participants in the 31DWM projects to support the policies of the NDC government. Despite the obvious underlying political motivations for supplying micro-credit facilities to women, and reinforcing the WID models of development in so doing, it is evident that women require credit to engage in economic activity. But, while benefiting a few women with credit, the larger issues of attitudinal change and organizational and institutional transformation (i.e., GAD and GM approaches) are largely ignored.

For instance, one female former 31DWM member commented on how the 31DWM's resources were used on activities that perpetuated women's marginal status.

Women were being helped to continue with their conventional activities. However, the noise about the whole idea of empowerment was woefully inadequate compared to the Movement's activities. The Day Cares were many, but women's activities for income generating were few. The projects were also

not evenly distributed in communities and the country. One might be tempted to say that the women were organized to hail Konadu,¹⁸ but the 31DWM created awareness among women to mobilize since, prior to its establishment, women were usually united under men's leadership. (Female, former 31DWM member #1, 08/10/ 2002)

The 31DWM mobilization of women was a major resource for women, and all of the participants in this study cited the 31DWM's success as a gain for women. However, using this resource to concentrate on conventional projects and income generating activities suggest a "women in development" (WID) approach (discussed in Chapter Three), which tends to support the status quo, in terms of gender equality and class, rather than transform existing gendered institutions. Childcare involves satisfying one practical need of women, and the members of the 31DWM saw their day care center projects as a form of support to women. However, critics such as Aubrey (2001: 102- 103) argue that the emphasis on day care centres deviated from the rhetoric of the 31DWM's political empowering role of the 31DWM. As a result, women's participation is still at the social or community level, which treats participants as passive or docile, following Foucault (1991), and lacks institutional transformatory potential (Hickey and Mohan, 2002: 6; Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999: 4).

The 31DWM members and 31DWM project participants differed in their opinions on the social, economic and political impacts of the resources that the 31DWM had access to, and used in its projects for women. The 31DWM members were of the view that the resources used on women's projects developed women's self-confidence, promoted their civil rights and their political responsibilities, which were ultimately deemed to be in support of the NDC government. While promoting civil rights the state often neglects women's social rights (Kantola, 2006: 12). The 31DWM's project participants only

¹⁸ Konadu is Mrs. Rawlings's first name.

acknowledged the economic impact of projects without any reference to their civil rights and political responsibilities. This suggests that participants did not feel the political impact of projects, as 31DWM members were unable to openly criticize NDC government policies.¹⁹ This explanation implies the ignoring of the political undertone of the development process, which Ferguson (1990: 252) describes as ‘anti-politics of development’. Usually, open criticism of government policies leads to conflict between the government and marginalized groups (Caldeira, 1998: 75; Geisler, 1997: 545). There is no evidence of the 31DWM and MOWAC having any conflict with the governments that they support, because they have both experienced immediate and beneficial access to the male-dominated state and to the District, Municipal and Metropolitan Assemblies.²⁰ This domination by government affiliated women’s organizations perpetuates the unequal representation of women in decision-making processes, which is another challenge to efforts to improve women’s status, as the following discussion reveals.

7.6 REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Gender ideologies and negative attitudes affect women’s political participation more than women’s education, participation in the labour force, industrialization and other socio-cultural factors (Ryan, 2009: 319). This observation is troubling because, since the 1990s equal representation of women and men at all levels of the

¹⁹ In my interactions with the respondents from the 31DWM, I realized that 31DWM members project participants they did not always support NDC government policies on women, but they were not public about their concerns. This was because they used the insider channel during the NDC regime, and would be marginalized by the 31DWM if they undermined its role and the NDC government publicly.

²⁰ Population size is the criteria used to differentiate between District (population of 75,000), Municipal (population of 95, 000) and Metropolitan (population over 95, 000) Assemblies (Ghana Districts, 2009a).

decision-making process is identified as the best strategy in efforts to improve their status (Goetz, 1998; Zuckerman, 2002; Antrobus, 2004; Ryan, 2009). This focus on the equal representation of women and men in development is supposed to change gendered institutions to increase women's participation in decision-making processes. This representation underlies the feminist based GAD and GM approaches, which take both women and men into account in the development process. This strategy has not been effectively promoted within the organizations studied. As Love (2007c: 311) notes, the initial mandate of institutions are difficult to change. Within the NCWD, the unequal treatment of women and men can be attributed to the mandate and mission statement of the NCWD at the time of its establishment.

The 'women only' policy adopted at the time of the establishment of NCWD still influences women in their organizations, because institutions and organizations are resistant to change (Government of Ghana, 1975). Although the theoretical focus has shifted from WID to GM, in principle, internationally (Staudt, 2003: 40; Young, 2002: 321; Moghadam, 1995: 16) the organizational culture of the 1970s (and WID) still persists in Ghana, and the gender relations in society have not changed much. Yet, as noted above, frustrated with the conflict among women, all of the NCWD staff members interviewed indicated that they preferred working with men, but men are not given any incentives to stay in the NCWD organization. In the past, the NCWD concentrated more on sending women for training and to conferences rather than men (Female, NCWD staff member #2, 07/15/2002). Another said, "Some female staff members constantly question men about the prospects that the NCWD has for men in terms of career advancement. They suggest [that] the men [should] leave if they want to succeed in their careers"

(Female, NCWD staff member #3, 07/16/2002). The NCWD female staff members' attitude towards men may reflect either women's competition for jobs or the assumption that women will do better than men as they are responsible for issues that affect them (Crewe and Harrison, 1998).

Cultural systems are difficult to change, and these systems provide the framework within which individuals operate (Love, 2007c: 310). Therefore, both women and men are usually hesitant to challenge bureaucratic rules and cultural practices in the public sphere, because this could lead to tensions within organizations and communities. Even though feminists claim they are constrained by gender roles and cultural practices, they also perpetuate these roles and practices (Dolphyne, 1991: 68; NCWD, 1994; Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 36; Wangusa, 2000: 24), as the experiences of NCWD staff members and the participants of their program reveal. A male NCWD staff member remarked "Women themselves decide on what a man's work is in the NCWD. The women think certain tasks²¹ in the office should be performed by men" (Male, NCWD staff member #1, 07/15/2002). Thus, even within an organization that is supposed to play a leading role in enhancing women's status by weakening state governing technologies, women NCWD staff members continue to employ the rules of socially assigned gender roles. This contradiction supports the assertion that women themselves are not willing to accept responsibility for what they consider to be "men's work" or to share work on what they perceive to be women's concerns (Taylor and Staudt, 1997: 214). Because bureaucracy provides the framework for administrative practices in the public sphere, women tend to comply with the rules of bureaucracy rather than push for transformation of institutions or to establish new institutions (Love, 2007c: 312; Goetz, 1997: 16; Ferguson, 1984). As

²¹ He cited tasks such as lifting heavy things or climbing on a chair to reach for a file on a top shelf.

this study reveals, women rejected the establishment of MOWAC. Some women are reluctant to support efforts to bring about intra-gender equality or even to overcome the constraints of bureaucracy, because they want to enjoy the meritocratic titles such as 'Dr.'²² that bureaucracy confers on them (Chingulu, 1997: 35).

One NCWD staff member was sympathetic towards men when she observed that, "Men do not say anything against the eradication of certain traditional cultural practices such as female genital mutilation. It is women who justify it through various means" (Female, NCWD staff member #2, 07/15/2002). The views of women participants at the NCWD's monthly meetings (WOMM) also support women's adherence to their socially assigned roles as women. They acknowledge the psychological and emotional discomfort it might cause them if they deviate from these socially assigned roles. A top female MOWAC staff member also blamed women for their conservative attitudes, and advised that women should work to change this conservative approach to women and development (Female, MOWAC staff member #1, 08/29/2002). While women are usually regarded as the bearers of culture (Long, 2005: 82), they are also blamed for upholding certain cultural practices rather than challenging them. This is a governing technology of ambivalent expectations from women, which put women in a no-win situation. However, understanding the importance of changing such cultural practices (through education or other means, such as policy) is essential, if women aim to participate in the effort to improve their status. Yet, in practice, both men and women in organizations do not show their commitment to change these cultural practices, because they tend to support the status quo.

²² Women employees with Ph.D. degrees.

When policies and women's actions concentrate only on women in development processes, they can be at odds with GAD and GM approaches. One female WOMM participant argued that when some women form women's organizations, part of their agenda is to support men, but this support perpetuates unequal gender relations. She explained that, "We cannot disassociate our motherly role from our official mobilization of women. When men lose their wives and remarry, the children become another woman's responsibility [so we have to support men to reduce the pressure on their wives]" (WOMM participant #3, 07/26/2002).

Motherly and caring characteristics influence women's (non-)support for which legislation intended to prevent the violation of women's rights. One participant noted, "We are aware that men outnumber women in parliament, so they [women] cannot vote against men in [for example] rape cases. Further, men and boys are our [women's] sons, so if they get a long jail sentence for rape, it will be difficult for mothers too" (WOMM participant #2, 07/24/2002). While women think about the welfare of men and boys, men have more interest in their daughters' welfare than that of their wives, and fear losing their power and status as husbands when their wives benefit from resources independent of them.

Men's cultural perception of women's issues is high. [But] men do not see the need for special programs for women. Some male parliamentarians believe Ghanaian men are being marginalized because of the establishment of MOWAC and the appointment of a Minister of State for Basic and Girl-Child Education. There is a big difference between how men perceive their wives and their daughters. Men have more interest in the welfare of their daughters. The interest is selfless. Their daughters should benefit from gender policies, not their wives. When wives benefit, some men think they [husbands] are disadvantaged. (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 08/08/2002)

It may be easier for men to participate in gender decision-making processes and be advocates for their daughters rather than with their wives. Gender equality for wives threatens the status quo for men as husbands. However, the risk is that in Ghana, once some daughters marry, they lose the high status accorded them by their fathers. These young women then have to face the realities of systemic gender inequality through their limited and pre-determined rights and obligations in marriage (Boserup, 1992: 16-17; Dolphyne, 1991: 1). Some fathers may want to protect their daughters from this gender inequality, but other men do not take women's concerns seriously.

Not all classes of men hold their daughters in high esteem, though, because of the variations in how different classes socialize their children. Educated men are more likely to support egalitarian gender relations than are non-elite men (Lips, 1993). Nevertheless, throughout this fieldwork, the educated men who knew about this research topic either laughed or smiled in a way that expressed their doubts about the success of the perceived goal of women raising their status. One former NCWD staff member shared this concern about men's lack of seriousness about gender inequality. According to her, when she got a job with the NCWD, a Ghanaian man remarked, 'There is nothing going on there, but you will have the opportunity to build your capacity and leave [for a better job]' (Female, NCWD former staff member #2, 08/01/2002). This staff member, thus, developed her skills in the NCWD, looked for another job, and resigned from the organization. Although she gained experience from the NCWD, she was concerned about high turn-over of staff at the NCWD, and the negative perception of men towards the functions of the NCWD. Her experience is not an isolated case.

During this fieldwork, highly positioned men, including some NDC parliamentarians, thought that the duplication of organizations for women in Ghana (by the NPP government) was unnecessarily complex. They thought that there was little to be gained from this study, because of the politics at the NCWD and at MOWAC. Male politicians from the NPP criticized the relationship between the 31DWM and the NCWD prior to 2001. They admitted that men's support for women and women's organizations' 'insider' access to the state is greatly influenced by women's class and political affiliations.

NCWD participants focused on both education and policy as tools for effecting change in attitudes about gender equality and addressing women's concerns in the development process. One NCWD participant observed that:

The NCWD [i. e., women's governmental organizations, including MOWAC] should target young children at the kindergarten level by offering a gender sensitive curriculum. This is because no amount of gender awareness will change the attitude of some [adult] men. Knowledge and practice are two different things. (Female, NCWD staff member #1, 08/08/2002)

The relationship between men and women at the 31DWM was similar to that in the NCWD, which means that each performed their traditional roles. Men are still responsible for operating the corn and bread mills at two of the factories (Female, 31DWM project participant #1, 08/13/2002). The study also revealed an example of how men take over successful women's activities that have considerable income generating potential, as discussed in Chapter Three. According to one of the 31DWM project participants, a woman managed the bakery until 1988, but when its status changed, after

it became a registered limited liability company, a man was brought in to take over as the Managing Director.²³

Taking into consideration the complexity of all these challenges in weakening of governing technologies and limiting the impact on indigenous cultural practices, and control efforts to promote gender equality and improve women's status, the research participants not only suggested who should be responsible for making changes, but they also suggested how the effort to promote women's status would be better facilitated through the development process. These ideas constitute the next subject of analysis.

7.7 VISION OF POTENTIAL SOURCES OF CHANGE

Usually, feminist scholars conclude their studies with suggestions for change (Sen and Grown, 1987; Parpart, 1995; Mohanty, 1997; Beneria, 2003; Antrobus, 2004). In this study, research participants offered potential sources of change to overcome the challenges in efforts to improve women's status. The discussion in this Ph.D. thesis has focused on the three categories of women's organizations (WGOs, WQUANGOs, WNGOs), as well as on the state and multilateral organizations that dominate and control the processes aimed at addressing women's issues and gender in the development process. The efforts of the women's organization to engage with the state are, ostensibly, meant to reduce the impact of governing technologies on women, and in principle, these women's organizations share a similar vision for change with regard to the state and multilateral organizations. However, attempts to motivate research participants to rank the various actors (multilateral organizations, the state, and women's organizations) in

²³ This type of limited liability company is a more advanced form of economic organization compared to the usual small scale income generating activities in which women are normally involved.

order of importance regarding efforts to improve women's status was difficult. This difficulty underscores a preferred inclusive approach that recognizes the importance of these three actors in efforts to improve the conditions of the women (and poor men) (Antrobus, 2004; 161; Love, 2007c: 318). The inability of participants also reveals the rhetoric of their commitment to efforts to improve women's status.

All participants in this study acknowledged that the effort to improve women's status and positionality in development processes cannot be facilitated if women's organizations lack access to material (funding, equipment, personnel, training) and non-material resources (i.e., political party influence, networks, coalitions, opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, and women's collaboration). The state and the multilateral organizations are important actors in terms of how they dominate, control, facilitate or obstruct the efforts of women's organizations to address gender equality and women and development issues. Between the state and the multilateral organizations, the state is more influential over women at the national level, because of its ability to generate and apply force, and its obligation to protect its citizens (Rai, 1996: 6; Kantola, 2006: 11).

The research participants (excluding those from MOWAC and one NCWD member) identified the key to improving women's status is that the state remains politically neutral. Attaining this politically neutral position is difficult, because political coalitions underlie social change (Love, 2007c: 319). Moreover, while political parties in power seek their own political interest before that of their citizens (Charlton et al., 1989: 14-15; Tsikata, 2001a: 268), bureaucratic organizations are also political actors that protect their mission, mandate and personnel (Love, 2007c: 310). Civil servants are

socialized and constantly trained to achieve this goal. In this study, the 31DWM members and the NCWD staff members, who have worked as insiders with the state, suggested that it is impossible to achieve a politically neutral status of the state and civil servants. Tsikata (2001a: 259), however, argues that political parties can have a plan of action that will help to improve Ghanaian women's status. This suggestion targets the political party in power in Ghana, since it is the government in power that identifies and, ostensibly, implements policies of the state, and, thus, controls the process of improving women's status (Government of Ghana, 1975; Dankwa, 2000; MOWAC, 2009). The challenge is that governments often draft and agree to policies that are never implemented (e. g., the gender policy document prepared during the NDC regime was never implemented), and at times there is no "action plan" for women, as suggested by many participants in this study. Without adequate processes in place and proper monitoring, it is difficult to follow-up on the implementation of policies on women (Zuckerman, 2002: 88). This monitoring and follow-up on implementation processes will be more effective when the state is politically neutral.

One NETRIGHT member described the nature of preferred organizations for women, which resembles the model of partnership described as post-bureaucratic interactive and integrative relationship (Love, 2007c: 319).

Multiple organizations should deal with women's issues, not just one [like MOWAC or the NCWD]. One of the organizations should be an autonomous body like [the] Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)²⁴ and backed by the Constitution. What women need is more than what governments can offer. (Female, NETRIGHT member #1, 07/30/2002)

²⁴ CHRAJ was established by Act 456 and based on a provision of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, n. d). It is supposed to be administratively and functionally autonomous.

Relying solely on government for change to gender equality and women's social, economic and political status has limitations, because it lacks the resources to address these issues adequately. Also, focusing only on an autonomous government organizations to oversee women's issues raises questions about how it would be any different from the NCWD and MOWAC, which the state has already created for women. For example, the research participants from the Public Services Commission (the body that oversees the organizations in the civil service in Ghana) cited government interference, a governing technology, as one of the obstacles to their administration of the NCWD. Debatably, any autonomous government organization would also gain access to the state through feminist civil servants who either do not have the power to challenge the state or choose not to do so, based on their personal goals (i. e., they aspire to a better position in government) or because of their partisan politics. Although one could suggest an alternative women's organization that operates autonomously outside the state, the state in very subtle ways can weaken or break up such an organization using its governing tactics by creating a parallel insider organization (Win, 2004: 23; Tsikata, 1989: 73).

As noted above, a leading member of the 31DWM pointed out the difficulty in achieving the goal of political neutrality when addressing women and gender issues in development processes. However, 31DWM members now favour political neutrality as their organization does not have access to resources and is excluded from decision-making processes under the NPP regime. The same 31DWM member also favored gender mainstreaming over establishing a separate Ministry (Female, 31DWM member #2, 08/13/2002). When the state loosens its position on the political neutrality of civil servants and genuinely decentralizes administrative procedures, women working within

the state can engage effectively with the state and promote women's status. Creating a political space for women within the president's office also enhances women's ability to influence decision-making within the state (Chappell, 2002: 90). However, this did not work out well for Ghanaian women in the past. During the NDC regime, a Minister was appointed in 1999 to represent women within the state, but the 31DWM was unable to object to the appointment, and suggest the GM approach to women and development despite its close relationship with the ruling government. However, the high public profile accorded to the 31DWM rather served to marginalize the Minister (as discussed in Chapter Six). Therefore, at this point, women and the government may not take the 31DWM's suggestion to have a politically neutral leader seriously.

Using the Beijing Platform of Action (PfA) as a framework, research participants from both the NCWD and NETRIGHT recommended a gender strategic framework and policy guidelines for any autonomous organization working with women. Although the members were not definite in the kind of policy required, their suggestion implies allowing women to articulate clearly what women need (i. e., an autonomous women's organization) to improve their status. The outcome of this process could result in formulating a well-defined national gender policy, which will serve as a guideline for both the state and women. One way of achieving this goal, according to these participants, would be for the government to ensure wide consultation with women inside and outside government, instead of only concentrating on select politicians. This view supports the bringing together of feminist politicians, feminist women's movement and feminist civil servants suggested in the triangle of empowerment model for more interaction among women (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998). It is also similar to Love's

(2007c: 318) integrative and interactive approach to networking. As well, the wide consultation and the triangle of empowerment model is a key feature of the GM approach, but this approach is effective only when all actors are constantly reminded of their roles (Zuckerman, 2002: 88) and made aware of the potential benefits of their differences too (Win, 2004: 19). A healthy relationship between governments and all women has been hard to achieve in Ghana (Mensah-Kutin et al., 2000: 21; Oquaye, 2001: 53) and elsewhere (Win, 2004; Geisler, 1997). As one NETRIGHT member observed:

There must be a healthy relationship between NGOs, the NCWD and MOWAC. MOWAC should not co-ordinate the activities of NGO's. MOWAC should be an agenda setting agency that sets policies, proposes legislation and reforms, but does not organize NGOs. [She asked] if you organize me, where is my voice? [It means] we [civil society members] cannot have an effective dialogue. It also affects my credibility. MOWAC should set the gender framework, taking into account regional and sub-regional socio-economic issues such as poverty reduction strategies. (Female, NETRIGHT member #5, 09/11/2002)

The inability to develop a relationship between the various actors involved is due to differences in ideas and a lack of understanding. For instance, women's NGOs believe that they should remain autonomous without government interference. To them, as noted in the statements above, government control means a lack of autonomy for NGOs. Following Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality, government interference is unpredictable and comes in varied forms (Everett et al.; 1989; Stewart, 1996; Rai, 1996; Chappell, 2002; Caldeira, 1998). Yet, throughout this study, the NCWD described WNGOs as having their own constituency detached from the women's arms of the state (i.e., the WGOs). According to participants, this detachment from women at the grassroots and other levels is governing technology, because, it has affected the performance of WGOs (and WNGOs) in Ghana since the 1980s, when multilateral

organizations began to actively restrict the policy implementation roles of such government bodies through structural adjustment policies.

Participants' perception of state control over WNGOs/NGOs contradicts the position of participants from NETRIGHT, who prefer a more inclusive and multiple actor approach to women and development. Although NETRIGHT members are skeptical about the state, because of its governing techniques, they are somehow receptive to state participation because of the state's control over resources. Undoubtedly, considering the nature of the government control of women's organizations, this kind of inclusion is unattainable. Any individual who favors this inclusive approach should be prepared to give up some of his/her power through networking and coalition-building (Hartsock, 1997: 93). In some ways, research participants had confused the idea of state coordination of WNGOs with state control over WNGOs. The coordinating role of the state is inevitable in governing of citizens and a bureaucratic system. The problem, though, is that bureaucratic structures are often state governing technologies (Goetz, 1997; Ferguson, 1990; Stewart, 1996). Also, the ineffectiveness of a women's organization depends on the extent to which the state governs the organization as in the case of state interference in the administration of the NCWD.

One government official's view on the research participants' preference for a women's autonomous organization draws attention to the effectiveness of WGOs without state interference. He eloquently explained that the constitutional status of organizations does not necessarily protect WNGOs from state interference. He also pointed out that the rhetoric of the state and the differences in the status of the NCWD and the Commission

on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)²⁵ that NETRIGHT members sought:

Words [alone] do not describe some situations in Ghana. CHRAJ is a Central Management Agency²⁶ created under the Constitution. It will be very difficult to unseat its Head without going through the same process of appointment. The institutions protected by the Constitution cannot source [i.e., apply] for donor funding like the NCWD; it is the government, which funds them. The fact that the President appoints the Head, and that the government funds constitutionally protected institutions, limits us. However, an advantage is that we also use our Constitutional right to react to government action. Despite the NCWD's lack of Constitutional protection, it had power when it was established until it was blocked by the 31DWM in the 1980s. The NCWD then played second fiddle in women's issues, which weakened its capacity to promote women's empowerment. (Male, government official #2, 08/28/2002)

CHRAJ is a male-headed organization and, therefore, the state may perceive it as having a higher status than a female-headed one (Goetz, 1997). As noted previously, the 1982-2000 blocking of the NCWD's access to the state was actually spearheaded by the 31DWM, a WQUANGO whose leader, Mrs. Rawlings, had more power than some men in positions of power (Ibrahim, 2004: 4; Aubrey, 2001:102).

The women's movement is supposed to play a positive role in women's strategy to gain insider access to the state, and use the outsider and autonomous channels to the state effectively (Everett et al., 1989). Through their efforts, women's collaboration can be used as a source of empowerment (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998). Instead, the 31WDM was a negative influence on women, as it blocked the women's arm of the state (i. e., NCWD), making it difficult to establish a powerful women's organization (such as the CHRAJ) that could utilize its connections with both insider/outsider channels to the state. However, the pattern in Ghana (as discussed in Chapters Four to Six) is that the state

²⁵ The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) is a government organization that is responsible for human rights issues in Ghana.

²⁶ The definition of a Central Management Agency is not clear-cut. The closest explanation offered by a civil servant is that the functions of a Central Management Agency cut across all sectors of society.

controls the women's organizations in the direction that it chooses to take them (see also Callaway, 1976: 189; Tsikata, 1989: 73; Manuh, 1993a: 110; 1993b: 176). The state's preference is to divide and rule over women. It is not to the state's benefit to support women and their ideas of institutional and organizational transformation (Hutchful, 2002). These are governing technologies, which thwart women's collaborative efforts, and block their effective access to the state for decision-making processes and power. Yet, women's strong collaboration is the key to their ultimate success in using the multiple channels effectively to access the state. This implies that power is not easily shared as Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality suggests. Drawing from Ghanaian women's experiences, one 31DWM member believes that women can actually work better together for a common cause than men can. However, the politics of victimization obstruct women's progress (Female, 31DWM member #3, 08/14/2002). This experience of victimization also occurs among African women, in general, when they struggle for recognition, legitimacy and resources (Ibrahim, 2004; Mama, 2000; Geisler, 1997). The following section summarizes the discussion in the chapter and outlines the conclusions drawn from it.

7.8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to examine persistent challenges that Ghanaian women's organizations live with in the face of policy and organizational changes, and to identify the ways that the various actors involved in efforts to improve women's status could address the challenges that remain. The chapter first reiterated the reason for targeting women in the development processes, and the approaches to women and development

that scholars have suggested to influence various actors interested in women and development issues. The discussion revealed that the approaches to women and development have not been effective as intended, because of the impact governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations on women's organizations, which pose as challenges to women. Throughout the discussion, it was evident that the channels that women's organizations pursue to the state to collaboratively engage with the state and influence the state could help build the required coalition among the three categories of women's organizations studied. However, the major challenges that persist and thwart efforts to improve women's status in Ghana collaboratively are as follows: women's autonomy and affiliation with the state; women's limited integrative and interactive relationships; institutions as sources of conflicts, tensions in women's organizations and ineffective (non-)leadership models; discriminatory resource allocation, and unequal representation of women and men in decision-making processes.

Participants revealed that autonomy of women's organizations, their affiliation and non-affiliation to the state are technologies of governance that threaten efforts in to improve women's status. Autonomy of women's organizations, their affiliation and non-affiliation cause divisions among women and control women's access to donor and state resources. For example, 31DWM and its state affiliation with the state and NETRIGHT's non-affiliation with the state all serve as state governing technologies, because they lead to state interference in the efforts of women's organizations to improve their status. While women's organizations' that are affiliated to the state has the support of the state, those that are not lack state support. Discriminatory support by the state for WQUANGOs, and to some extent, WGOs secures the position of the state, but creates

inter- and intra- organizational conflict between these organizations and WNGOs.

Tensions such as these limit women's ability to collaborate across different types of women's organizations, as indicated in Chapter Four in the discussion of the Vargas and Wieringa's (1998) empowerment model.

Due to state interference and the divisions it creates, and the different interests that emanate from these divisions, women's integrative and interactive relationships are undermined. The impact of women's organizations' inability to develop integrative and interactive relationships weakens some women's organizations' mobilization capacity, effective networking, coalition-building and collaborative efforts. In part, limited networking, coalition-building and mobilization capacity of women were attributed to bureaucratic institutions of the state and multilateral organizations. Such institutions are often a source of state control of women, which further exacerbates the nature of tensions and conflicts among women's organizations. Women's organizations are unable to resolve these conflicts because of ineffective women's leadership due to the state's imposed political leaders on WGOs, or some WNGOs' adoption of a non-leadership model to escape the state's and donors' control. Other challenges that remain are the state's discriminatory allocation of resources to women's organization. Some women's organizations continue to lack adequate resources, especially those women's organizations that are autonomous, non-affiliated to the state and involved in advocacy work on women and development. Lastly, women and men are still not equally represented in decision-making processes. Besides the challenge of unequal representation, women and men, and women particularly, continue to focus on their

socially defined gender roles, which are perpetuated within women's organizations ostensibly established to improve women's status.

Their vision for change centered on the removal of these limitations. While some research participants thought that women's affiliation to the state cannot be avoided, others were of the opinion that it is possible for the state to occupy a politically neutral position in its relationship with women. Some participants thought that a separate state but autonomous women's organization would function better than the NCWD or MOWAC, which are controlled by the governments in power. However, considering that the state only has an interest in the mobilization of women to protect state power, it is probable that the state would also interfere in the administration of any new organization. What is required of the actors – women's organizations, the state and multilateral organizations – is their willingness to work together. However, unless the state and multilateral organizations create a more conducive political and economic environment that will enhance the state's allocation of resources to women, women may continue to experience the divisions among them. As suggested by many participants, an autonomous organization outside the state would serve as a watchdog for women and report on the progress being made in women's social, political and economic status. According to participants, this autonomous women's organization should be backed by constitutional rights, which it can use to put pressure on the government to implement women's policies properly. Women elsewhere have adopted a step-by-step process, which helps women to monitor and put pressure on the state to formulate and implement women's policy (Zuckerman, 2002: 88). Chapter Eight provides the overall summary of

findings from the study. The chapter also comes to some conclusions drawn from the findings, and offers suggestions for policy initiatives and for further research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

REFLECTING ON THE PAST AND HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This concluding chapter summarizes this study and highlights how the findings reflect the relationships between women's organizations, the state and multilateral organizations. By reflecting on the practices and processes through which the state and multilateral organizations govern women's organizations, the nature of interventions from actors in women's development issues, and the reactions of the various actors to these interventions, this chapter further highlights how women's organizations and the state operate. It also reveals the knowledge and expertise used to govern women's organizations, the rhetoric of the various actors concerned with women and development, and the persistent challenges facing women's organizations. The chapter further identifies those who should be responsible for mitigating such challenges, revisits the objectives of the study and the methodology used, and restates the major findings. It also reviews the limited theoretical approaches to women and development that inform various actors, and restates the theoretical and analytical framework of the study - notions of governmentality, the analytics of government perspective and models on women's (dis)engagement with the state. Lastly, the conclusion acknowledges the limitations of the study, and then provides suggestions to help improve Ghanaian women's status and presents ideas for further research.

8.2 SUMMARY OF STUDY

The study investigated the relationship between women's organizations and the state and multilateral organizations. Understanding these relationships is important given that collaborative efforts of various actors are necessary in attempts to change organizations and institutions and improve women's status (Love, 2007c: 318). The main argument of the thesis is that while spearheading efforts to improve women's status in the development process, the state and multilateral organizations govern women through the suggestions they offer, and development theories and development policies they prescribe to them. Women often operate within the confines of these suggestions, theories and policy prescriptions. This *de facto* acceptance by women and their representative organizations reinforces the governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations that reproduce and perpetuate women's low socio-economic status. Some women find alternatives to escape state control by relying on their own financial resources or distancing themselves from the state, but the state further manipulates them through various governing technologies - monitoring their activities, denying them access to resources, excluding them from important policy and decision-making processes by describing the organizations as anti-government and/or members of the main opposition party.

New theoretical approaches to women and development and the restructuring of women's organizations, which are ostensibly responsible for improving women's status, do not necessarily serve their intended purpose, owing to the constrained space within which women's organizations operate. This is due, in part, to the powerful nature of state interventions, the reactions of women's organizations, and the various levels of

(dis)engagement and evolving nexus of relationships among the actors involved in women/development/governing processes. State governing technologies and women's reactions to these (and those of their organizations) can create additional risks for women (e. g., lack of access to resources, exclusion from decision-making processes, lack of effective leadership, intra- and inter-organizational conflicts, tensions among women's organizations), which further inhibit women's opportunities for improving their social, economic and political status in development processes. As this study reveals, reorganizing women's organizations and/or elevating/promoting the status of women's organizations with the goal of promoting women's collective action to engage with the state and participation in policy and decision-making processes, through networking and coalition-building, is not sufficient to support efforts to improve women's status.

This study examined the nature of the relationships among the various actors whose aim is to improve women's status, and the governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations. Multilateral organizations directly influence women's organizations through the ways in which the state and multilateral organizations act and interact; in combination, they intervene and re-direct women's organizations towards national policy agendas, which either promote and/or obstruct the enhancement of women's status. This research also identified the opportunities and challenges of women's organizations, forms of knowledge, governing processes and practices that the state employs either to institutionalize or destabilize women's organizations, and the alternative forms of knowledge that discontented women's organizations have at their disposal to counter state governing technologies. The study further revealed the persistent challenges facing women's organizations.

The location of the study in Accra, the capital of Ghana, was influenced by the fact that most governmental and non-governmental policy and decision-making debates concerning women take place there. The headquarters of the women's organizations studied are located in Accra, and are as follows:

- (1) Women's Governmental Organizations (WGOs), which include the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC);
- (2) Women's Quasi Non-governmental Organizations (WQUANGOs), which include the 31st December Women's Movement;
- (3) Women's Non-Governmental Organizations (WNGOs), which include the Network for Women's Rights for Ghana (NETRIGHT).

Fundamentally, the research for this study covers a ten year period - 1992 to 2002. However, to update the research data after the fieldwork in 2002, some mention was made of changes and experiences of women's organizations between 2003 and 2009 to highlight significant events that relate to the case under investigation. Field research was conducted in 2002, a year in which Ghana was going through a major political transition after the country had adopted a new constitution after 11 years (1981-1992) of military regime, headed by Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings. Mrs. Nana Konadu Rawlings, wife of Rawlings, headed the 31DWM, the WQUANGO, and limited other women's organizations, including the NCWD and NETRIGHT. After the transition in 1992, the country witnessed a proliferation of WNGOs in accordance with the policies of multilateral organizations, which favour the increased participation of marginalized groups, including women, in policy and decision-making in development processes. The

state and women's organizations followed this external policy trend on women and development, but various factors limited the impact of women's networking, coalition-building and collaborative efforts. Besides the external influences, during President J.J. Rawlings regime under the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) (198-1992), the state discriminated against some women's organizations, but supported the 31DWM. The degree of favourable treatment of the 31DWM over other women's organizations and the level of discrimination of other women's groups decreased slightly when the PNDC was replaced by its successor, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government, a democratically elected government (1992-2000), which was also headed by Rawlings.

In 2000, however, the National Patriotic Party (NPP), led by John Agyekum Kufuor, defeated the NDC in both presidential and parliamentary elections and transformed the relationship between the women's organizations studied, the state and multilateral organizations. These changes also had an impact on the relationships among the three categories of women's organizations studied, in terms of their organizational and institutional structures, and their levels of influence regarding policy and decision-making practices and processes. Despite these changes, the controlling impact of state governing technologies and gendered policy priorities remained.

Over a period of three months of field research in Ghana, and using a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered from current and former employees and members of the women's organizations listed above. A total of 45 research participants were interviewed: 33 women and 12 men. In-depth interviews were conducted with 30 people, and 15 "Other" participants were contacted through snowball sampling. The

'Other' category was comprised of those who also had some experience and/or information to share on the various women's organizations and efforts to address women's issues in Ghana's development process. They included members of staff of multilateral organizations, parliamentarians, former Ministers of State, and civil servants from government departments that had been affected by the restructuring of the women's organizations, and members of the general public.

The literature review of scholarly and grey literature on women's organizations and the government for this study revealed that policy prescriptions of multilateral organizations (i. e., the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) are often male-biased, and that women and gender issues are largely overlooked. The study examined the role of multilateral organizations in creating women as a risk category and then targeting them for special development programs, particularly through women's small-scale income generating activities. This study examined the four main approaches to women and development that emerged over time and that were intended to reduce the impact of the social, economic and political risks for women - i. e.; women in development (WID); women and development (WAD); gender and development (GAD); and, gender mainstreaming (GM). While the WID approach to women and development is the least transformatory, it remains the dominant approach to women and development, as it supports the agenda of the state and multilateral organizations, and perpetuates men's dominant positions in society. These theoretical approaches to women and development are rooted in feminist perspectives and development theories (see Table 3: 1), which influence national and international deliberations on women and development,

and state processes and practices in dealing with women's development concerns (Rathgeber, 1990: 489; Staudt, 2003: 40).

At another theoretical level, Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality and Lemke's (2003, 2007) analytics of government perspective are useful in helping us to understand how women's engage with or disengagement from the state is determined and governed. The notion of governmentality states that governments employ various technologies to manipulate and create docile citizens, and that power does not reside in a single domain; rather it is diffused and shared among people through discourses. Lemke's (2003; 2007) analytics of government perspective brings insights into the study, as it reflects on both internal and external governing technologies as well as the constrained political and economic framework within which current development processes are situated. These two theoretical strands are not specifically intended to explain women's development conditions; however, they offer an understanding of the creation of women as a risk category over time, one that must be governed, and the limitations that governing technologies place on women's collaborative efforts. Most importantly, the suggested approaches to women and development that multilateral organizations offer continue to influence the way these women's organizations operate. This discussion is situated within a broader framework of the multilateral organizations and the state, and the expertise and limited knowledge of these actors concerned with women, gender and development processes.

The analytical framework also employed models on women's engagement with the state. Everett et al.'s (1989) model on the "insider", "outsider" and "autonomous" channels that women pursue to access the state, which lack elements of collaboration;

and, Vargas and Wieringa's (1998) 'triangle of empowerment' model (i.e., which promotes collaboration among feminist civil servants, feminist politicians and the feminist women's movement) are useful models, but are far more complex within the Ghanaian context than the literature indicates.

8.3 CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE STUDY

Unfolding political events and new policies emerging prior to and during the period of my fieldwork shaped the research. These events served as examples of practices (Foucault, 1991) and processes (Lemke, 2007) involved in establishing organizations and institutions. Proponents of the analytics of government identify processes as the most crucial factors in attempts to understand governmentality. However, both governing practices and processes give meaning to the experiences of women's organizations. The case study approach was useful in challenging assumed existing generalizations that initiate an "early step in theory building" (Stake, 1995: 4; 2000: 439). The study achieved this by revealing that the four theoretical approaches to women and development, which, ostensibly, were intended to help promote women's status and, in some cases, transform existing institutional and organizational structures have not been effective. This was approached, initially, through a welfarist approach to women and development (WID) and later on through transformatory collective participation through women's organizations (GAD and GM) – but these approaches sometimes have been used to obstruct efforts that will improve women's status.

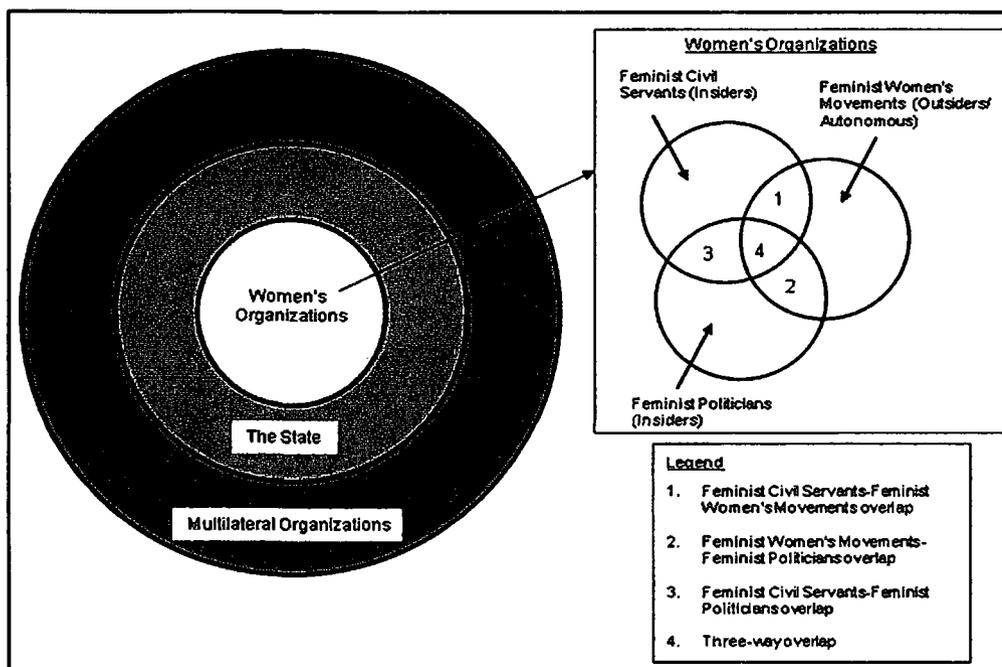
The complex and overlapping nature of models on women's (dis)engagement from/with the state, negates the simple and distinct categorization of women's

organizations' (dis)engagement from/with the state. This supports the views of some Ghanaian gender scholars that theories are the way people view the world, and, therefore, are not applicable to all categories or cases (Manuh, 2007: 139-141). Each category of the women's organization studied responded to the changing circumstances to improve women's status, through engaging effectively with the state, based on its knowledge and expertise to adopt an engagement technique that works best for the organization.

This study demonstrates the relevance of notions of governmentality and analytics of government in understanding women's relationship with the state within the African context by understanding the processes and practices of technologies of governance in relation to the various social, political, economic and cultural constraints of women's organizations. The study also revealed the role that indigenous cultural practices play in limiting efforts to improve women's status in development processes. While men are not ready to give up their privileged position, women also foster unequal gender relations through marginalizing men at the work place, and assigning them gender roles that are culturally defined, and/or supporting men's actions and governing processes and practices.

The following section expands on the conclusions drawn from the study by describing the nature of the relationships among various actors involved in efforts to improve women's status in Ghana, the expertise and knowledge that guides each actor, and the challenges that persist in the processes. It also offers suggestions about how the remaining challenges could be addressed and those who should be involved in this process.

Figure 8.1.: Levels of Interaction Among Multilateral Organizations, the State, and Women's Organizations



Governing Technologies and Dominance of Multilateral Organizations

The different actors involved in improving women's status operate at macro, meso and micro levels of influence.¹ Multilateral organizations operate at the macro; while the state and women's organizations operate at meso and micro levels respectively (see Figure 8: 1 above). The macro level (multilateral organizations), which is usually economic oriented, immensely influences the nature of relationships among various actors. The actors at the macro level limit the freedom of those at the meso (the state) and micro (women's organizations) levels. This limited freedom of meso and micro level actors questions the expectations of multilateral organizations about the role of the state

¹¹ As indicated in Chapter One, bilateral organizations are not the focus of this thesis; therefore they are not represented in Figure 8.1 on the levels of interaction among multilateral organizations, the state and women's organizations in Ghana.

and women's organizations in development processes. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (2005) observes:

Human development is about freedom. It is about building human capacities – the range of things that people can do, and what they can be. Individual freedoms and rights matter a great deal, but people are restricted in what they can do with that freedom if they are poor, ill, illiterate, discriminated against, threatened by violence or denied political voice. (Human Development Report, 2005: 18)

This observation suggests that we place more emphasis on inclusion of the marginalized, encouraging participation in civil society, giving legitimacy to marginalized group's voices, and acknowledging the issues that marginalized groups have (Wallerstein and Professor, 2007). Yet, macro level actors wield more power in their established relationships.

This finding is not new in the women, gender and development literature, but it is significant because this power dimension negates Foucault's (1991) contention that power is distributed and diffused among social actors. It also has implications for the favoured relationship that multilateral organizations suggest should exist among various development actors regarding ownership of development processes within the current World Bank's and IMF's Poverty Reduction Strategies Papers policy approach. Kabeer (1999: 15), a feminist scholar, observes that "[p]ower is rarely diffused equally throughout an organization, however egalitarian its formal ideology". Based on women's experiences in this study, power sharing is even more limited in inter-organizational interactions. Most importantly, the agenda of the multilateral organizations changes the economic, political and policy-making terrain on which women's organizations must play in development processes. This terrain is rooted in external policy-making processes, and goes beyond the control of individual

states in the global south, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa (The South Commission, 1990; McMichael, 2004: 116; Wiarda, 2004: 23).

Governing Technologies and the Challenges of the State

Feminists describe the state as powerful, and able to use collective force through various governing technologies, which limit individual citizens and women's organizations (Stewart, 1996; Chappell, 2002: 85, Kantola, 1996). Responses from participants in this study on the governing processes and practices of the state not only reflected this description, but also underscored the challenges of states in the global south. Many states in the global south, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, are limited in their freedom to formulate policies, as indicated throughout this case study on Ghana. They are weakened by colonialism, their continuous dependency on the global north and are, therefore, susceptible to the immense influence of multilateral organizations (i. e., the UN's declarations on women) and interventionist policies and programs (i. e. World Bank and IMF's SAPs/ERP, PRSP/HIPC), as this case study reveals.

In Ghana, this external influence is so strong that, whether there is a change in government or not, new governments either pursue the existing prescribed policies or accept new policy prescriptions (Aryeetey and Harrigan, 2000: 5; Hutchful, 2002: 1). This often exacerbates the existing negative impact of earlier policy prescriptions on women and citizens as a whole (Hutchful, 2002: 116; The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004: 10). These external influences often disrupt and undermine effective policy formulation and decision-making processes. For instance, at the time of

this study, although the government claimed to focus on improving women's status, it accepted the World Bank's program conditionalities for its heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) that did not adequately address gender or women's issues in development processes. Further, due to changes in government policies, and the lack of transparency in policy changes and the drafting of the country's gender policy document prior to the change, Ghana did not have any definitive gender policy that guided the government, multilateral organizations and women's organizations in their efforts to improve women's status. The acceptance of the HIPC package and the lack of a gender policy document are serious oversights that must be considered in light of the various governing technologies that the state uses to silence women, restrict their operation and/or exclude them from policy and decision-making in development processes (Longwe cited in Gordon, 1996: 118-119).

Despite the limitations of external prescriptions, the state still relies on external funding to address women's concerns, to the extent that MOWAC receives only one per cent of the government's budget allocation (Dawuni, 2009). This meager allocation cannot adequately support MOWAC's (a WGO) efforts to promote women's status without external assistance. Often, the state is unable to fulfill its functions because of its weak capacity, slow decision-making in a rapidly changing global economic policy environment (Love, 2007c: 304). Arguably, these limitations trigger women's collective action and political participation to put pressure on the state to change its relationship with the multilateral organizations and enhance its chances to deliver its mandate to women in development processes (Turner and Brownhill, 2004).

Governing Technologies and the Ambivalent Operations of Women's Organizations

Women's collective action is often through women's organizations. However, the operations of women's organizations are limited and they continue to be risk prone due to the governing technologies of macro (multilateral organizations) and meso (the state) and micro (powerful women's organizations) level actors. While the policies of multilateral organizations affect women's access to resources, which are directly distributed by the state, the state's efforts on behalf of women are influenced by whether women's organizations are affiliated to the state or not. This affiliation is manifested through the distribution of resources, as witnessed in the case of the 31DWM (additional resources allocated) and the NCWD (resources withheld) before and after 2001, and MOWAC (resources allocated) and the 31DWM (resources withheld) after 2000. The state uses different governing technologies in promoting some organizations' access to resources while limiting others, and the multilateral organizations are, to a large extent, influenced by the state's preferences for women's access to resources. This discrimination in resource allocation by the state, and with the support by some women, was a major source of conflicts and tensions among women's organizations. Some research participants reasoned that the state should be non-partisan in its support of women's organizations, but other participants argued that women cannot gain from the state without being closely affiliated with the political party in power. One might argue that when women's organizations find a balance between these dual positions of political neutrality and political affiliation, through genuine coalitions, it might enhance their efforts to weaken governing technologies (Vargas and Wieringa, 1999: 3). Yet, it is

important to recognize that despite women's organizations' partisanship or non-partisanship, and affiliation or non-affiliation with the state, the state continues to develop and employ technologies to govern women – for its benefit, not women's.

Due to the controlling and discriminatory nature of the state, NETRIGHT, an autonomous women's organization, decided to rely on its limited resources rather than appeal for state and donor funds, but this decision affects the effectiveness of the organization. As indicated elsewhere in this thesis, NETRIGHT adopted a non-hierarchical organizational and leadership structure, yet its members were quite limited in their intra-organizational interactions and participation in decision-making processes. Michael (2004: 119) suggests that civil society organizations in Africa rely on their own resources to protect their freedom and function effectively and autonomously. However, an autonomous and non-hierarchical leadership model resulted in the state's control of other women's organizations, and NETRIGHT's control of women within NETRIGHT and outside the organization. Molyneux (1998: 72) notes that:

Autonomous organizations do not necessarily lead to the empowerment of women: first because informal power structures can operate 'tyrannically' in the absence of formal limits or procedural rules governing the exercise of power. Second, because autonomy can in some contexts mean marginalization and reduced political effectiveness.

While women complain about state control and multilateral organizations (Stewart, 1996: 23; Staudt, 2003: 40), some women's organizations also restrict the participation of women. This source of control among and within women's organizations is complex. The tactics used by NETRIGHT (by distancing itself from the state) and the 31DWM (through close affiliation to the state) constrain other women's organizations in different

ways. NETRIGHT's autonomy derives from conflict between women and the state and other women's organizations and by distancing itself from the state while the 31DWM's autonomy from other women's organizations is based on its close affiliation and consensus with the state. The benefits of both forms of autonomy, however, are not shared by all women.

This study reveals that Ghanaian women's organizations use multiple and overlapping channels to (dis)engage from/with the state (see Figure 8: 1 above). Their choice of channels is either a manifestation of governing technologies or women's organizations' response to governing technologies. The use of these multiple channels has both positive and negative implications for women's efforts. These multiple channels can limit women's (dis)engagement from/with the state and, therefore, women's organizations still lack the required force of networks and coalition-building among women to transform organizations and institutions effectively. The 31DWM, the most powerful women's organization in Ghana (1982-2000), relied on politicians and civil servants, but it pursued the state's agenda instead of women's. NETRIGHT also used multiple channels to engage with the state, which is possible only because it is a coalition of NGOs, individuals and public servants, who, presumably, are not involved in partisan politics. Unlike the 31DWM, NETRIGHT's level of influence was marginal, because it is not closely affiliated with the state and could not seek the assistance of politicians as suggested by Vargas and Wieringa (1998) in their triangle of empowerment model (see Figure 8.1 above).

The NCWD and MOWAC (WGOs) staff members are civil servants, who are usually protected by the state. Indeed, the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution states that:

[A] member of the public services shall not be – victimized or discriminated against for having discharged his [sic]² duties faithfully in accordance with this Constitution; or dismissed or removed from office or reduced in rank or otherwise punished without just cause.

(Government of Ghana, 1992: 129)

Yet, the state operates differently through its non-support for civil servants unless they support its political and policy agenda. Due to the roles played by the various actors and how they operate, the views of some participants cited in the opening sentence in Chapter One that the actors change, but the policy priorities remain summed up how powerful governing technologies constrain how women’s organizations operate. The study, though, has some limitations in its focus, which are discussed below.

8.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study focused on urban women and excluded rural women although they constitute a significant percentage of Ghanaian women (Ghana Statistical Service, 2009). This exclusion is because they are not usually involved in central policy and decision-making processes related to women’s concerns in development processes. Instead, this study focused on those women involved as “insiders” (i.e., government employees, civil servants, politicians) and “outsiders” (WNGO leaders and members) who critique policy-making processes. The relatively brief period of field research did not allow for a comprehensive investigation into all of the social, political and economic policy implications for women or the three categories of women’s organizations involved. Nor did it permit several follow-up interviews with participants, which might have further illuminated the relationships between women’s governmental, quasi non-governmental, and non-governmental organizations, and the strengths and weaknesses in efforts to

² The Constitution uses gendered language.

improve women's status. Nonetheless, the study highlights the shifting nature and/or temporality of the state's relationship with women's organizations and among women's organizations, with multilateral organizations, and exposes governing technologies of the state and multilateral organizations as well as the practices and processes involved in development.

The study was also conducted during a time of a major political transition, which brought a certain limitation. Due to the political atmosphere at the time and the "culture of silence", many participants shared their experiences, but were unwilling to be identified. Although, these participants provided credible information, the information may not have had as strong an impact on development debates and discourses related to Ghanaian women, as it might have if it were associated with specific high-profile individual sources. Subsequent studies should try to address these limitations in order to initiate an open dialogue with high-profile individuals and also influence policy changes with credibility.

8.5 THE WAY FORWARD

This section suggests ways to promote functional relations among the various actors: multilateral organizations, between the state and women's organizations and among women's organizations in efforts to improve women's social, economic and political status and their effective engagement with the state in development processes.

Limiting the Role of Multilateral Organizations

Research participants noted that the best era in Ghana for improving women's status ended in 1981 with the second Rawlings coup d'état. This period was before the establishment of the 31DWM and before the socio-economic impact of the introduction of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) during Rawlings PNDC regime in Ghana. When women's collective action against the state was most required, the 31DWM attracted some women in support of the state, but it equally caused divisions among women's organizations, which undermined collaborative efforts among women, because of the 31DWM's affiliation with the Rawlings regimes. Indeed, one participant from MOWAC also highlighted the fragmented role of multilateral organizations through neoliberal policies from the 1980s, which were accompanied by their selective allocation of resources for women. It is unlikely that the mode of operation of the multilateral organizations will change in the immediate future unless planners reorient themselves to focus on human well-being (Beneria, 2003: 161), and the ability of women's organizations to challenge the state relentlessly. There were hopes that women's activism through collective action could change the policy focus of these organizations to gender issues. The force of such collective actions can be effective if the UN and other multilateral organizations are also committed to the process.

Jain (2005: 153) observes that gender issues are ghettoized in the United Nations. According to her, despite achievement in policy commitment, there is a lack strategic planning, channels of communication, and a lack of consistent commitment and compliance with the gender mainstreaming strategy. Jain's observation exposes the rhetoric of the UN's efforts to improve women's status, and also establishes the link

between its governing processes and practices. It also explains why it is unable to monitor the state's efforts to improve women's status as this study and others elsewhere reveal (Sikosma and Kardam, 2000: 1).

Strengthening the Mediating Role of the State

The state must play a bigger role in negotiating with the multilateral organizations in the process of policy formulation, implementation and change by rejecting gender-blind conditionalities placed on states. Studies reveal that democratic governments, compared with authoritarian ones, face greater obstacles in complying with the conditionalities inherent in the development policy prescriptions of multilateral organizations (Akonor, 2006: 110-111). According to Akonor (2006), criticism and resistance from civil society organizations, of which NETRIGHT is part, constrain government from pushing their pro-economic growth agenda forward.

Akonor's (2006) view implies that the more these civil society organizations participate, the more they are able to make democracy more meaningful, and also prevent the democratic state's compliance with policies that contribute to deteriorating conditions for marginalized sectors of the populations (e.g., women, poor people, disabled people, etc.). This study revealed that the state's influence on women's organizations reduced in 1992 when Ghana returned to a democratic government after 11 years of Rawlings's military regime, and in 2001 when the Kufuor NPP government came to power. For this reason, women not only need to build coalitions in order to increase their representation in policy-making processes, but they also need to reject what does not work for them, and continue to work with the state to review its failed policies. Only then can women

effectively put pressure not only on the government but also on the multilateral organizations. The state also wields power in internal decision-making processes and, through various governing technologies, it controls women's organizations, but this control must also change if women's status is to be improved. As discussed below, collaborative efforts among women and between women and the state elsewhere in Africa have yielded good results.

The state serves as a buffer between women and multilateral organizations. The power of the state in this relationship is that it has the capacity to create and change institutions and organizations whenever it wants (Love, 2007: 310). This was evident in Ghana's institutional restructuring in support of women from the 1960s onwards. The government created special parliamentary seats for women through the Representation Act in 1960 (Dankwa, 2000), established the NCWD in 1975 (Government of Ghana, 1975), and MOWAC in 2001 (MOWAC, 2009). The state, with the support of its citizens, and with strong women's coalitions, can effectively challenge decisions of multilateral organizations, and establish organizations and institutions that will benefit women. The characteristics of the state support Curtis's (1995) view that, despite the limitations that external influences have placed on the state, the state still wields power. Curtis (1995) does not make reference to African states, but Kenya's experiences show that when an African state is forceful it can reject policies and conditionalities of multilateral organizations (Turner and Brownhill, 2004: 21).

The Ghanaian state can emulate this action to protect women against unrealistic policies, and adopt pro-development negotiating relationships with multilateral organizations. Such pro-development relationship between women's organizations and

the state is one of the factors that have enhanced Asia's development (Wiarda, 1999: 67), and somehow improved women's status (Schultz, 2001: 1). Women's organizations in Kenya and Nigeria also succeeded in putting pressure on these multilateral organizations to change their neoliberal approach to development (Turner and Brownhill, 2004: 25). This means women require a strong network and commitment to support the state, and rise above personal differences and cultural impediments that might inhibit such efforts.

What emerged out of the research is that both men and women have their ideas of what men and women's roles are. These ideas are influenced by socialization processes from a young age (Nukunya, 1991; Gyekye, 1999). Such ideas may change through civic education. Indeed, Ghana's policy environment has improved over time, but perceptions on the gender/women's issue have not changed much. Therefore, the first step is conscientization through education such that men and women can understand each other and work together to support policy formulation and implementation. When conscientized, those in power will be better informed to formulate gender sensitive policies through gender mainstreaming (Staudt, 2003: 40) and gender budgeting (Leadbetter, 2001; Jacobs, 2009). They can promote grassroots and inclusive participation (Antrobus, 2004: 137) to support policy formulation and implementation, without the fear of men losing their privileged positions, without women being seen as getting too much attention and removing women's guilt of supporting programs that will conflict with women's culturally prescribed gender roles. Women's organizations must continue to play their required role in the process.

Promoting Collaborative Efforts Among Women's Organizations

Win (2004) states that division and a lack of understanding among African women's organizations reduces their possible collective force to improve their status.³ This is primarily due to women's partisan politics and fragmented self-interest (Mama, 2000; Win, 2004). Yet, women's inability to negotiate better relations together that could foster their collaborative efforts constrains coalition-building and networking across organizations. Individual personalities also exacerbate the situation so that women either willingly or unwillingly abandon their efforts of working together. According to Win:

Women's networks and coalitions can be one of the most potent forces for claiming women's rights. If they are based on commonly agreed values and principles, [but] they merely work on common issues and do not recognize the diversity of values and principles which exists within them, coalitions will immobilize themselves. Recognizing and affirming differences, particularly fundamental difference, is a critical part of effective strategizing. It allows groups to negotiate and renegotiate the terms of coalitions, and how far they will go with one another. In cases where huge differences lie underneath a surface of unity, it is maybe necessary to let go of the coalition. (Win, 2004: 26)

While continuous engagement is key in women's relationship with the state, NETRIGHT claimed to be radical and determined to change organizations and institutions that negatively affect women, but the members admitted that they quickly abandoned their initial desire to collaborate with MOWAC. Such withdrawal and the exclusion of the 31DWM from policy and decision-making processes actually weakens women's position and their opportunities for working with the state. Women need collaborative strategies instead of withdrawing from the state.

³ Win's (2004) question on women's coalitions is important in women's collective efforts as a strategy for promoting their status.

The section below offers suggestions for further research and for women's organizations and the state to open up spaces for dialogue that will improve women's social, economic and political status.

8.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has focused on the broad range of women's issues within the Ghanaian context investigating various factors such as: the relationships between multilateral organizations, between the state and women's organizations; between state interventions and reactions of women's organization to the state; and, persistent challenges to improving women's social, political, and economic status. Assibey-Mensah (1998: 292-293) observes that the usual practice in dealing with women and development issues in Ghana is to look outside the country to apportion blame for the lack of substantive progress. He suggests that Ghanaians should look within. In particular, he urges that planners should focus on practices such as budget allocation challenges and the public sector to find solutions to the existing formal and informal administrative bottlenecks (i. e., bureaucratic governing techniques). Arguably, this is difficult to do because multilateral organizations have limited the role of the state in this regard. He adds that the approach to improve women's status should be a multi-party strategy, which would bring together political parties. He further posits that there are numerous alternatives to promoting women's status in development processes, but he did not identify any such alternatives. These suggestions, however, are worth considering. This study reveals that organizational and institutional change, the commitment of all actors, collaboration between women's organizations and the state,

and also among women's organizations will help to reduce some obstacles, expand their repertoire and their enhanced efforts to improve women's status in the development processes.

Ghanaian women's organizations have become very creative in their choice of the multiple and overlapping channels to access the state for the purpose of influencing policy and decision-making processes to improve women's status (Dawuni, 2009: 2; Capacity Org, 2009: 1). While women's options are still limited, they are also different from the discrete and compartmentalized channels suggested by Everett et al. (1989), or the relationship/empowerment model put forward by Vargas and Wieringa (1998). Women's organizations' limited access to engage positively with the state and decision-making processes reduces the transformatory force that women's collectivity generates. Further research needs to be conducted to identify how Ghanaian women, and women elsewhere in the global south with similar historical, cultural, political, social and economic backgrounds, can move beyond the current impasse that they face with regard to having fragmented women's organizations rather than an all-inclusive women's coalition. An in-depth analysis of women's individual experiences concerning lobbying with the state through their use of these channels would also be a good area for further research.

The significance of the suggested future research focus is in view of the fact that Ghanaian women's socio-economic status deteriorated over time through the development processes. Ghanaian women who, prior to Ghana's contact with the global north, were recognized for the social, economic and political functions, have gradually been marginalized in the development processes. Although some governments and

women's organizations in Ghana have made promises to improve women's status, there remains a gap between what governments and women's organizations have done for women and what they were expected to do. Unless the state and women's organizations address women's development concerns, Ghanaian women will continue to experience marginalization and a perpetuation of their low socio-economic status. Increasingly, Ghanaian women's organizations are placing emphasis on networking and non-partisan coalition-building. Such networks and coalitions should focus on transforming organizations by understanding their rules and activities, the nature of resource allocation, the inclusion and exclusion of individuals and groups from policy and decision-making processes, and how these factors determine inter- and intra organizational structures (see Kabeer, 1999: 14 -15; see Appendix J). As Ghanaian women's coalitions and networks grow stronger and are non-partisan, women will be in a position to engage effectively with the state and influence decision-making, policy and practice in development processes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT DECREE, 1975 (N.R.C.D 322)

In pursuance of the National Redemption Council (Establishment) Proclamation, 1972
this Decree is hereby made:-

1. There shall be established a National Council on Women and Development (in this Decree referred to as “the Council”).
2. The functions of the Council are:-
 - (a) to advise the Government generally on all matters relating to full integration of women in national development at all levels;
 - (b) to serve as the official national body for co-operating and liaising with national and international organizations on matters relating to the status of women;
 - (c) to examine and evaluate the contribution of women in the economic, social and cultural fields, and to advise Government as to the specific areas where participation by women may be strengthened or initiated;
 - (d) to study the effect of customary beliefs, prejudices and practices on advancement of women in the education, political and economic fields, and to report to Government from time to time;
 - (e) to devise a programme for the establishment of machinery and procedures to make possible the continuous review and evaluation of women’s integration in the total development effort at local, regional and national levels;
 - (f) to study plans and proposals for the establishment of large-scale non-formal education and training for the purpose of raising living standards in the rural and urban communities and eradicating illiteracy;
 - (g) to perform such other functions as the government may assign to the council, or as are incidental or conducive to the exercise by the council of all or any of the foregoing functions.
3. (1) The Council shall consist of the following persons:-
 - (a) twenty persons, fifteen of whom shall be women with competence in areas of public affairs and women’s activities;
 - (b) a representative of the ministry responsible for education and culture;
 - (c) a representative of the Ministry responsible for Health;
 - (d) a representative of the Ministry responsible for Labour, Social Welfare and Co-operatives;
 - (e) a representative of the Ministry responsible for Economic Agriculture;
 - (f) a representative of the Ministry responsible for Economic Planning;
 - (g) a representative of the Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs;
 - (h) a representative of the Ministry responsible for Information;

- (i) a representative of the Ministry responsible for Finance;
 - (j) the Attorney-General or his representative;
 - (k) the Chairman of the Public Services Commission or his representative.
- (2) There shall be a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman designated by the Government from among the members of the Council all of whom shall be appointed by the National Redemption Council.
 - (3) The members of the Council other than the *ex-officio* members shall hold office for a term not exceeding two years but shall be eligible for re-appointment.
 - (4) Members of the Council other than *ex-officio* members may at any time resign their office by notice in writing addressed to the National Redemption Council and the appointment of any such member may at any time be terminated by the National Redemption Council if it is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so.
 - (5) The office of a member absent from Ghana for a continuous period of six months or more shall become vacant at the end of such period.
4. In the event of the resignation or death of a member, or where the office of a member becomes vacant under subsection (5) of section 3 a replacement shall be appointed for the remainder of his term in accordance with procedure laid down in section 3 of this Decree.
 5. (1) No member of the Council shall be entitled to any remuneration in respect of his membership.
(2) The Council may however pay to members or to other persons attending meetings of the Council such travelling and other allowances out of the funds of the Council as may be determined by the Commissioner.
 6. (1) The Council shall ordinarily meet for the despatch of business at such time and place as the Council may decide but shall meet at least once in every three months.
(2) A meeting may be conveyed at any time on the direction of the Chairman, and shall be convened at any time on the written request of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Council addressed to the Chairman with a statement of the matters to be discussed and in the event of such a request the Chairman shall convene the meeting within 30 days of the receipt of the request.
(3) The Chairman shall preside at every meeting of the Council and in his absence the Vice-Chairman shall preside and in the absence of both of them any member elected by the members of the Council present shall preside.
(4) One-third of the members of the Council shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Council.
(5) Questions proposed at meetings of the Council shall be determined by a simple majority of members present and voting and in the event of equality of votes the Chairman or the person presiding shall have a second or casting vote.
(6) The validity of any proceedings of the Council shall not be affected by any vacancy among its members or by any defect in their appointment.
(7) The Council may at any time co-opt any person to act as an adviser at any of its meetings but no person so co-opted shall be entitled to vote at such meetings.

- (8) Subject to the other provisions of this section the Council may regulate its own procedure
7. (1) The Council may appoint such committees consisting of such persons, whether members of the Council or not, and upon such terms as it thinks fit to advise the Council or exercise any of its functions.
 (2) The Chairman of any committee appointed under subsection (1) of this section shall be a member of this Council.
 (3) The Council may also seek advice, or otherwise consult any public body in the discharge of its functions and any such or any public body shall give such advice or render to the Council such assistance as the Council may require.
8. (1) The Council shall have an executive secretary who shall be appointed by the National Redemption Council such terms as it may determine.
 (2) The secretary shall under the direction of and supervision of the Council be responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the affairs of the Council.
 (3) The Secretary shall arrange the business for and cause to be recorded and kept minutes of all proceedings of the Council and shall perform such other functions of the Council as the Councils may assign to him.
 (4) The Council shall also have such other staff as may be necessary for the efficient conduct of the functions of the Council.
 (5) The Secretary and other members of the staff of the Council shall be public officers.
9. (1) The funds of the Council shall include:-
 (a) any grant received from Government by the Council for the discharge of its functions, such grants being charged on the Consolidated Fund;
 (b) any moneys accruing to the Councils in the course of the performance of its functions under this Decree;
 (c) any loans granted by the Government or any banking institution; and
 (d) gifts and bequests
 (2) All sums of money received on account the Council may be paid into such bank or banks as may be approved by the Council for the credit of the the Council's general current or deposit account, so however, that the Council may invest as it deems fit, any moneys not required for current use.
10. The Council shall receive estimates of expenditure for each financial year from the secretary appointed under section 8 (1) of this decree and shall process such estimates and submit them to the Government for approval through the Commissioner.
11. (1) The Council shall-
- a. cause proper accounts and other records in relation thereto to be kept;
 - b. prepare an annual statement of accounts in such form and containing such particulars as the Auditor-General may from time to time direct, or as may be required to satisfy its undertakings or engagements.
- (2) The accounts of the Council shall be audited annually by the Auditor-General, who shall make a report thereon to the Government.

12. (1) The Council shall annually, not later than six months after the end of its financial year, prepare and submit through the Commissioner to the Government, a report on its activities during the preceding years.
- (2) The financial year of the Council shall be the same as that of the Government.
13. The Commissioner may by legislative instrument make such regulations on the recommendations of the Council as the Commissioner may think fit for purposes of giving full effect to the provisions of this Decree.
14. In this Decree-
- ‘Commissioner’ means the Commissioner responsible for Foreign Affairs.
- Made this 2nd day of April, 1975.

COLONEL I.K. ACHEAMPONG
Chairman of the National Redemption Council

Date of Gazette notification: 8th April, 1975.

Appendix B

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Adolphine Y. Aggor-Boateng, a Ph.D candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada. I am presently in Ghana to conduct interviews pertinent to my doctoral dissertation being written.

The objective of my research is to learn more about the challenges governmental and non-governmental women's institutions face in Ghana. Specifically, I will study the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) and the 31st December Women's Movement (DWM), the two broad-based and most influential governmental and non-governmental women's institutions in Ghana.

These institutions were set up at different times to empower women for their socio-economic development and have since become targets of governments, development planners and donor agencies. I would like to learn about the challenges these institutions face, and the impact on the women they serve. The findings of this study will also provide information on the strengths and weaknesses of governmental and non-governmental institutions as appropriate institutional mechanisms for changing women's socio-economic status.

If you would permit me, I would be interested in conducting an interview with you to learn more about your views with regard to the operation of these institutions. There may be some possible risks involved in the research (e.g., you may develop a negative working relationship my colleagues and funding agencies when your views differ from theirs). However, I will protect your identity and treat all information collected from you very confidential.

Attached to this introductory letter is an informed consent form that I have designed to be signed between a respondent and a researcher. A copy of this form will be given to you if you accept this interview.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Adolphine Y. Aggor-Boateng
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6
Canada

Appendix C
INFORMED CONSENT FORM
(Government Officials, NCWD and 31DWM Staff/ Executives)

I have been invited to participate in a study conducted by Adolphine Y. Aggor-Boateng, a Ph.D candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The aim of her study is to learn about the challenges governmental and non-governmental women's institutions face in Ghana, a research requirement for the award of her Ph.D degree. The title of her dissertation is "The State and Women's Institutions: Impact on Ghanaian Women."

I have read/have had it read me, understand and agree to the following:

- Adolphine will be the principal investigator in this study.
- My participation in this research is voluntary.
- The interview sessions will be organized on individual basis, and the researcher and I will give our mutual consent to the locale and time selected for this interview.
- The duration of this interview will range between one and one and half hours.
- I understand that there may be some slight potential risks involved in this research (e.g., emotionally I may develop a negative working relationship with my colleagues, and funding agencies when my views differ from theirs).
- If I experience any discomfort, feel at risk in anyway, I am free to withdraw my participation at any time.
- I also have the right to decline to answer any questions that make me feel uncomfortable.
- If I do exercise my right to withdraw I give/do not give the researcher permission to use the data I provided to that point.
- I do/do not give my permission for the interview to be audiotaped for transcription purposes, and I can have a copy of the tape.
- The researcher's notes and audiotapes will be destroyed once the dissertation is published.
- I will be asked for permission to be quoted, but my name will not be used in the dissertation.
- I am also invited for a focus group discussion that is designed to provide more information on the operation of the institutions being studied.
- In all circumstances, my identity will be kept anonymous and all information collected from me will be treated as confidential, stored and locked in a durable file organizer under the researcher's care while travelling, and will be locked in a cabinet in my home when not travelling.
- To ensure my anonymity, the consent form signed by me and the data collected from me will be kept in separate files.
- The researcher will take steps to ensure my anonymity and confidentiality of data to protect me against any risks, but she cannot guarantee anonymity of my identity if I choose to participate in focus group discussions at the second stage of the research.
- Although the researcher cannot guarantee confidentiality of the data from the focus group discussions, she will ask participants to respect each other's privacy.

- The results of the study will be published as the researcher's Ph.D dissertation, and a copy each will be made available at the NCWD and DWM offices.
- There are no financial benefits for participating. However, the result of the study and recommendations will provide information that could lead to better gender policy formulation and implementation.
- If I have any questions, I can contact:

The researcher

Adolphine Y. Aggor-Boateng
 Department of Sociology and Anthropology
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520-2582 or (613) 260-3743
 Fax: (613) 520-4062

The Supervisor

Prof. Nahla Abdo
 Department of Sociology and Anthropology
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520-2600 Ext. 2617
 Fax: (613) 520 4062

The Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Prof. Charles Gordon
 Department of Sociology and Anthropology
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520-2600 Ext. 2585

And if I have any concerns, I can contact the **Chair of Carleton University Ethics**

Committee: Prof. Klaus Pohle
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520 7434
 E-mail: klaus_pohle@carleton.ca

My signature indicates that I have read and understood the information provided above, that I am willing to participate in this study, that I will receive and keep a copy of this form, and that I am not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.

 Signature of Interviewee

 Signature of Researcher

 Date

 Date

Appendix D
INFORMED CONSENT FORM
(Women Beneficiaries)

I have been invited to participate in a study being done by Adolphine Y. Aggor-Boateng, a Ph.D student in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The aim of the study is to learn about the challenges governmental and non-governmental women's institutions face in Ghana, a research, which she is required to do for the award of her Ph.D degree. The title of her research paper is "The State and Women's Institutions: Impact on Ghanaian Women."

I have read/have had it read me, understand and agree to the following:

- Adolphine is the main researcher.
- I willingly agreed to take part in this study.
- I will be interviewed alone.
- Adolphine and I will agree on a suitable place and time for the interview.
- The interview will last between one and one-half hours.
- I understand that there may be some possible risks involved in this research (e.g., the fear of developing a negative working relationship with my colleagues and funding agencies when my views differ from theirs).
- I am free to refuse to answer questions I feel uncomfortable with.
- If I feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview session or the research process, I will stop participating.
- If I stop participating, I will/will not allow the researcher to use the information provided to that point.
- I will/will not allow the researcher to record the interview.
- If I agree that the interview is recorded, a copy of the tape will be given to me if I want it.
- The researcher's notes and recorded tapes will be destroyed after she has written the research report.
- The researcher will not reveal my name or data collected from me to anyone.
- The information collected from me will be treated as secret, and locked in a box under the researcher's care.
- In order not to reveal my identity, the consent form signed by me and the data collected from me will be kept in separate files.
- I may also be asked to participate in a group discussion.
- If I decide to participate in the group discussion, the group members will know my views, but the researcher will plead with them to respect each other's privacy.
- I will be asked before any of my direct spoken words will be written in the research report, however, my name will not be used.
- The findings of the research will be written into a report for the award of the researcher's Ph.D. degree, and a copy each will be deposited at the NCWD and DWM offices.
- I will not be paid for participating in this research. But, the research findings will be used in making recommendations, which may be used in improving women's lives.

- If I have any questions, I can contact:

The researcher

Adolphine Y. Aggor-Boateng
 Department of Sociology and Anthropology
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520-2582 or (613) 260-3743
 Fax: (613) 520-4062

The supervisor

Prof. Nahla Abdo
 Department of Sociology and Anthropology
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520-2600 Ext. 2617
 Fax: (613) 520 4062

The Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Prof. Charles Gordon
 Department of Sociology and Anthropology
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520-2600 Ext. 2585

And if I have any concerns, I can contact the **Chair of Carleton University Ethics**

Committee: Prof. Klaus Pohle
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, ON. Canada K1S 5B6
 Tel: (613) 520 7434
 E-mail: klaus_pohle@carleton.ca

My signature indicates that I have read and understood the information provided above, that I am willing to participate in this study, that I will receive and keep a copy of this form, and that I am not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.

 Signature of Interviewee

 Date

 Signature of Researcher

 Date

Appendix E

Questionnaire for NCWD and the 31DWM Executives/Staff The Relationship between the State and Women's Organizations

Date:

Place:

Time:

Interviewer:

The questionnaire is in two categories. Category one covers questions one to 21. It aims at eliciting information on the state and other institutions. It also has questions which address shifts in institutional location, institutional mandate and budget. Category two focuses on the role of women's institutions in empowering women.

1. What is your role in the NCWD/31DWM?
2. Do you see your role as empowering women? How?
3. What is the mandate of your institution?
4. Which Ministries or organizations do you report to?
5. How does this impact your work?
6. Within the last 10 years what kinds of changes have taken place within the state?
7. How have these changes affected your work?
8. Do you work together with other institutions/NGOs?
9. How would you evaluate this type of work or partnership?
10. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of working with these other institutions?
11. How do you see your relationship with the new Ministry for Women and Children and the government?
12. How are you funded?
13. Are there any conditions attached to your funding?
14. If yes, what type of conditions are they?
15. Do you accept the conditions? Why?
16. How do you evaluate the conditions vis a vis women's empowerment?
17. Do you get feedback on your reports?
18. How does the feedback affect your future funding or relationship with donor agencies?
19. What challenges do you face as professional women working within bureaucratic institutions?
20. What concerns do you have working with male dominated state institutions and NGOs?
21. How do you evaluate the presence of men in your institutions?
22. What challenges arise from issues of "traditional" culture?
23. How do you deal with them?
24. What kind of projects do you have for women?
25. How do you evaluate these projects? (i.e., are they empowering women? In what sense?)
26. What kind of feedback you get from your beneficiaries?

27. What questions you would like to ask?
Thank you very much for your time and participation.

Appendix F

Questionnaire for Beneficiaries

The Relationship between the State and Women's Organizations

Date:

Place:

Time:

Interviewer:

1. How was this project started?
2. By whom?
3. What is the main priority of the project?
4. How was this priority identified?
5. What, if any, is your role in this process?
6. What role do you play in the project now?
7. How do you benefit from this project (i.e., social, economic and political)?
8. What are the benefits to your family and community?
9. If this is not your first project, how do you compare the benefits of the project/s i.e. what is the difference between this project and the old one/s?
10. How would you account for the difference?
11. Is there a guarantee for future employment? If no, why are you participating in the project?
12. How do you ensure equal opportunities for women in the project (i.e., performance of roles)?
13. If not, what are the differences in types of roles women play?
14. What kind of networking do you have with other institutions, which offer similar services to women? (If respondent is in a position of decision making ask question on networking).
15. How does networking promote or hinder the acquisition of economic and political skills of women?
16. What are your sources of funding?
17. How long is the funding period?
18. Is this reasonable given the objectives of the project (i.e., is it feasible that the objectives will be achieved within this time frame)?
19. Who controls the resources?
20. How are accountability and transparency issues built into the use of funds?
21. What are conditions attached to your funding, and how do these conditions affect your work?
22. How do you see the role of the NCWD and/or 31DWM?
23. Do you have men in your group? If yes, what role do they play?
24. Are there any issues I haven't touched on in our discussion that you would like to raise?

Thank you very much for your time and participation.

Appendix G

Questionnaire for Policy Makers in Government The Relationship between the State and Women's Organizations

Date:

Place:

Time:

Interviewer:

1. How long have you been working with the NCWD/31DWM?
2. What is your role in the operation of the NCWD and the 31DWM?
3. How does your role impact the work of the NCWD and 31DWM?
4. What challenges do you face in working with the NCWD and/or the 31DWM as a state official vis a vis other funding agencies?
5. How do you see your role working with female-headed institutions?
6. Considering the other institutions under you, what proportion of your budget do you allocate to the NCWD and/or 31DWM?
7. If there are differences how would you account for them?
8. What kind of projects do you fund or promote?
9. How has shifts in government within the past 10 years affected your work with the NCWD and/or 31DWM?
10. Do you find it particularly challenging in working with these institutions? Why?
11. These institutions claim they are equipping women with economic and political skills, what is your opinion?
12. Generally women are not satisfied with the state, what is your response to these allegations?
13. Are there any issues I haven't touched on in our discussion that you would like to raise?

Thank you very much for your time and participation.

Appendix H

Sara H. Longwe's Empowerment Framework: Levels of Equality

Control		
Participation	Increased equality	Increased empowerment
Conscientisation		
Access		
Welfare		

Welfare: Longwe's defines this as the level of women's material welfare, relative to men. Do women have equal access to resources such as food supply, income and medical care?

Access: This is defined as women's access to the factors of production on an equal basis with men; equal access to land, labour, credit, training, marketing facilities, and all public services and benefits. Longwe points out that equality of access is obtained by applying the principle of equality of opportunity, which typically entails the reform of the law and administrative practice to remove all forms of discrimination against women.

Conscientisation: This is understood in Longwe Framework as a conscious understanding of the difference between sex and gender, and awareness that gender roles are cultural and can be changed. 'Conscientisation' also involves a belief that the sexual division of labour should be fair and agreeable to both sides, and not involve the economic or political domination of one sex by the other. A belief in sexual equality is the basis of gender awareness, and of collective participation in the process of women's development.

Participation: Longwe defines this as women's equal participation in the decision-making process, in policy-making, planning, administration. It is a particularly important aspect of development projects, where participation means involvement in need-assessment, project formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Equality of participation means involving women in making the decisions by which their community will be affected, in a proportion which matches their proportion in the wider community.

Control: This term denotes women's control over the decision-making process through conscientisation and mobilization, to achieve equality of control over the factors of production and the distribution of benefits. Equality of control means balance of control between men and women, so that neither side dominates.

Source: March et al. (1999: 93-94).

Appendix I

Andrea Cornwall's (1996) Different Levels of Participation

Level of Participation	Part played in the process by local participants	Amount of control from outsiders	Amount of support from participants	Outsiders and Insiders relationship
Co-option	No real input or Power. Outsiders decide in a top-down manner.	***** ***** ***** ***** *****		Outsiders work ON an FOR insiders
Compliance	Tasks are assigned, incentives. Outsiders decide on the agenda.	***** ***** ***** *****		Outsiders work FOR insiders
Consultation	Options of (male) leaders are sought. Outsiders decide on activities.	***** ***** ***** ***** *****	* * *	Outsiders work FOR and WITH insiders
Co-operation	Local people work together with outsiders. Decisions are made by, and process directed by, outsiders.	***** ***** ***** ***** ***** *****	** *** *** *** *** ****	Outsiders work WITH insiders
Co-learning	Local people and outsiders share knowledge and work together. responsibility is shared. Outsiders work as facilitators	**** **** *** ** *	**** **** ***** ***** ***** ***** ***** ***** *****	Work is BY insiders, WITH outsiders
Collective Action	Local people set their own agenda and carry it out.		***** ***** *****	Work is BY insiders

Outsiders may be
Initial catalysts, but
Leave.

Source: Unknown (Cornwall, 1996: 94)

Appendix J

'Deconstructing' Organizations'

Rules (or how things get done): What is distinctive about institutional behaviour is that it is rule-governed rather than idiosyncratic and random. Distinctive distinct institutional patterns of behaviour inhere in the official and unofficial, the explicit and implicit, in norms, values, traditions, laws and customs which constrain or enable what is done, how it is done, by whom and who will benefit. The institutionalisation of rules has the advantage that it allows recurring decisions in the pursuit of institutional goals to be made with an economy of effort; their disadvantage is that they entrench the way things get done to the extent of giving them the appearance of being natural or immutable.

Activities (what is done): The other side of the coin to institutional rules is the generation of distinct pattern of activities. Indeed institutions can be defined as 'rule-governed' sets of activities organized around the meeting of specific needs or the pursuit of specific goals. These activities can be productive, distributive or regulative but their rule-governed nature means that institutions generate routinised practices. Institutional practice is therefore a key factor in the reconstitution over time of social inequality and, in the final analysis, it is institutional practice which will have to be changed if unequal relations are to be transformed.

Resources (what is used, what is produced): All institutions have the capacity to mobilize resources and institutional rules govern the patterns of mobilization and allocation. Such resources may be human (labour, education and skills) material (food, assets, land, money) or intangible (information, political clout, goodwill, contact) and they may be used as 'input' in institutional activity or represent institutional 'output'.

People (who is excluded and included in institutional activities): Institutions are constituted by specific categories of people. Few are fully inclusive, despite their professed ideologies. Rather, institutional rules and practices determine which categories of people are included (and which excluded) and how they are assigned different tasks, activities and responsibilities within the production process and different resources in the allocation processes of the institution. Institutional patterns of inclusion, exclusion, positioning and progress express class, gender and other social inequalities.

Power (who determines priorities and makes the rules): Power is rarely diffused equally throughout an organization, however egalitarian its formal ideology. The unequal distribution of resources and responsibilities within an organization, together with the official and unofficial rules which legitimise this distribution tend to ensure that some institutional actors have the authority to interpret institutional goals and needs, as well as the ability to mobilise the loyalty, labour or compliance of others. Thus power is constituted as an integral feature of the institutional life through its norms, rules and conventions, its allocation of resources and responsibilities and its customs and practice. The outcomes of institutional practice, including its reconstitution over time, will reflect the interest of those with the power to make the rules as well as to change them.

Source: Kabeer (1999: 14-15).

Appendix K
Determinants of Women's Status: Interaction With Social and Economic Factors

Inputs (Exogeneous)	Social Structure	Legal Framework	Political Will
Inputs (Exogeneous)	Education	Credit	Health Assets
Intermediate Outcome (First level):	Decision-making	Employment	
Intermediate Outcome (Second level):	Income		
Intermediate Outcome (Third level):	Consumption	Leisure	Dignity, recognition, leadership etc.

United Nations (2001: 7).