

# Dimitra Newsletter

## RURAL WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

NEWSLETTER N° 6 – BRUSSELS, JANUARY 2002

### foreword

Dear Friends,  
2001 is already drawing to a close, and it has been an eventful year. The Dimitra Guidebook for Africa and the Near East has been published. Our thanks and congratulations go to our eight partner organisations, who spared neither time nor effort in gathering the information in the field. There have been some changes in the coordination team of the project, which has been extended for another 3-year period: Maartje Houbrechts, the Project Officer in Brussels, has left us and is now working in other climes, where she will continue her action for justice and peace throughout the world. She has been replaced by Judith Gracey, who is an information and communications expert. Hello, Judith, welcome to our midst. Goodbye, Maartje, good luck and our heartfelt thanks for all the work you did.

At this time when the challenges to development and peace are facing poverty and highly complex conflicts across the planet, it is generally women, and rural women in particular, who are to the fore in providing for their families and their daily needs. It is they who are hardest hit by the disastrous effects of

phenomena which are very often beyond their control. Mariame Sow of Enda-Pronat thus presents an article on sound and sustainable agriculture and questions globalisation and the recognition and enhancement of the interests and skills of men and women farmers. In this context the new treaty on plant genetic resources becomes a valuable instrument.

Social justice, the respect of rights, tolerance and equality are not compatible either with the exclusion of one part of the population or with the domination of a fringe of society. The Gender Development Institute in Ghana therefore develops the gender concept to the full by examining questions of masculinities, a facet which is often forgotten in the establishment of more egalitarian relations between men and women. These relations are rooted in individuals at a very early age and are reflected in the way institutions operate and in how they allocate and manage resources. At the same time, women are exploring the world of information and communications more and more, whether in the publishing field or in that of the use of new communication technologies. It is becoming increasingly evident that their interest in sharing and comparing information, experiences and successes is rapidly growing. In Nigeria, rural women don't think twice about communicating by computer, knowing that the more their

voices are heard, the more the world will see them as a force to be reckoned with. They are moving on from their role of passive addressees to become real actors of change, initiating transformations in society and aiming to change their lives and the lives of their families, as is evidenced by the successful experience of the women of a village in South Africa. This success could be one of the stories collected and disseminated by *le Monde selon les femmes*.

At the end of this Newsletter, sources of funding, books and forthcoming conferences are presented to complement your sources of information. We hope that you will enjoy this issue and we hope that 2002 will be a happy and successful New Year for you all. □

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FOOD AND  
AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

### Editorial by Marie Randriamamonjy

At the beginning of this New Year I would like to wish you, your families and your countries a New Year 2002 bringing happiness, fulfilled hopes and peace.

As you no doubt already know, the Dimitra Project has been extended for the next three years. We shall be consolidating what we have achieved so far and building up the capacities of the networks that have been set up in the information and communications field. We shall ensure that the Dimitra Project serves rural populations even more – particularly women, who are working untiringly for development and peace.

Rural women must thus be able to enjoy the same rights and opportunities as any other individuals to guarantee their security and

that of their families: their physical security, of course, but also their food security and their financial and intellectual security.

This mission is all the more urgent and imperative since global trends are liable to exclude more poor people every day, thus exacerbating their deprivation. More often than not, globalisation, rural depopulation, the AIDS pandemic, and the depletion of natural resources hit the most disadvantaged countries and population segments hardest, especially women and children, and the weighty list of dangers entailed in these phenomena is further aggravated by the ever-growing perils of armed conflicts and natural disasters.

Yet much of the progress generated by



# Her Majesty Queen Fabiola has been awarded the Ceres Medal of FAO

On 16 October, World Food Day, H.M. Queen Fabiola was presented the Ceres Medal by Mr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO. This distinction bearing the name of the Roman goddess of agriculture is awarded to eminent women who have achieved outstanding action to promote rural development and the efforts to fight hunger throughout the world. It is a tribute paid to remarkable personalities of our time as an acknowledgement of their solidarity with the poorest people in our world.

Queen Fabiola was awarded this medal primarily for her commitment to rural women within the International Steering Committee on the Economic Advancement of Rural

Women, of which she has been a member, the President, and the Honorary President.

H.M. the Queen pointed out that "It is mainly they (women) who work, suffer and fight for their families and for their ever increasing happiness that they hope to achieve by obtaining autonomy for their loved ones." And she added that "... we might be tempted to give up in the face of wars and hatred so prevalent in our world, but none of these atrocities can ever kill the life hope which is so deeply rooted in us and in nature."

In her presentation speech the Queen, as Mr. Diouf did, pointed to the importance of the Dimitra Project. She thanked FAO for sup-

porting the project, which was originally launched by the King Baudouin Foundation and which she said "provides a means of creating synergies and nurturing friendships in the rural development field."

This event took place on the occasion of World Food Day, whose theme of "Fight Hunger to Reduce Poverty" was a reminder, as the Director-General of FAO remarked, «that it must be recognised that hunger deserves to be given at least as much attention as poverty when development priorities are being considered at the world level». World Rural Women's Day had been celebrated the day before, i.e. on 15 October, on the theme of "Peace for rural women to obtain food security". □

## Approval of an international treaty on plant genetic resources

### ■ A unique international agreement

At its General Assembly in November 2001, the FAO Conference approved the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. This treaty guarantees more efficient use of genetic diversity for facing the challenge of eradicating global hunger.

The treaty is a unique international agreement aiming to guarantee the conservation and sustainable utilisation of plant genetic resources, the future availability of the diversity of these resources as well as the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits they bring. It vests the agricultural sector with a multilateral instrument for cooperation and synergism with other sectors, and

with the trade and environment sectors in particular.

### ■ The need to conserve the existing traditional varieties

As José Esquina-Alcazar, the Secretary of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, remarked, "It is estimated that 10,000 species have been used for human food and agriculture, yet the diets of the majority of the world population is composed of only 150 plant species. Twelve of those 150 species provide some 70% of food, whereas only four – rice, maize, wheat and potatoes – constitute over 50% of foodstuffs. We thus clearly are not using the available resources to the full." And he added that it is now more important than ever before to

conserve the existing traditional varieties in order that future generations can cope with environmental change and the needs of mankind.

The treaty recognises the tremendous contribution made by farmers throughout the globe to the conservation, improvement and availability of plant genetic resources. It encourages governments to safeguard and promote both the rights and the traditional knowledge of farmers. □

Further information can be found on the web site of FAO: <http://www.fao.org>

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globalisation and the information and communications revolution can be of great benefit to rural women, although efforts will still have to be made to preserve areas of expression and to promote a society and an economy based on solidarity.

In its new Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007), which was adopted in November 2001, the FAO undertakes to devote as much attention as possible to the equal sharing of the benefits of change between men and women and to the joint management of those benefits by both sexes – whether in the field of resources, agricultural services or jobs.

Furthermore, the FAO will use the opportunities provided by the new information technologies to remedy deficiencies in education, literacy training and extension services. It will use them to stimulate exchange, share knowledge and disseminate relevant information on gender equity. It will turn them to good account to present decision-makers with irrefutable arguments which are well documented both qualitatively and quantitatively in order to convince them of the absolute necessity to elaborate and adopt development policies that are marked by equality and equity for all.

Once again, I send you my best wishes for a

prosperous and a happy New Year, and I hope that you will enjoy this edition of the Dimitra Newsletter. □

**MARIE RANDRIAMAMONJY,**

Chief, Gender and Development Service,  
FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization  
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# Organic and sustainable agriculture

by Mariame Sow, Enda/Pronat, Senegal

Small farmers in Senegal have had periods of prosperity, but these have unfortunately been short-lived. Before and just after the declarations of independence there was in fact sufficient rainfall and good soil fertility so that it was possible to feed a still fairly small population relatively easily.

## ■ Population growth and diversification of agriculture

But food needs increased with the rapid growth of the population, and agriculture gradually became diversified: groundnuts in the groundnut basin (in the centre of Senegal), "European-type" vegetables (carrots, cabbage, turnips, egg plants, etc) in the Niayes zone some distance from the capital, and rice in the valley of the Senegal River. The introduction of these new varieties was accompanied with new crop-growing techniques such as mechanisation, single-crop farming, and the massive use of chemicals, whose results were spectacular in the first few years but did not last.

## ■ The negative effects of new agricultural production methods

The difficulties encountered in agricultural production are certainly to be explained by drought, but also and in particular by the fact that the peasants had not totally mastered the new farming methods. The negative effects are many and varied: a decrease in organic matter, leaching and acidification of arable land, incidence of parasitic diseases and increased resistance to pest control products, accumulation of agrochemical residue and pollution of ground and surface water, not to mention the cases of poisoning in both humans and animals.

In view of this state of affairs, Enda Tiers-Monde launched a programme entitled "Pronat, Protection naturelle" (Natural Protection), in which efforts to alert farmers, technicians and certain research institutes to the dangers of agrochemicals have been the spearhead of action ever since it was launched in 1982. These efforts have been accompanied by action to develop alternative solutions to chemical pesticides with the collaboration of the peasants themselves.

## ■ The PRONAT Programme

It is now observed that many farmers are beginning to realise the damage caused by agrochemicals. Better still, some of them are developing initiatives either on their own or within their respective organisation to promote a form of agriculture which is healthier (i.e. farming methods which consume as few agrochemicals as possible) and more sustainable. Those methods must be easy replicable within the home environment of the farmers

and in their practices.

This new agriculture has been at the heart of many discussions of local, national and international authorities. The concept has been refined with the partners, the farmers who are trying to use it, even though they have difficulties in its implementation. It is quite clear that organic and sustainable agriculture is the only alternative for guaranteeing the food security of the rural population, which accounts for 70% of the total population of the country.

In the food production process sustainable agriculture uses natural elements more efficiently without causing pollution. It incorporates natural processes such as matching crop rotation and crop succession systems, the biological fixation of nitrogen, soil rehabilitation and the use of natural enemies to fight pests. It minimises the use of non-renewable inputs such as pesticides and fertilisers, which damage the environment and/or harm farmers' and consumers' health. Furthermore, while improving farmers' capacities and making them more independent it develops their knowledge, know-how and skills.

## ■ Intensive farming methods in question

Moreover, as the result of the production crisis that has occurred in the West, intensive farming methods have been called in question. At the present time, organic and sustainable agriculture is liable to become imperative for the countries of the South in view of the sensitivity of the countries of the North to the new production techniques (pesticides, GMCs, 'mad cow' disease, 'dioxinated' chickens, etc.).

National and international markets are already manifesting renewed interest in healthier "country" products. The liberalisation and opening of these markets combined with financial interests will inevitably lead to the expansion of organic farming. The main concern with regard to this development is the attention, which will be devoted to small farmers. If considerable financial opportunities emerge, a stampede of multinationals

and the affluent to developing countries is obviously to be expected.

The hasty disengagement of States from the primary sector is creating a situation open to all sorts of land speculation and land transactions to the detriment of small farmers, who lack the means to develop their land. What will be the fate of these farmers? Are they not liable to become underpaid agricultural labourers on their own land, as has been the case in certain countries of Latin America and Asia (Philippines)? Do we have the right to abandon small farmers in Africa to the same fate?

## Organic farming: one way to fight poverty

## ■ For an access of women to land

In several areas, as the drought has persisted and the male rural population has migrated to urban areas it is women who have taken over the task of ensuring the survival of their families and who farm the land to which they often have limited and difficult access.

In theory, the law on State-administered property could have facilitated their access to land, but the spirit of the law and realities in the field are two factors which rarely tally, particularly since the sociocultural barriers restricting women's access to land ownership are extremely difficult to remove. Does this justify maintaining over half of the working population on the fringe of the economy? It is important that intensive work be carried out at grassroots level in this context with the involvement of all local actors and that great efforts be made in this field. Pronat hopes that this will be the case.

It is important that local, national or international non-governmental organisations and peasant organisations should combine their efforts to achieve synergy and that they advocate that sound and sustainable agriculture should benefit the poor – now that the opportunity has presented itself for once.

Considerable efforts are currently being made to fight urban poverty in Senegal. This action is no doubt essential, but its success will depend on the result of another battle to be fought further up the line. For urban poverty is the product of a chain reaction – it originates in rural areas. If urban poverty is to be fought, efforts must first tackle rural poverty – the actual root of the problem. □

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# Gender issues to be developed to the full

Although positive change must be sought for women, men must also change. If women were to be the only persons to work for more equality in gender issues (...), we would again have a situation similar to the double working day, where women would have to take responsibility for changing not only their own ideologies and practices but also those of men.<sup>1</sup>

## Conference on "Gender equity and men: Continental Echoes..." in Ghana

The second International Gender Conference entitled "Gender equity and men: Continental Echoes..." was held in Elmina (Ghana) from 8 to 12 October 2001. It was organised by the Gender Development Institute (GDI), and the some 100 participants came from a wide variety of backgrounds and disciplines: NGOs, local associations, rural extension workers, primary school teachers, company managers, professors, researchers (anthropologists, sociologists, etc), community religious leaders, and representatives of ministries – mainly from Ghana, but also from other countries in Africa, Europe and North America. The aim of the Conference was to devote thought to how both men and women are conditioned by cultural mentalities and traditions. Society's perceptions of the roles of men and women are concepts, which change

and evolve and are shaped by culture, tradition, education, religion, etc.

But until now men have been very passive when it has come to taking a stand on gender issues. They have left that task to women. How is this apathy – or reluctance – on the part of men with regard to gender issues to be explained? What role must they play in

the debate? Why is it mainly women who make the effort to think about the issue? These are all questions which the GDI considered expedient to include on the conference agenda.

Culture and tradition are often invoked in order to delay the introduction of more egalitarian relations between women and men. Yet customs and practices are not unalterable, and, where necessary, the cultural and structural bases which contribute to inequality should be changed. Furthermore, there is a need for deeper knowledge of the positive elements of the cultures and traditions of each community in order to enhance them. No social change can be brought about without the consent and active involvement of all members of the community – both women and men –, local associations, leaders, and of course the traditional chiefs and religious leaders, who play a major role in society. □

**Further information  
can be obtained from the  
Gender Development Institute (GDI)**  
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1 Adapted from a publication by Sarah White, referred to in *Quel genre d'homme, Construction sociale de la masculinité, relations de genre et développement*, Collection Yvonne Preiswerk, 2000. Publication of the Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED), available free of charge from the Publications Department of the IUED, C.P. 136, CH-1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland;  
E-mail: [Publications@iued.unige.ch](mailto:Publications@iued.unige.ch);  
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## How to recognise a gender-sensitive organisation?

There are four interdependent factors which are essential to gender mainstreaming within an organisation, irrespective of its type, scale or scope. These are the political will, technical capacity, accountability and the culture of the organisation.

**Political will** is manifested when top-level organisational leaders openly support a vision and process for gender mainstreaming. These leaders are able to convey effectively the organisation's commitment to gender equality. They commit the necessary human and financial resources and adopt supportive organisational policies and procedures.

**Technical capacity** is manifested by the improvement of staff skills and ability for dealing with gender issues. It means the introduction of new systems for collecting gender-disaggregated data and gender-specific information. It includes the development of gender-sensitive tools and procedu-

res to ensure that women and men participate and benefit equally.

**Accountability** is requested through a set of incentives to stimulate professional practices and attitudes that are gender-sensitive. Each individual member within the structure as well as the organisation as a whole, must be committed to change towards gender equality.

**The culture of the organisation** is manifested by organisational practices and methods of how people relate and behave within the organisation, in order to allow gender issues to be taken in consideration and enhanced. It involves progress towards employing a gender-balanced staff as well as equal valuing of women and men in the work place.

Take these four components and imagine a tree whose roots represent political will and whose branches and leaves symbolise the

*(Framework for gender mainstreaming – Commission on the Advancement of Women – CAW)*

technical capacity, responsibility and culture of the organisation. What shape is your tree? Does it have strong roots? Are its branches well developed? Does it stand straight or is it lop-sided? What does it lack that would make it more beautiful? Does it have dense foliage? Or is it still just in bud? □

Adapted extract from *Gender and Organisational change. Lessons from the InterAction Community*. Workshop for the Gender Development Institute (GDI), October 2001.

### Commission on the Advancement of Women (CAW)

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## A new type of club

Like many schoolchildren throughout the world, students in Ghana have extramural activities: football clubs, song clubs, music clubs, etc. Six secondary schools in the city of ACCRA boast an original activity for their students – a gender club. This is a novelty launched by the Gender Development Institute (GDI) and based on the potential which schools offer for raising young people's awareness of concepts of gender equality and equity.

Could there be any better place than school structures for introducing youngsters and opening their minds to the issues and realities of social relations between men and women? School is one of the pillars of society. It shapes the behaviour, attitudes and values which govern the lives of men and women. It is a place where the daily lives of young boys and girls are catalysed, where they confront one another and get to know one another.

Gender clubs operate like any other club in everyday life. They bring together people – in this particular case schoolboys and schoolgirls – with common interests who would join in a programme and activities. Social stereotypes, sexist prejudices and established discriminations are examined and called in question by means of leisure activities such as trips and excursions, competitions, drama productions, debates, etc. Discussions on the concept of gender and its implications are the focal point around which these activities are organised.

Gender learning is transformed into a new way of looking at society in order to influence it according to the requirements of the principles of equality and equity. The future is more than ever in the hands of the younger generations. □

Further information can be obtained from the *Gender Development Institute (GDI)*

## Towards gender-responsive budgeting

The conference entitled Towards gender-responsive budgeting, which was held in Brussels on 16 and 17 October 2001, urged governments, multilateral agencies and non-governmental organisations to incorporate gender analysis in the preparation of national budgets.

Over 200 delegates from 43 countries took part in this Conference, which was hosted by the Belgian Government (Secretariat of State for Development Cooperation) and organised jointly by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Government of Italy, and UNIFEM, with the collaboration of the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

### **Mobilise the political and financial support of governments**

The goal was to mobilise the political and financial support of governments and civil society with a view to promoting gender-responsive budget initiatives.

National budgets reflect national strategies for meeting the social and economic needs of the population. Analysis of those budgets from the gender perspective provides a means of evaluating the responsibility taken by governments with regard to their gender mainstreaming commitments.

UNIFEM Director-General Noeleen Heyzer pointed out that incorporating gender analysis in the evaluation of budgets helped decision-makers to identify any policies which

needed to be adjusted in order to achieve fairer human development and equality between men and women. She stressed that ignoring gender issues is not a neutral attitude – it is blindness whose human and economic cost is high: reduced productivity, limited development of the skills of the population, reduced levels of prosperity.

### **Budgets that contribute to better governance**

Mr. Tony Hutton from the OECD went further, stating that gender budgeting is not only a social issue but a question of economic growth, which must be integrated into the work of finance ministries and budget committees.

There are currently over 40 gender-responsive budgeting initiatives throughout the world at the present time. They help to strengthen governance and promote transparency and they provide a means of achieving better economic efficiency. They are also a means of combating discrimination against women and promoting gender mainstreaming and respect for women's rights in legislation.

The Conference encouraged the examination of budget processes to ensure that women's and men's needs are considered equally, and it recommended that women be involved in this process. It urged governments to publish an annual budget report relating to gender equality and promote the catalytic and supportive role of development cooperation in fostering gender budget initiatives. □

## International Inception Seminar for the setting-up of a Network of African Women Economists

Senegal, 29 October-3 November 2001

The UNIFEM Regional Office for Francophone and Lusophone Africa has just launched a programme intended to foster greater participation of women in economic policy formulation and monitoring. Within this programme, UNIFEM's interest is oriented towards building women's capacities as change agents through the creation of linkages between household economic activities and global economies. This is explained by the crucial need to make the economy more responsive to poverty concerns and gender equality.

In the framework of this initiative, UNIFEM convened an international inception seminar to facilitate the emergence of a network

of African Women Economists. The network will carry-out research, training and advocacy on gender and macro-economy. Areas to be covered include gender budgeting, trade, debt management, Poverty Reduction Strategy Policies (PRSPs) and statistics and indicators.

The seminar gathered about 50 people from the following countries: Burkina Faso, Benin, Cape-Verde, Chad, Côte-d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. Participants are representatives of the ministry of economy, trade, budget, women, planning etc...; technical advisors on economic and trade issues; parliamentarians; women economists from research centers, universities and civil society organisa-

tions; journalists working on economic issues at national and regional levels; representatives of UN and regional institutions; women's rights activists and members of partner networks.

Future activities of the network include national strategy planning seminars, national forums with parliamentarians on gender budgeting, consultations with key ministries and research and publications on various thematic areas (e.g. women's unpaid work). □

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# Women and communication

The October 2001 issue (no. 95) of the Spore magazine of the CTA (Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development)<sup>1</sup> contained an article on '**Women in publishing**', another – by no means insignificant – field of information and communication. We are reproducing large extracts from that article here<sup>2</sup>.

## ■ A sector that's lagging behind

ACP women hoe the fields, feed the family and keep the peace. They should be publishing more, too.

We are what we eat, goes the old saying. We are also increasingly what we read and whatever else we absorb from various media: our families, communities, school, the press, radio, for example. Yet, at a time when many inequalities between women and men are being removed, the profession that supplies us with much of our information – call it publishing, for short – is still lagging behind.

In general, the publishing sector in many ACP countries is waiting to grow outside the educational field and the sphere of the child: the lack of a paying market, a high rate of illiteracy, and technical hurdles in production and distribution head a long list of problems hindering the growth of literature and professional publishing. Move out to some of the extreme edges of the publishing world, into the realm of agriculture, agri-food and rural development, and you will look in vain for signs of gender equity, with a few notable exceptions. The number of women writers, editors and publishers falls way below the none-too-impressive average of women occupying 25% of media posts quoted by the African Women's Media Centre.

Even if the publishing profession does not show it clearly, the role of ACP women in communication is crucial (...). Such traditional roles as story-telling, predominantly fulfilled by women, have not always made it in the transition to contemporary styles of communication. There are still many more men writers and many more books written by men (...).

Even after years of focused activities, the Uganda Women Writers' Association, also known as Femrite, confirms this: its 2000 edition of the Ugandan Creative Writers Directory lists twice as many male as female writers.

## ■ Women bring change from within

While writers are pressuring to genderise publishing, as witnessed by the Women Writers Conference at the Zimbabwe International

Book Fair in 1999 on Women and Activism, the profession itself is also struggling to join an era of gender equity. One of the relatively few books published on women in publishing in Africa and other ACP regions, the directory of the African Books Collective, has gathered details of less than two hundred women involved in the profession across the continent.

Change is on the way. Publishing is a creative profession, and perhaps easier to genderise than food security. This is certainly the case with such professional bodies as the rather feminised and very dynamic Pan-African Booksellers' Association, the African Publishers' Network with its strong emphasis on promoting gender issues among its membership, and the Caribbean Publishers' Network, which fully reflects the pivotal role of women in the development of that region. These thrusts are reflected in a new wave of resource materials on editing, production and

## gender and publishing

marketing. They are produced primarily by women, and some directly address key themes such as gender-sensitive editing in order to deal with traditional stereotypes.

## ■ Lady writer on the PC?

In the already marginal fields of agricultural publishing and associated topics such as nutrition, marketing, finance-credit-savings, organisation and management, the role of women is very small. The vast majority of titles are still being originated and designed by men to this day. Until this imbalance changes, how much can we reasonably expect agricultural and rural practice to change?

(...). Since this area is often not viable in traditional commercial terms, many publications are produced by non-profit bodies, or by regular publishers with external 'donor' participation through such schemes as CTA's co-publication programme.

These publishers in turn are generally committed to gender equity in a progressive way,

from their staffing policies to their editorial options. This makes their products more accessible in terms of content and distribution to readers in rural areas, where there is already a high level of demand, even if literacy levels still require much attention.

Chipping away in a genderly fashion at the existing publishing profession is one thing, but the greatest prospects lie in the field of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the use of electronic publishing. Throughout ACP countries, computer networks are actively used by proportionately more women than in the industrialised world (...). Relatively new networks like Women's Net and Famafrique, and the new Hafkin prize underline this.

It is in a more traditional network, however, that we can see the surest signs that publishing is getting properly genderised. The International Women's Tribune Centre, a stalwart for decades of grassroots communication initiatives, has hooked onto ICTs. The IWTC project – 'Rural Women in Africa: Ideas for Earning Money' – has started by operating in rural telecentres in Uganda, and will soon be usable on stand-alone computers anywhere. It provides rural women with ideas, case studies and an exchange of experience on micro-enterprise through inter-action with a CD-ROM by mouse-clicks, appropriate graphics and spoken texts in local languages. Now isn't that spot on? It took women publishers to think of it. □

1 Spore is a bimonthly publication, which is produced by the CTA to provide information for agricultural development in ACP countries. It is free of charge for private individuals and for ACP and EU organisations which devote efforts to development. Apply to: CTA, Postbus 380, 6700 AJ Wageningen, The Netherlands; phone: + 31 317 467 100; fax: + 31 317 460 067; e-mail: cta@cta.nl; web site: <http://www.cta.nl>

2 A fact sheet listing publications, resource guides and contacts can be obtained by clicking on the link: ([www.agrica.org/Spore/spore95/spore95\\_feature2.html](http://www.agrica.org/Spore/spore95/spore95_feature2.html)) or from the compilers, at the following address: Mediateurs, W-Alexanderpoort 46, 1421 CH Uithoorn, The Netherlands; fax: + 31 297 54 05 14; e-mail: [info@spore-magazine.org](mailto:info@spore-magazine.org)

# Electronic mail in the service of village women in Nigeria

2001 APC Africa Hafkin Prize winner trains women in rural Nigeria to use information technology for peace and poverty alleviation.<sup>1</sup>

The first APC (Association for Progressive Communications) Africa Hafkin Communications Prize was awarded on 31 July 2001 to Ms Kazanka Comfort, head of the Bayanloco Community Learning Centre in Kaduna State, Nigeria, an initiative of the Fantsuam Foundation<sup>2</sup>. It was the first time that this prize, which rewards creative uses of information technologies, was presented (see box).

## ■ The "Women and Peace" project

It was while working on the "Women and Peace" project – aiming to work for peace and detect potential flash-points of communal violence – that Ms Comfort realised how fast communication could benefit rural women in emergency situations and even save lives. Although the villages are in many cases without electricity, let alone computer equipment, she managed to convince her employer, the Fantsuam Foundation, of the potential impact and advantage of having access to the Internet and an e-mail address in each village – and the villagers saw the potential themselves.

So the Foundation decided to support community-based computer centres as part of its microcredit and poverty alleviation scheme. The first Community Learning Centre was set up through the disbursement of loans to a women's group.

The Bayanloco Centre had to overcome multiple obstacles, including the initial opposition of an all-male Board of Trustees, technophobia amongst the rural women involved, a high level of illiteracy, no telephone and no regular supply of electricity.

## ■ A women-driven project

"Kazanka Comfort demonstrated that information technology is not an unnecessary luxury for rural women in poor countries, but rather a tool to help them meet their needs. The project was not technology-driven; it was women-driven!" said Ms. Hafkin in her award statement.

Largely due to this determination and the enthusiastic reception of the IT training by local communities, eight additional villages and two education institutions have asked the Fantsuam Foundation to support them in their efforts to set up their own community learning centres.

The Hafkin Prize winner and the other finalists have debunked some common myths about Africa being the 'unconnected continent', bypassed by the 'information age'. What is not adequately recognised is that

## Africa is not 'unconnected'

Africans, and specifically African women, are being remarkably innovative, entrepreneurial and courageous in engaging information and communications technologies, in spite of limited access to resources and infrastructure. □

## THE AFRICA HAFKIN COMMUNICATIONS PRIZE

The Africa Hafkin Communications Prize is an initiative of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) and its Africa Programme. The theme for the Prize in 2001 was: women-led, women-informed, women-inspired initiatives.

Dr. Nancy J. Hafkin has been a pioneer and innovator in the area of networking, development information, and electronic communications in Africa. Her forceful advocacy has drawn attention to the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) on that continent and to the foreseeable cost of keeping it out of the economic and social change brought about by the global information society.

The US\$ 7 500 Hafkin prize is open to civil society organisations, government institutions, educational organisations, community-based groups, networks, social movements or individuals anywhere in Africa which have launched and successfully run projects using ICTs as an essential component of their action to develop justice.

The following can be cited amongst the other finalists:

■ The NairobiBits project in Kenya, run by women, who teach young Africans from

slum areas the technical and creative skills of Web design so that they can express themselves on-line:

*http://www.nairobits.org;  
E-mail: info@nairobits.org*

■ Again in Kenya, the Slums Information Development And Resource Centres project, which aims to empower young disadvantaged people living in urban slums to take action and change their own environment:

*http://www.sidarec.or.ke;  
E-mail: sidarec@kenyaweb.com*

■ In Nigeria, the Society For Women & AIDS In Africa, which is engaged in health education, with particular emphasis on AIDS:

*E-mail: swaan@cyberspace.net.ng*

■ In Senegal, TAFTAF is a group of 60 craftswomen whose goal is to use the Internet to promote and sell their ethnic art throughout the world. TAFTAF also provides cultural information about the customs from which the products emerge:

*http://www.taftaf.com;  
E-mail: marlene@taftaf.com*

(extract from: [www.apc.org](http://www.apc.org))

1 Extract from the web site of the Association for Progressive Communications: [http://www.apc.org/english/hafkin/haf\\_finalists.htm](http://www.apc.org/english/hafkin/haf_finalists.htm)

2 Particulars of the Foundation: <http://www.kabissa.org/fantsuam>;  
E-mail: [fantsuamfoundation@fantsuam.com](mailto:fantsuamfoundation@fantsuam.com)

# South Africa: the experience of the women of Mpindweni

The women of Mpindweni have taken their fate into their own hands, even if there are still problems to be resolved in this African village. Whereas in times gone by they had no recognised occupation, no gainful employment, and no real prospect of progress, they are now bakers, market gardeners, and seamstresses.

Over the last 5 years the women of Mpindweni (East Cape Province) have organised in a group (the Masibambane group) and have created their own employment and their own business. They have acquired a position of strength in the community. Yet they have not been spared pitfalls, and fate has dealt them several blows. They could have given up many times – but they didn't: their creativity is stronger than ever and they are now even emulated by others.

## ■ It all started in 1996

Refusing to accept an endless situation of poverty, in which they had no employment and no economic activity, and spurred on by the will to change, these women applied to the *Transkei Land Service Organisation* (TRALSO) for land in 1996. TRALSO is a body which runs various projects which are financed by the Netherlands, *inter alia*, and concern mainly land restitution and land reclamation, as well as action to improve livelihoods (see box).

Their request was not complied with immediately, but they continued to seek support and funding from aid organisations, despite moments of discouragement. Only seven of the original group of women continued to believe in their project and steadfastly pursued their dreams. It was not until February 1998 that TRALSO managed to support them, providing training in production techniques and activity management: baking, market gardening and pig farming.

## ■ A bakery in the village

Using their own resources and working in the house of one of the group members, the women of Mpindweni began to make their own bread, which sold like hot cakes. The villagers were delighted – until then they had to go to another village to fetch bread and the transport alone cost 6 rands, whereas the Mpindweni bread is now sold at 2.9 rands (1 US dollar = 8 rands). In May 1998, their energy was boosted with a grant from the Netherlands Cooperation Programme, which enabled them to purchase equipment and expand their activity. Con-

tracts were signed with the Prison Service and the School Feeding Programme of the Department of Health. But delays in payment unfortunately created cash-flow problems and, to crown all, a violent storm destroyed the bakery.

Yet these fighters persevered, reviewing their working methods and deciding to diversify their activities in order to vary their sources of income and minimise risks. They devoted efforts to market gardening and sewing.

## ■ A community field

With support from TRALSO, which mobilised the Ministry of Agriculture, the women approached the local authorities and negotiated the allocation of 2.5 ha of land, which was to be used for communal production. The Department of Agriculture helped them fence in an area in order to protect it from straying animals, and at the same time the women built a unit for the group's activities in which they installed the bakery. Their dreams were beginning to come true.

But one morning when they went out to the

field as they did every day they discovered that their months of effort spent tilling, sowing, weeding, planting out, and watering the vegetable and cereal plantations had been reduced to virtually nothing: animals had got into the plot and had trampled the cabbages, grazed on the lettuces and devoured the wheat.

It was soon discovered that the culprits were men of high standing in the village who were jealous of these women's progress and felt threatened in their status. They had destroyed part of the fence thus allowing the animals in to wreck the crops. They claimed that the women should not have been given the land in the first place when there wasn't a single man in the group, and they also claimed that the land they were using was intended for grazing their cattle. The TRALSO Gender Programme staff helped the women to discuss this problem with the traditional authorities and the members of the community in the presence of representatives of the police force, the Department of Agriculture and the South African Civic Organisation. A consensus was reached, and the entire community recognised the group and accepted that their activities should continue.

Since then, the Masibambane group has been pursuing its initiatives, obtaining the necessary support, seeking funds and approaching public structures. The Ministry of

The *Transkei Land Service Organisation* (TRALSO) is an independent South African organisation which was set up in 1990 in response to the increasing urgency of land claims. Its geographical coverage comprises the poorest zone in the East Cape Province, which is marked by economic stagnation, unemployment, and land shortage. TRALSO has set itself the task of finding solutions to the land problems of rural communities and individuals, seeking at the same time to resolve food security problems and to find means of improving lifestyles and livelihoods. Its programmes thus deal with broader land issues as well as their corollaries, concerning land reclamation, land tenure, land redistribution, soil protection, and the improvement of living conditions. A Gender Programme is also underway.

TRALSO is currently operating in 5 rural communities (including in particular the

Mpindweni community), where the populations have become involved in a variety of activities including communal market gardens, eco-tourism, poultry farming, tree farming, and general income-generating activities.

For further information on the project and on TRALSO please contact:

**Navy Simukonda, Acting Director  
Transkei Land Service Organisation  
(TRALSO)**

60 Wesley Street, Umtata, 5100,  
Eastern Cape, South Africa.  
tel.: +27 47 531 2851/2,  
fax: +27 47 531 2853,  
mobile: +27 83 492 8118  
e-mail: [tralso@wildcoast.co.za](mailto:tralso@wildcoast.co.za)  
web site: <http://www.tralso.eastcape.net>  
(temporary address)

Health thus helped to finance activities when the group had exhausted the funds initially granted by the Netherlands Cooperation Programme.

In February 2000, the Cooperation Programme issued a very favourable evaluation of the results achieved and gave the group a new lease of life in the form of another grant, part of which was used for electrifying the group's building and purchasing additional equipment (water tanks for the vegetable garden, electric ovens for the bakehouse).

#### ■ **There's no stopping change now**

The project has been a real success and has been run entirely by the women themselves since September 2000. There is unfortunately still poverty in the village, but the women know that they have begun to move mountains. They have managed to make their voice heard.

Village life has changed. The men no longer fear the group and have overcome their ani-

#### **"Trying to help and build ourselves"**

mosity. Meals are provided for 800 schoolchildren every day as the result of the Masibambane group's production. The smell of fresh bread wafts through the village every morning, and its quality plus the savings it has brought are a source of great satisfaction. The sewing workshop is in operation, and the women have opened a bank account which they are able to run themselves thanks to the training they were given in book-keeping. Other women have now organised themselves and 10 further projects are being run under an umbrella body known as the "*Masizakhe Mpindweni Community Development Forum*", whose name in the Xsora language means "*trying to help and build ourselves*".

The group is currently trying to increase agricultural production by seeking solutions to the water shortage. Since there is no water supply, crops can only be grown during the rainy season, but one day, the women say, the water problem will be a thing of the past. Meanwhile the group is broadening its horizons, seeking other women in South Africa with a view to exchanging and sharing their experiences. □

## **Developing Countries Farm Radio Network**

The Developing Countries Farm Radio Network distributes radio scripts to its 1.100 members in 121 countries throughout the world four times a year. These scripts concern simple and economical techniques for increasing food production and improving nutrition and health.

The Developing Countries Farm Radio Network is a non-governmental organisation based in Canada. It was set up at the instigation of a Canadian farm broadcaster, George Atkins who, while travelling in Zambia in 1975 with two other local farm broadcasters, had the idea of setting up a worldwide exchange for sharing practical farming information.

At the time, his colleagues in developing countries were telling their audiences about commercial fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides, and tractor maintenance – i.e. about expensive techniques that they could not afford. So, the broadcasters thought, why not broadcast information about affordable techniques that were more suited to their context?

They knew that the information was waiting to be found – in the next village, or in a neighbouring country, or even halfway round the world. And hundreds of farm broadcasters, if "networked", could share that information to benefit millions of small farmers.

The Developing Countries Farm Radio Network has been gathering and sharing information on simple economic techniques, which small farmers can afford and

which are conducive to sustainable agriculture. It deals with a very wide range of subjects, from crops to the environment, covering parasite control, nutrition, health, small farms and many other topics. Special attention is devoted to subjects of interest to women farmers. The network's most recent publication (July 2001) concerns respect for indigenous knowledge.

The information is distributed to farm broadcasters, editor, farming consultants, teachers, health officers, extension workers and any other development agents. The texts (over 100 in English, French and Spanish) are illustrated to facilitate interpretation and multiply their uses. They are circulated free of charge to the members of the network – and membership is also free of charge. There is just one obligation: members are requested to let the Network know how the information is used and to suggest ways in which it might be improved. □

Enquiries about how to join the network and receive material should be addressed to:

#### **Developing Countries Farm Radio Network**

416, Moore Avenue, Suite 101,  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4G 1C9  
phone: + 1 416 971 63 33;  
fax: + 1 416 971 52 99,  
E-mail: [info@farmradio.org](mailto:info@farmradio.org);  
web site: <http://www.farmradio.org>

# In search of funding

Women throughout the world are organising to cope with the problems and difficulties which affect their lives and those of their families. They have exciting ideas and projects, but they often deplore the lack of funding for putting them into practice. Money is always a difficult issue. One possible solution is to get in touch with Mama Cash and the Global Fund for Women.

## ■ Who is Mama Cash?

Mama Cash (a fund for women) is an independent organisation which finances women's associations. It is interested in improving the socio-economic conditions of women throughout the world, and it invests in non-governmental women's organisations or associations which work towards that goal. It focuses primarily on:

- the equality of the civil, economic, and legal rights of women and their rights relating to reproductive health; efforts to combat sexual violence are also a priority field;
- communications: documentation centres, periodicals, publications, radio broadcasts for women, information and communication technologies;

- cultural activities: drama productions, cultural festivals, women's music groups, construction of centres and places where women can meet.

The financial aid provided for projects by Mama Cash amounts to between 1.500 and 5.000 euros (2.500 euros on average). Feel free to contact Mama Cash – you will be given all the necessary information. Mama Cash speaks English, Spanish, French and Dutch. The particulars of the Fund are as follows:

### **Mama Cash**

Fund for Women  
P.O. Box 15 686, 1000 ND Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands  
phone: +31 20 689 36 34;  
fax: + 31 20 683 46 47  
E-mail: [info@mamacash.nl](mailto:info@mamacash.nl);  
web site: <http://www.mamacash.nl>

## ■ What is the Global Fund for Women?

The Global Fund for Women is a foundation which grants donations up to 15.000 US dollars to women's groups to support their efforts to transform their societies.

It supports initiatives to protect and defend women's rights, action to improve women's socio-economic conditions, and

innovations giving women access to communication technologies and the media. It is also interested in setting up networks and promoting collaboration amongst women's groups. A whole range of questions that are decisive for women are thus taken into consideration. □

### **One example of the many actions supported by the Fund:**

#### ***the Corazón de la Tierra Craftswomen's Cooperative in Yajalón, Mexico***

Maya women who met through their daughters' school have formed a cooperative for self-education, which invites speakers to come and give talks on issues concerning sexuality, health and women's individual rights. Its members are learning to read and write Spanish. The Cooperative also sells embroidery in order to collect funds to finance schooling for the members' daughters. □

Further information can be obtained from:

**Global Fund for Women**  
1375 Sutter Street, Suite 400,  
San Francisco, CA 94109, USA  
phone: + 1 415 202 7640;  
fax: + 1 415 202 8604  
E-mail: [grants@globalfundforwomen.org](mailto:grants@globalfundforwomen.org);  
web site: <http://www.globalfundwomen.org>

# The National Network of Rural Women is in operation in Senegal

After an initial session to set up the network in August 20001, the National Network of Rural Women in Senegal held its constituent General Assembly on 15 and 16 May 2001. The twelve supporting associations, who are the founding members of the network, were there in force and were accompanied by their grassroots partners. More than 100 people took part in the proceedings to examine the statutes and internal rules of procedure of the network and also elected the members of the provisional Steering Committee. Three technical support units were set up – one for training and communications, one for projects, and one for organisational development, awareness promotion and extension activities.

This network is an initiative of the Dimitra Project coordination unit in West Africa, which covers seven countries. The network is established in Senegal with the mission of expanding throughout these various countries. Its creation was motivated by the will

to develop the achievements of women's organisations and to highlight the role of rural and peri-urban women in development. There is a wide range of women's organisations in Senegal, but although they have already achieved a great deal much remains to be done. The members of the network have undertaken to combine their efforts to develop things further. These members are the Association for the Development of Education and Training in Africa (ADEF/Afrique), the National Association for Adult Literacy Training and Education (ASAFODEB) the Senegal Association for Promoting Organic

and Biodynamic Farming (ASPAB), the African Collective for Research, Action and Training (ACRAT), ENDA-Pronat, NIIL JAAM, the Senegal Federation of NGOs (FONGS), the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Rural Family Houses (RFH), the African Network for Integrated Development (ANID) and the SIRA. The field of action of this network is vast, ranging from training and information for women's associations to the creation of links between development partners, the development of local knowledge, action to promote solidarity amongst associations, and measures to support income-generating activities.

There is a tremendous lot of work to be done. The network is open to any organisation willing to devote efforts to this initiative. □

1 Dimitra Newsletter no. 5: Establishment of a National Network of Rural Women in Senegal, page 7

Please address all enquiries to:

**Fatou Sow**  
**ENDA-Pronat,**

54, rue Carnot, B.P. 3370, Dakar, Senegal  
phone: + 221 8 225565;  
fax: + 221 8 235157 or 222 695  
E-mail: [pronat@enda.sn](mailto:pronat@enda.sn);  
web site: <http://www.enda.sn/pronat>

# Le Monde selon les femmes (The World According to Women): the Palabra/es magazine and network

The Palabras Project has been aiming since 1996 to get women's groups in both South and North to relate and write about concrete actions, something they have done which illustrates their social commitment and which they'd like to publicise.

This objective is based on the conviction that women's groups in both North and South are acting, reacting and taking their future into their own hands as far as they possibly can. They have interesting things to tell others and to write about, things that are little known.

By opting to disseminate and relay what the women's groups in the South express and by establishing partnership relations with groups or institutions in the South, *le Monde selon les femmes* fulfils an essential supporting role as an intermediary for demands for development that guarantees more equality.

Stories are exchanged between the French-speaking and Spanish-speaking worlds (Europe, Latin America and French-speaking Africa). The narratives, which are all always related collectively, present concrete achievements.

This cross-flow of stories achieves an objective of development education, for the stories show instances where solidarity is possible when based on similar assessments of comparable situations. The exchange of practices shows the range of different experiences and also reflects the realities of each social group, each country and each culture as well as the similarity of the emotions the women go through (delight or disappointment), of the events they experience and of the approaches they adopt, the aim being to enhance women's autonomy.

## ■ The Palabra project pursues a threefold objective:

1. to broadcast concrete examples of the experiences of women's groups to a wide public;
2. to help women to learn about and to get to know one another in order to create synergy between women's groups through the cross-flow of their stories;
3. to devise extension tools (for development education and for gender and development training).

### ■ Its three components are:

1. publication of the Palabras magazine;
2. gradual establishment of a network for exchange and contacts;
3. organisation of meetings between the associations taking part in the project; two exchange seminars have been held – one in 1998 and the other in 1999.

The proceedings of these meetings have been published and are available on request. Nine issues of the Palabras magazine have already been published on specific themes:

- zero issue on violence against women;
- no. 1 on sustainable agriculture;
- no. 2 on employment;
- no. 3 on health and reproductive rights;
- no. 4 on citizenship;
- no. 5 on women in urban centres;
- no. 6 on organisations which support women;
- no. 7 on the World March of Women;
- no. 8 on women and art.

Palabras is published in two languages, French (800 copies) and Spanish (500 copies); the zero issue was also published in Italian (100 copies).

The magazine is circulated by post (600 copies are dispatched), and the remaining copies are sold at the various *Le Monde selon les femmes* activities. The circulation of the magazine is free of charge outside Belgium; it is sent to more than 60 countries (Europe, French-speaking Africa, and Latin America). The sales price (100 Belgian francs) covers production costs (translation, layout, printing) but does not include the costs incurred in the preparation of the magazine, networking, contacts, etc. Each issue announces the topics to be discussed in forthcoming issues. □

Further information can be obtained from:

### Le Monde selon les femmes

Rue de la Sablonnière, 18,  
1000 Brussels,  
Belgium  
phone: + 32 2 22 30 512;  
fax: + 32 2 22 31 512  
E-mail: [monde.femmes@skynet.be](mailto:monde.femmes@skynet.be)

## new books

### The Information Revolutions: How the Management of Information and Communications is Changing the Lives of Rural People

*Paul Mundy and Jacques Sultan,  
CTA, 2001 (in English and French)*

The purpose of this book is to give an account of successful experiences and to explain how individuals or organisations have managed to master communication tools in order to improve the lives and livelihoods of rural people. The authors have identified some 40 examples in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The examples which have been chosen are local or national initiatives which are doing good communication work despite the constraints they face.

241 pages;  
ISBN 92 9081 2289 and 92 9081 2397,  
CTA no. 1038  
CTA, Postbus 380, 6700 AJ Wageningen,  
The Netherlands  
phone: + 31 317 467 100;  
fax: + 31 317 460 067  
E-mail: [cta@cta.nl](mailto:cta@cta.nl);  
web site: <http://www.cta.nl>

*This book is also available in full on the CTA web site in PDF format (it can be downloaded by chapter or as one single file): <http://www.agrica.org/pubs/inforev/indexfr.html>*

### Stories of Equitable Development: Innovative Practices from Africa

*InterAction and the Gender Development Institute, 2001 (in English and French)*

This book is a collection of nine case stories describing unique and innovative strategies development organisations working in Africa have used to integrate gender equity into their programmes and organisational structures. The cases in this collection focus on the 'what' and 'how' of the strategies, discuss lessons learned, and give advice for those seeking to adapt these approaches in their organisation's own work.

110 pages,  
ISBN 0 9678813-2-3  
InterAction,  
Publications Department,  
1771, Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.,  
Suite 701, Washington, DC 20036, USA  
phone: + 1 202 667 8227;  
E-mail: [publications@interaction.org](mailto:publications@interaction.org)

## An Information Policy Handbook for Southern Africa, A Knowledge Base for Decision-Makers

*IDRC (International Development Research Center) and DBSA (Development Bank of South Africa), 2001 (in English)*

This publication on the processes of formulating and implementing information policies focuses on information and communication technologies. It analyses examples of information policy, highlighting the reasons for their success or failure. The book provides detailed information on South Africa since the 1990s and on the neighbouring countries (Mozambique and Namibia).

The publication is available online at <http://www.dbsa.org/publications/ictpolsa> or at <http://www.apc.org/books/ictpolsa/>

Further information can be obtained from: Gordon Coburne, DBSA  
E-mail: [gordonc@dbsa.org](mailto:gordonc@dbsa.org)

### Call for contributions for compiling the book "Food is a feminist issue"

"Agenda", the quarterly newsletter, is preparing a book entitled *Food is a feminist issue*. It invites contributors to send in articles on political and cultural studies, nutrition and health programmes and sociological and psychological research. All of these contributions must relate to new gender perspectives in the field of food. The articles must not exceed 6,000 words. The publication of the book is scheduled for February 2002.

Further information can be obtained from: Lou Hausom or Janine Moolman  
Lokile Molefe, Agenda, Room E 302,  
Diakonia Centre, 20 St Andrews Street,  
Durban, South Africa  
phone: + 27 31 304 7001;  
fax + 27 31 304 7018  
E-mail: [intern@agenda.org.za](mailto:intern@agenda.org.za);  
web site: <http://www.agenda.org.za>

<http://www.fao.org/sd/dimitra>



FOOD AND  
AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

## conferences

### 1 to 3 March 2002

International conference on **Emerging Issues and New Challenges: Human and Resource Development in Southeast Asia including Transitional Societies of Indochina (Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar)**, to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, organised by the WARI (Women's Action and Resource Initiative).

The proceedings will focus on civil society, women's economic activities, national gender mainstreaming machinery, and natural resources.

Further information can be obtained from: WARI  
(Women's Action and Resource Initiative)  
52/619 Muang Ake, Rangsit,  
Pathumthani, 12000, Thailand  
fax/phone: + 66 2 997 7279  
E-mail: [concourse02@yahoo.com](mailto:concourse02@yahoo.com);  
web site: <http://www.geocities.com/wari9>

### 21 to 26 July 2002

Conference of the **International Women's Congress**, to be held in Kampala, Uganda, on the theme of **Gendered Worlds: Gains and Challenges**.

This will be an opportunity to devote to further thought to the circumstances of women and to making progress on gender issues. The aim is to provide a forum for discussions amongst researchers from many different disciplines and professionals who work in organisations committed to promoting women and gender issues.

Further information can be obtained from the Department of Women and Gender Studies  
Makerere University  
PO Box 7062, Kampala,  
Uganda  
fax: + 256 41 54 35 39  
E-mail: [gendermu@africaonline.co.ug](mailto:gendermu@africaonline.co.ug);  
web site: <http://www.makerere.ac.ug/>  
womenstudies

### 23 to 26 July 2002

**Know-How Conference**, to be held in the context of the International Women's Congress announced above

This conference is being organised by the Isis-WICCE exchange network. It will bring together experts experienced in the gathering and dissemination of information for the benefit of women and on their general conditions. The aim is to establish and strengthen relations between the participating orga-

nisations with a view to creating new information programmes that are accessible to women in particular.

Further information can be obtained from: Isis-WICCE, Griet Onsea  
Plot 32 Bukoto Street, Kamwokya,  
PO Box 4934, Kampala, Uganda  
phone: + 256 41 543 953;  
fax: + 256 41 543 954  
E-mail: [griet@imul.com](mailto:griet@imul.com);  
web site: <http://www.isis.or.ug>

### 2 to 11 September 2002

**World Summit on Sustainable Development (or Rio + 10)**, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa

The results that have been obtained since the 1992 Rio Earth Summit will be evaluated.

Further information can be obtained from: UN Johannesburg Summit Secretariat,  
Major Groups Relationships  
2 United Nations Plaza, 22nd Floor,  
New York NY 10017, USA  
fax: + 1 917 367 2341/2  
web site: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org>

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