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NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SURVEY 2009: PRESENT STATUS, OPTIONS AND FUTURE FAO ACTIVITIES AND COOPERATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN GENDER IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ECA WPW

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report is a Needs Assessment with Recommendations for Activities for the FAO ECA Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development (WPW). The findings are based on a survey conducted in spring 2009 among Ministries of Agriculture, Rural Foundations, Universities and Research Institutes, NGOs and independent expert consultants, who have taken part in WPW activities over the past four years. Although the WPW faces many constraints in terms of financing and staffing, it has nonetheless made some valuable contributions to gender-focused rural development in the European, Central Eastern European (CEE) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries since its inception in 1965. It now faces a challenge in terms of defining its future orientation and areas of work, in light of the constraints faced. Over a number of years the WPW, through its Sessions and Expert Meetings, has built up a level of expertise on gender issues in the focus regions, and it is crucial that the WPW find ways to capitalize on this expertise. The WPW has impressed upon Ministries of Agriculture and other policymakers in the regions the importance of recognizing and targeting gender inequalities in rural development, both on-farm and off-farm. Through its Expert Meetings especially, it has provided a forum for Ministries, NGOs, Research Institutes and Universities, and United Nations partners to network and exchange valuable experiences and practices in gender-focused rural development. In this sense it plays an important role as a dynamic knowledge network.

2. Given that there are other national, international and United Nations gender-related programmes and projects operating in the CEE and CIS region, it is important for WPW not to repeat the work of other organizations, but rather to complement and, where appropriate, collaborate with other organizations. The WPW must also consider finding ways to secure funding and to reach out to more groups representing rural women, especially in the CEE and CIS countries. The Working Party on Women has worked over the years and built for itself a niche and position where it is a recognized forum for the exchange and transfer of experience from Western European, Central Eastern European (CEE) and former Soviet Union (CIS) countries. The fora that offer such opportunity are rare in the CEE and CIS region and this achieved position should not be neglected or wasted.

1. INTRODUCTION

3. This document is divided into four sections. Section 1 provides an overview of FAO's European Commission on Agriculture Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development (WPW) activities between 2005 and 2008, with a focus on Expert Meetings. Section 1 also provides an overview of the participants attending these meetings, and of the technical areas covered since 2005, and recommendations for future areas of work and format of meetings. Section 2 is based on a recent survey (February-March 2009) carried out among participants attending WPW activities, in order to assess: (i) the level of satisfaction among participants, (ii) constraints preventing them from engaging further in WPW activities, and (iii) their recommendations for the WPW. This follows a similar survey conducted among WPW participants in 2004, the results of which are summarized in Section 1. Section 3 is an overview of the activities and programmes of international, national and NGOs' technical assistance multi- and bilateral programmes and projects in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Central Asia Region in gender and rural development, with which WPW may wish to consider linking more strongly. FAO's perceived "comparative advantage" is also discussed, and links are provided to FAO's Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW), Economic and Social Development Department Regular Programme activities and available global expertise. Tentative priority area and country groups for the Region are suggested.

4. Section 4 provides recommendations on approaches, options and areas and proposals for the future scope and format of ECA WPW activities in gender and rural development in the region. Further information is contained in the Annexes at the end of the report.

1.1 Overview of past FAO ECA WPW activities

5. The Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development ¹ has been a statutory body of FAO's European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) since its establishment in 1965. It is open to all Member Nations of the European Commission on Agriculture. The FAO Sub-regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe supports and provides Secretariat to the WPW since 2005, as gender aspects are an important element of FAO activities in the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia sub-regions.

6. The purpose of the WPW is to:

- encourage the exchange of information and experience with a view to promoting the role of women and the family in agriculture and rural development;
- promote and encourage the professional development of rural women;
- cooperate with institutions and agencies striving for the integration of women in rural development, and
- formulate policy recommendations on matters pertaining to education, research, extension, training and other related fields within their areas of technical competence.

7. The WPW can also be seen as a network for exchange of knowledge, experience and information among individuals, organizations (NGOs and CSOs) and with other networks. In this context, networking is seen as instrumental in the process of exchange and learning that will bring forward the status of rural women to the attention of decision-makers and achieve equality in work and living opportunities (*Report on the WPW 2004 Survey*, REU 2004). The WPW is a relatively small entity and activity but its value is in the network of people, specialists and institutions that it brings together to exchange experience on mainstreaming gender issues into agricultural and rural policies.

8. The WPW also has a unique role within the FAO European and Central Asia Region, giving an opportunity to make rural women's voices heard (*Report on the WPW 2004 Survey*, REU 2004). In 2004 a survey was conducted on the WPW activities in order to assess their impact on gender in agriculture and rural development related activities and actions in the FAO European Region. As the WPW is committed to continuous improvement it was felt that the evaluation of the WPW activities by participants would allow for new ideas and suggestions that should be fully considered as an integral part of the WPW's commitment to enhancement of its services. The survey assessed the following issues: General information/professional profile of respondents; Participation in the most important WPW activities; Outcomes/ impacts/outputs of the WPW's activities on different levels, and Recommendations and suggestions.

9. The key findings from the 2004 survey are summarized as follows:

- WPW, as an active network, has initiated many positive changes and had positive impacts in the Region. Its role is contributing to reducing gender inequalities in rural areas all over the Region and empowering women to be able to actively participate in decision-making regarding the central/main issues concerning European rural areas.

¹ The WPW was established by the European Commission on Agriculture at its Fourteenth Session (1965, Resolution ECA 8/65), under the name ECA Working Party on Home Economics. With the gradual recognition of the important role of farm and rural women in the socio-economic development of rural communities, the Twelfth FAO Regional Conference for Europe held in Athens in 1980 (see Report, paragraph 77) decided to change the Party's title to the "Working Party on Women and the Agricultural Family in Rural Development". The change to its present name was recommended at the 7th Session of the WPW (Athens, 1994) and approved at the 30th Session of the ECA (Nitra, 1997).

- In general, the survey results demonstrated overall satisfaction with the WPW activities and called for continuation of the WPW.
- The survey showed that the FAO ECA WPW enables the exchange of experience, knowledge and new connections among people who otherwise would never meet and this is highly valued among the Member States.
- Though male members represent a minority group among the WPW network members they have been very active in the WPW activities. It is suggested to continue involving men in the WPW activities as well as to promote their participation in the WPW board.
- The survey results also indicated that the most important and well-attended WPW activity are the Expert Meetings.
- Contacts established during the WPW activities are perceived as a good starting point for collaboration and joining various international programmes such as the EU Phare, Leader, Interreg and Special accession programme for agriculture and rural development (SAPARD).
- The respondents from Member States feel that abolishment of the WPW could have negative effects on rural development in the FAO European Region. They unanimously agreed that the WPW should continue to play the important role of providing a neutral meeting and communication place and continue contributing to the dissemination of knowledge, ideas and skills.
- In future, the WPW should focus on and address specific and common needs and problems of rural women and men in each sub-region of Central and Eastern Europe. In this context, the WPW is invited to continue to actively participate in developing strategies and work programmes and projects that will benefit rural women and men in the Region.

1.2 Key importance of gender in agriculture and the role of the WPW

10. In many countries, gender equality issues are typically considered as under the mandate and relevant to ministries other than agriculture (such as social affairs, or equality or women's affairs). However countries in the CEE and Central Asia are becoming aware of issues related to empowering minorities and excluded groups. Gender-related issues are gradually seen as key for future activities. Placing the issues of gender on the agenda in Ministries of Agriculture is a key role, which the WPW has undertaken, with the weight of FAO behind it (***WPW Background Document, Proposed Workplan and Strategy***, U. Murray, 2007). The WPW provides a forum for information and exchange of relevant ideas and themes related to gender and women in agriculture. The WPW has raised awareness of the role of women in rural areas, in poverty alleviation, farming and stressed the gender implication of current demographic trends with male outmigration to cities (***Background Document, Proposed Workplan and Strategy***, U. Murray, 2007).

11. While there are many organizations working on gender issues within the European Union, there are fewer organizations focused specifically on agriculture. With even fewer organizations focusing on gender issues in the Central Asia and CEE countries, the focus of WPW on gender and agriculture across non-EU states in Europe gives it particular significance. WPW has, in this sense, built a niche where it is the recognized forum to exchange and transfer experiences from Western Europe to Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union countries. Such fora are rare in the region (***Background Document, Proposed Workplan and Strategy***, U. Murray, 2007).

12. In spite of their obvious contributions, in the period of agricultural and rural transition from state-run to free-market economies and following the onset of globalization in the CEE and Central Asia sub-regions, women are more vulnerable, as relatively more women than men are poor, have low or no incomes and are unemployed, or employed below their level of education. Traditional gender roles continue to burden women as domestic work is still defined by many as women's work, so they are discriminated against in the labour market (***Breaking Ground***, p.128, FAO: 2005).

13. At the same time, agricultural and rural transformations provide women new opportunities to improve their livelihoods, their place in the farm family and as agricultural professionals in their rural communities, allowing them to contribute significantly to agricultural and rural innovation. To strengthen this trend, women's empowerment needs to be achieved through the removal of the specific obstacles that hamper the deployment of their full potential. To this end, agricultural and rural development policies and strategies need to be developed to broaden women's resource base, and legislation and institutions should provide the civil and political mechanisms to guarantee equal access to resources and opportunities for both women and men. (*Breaking Ground*, p.128-129, FAO: 2005). Rural development and agricultural policies, in order to have any real impact on poverty and development in rural areas, must be fully oriented towards and fully comprehend and encompass the very fact that rural life and work, both within and outside of the basic family unit, is gendered.

The participant women's organizations and NGOs, through the WPW, have a unique opportunity to discuss and share strategies and ideas with participant policymakers, especially during the course of WPW Expert Meetings, and in this way the WPW can influence policy-making.

14. Although recent decades have seen a significant improvement in the quality of life of the rural populations in the CEE and Central Asia sub-regions, women and men continue to face numerous difficulties and constraints to economic development, as well as challenges to improve infrastructure, access to inputs and to farm products markets and social services in rural areas. The CEE and Central Asia countries have much ground to cover so that gender is central to their economic and social policies. The process of economic transition from central planning to open market has not been gender neutral. Gender is a central organizing factor in societies and significantly affects the processes of production, distribution and consumption. How and who gains access to employment is important and more jobs does not necessarily mean better jobs for women. Migration and human trafficking of women and children is a serious problem in the region, with little reliable statistics available. Some of the gender issues in the region related to men, with boys lagging behind in education in some countries, men not adjusting to transition in others, and men dying consistently younger than women for a variety of reasons in rural areas (WPW 20th Expert Meeting Report, Nitra, 2007). The WPW can play a vital role in terms of its expertise and specialization in gender issues in rural areas.

1.3 How the WPW currently implements its purpose

15. The WPW has two principal activities: formal Sessions (every two years) and Expert Meetings (annual technical meetings).

16. WPW Board Members prepare and present WPW activities and plans during ECA sessions and meetings with the SEU secretariat.² The latter prepares a report on WPW activities for the FAO ECA that reviews technical aspects and issues of importance to European agriculture and rural development. The Commission monitors the activities of the WPW. The results of discussions and recommendations stemming from the ECA are submitted to the FAO Regional Conference for Europe for policy discussion and adoption.

17. Representatives from FAO Member States from the region are invited to a WPW Session every two years. There has been a decline in the number of Member States representatives attending these sessions in recent years. The WPW is open to all FAO ECA Member Nations. Elected representatives of seven member countries are elected to sit on the Board of the WPW, which meets annually to review past activities and to plan future work. The Board expedites activities and acts as an Advisory Committee between ECA sessions.

² Summaries and documents related to WPW meetings are available at:
http://www.fao.org/world/Regional/REU/meetings/meetings_WPW_documents_en.html

1.4 WPW Sessions

18. Twelve biennial sessions have thus far been held. The theme of the sessions is chosen by the WPW from the suggestions given by participants in various WPW activities, and relates to the priority needs of WPW members. The sessions focus on issues related to the socio-economic development in rural areas in Europe with particular emphasis on rural women. The sessions also provide a forum for making policy recommendations and decisions, evaluating existing activities and determining the future orientation of the WPW (**Report on the WPW 2004 Survey**, REU 2004). During WPW Sessions, WPW activities and future work are planned and the election of the WPW Board takes place. Following the recommendations of the Session, the Board of the WPW, in cooperation with the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, develops programmes of activities for a given biennium.

19. The 14th Session of the FAO ECA Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development will take place in June 2009 in Budapest at the invitation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Hungary and the theme of the Session is "Impacts of Migrations on the Livelihoods of Rural Households and Better Management of Agricultural Resources at Origin: Selected European Policy Experience: Gender Focus and Mainstreaming". Based on presentation and discussion of regional and country experience case studies at the 14th Session, the WPW will attempt to collect and develop recommendations for rural development policies and instruments to: (i) mainstream gender focus and considerations into rural programmes, in particular those aiming to prevent/reduce depopulation and abandonment of agricultural activities; (ii) develop guidelines and approaches to supporting rural women, both those remaining in areas of origin and facing labour shortages and those that migrate and send remittances for potential investment, and (iii) disseminate experience of programmes and projects that have made rural areas competitive and attractive in terms of jobs, income generation and standard of living, thus mitigating outmigrations (**14th Session Concept Note**, REU 2009).

1.5 Expert Meetings

20. According to a 2004 Survey on WPW activities, the Expert Meetings are regarded as one of the most important and influential activities of the WPW. They are organized annually, jointly and at the invitation of a Member State. The meetings focus on training techniques, methodologies and the exchange and acquisition of information and skills necessary in the rural development process.

21. Each year a different subject is chosen for the Expert Meeting, corresponding to the interests of country groups. Expert Meetings also include a study tour in the country organizing the event, allowing the participants to acquaint themselves with the problems and potentials of the region and the experience of ongoing projects to support rural development. The Expert Meetings are unique fora for exchange of experience and mutual dialogue among the participants, who come from Government Ministries, NGOs and rural women's organizations, United Nations agencies, universities and institutes, as well as expert consultants.

1.6 Summary of technical issues and areas covered

22. This section will provide an overview of the technical issues and areas covered at the last four Expert Meetings.

23. The **18th Expert Meeting**, 5 to 9 September 2005 in Krakow, Poland, on **Sustainable Rural Tourism: Gender and Community Perspective** was attended by 46 participants, from 14 different countries. The EM afforded an opportunity to exchange practical experience between gender and rural development specialists, representing government agencies, farmers and entrepreneurs' organizations as well as NGOs from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries, presenting extensive Western European experience in rural and agro tourism as a background to inform and disseminate. Experiences and case studies from Austria, Finland, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland on the organization, legal

regulations, taxation and standards for farm tourism were presented and allowed for an in-depth exchange of practical experience by participants.

24. Specific issues and areas discussed during the 18th Expert Meeting and recommended for further activities and research included:

1. The need for further and targeted capacity-building and training in professional management of rural and agro tourism enterprises, including economic analyses and return on investment;
2. Innovative approaches to utilizing idle resources, from labour to buildings and land, e.g. energy crops, rare herbs, etc.;
3. Involving local communities and NGOs in the expansion of tourist activities;
4. Combining tourism with environmental considerations, ecological farming and products supply;
5. Specific programmes and projects focused on gender issues in rural areas, including balancing men versus women workloads, primarily as a specific component of extension and advisory services, and
6. Developing specific targeted market research and techniques and promotion for rural tourism.

25. The WPW was requested to develop an exchange programme for gender issues and training in gender-related approaches and skills, including training programmes for gender integration to rural development, based on the available Socioeconomic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) methodology (see Section 3.2).

26. **The 19th Expert Meeting**, 25 and 26 September 2006, Pécs, Hungary, on **Rural Development through diversification of jobs and incomes, with a specific Focus on gender-responsive micro-finance** was attended by some 37 participants from 15 countries (8 EU and 7 non-EU). The main theme of the Expert Meeting focused on policy approaches and micro-finance projects to improve the economic and employment situation of rural women and to respond to the needs of women entrepreneurs. Experiences were shared from Western, Central-Eastern, South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States in rural development through the diversification of jobs and incomes. The EM was particularly relevant in the CEE and CIS context, where rural policies must be developed to bring women who lost jobs back into the labour market. This will require extensive and expensive vocational training skills, taking into account the women's obsolete professions, often low formal education and practical training skills in demand in a market economy, the target group being women over 50 years old.

27. Specific issues and areas discussed during the 19th EM and recommended for further activities and research included:

1. The need for targeted capacity-building and training in micro-finance, including economic analyses and return on investment to aid rural female entrepreneurs;
2. Dissemination of experience of micro-finance supported innovative approaches to utilize idle resources, from labour to buildings and land available in rural areas that could generate jobs for women in the post-transition period, and
3. Developing specific targeted micro-finance projects and techniques, including training focused on assisting female entrepreneurs and involving local communities and NGOs, as a specific component of extension and advisory services. The training should focus on the female entrepreneurs' education and be adjusted to their perception capacity and actual - often low - market and business experience (**WPW 19th Expert Meeting Report**, REU, 2006).

28. The **20th Expert Meeting** was held from 28 November to 1 December 2007 in Nitra, Slovakia, and focused on **Rural Development Policies and Programmes to Generate Jobs and Income, with a specific Gender Focus: From Product and Services Development to Marketing (Lessons learned during European Integration and Market Transition)**.

29. 18 participants attended, and presentations were made by representatives from Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. Experience and lessons learned provided an account of the successful outcomes of implemented projects but also underlined the various types and intensity of difficulties rural people and particularly women still struggle with.

30. Recommendations from the 20th Expert Meeting included that:

1. The future Expert Meeting undertake research on migrations, which is a concern for many countries in the region;
2. There be more collaboration amongst agencies working in rural areas, thus the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Bank, United Nations agencies and others involved in rural development in Europe (such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development which does not deal directly with gender) should be invited to participate in future FAO WPW meetings. Programmes and projects starting in the region should initiate workshops where all stakeholders examine what each other is planning or attempting to undertake. In general data could be better shared across agencies. Likewise, linkages and collaboration between the various ministries (agriculture, health, finance, employment) should also be encouraged;
3. Policies and instruments for development of product and services appropriate for female entrepreneurs should be developed;
4. The need to enhance bottom-up initiatives during project identification, formulation and implementation and support to initiatives that are connected to local values (territory) was underlined.

31. The **21st Expert Meeting** took place from 23 to 25 October 2008 in Tirana, Albania. The title of the Expert Meeting was **Out of the Shadows: Making Female Labour in Agriculture Visible. Women's labour input in agriculture and role in subsistence farms in South-East Europe and Central Asia: Realities and tools for economic and legal recognition.**

32. 42 participants attended, representing 13 countries, namely; Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Expert Meeting focused on: (i) the economic and legal status of women working in agriculture and rural areas, and (ii) the registration, assessment and valuation of their work. The Expert Meeting task was to identify the main legal, institutional, cultural, social and economic factors that affect the status of and exercise of women's rights related to farming and work in rural households, in order to achieve more equal treatment of men and women in agriculture, in their self-employed capacity and for assisting spouses of the self-employed, including - where appropriate - reference to European Union legislation. Exchange of country experience enabled the identification of the main legal, institutional, cultural, social and economic factors that affect the status of and actual exercise of women's rights related to work in rural households and the main impeding elements for the legal and economic recognition of women's status as workers as well as efficient institutional solutions and good practice to improve the status of women working in agriculture and rural areas, including household work.

33. Recommendations emerging from the 21st Expert Meeting included:

1. To carry out a survey on the situation of rural women, in order to understand and address the problems;
2. To include gender in rural development strategies;
3. To review current policies and legislation and find ways to better calculate the unpaid work in rural areas;
4. To strengthen women's economic autonomy and entrepreneurship;
5. To develop credit programmes and professional training;
6. To address the gender-aspects of migration, climate change and associated environmental problems and opportunities (bioenergy, sun and wind energy, and micro energy production);
7. To address the issue of organic agriculture versus industrial agriculture;

8. To look into the promotion of decent work and the participation of women in social dialogue, and
 9. To implement programmes to guarantee access of women to land.
34. The WPW Expert Meetings from 2005-2008 have covered a wide range of pertinent issues for gender and rural development and although there is a very strong focus on farming women, the EMs have also moved more broadly into the question of rural development. This is a positive trend in that it encompasses and comprehends more broadly the gender issues not only on the farm, but also off-farm. It is recommended that this trend continue. It is also recommended that the WPW should attract and facilitate more Member States in the region, particularly those who joined FAO in the past ten to fifteen years. This would mean a substantial increase in representatives from CIS and CEE countries.
35. The next sub-section expands upon the recommendations for future areas of work for the WPW (in particular for Expert Meetings), as developed by EM participants over the past four years.

Expert Meetings Participants Profile, 2005- 2008

Expert Meeting participants include staff and project leaders from Ministries of Agriculture, Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, regional and local governmental and non-governmental agencies and institutions, farmers' and womens' associations, research and extension institutes and services and international organizations. The WPW has had a significant participation at the Expert Meetings of NGOs, rural women's groups and academics over the past four years, and if some funds were freed-up to cover costs of participants, this list would expand. Of note also is the participation of other United Nations agencies in the region, with a focus on gender issues. These include the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (2008), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2005, 2008), and IFAD (2006, 2007). The International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) has also participated (2008).

1.7 Recommendations for future areas of work

36. Thematic areas of focus for future WPW Expert Meetings:

➤ **Climate Change and Environment**

According to the Committee on the Status of Women 2001, in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS, although women's educational level is generally high, their knowledge of health issues is good and they form the majority in medical and health-related professions, for example, they continue to be unaware of environmental issues (**Breaking Ground**, p. 142, FAO: 2005). There is a lack of understanding also on the part of many policymakers of the gender dimensions of climate change, which has been neglected by international climate change policy-makers until recently (ibid). Women are still absent from the climate change and natural resource-related decision-making processes at all levels. A focus on technical solutions has largely ignored social and political factors. The successful implementation of climate change policies and projects requires an understanding of the gender-based roles and relationships vis-à-vis natural resources, as well as the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change and the different risks and vulnerabilities of women and men. This includes the structural constraints that curtail women's access, control and ownership over assets.

This should be a key target area of the WPW, with FAO's support, over the coming years. An Expert Meeting on the Gender and Rural Dimensions of Climate Change, with exchange of

experiences and perspectives of rural women, NGOs, Government Ministries, International Organizations and institutions from the WPW Member States, could add a crucial gender dimension to the climate change debate, which would be particularly useful for agricultural and rural policy design in the CEE and Central Asia sub-regions.

Improving natural resource management practices and protecting the environment require reducing poverty and achieving livelihood and food security among rural women and men. The following are some of the key gender issues in natural resource management interventions, for example, that the Expert Meeting could explore: Rural women and men have different roles, responsibilities and knowledge in managing natural resources; Gender differences exist in rights and access to natural resources, including land, trees, water and animals; and Access to new technology, information, and training related to natural resource management remains highly gendered, with most of the related initiatives targeting men (see **Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook**, Module 10, FAO, IFAD, World Bank: 2008).

➤ **Elderly Rural Women in the Region**

One result of limited options for developing a secure rural livelihood is that the most skilled and entrepreneurial residents leave the countryside. Therefore, unemployment is triggering the out migration of young rural adults, which results in the well-documented ageing of rural and farming populations in many CEE and CIS areas (see *Breaking Ground*, FAO: 2005). The ageing population comprises more women than men, reflecting an overall development in European, CEE and Central Asia regions. This is because women have a higher life expectancy and, in CEE and CIS, women of this generation migrate less out of rural areas. In the Romanian countryside, for example, in the year 2000, women over 60 comprised one-quarter of the rural population (*UNDP*, 2000a, cited in *Breaking Ground*, FAO: 2005). Another factor contributing to the ageing of the rural population in the region is the decreasing birth rate. Finally, food security has become an issue for the elderly, as they may not be receiving the help they need to cover basic needs. This is often as a result of the break up of traditional family patterns and safety nets, as well as poor social services in rural areas, which aggravates insecurity, including food insecurity, for the elderly rural population (*Breaking Ground*, p. 151, FAO: 2005).

It was noted during the 19th Expert Meeting (Hungary 2006) that bringing women that lost jobs in former cooperative farms and state enterprises back into the labour market is key for rural development in stagnating areas, if only to prevent their further degradation and loss of infrastructure. This will require extensive and expensive vocational training skills, taking into account the women's obsolete professions, often low formal education and practical training skills in demand in a market economy, the target group being women over 50 years old. The WPW should consider holding an Expert Meeting on this issue, and explore options for supporting and building capacity among rural women in the region. This Expert Meeting could be carried out in conjunction with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and partners (Employment Federations and Trade Unions, for example), and could be carried out under the present FAO/ILO collaboration in the Agriculture and Decent Work Initiative (see Section 3).

➤ **Decent Work in Rural Areas, a gendered-perspective**

Decent work is captured in four strategic objectives: fundamental principles and rights at work and international labour standards; employment and income opportunities; social protection and social security; and social dialogue and tripartism. These objectives hold for all workers, women and men, in both formal and informal economies; in wage employment or working on their own account; in the fields, factories and offices; in their home or in the community. The ILO provides support through integrated decent work country programmes developed in coordination with ILO constituents. They define the priorities and targets within national development frameworks and aim to tackle major decent work deficits through efficient programmes that embrace each of the strategic objectives.

An Expert Meeting examining decent work options in the CIS and CEE rural areas from a gendered perspective could use the already established working relationship between ILO and FAO (the Expert Meeting could be co-organized). As mentioned previously, it is recommended that the WPW continue to work on rural development issues and options off-farm as well as on-farm, and that it continue to look at the gender dimensions of rural employment and income diversification. An Expert Meeting focusing on Decent Work could be very useful in this respect.

➤ **The Role of Trade Unions in Rural Areas in the CEE and CIS**

The International Labour Organization's tripartite structure might be one model that the WPW can learn from, whereby Government, Employers Federations and Workers' Organizations come together to discuss labour issues and find ways to move forward together. The WPW could potentially extend its reach to more rural women around the CEE and CIS region through linking trade unions operating in the region. The huge potential for the WPW and participants, especially rural women's associations, to collaborate with trade unions should not be overlooked. By inviting trade unions into the WPW structure, and to the Expert Meetings, the support-base and scope of the WPW in the CEE and CIS regions in particular could widen significantly.

A list of potential partner trade unions in the region is contained in Annex I. These trade unions are affiliated to the International Union of Foodworkers (IUF), which in turn is a key ILO partner. Many of the gender-related, food security, environment and rural development concerns of the WPW are shared by the IUF-affiliated Agricultural and Workers' Unions in the region, the IUF itself also having a gender focus. The unions may also have resources to send representatives to the Expert Meetings, and would be knowledgeable on the practical and legal implications of the ILO Decent Work Programme.

➤ **Land Reform**

An example of activities could be a project that would start with research and analysis of the role and situation of women in land reform in CIS countries, a subject so far relatively under-investigated and, more important, not on the agenda of national Ministries of Agriculture. One could envisage the WPW approaching the Czech Ministry of Agriculture Trust Fund or another donor from EU New Member States to co-finance a seminar or Expert Meeting on the subject for selected CIS countries, that would as an output formulate project ideas for submission to multi- and bilateral donors (Una Murray, *Notes on FAO/ECA WPW*).

Regional/Global Dichotomy

There is a debate as to what extent the WPW should focus on Regional and Sub-regional issues of importance, against a clear background of the situation in the CEE and CIS region, versus taking a more global approach, to include experiences from other regions (Latin America, South-East Asia and Africa, for example). This challenge is also more broadly applicable to all FAO activities in gender and rural development in the European Region. While the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and United Nations Conventions on Women's Rights act as guidelines for action, regional differences make a global approach more complicated. Some of the most important issues in the CEE and CIS region are; migration, and challenges of economic transition, with crisis factors often closely related to political and economic legacies of communism and the Cold War, recent sub-regional conflicts and to the complex socio-economic and political problems stemming from post-communist transition. These factors are specific to the region, and differ from experiences in other regions, making attempts to apply global approaches more complex. For example, CIS countries are often dealing with the shock of collapse rather than a long history of poverty (as in the African experience). The WPW will need to carefully plan its work keeping this regional/global dichotomy in mind, in order to find a balance and make examples of "best practices" from other regions useful and pertinent to participants in WPW activities.

Further Recommendations for WPW activities:

➤ **Gender Disaggregated Data Campaign**

The gender imbalance in data collection and analysis, especially by government ministries, is a recurring problem, which has been noted on several occasions by the WPW in the past. For example, at the 18th Expert Meeting (Poland, 2005), the "*limited availability of gender-specific data and policies*" was criticized by participants, and that (in relation to agro-tourism, for example) "*there appears to be broad recognition of the leading role of women entrepreneurs in rural and agro tourism development but the policy issue of designing and implementing specific gender-focused projects and instruments remains controversial, among other reasons due to lack of appropriate data and statistics*" (WPW 18th Expert Meeting Report, 2005, p. 6).

It is clear that, for policy planning and implementation, detailed data disaggregated by sex should be collected, analysed and made available to rural policy planners in order to obtain deeper insights into rural social life and its gender dimensions. This issue was also on the agenda of the 21st Expert Meeting (Slovakia, 2008), with the presentation of a technical paper on the issue. The WPW should keep this issue on the agenda of future Expert Meetings, and should press policymakers on the importance of gender-disaggregated data collection. During the 19th Expert Meeting (Hungary, 2006), it was suggested by participants that, in terms of collecting information on the position of both rural women and men, a common/joint methodology should be employed for data collection. The FAO/SEAGA approach was noted as an excellent practice in this respect.

➤ **Knowledge Dissemination and Website**

The WPW has developed a level of technical expertise on the issues discussed and debated in the Expert Meetings and Sessions of the past number of years, and specialized, high-quality papers have been presented therein. In order to strengthen the role of the WPW as a dynamic knowledge network, it is recommended that a specific WPW website, containing thematically organized papers and presentations from Expert Meetings and links to partners, be developed. One such

model the WPW could emulate is the Dimitra website³. Dimitra has been an FAO project since 1998, and the project's main aim is to improve the living conditions of rural populations, especially women. The objectives of Dimitra are to consolidate and extend the network of rural womens' groups in Africa, promote information exchange by strengthening information and communication skills, and update and disseminate information on gender and rural development issues. It has an extensive and well-designed website with links to partners and a database.

Developing a website containing position papers and the central objectives of the WPW would be an effective way for the WPW to deliver its message to policymakers and others (potential partners, donors, universities, etc.). This will need to be updated regularly by a webmaster. The WPW is currently lacking a stand-alone, well-designed website, and it is highly recommended that one be created. As mentioned, the website could contain:

- i. A section with WPW papers and presentations from past Sessions and Expert Meetings;
- ii. Links to partner organizations and groups;
- iii. An e-forum for exchange among participants in WPW activities;
- iv. An e-newsletter and invitations to WPW activities, and
- v. A database of WPW participants.

➤ **Advocacy**

Participants at the 19th Expert Meeting (Hungary, 2006) were keen that advocacy work should be strengthened. It was noted, for example, that "it is important to be able to communicate to those at policy level the actual situation in rural areas" (**WPW 19th Expert Meeting Report**, 2006). It was noted by participants during the 19th Expert Meeting (Hungary, 2006) that a focus on good practices and continuous dissemination of positive examples could be practically useful to extrapolate ideas for strategies that could be commonly used. The WPW should focus on the issue of communication, such as sharing experience of developing entrepreneurial skills. Another suggested area of communication focus is community energizing and mobilizing the community for development initiatives, including sharing experience on how to involve NGOs, women's associations and promoting initiatives to enhance the leadership skills of women in communities, necessary to foster an entrepreneurial spirit. The WPW could hold an Expert Meeting on Communication, and best practices and positive (and negative) experiences could be shared on the website.

A Dynamic Knowledge Network

Expert Meeting participants in 2006 expressed recognition of the WPW as a "forum to exchange experience in rural development and to network" and in this context, asked for further FAO ECA support to WPW activities. It was noted by respondents to the 2004 and 2009 surveys that WPW's most effective role was that as a knowledge forum for exchange and ideas.

1.8 Structure and Funding

37. The WPW faces many constraints, the most serious of which are limited financial resources and lack of staff specialized in gender in the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) which provides the Secretariat for, and supports WPW activities since 2005⁴.

³ <http://www.fao.org/dimitra/en/>

⁴ The FAO Sub-regional Representative for Central and Eastern Europe, during the ECA WPW Twelfth Session in Nitra, Slovakia, 2004, encouraged the WPW to seek extra-budgetary support from the EU, and from supportive ECA Members who may wish to consider providing extra-budgetary support to the continuation of WPW activities. SEU would also continue to provide administrative assistance to the WPW. See: http://www.fao.org/world/Regional/REU/meetings_documents/WPW_04_Report_en.pdf.

The situation does not look likely to improve in the future. The Board of the WPW, who are volunteers, have had to complete some of the tasks previously undertaken by the Women in Development Officer at the REU (this post no longer exists). In place of the ex-REU Women in Development Officer, limited technical backstopping is provided by the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW) in the Economic and Social Development Department, in FAO Headquarters in Rome.

38. An FAO Regular Programme ESW allotment in 2008-2009 at the disposal of REU and training of a Junior Technical Officer in rural development and gender, provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Hungary have eased the constraints somewhat. Support is adequate for the organization of one WPW Expert Meetings and/or one Session per biennium and for providing information to the WPW on FAO priorities but limited backstopping and quality control on gender issues by ESW are the main constraint.

39. In view of the difficult financial situation of the WPW, following FAO budgetary cuts, a multilateral trust fund was set up for the WPW in 2005. The governments of Austria, Switzerland, Norway and Lithuania have supported this fund. Member Governments also support the WPW by hosting and organizing some of the key WPW activities such as the expert meetings. An increase in trust funds for the WPW may be possible if the WPW stresses the urgent need to address gender and poverty issues in the European region, particularly in the Central Asia and CEE countries. Such commitment will not occur without advocacy measures.

40. The WPW would greatly benefit from having at least one paid resource person, based in FAO or in a separate institution/office, who could coordinate the activities across the region and ensure that WPW activities continue throughout the year, and not only during the EM and important workshops.

41. New and innovative ways are needed to approach donors and secure funding for WPW activities. Recommendations from the 2007 WPW *Background Document, Proposed Workplan and Strategy for the WPW* (Una Murray, 2007), are advised. The recommendations are as follows:

- Implement a plan to persuade development and donor organizations to financially support the attendance of these countries at WPW activities. This could entail contacting EU Member States gender experts who have a gender policy in their development cooperation programmes. Find out if they have any development cooperation programmes in CIS and CEE countries. If so, explain the mission and objectives of the WPW and negotiate or ask for their support in funding participants to WPW activities. Donor countries to be investigated could include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Annex II contains some organizations that could potentially support participants to attend WPW activities.
- Piggy-back on multilateral programmes in the region. IFAD supported representatives from Azerbaijan and Serbia to attend a 2006 expert meeting on gender-responsive microfinance. The FAO REU and SEU have projects in the region such as sustainable management of natural resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and on forestry in Serbia. Link with local staff in these or similar projects and encourage them to send local staff to relevant WPW expert meetings and summer schools. Try to tap into any capacity-building funds available through projects (*Background Document, Proposed Workplan and Strategy*, U. Murray, 2007).

1.9 Recommendations for the format of meetings

1.9.1 Statutory Body Status

42. The WPW, at present, has FAO statutory body status. This status has both advantages and disadvantages for the WPW. As a statutory body of FAO, WPW holds influence and credence in

national ministries of agriculture. Invitations to WPW activities are sent out to Member States' ministries of agriculture who designate participants to attend WPW Sessions and Expert Meetings. Addressing gender issues at ministerial level gives WPW a high status. In many countries, gender equality issues are typically considered as relevant to ministries other than agriculture (such as social affairs, or equality or women's affairs). However, countries in Central Asia and CEE are becoming aware of issues related to empowering minorities and excluded groups. Gender related issues are gradually seen as key for future activities. Placing the issue of gender on the agenda in ministries of agriculture is less difficult with the weight of FAO behind the WPW (*Background Document, Proposed Workplan and Strategy*, U. Murray, 2007, p. 5). A review of the participants' lists over the past number of years reveals a large number of government ministries attending Expert Meetings.

43. There are also disadvantages to statutory body status, in particular related to the formal structure of the WPW, and resources spent on obligatory Sessions, for example. The Sessions provide a forum for making policy recommendations and decisions, evaluating existing activities and determining the future orientation of the WPW. But there has been a decline in the number of Member State representatives attending these sessions in recent years, arguably indicative of a lack of interest on the part of the representatives in the Sessions, or a lack of sufficient financial and staffing resources available to potential representatives. By revoking FAO statutory body status, the WPW would free itself of the obligation of holding Sessions, and could focus instead on the more important Expert Meetings. The Expert Meetings are the only such regular activity on gender that FAO has in Europe, although FAO examines and incorporates gender issues as part of its rural development projects (*WPW 20th Expert Meeting Report*, Nitra, 2007).

1.9.2 Annual Expert Meetings

44. According to the findings of surveys conducted in 2004 and February 2009, participants of WPW activities find the Expert Meetings to be the most useful and important of WPW activities, and the one that they are most interested in participating in. At present, beyond a formal invitation, WPW is not in a financial position to be able to cover costs for participants or for presenters to attend the Expert Meetings, since these enjoy FAO statutory body format.

45. The Expert Meetings are the activity with the most value-added, in terms of the potential for participants to share knowledge, make connections and learn from high quality presentations. By giving up statutory body status, the WPW would free-up resources to focus on attracting more participants to the Expert Meetings and to strengthen its network, activities which it does well. The forum provided by the Sessions for making policy recommendations and decisions, evaluating existing activities and determining the future orientation of the WPW could also be absorbed by the annual Expert Meetings.

1.9.3 Recommendations for Board Activities

46. The Board of the WPW, as active and competent as it has been so far, will require support from the FAO technical divisions and REU and SEU to identify and formulate and implement projects and activities that are proposed by the Board but technical capacity is needed to turn these into fully-fledged projects and activities (Una Murray, *Notes on FAO/ECA WPW*). The Board should look at the outcomes of the Expert Meeting and consider ways of following-up on the recommendations emerging from the Expert Meetings. In particular, the Board could use its extensive networks and knowledge of national and international programmes on gender and rural development in Europe and the Central Asia and CEE sub-regions to develop a list of potential partners for the WPW to work with in the future. This list should provide institutions, names, ideas and connections which the Board members may have with EU projects and NGO projects, for example, as well as ideas for training and capacity-building among WPW participants and partners. In this way, the Board Members could develop contacts, guidance and ideas for future WPW work.

2. SURVEY AND FINDINGS

47. Section 1 above provides a summary of the findings of a survey conducted in 2004 among participants at WPW activities. In February and March 2009 an updated version of the survey was conducted. 29 respondents took part in the survey, from Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, and Romania. The survey contained questions on the respondents' position in their organization (Government Ministry, NGO, etc.), on their participation in WPW activities and the benefits of participation, and on their recommendations for future WPW activities.

48. 14 respondents held positions in National Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs), 8 came from Universities and Research Institutes around the region, 4 from NGOs/Foundations, 2 were consultants specialized in the area of gender and rural development, and one respondent held a programming position in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). All respondents worked in rural development, with the majority working in gender projects and programmes. 8 respondents also worked in technical assistance. Most were involved in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national rural and regional development policies, programmes and projects.

It is very important to work out the gender-specifics of diverse problems in rural development processes – only in this way can the complexity of rural development be seen. WPW provides an important forum in this respect - Survey respondent, Austria

49. The majority of respondents had taken part in Expert Meetings only, with a small number having also attended Sessions. They found that the main benefits of participation in the Expert Meetings were the presentation of rural development experience and the presentation of gender projects. As noted by one respondent from Austria, the Expert Meetings allowed him to “develop awareness for and sensitivity to gender issues and their relevance for successful implementation of programmes and projects”. A number of respondents also found the Gender Training and Rural Development Training aspects of the Expert Meetings useful.

It was very important for me to see what efforts have been made in this context in my country and to present our experience in these rural development processes and to share these experiences with the other participants - Survey respondent, Austria

50. Some of the main constraints mentioned by respondents for not attending Expert Meetings or participating in WPW activities were:

- Financial constraints;
- Lack of available trained/specialist staff to attend WPW activities, and
- Time constraints and lack of information regarding WPW activities. One respondent also noted that “late announcements” of Sessions and Expert Meetings had posed a problem for his organization in the past.

Support of rural women and families nowadays is a very important element of dealing with the problems in rural areas, arising from the actual economic crisis. A significant element of the WPW activities is the connection with the practice and the possibility of providing expert and technical assistance, mainly for the new Member States. The WPW, thanks to its programme orientation, should create a platform for communication, should support the search for solutions to rural gender issues and problems and provide advice on areas where it has developed competency - Survey respondent, Slovak Republic

51. There was a range of answers regarding how often respondents received information regarding WPW activities. In general, for those respondents working in Ministries (of Agriculture, for example), information is received “regularly”. This includes invitations to Sessions and Expert Meetings. On the other hand, some respondents noted that they received information “from time to time” or “rarely”. For the most part, these respondents worked in Universities and NGOs, or as consultants. Information is received from FAO (e.g. from the

WPW Secretariat), through the Government or permanent representative to FAO, or through personal contacts.

52. All respondents felt that an e-mail newsletter from WPW (short and more often) would be recommended. Most respondents felt that a personal or institution-addressed e-mail invitation would be welcomed.

If the WPW had funds, they could commission others to offer capacity-building. I think the WPW plays an important role as an expert “think tank” but the WPW requires a secretariat and funding to move forward and follow up on activities in network activities. A regularly updated website would be very useful for this.

- Survey respondent, Ireland

53. Most respondents also felt that it would be worthwhile to develop a dedicated WPW website, containing information on partners, Sessions and Expert Meetings, technical papers and presentations and links to FAO work on gender and rural development.

54. The majority of respondents had not received SEAGA training, but they expressed an interest in taking part in SEAGA training and in learning more about it.

55. The principal expectations from the WPW mentioned were:

- exchange of experience on gender-focused rural development programmes and projects;
- training in gender-related project approaches and skills;
- exchange of rural and agricultural support policy experience and capacity-building, and
- Gender-Disaggregated Data/Statistics.

56. The principal areas that respondents feel the WPW should focus on are: (i) income diversification for rural women; (ii) gender and land reform, and (iii) climate change. Respondents feel that the WPW should collaborate with the United Nations system and with NGOs in the region, and also with European Union projects.

In Hungary, climate change is one of the biggest problems and finding ways to combat this change is crucial especially in rural areas where agriculture has a significant role. We would like to transfer knowledge, gain experiences and see practices through our activity with the WPW

- Survey respondent, Hungary

57. Respondents were requested to give specific recommendations on how the WPW could most effectively make an impact, and the recommendations were for WPW to work on capacity-building through trainings, seminars and workshops; as an expert “think tank”; and in networking activities (establishing a website, sending information and newsletters).

58. Respondents also provided some specific recommendations for the format of the Sessions and Expert Meetings. For the Sessions, it was recommended, for example, that “*the incentive-papers should not be too many; they should be prepared very well and should give ‘new’ information, approaches, views to (gender-related) problems in rural areas. The recommendations should be useful for the ECA - the themes and issues of WPW should correspond with the issues of ECA and vice-versa. Better communication structures should be built up*” (Survey respondent, Austria). A further recommendation for the Session format was for “*more guidance to be provided to presenters on how to present and what, and ask them to relate their presentation to the WPW theme*” (Survey respondent, Ireland).

59. Recommendations for the format of the Expert Meetings were related mostly to the level of guidance given to presenters and speakers. One respondent, for example, recommended that “*pre-selection of papers to be presented take place, to ensure that the template provided in the invitation letter is followed in order to achieve more focussed presentations and subsequently more clear and structured discussions*” (Survey respondent, Austria). It was also recommended

that “FAO create a team of specialists in close cooperation with FAO Member States in order to carry out follow-up activities” (Respondent, Slovak Republic). One respondent noted that the Expert Meetings should strive for “*more concrete concluding remarks, which could be sent as announcements to different organizations, governments, state institutions, NGOs, etc.*” (Respondent, Lithuania).

60. It was noted by one respondent from Sweden that WPW activities are more relevant for CEE and Central Asia countries than for Western European countries, because the Western European countries have come further in terms of gender planning and rural development than the CEE and Central Asia sub-regions, and the problems facing Western European countries have evolved (specific problems mentioned were legislation and targeted policies). It is recommended, therefore, that the WPW focus its attention on countries in the CEE and Central Asia sub-regions, and attract more partners from these regions.

61. For the majority of respondents taking part in the 2009 WPW Survey, their principal expectations from the WPW were: (i) to act as a forum for exchange of rural and agricultural support policy experience and capacity-building; (ii) exchange of experience in gender-focused rural development programmes and projects, and (iii) training in gender-related project approaches and skills. Respondents also noted the crucial role that the WPW can play in terms of networking, capacity-building and as an “expert think tank”. It was noted by one respondent, for example, that “*Based on the extended relations of FAO, the WPW can be a very good networking opportunity for organizations. Conferences, meetings and other networking activities such as a website, on-line forum and e-newsletter could be very useful tools for this networking*” (Respondent, Hungary).

3. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES BY INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND NGOs TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MULTI- AND BILATERAL PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS IN THE REGION IN GENDER AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

62. During the 20th FAO/ECA WPW Expert Meeting, held in Slovakia in November/December 2007, it was agreed that there should be more collaboration amongst agencies working in rural areas. IFAD, the World Bank and other agencies engaged in rural development in Europe such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development should be invited to participate in future WPW Expert Meetings. In general, experience and data could be shared better across agencies, and programmes and projects starting in the region should initiate workshops where all stakeholders examine what each other is planning or attempting to undertake.

63. It was noted by participants at the 19th FAO WPW Expert Meeting in Hungary in 2006 that “*integration approaches with local partners allow each organization to build its strengths, and ensure that no one organization is trying to cover all aspects*”. The question of working more collaboratively with international and national activities and programmes and NGOs in the region involved in the issue of gender and rural development is a recurring one. It would be counterproductive to attempt to do what other (better resourced) organizations are already doing. The following list is an overview of such activities in the region, and organizations with which the WPW may wish to collaborate. The list is continued in Annex II, based on work carried out by a consultant in 2007 (Una Murray).

(i) International Fund for Agricultural Development

64. The WPW has an established relationship with IFAD, in that IFAD attends Expert Meetings, and this should be strengthened. At the 20th Expert Meeting (Slovakia, 2007) it was noted that there was a “particular interest” on the part of the participants in IFAD as an organization, given the professional, interesting and knowledgeable presentations made by the IFAD representative during the Expert Meeting. During the 19th Expert Meeting, presentations were also made by IFAD on gender-focused projects in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

65. Of particular interest to the WPW is the IFAD Gender Mainstreaming Programme for Central Europe and CIS countries. This three-year programme was in operation from 2002 to 2005, with projects organized in six countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova). Initially the IFAD projects in these countries achieved disappointing results in terms of attracting women participants. It became apparent that the reversion to traditional gender roles was making it difficult to reach out to and make an impact on the lives of women and men in an equal way. The Gender Mainstreaming Programme was geared towards redressing this imbalance, integrating more women into IFAD project activities and demonstrating ways in which women could gain greater economic autonomy and take on decision-making roles within poor rural communities⁵. These projects and partners should be examined by WPW, and possible further collaboration with IFAD on activities should be considered.

66. A List of current IFAD projects in the region is contained in Annex III.

(ii) International Labour Organization

67. The ILO provides support through integrated Decent Work country programmes developed in coordination with ILO constituents. They define the priorities and targets within national development frameworks and aim to tackle major decent work deficits through efficient programmes that embrace each of the strategic objectives. It is recommended that the WPW explore the possibility of collaborating with the ILO and finding ways to incorporate a rural gender-focus in the Decent Work Programmes in the CEE and CIS sub-regions. The Decent Work Programmes are often structured around a two to three year budget, so the WPW would need to approach the ILO Regional Offices with proposals for the next budget round and future Decent Work Programmes⁶.

68. The ILO and FAO have launched a website designed to highlight the many areas in which they are already collaborating and others in which they are contemplating joint activities. The joint FAO-ILO website: "Food, Agriculture and Decent Work" (www.fao-ilo.org) describes the joint work of the two agencies in ten major fields, including decent employment, child labour, youth employment, cooperatives, small and medium enterprises, rural workers, safety and health, crisis management, crops, fisheries and forestry, and labour statistics. It also provides extensive links to related information sources. This cooperation derives in part from an action-oriented agreement between the organizations signed in 2004.

69. Both organizations share a commitment to support people-centred, sustainable development and fair and inclusive globalization. Attention is given to improving, in a balanced, participatory and equitable way, the main assets of the poor – their human, social, natural, physical and financial resources. The primary goal of ILO is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and

⁵ see <http://www.ifad.org/english/gender/cen/ifad.htm>

⁶ Link to ILO Decent Work Country Programmes:
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm>

human dignity. The primary goal of FAO is to contribute to the reduction and eventual elimination of hunger and rural poverty through the sustainable development of agriculture, rural areas and their natural resources.

70. A coordinated strategy is a critical option in order to complement and enhance the work currently being carried out by each organization, respectively, on labour and agriculture and rural development and promote rural work⁷.

(iii) United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Development Fund for Women

71. Possibilities of strengthening cooperation with UNDP country offices in particular but not exclusively in CEE and CIS countries where FAO has no FAORs (only National Correspondents), also in project and activities' selection and formulation stage and joint approach to prospective donors, in particular bilateral donors that are returning to the subregion, deserve a concentrated effort on the part of FAO, SDW and sub-regional offices in the region (Una Murray, *Notes on FAO/ECA WPW*).

72. UNIFEM CIS is the United Nations Development Fund for Women, working in the 12 countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. UNIFEM in the CIS is striving to promote gender equality and women's political participation, secure women's economic rights, and eliminate all forms of violence against women. UNIFEM's strategy in the CIS focuses on three key themes:

- Securing economic rights: in the context of privatization and globalization;
- Supporting women's participation in decision-making processes that shape their lives, and
- Promoting a violence-free society.

73. UNIFEM CIS works in cooperation with various partners. These are national women's machineries in the CIS countries, United Nations agencies and other donors, women's NGOs and networks, research institutions and academia.

(iv) EU Projects

74. Contacts established during the WPW activities are perceived as a good starting point for various international programmes such as EU Phare, Leader, INTEREG and SAPARD Programmes, etc. (*Report on the WPW 2004 Survey*).

75. **Leader+** is one of the four initiatives financed by EU structural funds and is designed to help rural actors consider the long-term potential of their local regions. Encouraging the implementation of strategies for sustainable development, it has a strong focus on partnership and networks of exchange and experience⁸.

76. A special €520 million fund, Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (**SAPARD**) was created together with other preaccession instruments such as Phare and the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession (ISPA), to provide accession and applicant countries support in the process of adjustment and accession. SAPARD was related to the common agricultural policy, to structural adjustment in agricultural and rural areas and provides for a variety of activities and services. These include land improvement and re-parceling, setting up producer groups, investment in agricultural holdings, promotion of production methods that protect the environment and conserve rural heritage, diversification of economic activities

⁷ The ILO, FAO and IFAD will carry out a joint technical expert workshop on "Gaps, trends and current research in gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: differential pathways out of poverty", in Rome from 31 March to 2 April 2009.

⁸ see http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/index_en.htm

and development of alternative sources of income, farm relief services and farm management services, food quality and consumer protection, veterinary and plant health controls, vocational training, technical assistance, management of water resources for agriculture and improvement of rural infrastructure. The most important aims were improvement of market efficiency, quality, veterinary and health standards and the creation of new jobs in rural areas. In accordance with the EU policies on gender equality, the SAPARD Programme ensured equal access to women and men. Their share in the programme was monitored regularly.

(v) EU Institute for Gender Equality

77. The Institute is intended to be an independent centre of excellence at European level. It will gather, analyse and disseminate research data and information needed by policymakers in Brussels and in the EU Member States. It will have a documentation centre and a library, which will be open to the public. The Institute will also stimulate research and exchanges of experience by organizing meetings between policymakers, experts and stakeholders and it will raise awareness of gender equality policies with events including conferences, campaigns and seminars. It is recommended that the WPW seek to develop links with the EU Institute for Gender Equality, and to invite representatives from the Institute to future WPW Expert Meetings.

3.1. *FAO's comparative advantage and link with the FAO/ECA WPW mandate*

78. Through its various activities, FAO has strived for better recognition of rural women's contribution to development and for their empowerment in the public and political spheres, as well as for the attainment of their legal rights, under relevant international legal instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which is the only international legal convention with special provisions for Rural Women (Article 14⁹).

79. Gender issues are also a key part of the Millennium Development Goals-related activities, if and as implemented in the CEE/CIS sub-region and FAO is expected to lead the way in rural areas, based on its experience over the years and throughout other regions.

80. The Working Party on Women has worked over the years and built for itself a niche and position where it is a recognized forum to exchange and transfer experience from Western European and Central Eastern European (CEE) and former Soviet Union (CIS) countries. The fora that offer such an opportunity are rare in the CEE and CIS region and this achieved position should not be neglected or wasted. The important role of FAO as an intermediary for consultations and provider for capacity-building is recognized and appreciated by Member States. This is a role that deserves to be enhanced in a systematic way and the relatively limited resources this will require will result in a much stronger catalytic effect and will promote FAO's project experience from other regions (Una Murray, *Notes on FAO/ECA WPW*).

3.2. *Links to FAO ESW Regular Programme activities and available global expertise*

81. The FAO Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW) has over the years built up the impressive Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) Programme, which is much appreciated by beneficiaries and specialists, with most manuals available also in Russian, the latter a working language in the CIS subregion. This training material, covering a complete range of issues in gender in rural development and based on FAO's extensive experience in many parts of the world and under different conditions, is already greatly valued where it has been used. More intensive promotion of the SEAGA manuals, in an organized way and addressed to prospective donors may be expected to further increase interest and stimulate requests for FAO assistance and/or backstopping of training based on the SEAGA Programme.

⁹ Noted by Ms Kadlecikova, FAO Sub-regional Representative for Central and Eastern Europe, during the ECA WPW Twelfth Session, Nitra, Slovakia, 18-21 October 2004:

82. The *Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook* is another useful publication that the WPW could use in the future. The Sourcebook was jointly produced by FAO, the World Bank and IFAD¹⁰. The Sourcebook compiles the good practices and innovative activities that successfully integrated gender into their project and programme design for sharing and learning. The sixteen modules, including Agricultural Labour, Markets and Rural Finance, represent themes of cross-cutting importance for agriculture and rural development. This sourcebook could be used by WPW in particular as a backstop for future Expert Meetings.

3.3. *Tentative priority areas and country groups for the Region*

83. The following are some of the issues recommended for the WPW as future areas of work in the coming years. It is likely that these issues will become increasingly important in rural areas and rural development over the coming years.

- **New Energies** - Bio-energies, sun and wind energy, and micro-energy production: Challenges for ensuring that programmes and projects for the development of new energies are gender-sensitive.
- **Organic vs. Industrial agriculture and new market opportunities.** The markets for Fairtrade Certified and Organic Certified produce have grown over the past number of years, and while it is likely that this trend will slow down with the current financial crisis, there is still potential for these niche products to find new markets in the CEE and CIS regions. The certifications and standards for Organic and Fairtrade, for example, are often complicated and complex, and the WPW could potentially hold an Expert Meeting looking at the potential for rural women producers to gain access to the new markets, and
- **Further Capacity-Building.** Rural women's capacity-building should be facilitated, such as increased access to schooling, training and re-training programmes, to provide them with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in farming and the private labour market.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS ON APPROACHES, OPTIONS AND AREAS AND PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE AREAS AND FORMAT OF ECA WPW ACTIVITIES IN GENDER AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION

84. This section provides a summary of the recommendations for WPW activities contained in the report.

- The WPW must secure the support of FAO, policymakers and ministries of agriculture to provide the resources and support needed for WPW to function.
- The WPW has begun to move more broadly into the question of rural development, off-farm as well as on-farm. It is recommended that this trend continue.
- The WPW should attract and facilitate more Member States in the CEE and Central Asia sub-regions, particularly those who joined FAO activities in the past 10-15 years. This would mean a substantial increase in representatives from CIS and CEE countries, which would strengthen the WPW and enrich the experience and learning of its members.
- A dedicated WPW website, containing position papers, presentations, links to partners and a database should be developed. In developing such a website, the WPW should look to the well-designed and comprehensive Dimitra website¹¹. The website would require resources for a "webmaster" to update the site and database on a regular basis. This position might also include facilitating the WPW network, by sending e-mail invitations to WPW activities and a regular e-newsletter to WPW partners and participants.

¹⁰ see http://www.fao-ilo.org/news-ilo/detail/en/news/8234/icode/?no_cache=1

¹¹ see <http://www.fao.org/dimitra/en/>

- The WPW should seek to further collaborate with other donors and programmes, in particular those mentioned in Section 3 above and in Annex II of this report.
- The WPW Board should consider options for following-up on the recommendations emerging from the Expert Meetings. The Board should use its knowledge and professional network to develop guidance for future WPW activities and should develop a list containing contacts and institutions (particularly in the CEE and Central Asia sub-regions) that WPW could collaborate with.
- A substantial portion of the participants attending Expert Meetings over the past number of years come from universities and research institutes (in 2008, 8 of 43 participants were from universities and institutes; in 2007, 3 of 18; in 2006, 9 of 37; in 2005, 17 of 46). WPW should develop its links with universities in CIS and CEE countries. They in turn may have links to rural development programmes and access to educational grants that can be used for capacity-building in the areas of WPW's focus. Links should be developed with relevant research institutes from this part of Europe.
- The WPW should also consider developing links with and collaborating with Trade Unions throughout the CEE and CIS region, and in particular with the IUF-affiliated unions (see Annex I).
- The WPW should consider holding technical workshops on how to compile funding proposals to secure funding through various international, national and regional programmes, projects, and funding sources (such as the ongoing or successor EU Projects referred to in Section 3. A well-planned and delivered workshop enabling WPW members to apply for funding could have lasting positive impacts for the members' organizations and for the WPW. Many funders require potential funding recipients to be members of networks working in their field, and the WPW, with its status as an FAO statutory body, would be an excellent example of networking. Portions of secured funding could be earmarked to enable participants to take part in WPW activities.
- The WPW should continue to develop as an Expert Think Tank and Dynamic Knowledge Network. It should offer a neutral forum to discuss gender-related issues as they relate to food, agriculture and poverty in the region, and encourage the exchange of new information and experiences with a view to addressing new and recurring gender related poverty challenges in the region.
- It should promote the professional development of rural women and build a network of individuals willing to provide technical advice in devising gender sensitive national agricultural policy and strategies to achieve rural development and poverty alleviation goals.
- The following areas are recommended for future WPW activities and Expert Meetings: Climate Change and Environment; Elderly Rural Women in the Region; Decent Work in Rural Areas, a gendered-perspective; The Role of Trade Unions in Rural Areas in the CEE and CIS; Land Reform.
- It is also recommended that the WPW develop its work on Gender Disaggregated Data and Advocacy.

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ANNEX I

**SELECTED IUF AFFILIATED TRADE UNIONS IN THE CEE AND
CIS REGION****Albania**

The Independent Trade Union of Workers in Agriculture and Livestock (SPPBBSH)

The Trade Union Federation of Agriculture and Food Workers (TUFAFWA)

Armenia

Republican Union of Agro-Industrial Workers Organizations of Armenia

Azerbaijan

Agricultural and Food Industry Workers' Union "Kandgida-Is"

Bulgaria

Agriculture and Forest Industry Federation (PODKREPA)

Fédération des syndicats indépendants de l'agriculture (FITUA)

Kazakhstan

Regional Organization of Agricultural, Food and Allied Workers' Unions of Eastern Kazakhstan

Kyrgyzstan

Agricultural Workers' Union

Lithuania

[Lietuvos žemės ūkio darbuotoju profesiniu sąjunga federacijos \(Trade Union Federation of Lithuanian Agricultural Workers\) \(TUFLAW\)](#)

Romania

The National Federation of Rural Workers' Unions (AGROSTAR)

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Trade Union of the Workers from the Agroindustrial Complex of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Agro-Sindikata)

Ukraine

Agro-Industrial Workers' Union of Ukraine

See IUF- International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers Association, www.iuf.org

ANNEX II

PRIORITY PARTNERS FOR WPW COLLABORATION

1. EU Groups**New EU Gender Institute - Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/index_en.html

Reason for contacting the EU Gender Institute:

The Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities section of the EC has responsibility for the new EU Gender Institute scheduled to commence operations in 2007 in Vilnius, Lithuania. Mr Stefano Martinelli can provide updated information on progress regarding the establishment of the new EU Gender Institute in Vilnius, Lithuania. Tel: +32 2 298 1053.

The Board of the WPW could write to the new Institute Director as soon as possible, outlining the mission and activities of the WPW and suggesting areas for collaboration in agriculture.

DG RELEX (Directorate-General for External Relations)

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/dgs/external_relations/contacts/relex_directorate_en.htm

The Directorate-General for External Relations (DG RELEX) is concerned with external relations policy for the EU and the Commission's relations with international organizations, such as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe. The new Barroso Commission will also ensure the assumption by DG RELEX of responsibility for the European Neighbourhood Policy. Tel: +32 2 299 9180 / +32 2 2993204 / +32 2 2953629

Reason for suggesting that the WPW contact DG RELEX: The WPW could contact DG RELEX to ascertain how a statutory United Nations body such as the WPW can legally collaborate with the EU, or apply for funding. Collaboration is possible. In 2004 the ILO training centre in Turin was awarded a two year tender with the EC to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy in EC development cooperation. DG RELEX should also be contacted since it manages bilateral relations with countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

EC DG Agriculture

Reason for suggesting that the WPW contact DG Agriculture: The individuals below should be contacted by the WPW for information regarding institutions working in CIS and CEE countries on gender and agriculture, or organizations working on the same theme within the EU. Additionally they could be asked about eligibility for DG Agriculture programmes.

- HORTET TARROJA Ester, Rural Development (Unit F.3), ester.hortet@ec.europa.eu;
- MENENDEZ VALLINA Annabelle; Relations with other Community Institutions and agricultural NGOs (Unit K.3), annabelle.menendez-vallina@ec.europa.eu;
- DG REGIO BERNARD-BRUNET Patrick; Développement thématique; impact (Unit C.1), patrick.bernard-brunet@ec.europa.eu;

Leader+ is one of four initiatives financed by EU structural funds and is designed to help rural actors consider the long-term potential of their local region. Encouraging the implementation of strategies for sustainable development, it has a strong focus on partnership and networks of exchange of experience.

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/index_en.htm

Another reason for contact is to obtain information with regard to recent publications on the theme of gender and agriculture. Some examples include:

- http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/publi/index_en.htm#book7
- Agriculture – The Spotlight on Women (2002)
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/publi/women/spotlight/text_en.pdf
- Women Active in Rural Development (2000)
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/publi/women/broch_en.pdf
- CAP Studies. Labour situation and strategies of farm women in diversified rural areas of Europe (1998) . A research project funded by the AIR-programme of the European Commission (CT94-2414)
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/publi/capstud/women/index_en.htm

EU European Social Fund

This programme is for regions in the European Union which are lagging behind in their development, undergoing restructuring or facing specific geographical, economic or social problems. The structural fund regulations for 2000-2006 provide for three priority objectives:

- **Objective 1:** To promote the development and structural adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind;
- **Objective 2:** To support the economic and social conversion of areas experiencing structural difficulties;
- **Objective 3:** To support the adaptation and modernization of education, training and employment policies and systems in regions not eligible under Objective 1.

<http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/g24207.htm>

Reason to contact the EU European Social Fund:

In order to obtain information about priority objectives from 2007 onwards. FAO priority countries joining the EU may be able to obtain funds. The WPW could link with the EU European Social Fund programmes or invite individuals from such programmes to attend WPW activities.

CEI

The Central European Initiative (CEI) is composed of 18 Member States: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. The CEI has nine EU and nine non-EU Member Countries. As an intergovernmental forum, the CEI focuses on political, economic and cultural cooperation among its Member States. Its main aim is to assist transition countries in Central Europe come closer to the EU.

<http://www.ceinet.org/home.php>

Reason for suggestion as a potential collaborator with the WPW:

The CEI has already provided support to representatives from four countries to participate in a WPW Expert Meeting on Gender and Rural Development in Poland, 2005. Perhaps it would be willing to support representatives from non-EU member countries again. Contact the CEI Funding Unit at:

<http://www.ceinet.org/main.php?pageID=279>

2. United Nations Partners

UNDP

The UNDP has country offices in Europe and CIS countries. The link below is to gender projects carried out in the European region:

http://europeandcis.undp.org/files/uploads/Gender%20CoP%20Istanbul%20January2005/UNDP%20Europe%20%20CIS%20projects%20summary%202005_4April.pdf

Reasons for linking up with UNDP:

WPW should investigate the possibilities of strengthening cooperation with UNDP Country Offices in CEE and CIS countries particularly in countries where FAO has no FAORs, Assistant FAORs or National Correspondents. WPW through the REU could become involved in UNDP project activities on agricultural and gender-related areas. Becoming partners at project formulation stage is the best option. Gender is on the agenda of UNDP and a criterion for project appraisal.

3. International Organizations

EBRD

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is the largest single investor in countries from central Europe to central Asia. It has a network of over thirty local offices. EBRD staff have expertise in a broad range of investment areas and may undertake some social and environmental analysis work.

Reason for suggestion as potential collaborator with the WPW:

EBRD do not appear to have any policy or section on gender, but do have offices and links in central Europe and CIS. EBRD would be a potential source of funds or could co-finance WPW activities if they were related to enterprise development. Because EBRD provides strong support for small, medium- and micro-sized enterprises, and they provide individual entrepreneurs with access to finance, it might be interesting to contact them with respect to gender and entrepreneurship, or ask them to collaborate on expert meetings with related themes

Contact: EBRD, One Exchange Square, London EC2A 2JN, UK Tel: +44 20 7338 6000 fax: +44 20 7338 6100 <http://www.ebrd.com/index.htm>

The World Bank

The World Bank's mission in the countries of Europe and Central Asia is to promote sustainable growth and improve living standards for everyone. They carry out projects on gender in Europe and Central Asia. The World Bank has a gender webpage for Europe and Central Asia.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTECAREGTOPGENDER/0,,menuPK:570872~pagePK:34004175~piPK:34004435~theSitePK:570862,00.html>

Reasons for contacting the World Bank:

A list of gender focal points in various countries in the region should be contacted as WPW members might be useful links for World Bank projects. Perhaps the WPW could request funding to attend WPW activities. WPW could try to link to World Bank projects in the region.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECAREGTOPGENDER/ContactUs/20909853/ECAGenderFocalPoints050406b.pdf>

<http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/ECA/ECSHD.nsf/ExtECADocByUnid/EB49C63DBEAC91C585256CC4007357C0?Opendocument>

4. NGOs and Networks

KARAT

KARAT, based in Poland is a regional coalition of organizations and individuals that works to ensure gender equality in the CEE/CIS countries, monitors the implementation of international agreements and lobbies for the needs and concerns of women in the region at all levels of decision-making fora. KARAT members include NGOs from 21 countries.

KARAT Coalition's address: ul. Karmelicka 16 m. 13 00-163 Warsaw, Poland
Tel/Fax: +48 (22) 636 83 07 e-mail: secretariat@karat.org.pl

<http://www.karat.org/>

Reasons for contacting KARAT:

Contacting KARAT could help prioritize gender-related issues in the CEE/CIS countries.

WWSF

The Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF) is an NGO with United Nations consultative status (the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI)) based in Geneva. WWSF's principal objective is to empower women, children and NGOs.

Reason for contacting the WWSF:

WWSF offers a [Prize for women's creativity in rural life](#), every year and organizes a World Rural Women's Day on 15 October. <http://www.woman.ch/wwsf/1-introduction.php>. The WPW could discuss whether and how they could collaborate on Rural Women's Day. 15 October could be used as an opportunity to highlight the activities of the WPW in Member States.

NOVIB/Oxfam

NOVIB/Oxfam, The Netherlands, also work in Eastern Europe. Details of their gender equality programmes in Albania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, are available at:

http://www.novib.nl/id.html?id=PROJ_GIDS&lang=EN&action=zoeken®io=312&land=0&thema=80&term=

A possible contact in relation to Microfinance in the CEE region: Karen Kammeraat karenkammeraat@novib.nl

Reason for suggestion as a potential collaborator with the WPW:

Oxfam have a poverty focus and good gender policies and action plans. The WPW could usefully 'piggy-back' on NOVIB programmes in Eastern Europe, invite national NOVIB staff to expert meetings, or collaborate on NOVIB activities that are gender and agricultural related.

NEWW

The Network of East-West Women (NEWW) is an international communication and resource network supporting dialogue, informational exchange, and activism among those concerned about the status of women in Central and Eastern Europe, the Newly Independent States, and the Russian Federation. NEWW coordinates research and advocacy that supports women's equality and participation in all aspects of life.

<http://www.neww.org/en.php/home/index/0.html>

Reasons for linking up with the NEWW:

Contacting the NEWW could assist WPW in learning about the priorities of rural women in the CEE and CIS region. Linkage could be made, and perhaps joint activities could be generated.

ANNEX II.1 OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE COLLABORATION

1. United Nations Partners

UNECE

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) strives to foster sustainable economic growth among its 56 member countries. UNECE provides a forum for communication among States; brokers international legal instruments addressing trade, transport and the environment; and supplies statistics and economic and environmental analysis. Special attention is given to Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus, where in many respects women's position has deteriorated during the transition process.

The focus of UNECE gender activities include providing a forum for a regional dialogue; promoting women's entrepreneurship and raising awareness on gender aspects of small and medium enterprise (SME) policies; organizing Regional Forums of Women Entrepreneurs and subregional workshops and dissemination of good practice in financing women's businesses and improving their access to ICT. UNECE also aims to contribute towards building a gender-sensitive information society. UNECE is involved in developing methodologies, collecting gender-disaggregated data, and training on gender statistics within their [Gender Statistics programme](#). <http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/Welcome.html>

Within UNECE the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), supported by UNECE and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), aims to strengthen sub-regional cooperation between its member countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Reason for contacting UNECE:

Funding may be possible for participants from CEE and CIS countries to attend WPW activities. UNECE may collaborate with WPW on gender-related activities. WPW could usefully study how the Working Group on Gender and Economy within SPECA is organized and functions. Contact: Ewa Ruminska-Zimny, Regional Adviser on Gender and Economy, UNECE

2. Research Institutes

CESTRAD

The Centre for the Study of Transition and Development (CESTRAD) of the Institute of Social Studies is located in The Hague. CESTRAD is a specialized unit for research and training, on the economics and politics of transition. CESTRAD is a platform for researchers and policy analysts from governments and NGOs in transition and OECD countries.

<http://www.iss.nl/content/view/full/2795> E-Mail: cestrad@iss.nl

Website: <http://www.iss.nl/cestrad>

Reason for the suggestion as a potential collaborator with the WPW:

Joint research projects, link to publications on the European region; may be able to provide speakers or trainers for Expert Meetings.

Cross-Border Centre of Expertise in Rural Development

A “community of practice” with the objective of encouraging academic-practitioner dialogue and cooperation to promote rural development (www.hvtk.org).

3. NGOs and Networks

WIDE

Women in Development Europe (WIDE) is a European network of development NGOs, gender specialists and human rights activists. WIDE monitors and influences international economic and development policy and practice from a feminist perspective. WIDE’s work is grounded on women’s rights as the basis for the development of a more just and democratic world order.

Contact details: WIDE, rue de la Science 10, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
phone: ++32-2-545.90.70 fax: ++32-2-512.73.42; e-mail: info@wide-network.org

Reason for the suggestion as a potential collaborator with the WPW:

WIDE is a large network that could be useful for publicizing WPW activities. WIDE members may participate in WPW activities.

EWL

The European Women’s Lobby (EWL) is the largest umbrella organizations of women’s associations in the European Union (EU). The EWL Secretariat is based in Brussels, but EWL has member organizations in 25 Member States of the EU. The European Women’s Lobby aims at promoting women’s rights and equality between women and men in the European Union.

<http://www.womenlobby.org/site/hp.asp>

Contact: 44 (0)20 7220 0180.

Reason for the suggestion as a potential collaborator with the WPW:

The EWL could be contacted to provide funding for meetings, to provide linkages to similar organizations or for information on a particular chosen theme of the WPW. Perhaps the EWL

could suggest speakers for WPW activities. WIDE could provide advice on lobbying on gender issues.

MIJARC

Based in Brussels, MIRARC is the International Movement for Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth. MIJARC has already participated in a FAO Special Forum aligned to the FAO Committee on World Food Security to assess progress of the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action and review target achievements towards the end of 2006.

Reasons for the suggestion as a potential collaborator with the WPW:

MIJARC might be useful collaborators if the WPW focuses more on rural youth in the future.

<http://www.mijarc.org/europe/index-en.htm>

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS (IFAP)

IFAP is the world farmers' organization representing over 600 million farm families grouped in 115 national organizations in 80 countries. It is a global network in which farmers from industrialized and developing countries exchange concerns and set common priorities. IFAP has a regional specialised committee for the Mediterranean area (Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). IFAP has a **Standing Committee on Women in Agriculture** – for women farmers' activities, the recognition of their rights and needs and the broadening of their representation within farmers' organizations.

<http://www.ifap.org/en/issues/women.html>

<http://www.ifap.org/en/members/members.html>

Reason for the suggestion as a potential collaborator with the WPW:

IFAP could be a source for networking and linkages. IFAP may be able to send specialists from their standing committee on women in agriculture to WPW meetings?

Ms Paola Ortensi is vice chair officer of the Committee 2004-2006 and also a member of the WPW network. www.ifap.org

WECF

Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) is a network of organizations in thirty countries. WECF helps women to actively take part in making their communities healthier and more sustainable. The WECF proposes solutions and asks politicians to take action.

Reasons for contacting WECF:

Sustainable Development and Agriculture is one of five working groups in WECF. The

http://www.wecf.de/wecf/wg_health_agriculture_rural.php.

This Working Group shares experiences, exchanges ideas and identifies challenges and opportunities regarding the relationship between agriculture, biodiversity and rural development in Europe. <http://www.wecf.org/>.

Joint or collaborative activities could be planned with the WECF. Speakers could be invited to WPW Expert Meetings.

4. EU Group

The Council of Europe

Within the Council of Europe, the issue of equality between women and men is the responsibility of the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG). This is an intergovernmental body within the Council, which carries out analyses, studies and evaluations, defines strategies and political measures and, where necessary, decides on the appropriate legal instruments. The members of the CDEG are high-level individuals appointed by their government.

Reason for linking with the Council of Europe:

WPW should study the roles and duties of the CDEG on their webpage, and then usefully contact the CDEG with a view to using CDEG studies and evaluations and examining the outcomes of the Steering Committee.

<http://www.humanrights.coe.int/equality/Eng/EqualityCommittee/EqualityCommittee.htm>

EU Rural Jobs

The EU Framework 7-funded project (www.ruraljobs.org). This project will quantify the employment needs and potentials in different types of rural areas across Europe and provide guidelines on the better targeting of future rural development needs.

5. International Organizations

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

OECD/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) work in the area of gender equality is carried out primarily through the Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET). GENDERNET is the only international forum which brings together gender experts from bilateral and multilateral development agencies to define common approaches; and share good practice, innovative ideas and state-of-the-art research on gender-related topics. Civil societies are also invited to contribute to activities and participate in events which the network organizes. GENDERNET actively contributes a gender equality perspective to work conducted by other DAC subsidiary bodies (peace-building; governance; poverty reduction; statistics; evaluation and environment).

Reasons for linking up with the OECD:

The OECD may be able to provide co-financing or funding for individuals from CIS and CEE countries to expert meetings. OECD representatives could be contacted as allies in each CIS or CEE country and rally their support for the WPW. Since the GENDERNET also organizes thematic workshops involving OECD partner countries, the United Nations, research institutes and civil society organizations, the WPW could find out about the next thematic workshop and determine if collaboration on the theme could take place. Because the OECD participates in advocacy events bringing together experts from both OECD and partner countries, perhaps they may be interested in the work of the WPW in OECD countries. Ms Eleni Tokkari from Greece is one of the contact persons of GENDERNET and also a member of the WPW network.

http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,2686,en_2649_37401_1_1_1_1_37401,00.html

http://www.oecd.org/about/0,2337,en_2649_34541_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

[Tip sheet on gender - land, environment and agriculture available at:](#)

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/3/8/1896584.pdf>

Agence Intergouvernementale de le Francophonie

This agency develops cooperation programmes and helps developing countries, as well as countries in transition (Albania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) to have the necessary means for developing in an equitable and sustainable way. A section on women and development is available at:

<http://www.francophonie.org/actions/developpement/ini-femmes.cfm>

<http://agence.francophonie.org/agence/index.cfm>

Reasons for linking up:

The WPW could explore how this agency helps countries in transition and determine if collaborative activities could take place.

ANNEX III

CURRENT IFAD PROJECTS IN THE REGION

For IFAD Operations by Country, see

<http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/country.htm>

Albania

IFAD's most recent investment of USD 9.2 million in The [Mountain to Markets Programme](#) is a package of poverty-reduction measures based on participatory and systematic identification of investment opportunities in poor mountain areas. The goal is to increase the incomes of poor rural people in the northern part of Albania, the most disadvantaged part of the country.

The [Programme for Sustainable Development in Rural Mountain Areas](#) supports initiatives to increase household income among rural poor people in mountainous areas. One of the programme's objectives is to convert the Mountain Areas Finance Fund into a fully operational rural commercial bank owned by clients and investors. The Mountain Areas Development Programme, a major development effort initiated by IFAD, focused on 16 of the country's 21 poor marginal mountain districts.

Through its [Gender Mainstreaming Programme for the Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States \(CEN\) countries](#), IFAD has provided technical assistance in the form of a USD 88,2000 grant to benefit women and youth. The grant supports a project initiated by the Mountain Areas Finance Fund to generate knowledge and develop skills that will enable rural women and young people to increase their incomes and improve their living conditions.

Armenia[Farmer Market Access Programme](#)

The objective of the programme is to make financing available to rural enterprises with good potential for rapid growth. It will help create opportunities for farmers to become more commercially oriented, and it will also increase employment prospects for rural communities.

The objective of the [Rural Areas Development Programme](#) is to stimulate sustained growth of rural enterprises by delivering an interrelated package of business development training and financing. Loans are organized through the [innovative Rural Finance Facility](#), which has attracted financing from several major donors.

Azerbaijan[Rural Development Project for the North-West](#)

The project will help small farmers and pastoralists improve crop and livestock productivity and diversify their incomes, while assisting them as they organize themselves to gain access to the many support services available from other agencies and projects in the area. Activities have a focus on the most disadvantaged groups and on women.

[North-East Development Project](#)

The overall project goal is to improve living conditions for households that depend on irrigated agriculture in the target area, by supporting increased food security and income-generating opportunities. Most of the households targeted have received plots of land through the privatization scheme.

Bosnia and Herzegovina[Rural Livelihoods Development Project](#)

The project is composed of the following: Farm reconstruction project; Small farm reconstruction and development project; livestock and rural finance development project; Rural enterprise enhancement project.

Georgia

For the [Rural Development Project](#), also co-financed with the World Bank, IFAD provides funds to support market development and rural financial services. It contributes to building the capacity of commercial banks and other financial institutions. One of the project's chief objectives is to create a model for financial services that can be replicated on a nationwide basis.

The [Rural Development Programme for Mountainous and Highland Areas](#) is a joint programme involving poor rural people in Georgia and Azerbaijan. It provides the support they need to participate in the market economy and strengthens their capacities to manage their resource base.

Republic of Moldova[Rural Financial Services and Marketing Programme](#)[Rural Business Development Programme](#)[Agricultural Revitalization Project](#)**The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

An ongoing IFAD-funded initiative is the Agricultural Financial Services Project (AFSP). The overall goal of the AFSP is to raise the standards of living of the rural population in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia through increased and sustainable economic activity that is responsive to the emerging market context.