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CONFERENCE

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PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATING THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF ACTION (2002-2007)

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. FAO's Gender and Development Plan of Action (GAD PoA) was endorsed by the 31st Session of the Conference (C 2001/REP para 53) and progress was reviewed at the 32nd Session (C2003/6). The Conference requested that a second Progress Report be prepared for its 33rd Session in 2005. This Report reviews the progress made in the implementation of GAD PoA and responds to the specific recommendations and final observations put forward in the 2003 Progress Report.

II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF ACTION (GAD-POA)

2. The GAD PoA constitutes FAO's main policy instrument for follow-up to the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action on Women, the Beijing +10 review, and the gender aspects of the 1996 World Food Summit Plan of Action and the Political Declaration adopted at the World Food Summit: five years later in June 2002. In these policy documents, FAO Members committed to support the advancement and empowerment of rural women and to promote gender equality in agriculture and rural development. Furthermore, a majority of FAO Members are Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the only international legal instrument with specific provisions for rural women (Art. 14).

3. The Plan is consistent with the longer-term orientations and corporate strategies contained in FAO's *Strategic Framework 2000-2015* and is firmly rooted in the rolling Medium Term Plan (MTP). The rolling nature of the MTP ensures that gender related commitments are reviewed and updated every two years. The GAD PoA identifies a series of priorities for action and also aims at strengthening responsibilities and accountability for gender mainstreaming throughout the Organization.

4. The GAD PoA serves as an organization-wide framework for FAO to develop its skills, capacities, mechanisms and modalities to better assist its Members in developing and implementing national and regional policies, strategies and programmes for agricultural and rural development that are consistent with the aforementioned political and legal commitments, and with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). FAO activities focus on food security, and many FAO interventions are directly conducive to achieving Goal 1. It is believed that achieving food security, in turn, will have a direct impact on all the other MDGs. FAO promotes gender equality in access to and control of productive resources which contribute directly to the reduction of rural poverty and hunger. Undernourishment is strongly correlated to poverty, child and maternal mortality, and to the incidence of tuberculosis and malaria. FAO's interventions in the area of gender equality are expected to have an impact on reaching Goals 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6. FAO's Gender and Population Division (SDW), leads the Organization's efforts to mainstream gender into all FAO activities. Interventions aim to promote gender-sensitive monitoring of the MDGs by advancing knowledge about gender issues in agriculture, nutrition and rural development.

III. CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING

5. The SDW division is the FAO focal point for gender and agriculture/rural development concerns, as well as for HIV/AIDS concerns. It facilitates FAO's follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action on Women, the Cairo Programme of Action on Population and Development, and the UN Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, cooperating with the UN system on these matters. In terms of gender issues, the Division's mandate is to provide technical support for FAO member countries in promoting the mainstreaming of gender concerns into the activities of the Organization, and to catalyse and support gender mainstreaming within FAO itself. During the

past biennium, a number of instruments and mechanisms have been designed, created or used together with the Technical Divisions to facilitate this process.

6. The GAD PoA is the principal instrument for operationalizing the *Priority Area for Interdisciplinary Action (PAIA)* on Gender and Development, highlighted in the MTP. The GAD PoA has defined four medium-term objectives that promote gender equality in access to: (1) food; (2) productive resources, natural resources and agricultural technology and support services; (3) decision-making at all levels; and, (4) on- and off-farm employment opportunities. FAO's main activities for implementing these objectives are policy advice, capacity building and information dissemination. The Gender and Development PAIA benefited from of a small allocation of central catalytic funds that were used for capacity building and information dissemination. A *Gender PAIA Web site* is currently under development. It will replace the current Gender and Food Security Web site, identify and highlight new entry points for gender mainstreaming and disseminate information on gender mainstreaming activities.

7. *Focal Points for gender mainstreaming.* Each FAO technical unit has selected on a rotational basis among regular staff, a minimum of two Gender Focal Points (GFPs) who are responsible for assisting in strategic planning, programming and reporting of gender mainstreaming within the Organization. At the request of the GFPs, SDW organized short tailored training seminars to discuss gender issues within the specialized areas of each Technical Division, for example, the Animal Production and Health Division and the Forest Products and Economics Division. According to the responses of a questionnaire circulated amongst the GFPs by SDW (65 percent of the GFPs responded), 73 percent have participated in project design activities, 66 percent have given advice on gender issues and 60 percent have promoted information exchange on gender issues for the endorsement of this strategy.

Capacity building in-house

8. The Human Resources Management Division (AFH) and SDW developed a *Corporate Strategy for Building skills of FAO staff for Gender Mainstreaming*. Building the skills of FAO's own staff for mainstreaming gender is critical for the successful implementation of the GAD PoA and constitutes a major element in creating an enabling environment that is conducive to gender mainstreaming. Skills-building efforts range from basic awareness and sensitivity training among senior and mid-level management to more specialized gender analysis training for technical staff involved in field programmes, normative and policy work, using tailor-made materials for the different groups. A two-tier strategy was developed to integrate gender analysis into the curricula of courses on project cycle and designing tailor-made training sessions with technical divisions. Not all planned activities have been implemented due to budget constraints and limited managerial time to support this strategy.

9. *Socio-economic and gender analysis (SEAGA).* As SDW's main training programme for gender mainstreaming and capacity building, the SEAGA programme aims to incorporate socio-economic and gender considerations into policies and strategies, programmes and development projects, using a holistic approach in development and emergency contexts. SEAGA tools and methods support people-centred development and cover different technical areas like microfinance, irrigation, emergency and rehabilitation, livestock, agro-industry, project cycle and household resource management. In house, the SEAGA materials have been used in corporate training strategies.

10. *Project Cycle Overview Course (PCOC).* The main instrument for training FAO staff involved with projects in the corporate framework is the PCOC offered by AFH. During the present biennium, elements of the SEAGA Guide on the Project Cycle were incorporated into the course curriculum and special sessions on gender analysis and the project cycle were facilitated by SDW.

Gender sensitive indicators and statistics

11. In response to increasing demand for gender-sensitive information, FAO has worked with other UN agencies to improve the situation regarding gender and information. This includes the inclusion of gender-specific data on the economically active (agricultural/non-agricultural) population in the *FAOSTAT* data base. In this context, SDW has collaborated with the Statistics Division (ESS), to develop and make available gender-sensitive data and indicators. Technical backstopping of agricultural statistics projects in the framework of the current round of the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA 2010) has also been provided.

12. SDW's focus on gender and natural resource management has included efforts to develop socio-economic and *gender-sensitive indicators (GSI)* in this area. Based largely on qualitative field-tested data, GSI that combine socio-economic with bio-physical information were generated during this biennium and were field tested for agro-biodiversity conservation and for land use and management. SDW is working on indicators to monitor non-health impacts of HIV/AIDS on rural livelihoods. SDW has also contributed to the *ASIA COVER* initiative on the development of a regional map, digital database and socio-economic gender-sensitive statistics related to food insecurity and poverty in seven South Asian countries.

13. SDW has developed SEAGA-based training materials in the production and use of *gender-disaggregated data and indicators (GDD)* for agricultural statisticians and policy analysts, as well as programme planners for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Member Countries. During the biennium the methodology and tools were used at workshops in the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Georgia, India, Kyrgyzstan and Zambia.

IV. MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN REGULAR PLANNING AND EVALUATION

14. The 2004-05 *Programme of Work and Budget (PWB)* highlighted all Biennial Outputs (BOs) related to the implementation of the GAD PoA through a special symbol, and gender-sensitive indicators were also identified. This exercise, based on the information entered in the Programme Planning, Implementation Reporting and Evaluation Support System (PIRES) by all technical units, provides a tool for defining, implementing and reporting achievements.

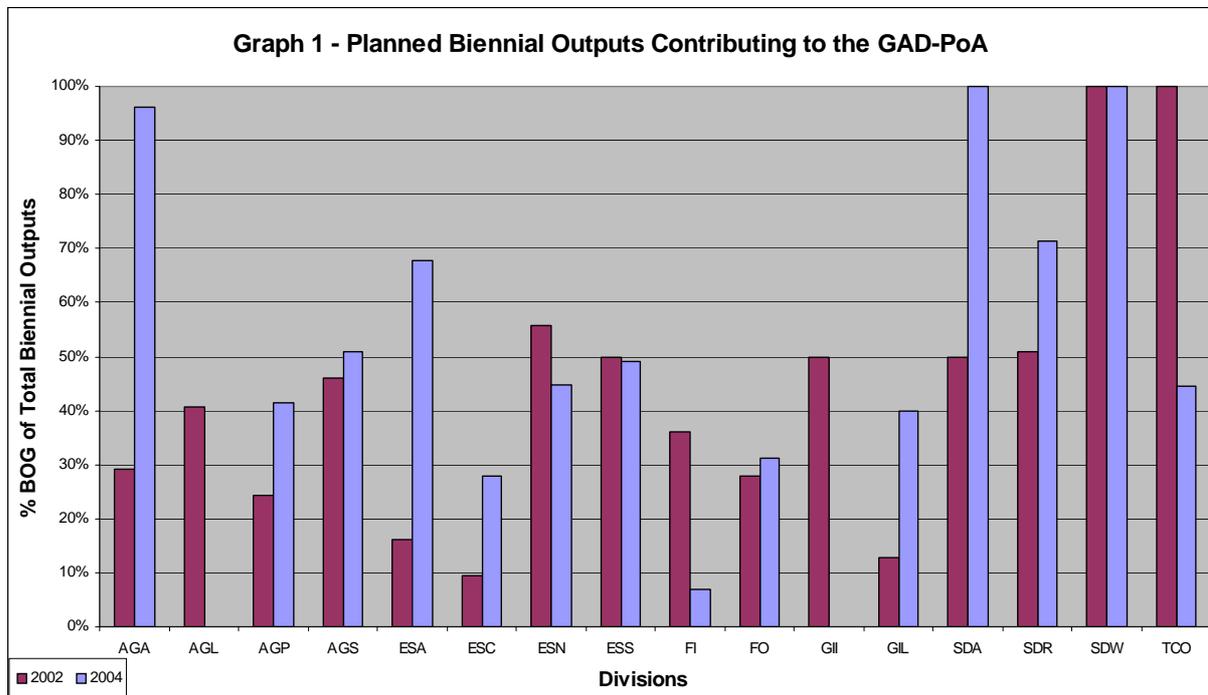
Table 1. Biennial Outputs 2002-2005

BOG (Biennial Outputs – Gender related)
 BONG (Biennial Outputs – Non-Gender related)
 BOT – (Biennial Outputs – Total)
 2002 – 2002-2003
 2004 – 2004-2005

Department	BOG2002	BOG2004	BONG2002	BONG2004	BOT2002	BOT2004
AG	120	153	227	130	347	283
ES	108	98	203	125	311	223
FI	98	14	173	186	271	200
FO	56	44	145	97	201	141
GI	13	16	83	26	96	42
SD	100	68	50	12	150	80
TC	9	8	0	10	9	18
Total	504	401	881	586	1385	987

Note: Data from selected Divisions - AGA, AGL, AGP, ESA, ESC, ESN, ESS, FI (entire department), FO (entire department), GII, GIL, SDA, SDR, SDW and TCO.

15. Data retrieved from the PWB database reveals a decrease of 40% in total biennial outputs and of 21% in the absolute number of gender related biennial outputs (BOG) (refer to Table 1). However, the percentage of outputs identified as gender related with respect to the total has shown a slight positive increase of 4% (from 36% to 40%).



Note: Data from selected Divisions - AGA, AGL, AGP, ESA, ESC, ESN, ESS, FI (entire department), FO (entire department), GII, GIL, SDA, SDR, SDW and TCO.

16. The graph above illustrates the proportion of planned biennial outputs contributing to GAD PoA at Divisional level. Data reveals that more than 50 % of the planned BOs of the Animal Production and Health Division (AGA), the Agricultural Support Systems Division (AGS), the Agricultural and Development Economics Division (ESA), the Rural Development Division (SDA), the Research, Extension and Training Division (SDR) and SDW contribute to the GAD PoA. AGA has not only experienced a 67 percent increase in gender-related BOs planned, but these outputs now represent 96 percent of the division's total planned outputs. AGA has also been a very active participant in other FAO gender mainstreaming initiatives, for example the GFP network and tailored training and workshops (see Box 1).

17. Conversely, some Divisions, such as the Land and Water

Box 1.

Animal Health and Production Division (AGA) – Implementing the Gender Plan of Action

Initiatives

- AGA Seminar on SEAGA gender and livestock guide, presentation and feedback (2002), Field-testing workshop of the SEAGA livestock guide in Uganda (2003) – Publication of the SEAGA Livestock Guide: Planning with a gender and HIV/AIDS lens (2005)
- AGA/SDW held a seminar that selected and identified appropriate indicators to measure gender mainstreaming in AGA (2005)
- AGA Gender Web site highlights key gender issues in the technical area
<http://www.fao.org/ag/AGA/Gender/gender.htm>

Challenges

- Mainstreaming, in concrete ways, gender consensus in assessment, implementation and evaluation
- Understanding the concept of gender with practical examples
- Moving beyond “academic exercise” and “business as usual” attitudes

Gaps

- Effective, user friendly tools to implement the above
- Strong understanding and commitment of staff

Development Division (AGL), the Fisheries Department (FI), the Information Division (GII) and the Field Operations Division (TCO) have seen a decrease in their contributions to the GAD PoA. These decreases are partly due to a decrease in the total number of Major Outputs and partly due to the completion of gender-related studies, projects and papers. However, these decreases are also partly related to a reporting problem because there continues to be a tendency to consider “gender-sensitive” work as initiatives or projects that focus explicitly on women, rather than those that reflect an understanding of the realities of both men’s and women’s (from various economic, social, cultural, et. groups/backgrounds) lives and address their specificities.

18. The *FAO auto-evaluation process*, conducted by Technical Divisions and supervised by the FAO Evaluation Service (PBEE), became effective in 2004 and guidelines included gender as an important issue to be considered. The relevance of gender as an element of analysis was systematically raised during briefings with officers and consultants involved in these exercises. During 2004, 19 auto-evaluations were carried out, drawing on activities in 28 Programme Entities (PE). Just ten of the separate PEs had identified gender-related biennial outputs in the PWB. However, within the 19 auto-evaluations, only three mentioned gender as a dimension in their analysis and of these three, only two had planned for gender related outputs.

19. *Project evaluations.* During the period 2002-2004, a total number of 54 ongoing FAO field projects were evaluated and 31 were found to contain specific reference to activities carried out to promote the empowerment of women and/or related to gender issues, but only one focused specifically on the thematic area “Women in Agriculture and Rural Development.” Average scoring of potential impact on women for the 31 projects was 2.9 on a scale of 1 to 5, 21 of which are equal to or above 3 (see Table 2). However, only six project evaluations stated that women’s social status had improved through project interventions. PBEE highlighted that further efforts are required to incorporate gender issues in TCP projects and Member countries who submit project requests also need to be reminded that gender equality and equity is vital for meeting the targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

Value scale 1 - 5	Number of projects
1-2 (low)	9
3 (average)	16
4-5 (High)	7
Total	31

20. *Programme and Project Review Committee (PPRC).* One of the six criteria by which project documents are appraised by the PPRC is the promotion of gender equality and equity. According to PPRC databases, during 2004 a total of 277 projects were submitted to the PPRC out of which 160 received comments (excluding minor annotations). From these 160 projects, 43 received remarks on the gender criterion. Frequently projects have been critiqued on the absence of adequate attention to the gender criterion not only by SDW reviewers, but also by other units, particularly in the Sustainable Development, Economic and Social, and Fisheries Departments. To guide the appraisal process, SDW submitted guidelines (now under consideration by PPRC) for the application of Criterion number 5 - Gender Equality and Equity.

21. *Programme and thematic evaluations.* PBEE routinely conducts general evaluations of technical programmes, inter-disciplinary areas and thematic topics. Between 2002 and 2004, six evaluations were presented to the Programme Committee. According to one of these evaluations, “FAO’s work in the area of animal health paid considerable attention to small livestock, which are of particular interest for women in developing countries. Projects on the delivery of animal health services have included specific components for addressing women’s needs and priorities.” In the case of crop production, where the participation of women is significant, very often the projects included a gender dimension. In spite of these achievements, “The evidence from a wide range of evaluations of FAO normative and field programmes is that gender issues are not mainstreamed in the organization’s activities and that very often, women are still “added on” as isolated components into field projects.” (PBEE)

V. IMPLEMENTING THE GAD PoA IN THE BIENNIUM 2004-2005

22. In implementing the GAD PoA, FAO focuses its work on capacity building, policy issues and technical advice in the four priority areas of intervention outlined in the GAD PoA. Capacity building is essential for mainstreaming gender in FAO field and normative work, and promoting socio-economic and gender analysis in Member Countries. The SEAGA Programme is used in workshops and training of trainers at regional and national levels and through short sensitization sessions for decision- and policy-makers at management and middle-levels to raise awareness on gender issues. A network of over 3800 development specialists familiar with the SEAGA approach from over 100 institutions in more than 80 countries was established to facilitate the much-needed exchange of information and views in gender mainstreaming. During the current biennium, more than 20 workshops were carried out under the SEAGA programme, and five, technically specific guidelines were produced and tested. Capacity building to integrate socio-economic and gender issues into agricultural and rural development strategies were held in the following countries – Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Kyrgyz Republic, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Paraguay, Slovenia, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia. Key outcomes of SEAGA training were a closer cooperation between development agents and local people, and enhanced capacities of men and women to direct their own development. The following sections present a selection of other achievements made in the implementation of gender mainstreaming during the 2004-2005 biennium.

Access to food and nutrition

23. In this area, FAO seeks to improve women's access to adequate nutrition and provide them with knowledge and resources. For example: Gender differentiated roles within households do not always allow for equal access to food and nutrition. Home gardens have an established tradition and offer great potential for improving household food security and alleviating micronutrient deficiencies. The Food and Nutrition Division (ESN) and the Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP), actively collaborate with national agricultural extension, research, training institutes, and with NGOs to train field staff, farmers' and women's groups, and school teachers in gardening techniques and practical nutrition.

Access to natural resources

24. In recognising that women play a leading role in using and managing fields and forests, crops, water, fish and livestock, FAO seeks to promote gender equality in the access to, control over, conservation of and management of natural resources and agro-biodiversity. For example: The FAO Forestry Department is working with the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (ACT), to validate six of the fifteen indicators for the sustainability of Amazon Forests at the management unit level. This is achieved through technical assistance, training and development of a standardized forest management instrument. The implementation of criteria and indicators should facilitate efforts to assess if indeed women, young people and forest communities play a greater role in decision-making concerning Amazon forest management.

Access to Agricultural Technology and Support Services

25. In this area, FAO seeks to promote equality in the access to the broad range of agricultural support systems, including markets, credits, technology, and gender sensitivity in extension and training. For example: In Sudan, FAO and partner NGOs have trained trainers and female-headed [Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)] households in the construction and use of fuel-efficient stoves (over 30,000 women have been trained thus far). The stoves reduce fuel consumption by 40 percent and are made with inexpensive local materials, thereby decreasing pressure on already deteriorating natural resources, promoting environmental awareness and empowering and protecting women with labour-saving technology. FAO is also actively investigating other, more sustainable fuel sources to substitute for wood and charcoal to achieve greater impact and benefit

to a larger number of IDP women, and FAO is also promoting labour- and time-saving technologies and practices for households affected by HIV/AIDS.

Gender sensitive agricultural and rural development policy and planning

26. Ensuring a gender sensitive policy environment is crucial for promoting gender sensitive activities. A gender perspective often helps to redress not only social injustices, but also economic inequities. For example: The channels through which India's rural poor are most likely to become landowners (and thus be in a better position to control and manage land) are: a) laws relating to inheritance; b) government land distribution programmes; and c) the land market. All three sources are skewed – in structure, operation, or both – against the equal participation of women. Research, conducted by the Rural Development Institute (RDI) and FAO's Sustainable Livelihoods Support Programme (LSP), studies the range of issues and opportunities, such as possibilities for liberalising restrictive legislation and expanding the vision of appropriate land grants to include small plots; it highlights concrete opportunities for positively impacting the livelihoods of the rural poor. FAO has also assisted several countries in developing national strategies to mainstream gender in rural and agricultural development and is integrating gender issues in its work on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

VI. MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN THE FIELD PROGRAMMES

27. *The Investment Centre (TCI)* developed a Divisional Plan of Action to monitor progress achieved in mainstreaming gender in agricultural investment project design. This ensures that gender analysis is applied in 100 percent of the development and investment projects prepared on behalf of IFAD and in 33 percent of other financing institutions. Key achievements include:

- creation and regular update of a database and monitoring system for applying gender analysis;
- gender sensitization of TCI mission leaders;
- publication of primary data on gender relations from at least two TCI socio-economic and production systems studies each year; and,
- guidelines on socio-economic and production systems studies revised to incorporate recent developments, including the gender aspects of Participatory Rural Appraisal.

28. *Emergency programmes.* FAO's main role in emergencies is providing assistance towards re-establishing local food production and diminishing dependency on food aid, and building the basis for a transition to sustainable development. SDW has been working with Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) and World Food Programme (WFP) on ways for ensuring that emergency and rehabilitation initiatives take into account the differentiated needs and priorities of women and men. A fact sheet on gender and emergency and a pocket-sized manual for mainstreaming a gender dimension in emergency programmes were prepared at the end of 2004, and in April 2005 the joint SEAGA FAO/WFP Guidelines for emergency and rehabilitation programmes were made available.

29. After the tsunami of December 2004, SDW participated in the Organization's integrated response to the disaster for protecting and promoting the livelihoods of most vulnerable men, women and marginalized groups in affected areas. This included the collection of gender-disaggregated information supporting mid-term interventions, gender capacity building for emergency specialists, and the integration of a gender perspective in agricultural and fisheries projects. Specific gender-sensitive projects on the rehabilitation of small-scale enterprises and microfinance institutions in fishing communities and on assistance to community-driven land adjudication for protecting and promoting livelihoods of disaster-affected communities, were designed and are currently under approval for Indonesia.

30. The *FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP)* addresses pressing development problems in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors and rural development. Among other issues, the programme focuses on increasing food production and raising the income and nutritional

standards of small farmers and rural workers. Over the past year, seven new TCPs were approved in Cambodia, Cape Verde, Cook Islands, Dominican Republic, Morocco, Slovenia and Zambia - specifically considering gender equality and development and providing policy advice.

31. During the biennium special efforts have been made to develop gender considerations in the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) and the Telefood Campaign. The integration of socio-economic and gender issues into these programmes has been completed in countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, South Africa, Swaziland and Uganda. Training on gender analysis in water management was organised for 21 countries in Africa and Asia. The DIMITRA project 'Rural Women and Development: Networking and Partnerships' skills strengthening in information management; and the LinKS project - Gender, biodiversity and local knowledge systems for Food Security have been instrumental in facilitating this process.

VII. SPECIAL FOCUS ON GENDER, HIV/AIDS AND FOOD SECURITY

32. Gender inequality is one of the driving forces behind the spread of the HIV virus. FAO monitors the impact of HIV/AIDS on food security, and supports the initiatives of member countries in preventing a worsening of the pandemic and mitigating its gender-related negative effects on food security and nutrition. All technical departments, as well as some regional and sub-regional offices, are developing relevant activities. Fourteen technical units have been collaborating, through an informal inter-disciplinary working group, on integrated approaches to HIV/AIDS in agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, emergencies, fisheries, labour-saving technologies, land and property rights, livestock, nutrition and youth livelihoods and skills building.

33. Policy development, advocacy, training and capacity-building have been carried out in close collaboration with IFAD, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Childrens Fund. Within this framework, a wide range of activities have been implemented, documents and training materials produced and strategic areas of intervention identified. In addition, a new programme entity entitled "Analysis and mitigation of the impact of HIV/AIDS on food security and rural development" was incorporated into FAO's Medium Term Plan 2004–2009.

34. FAO has designed a gender-sensitive strategy for addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS and other diseases of poverty on nutrition, food security and rural livelihoods. The strategy is composed of six priority areas of intervention: strengthening national capacity, strengthening the capacity of local governance structures, improving access and adoption of labour and time saving technology, empowering vulnerable communities, strengthening policy dialogue and advocacy, and providing nutritional support. FAO has also responded to Member country requests by assisting in the development of gender-sensitive agriculture sector plans and strategies to address the HIV/AIDS crisis.

35. A new PAIA on the implications of HIV/AIDS and Other Diseases on Food and Agriculture will become active in the 2006-2007 biennium to coordinate normative outputs, technical assistance and policy guidance given to countries regarding the ways in which the agriculture sector (including fisheries and forestry) can contribute to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic and other diseases. The PAIA will consolidate and strengthen cross-departmental activities hitherto coordinated through the informal working group on HIV/AIDS and will complement corporate work on gender and food security.

VIII. PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTREACH

36. In its Strategic Framework 2000-2015, the Organization emphasizes partnerships through its cross-organizational strategy "Broadening Partnerships and Alliances". Examples of partnerships that focus on gender sensitive issues are the following:

37. The Partnership Programme between *FAO and the Belgium Survival Fund* addresses ongoing projects in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Zambia that mainstream gender throughout the entire project cycle. Specific interventions focus on the reinforcement of food security and the economic rights of women, mainly by promoting their access to and management of economic resources.

38. The *FAO-Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP)* focuses its work through 2007 on three key areas: food security, agricultural biodiversity and forestry. It supports FAO's work to build capacity in poor countries for development planning and policy-making and includes gender considerations as an essential component of the activities planned and implemented.

39. Since 2004, FAO works with the *World Food Programme (WFP)* and other UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and local institutions, to operate Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools for children and young people in response to the growing numbers of AIDS orphans. The schools aim to develop agricultural knowledge, business skills, and life skills with orphans and vulnerable children aged 12 to 18, helping prevent HIV/AIDS by promoting gender-equal attitudes from an early age.

40. FAO acts as Secretariat for the *Mountain Partnership*, launched at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002. A Gender Initiative was created to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed in mountain development policy and action. In 2004, leading members of the Gender Initiative met for the first time at a workshop in Rome to identify key issues and actions.

41. FAO and the *United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)* have joined in partnership with Member countries, international agencies and civil society in the *Education for Rural People (ERP)* initiative, launched at the WSSD in 2002. Illiteracy is a strong correlate of poverty and hunger, and is mainly a rural phenomenon which hinders rural development and food security, threatens productivity and health and limits opportunities to improve livelihoods and gender equality since illiteracy is particularly high among rural girls and women. The ERP initiative contributes to FAO's effort to achieve all MDGs.

42. FAO is an active member of the *UN Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE)* and participates in the following task forces: Gender and Water, Gender and ICTs, Women Watch, Gender and Trade, and Gender and the MDGs. FAO is also active in *The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS* and the *Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance*.

43. To mark relevant International Days, FAO regularly organizes various seminars for staff on gender aspects of technical topics. Themes presented in the current biennium include: Promoting Gender and HIV/AIDS Sensitivity through Microfinance; "Biodiversity for food security"; Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools; Women and HIV/AIDS; and People and Rice.

IX. FINAL OBSERVATIONS

44. As recognised in the UN Secretary General's Report on follow-up to and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, FAO has done relatively well in its efforts to mainstream gender. As also found in other UN Agencies, FAO is not devoid of problems in the implementation of gender mainstreaming. In spite of progress in the development of gender-sensitive indicators, mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating implementation and capacity building, important challenges remain.

45. First, *Senior Management* needs to underscore its commitment to the gender mainstreaming process by ensuring that Technical Divisions are accountable and aware of their responsibilities in the implementation of the GAD PoA.

46. Second, to ensure that the Technical Divisions are *accountable* in the gender mainstreaming process, tools should continue to be refined to help the Technical Divisions to monitor and evaluate their contribution to the implementation of the GAD PoA.
47. Third, to strengthen accountability, the *Gender Focal Point responsibility* should be systematically assigned to senior level management. The GFP tasks should be considered as part of their regular programme of work, included in their job descriptions and consequentially in staff evaluations.
48. Fourth, the Technical Divisions must take the responsibility to ensure that the *capacity* of their staff is appropriately built so as to contribute to the implementation of the GAD PoA and should commit financial resources to do so. SDW should continue to engage in normative work to ensure that gender mainstreaming concepts are internalized by the Technical Divisions.
49. Fifth, senior management should endorse the *Corporate Strategy for Building skills of FAO staff for Gender Mainstreaming* designed by AFH and SDW and the guidelines for Criterion number 5 – Gender Equality and Equity, still under review by the PPRC, should be approved.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

50. In conclusion, it is recommended that Conference endorse this second Progress Report on the Implementation of the FAO Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007), invite further assessment of progress in terms of gender mainstreaming during the biennium 2006-2007, and enjoin the Secretariat to continuously refine its organizational arrangements and procedures to foster gender mainstreaming in both the Regular and Field Programmes.