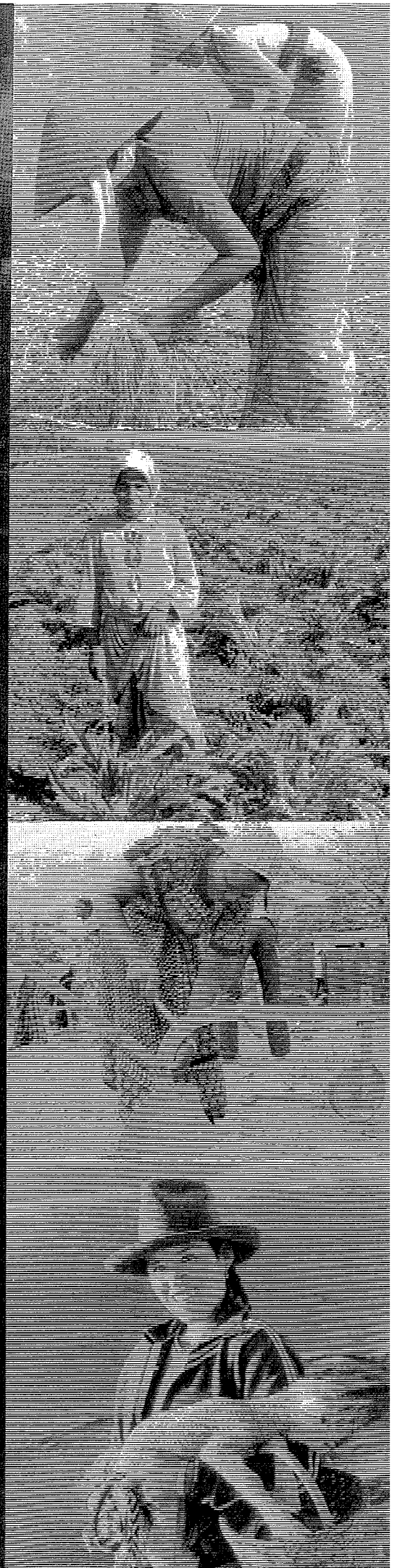

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

FAO's
Plan of Action

Illustrated version





This page:
Tunisia - Haymaking

Cover:
Indonesia - Women harvesting rice.
Morocco - Women cutting artichokes for export.
Burkina Faso - Agriculture student learns use and maintenance of modern plough at training centre.
Peru - Herder carries lamb while driving livestock home for the night.

“...discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity.”

United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, December, 1979

“Women should participate and contribute on an equal basis with men in the social, economic and political processes of rural development and share fully in improved conditions of life in rural areas.”

The Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, July, 1979

“Development strategies and programmes, as well as incentive programmes and projects in the field of food and agriculture, need to be designed in a manner that fully integrates women at all levels of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in all stages of the development process of a project cycle, so as to facilitate and enhance this key role of women and to ensure that women receive proper benefits and remuneration commensurate with their important contribution in this field.”

The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, July, 1985

“Substantively, the major thrust of FAO's activities will continue to be directed at supporting women in their role as agricultural producers. Within this framework, future activities will give greater recognition to women's special needs for (i) income-generating activities and control of income, (ii) educational and training opportunities and (iii) technologies and other means to both ease the burden and increase the productivity of women's work.”

FAO Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development, November, 1988

W O M E N I N A G R I C U L T U R A L D E V E L O P M E N T

FAO's
Plan of Action



Rome
1990

Contents

Rural women <i>A force for change</i>	4
Women in development <i>The Plan evolves</i>	6
FAO's Plan of Action <i>Integrating women into development</i>	8
Civil status sphere <i>A foundation for women's progress</i>	10
Economic sphere <i>Increasing the income of women</i>	14
Social sphere <i>Easing women's daily burden</i>	26
Decision-making sphere <i>Giving women the choice</i>	31
Launching the Plan <i>Programme priorities</i> <i>Monitoring and appraisal</i>	34
Summary	41



Foreword

For many years FAO has undertaken activities which aim at promoting the role of women in agriculture and rural development. In November 1988 the FAO Council requested the Organization to intensify further its efforts in this field. The Council unanimously adopted for transmission to the Conference a Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development, which provides guidelines for FAO to ensure the incorporation of concerns for women into all its activities. A summarized version of this Plan is presented in this publication. It is issued in order to familiarize a wide readership, at both governmental and non-governmental levels, with FAO's approach and to stimulate supportive action for the integration of women in the development process.

A series of international events have set the stage for this move towards giving due recognition and support to women in agricultural production, processing, marketing and in home economics. The International Women's Year in 1975 created an awareness and led to the commitment of numerous governments and international organizations to eliminate discrimination against women. The decade for women in development that followed, culminated in the 1985 Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for



Opposite page:
*Ecuador - Farmers
harvesting
potatoes.*

This page:
*Mozambique -
Fisherwomen
dragging nets.*

the Advancement of Women. Already in 1979 the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development had declared "that rural development based on growth with equity will require the full integration of women". This conviction was echoed by FAO's World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development held in 1984 and FAO's World Forestry Congress in 1985. It is now fully articulated with respect to FAO's entire field of responsibility in the FAO Plan of Action.

The Plan of Action outlines four spheres of activities. They relate to the civil status of rural women, to their economic and social situation and to their role in decision making. Each sphere includes activities which aim at removing existing barriers to and fostering potentials for the full integration of women in the development process. The Plan calls on FAO to intensify its activities in each of these areas, notably by the systematic collection of information and monitoring of trends, by promoting appropriate policies and by assisting interested governments. It mandates FAO to pursue a two-pronged approach to project assistance, that is on the one hand through projects that are directed exclusively at women, and on the other, to support the concerns of women in all FAO's projects and activities.

Worldwide, millions of women tend the fields, look after the crops and the animals, gather firewood, collect water, process and market the products and manage their homes and care for their families. Now the importance of their contribution to the development process is generally recognized. But it remains to introduce, at all levels, effective policies and programmes that can make their contribution more effective and facilitate their access to the fruits of their work.

I firmly believe that the active participation of women can have a crucial and positive impact on the social and economic development of rural societies. It is my sincere wish that FAO's Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development give fresh impetus to national and global endeavours to alleviate women's sufferings and burdens and to provide women and men with equal opportunities and equal rights.

EDOUARD SAOUMA
Director-General

A force for change

Once considered "invisible" in the agricultural economy, women constitute an important percentage of the world's total agricultural labour force. Even the figures in the chart greatly underestimate the work done by women — excluding their many hours of seasonal, part-time and unpaid labour, and their household activities. Rural women have many roles: wife, mother and agricultural producer, involved in raising livestock, and growing, harvesting, processing, marketing and preparing food. They cultivate subsistence crops for family consumption and may also work on cash crop production; or they may be landless and rely solely on wage labour. Women are also agricultural extension workers, production scientists and sometimes policy-makers. Regardless of the scenario in which women work in agriculture their participation in rural development is

crucial to an adequate food supply.

Women's daily work in agriculture, fisheries and forestry, as well as in food processing and marketing, is evidence of the essential contribution they make to rural production. Unfortunately, recognition of their participation has not always led to their inclusion as project beneficiaries. Access to productive resources such as land, credit, appropriate technology and training has always been insufficient to enable women to achieve their full potential.

Since the early 1970s, however, the issue of women in agricultural development has gained momentum. It is now a priority for development organizations and planners. There is increasing recognition of the need to integrate women into mainstream agricultural development in order to stimulate the entire agricultural labour force, both men and women, and to maximize its output. Women represent

A TIMELINE OF FAO'S MANDATE AND ACTIVITIES ON WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

1945

□ Establishment of FAO

1948

○ Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1949

☆ Establishment of the Home Economics and Social Programme Service in FAO

1966

○ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

○ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

1967

○ UN Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

1969

○ UN Declaration on Social Progress and Development

1975

○ International Women's Year and World Conference in Mexico

□ FAO Council Resolution 2/66 "Integration of Women in Agricultural and Rural Development and Nutrition Policies"

□ FAO Conference Resolution 10/75

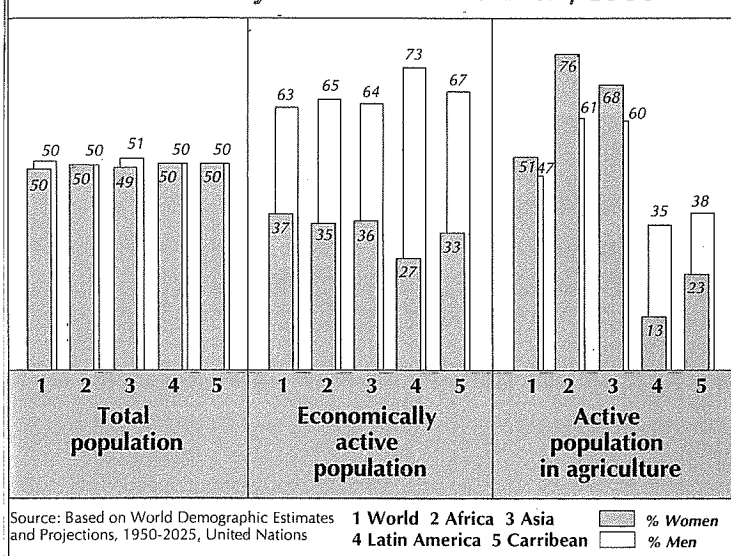
"The Role of Women in Rural Development"

a major force for rural change, a largely untapped resource that could boost rural economies and lead to higher growth rates and increased food production. Growing awareness of the role of women in production as well as of their wider contribution to social and economic development has prompted

the creation of new national and local rural policies to support their work.

Many countries are striving to eliminate the legal barriers that have prevented women's equal participation and equal benefits by creating institutions and organizations committed to the advancement of rural women. With continued evaluation and analysis of existing policies and development plans, women can have better access to productive resources and to social services. Along with men, they can have the opportunity to earn income and participate in making decisions regarding their communities and families.

World survey of women and men, 1985



Data do not necessarily include women's part-time, seasonal or domestic food crop labour.

1976

○ Start of the UN Decade for Women 1976-1985

☆ Establishment of the FAO Inter-Divisional Working Group on Women in Development

1979

□ World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Adoption of Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action

○ UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1983

☆ FAO's Home Economics and Social Programme Service is converted into Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service

☆ FAO Committee on Agriculture discusses the "Role of Women in Agricultural Production"

☆ FAO's Report on the State of Food and Agriculture dedicates a special chapter to "Women's Participation in Agriculture"

☆ FAO Near East Regional Experts Meeting on Women in Food Production, Amman

□ FAO Conference Resolution 4/83 requests FAO to monitor programmes that benefit rural women

☆ FAO Expert Consultation on Women in Food Production, Rome

The plan evolves

International Women's Year in 1975, and the United Nations Decade for Women that followed, brought world attention to the critical role of women in development and gave the impetus needed for international organizations and many governments to work for the elimination of discrimination against women. In 1985, upon the conclusion of the Decade for Women, the creation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies promoted specific actions for broadening women's participation and equality in development.

Meanwhile, in 1979, delegates of 145 governments and international organizations gathered in Rome for FAO's World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD). The Conference adopted the Declaration of Principles and



Botswana - Trainee learns tractor-driving at Agricultural College.

1984

- ✧ Resolution of the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development including women specifically in the Programme of Action for the Development of Small Scale Fisheries
- ✧ FAO Government Consultation on the Role of Women in Food Production and Food Security in Africa, Harare
- ✧ FAO Regional Conference for Africa includes discussion on rural women
- ✧ FAO National Workshops on "The Role of Women in Agriculture and Food Security" held in Egypt, Sudan and Tunisia

1985

- World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, Kenya. Adoption of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (NFLS)
- FAO Conference Resolution 12/85 relating to rural women's problems, especially in the areas of training and access to inputs and technology

1986

- ✧ FAO Regional Conferences are held in Asia and the Pacific, the Near East and Latin America and the Caribbean. Include discussions on rural women and agriculture
- ✧ FAO begins coding projects according to women in development concerns
- ✧ FAO prepares the chapter "Women in Agriculture" for the UN World Survey on the Role of Women in Development

Programme of Action specifically addressed to the participation of women on an equal basis with men in rural development. Since the Conference, FAO's approach to women in development has focused on the role of women in agricultural production and rural development

Each of the above gave impetus to FAO in framing its own Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development. The Plan of Action is the culmination of many years of experience in this area, reflecting FAO's commitment to rural women.

Formulated at the request of FAO's Conference in 1987, the Plan ensures the systematic incorporation of women into all programmes and projects of the Organization. Realizing that the design and formulation of projects that include both women and men are crucial to the success of agricultural development, the Plan provides the framework and specific actions for guaranteeing women their place as both participants and beneficiaries. In 1988, FAO's Council

unanimously adopted the Plan of Action and recommended that the Organization identify priorities and set a timetable for their implementation. The task of implementing the Plan is coordinated by the Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service of the Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division, in cooperation with FAO's other technical divisions, with a view to including all aspects of women in development in their programmes of work.

1987

- Formulation of the UN System-Wide Medium-Term Plan for Women in Development (SWMTP) 1990-1995 for implementation of the NFLS, designating FAO as the agency responsible for all food and agricultural components of the Plan
- ☆ FAO prepares the Second Progress Report on WCARRD Programme of Action Including The Role of Women in Rural Development
- ☆ FAO policy paper "Women in Agriculture and Rural Development: FAO's Programme Directions" is presented to the FAO Conference
- FAO Conference Resolution 3/87 requesting a plan of action for the integration of women in development encompassing strategies to ensure that all relevant programmes of FAO incorporate the recommendations of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies and the System-Wide Medium-Term Plan
- FAO Conference Resolution 4/87 requesting a meeting of experts to discuss how to integrate women into the process of rural development

1988

- ☆ FAO Expert Consultation on Experiences of Institutional Changes Concerning Women in Development, Rome
- FAO Council Resolution 1/94 adopting the Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

1989

- ☆ FAO prepares the chapter "Women, Food Systems and Agriculture" for the update of the UN World Survey on the Role of Women in Development
- The FAO Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development is adopted by the FAO Conference

Integrating women into development

The Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development embodies FAO's policies and programmes to improve the lives of rural women. It is based on the Organization's commitment to the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, which is a pledge by the UN Member Governments to take concrete steps by the year 2000 to eliminate all political, economic, social and cultural forms of sex-based discrimination.

Focusing specifically on agriculture, food and rural development, including fisheries and forestry, the Plan of Action outlines three principal areas of activity:

- Gathering statistical data and research studies on all issues related to women in agricultural development, and ensuring FAO's ability to monitor the status of these issues in the field;
- Advising policy makers on women in agricultural development at both the international and national levels;
- Assisting in implementing women in agricultural development projects and programmes, and in mobilizing the necessary resources.

The Plan recognizes that women already make a crucial contribution to agricultural production. It is dedicated to enhancing their participation through projects and programmes that systematically bring women into the mainstream of development activities and national life. Within this framework, future activities will give greater recognition to women's special needs for income-producing activities and control of income, educational and training opportunities, and technologies and other means to ease the burden and increase the productivity of women's work.

FAO's two-pronged approach to women's projects and programmes

FAO takes a two-pronged approach to women in development, that is reiterated in the Plan of Action: first, the implementation of projects and programmes oriented exclusively to women (women-specific projects and programmes) and, second, the promotion of the integration of women's issues and of women as participants in all of FAO's projects and activities (mainstream programmes and projects).

FAO recognizes the necessity of women-specific projects under certain circumstances: where "women-only" projects can serve as demonstrations to encourage national governments to include women in their mainstream projects; where cultural factors prevent women from working alongside men; or where rural women have been generally neglected. However, the success of "women-only" projects is often constrained by small budgets, low government priority, a lack of skilled project staff and concentration on marginal enterprises. Therefore, while the Plan incorporates both approaches, every effort will be given to including both men and women as full participants in mainstream projects.

Role of Member Governments

In adopting the Plan, FAO's Council requested that Member Governments make all possible efforts to contribute to its implementation. It is evident that without the interest and commitment of governments, the actions envisaged in the Plan cannot succeed. Comprehensive policy designs, programme and project planning, implementation and evaluation, as well as legislation related to women's issues, are requisites at the national level for the Plan's success. In line with

its mandate, FAO stands ready and eager to assist Member Governments in the realization of greater participation and greater equality for rural women.

The four spheres

The Plan revolves around four spheres - civil status, economic, social and decision-making. They are selected on the basis of FAO's long experience in working with women in developing countries and with Member Governments.

Each sphere contains its own strategy for increasing women's status at all levels of society - household, community, national and international. Within each sphere, numerous actions are presented that FAO envisages as essential to the Plan's implementation. Because not all actions can be carried out simultaneously, priorities have been determined and are presented on page 34.

CIVIL STATUS SPHERE

Seeks to improve the legal and attitudinal climate to permit women to contribute to and benefit from agricultural and rural development and increased food production

ECONOMIC SPHERE

Seeks to enhance the role of women as producers in agriculture, fisheries and forestry and to recognize the need for access to resources, extension training services, and technologies that increase their productivity

SOCIAL SPHERE

Seeks to emphasize the interdependence of population, nutrition and education on agricultural productivity and to integrate these aspects into field projects; to improve the access of rural women to education and social services that will ease their domestic workload; and to increase the ability of women to participate more fully in agricultural production and professions

DECISION-MAKING SPHERE

Seeks to increase women's involvement in decision-making through greater participation in institutions and people's organizations and to train women in the skills needed to play a greater role in national and local level policy-making in relation to agricultural production, extension services and land reform

A foundation for women's progress

Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women* has been a milestone in encouraging governments to enact legislation to improve conditions for women. As of 1989, two-thirds of the UN Member Nations had ratified the Convention, contributing toward the goal of overall equality by the year 2000. The principles laid out in the Convention are basic to FAO's Plan of Action for enhancing women's legal status.

Almost all countries represented at the World Conference of the International Women's Year in 1975, and the subsequent women's conferences in Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985, have established governmental bodies responsible for the promotion of women. In some cases, these agencies have contributed to increasing the awareness of their governments regarding the needs of rural women, and have been instrumental in the creation of specific legislation on land rights, inheritance and rural wage rates. The degree of their success, however, is usually linked to the closeness of their affiliation with ministries of agriculture, whereby programmes and projects for rural women can benefit from an already existing network of regional and local offices and a high level of technical expertise.

The legal issues important to women in developing nations, as everywhere, include constitutional issues (equality, civil rights and political rights), economic issues (credit, ownership of property and inheritance), labour issues (wages, maternity benefits and employment opportunities), family relations (marriage, divorce and reproduction), health care (health entitlements and

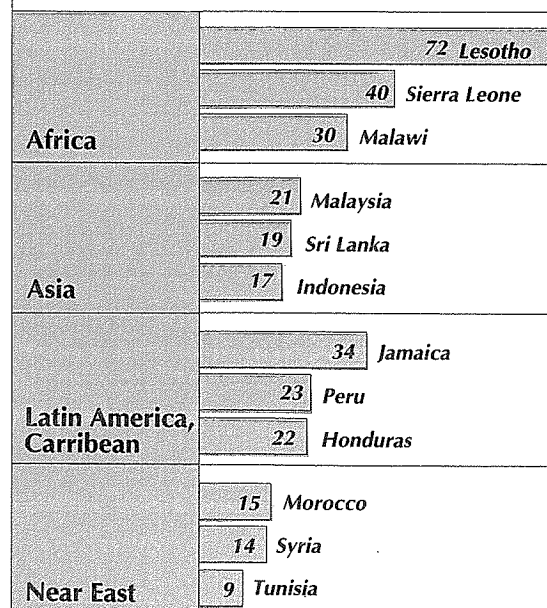
family planning), and so on.

Unfortunately, the civil status of women in many countries is such that women are constrained from full participation in the benefits of development.

With respect to women and agricultural development, the impact of laws regarding agrarian reforms, land rights, and access to credit and training are particularly important. There are two major trends, often interrelated, that are particularly pressing: women's lack of land rights and the increasing number of women heads of households.

Lack of access to land remains a major obstacle to the full participation of women in rural development. FAO studies show that women tend to lose out in most land reform programmes. For example, in Latin America, many

Percentage of households headed by women in selected countries



Source: Based on Population Census for Selected Countries, 1987 and US Bureau of the Census

agrarian reform laws continue to exclude women. Land is awarded to a "family head", traditionally a man. In some cases a widow cannot inherit her husband's land without written agreement from his other heirs. Throughout most of Africa, customary rules that are not necessarily enforced through a judicial system, but nevertheless have considerable authority, also tend to favour men in land rights. In other regions, religious beliefs are the primary influence that result in laws that deny women full land rights or from working with men who are not family members.

Similarly, the introduction of new technologies such as irrigation systems has reduced women's access to land and limited their independent farming roles. The basic problem is that as land is improved and its value increases, there is a move from traditional communal use rights to a more individualized system of land ownership. Men, by virtue of their position as household heads, tend to extend personal control over the land, squeezing out women. Inheritance practices, whereby land passes from father to son, reinforce male control of land, often depriving even widows with young children of rights to land.

The difficulties women have in securing land are even more serious for women heads of households. In reviewing land reform programmes in various countries, FAO has found that regardless of whether the sex of the beneficiary is specified in the law, women heads of households seldom have access to land even when their productive activities call for it. Therefore, the growing number of women heads of households includes a growing number of landless women. Forty to fifty percent of all households in small, rural villages in the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean are headed by women; in parts of Africa, 30 to 60 percent of households are headed by women (either because husbands are away or they have no

husbands); and in the Near East, it is estimated that women head 1 in every 6 households. Without title to land, these women lack the collateral necessary to obtain credit, extension and training.

Access to land by female-headed households in Malawi

cultivated area (hectares)	% female-headed households	% male-headed households	% total
< 0,50	35	19	24
0,50 - 0,99	37	29	31
1,00 - 1,49	16	20	19
1,50 - 1,99	7	12	11
2,00 - 2,99	4	13	10
> 3,00	1	7	5
total	100	100	100

Source: Government of Malawi and UNICEF, 1987

Female-headed households typically have smaller holdings than those headed by males.

Fortunately, in some countries, major policy changes on agrarian reform have defined women as beneficiaries, granting them the right to own land either separately or jointly with men. Some examples of countries where government agencies for women have been successful in this issue are Colombia, India, Malawi and Mexico. In addition, FAO has assisted the governments of Brazil, Costa Rica and Peru in drafting national plans for rural women. However, more attention must be given to improving women's legal access to both land and resources. The elimination of legal and attitudinal discrimination against women will further facilitate any plan to increase agricultural productivity.

Some achievements

LEGISLATION AND NATIONAL PLANS TO ENHANCE WOMEN'S STATUS

Bangladesh

1980 - 1985: The Second Five-Year Plan includes support for the creation of special cooperatives for the landless and for women to provide them with skill-training, credit, and income-generating activities in both the farm and non-farm sectors.

Brazil

1988: A new constitution states that land distribution will be equitable and that land titles will be awarded to both women and men.

China

1983-1988: More than 95 percent of women's federations at the county level set up legal advisory agencies to provide services for women.

Colombia

1988: Agrarian reform legislation is revised to allow women and women heads of household access to land ownership; previously, only male heads of household were eligible.

Gambia

1980: The National Women's Bureau and the National Women's Council are established by an act of Parliament.

India

1976: The Equal Remuneration Act provides for equal wages to be paid to men and women workers and for the prevention of discrimination against women in employment.

Indonesia

1984 - 1989: The development plan, Repelita IV, has a package of action programmes for lower income women, including supports for farming, rural development, cooperatives and family planning.

Jordan

1986 -1990: The Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development proposes for rural women the "expansion of agricultural extension programmes, combined with population and family planning programmes to upgrade women's capabilities in agricultural work and home management".

Nicaragua

1981: New legislation specifies that women should have the right to benefit from agrarian reform policies and participate in agricultural cooperatives.

The Philippines

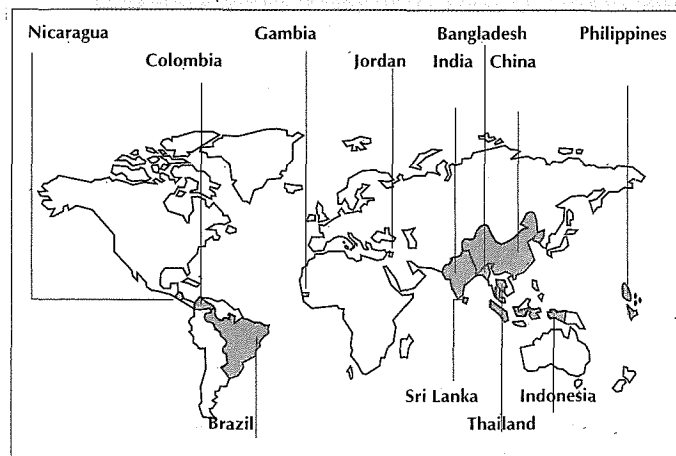
1987-1992: The Philippine Development Plan for Women is prepared to ensure that women participate on an equal basis with men.

Sri Lanka

1980: The Development Councils Act makes provision for the representation of women's rural development societies in local-level planning institutions.

Thailand

1982 - 2001: A long-term Women's Development Plan is established.

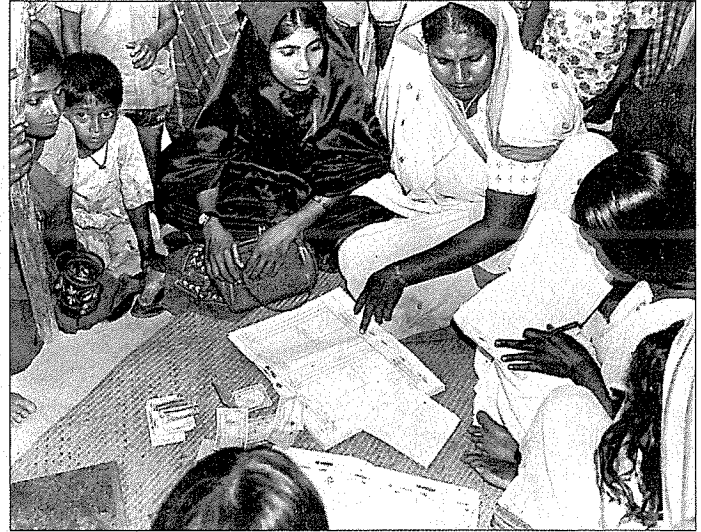


Source: WCARRD, *Ten Years of Follow-Up. The Impact of Development Strategies on the Rural Poor*, FAO, 1988 and accompanying progress reports submitted by countries.

Strategy for action

FAO's strategy for improving the civil status of women complies with the principles of the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. The convention specifically addresses rural women's rights to participate in development planning; to secure agricultural credit; to receive training, education and health care; to join cooperatives and other rural organizations; and to enjoy adequate living conditions.

Bangladesh - Discussing the accounts at a women's village cooperative meeting.



STRATEGIES

ACTIONS NEEDED

NATIONAL LEGAL REFORMS

Assistance to governments in identifying areas that require improved legislation for women, particularly in :

- Right to land and water
- Access to credit
- Right to new technologies
- Full membership and equal voting rights in cooperatives

Promoting the exchange of experience among governments in the application of improved legislation for women

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Educating rural women on existing rights

Publication of case studies regarding the legal status of women

Producing publications and radio programmes profiling successful women in various agricultural professions

Increasing the income of women

Recognition of the role of women in agriculture is important to developing countries where the concern is to boost rural economies and sustain adequate food supplies. The major thrust of FAO's activities will continue to be directed to supporting women in their roles as agriculturalists. The factors that exclude women farmers and entrepreneurs from productive resources and services are under examination.

Structural adjustment policies

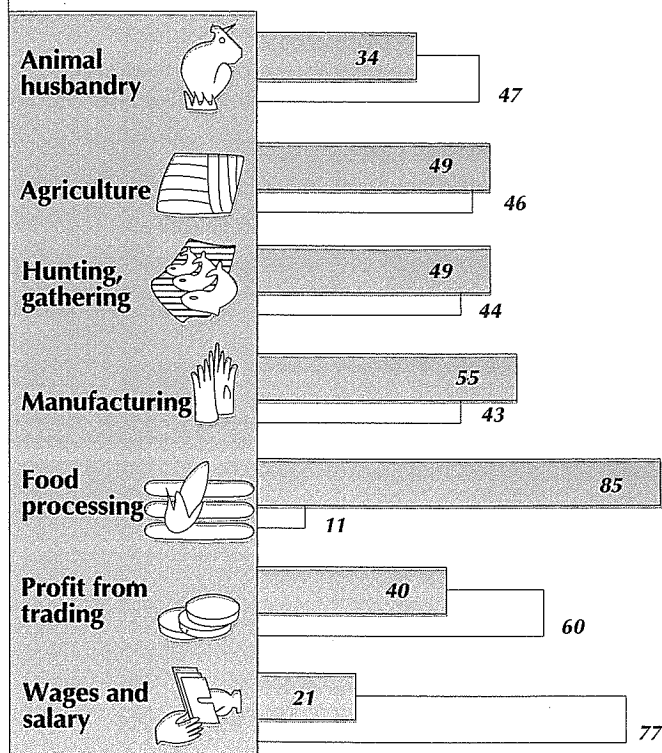
Many developing countries seek to improve their national economies through structural adjustment programmes that involve changes in fiscal, monetary, exchange-rate, and commercial or industrial policies. Such changes, which previously had been assumed to be gender neutral, can in fact further impoverish poor rural and urban people, particularly women and children, in the short and/or long term. For example, structural adjustment policies have caused cut-backs in social spending on health and education in many countries, and the education of girls has declined in some places. Between 1980 and 1984, spending per capita on health fell in over 60 percent of the countries in Latin America while in Africa, between 1979 and 1983, it fell in seven out of 15 countries, and in four out of 12 countries in South and East Asia. Both FAO and UNICEF publications on this subject have sensitized international opinion to such negative effects.

In many cases, structural adjustment includes policies that encourage farmers to increase production of crops for export, such as coffee or cotton. With this change of emphasis, women's land that was previously cultivated for food crops may be alienated and as a result, women can lose both food resources and income. In cases where women already help produce cash crops as well as household food crops, an increase in cash crop production may mean they have less time and energy to grow and prepare food for their families.

On the positive side, measures designed to expand agricultural output can lead to increases in employment and credit opportunities. In some cases, women earn incomes by

Table does not include contribution of children which would bring totals to 100%

Contribution to household income by female and male division of labour in eight villages of Nepal, mid-1970s



■ % Women □ % Men 🏠 Activity

Source: Based on World Bank Staff Working Paper n.526, 1982

producing or processing cash crops, either alone, with their husbands, or as wage labourers. The extent to which women can benefit from these opportunities depends, however, on how policies impact on the sexual division of labour, whether women can exercise control over the income earned, and the degree of legal protection of women and men from exploitation. FAO, together with other technical agencies of the United Nations, is collaborating with the World Bank in a project designed to identify the unforeseen negative effects of structural adjustment programmes and to investigate and support ways to reduce them.

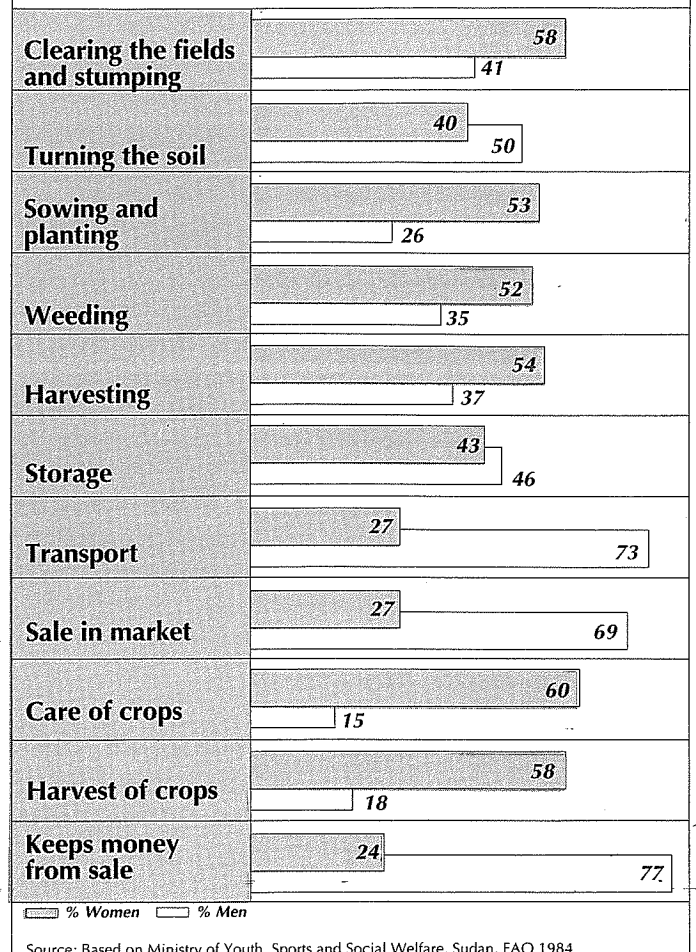


WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL WORK

Division of labour in crop production

A starting point for determining the extent of women's participation in agriculture is the sexual division of labour. In many cases women are primarily responsible for weeding, harvesting, transporting, storing, processing and marketing, but they often contribute greatly to ploughing, planting and fertilizer application as well. In some countries the sexual division of labour is according to type of crop. In other cases men and women have complementary labour roles for the same crop. Clearly, the agricultural activities of women and men vary according to region, the structure of the household, and the productive resources available. (See the charts for examples from Nepal and Sudan.) With greater intensification of agriculture, the rural workload tends to increase, hence the need for projects that lessen the labour input of women and men while maximizing productivity.

Division of Labour in the Transhumance sector in Southern Darfur, Sudan



Though women contribute a higher percentage of labour than men, they receive less than 25% of the income earned

Women in cash crop production

Decisions to change the crops that are grown, whether for domestic consumption or export, can greatly affect the workload of women. The two main issues for women in cash cropping are first, the competition it presents for the labour and land that would otherwise be devoted to producing food, and second, their ability to ensure that the profits are drawn upon to meet basic household needs. Just because women have traditionally grown food crops, does not necessarily mean they have no interest in producing their own cash

crops. If a cash crop yields a higher return than a subsistence food crop, women will seek access to that crop. Women already play a greater part in cash crop production than is commonly recognized. In Rwanda, for example, women do about 70 percent of the work involved in coffee production. In a number of countries women are paid in cash or kind for assisting their husbands with cash crops.

Livestock

Women's ownership and control of livestock and their products are an important economic resource. Sometimes, it is assumed that women tend only small animals while men own and care for large livestock. But this division of labour should not be taken for granted. In some places women own cattle, and in many others women milk and take care of the animals. In Pakistan, for example, women are responsible for 60 to 80 percent of the feeding and milking of cattle. Moreover, where large animals are penned and fed, caring for them becomes a domestic matter - changing from a situation where men and boys are in charge of herding to one in which women and children of both sexes must do the work. Poultry and animals such as sheep, goats, rabbits and guinea pigs, are important to women because they are often the only source of income fully under their control. In Egypt, as in many other countries, women are responsible for raising nearly all of the goats and poultry. FAO finds that poultry and small animals raised by women often make a greater contribution to the diet of low income groups than do cattle. The problem is that few livestock extension programmes include women.

Benin - Counting up the day's receipts at a women's cooperative.



Forestry

The depletion of forest resources has had a substantial impact on women in three ways:

- Trees are necessary to protect the quality of soil and water and to manage them as productive resources. Most tropical farming systems are unsustainable without trees as part of the system. When farmland and water are not available close to households, or when larger gardens and longer waits at the well are required, this can greatly increase the time women spend on this task.
- Forests provide food, fodder, fibre and the fuel for cooking and processing food. These are products for which women are largely responsible.
- Small-scale enterprises dependent on forest products are among the major employers of rural people, especially the landless and the land-poor. Women are heavily dependent on such enterprises and in some countries (such as Egypt) are their managers.

Forestry services are now focusing on supporting people's efforts to incorporate trees into their living areas and farming systems as well as on

integrating agriculture in forested areas. They are finding it important to learn from women how they as managers of trees and forest resources can be supported so as to have better and sustainable access to the forest products and outputs they need.

Fisheries

Women often engage in fish processing and marketing in small-scale fisheries either directly or in cooperation with men. In Ghana, smoking, salting, drying and marketing of fish is typically done by women, who process and distribute 60 to 90 percent of both farm and marine produce. Reports presented at the FAO workshop in 1987 on Women in Aquaculture estimated that 20 000 women in the Philippines and 43 000 women in Thailand were involved in fish farming as well as in fish handling and sales. These figures imply the need to support women's participation through training and projects. To this end, FAO has developed a new manual, *Women in Fishing Communities: Guidelines*, that focuses on women and fish production, processing and marketing, as well as on the relevant organizational, technical and financial supports.

Food processing

Rural women process foods, especially for family consumption, with few or no modern aids. Typical work includes cleaning, threshing and grinding grains or drying fish, and making cheeses or yoghurt. In some parts of the world, the village women share these tasks. Even so, it can take hours to process grains for cooking. For example, in one North African country, it was estimated that women spent four hours a day grinding wheat for couscous. A target of many FAO projects is to upgrade traditional food processing without resorting to expensive technology. Tangible results have been achieved in food processing at the village level, including drying perishables and milling grains. In Burkina Faso and Ghana, improved technologies for drying fruits,

vegetables and root crops have reduced the losses resulting from seasonal gluts. In Burundi, over 100 women have been trained to use machines for processing cassava into *gari* for local consumption.

Farming systems and gender analysis

Most farms in developing countries are small, with few resources other than family labour. To analyse small farm problems and development opportunities, farming systems development treats all aspects of the farm and household economy as a system, including on-farm activities (crops, livestock, trees, fish), off-farm activities (marketing, wage employment) and household activities. Combining gender analysis (an analysis of men's and women's roles in relation to each other) and farming systems development, provides a framework for examining household and individual resource allocations on farms and the constraints to production. In many countries, men concentrate on income-generating work (both on and off the farm), while women typically combine work to produce income with agricultural production, household tasks and child care. These competing demands on their time can serve as a significant constraint to the adoption of new forms of production that rely on women's labour. Such issues can be readily explored through farming systems development, which combines analysis and planning in extension, training, research and policy. The work situation of small farmers is analysed and new technologies are tested and refined as appropriate.

FAO offers training courses on farming systems development and collaborates with governments in using it to identify small farm constraints to production. Present projects are in Latin America, Asia and Africa. The Plan of Action urges that gender analysis (see page 34) be integrated with FAO's farming systems development training and projects.

This will facilitate a better understanding of the role of women in agricultural production as well as of their activities not generally defined as "production" that are nevertheless essential to the well-being and economic livelihood of rural households and communities.

Male migration

In a number of developing nations the trend of male migration is growing. Men migrate from their villages to cities and even to other countries in search of employment. The effect of this on women depends in part on the length of absence. In Latin America and Africa, there is both seasonal migration and long-term migration. Long-term migration can mean that women are left on small farms alone with their children for years. The rate of seasonal migration can be very high, particularly in Africa. In one country of southern Africa, FAO reports that 63 percent of the households are headed by women because of male migration. These women must take on many additional tasks, greatly increasing their workload. With fewer men in the community, the demand on women for labour reduces the time available for domestic responsibilities, particularly for growing crops essential to the family diet.



WOMEN'S ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Credit

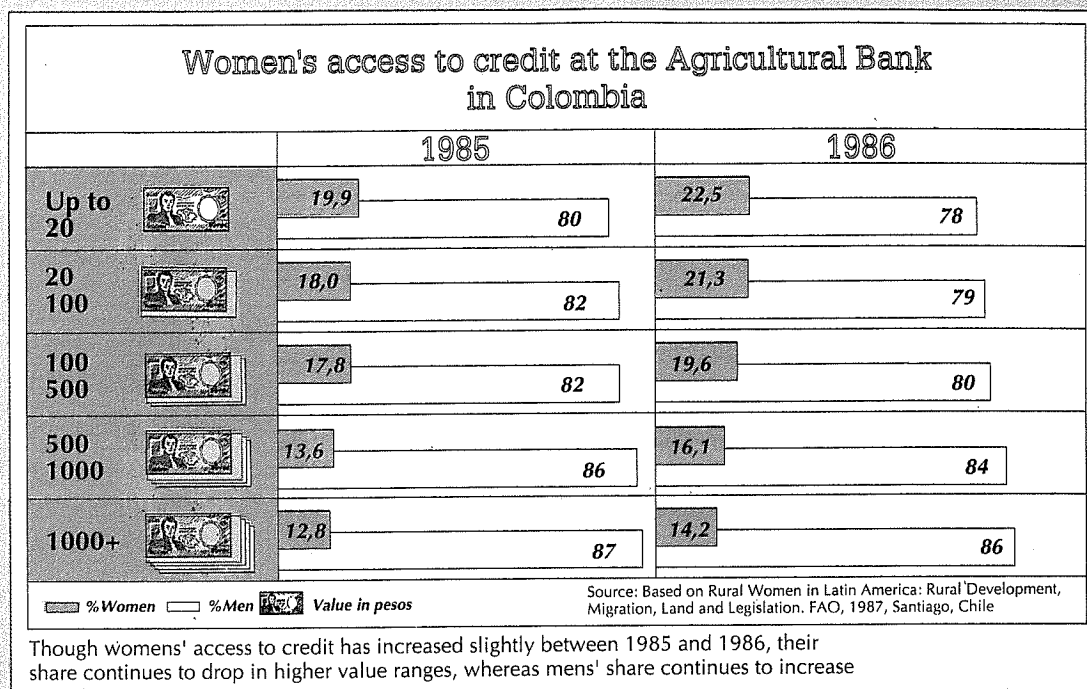
Because most women lack collateral, such as land, they usually have little access to credit. In many cases they must rely on their husbands and other relatives, or on money-lenders who often charge high interest rates. Women seek credit, for example, in order to purchase land, tools and fertilizer, or to start a new marketing scheme. Sources of finance for women farmers are clearly needed, but banks have tended to underestimate the productivity of women farmers and

their ability to repay loans. Studies by FAO and others show that repayment rates by women's groups have been excellent. Loans for women's groups may also have the added advantage of reaching the poorest women who as individuals would be ineligible. Progress is being made as, for example, in Bangladesh, where over 8 000 women's groups have been organized into credit and marketing cooperatives since 1987. In Africa, an FAO study of 21 credit schemes concluded that in order to make credit more useful to women, loan packages, particularly those aimed at female-headed households, should include financing for labour for land preparation. In most schemes, no such provisions exist.

Extension

Rural women generally have poor access to agricultural information and services. One FAO study found that women represented up to 80 percent of the food producers in some countries, but they received only 2 to 10 percent of the extension contacts. Extension personnel, both male and female, tend to overlook the needs of women farmers. For example, agricultural training is often focused on improving export crops, where male farmers predominate, whereas training with respect to subsistence crops and small livestock, where women farmers predominate, is less prominent.

In some parts of the world, constraints prevent male extension workers from interacting with women, and recruiting women extensionists is difficult. It may be possible, however, to use new methods to recruit women extensionists and for male extensionists to work with women in groups. Some countries, including the Philippines, Thailand, Lesotho and Egypt, have made great strides in training female extension workers as a means of reaching women farmers. In Malawi and Burkina Faso, male extensionists receive specific guidance on working with women farmers.



Most training programmes for women still emphasize domestic skills rather than agricultural skills though both are relevant and need to be combined.

Technology

The primary objective of new agricultural technologies (such as crop varieties, new breeds of livestock, improved tools, cultivation methods and techniques and/or mechanization practices) is to save time and increase efficiency without threatening women's and men's jobs in farming. Irrigation technology, for example, can increase crop production and make more water available to households and livestock. This greatly reduces the time women spend collecting water. In Tanzania, for example, an irrigation project reduced by half the time spent on fetching water thereby releasing sufficient labour to increase the area cropped by 20 percent. On the other hand, some irrigation methods can affect women negatively because they increase the time needed to transplant crops, weed and harvest.

Marketing

All over the world women are active in retail trading and marketing. Generally, the participation is greatest where trade is traditional and not highly commercialized or industrialized. With the rapid increase in urbanization, women have been quick to respond to the markets created for their produce. In much of Asia, women market foods such as vegetables; in West Africa they distribute most major commodities, and in the Caribbean women account for nearly all local marketing. Through their marketing efforts women are able to raise family incomes and provide valuable linkages between farms, consumer goods and buyers. Improved access to credit as well as to transportation and enhanced marketing facilities would greatly aid these women. Providing more information on production and sales and existing market infrastructure, could help meet the specific needs of women producers and traders.

Some achievements

Reflecting the diversity of women's economic development activities, FAO's efforts to support women include workshops, manuals and extension training as well as field projects. A few examples are highlighted below.



MARKETING, CREDIT AND EXTENSION

Learning from rural women

Learning from already successful rural women is the idea behind a training manual, produced by FAO in 1985, to promote women's group marketing activities at the village level. Its goal is to improve their agricultural marketing skills by organizing them into groups to be trained by women who are already successful. Governments can play a key role in initiating training workshops for women and in providing assistance to them. The manual has been used in workshops throughout Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

Production is only half the battle

Spoilage and loss threaten crops between harvesting and their arrival at the market. With appropriate packaging, proper handling and transport, and adequate storage facilities, produce will arrive at the market fresh and ready for purchase. A manual, prepared in 1988 under a FAO project, offers a comprehensive training course for extension workers, groups and individuals in marketing fresh produce.

Giving women access to credit in Zimbabwe

An FAO project is investigating how to remove the constraints that prevent women from participating effectively in agriculture. In 1988, a savings and credit scheme was introduced in collaboration with a financing

institution. Farmer groups, consisting of 80 percent women, receive intensive training in crop selection, methods of planting and cultivation, fertilizer application and harvesting. In addition, they receive training in group dynamics, participatory production planning, group record keeping and evaluation of the previous season's production and activities. After two years of training, farmers who develop the necessary production and book-keeping skills are eligible for credit.

Improving agricultural extension services for women in rural Africa

Agricultural training and extension has failed to reach and benefit many of Africa's women farmers, even though they dominate the production of food for domestic consumption. The need to review past experience in extension programmes and to identify their constraints has prompted case studies in Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Under FAO leadership, a workshop was held at which governmental and non-governmental representatives from the five countries met to discuss the studies, visit rural women's groups and make recommendations to government and international agencies. One result has been a change in Malawi's agricultural extension policy which now aims to "meet the needs and aspirations of all male and female smallholder farmers," rather than simply "farmers". Future plans include the revision of extension curricula, so that training programmes are geared to the specific needs of both men and women.

Promoting women's role in food production in Egypt

FAO sponsors a training program in six rural villages of Egypt that helps women organize into groups for collective action. The project goals are to increase food security and women's income-generating opportunities. In 1988 and early 1989, 300 women learned about drying, freezing and preserving fruits and vegetables, and

436 women used the new revolving loan fund to purchase sheep, goats, rabbits, ducks, chickens and turkeys. Future activities include increased training in food production technologies and expanded credit programmes. FAO also is looking for ways to replicate this project in other villages.



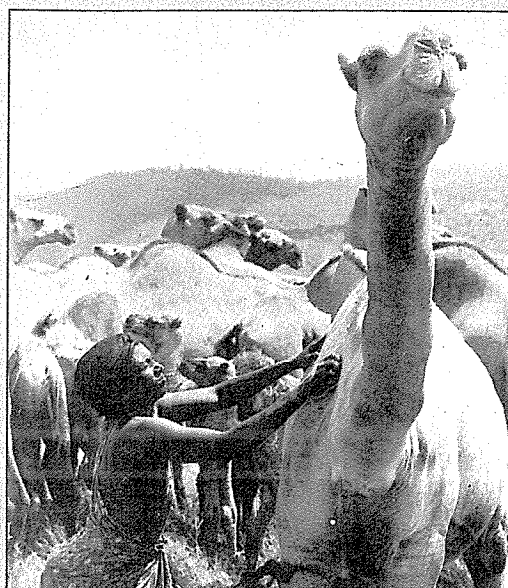
SMALL-SCALE ANIMAL PRODUCTION

A success story in sheep production

In some traditional societies, individual women are not allowed to own sheep. Yet, sheep can provide women with a substantial and much-needed income, as well as a source of food and security in time of crisis. The Kara region of North Togo found the answer: if women were organized into groups, they could own and look after their own flocks of sheep. Women learn basic animal husbandry, feeding, veterinary care and breeding. They keep records and do their own economic planning. Contracts are used to obtain equipment, loans, and services, and to sell the animals. In a region where small animal production has been characterized by low productivity and high mortality, these women increased their flock productivity fourfold. The lessons learned in this project form the basis for a new FAO training manual for extension workers on village-based sheep production.

Dairy development provides women with income

In 1985, FAO carried out surveys in Tanzania to identify suitable villages for the establishment of Dairy Development Training Units. One aim of the project is to bring together women to participate in dairy cooperatives. Tanzania has a long-standing cooperative movement, though the number of cooperatives involved with dairy activities is low, and women traditionally have played only a limited role. One new dairy



Ethiopia - Camel owner treating herd against mange by scrubbing them with dip solution.

cooperative, the Nronga Cooperative Society, has a unit of women that has increased its milk production from 200 to 520 litres per day. Another, the Losaa Women's Cooperative, markets its own cheese to hotels and local restaurants. The group has increased its milk production from 90 litres of milk per day, to over 167 litres per day. Learning to make cheese has enabled them to preserve milk that otherwise would spoil.

FAO has also promoted improved fodder and milk production among existing women's groups in two districts of Kenya, since 1985. An initial survey showed that milk yields were generally low because natural pastures were the only source of fodder, and that standards of animal husbandry were poor. As a result, women are taken to a Dairy Training School to learn about the planting of various fodder crops. They are then given their own plots to cultivate, supported by demonstrations on fodder conservation and silage-making. FAO and the Regional Dairy Institute supply the seeds and train the extension workers.



USE OF FERTILIZERS

Increasing women's access to fertilizers in Sri Lanka

Faced with a rising population, Sri Lanka needs to make full use of the arable land available for crop production through the application of fertilizers and improved farming methods. Women in Sri Lanka have been engaged in agriculture for decades, though only recently has their importance started to be recognized. In disseminating information, removing some traditional beliefs and increasing farmers' access to fertilizers, the government is realizing the substantial contribution women make to food production and the value of fertilizer to them.

The FAO-assisted "Farm Women's Agricultural Extension Programme" is training female extension workers and village leaders to encourage a greater use of fertilizer and improved seeds by women. In addition, the FAO Fertilizer Programme, in collaboration with the National Fertilizer Secretariat of Sri Lanka, is training fertilizer dealers to advise women farmers on how to make the best use of fertilizers that they buy. More than half of the fertilizer dealers trained since 1984 have been women.



IRRIGATION

Women in irrigated agriculture in Tanzania

To ensure that investments in irrigated agriculture benefit farmers of both sexes, FAO has started a pilot project linked to an irrigation project covering six villages. The project examines the parts played by individual family members, particularly women, in existing farming systems and identifies obstacles to their participation in irrigation improvement, development and management. Village women have formed groups through which their

problems can be discussed and resolved. Village workshops and field visits ensure a wider acceptance of women's participation in irrigation and awareness of their productive capabilities. Both the national counterpart and the planning officer have received training in gender issues.



WOMEN IN FISHERIES

Fish processing and community development in Sierra Leone

Throughout the area of Shenge, fishing is the main economic activity. While the men fish, the women process and market the catch, make salt, soap and oil, and engage in subsistence agriculture. An FAO project is training women in order to ensure that the fish catch reaches consumers with as little loss as possible in either quantity or quality. Objectives include establishing an effective system that will enable women to increase their income-earning capacity as well as to improve the health and hygiene of their families.

Aquaculture for Local Community Development Programme (ALCOM)

The FAO workshop on "Women in Aquaculture", held in 1987, helped to show the substantial involvement of women in fish farming. ALCOM, a collaborative programme including FAO, is conducting pilot studies on combining aquaculture with agriculture in Southern Africa. The initial pilot activity in the Chipata area of Zambia has identified three villages where the population includes many female-headed households. The project activities, such as building ponds and improving harvesting methods, are decided in consultation with the local women who are frequently the real fish farmers. Additional studies are being conducted in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Lesotho.

Burundi - Women predominate at central fish market.



Improved living conditions of fisherwomen and their families in the Bay of Bengal

The FAO project to develop small-scale fishing in the Bay of Bengal, initiated in 1979, was expanded in 1987. Meanwhile, the number of women participating increased greatly and the project was strengthened to deal with their concerns. In 1988, an FAO mission to the Bay confirmed that when fisherwomen have increased incomes and better access to health education and care, the quality of life in their communities improves. The mission also found that the women were encouraged to have smaller families (an important development concern in the region). The project helps women organize themselves to resolve their problems and through their entrepreneurial skills identify ways of earning incomes that will ensure access to credit and savings schemes. Programmes are also being developed to give women greater access to health care and family planning.



WOMEN IN FORESTRY

Rural women in Nepal take the initiative in protecting forests

In Nepal, women are the main collectors of fuelwood and animal fodder and grasses used for grazing, and their constant need for these resources has caused widespread degradation of forest areas. In an effort to conserve and regenerate these forest resources, FAO in cooperation with the Makwanpur District Forest Controller selected 25 hectares of severely degraded forest for a reforestation programme. Rather than clear away existing shrubbery, strips two metres wide were cleared for new trees with the help of 100 local men and women. The women were still able to collect fodder, but they were prevented from cutting trees or grazing animals in the area. As the existing shrubbery started to regenerate, the community began to see the importance of protective management in the conservation of natural resources.

A Forest Management Committee was formed and women proved to be its most energetic members. In one case, a group of women took the initiative to expand the protected area, tripling the total number of hectares in the project. Within a year, the natural vegetation grew over 3 metres high, containing more than 20 different tree species. The women demonstrated their interest and commitment in conserving and managing these vital resources.

Women help create 11 000 hectares of new forest land on Cape Verde

On Cape Verde's islands of Santiago and Maio, FAO is helping the government set up a forest service. Activities include forestry training, tree planting, and the management and utilization of plantations. One of the most impressive achievements of the project is the creation in ten years of 11 000 hectares of new forest

plantations which combat desertification, conserve land and water and provide different products to local communities. Women have taken a direct part in this. Of the 4 000 workers employed annually to establish nurseries, plant trees, and undertake soil conservation work, 70 to 80 percent are women.

Women fight the encroachment of sand dunes in Mauritania

In an area where women have few opportunities to work, and cultural traditions usually prevent their participation in projects, some women in Mauritania have engaged in their own battle against the sand dunes. FAO is assisting the Department for the Protection of the Environment with the National Plan to combat desertification. The project has introduced mechanical stabilization and biological fixation to protect villages, roads, schools, and fields from sand dunes. Unable to take part in the project's activities, the women's producer cooperatives have

spontaneously asked for help to establish their own nurseries so that they can grow trees to protect their villages and fields.

Men and women participate in watershed management in Bolivia

In the Tarija Valley in southern Bolivia, men's and women's associations have joined together to save their soils and forests. A watershed management project was started in 1984 in conjunction with the Bolivian Government because of severe erosion and overgrazing. Local men and women voluntarily carry out the tasks of land preparation, planting and weeding. Whether working together or separately on joint projects, they are actively restoring their forest resources as well as conserving the soil needed for their farms.



Thailand - Worker taps rubber tree.

Strategy for action

FAO's action programme seeks to maximize the access of women to productive resources in order to expand their economic opportunities and ensure equal participation in and benefits from rural development.

The strategies cover: income control and economic adjustment; agricultural production; food processing and marketing; wage employment and income-producing activities.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS NEEDED
INCOME-PRODUCTION AND ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study the effect of the economic crisis and structural adjustment on women Promote income-producing activities for women Study women's participation in agricultural labour markets
EMPLOYMENT AND INFORMAL SECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist countries in assessing the impact on women of male migration, seasonal fluctuations in labour markets, and wage trends where women and men receive unequal pay Support women in the informal sector through income-production projects
SUPPORT TO WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help countries to re-orient agricultural extension systems to include women's concerns Assist governments and financial institutions to create credit sources for women Promote the generation, improvement and transfer to women of appropriate technologies Include gender and household issues in farming systems research Address women's needs in forestry and fisheries Ensure the participation and training of women in irrigation programmes Assess the participation of women in cash crop production Extend horticultural activities to women Promote involvement in livestock production
FOOD PROCESSING AND MARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase women's access to improved techniques and technologies in food harvesting, processing, storage and transportation to markets Promote women's participation in marketing organizations Improve women's access to credit Strengthen the capacity of national agencies to train women in improved marketing practices

Easing women's daily burden

The multiple roles of rural women, having both domestic and agricultural responsibilities, means that they often have a long working day. Various studies put the ordinary daily workload of rural women in developing nations at 15-16 hours. At seasonal peak periods such as harvesting it may be much longer. Rudimentary utensils and procedures for food preparation, and scarcity of nearby sources of fuel and clean water, make their household tasks more time-consuming and laborious. Full participation of women in economic development programmes is hampered by a lack of time and energy. For FAO, three issues emerge as key to easing women's daily burden: population, nutrition and education.

Population

The interaction of population growth, rural-urban migration, family size and rural women's roles as both child bearers and agricultural producers is increasingly recognized as fundamental to food supply and demand. In many nations, food production has not kept pace with population growth. Solutions to this problem must address both supply (through increasing agricultural output) and demand (through effective national population policies). One approach is through acknowledging the contribution of women to rural development and by designing programmes aimed at maximizing their productive capacity. When such programmes also succeed in improving women's physical and social status and reducing the infant mortality rate, they will ultimately contribute to reducing population growth. FAO studies show that this effect will occur sooner, and be more pronounced, when specific population components are part of rural development projects in which women participate.

Nutrition

Although women play a major role in food production and processing, they suffer from inadequate nutrition. Only 20 to 45 percent of women of child-bearing age in the developing world have a daily diet of 2 250 calories as recommended by the World Health Organization, let alone the extra 285 calories per day needed during pregnancy. In some nations, women and girls eat the least. Research in Bangladesh, reported by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, has found that boys under 5 years old are given 16 percent more food than girls of the same age, while a study in India found that boys are fed far more fatty and milky food than girls. In the same study, girls are 4 times as likely to suffer from acute malnutrition, but 40 times less likely to be taken to a hospital. FAO is attempting to remove these inequalities through the incorporation of nutritional considerations into planning and project design and through the creation of more income-earning activities for women. It has been found that as the incomes of women increase, they spend more on nutritious food.

A healthy diet also depends on clean water and adequate fuel. Lack of clean water leads to diseases that kill an estimated 8 million children annually. Water-borne diseases also debilitate many agricultural workers. In most developing nations it is still the arduous task of women to carry both water and fuelwood to their homes. The fuelwood shortage in Bangladesh is so severe that rural women and children spend an average of 3 to 5 hours a day gathering and transporting fuel. Fuelwood shortages can result in changes in cooking habits that decrease nutrition, such as reducing food preparation to only one meal per day.

Average minutes per day in productive activities
in selected villages in Bay Region, Somalia

Activity	Average Minutes per Day	
	Women	Men
Total Time in Agricultural Work	205	159
Crop production	143	88
Animal husbandry	34	37
Poultry	1	1
Food preparation for sale	18	0
Selling	7	33
Construction	2	0
Total Time in Household Work	416	39
Food production for consumption	228	6
Cleaning	18	1
Child care	68	6
Care of others	11	0
Management	14	6
Clothing care	9	0
Shopping	17	17
Fuel gathering	20	2
Water gathering	31	1
Total Time in Other Work	29	46
Paid work	0	19
Clothing construction	0	1
Manufacturing	29	26

Source: Adapted from Molly Longstrath. "Final Report on the Women's Time Use Study, Bay Region, Somalia, May to July 1985." Paper funded by a Women in Development Fellowship from CID/WID USAID.

In Guatemala, for example, many families can no longer find enough fuel for the lengthy cooking required for their traditional staple of beans. FAO supports projects to find ways to shorten the time spent by women in food processing and food preparation, and in collecting water and fuelwood, in order to increase their families' nutrition and health as well as their economic productivity.

Education

Women who have access to education often delay childbearing and use family planning. Yet, there is still a tendency in many places to send boys to school while girls stay at home to care for younger children and to help their mothers. FAO has shown that girls between the ages of 10 and 14 contribute 22 percent of family labour, while boys in the same age group contribute only 6 percent. Improved agricultural methods and social services would encourage parents to

educate children who might otherwise be denied schooling because their labour is needed on family farms.

An increase in female enrolment must be accompanied by appropriate curricula, for both girls and boys, in terms of skills taught and future employment possibilities. Agriculture and home economics training should include courses on farming methods, resource management, health, nutrition and family planning. In addition, employment opportunities for graduates must be examined in order to widen the possibilities for women within the agricultural professions and in general.

Some achievements

Agricultural productivity is increasingly constrained by demographic trends that in turn affect the nutrition levels of women and their families. Women's limited access to education and technical training further hinders progress. With the hope of improving this situation, FAO is supporting studies and projects designed to address the linkages between agricultural production, population, nutrition, and education.



POPULATION

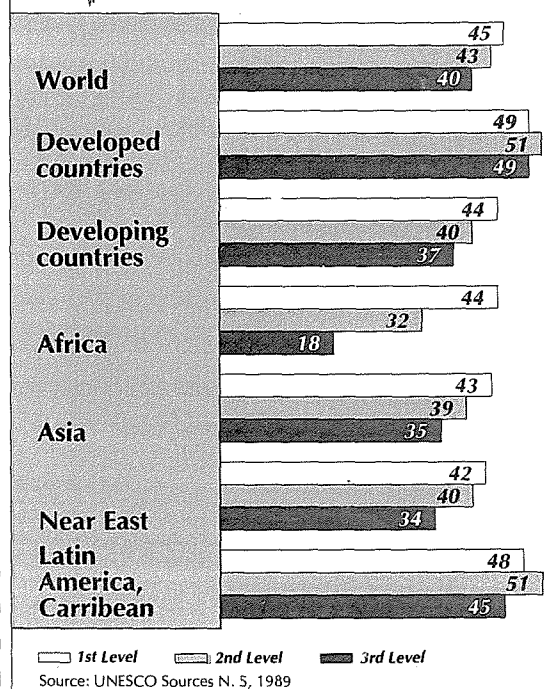
Addressing women's productive and reproductive roles

With case studies in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Near East, FAO is seeking project approaches that will have a positive influence on both productive and reproductive roles of women. A pilot study in the Yemen Arab Republic enlists agricultural extension workers in a population education program. Between 1987-1991, the project will: encourage more women to be extension workers, train women and men extension workers in population education, and through the extensionists, teach farmers about new agricultural technologies as well as family-planning.

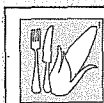
Pilot studies in Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Lesotho and Zimbabwe show that as women farmers increase their productivity and income, their attitudes toward the number and spacing of children desired are also indirectly affected. Women who participate in FAO's income-producing projects express more interest in information on family planning and child feeding practices than do non-participants.



Percentage of females in total enrolment



Figures are based on the three globally recognized levels of education - primary, secondary and tertiary. In most regions, girls and women have fewer opportunities than boys and men to attend school. The higher the level of education, the greater the disparity.



NUTRITION

People's participation programme in Zambia

In an effort to integrate nutritional components into its projects, FAO is examining the impact of increased income on the diets of women and their families. Studies are identifying nutritional problems and determining training and educational needs in crop production in order to improve the daily food consumption of Zambian families. As of 1989, 97 participation programme groups have been formed in Zambia with FAO's assistance. They involve over 1 000 rural people, 74 percent of whom are women. The groups are starting their own businesses, making profits and learning how to save. Similar approaches to nutritional integration are being used in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.



EDUCATION

Training to promote the participation of rural women and men in Honduras

Since 1986, FAO has helped train women selected by local women's groups to be promoters in rural development and organize their own groups. The project assists them in earning income and teaches them how to gain access to funding and technical assistance. Promoters are trained in literacy, nutrition and in improving housing and environmental conditions. A special training programme for Honduran government officials and technicians on incorporating peasant women into the process of rural development has also been designed and implemented.

By 1988, at least 450 groups had undertaken a wide range of activities related to food production, literacy, housing improvements, better nutrition, communal stores, corn grinding and

sanitation. More than 1 200 men and women in land reform cooperatives had learned to read and write. Women were enthusiastic about the recognition they were receiving from their government, and by their growing capacity to negotiate credit and access to land. Besides increasing rural production, this project is responsible for mobilizing women to identify and communicate their needs at both the community and national levels.

Training farmers in the Senegal River Valley

In the past, only heads of households were eligible for extension training in the Senegal River Valley, thus only men learned about new opportunities and technologies. FAO has introduced two approaches to increase access to land and new technologies for women and youth. First, a literacy programme based on local languages is teaching farmers how to read, write and calculate numbers based on everyday activities such as ploughing and fertilizer use. The project works directly with 53 groups, half of which consist of only women, and half of which include both men and women. The literacy training widens the participants' opportunities for access to training, credit and new technologies. Secondly, FAO has trained nearly 400 village women as extension agents and provided the women's groups with nearly 400 hectares of land. While increasing their incomes and technical and management skills, the women serve as extensionists to neighbouring farmers. One group of women produced 13 tons of onions in their first season and marketed the harvest.

Strategy for action

FAO's strategy and action programme is designed to adapt social services and educational facilities to rural areas, removing the constraints that prevent the full participation of women in agricultural development. Where the strategies involve activities beyond FAO's immediate mandate, the Organization cooperates with other UN agencies.



Peru - Enterprise workshop gives training and literacy classes to women.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS NEEDED
POPULATION	Study the relation of demographic factors to women's roles in rural and agricultural development Integrate population components into already existing agricultural, fisheries, and forestry projects Organize training workshops for project staff on population issues in rural development Produce guidelines for integrating population components into rural and agricultural development
NUTRITION	Advise and assist governments in food and nutrition policy making and programmes Initiate nutrition education courses and supplementary feeding projects Teach improved techniques and availability of resources for food processing, preparation and conservation Include such topics as clean water and fuel in regular projects
EDUCATION	Review global and national educational trends and assist governments in revising educational systems Re-design curricula in home economics courses to include rural women's issues in agricultural production Integrate functional literacy into already existing projects Encourage women's enrolment in higher education and their studies in agricultural production sciences

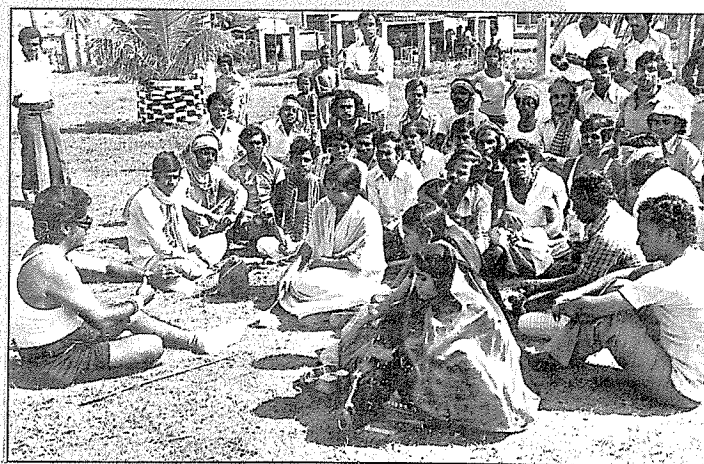
Giving women the choice

In most cultures women are excluded from the leadership and decision-making roles which determine development activities. Women do not share fully in the decision-making processes at household, village or national levels. Their representation in political parties, in governments and in people's organizations has not been sufficient to ensure that they benefit fully from the development of their communities and nations. Some progress has been made through access to local groups and organizations, but a wider acceptance of their capabilities is required at all levels of policy-making.

Women and decision-making may not prove to be a simple issue. The interests of men and women in rural areas may conflict over investments in cash crops versus subsistence crops or in the purchase of tools for household production versus more advanced agricultural machinery. Mothers and fathers might disagree on the education of their children because of expensive school fees and/or the need for children's labour at home. Whatever the decisions, women should have an equal say in those areas that affect them and their families. With leadership and management training, women can exercise more control over their lives and gain the skills needed in order to be heard by governments, village leaders and their families.

One method of increasing women's role in decision-making is the formation of groups: both groups for women, and groups for women and men. Particularly effective are self-help community development organizations at the grass-roots level and mutual aid societies. These groups greatly increase rural women's visibility at the local level by representing and safeguarding women's right to

participate in village and project decisions. Often women in groups have more power than individual women in requesting access to land, credit, agricultural services, extension and training. Participation in groups also can enable women to learn management skills and methods for earning and saving income. For example, in Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, national women's groups are establishing branches in rural areas while existing rural organizations are strengthening ties with national associations. In Bangladesh, the Nijera Kori Kaj ("do it yourself") network of organizations, along with the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, specifically address the causes of their poverty and organize poor rural women collectively. In Chile, a woman's non-governmental organization assists peasant women in marketing and in improving their living conditions through education and self-help activities.



Bangladesh - Men and women join in a training session for rural development workers.

Some achievements

The decision-making opportunities of rural women can be encouraged in a variety of ways. In fact, most projects, training workshops and manuals of the kind presented in this booklet can help improve women's skills and their role in decision-making. Increasing the economic opportunities of women can improve their status, and in turn, enhance their decision-making and leadership roles at every level.










Preventing food losses in the North-West Province of The United Republic of Cameroon

Though women in the Cameroon grow most of the maize and potatoes, and process the harvests, extension workers found that they were rarely

present at demonstrations on post-harvest processing. One problem was the assumption that extension training is for men; another was that demonstrations were held at an inconvenient time for women. FAO decided to make women the focus for extension training in the project area. They were invited to join in and meetings were re-scheduled to meet their needs. This did not mean ignoring men who build the storage facilities and also cultivate maize. Discussions with both women and men farmers revealed that the best storage facilities existed where men took an active interest in food conservation, and where husbands and wives tackled the problem as a team. FAO also works through the local women's groups and cooperatives. One such group meets every Sunday and decides on the workplan for the coming week. Another group acts as a savings and loan association where women farmers can borrow money and improve their ability to save.

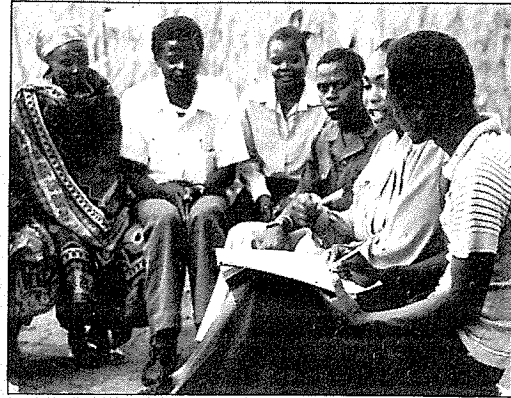
National meeting on household food security in Thailand

The National Women's Meeting on Household Food Security held in Thailand in 1988 established a working relationship among women's farm groups, government agencies and non-governmental and international organizations. At the meeting, organized with FAO's help, rural women leaders voiced their problems in guaranteeing food for their families. Government units concerned with including women in agricultural programmes formed links with the women leaders and sources were identified to give them greater access to credit, marketing, technology, extension and training. Through these improved channels of communication, many of Thailand's organizations concerned with the needs of women in rural areas can respond more effectively in policy-planning and in providing support services. A similar meeting was organized and held for women's groups in Guatemala.

Percentage of women in FAO's People's Participation Programme (PPP)				
	Total PPP staff	% Women	Total Farmers	% Women
 Ghana	16	25	3477	33
 Kenya	3	33	494	26
 Lesotho	7	71	315	79
 Swaziland	9	89	223	82
 Tanzania	14	29	96	27
 Zambia	20	90	1043	74
 Zimbabwe	11	82	573	80
 Sri Lanka	25	28	2314	53
 Thailand	48	15	2118	11

Strategy for action

The FAO Plan of Action is promoting an increased ability and opportunity for women to participate in organizations, learn agricultural management and use decision-making skills to influence the future of their families and nations. In order to increase their incomes and to widen their range of choices, projects are encouraging both women and men to share in making decisions, and to share in the allocation of resources.



Tanzania - Men and women learn record-keeping in one of FAO's people's participation projects.

STRATEGIES

ACTIONS NEEDED

PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

Identify obstacles to women's participation in decision-making at all levels
 Encourage time-saving technologies that can help women find the time to participate in social, economic, educational and political activities
 Promote the role of women in resource allocation, and in the design of programmes and development strategies

PARTICIPATION IN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS

Promote the establishment of women's and mixed-gender local organizations such as cooperatives, farmer's self-help associations, and credit and savings unions
 Promote training programmes for women's associations and increase their capacity for dialogue and negotiation
 Promote community actions and collective initiatives by women leaders in agriculture, forestry and communal fish farming

STAFFING OF FAO POSTS AND PROGRAMMES

Increase efforts to identify, train, and recruit female candidates to FAO professional posts without affecting the principle of professional quality and equitable geographical distribution
 Increase the participation of women in FAO training programmes by inviting government and non-governmental organizations to present women candidates
 Develop a more comprehensive roster of women experts as consultants

Programme priorities

To carry out the strategies and actions listed for the four spheres - civil status, economic, social and decision-making - the following are important tools. First, FAO will improve its collection and use of statistics and information so that its data will reflect more accurately the contributions of rural women to agriculture and document their gains and losses in development. Second, the types of training and public information produced by FAO will be reoriented to include a stronger focus on rural women. And third, women will be integrated into mainstream technical assistance projects. Because the Plan of Action is a wide-ranging document, it is necessary to provide a strategy for its implementation in terms of certain priorities. Seven priorities have been selected by FAO for the period 1989-91. Progress in implementing them will be monitored and new goals will be set for the period 1992-95, at the end of which the Plan is to be fully operational. Crucial to the success of these actions is the full participation of the entire Organization in conceiving, preparing and implementing activities and projects under the following priorities:

- FAO staff training on Women in Development (WID).
- Policy advice to Member Governments.
- Reorientation of home economics and agricultural curricula.
- Project development and monitoring.
- Preparation of manuals and guidelines to promote WID.
- Population education with special reference to women in development.
- Data collection, research studies, communication and public information.

FAO staff training on women in development

To bring women in development (WID) into the mainstream of FAO's development activities requires that the staff of FAO know why WID issues are important and how they can be integrated in technical plans and projects. Therefore, a comprehensive training programme has been designed for FAO staff. It has two objectives: to create an awareness and sensitivity to gender issues, and to provide FAO staff with the skills and tools required to include them in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects. The emphasis on "gender analysis" rather than on "women's issues" reflects a broader concern with women's roles and responsibilities in relation to those of men. Gender analysis examines both female and male roles within their social, political, economic and ecological environments, and can readily be applied to development projects.

The FAO staff training programme is based on key lessons learned by other institutions in their training courses on gender analysis: i) an explicit mandate for gender training is required from the Organization; ii) training serves as an extremely effective mechanism for integrating women's perspectives and gender analysis into the operations of an institution; iii) the case study approach is particularly well suited to learning gender analysis because it actively engages participants and provides a realistic experience in handling the issues; and iv) the selection of participants and materials is crucial to a successful training programme. At FAO, the participants are staff members at Headquarters and in the regional and country programme offices.

The training courses introduce the basic concepts, theory and methodology of gender analysis, the interrelationship of development and gender planning, and what is needed to put WID concerns into FAO's mainstream projects. The methodology is learned through practical exercises and case studies using selected FAO rural development programmes and projects. Various participatory training techniques are used, including group

discussions, project needs assessments, audio-visual materials and practical exercises. In addition, existing training courses, as appropriate, will be strengthened to include gender issues.

Example of a gender analysis training session

OBJECTIVES

To clarify fundamental concepts relating to gender, development, and planning

To introduce the rationale of gender analysis and methodological tools to translate it into practice.

To assess the application of gender planning and analysis methodology to the work of FAO at the project level.

ACCOMPANYING EXERCISES

Identify the daily tasks of men and women in developing countries, differentiating between productive and reproductive activities.

Analyse the policy approach in the funding/executing agency and in the recipient country in terms of programmes promoted.

Evaluate a rural development project by gender in terms of needs required and benefits delivered.

Apply gender analysis methodology to an FAO project.

Redesign an FAO project integrating gender into the planning (identify the procedures undertaken at each stage; identify personnel responsible for carrying them out; identify the major constraints or potential support for gender analysis).

PREPARATION AND PROMOTION OF GUIDELINES AND MANUALS

Guidelines and manuals help decision-makers, advisors and technical assistance staff to include WID concerns in all stages of project development. WID guidelines will be incorporated into existing general manuals where practical. In other cases new approaches will be developed. A strategy will be designed for the use of such guidelines by project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation teams.

Planned guidelines and manuals include:

- ☐ Guidelines on fertilizer utilization by women's groups, on women's participation in horticulture, seed selection, integrated pest management, animal husbandry, and on WID and population.
- ☐ Guidelines on gender analysis so that gender concerns can be addressed in project formulation and reviews.
- ☐ Guidelines on socio-economic indicators for monitoring and evaluating agrarian reform and rural development with an emphasis on women's issues.
- ☐ Guidelines for project designers and implementors to incorporate women's concerns in forestry activities.
- ☐ Training manuals on women's special problems in irrigation, on improved traditional technologies used by women in small-scale rural enterprises, and on human energy requirements that will enable gender issues to be covered in food and nutrition planning.

POPULATION EDUCATION AND WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Ways of bringing population education into key technical areas that affect women and rural development are being explored. Population issues will also be promoted in existing projects, in new pilot studies in agriculture, fisheries and forestry, in training materials and workshops, and in guidelines for project planners. The purpose is to create projects that improve the status and quality of life of rural women and their families, and that collect more grass-roots level information on the relationship between women and demographic factors in agricultural development.

Planned activities, programmes and projects include:

- ☐ Giving technical support on WID issues to projects with population components.
- ☐ Conducting case studies on women and population, and providing technical assistance and advisory services to Member Governments on the integration of population and environmental concerns.
- ☐ Designing population components for integration into rural, agricultural, fisheries and forestry development projects in which women participate.
- ☐ Sponsoring regional training workshops on population, women in rural development, and women and environmental concerns.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING

In order to increase its capacity to include gender considerations in projects, FAO is strengthening its Inter-divisional Working Group on Women in Development which will focus on ways of including women's concerns at all project stages. Special attention is being given to the identification of women as project participants, in presenting agricultural data by gender and in the inclusion of women in project formulation. Although continuing to have women-specific projects, the emphasis will be on integrating women into mainstream projects.

Planned activities, programmes and projects include:

- Conducting farm management surveys, including the study of gender roles in agriculture and domestic labour for the purpose of planning, designing and developing projects.
- Continuing the inclusion of gender analysis in the design of agricultural, forestry and fisheries projects.

- Offering training seminars to improve agricultural extension support for women.
- Working with rural bankers to extend credit to women farmers, and where banks do not exist, identifying alternative channels of credit.
- Setting up pilot projects for small animal production through non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and implementing integrated dairy development activities for small-scale milk producers, especially women's groups.
- Assisting women in resource and environmental conservation projects; promoting energy-related technologies (in food processing and the provision of water and fuel) to alleviate women's burdens, and promoting the expansion of women's income-producing activities in non-wood forest products.
- Providing continued support to women in irrigation project activities and involving women in fertilizer programmes.
- Training women retailers in marketing techniques; and continuing training activities for women in small-scale fisheries.
- Including nutrition education in agricultural and rural development projects in order to improve the population's nutritional status and to prevent malnutrition and nutritional deficiency diseases.



China - Researchers conduct measurements on vegetable seedlings.

POLICY ADVICE TO MEMBER GOVERNMENTS

Legislation and government policies are decisive factors in determining women's participation in economic and social life and in improving the effectiveness of WID programmes and projects. In advising governments, FAO takes two approaches: first, on a basis where a technical unit in FAO addresses a technical government agency on a specific policy, and second, on a basis where various technical units work jointly on a wider-ranging policy such as food security or price policies.

Planned activities and programmes include:

- Assisting Member Governments interested in revising their agrarian legislation to concur with the guidelines provided by the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.
- Offering policy advice to national ministries of planning, agriculture and rural development for the purpose of building and strengthening Women in Development units, and for including gender issues in the planning of overall national strategies on forestry and food security.
- Giving special attention to including women when providing assistance to governments on people's organizations, cooperatives and other rural groups.

REORIENTATION OF HOME ECONOMICS AND AGRICULTURAL CURRICULA

Home economics and agricultural extension workers are important in promoting rural development at grass-roots and project levels. The curricula of home economics and agricultural training institutions is therefore a key to development. By including agriculture, animal husbandry, nutrition and household resource management in home economics curricula, and by including gender issues and women participants in agricultural courses, extension workers of both sexes will be better equipped to give advice and train rural farmers, especially women.

Planned activities, programmes and projects include:

- Reorienting extension services to include WID concerns, and developing training materials.
- Assisting Member Governments to carry out staff training, and redesigning curricula to reflect WID concerns in home economics and agriculture at training schools and higher education institutions
- Offering nutrition training that is sensitive to gender issues to field staff from governmental institutions and to lecturers from agricultural colleges and universities.
- Preparing materials for training women's groups in the management of income-earning activities.
- Preparing materials on the impact of new technologies on labour patterns, resource allocation and decision-making in the household.

DATA COLLECTION, RESEARCH STUDIES, COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

In order to improve the basis for policy making and the implementation of agricultural and rural development programmes and projects, knowledge of gender issues and women in development must be built up. FAO will intensify its efforts to strengthen the data base on women in agriculture, to provide and analyse standard agricultural data by sex, and to carry out studies on women's participation in agriculture and their access to rural services and technology.

Planned activities, programmes and projects include:

Case studies

- Reviewing case studies to identify legal problems hindering women's participation in rural development and studying legal standards and women's accessibility to resources.
- Carrying out and analysing case studies on women in irrigated agriculture and on women's importance in the environment, on fuelwood, biomass fuels and other forms of rural energy.
- Preparing case studies and film strips of projects that have overcome constraints to women's participation in forestry projects.
- Preparing a study on rural women and fertilizer use for consideration by the Commission on Fertilizers.
- Analysing technological changes in agro-processing and their impact on women's employment.
- Studying the effects of economic structural adjustment programmes on the roles of women in agricultural production, marketing and family nutrition.

Data collection

- Including information on gender-linked tasks, access to resources and decision-making patterns in FAO farm data handbooks.
- Setting up a data base on women in agriculture, and preparing a manual for the collection of statistics on women in agriculture.
- Working with Member Governments toward an analysis of data by gender for the World Census of Agriculture.
- Ensuring an analysis of data by gender in the Sixth World Food Survey.

Public information

- Updating bibliographies on women in agriculture.
- Producing publications and audio-visuals on WID.
- Preparing population information, education and communication projects that have women as prime beneficiaries.



India - A student asks a scientist about mustard seed cuttings grown in the tissue culture laboratory.

Monitoring and appraisal

MONITORING AND APPRAISAL

Though progress can be difficult to measure, systematic procedures have been set up to monitor the Plan of Action. Monitoring the integration of women in agricultural development will occur at three levels: within FAO, within the UN as a whole, and with Member Governments.

- Within FAO, programmes and projects are evaluated as to the extent to which they benefit women. A coding system has been established that monitors the inclusion of female participants and beneficiaries in projects. This system is being expanded to ensure that gender is considered at each stage of the project cycle - identification, formulation, implementation, reporting and evaluation.

□ Within the UN system as a whole, FAO participates in making contributions to women in development programmes and projects. FAO regularly reports to the UN Division for the Advancement of Women on its progress in WID.

□ With Member Governments, FAO assists in a reporting system that allows nations to measure the impact of government planning, projects and programmes on women. At the national level, FAO is encouraging the reporting of data by sex on agricultural production, labour, income-earning activities, education, health, nutrition and other appropriate topics. FAO will also organize evaluation missions to countries to review and appraise projects and programmes.

The focal point for implementing the Plan of Action

The Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service is FAO's principal unit addressing women's issues. One of its most important responsibilities is to support the Inter-Divisional Working Group on Women in Development whose main purpose is to encourage all FAO departments and divisions to integrate women's concerns into their mainstream activities. The principal activities of the Service include:

- The preparation of FAO contributions on Women in Development to international meetings, and assistance to national-level units responsible for women's issues;
- Development and implementation of agricultural field projects benefitting women and supporting women's participation in mainstream programmes and projects;
- Global, regional and local studies on women's participation in agriculture and household resource management;
- Reorientation of home economics and extension training programmes to focus on women's economic and productive activities;
- Promotion of population education in order to integrate demographic issues in agricultural and rural development planning and programmes for women.

FAO's Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development presents a broad charter for increasing the overall effectiveness of agricultural development. It is a practical plan to increase agricultural production, improve the health and nutrition of rural families, and foster national growth by improving women's access to new technologies in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. While projects for women are important, the focus is on women and men working together in mainstream projects where most technical assistance is directed.

The Plan of Action signals a unique time in the history of FAO where there is a greater understanding and willingness to make changes. Taking a comprehensive view of women's multiple roles, emphasizing their economic contributions and focusing on alleviating the obstacles, FAO designed the Plan as an integrated approach to assuring that women's contributions and needs in agricultural development are fully accounted for

and supported. The Plan of Action is part of the United Nations' overall efforts to increase women's participation in development and will require continued collaboration between FAO and other UN agencies.

The four spheres — civil status, economic, social and decision-making — outline FAO's commitment to improving the lives of rural women. The seven priorities selected are appropriate for FAO at this time and will facilitate an effective implementation of the Plan. Already the various technical units of the Organization are finding new ways to include women in their mainstream projects. The success of the Plan depends, however, on the active support of Member Governments and donors. They are the key to seeing that the Plan's new strategies and actions actually reach the world's rural communities.



*Colombia:
Farmers tending
sorghum crop*

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS