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**THIRD PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
PLAN OF ACTION FOR INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

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## **I. BACKGROUND**

### **A. The 25th Session of the Conference**

1. The Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development (WID) was originally requested by the 24th Session of the Conference and approved by the 94th Session of the Council in 1988 to cover the medium-term period 1989-1995. Through Resolution 7/89, the Conference at its 25th Session in November 1989 unanimously approved the Plan of Action. It also specifically endorsed the objectives and strategies presented in the First Progress Report on Implementation of the Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development (C89/14). The Conference further requested that progress on the implementation of the Plan be monitored and reported to the 26th Session of the Conference in 1991.

### **B. The 26th Session of the Conference**

2. In November 1991, at its 26th Session, the Conference reviewed and approved the Second Progress Report on Implementation of the Plan of Action. It also requested that FAO prepare a Third Progress Report for presentation to the 27th Session of the Conference in November 1993. It requested that the Report be devoted less to descriptions of activities related to the eight programmatic priorities of the Plan of Action, as had been the case in the first two Progress Reports. Rather, the Report should focus on major and innovative efforts, especially those that pertain to: (1) the systematic integration of gender issues into mainstream FAO policy, programme and project work; and (2) the identification of major constraints to the full participation of women in activities carried out by FAO and Member Governments, as well as the means pursued to overcome these constraints.

3. The Conference, at its 26th Session, also approved the Medium-term Plan covering the period 1992-97. In the Medium-term Plan, FAO reconfirmed its commitment to the implementation of the Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development by highlighting it as one of nine Organization-wide challenges and one of five thematic priorities. The guiding principles and priorities of the Plan of Action are reiterated and adopted for the entire Medium-term period.

## **II. PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN OF ACTION**

4. This Report focuses on progress achieved in the implementation of the Plan of Action over the biennium 1992-93. The First Progress Report on Implementation of the Plan of Action (1989) defined seven programmatic and five administrative priorities. An eighth programmatic priority dealing with sustainable development was added in the Second Progress Report and was approved by the Conference in 1991. Section III of this Report focuses on progress achieved in relation to the eight programmatic priorities. Section IV discusses progress pertaining to the five administrative priorities.

5. The eight programmatic priorities of the Plan of Action are:

- (1) Training on Women in Development
- (2) Policy Advice to Member Governments
- (3) Project Development and Monitoring
- (4) Reorientation of Home Economics and Agricultural Curricula
- (5) Preparation and Promotion of WID Guidelines and Manuals



- (6) Data Collection, Research Studies, Communication and Public Information
- (7) Population Education and WID
- (8) Sustainable Development, Natural Resource Management, and Environment

6. Section III is divided into three main parts that reflect the major means to achieve the goals of the Plan: (A) Project Development and Monitoring, (B) Training, and (C) Policy Advice to Member Governments. Data collection, research studies, communication and public information are inputs for each of these three major activities, as is the production and dissemination of guidelines and manuals. Their discussion is therefore integrated into each of the three topics. Further, the substantive priorities are discussed in relation to these three topics, as are other areas of substantive work in FAO.

7. Section IV reports progress achieved, constraints identified, and proposals for improvement concerning the five administrative priorities which are intended to strengthen FAO's institutional support for the Plan of Action. These are:

- (1) Undertaking organization-wide efforts of awareness and compliance.
- (2) Increasing financial resources for WID activities.
- (3) Increasing female staff.
- (4) Enhancing and strengthening internal action on WID.
- (5) Strengthening external working relations.

### **III. REVIEW OF SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMME ACTIONS TAKEN IN PURSUIT OF THE PLAN AND CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

8. While there is increasing recognition worldwide of rural women's critical roles in food production and food security, in natural resource and environmental management, and in household management and family welfare, rural women still confront considerable discrimination. They constitute the majority of the poor population, and their material conditions have tended to deteriorate over time. They have lower access to productive resources in comparison with men (e.g., land, water, credit, technology, extension and training); minimal and eroding access to social services (e.g., education, health care and information, population education and family planning); and little economic, political and legal power to change their circumstances. This indicates the presence of an additional major constraint: throughout the regions, insufficient effort and resources are directed toward redressing these inequalities.

9. Considering the persistence of these inequalities and of weak policy initiatives at country level, FAO and other international agencies have concluded that a two-track approach was necessary. First, women's roles must be recognized and documented, and resources must be allocated in the short term through project development and monitoring to directly provide them with greater access to resources needed to improve their lives. Examples of constraints identified and FAO's efforts in this sense are presented below. Second, over the longer term, rural women require greater access to political power and the legislative process to permanently improve their access to and control over productive resources. FAO is providing this assistance through training efforts at various levels and through policy advice directed to Member Governments which focus on achieving change in the attitudes of development specialists and policy-makers, enhancing their abilities to deal with the issues and concerns of rural women, and equipping them to develop gender-responsive policies and legislation.



**A. Project Development and Monitoring****(1) Enhancing Women's Roles and Resources: the FAO Perspective**

10. In developing countries, rural women's lack of access to productive resources continues to present a major obstacle to increasing productivity, enhancing food security and achieving environmental sustainability in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. It is also a principle cause of rural poverty. Only by making concerted efforts to improve women's access to land, water, technology and inputs, credit, markets, extension, training and population education, will major inroads be made toward achieving sustainable development.

11. It has long been recognized that increasing the productivity and incomes of poor rural populations requires that a multitude of inputs and services be provided in a coordinated manner. For example, it is not enough to increase the amount of land available if tenure is insecure, labour-saving inputs are unavailable, or market access is weak. This is particularly relevant in the case of rural women whose constraints as poor producers are compounded by their gender constraints: heavy workloads, lack of mobility, inferior legal position, and relative lack of decision-making power. Their grave material situation, combined with the multiplicity of their roles and constraints, requires the development of more profound knowledge about the gender division of labour, as well as the careful articulation of innovative solutions that make maximum use of scarce resources.

12. In November 1991, the 26th Session of the FAO Conference adopted as the eighth priority for implementation of the Plan of Action, "Women, Sustainable Development, Natural Resource Management and Environment." This reflects the increasing recognition that women have a significant relation to the environment and to the achievement of sustainable agricultural development, as was highlighted in the FAO/Netherlands Conference on Agriculture and the Environment, the "den Bosch" Conference, in April 1991. The concern about women has arisen even more forcefully with the Rio Conference and the adoption of Agenda 21, especially **Chapter 24: "Global Action for Women towards Sustainable and Equitable Development"**.

13. Women have been the historical mainstay of many of the world's viable agro-ecological systems. Women's relation with the environment is derived from their fundamental role as household managers and providers of basic food stuffs, fuel and water for their families. Whether reference is made to sub-Saharan Africa or the Caribbean, where women produce 60-80 percent of the supply of basic foodstuffs mainly through shifting agriculture, or to Asia, where they perform over 50 percent of the labour involved in intensive rice cultivation, or to Indonesia or Central and South America, where their home gardens represent some of the most complex agro-silvo-pastoral systems known, women have vast responsibility for and knowledge of sustainable agriculture systems.

14. Women's perceptions of the environment are tied to their concerns with food security. Changes in land and tree tenure, land use, technology and inputs, are viewed by women according to their effects on the supply of water for domestic use and small-scale irrigation; on the possibilities for gathering fuelwood, fodder, medicinal plants and insects; on tree, plant, and animal production for consumption and sale. Women become abusers of the environment under those conditions where assuring food security in the short term compromises the resource base in the long term. Their perceptions of the causes and effects of this dilemma are often correct but frequently overlooked. Their perceptions of, and concerns with, the multiple and interrelated impacts of changes they cannot control are often not shared by the more powerful decision-makers in their societies.



(2) **Project Development and Monitoring and Related Regular Programme Support Over the Biennium**

15. The project development and monitoring activities and related Regular Programme support undertaken in the past biennium to enhance women's roles and increase their access to productive resources vary considerably across the Organization. Often, pilot studies and activities are launched and lessons learned are then integrated into follow-up phases or similar projects in other areas. The experience gained is also used to strengthen policy advice activities. While many examples can be given of FAO's efforts, only a few of the more innovative activities are highlighted in the following pages. The examples given focus on four critical areas: (1) financial resources, (2) technical training and extension services, (3) environment, natural resource management and sustainable development, and (4) nutrition and food security.

(a) **Credit and Banking Services**

16. Constraints Identified. The availability of institutional credit is important to small producers in developing countries since it enables them to engage in activities in more profitable sectors of the economy that ultimately will improve their living standards. In general, credit is intended to finance the acquisition of inputs and, especially for women, to permit investment in processing and marketing facilities and services.

17. One of the main constraints to increasing rural women's productivity is their lack of access to credit and banking services. The factors responsible include: (i) a lack of awareness of and ability to use formal credit facilities, in part due to illiteracy; (ii) a lack of collateral combined with stringent lending terms; (iii) mobility constraints combined with the lack of easily-accessed financial facilities; (v) lack of control over the use of credit and over the benefits to be derived at the household level; and (iv) the reluctance of banks to provide small-loan programmes due to their high transaction costs. FAO experiences have demonstrated that a number of combined actions must be taken to increase women's access to credit.

18. First, attention must be given to capacity-building among beneficiaries before credit is introduced. A major share of project resources must be invested in human resource development, and more emphasis must be placed on savings mobilization as an alternative or complement to credit. Capacity-building should focus on training for skills development and on establishing self-reliant women's groups capable of pooling resources. Women's groups serve as a channel for skills development programmes that enhance production, group mobilization, financial management and marketing. In turn, these groups enhance rural women's decision-making power regarding the use of credit and the benefits derived therefrom.

19. Second, local NGOs should be carefully selected and mobilized to help organize women's groups and to act as liaisons with credit institutions. This lowers organizational costs, helps defray transaction costs to lenders, and integrates women into formal delivery systems for credit and support services.

20. Third, in order to enable credit facilities to reach rural areas, assistance should be oriented toward reducing transaction costs, systematizing loan procedures and establishing guarantee funds. It is also important that bank staff be trained in appropriate means to appraise, disburse and supervise credit extended to resource-poor beneficiaries.

21. Fourth, alternatives to credit should be contemplated, exemplified by in-kind revolving funds and seed banks, which permit target groups to raise their productivity or increase their incomes to the point where credit is either not required or they become credit worthy.



22. Systematizing Loan Procedures. Revolving funds and credit programmes are not known for their high recovery rates, due in part to the lack of clear arrangements for loan management and repayment. In 1991 and 1992 the Fishery Department (FI) developed and introduced a set of management guidelines that clearly define how to establish and manage a revolving fund. The subjects broached include interest rates and charges, repayment periods, and procedures for arrears control and payment rescheduling which safeguard the purchasing power of the fund.

23. These guidelines have been introduced in fisheries credit schemes across Africa. They have had significant positive impacts on loan recovery rates, which in many programmes are now at 80-90 percent. An example of the impact of this effort is provided by the Cooperative and Rural Development Bank of Tanzania which operates a fund under the FAO Integrated Technical Assistance and Credit for Artisanal Fishermen project. The current overall rate of loan repayment is 77 percent, in contrast to the average loan recovery rate of 29 percent for the five-year, pre-guideline period ending 1989-1990.

24. This particular project has provided other important lessons. A 1988 evaluation identified factors limiting credit programme effectiveness. Elaborate lending procedures prevented the programme from meeting credit demands. Further, the main targets were borrowers with high cash equity, which neglected poorer fisherfolk, particularly women. Finally, the fund's purchasing power was continually eroding since only the loan principle was revolving, while interest remained with the Bank. In response, the project developed a simpler and more flexible credit delivery and recovery system, a special credit scheme for women with no access to collateral, and a fund stabilization component. Also, when the project started lending to women, it extended the categories of inputs eligible for finance. At first, loans were disbursed for fishing equipment used by men: when categories were extended, inputs that women needed for processing and marketing became accessible. Women borrowers soon constituted 10 percent of individual loan recipients. These innovations have been replicated in other FAO projects.

25. Establishing Revolving Funds. UNFPA is funding a programme in China directed at minority women in poor, remote rural counties in eight provinces. These minorities have the highest population growth rates in China and are affected by environmental deterioration. This programme, managed by the Agricultural Services Division (AGS), is attacking the population problem at its roots, which are related to poverty and the low status of women. It provides a package for women that includes literacy education, agricultural and technical skills training, family planning, health care, and small enterprise management. The programme has two main strategies, both of which hinge on a revolving fund scheme.

26. First, women's on- and off-farm enterprises are established and funded by loans from project resources. The enterprises repay project loans and loan payments are rolled over to women's groups formed with the support of an NGO, the All-China Women's Federation. When these groups repay their loans these are again rolled over to other women's groups. All women's groups receive training in micro-enterprise and financial management. About 6 000 women are participating in women's groups, and several thousand more in the enterprises. It is estimated that a further 100 000 households will benefit from the project by supplying the enterprises with raw materials. The synergistic effect of the programme in all aspects of women's lives is helping to raise their status and productivity.

27. Reducing Transaction Costs. The FAO Microbanking System, a computerized software system, has demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing transaction costs. It is now operational in more than 250 banks and bank branches in five countries in Asia, where the number is expected to reach 330 by the end of 1993. A survey conducted in the Philippines indicated that women constitute 70 percent of the clientele served by banks equipped with the System.



28. In-Kind Revolving Funds and Group Savings. Since 1985, Norway and the Arab Gulf Programme have been funding an integrated agricultural development project in Sierra Leone which seeks to improve household food security and increase women farmers' cash income. The project works to develop groups capable of managing new production and marketing schemes without a need for outside support. As of mid-1993, some 3 000 women farmers were organized in 174 groups across 70 villages in northern Sierra Leone. Many of these groups have established savings and credit schemes where members make monthly contributions to build up investment funds. Members decide how to invest and how to provide credit.

29. In one area, for example, women farmers' groups have been organized to produce vegetables for under-supplied markets in urban areas. At the beginning, high quality seeds and other inputs were provided through a project-supported credit scheme. As the groups' financial situation improved, they were able to cover most operating costs through savings. In fact, in 1992, five groups organized the Kabala Central Marketing Cooperative to sell vegetables in Freetown. The project provided technical assistance and loaned a truck to carry produce to the markets. Assistance has been reduced as groups have developed market contacts and logistical and management skills. Women have assumed the financial costs of this activity, and are purchasing two trucks with their own funds without a financial subsidy from the project.

30. In another, more remote zone, a major achievement has been the establishment of an in-kind revolving fund to provide groundnut seed. Groundnuts are grown almost exclusively by women and are crucial to the family diet and to generate cash income that women use to pay school fees for children. Typically, a large proportion of the harvest is sold for cash, and few farmers are able to retain a sufficient stock of seed for planting. At planting season, seed must be purchased at up to 120 percent above the selling price at the time of harvest.

31. The project began with 1 300 women who were cultivating one acre each. The project contributed seed stock to form an in-kind fund for groups. Group leaders were responsible for distribution and collection of stocks. Stocks increased from 21 mt in 1988 to 120 mt in 1992 through 30 percent annual interest payments. The repayment rate is over 90 percent which has allowed seed to be distributed to new participants, so that now more than 2 000 women farmers cultivate two acres each. Production groups have been transformed into village cooperatives that are able to cover operational expenses.

32. Increasing Incomes and Savings through Grain Banks. With the support of UNDP, UNIFEM and WFP, AGS is implementing a cereal bank project targeting rural women in the Sudan. Traditional grain storage structures have been improved and eleven cereal banks developed in project areas. Rather than selling cereals to traders from larger marketing centres, women sell directly to these banks. This has two advantages: first, by retaining grain locally, food security is enhanced for the villagers; and second, by reducing transport costs, women obtain a higher selling price for grains and a lower buying price for seed, thereby reducing the need for credit.

**(b) Extension and Technical Training**

33. Constraints Identified. Extension and technical training are rarely available to women farmers, even where they constitute the majority of producers. In 1988-89, only about five percent of agricultural extension resources worldwide were directed to female farmers. Further, only 15.6 percent of all extension personnel were women. Several countries reported having no women extension agents. There are still few women who apply for positions in agricultural education and extension, and few who apply for or are admitted to agricultural colleges.



34. Women's low access to training and extension services has been attributed to factors such as higher illiteracy rates and greater lack of mobility. However, several other constraints have also been identified. First, extension and other training agencies often fail to appraise and recognize the importance of women in agricultural production, which results in a failure to include them in target groups. Second, extension and training approaches are not always participatory and are rarely based on an accurate assessment of gender constraints and needs, and thus leave out the female population. Third, there is insufficient interaction between extension services and research institutions, and often insufficient research on crops produced largely or exclusively by women. Fourth, social and cultural conditions in many developing countries make it difficult for male extension agents to deal directly with rural women, while at the same time there are few female extension agents who could more easily reach them.

35. Further, privatization of extension and training services is a major trend which must be considered in future activities. Privatization can decrease women's opportunities to accede to these services since women have less ability to pay for these services, lower professional skills, higher illiteracy rates, less access to modern technology, and lower participation rates in rural organizations which would otherwise permit group access to private services.

36. Targeting Women Professionals and Women Farmers. The latest available data (1991) on FAO Field Projects which have a training component indicate that women represent 23 percent of all trainees. While this data confirms the upward trend evident since 1982 when only 10 percent of those trained were women, it represents an overall decrease since 1989, when 29 percent of all Field Projects trainees were female. However, the trend is not the same for all regions. In Latin America, the Near East and Europe there were significant increases in the proportion of female trainees over the period 1989-1991 (Latin America rose from 15 to 29 percent; the Near East went from 22 to 31 percent, and Europe rose from 29 to 50 percent). Lower figures were reported in Africa and Asia, where the percentages declined, respectively, from 30 percent to 19 percent, and from 36 percent to 22 percent. The reasons for the short-term variations in Field Project training in Africa and Asia need to be explored, while the trends in the other regions reflect continuous significant progress.

37. FAO Regular Programme training activities continue to show the same upward tendency in the percentage of female participants that has been evident over the past decade. Organization-wide data collected by ESH indicated that in 1989 the participation rate was 19 percent, whereas in 1991 it reached 28 percent. Data provided by the PLANSYS Output Module covering Regular Programme funded training and meeting activities under Chapter 2 of the Programme of Work and Budget, "Technical and Economic Programmes", can be found in Table 1. The data provided include, for the first time, participation in training and meeting events by gender and target group.

38. Women represented 22.6 percent of all trainees. Female participation was highest when training was oriented towards grass-roots groups (55 percent), and lowest when oriented towards managers (18 percent). A quarter of all policy-makers trained were women, whereas a fifth of all technical specialists and researchers were female. As regards all meeting events, women represented 21 percent of participants. Again, women were least likely to participate in meetings with managers; they were twice as likely to participate in meetings for policy-makers (22 versus 12 percent). These figures reveal that, although progress in women's participation has been made, FAO and especially Member Governments must redouble their efforts to assure that women benefit from training and contribute to meetings in all areas related to FAO's mandates.

39. In its Field Projects, the Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP) is addressing the specific needs of women in horticultural production. The employment of female technical advisers has been a key factor in reaching women farmers in several countries in Asia and Africa. Another



AGP effort links rural women's groups with national scientific and technical institutions in Southeast Asian countries, in order to identify innovative means to promote and produce nutritious fruits and vegetables and other marketable horticultural crops. A demonstration-based methodology has been developed to reach women's groups in Indonesia with training and extension on small scale horticultural cash crop production, which can be adapted to different social, economic and agro-climatic contexts.

**Table 1: 1992-93 FAO Regular Programme funded Services to Member Governments:  
Participants in Training Activities and Meetings**

Activity/Target Group	Total	Male		Female	
		No.	%	No.	%
<b>Training<sup>1</sup></b>					
Grass-roots	232	105	45.3	127	54.7
Managers	733	602	82.1	131	17.9
Policy-makers	1 129	850	75.2	279	24.7
Technical specialists and researchers	5 331	4 189	78.6	1 142	21.4
<b>Total Training</b>	<b>7 425</b>	<b>5 746</b>	<b>77.3</b>	<b>1 679</b>	<b>22.6</b>
<b>Meetings<sup>2</sup></b>					
Managers	753	665	88.3	89	11.8
Policy-makers	10 358	8 081	78.0	2 277	22.0
Technical specialists and researchers	3 349	2 707	80.8	642	19.2
<b>Total Meetings</b>	<b>14 460</b>	<b>11 453</b>	<b>79.2</b>	<b>3 008</b>	<b>20.8</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes courses, seminars and workshops, field days and study tours.

<sup>2</sup> Includes intergovernmental meetings, intergovernmental technical consultations, expert consultations/panels of experts, non-statutory meetings.

40. AGS implements projects in Lesotho and Nepal that are designed to eliminate marketing problems and increase the incomes of vegetable producers who are primarily women. In conjunction with extension services, these producers are being trained in production planning, improved post-harvest techniques and producer-market linkages, providing a package of rural services for women.

41. The Land and Water Development Division (AGL) emphasizes the role of women in plant nutrient and natural resource management projects. All fertilizer projects include farmer's field days focusing on the roles and responsibilities of women in plant nutrition. Projects in three countries have specially designed components that target women farmers in fertilizer use for vegetable production, plant nutrient management, and group vegetable gardening. Where possible, special in-service training is offered to women extension workers.

42. The Animal Production and Health Division (AGA) brought to completion the execution of a UNDP-funded Livestock Development Project in Yemen. Project surveys indicated that over 80 percent of all agriculture and livestock activities were performed by women. Consequently, a major component was oriented toward developing appropriate extension packages for improving sheep and goat production, an area which previously had not been a major target of extension services. The project trained village women trainers who in turn trained women as contact farmers.



43. A follow-up project will examine an alternative approach to providing semi-privatized livestock extension services to women. Producers will share the burden of supporting any extension service, so it is essential that extension agents provide services, information and inputs that meet the needs of both male and female producers. By working through contact families rather than contact farmers, both women's and men's access to extension should be enhanced. The pilot system would provide financial incentives to extension workers based on performance, which is to be evaluated by supervisors and recipients. If this is successful, the community will eventually take responsibility for paying, at minimum, the performance incentives.

44. A "Learners' Primer" and "Facilitators' Guide" have been prepared through the Regional Office for Africa (RAFR) on numeracy for illiterate adult women engaged in small businesses. Field-testing has shown that concentrating on numeracy before introducing literacy increases the efficacy of training. In follow-up to this functional numeracy education, a training package has been prepared on simple bookkeeping, which will be field-tested by the end of 1993.

45. Reorienting Agricultural and Home Economics Curricula and Extension. FAO is assisting Member Governments to raise awareness among current and future generations of home economics and agricultural extension personnel on the importance of not only reaching rural women but also of providing them with technical and managerial training. The Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division (ESH) is developing a training module to be introduced into regular extension education programmes on gender in agricultural extension, which will help extension agents to understand and analyse women's roles in agriculture and their constraints to greater access to extension services, as well as means to overcome these constraints. The module will be adapted and field tested in each region before it is finally distributed to extension institutes throughout the world.

46. ESH published a study in 1993 on Agricultural Extension and Farm Women in the 1980s which analyses 1989 FAO survey data on national agricultural extension approaches collected for the Global Consultation on Agricultural Extension. It presents comprehensive information on women farmers as extension clientele and women's access to agricultural extension; women as extension personnel; and ideas on designing gender-sensitive extension programmes for the 1990s. ESH will also be examining the effectiveness and constraints of agricultural extension services as these relate to rural women in four countries in Africa, Asia, the Near East and the Caribbean, under the Andre Mayer Fellowship Programme. At the regional level, RAFR is developing a series of studies on how women's concerns are reflected in the curricula of a number of agricultural extension training institutes in selected countries. The reports will offer information which can be incorporated into existing training curricula.

47. FAO Field Projects developed several innovative approaches to overcome the constraints preventing women from receiving adequate support. At the field level in Africa, ESH is providing follow-up to a project to improve extension work with women in five countries. The results will be used to modify the methodology taught to improve extension work with women. In Sierra Leone, emphasis was placed on in-service training of extension field staff, with emphasis on participatory extension techniques. In Kenya's semi-arid zone, voluntary organizations were promoted and mobilized to enable women farmers to receive technical assistance. A women's project on irrigated agriculture in Tanzania employed mainstream irrigation programme specialists to resolve the technical problems encountered by women farmers. In Zimbabwe, establishment of women's savings groups enabled them to attract the attention and assistance of extension agents. In Malawi, gender-oriented field guidelines were developed and used for extension programme planning and execution. In Nepal, women development field officers acted as group organizers linking extension services with the technical field staff of the Ministry of Agriculture. In Honduras, a ten-year programme to train peasant women as extension liaisons is improving rural food security through organic home gardening.



48. ESH prepared a document in 1992 entitled Reorientation of Home Economics for Rural Development in Developing Countries. It provides a conceptual framework to introduce household technology, agricultural production and rural development problems of rural communities into educational programmes. The framework stresses the need for improved interaction between home economics and agricultural professionals in the development of curricula to serve the diverse technology needs of rural households. FAO also published Rural Households and Resource Allocation for Development: An Ecosystem Perspective. This training manual is designed for post-secondary level education in agriculture, home economics and other rural development programmes. It promotes a systems approach to the family that integrates ecological perspectives.

49. At the field level, FAO provided direct assistance to reorient agricultural and home economic curricula in three countries. Further, workshops were held to discuss strategies to improve home economics extension and strengthen linkages between home economic and agricultural extension services and NGOs that work with rural women. A workshop in Thailand was attended by representatives of nine Asian countries, while another in Tanzania was attended by representatives from East and Southern Africa.

**(c) Women, Sustainable Development, Natural Resource Management and Environment**

50. Constraints Identified. Women are both the best equipped and the least equipped to manage the environment. They are the best equipped with determination and indigenous knowledge. They can identify fresh water sources and know the quality of the water, as well as local plant and tree species that have economic value as fodder, food, and medicines, and understand their growing conditions and other properties. They have a wealth of knowledge about crop associations, integrated pest management, weeding, plant protection and soil conservation. Their labour is more often called upon for community and national conservation measures such as afforestation, dam and reservoir construction, and contour and terrace construction and maintenance. On the other hand, they are least equipped since they usually have no voice or vote in overall decisions affecting their natural environment; their land and tree tenure is generally precarious and eroding; they lack access to basic services and credit; they find that perhaps their most critical resource - their labour supply - is diminishing. As ecological conditions deteriorate, some of their traditional knowledge and techniques become dysfunctional, some are lost from one generation to the next, and some cannot be applied due to a lack of time and other resources.

51. Establishing the Links and Enhancing Women's Roles. FAO's work on women, sustainable development, natural resource management and environment is coordinated through the Office of the Special Adviser to the Director-General for Environment and Sustainable Development. While a large number of FAO activities are oriented toward enhancing women's roles in sustainable development, specific efforts are focused on researching and raising awareness on the links between rural women, poverty, population and the environment.

52. As a contribution to implementation of Chapter 24 of Agenda 21, and to the 1993 Year of Indigenous Populations, FAO is developing technical guidelines that help development experts understand women's indigenous technical knowledge and their roles in the preservation of biodiversity. Other technical guidelines are planned which will deal with the issues of women and farm mechanization, appropriate technology and sustainability, and irrigation and water use.

53. The Forestry Department (FO) prepared a resource document on 'Gender, Women and Community-wide Resource Management' which was written for the African Forestry Commission. FO is also preparing a technical book entitled Sustainable Forest Management which considers gender issues as these relate to resource management and rural development. Sustainable community forestry activities must recognize the role of women and provide them with viable income-generating



opportunities. FO is planning to present selected case studies carried out over the biennium in future issues of the FAO Forest Harvesting Bulletin on activities which provide employment and income predominantly to women. FO also developed and executed a gender training programme for the forestry sector in Asia (see paragraph 65).

54. In India, FAO and UNDP are developing a 'Community-Based Programme for Sustainable Farming Systems in Fragile Areas' where gender issues are being addressed. In Latin America, two studies carried out in 1992 examined varieties of indigenous crops that have been domesticated and adapted by small-scale farmers. Both were concerned with the role of women in the management of genetic resources (potatoes in Peru and maize in Guatemala). The studies are being used in collaboration with AGP as a contribution to 1993 World Food Day in the area of bio-diversity, and for the UN in its focus on indigenous populations.

55. As a part of the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, a UN Expert Group Meeting on Population and Women was held in Botswana in 1992. A FAO paper examined rural women's needs for and attitudes toward large families and related these to environmental deterioration, health and nutrition. With financing from UNFPA, FAO sponsored a Regional Workshop on Women, Population and Sustainable Agricultural Development in Zimbabwe in December 1991. The Workshop Report contains summaries of reports from six African countries. Further, FAO is preparing policy guidelines with UNFPA support on women, population and environment for Asia (see paragraph 93).

56. FAO also recognizes the urgent need to understand and improve the role of agricultural education and extension institutions in the sound management of the natural environment at farm and community levels, and to measure the scope and extent of integration of curricula on environment and sustainable development in agricultural education and extension programmes. An "Expert Consultation on the Integration of Environmental and Sustainable Development Themes into Agricultural Education and Extension Programmes" will be held in December 1993. One of the core papers addresses gender issues and the role of women in environment and sustainable development within the context of agricultural extension and training.

#### **(d) Nutrition and Food Security**

57. Women's essential roles and major constraints relating to nutrition and food security have been identified in paragraphs 10 to 14 above. FAO continues to strive to enhance women's roles as primary nutrition managers at the household level, as income providers and as food producers, and to increase their access to all necessary resources.

58. The World Declaration and Plan of Action for Nutrition. For many countries, the elaboration of comprehensive food security programmes aimed at improving household food security will be an essential step toward realizing the objectives laid out in the World Declaration and Plan of Action for Nutrition adopted by the International Conference on Nutrition in December 1992. As follow-up to this Plan, FAO provides assistance for the assessment of food security and nutritional status, which includes gender specific data collection and dissemination.

59. The World Declaration and Plan of Action for Nutrition place particular emphasis on eliminating all forms of gender discrimination and on promoting gender equality. The Plan of Action on Nutrition seeks to promote and ensure meaningful equality between women and men through several mechanisms. These include: understanding women's roles in the community; affording women and girls equitable access to economic opportunities and to education and training; and adopting legal measures and social practices that guarantee women's equal participation in the



development process by ensuring their access and rights to utilize productive resources, markets, credits, property and other family resources.

60. Early Warning. At the national level, gender issues are considered in activities of the Early Warning Food Information Systems (EWFIS) of the Commodities and Trade Division (ESC) relating to surveillance, the development of national food and nutrition policies, and the incorporation of nutrition concerns into development policies and programmes. FAO is providing such gender-responsive assistance on behalf of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). A similar exercise has been initiated in Latin America in collaboration with the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA). EWFIS are expanding their activities in several countries to provide assistance in the formulation of more comprehensive food security programmes at the household level. On the basis of experience gained in pilot activities in four countries in Africa, five more countries were added over the biennium, including two in Asia.

61. Non-Traditional Foodstuffs in Household Food Security. The Nutrition Division (ESN) is also active in promoting household food security through greater reliance on traditional under-utilized foodstuffs in local food systems, where the responsibility for identifying, utilizing and preserving such food almost invariably falls to women. These foodstuffs are particularly important in areas where food shortages are common and malnutrition is widespread. The promotion of traditional foodstuffs offers a means of improving the nutritional and economic status of poor households. It can help reduce seasonal food shortages by diversifying diets, and serves to maintain social and cultural values and traditions. It also contributes to environmental sustainability since these foods are often multi-purpose and well adapted, less drought prone, less affected by pests and disease and permit better use of varied agro-ecological conditions.

62. FAO and IFAD have intensified their efforts to promote the production and consumption of under-utilized foods. For example, in 1992, the agencies jointly assisted the Government of Zambia at provincial and central levels to develop a policy to promote under-exploited traditional foodstuffs in a Vitamin A-deficient area of Luapula Province. Household level monitoring is being conducted with the help of the Central Statistical Office and with assistance from FAO, UNICEF and the World Bank. It is anticipated that the experiences gained from this activity, where women are the principal participants, can be replicated elsewhere.

## **B. Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis Training**

### **(1) FAO Training in Gender Analysis**

63. For over a decade it has been recognized that, if women are to benefit from and participate in development efforts, development specialists and policy-makers must be sensitized to gender issues, and national and UN system capacity must be developed to permit gender-responsive project, programme and policy development. Therefore, gender analysis training became FAO's first priority in implementation of the Plan of Action adopted in 1989. Initially, this training focused on the Organization's Professional Staff. By the end of 1992, ESH had carried out 42 two-day Gender Analysis Workshops at Headquarters and in Regional Offices, with 773 officers attending, representing approximately 80 percent of all Professional staff.

64. Over the past biennium, ESH has also carried out gender analysis training with two other target groups: national-level WID machineries and selected counterpart groups in member countries. Many of these training exercises were carried out in response to Government requests, such as that of the Ministry of Rural Development in Mauritania to train rural development workers and supervisors, that of the Central African Republic to train regional level extension staff, and that of Tunisia to train extension trainers and field staff.



65. The Forestry Policy and Planning Division (FON) supported the Gender Analysis and Forestry in Asia Programme throughout 1991-1992. Designed specifically to link gender analysis training to the forestry sector, the Asia Programme designed and implemented participatory training courses for national capacity-building, institutionalization, and materials development. Teams of trainers worked with national institutions and forestry projects in six countries. Thus far, the programme has trained over 350 villagers, extension workers, foresters, project managers, planners and policy-makers from governments and NGOs. The programme has been fully documented in a training package which includes the Asian case studies, two new training frameworks for field and management levels, and lessons learned in the execution of the participatory training programme and the case study research. In addition, a video is being produced which includes an overview of key gender issues in the forestry sector in Asia.

**(2) The Collaborative Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis (SEGA) Training Programme**

66. Internationally, considerable effort has gone into the design and delivery of WID/gender training programmes and guidelines. Gender analysis and gender planning tools have been designed and disseminated among a large number of people. The impact of this training, however, has not been as great as anticipated, as many development efforts still fail to adequately consider gender. This has served to underline the need to review the effectiveness of the WID/gender training and tools provided by international agencies.

67. In 1992, after largely concluding its own Gender Training Programme for Professional Staff, FAO undertook such a review along with Gender and Development trainers and managers from UNDP and the World Bank. The major conclusions were:

- (a) The content of WID/gender training should be expanded to permit gender issues to be understood in their broader social-economic and environment contexts, and to permit full integration of development priorities related to people's participation and empowerment, poverty alleviation, environment and sustainable development.
- (b) Training generally leaves participants "ready, willing but unable" to apply what they have learned, since the appropriate documentation is lacking and training methodologies require further development. Detailed guidelines for the collection and use of socio-economic and gender information for programme and project formulation exercises are required, as are sector-specific technical materials. Further, training materials and methods should be participatory, interactive and experientially based.
- (c) Efforts should be directed toward building regional and national training capacity through training-of-trainers, so that training can be more cost effective and available to a larger number of development specialists in member countries.
- (d) UN agencies can collaborate in this endeavour by pooling resources and expertise, thereby avoiding duplication and assuring greater homogeneity in the messages delivered.

68. FAO, UNDP and the World Bank have been collaborating to develop a four-year Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEGA) Training Programme to increase national and UN capacity to apply socio-economic and gender analysis to formulate gender-responsive, pro-poor and environmentally and socially sustainable projects and programmes.

69. The SEGA Programme will make available to trainers a portfolio of innovative and flexible training tools and methods which may be adapted to a variety of different cultural, political, economic and institutional contexts. It will increase the number of indigenous trainers in the developing world



with knowledge and skill in socio-economic and gender issues, to meet the already substantial demand for such training in all regions. Collaboration between United Nations agencies and the input of regional institutions and specialists will produce a design and delivery strategy encouraging maximum geographic coverage at minimal cost and optimum participation and sustainability at the regional and national level. The experience with SEGA training in each region will be fully documented and the impacts on the development work of participants will be evaluated.

70. In order to lay the foundations for the development of the SEGA Programme, the three initiating UN organizations embarked on a one-year preparatory period, October 1992 - October 1993. During this period the three agencies have:

- (a) Prepared a "common theoretical perspective" or conceptual framework that substantively addresses the issues of socio-economic and gender analysis (Lead Role: FAO).
- (b) Prepared an outline of a Field Manual which will be a general guide for socio-economic and gender analysis related to the programme and project cycle. The Field Manual will contain a series of practical tools for the identification, generation, analysis and presentation of gender-disaggregated socio-economic information (Lead Role: FAO).
- (c) Prepared guidelines for the development of Technical Supplements to the Field Manual which will each concentrate on a single sector or sub-sector, providing a socio-economic and gender responsive guide to a specific technical area (Lead Role: FAO).
- (d) Identified substantive needs, strategies and operational plans for the design, adaptation and delivery of training-of-trainers courses to build national training capacities (Lead Role: World Bank).
- (e) Identified regional, sub-regional and national entities including UN, governmental and non-governmental institutions and networks in each of the regions that could potentially serve as Programme executors and/or hosts (Lead Role: World Bank).
- (f) Achieved the support, collaboration and feedback of UN agencies and NGOs in the development and implementation of the Programme (Lead Role: UNDP).
- (g) Prepared a Project Document for presentation to potential donors (Lead Role: UNDP).

71. A Common Theoretical Perspective was developed by FAO that integrates macro (inter-household) and micro (intra-household) level socio-economic and gender analysis for environmental sustainability, poverty alleviation, equity and empowerment. The analysis is intended to provide essential inputs for programme and policy formulation. However, the programme and project formulation model that is being developed and addressed in the Perspective is founded upon stakeholders' participation, negotiation and conflict resolution procedures rather than on the more traditional top-down programme/project formulation procedures based upon technical expertise.

72. The development of Technical Supplements is another priority. To assure their utility, FAO, UNDP and World Bank determined that they will be developed by technical units of the appropriate UN agencies, together with the assistance of specialists in the socio-economic and gender issues relating to the technical domain. Within FAO, this approach further integrates the Divisions into the implementation of the Plan of Action, and helps to institutionalize the use of Supplements. ESH initiated the development of several Technical Supplements during the biennium with resources from the Government of Norway and Regular Programme funds. Draft supplements



were produced for Dairy Development, Fish Processing, Farm Mechanization, Irrigation, Plant Genetic Resources, and Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge.

73. In addition to this documentation, the collaborating agencies will develop a portfolio of SEGA Training and Training-of-Trainers packages, including a variety of interactive textual and non-textual tools (such as simulations, role playing, small group discussion, participant presentations, case studies, videos, field visits, computer programmes and databases) and a flexible and participatory training methodology.

### (3) Coordination of the SEGA Programme within FAO

74. The participation of FAO's Divisions in the formulation and implementation of the SEGA Programme is being actively sought through the Working Group on Women in Development (IDWG/WID). A Project Meeting held in 1993 for the review of the Common Theoretical Perspective was attended by staff from ESH, ESN, the Policy Analysis Division (ESP), and FO and FI. In addition, FAO plans to test training materials and documentation with Headquarters and Regional staff. At the request of the IDWG/WID, ESH is drawing upon content and lessons learned from related activities within the Organization.

75. The Fishery Policy and Planning Division (FIP) produced a set of guidelines that address gender issues in aquaculture and inland fisheries. These were developed by sector specialists in conjunction with fisheries professionals from Africa as a component of a regional aquaculture and fisheries programme. They are intended to serve as a guide for planners to integrate gender concerns in aquaculture and inland fisheries activities in ten countries in Africa. These guidelines cover many of the same issues that are contemplated by the SEGA Programme, but are regionally and country specific. They will provide a solid base for the development of SEGA technical supplements in Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries.

76. In 1992, the Investment Centre (DDC) produced guidelines on 'Sociological Analysis in Agricultural Investment Project Design', in which gender analysis is treated as an integral part of social analysis. In more general terms, gender issues are addressed in the Centre's 'Guidelines on Agricultural Investment Project Design', which were also finalized in 1992. These guidelines have facilitated integration of gender issues in DDC-assisted investment projects preparation. For example, at the request of financing institutions, in 1992 all of the 28 documents prepared for submission to IFAD incorporated gender issues, as did three documents prepared for the Asian Development Bank and eight prepared for the World Bank.

77. ESP prepared a training module on the social impact of policies regarding macro-economic reform and poverty alleviation in Africa, which addresses gender issues. ESP also produced the gender-responsive 'Guidelines on Social Analysis for Rural Area Development Planning', which is to be used in training activities in decentralized planning, and the Division highlighted 'Gender Considerations in Food and Agricultural Policy Analysis Training' relating to the implementation of structural adjustment programmes. Finally, in 1993, AGP finalized its guidelines for integrating women into plant protection programmes and projects.

## C. Providing Gender-Responsive Policy Advice to Member Countries

### (1) Major Challenges and Constraints: the FAO Perspective

78. Gender-responsive policy advice must cover a wide range of issues which affect the formulation of policies and related action programmes on the effective integration of gender issues into all aspects of agricultural development at the national, provincial and grass-roots level. In this



respect, gender issues must be identified in the overall and specific development objectives of the particular country, and the interdependence between gender issues and key development issues must be brought to the attention of decision-makers and programme planners. This includes, for example, gender issues in relation to: poverty alleviation, food security, rural employment opportunities, improved production through the most effective use of production resources, diversification of rural income opportunities with off-farm economic activities, and harmonizing environmental protection with agricultural development activities.

79. There is a great need to improve understanding of the impact of macro-economic policies on rural women. Over the last decade, a growing number of developing countries have implemented a package of economic reforms generally defined as 'stabilization' and 'structural adjustment'. Despite the criticisms that still accompany the implementation of these programmes, there is a growing consensus that economic reform in many countries cannot be delayed. Whatever the original causes of economic recession and disequilibrium, it is now widely accepted that economic management must be strengthened to reverse the negative economic trends. Since the mid-1980s, research has demonstrated that stabilization and structural adjustment programmes frequently have unintended negative consequences for disadvantaged populations, including rural women generally and women-headed households in particular. This has contributed to the increase in the number of requests for WID policy advice.

80. While a fair amount of research has been conducted on the negative impact of stabilization and structural adjustment programmes on women, there has been considerably less on the impact of specific agricultural and rural development policy decisions related to such programmes, such as those regarding agricultural prices, marketing and processing, credit, fiscal and monetary programmes affecting the rural population, food security, and farm and household policy impact monitoring. The lack of such research reflects: (a) a failure on the part of policy-makers, analysts and advisors to recognize the significance of such policy decisions for disadvantaged populations; (b) the lack of macro-economic policy specialists with social and gender sensitivity; and (c) a paucity of relevant data and indicators.

81. Establishing the linkages mentioned in the above paragraphs requires a robust information system. Agriculture and rural development policies, programmes and projects have often not fully succeeded because these relations are ill-understood, and rural men and women's social, economic, legal, technological and other short-term and strategic needs and constraints are not addressed adequately. In particular, the importance of rural women's productive, reproductive and community roles have often been underestimated due to the lack of adequate data. This is in turn a consequence of the fact that concepts, methods and actual practice of collecting, compiling and analysing gender-disaggregated data on the rural population in developing countries are deficient in several respects. Major constraints are: (1) lack of tabulation and dissemination of data collected by gender; (2) biases in data collected by gender; (3) major gaps in the data; and (4) non-applicability of concepts and classifications to small-scale or subsistence agriculture.

82. It is important to note that the provision of action-oriented policy advice to Member Governments is demand-driven. Member Governments make these requests, which are sent by relevant authorities to FAO Headquarters or routed through the Country Representations. While the number of such requests has steadily increased, it is still not in line with the actual need for gender-related policy formulation assistance. Another source of requests is related to the new UNDP successor arrangements, where the UNDP-funded TSS-1 mechanism is used for policy review and upstream programme and project identification. The incorporation of gender issues into country programmes and projects is vitally important for FAO's future role in the execution of UNDP-funded programme components of activities in the agricultural sector. During the biennium, the Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service (ESHW) received only two country requests



from UNDP/FAO field offices for TSS-1 activity execution. Therefore, there is a need to inform and motivate FAO Representatives to dialogue with UNDP Resident Representatives in order to include gender issues in the preparation of TSS-1 proposals. Suggestions are made regarding training of FAO Representatives in paragraph 110.

**(2) FAO Policy Advice over the Biennium**

83. FAO policy advice activities have sought not only to influence policy decisions that have an impact on rural women and households, but also to strengthen national WID machineries in government agencies and NGOs concerned with rural women, especially to increase their capacity to participate more effectively and actively in policy formulation processes. As a complement, FAO assists rural women to develop capacities to mobilize politically to confront discrimination, not as individuals, but as more powerful groups. This assistance provides strategic education and training inputs, helps in the formation of women's organizations that can address political agendas, and increases women's access to and control of economic resources.

84. FAO also focuses on data collection and review as well as on studies of agriculture and sub-sector performance. It prepares projects that integrate gender into all aspects of national agricultural development policies and action programmes at all levels. Assistance is provided to train agricultural planners and field officers in gender in agriculture and rural development.

85. Strengthening WID Machineries. During the biennium, a majority of the requests for policy assistance received by ESH have focused on the creation or strengthening of national-level WID machineries. These machineries are governmental units established separately, or within line ministries and/or NGOs, that are concerned with promoting the interests and concerns of women. Strengthening these units simultaneously strengthens the voices of the rural and urban women who are their clients.

86. The activities undertaken by FAO to strengthen the WID machineries over the past biennium have concentrated on: (i) training staff in management, organization, and gender issues; (ii) establishing coordinating mechanisms between the unit and other government entities and NGOs; and/or (iii) preparing national strategies and plans of action. Twenty-one countries have requested and received such assistance since 1991.

87. Influencing Policy Formulation. The FAO Plan of Action on People's Participation adopted by the 26th FAO Conference in November 1991, foresees that FAO provide advice to governments on measures for increasing the participation of rural people, especially women, in the process of rural development planning.

88. For 1993-95, the Regional Office for the Near East (RNEA) is developing, in coordination with Member Governments, donors and NGOs, a Policy Framework and Regional Programme of Action for Women in Agriculture in the Near East (RPAWANE). This programme will be based on an interactive participatory approach where people, ideas, institutions and resources can complement and support each other. This is expected to strengthen broad based regional cooperation and avoid fragmented efforts.

89. Examples of projects and other efforts intended to influence policy formulation at the country level are many. Indonesia was assisted with the development of a national project for the incorporation of gender factors in all policies and action programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture. In China, an FAO-assisted review provided guidelines to the Government and donor agencies on gender roles in the changing rural economy. The Planning Division of the Ministry of Agriculture in the Philippines is being provided with support to develop a project which will integrate rural



women's concerns into the agricultural planning process. RNEA and other UN organizations and agencies (UNDP, World Bank, UNEP, WFP) collaborated with the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MOALR) in the preparation of Egypt's agricultural strategy for the 1990s. RNEA also contributed to the work undertaken by a mission to Jordan to integrate gender issues into their programme for the agriculture sector, as well as to strengthen Jordan's WID coordinating unit.

90. In the biennium, eleven governments in Africa and Asia requested assistance from ESC for the formulation of comprehensive national food security strategies and action programmes. This involves assessment of national food security systems to identify problems, constraints and issues to be addressed, and the identification of food insecure population groups, their location and characteristics, and proposals for appropriate solutions. Particular attention is given to the problems women face, and gender specificity has been built into the proposed policy changes and action programmes. For example, in Africa, a common feature of the recommended food security policies and programmes are policies and actions to relieve rural women of their heavy workload in food production and processing, and to improve their access to extension services.

91. Policy Advice Relating to Stabilization and Structural Adjustment Programmes. To respond to the constraints identified regarding these specific policy areas, ESH has been collaborating with ESP to research the availability of information which would permit integration of gender issues in training modules for mid-level policy planners. Two case studies are being prepared for inclusion in these modules. The first considers the impact at the household level of policy decisions regarding the commercialization of agriculture in Rwanda; the second traces the effects of macro-economic and agricultural policies relating to sugar cane production on intra-household food security, health and nutrition in Kenya. ESP and ESH will continue to develop the documentation necessary to incorporate socio-economic and gender issues into various macro-level policy training and advice instruments.

92. RNEA is providing support on a regional level. Several countries in the Near East are undertaking structural adjustment programmes and are giving special attention to the establishment of a sound and balanced relationship between rapid economic growth and human welfare. Measures are being taken to alleviate the negative repercussions of structural adjustment programmes on the rural poor, particularly women. The incidence of female-headed households in the Region is estimated at 16 percent. Male migration has changed the composition of rural families and is affecting the gender division of labour. Additional research is being carried out to determine the specific impact upon women's roles and workload. To accomplish this, RNEA has established regional task forces in various fields, one of which is human resources/gender and development.

93. Women, Population and Environment. As a follow-up to Agenda 21, FAO is producing Country-Specific Policy Guidelines on Women, Population and Environment for Asia. These guidelines are intended both for awareness-creation and as practical tools for the promotion of holistic approaches in policy design, programming and investment efforts. They are aimed at: (i) overcoming constraints to agricultural and rural development linked to gender inequalities, unfavourable demographic trends and environmental degradation; and, (ii) providing rural women with the economic and social conditions, as well as the technical means, to determine their own reproductive behaviour as an integral part of environmentally sustainable development. These guidelines are being drafted by specialists from ten Asian countries in collaboration with RAPA and Headquarters staff. With the assistance of UNFPA, the methodology for the production of these guidelines will be replicated in other regions in 1994 and 1995.

94. Strengthening Women's Groups and NGOs. Women's organizations, including grassroots groups, professional associations, NGOs and networks, play a vital role by forming the core for political advocacy, which is fully recognized in FAO's Plan of Action on People's Participation. Capacity must be built within these groups to permit them to act in the political domain to change



their social and economic status. One of the important needs of rural women is to create visible and powerful grassroots organizations to pressure for the legal and legislative changes necessary for them to participate more equitably in the development process (a pattern that has proven to be successful in North America, Europe and, increasingly, South and Southeast Asia.) FAO's work centres on strengthening these groups through various means, including technical training. An example of a major innovative effort to achieve these objectives is provided by the FAO-sponsored Latin American and Caribbean Network of Institutions and Agencies in support of Rural Women.

95. The Network was an outcome of an FAO-sponsored workshop and round table held in El Salvador in 1991, in which countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean participated. The workshop was arranged to discuss implementation of FAO's Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development. One of the conclusions reached by participants was that, although there is a growing body of research and experience on the status and needs of women farmers in Latin America, there is little regular exchange of information or experiences among concerned institutions and organizations. The lack of exchange limits the systematic diffusion of findings and leads to a loss of scarce development funds as a result of the duplication of activities.

96. The purpose of this Network is threefold: (i) to exchange information at national and international levels among governmental institutions, NGOs and farmers' organizations working for rural women; (ii) to represent rural women's interests in social and economic development policies, both at the national and regional levels (within bodies such as the Andean parliament and CARICOM); and (iii) to identify, validate and diffuse organizational and productive alternatives that can ensure the sustainable use of natural resources in agricultural production activities involving women farmers.

97. The members of the Network are mainly women professionals and technicians of national institutions and NGOs working in the area of women in rural development, and leaders of farm women's organizations. The beneficiaries of the Network are women farmers, policy-makers, and staff of various development programmes and projects operating in Network areas. The Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLAC) acts as the Technical Secretariat and provides assistance to the sub-regional networks (Southern Cone, Andes, Mesoamerica and the English-speaking Caribbean).

98. The Network can become a potent regional WID machinery for advancing the concerns of rural women. However, to accomplish this, it is crucial that each of these Network sub-regions receive the necessary technical, training and logistical support during their formative period. While seeking extra-budgetary resources, FAO has employed Regular Programme funds to plan sub-regional workshops that will focus on building a common framework for understanding gender and development as well as on providing participatory methodologies and organization and communication skills.

99. Improving Statistics. FAO continues to provide Member Governments with critical inputs to develop the quantitative data necessary for gender-responsive policy decision-making. Specifically, as a follow-up to the 1991 FAO-organized Inter-Agency Consultation on Women and Statistics (IACWS), assistance is being provided to accurately measure the contributions of rural women to agricultural production, environmental sustainability, poverty alleviation, food security and nutrition.

100. As a follow-up to the IACWS, the Statistics Division (ESS), together with ESHW, carried out an extensive review of the Programme for the 1990 World Census of Agriculture in preparation for the Year 2000 Round which provides guidelines to countries for their data collection efforts. This review suggested changes to the Programme for the World Census of Agriculture which would permit improved collection of data on human resources disaggregated by gender.



101. ESS, RAFR and RNEA are seeking means to implement these improvements before the Year 2000 Round. In 1993, case studies on the availability of data on human resources disaggregated by gender through agricultural censuses were conducted by census experts in seven Near Eastern countries, who also made concrete suggestions for improvement. Results will be used to make appropriate modifications in the Near East Supplement for the Programme for the **World Census of Agriculture**. RAFR has embarked on a programme to compile statistical databases on women's work and working conditions in the agricultural sector for all African countries, and to put these databases at the immediate disposal of national policy makers and planners. Additionally, RAFR is collaborating with the national statistical departments of four countries to review existing agricultural survey questionnaires to increase the gender relevance of the information collected. This work will be extended in the next biennium, and results from the pilot programmes will be utilized in the agricultural censuses of the Year 2000 Round. Further, the Regional Office for Europe (REUR), in collaboration with ESH, has initiated a two-year project to provide gender-responsive agricultural databases and country profiles for policy and programme formulators.

102. ESH is collaborating with the World Agricultural Information Centre (WAICENT), which will play a major role in the dissemination of information on women's roles in the food and agricultural sectors. The general purpose of WAICENT is to improve the timeliness and availability of information, extend statistical coverage to new areas, strengthen data analysis and dissemination, and improve documentation and statistical methods as well as the analytical content of situation and outlook publications.

103. CAPPA, an ESP computerized system for agricultural planning and policy analysis, is being remodelled as K2 to include issues related to environment and sustainable development. As part of this exercise, K2 is being designed to handle more human resource data disaggregated by gender, especially in modules dealing with the labour force, income distribution, nutrition and population. K2 will help analysts to assess the impacts of a wide range of agricultural policies on these key variables. The system should be fully operational by the end of 1994.

#### **IV. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS TAKEN IN PURSUIT OF THE PLAN AND THE CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

104. Five administrative priorities were endorsed by the 25th Conference to strengthen FAO's institutional support for the Plan of Action. These administrative priorities are:

- (1) Undertaking Organization-wide efforts of awareness and compliance.
- (2) Increasing financial resources for WID activities.
- (3) Increasing female staff.
- (4) Enhancing and strengthening internal action on WID.
- (5) Strengthening external working relations.

105. The following pages highlight FAO's efforts over the past biennium to strengthen its capabilities to administer and implement the Plan of Action, the constraints encountered over the same period, and the means proposed to overcome these constraints. Administrative priorities (1) and (4) are closely related, so these will be discussed together in the next section of the Report. Administrative priorities (2), (3) and (5) are discussed in subsequent sections. A table at the end of the **Report** summarizes proposals for improving implementation of the five administrative priorities.



**A. Undertaking Organization-wide Efforts of Awareness and Compliance, and Enhancing and Strengthening Internal Action on WID**

106. The implementation of the Plan of Action on Integration of Women in Development is a dynamic process. It requires continual vigilance as to the relevancy of the Plan and its priorities, with periodic revisions to assure its adaptation to changing circumstances. As staff become sensitized to gender issues, their need for knowledge and expertise increases. The concept of "mainstreaming" itself changes as FAO gains experience through Regular and Field Programme execution. The need for more sophisticated internal mechanisms and instruments for mainstreaming (i.e., monitoring, appraisal, coordination) becomes apparent as the number of WID/gender-related activities multiplies and their complexity increases. Each of the components of this process will be addressed in turn in this section.

**(1) Updating the Plan of Action**

107. The First Progress Report on Implementation of the Plan of Action called for a periodic review of the priority areas in order to assure their continued relevance. This review should be carried out and extended to encompass the Plan of Action, which is especially important after 1995 since the Medium-term Plan extended the implementation period through 1997. Also, the Plan constitutes the main vehicle for FAO implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies (NFLS) and the recommendations of the World Conferences on Women, including the upcoming 1995 World Conference on Women which will review the NFLS.

108. When this review is undertaken, several areas should be addressed. As a first priority, consideration should be given to narrowing the scope of the Plan and the priorities in order to further concentrate scarce resources on obtainable goals. Clearer and more operational goals would facilitate implementation and monitoring, as would the development of indicators and base-line data to monitor progress. Second, the eight priorities should be reassessed, since considerable progress has been achieved in some areas, and other issues have emerged that may require greater emphasis. Each priority should have reachable targets and measurable key indicators should be defined in order to facilitate work and reporting to the Governing Bodies.

**(2) Awareness Building through Staff Training**

109. To increase staff awareness of the substantive issues dealt with in the Plan and better prepare them to participate in its implementation, Professional Staff continued to be trained throughout 1992. **As indicated in paragraph 63**, by the end of 1992, nearly 80 percent of FAO Professional Staff had participated in the Gender Analysis Training Programme. These workshops served to sensitize Professional staff to gender issues. In part due to this sensitization, the need for additional information has grown. In particular, staff require practical tools on how to integrate social and gender concerns into Regular and Field Programme activities in their respective technical areas. Such tools are being developed under the SEGA Programme. Staff will be involved in all phases of development and implementation of the this programme, and staff training will continue as the new Programme is developed.

110. Further, the effective implementation of the Plan of Action requires the full participation of FAO Representatives, who work most closely with Member Governments to identify and design development programmes and projects. Only 10 percent of all FAO Representatives were able to attend Gender Analysis Training courses. However, in 1993, special courses have been organized for FAO Representatives at Headquarters covering critical topics, including successor arrangements. The possibilities for including Gender Training will be fully explored **in the future**.



**(3) Mainstreaming through Regular and Field Programme Activities**

111. Mainstreaming WID/gender for FAO means integrating women as participants and beneficiaries of all relevant Regular Programme activities and Field Projects, including special measures, wherever necessary, to assure that their full integration is achieved. FAO recognizes that mainstreaming across the Organization requires the means to assure that, in those instances where women are potential participants and/or beneficiaries of Regular and Field Programme activities, these would deal with the issues, strategies and resources required, and insure the identification, development, financing, execution, monitoring and evaluation of appropriate actions. To do so, however, requires a monitoring and appraisal system capable of identifying existing and pipeline Regular and Field Programme activities as well as new upstream activities that are relevant to women and to the Plan of Action; and the ready availability of WID/gender expertise or knowledge and the financial means to ensure its provision and use.

112. Regular Programme Activities. Monitoring the implementation of the Plan of Action through the Regular Programme is of crucial importance and is now being facilitated through the PLANSYS Outputs Module. This PLANSYS Module was developed to provide FAO's Governing Bodies and Secretariat with relevant, reliable and timely information on services rendered by FAO. The Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation (PBE) is working closely with the Plan of Action's Coordinating Unit, ESHW, and the Interdepartmental Working Group on Women in Development (IDWG/WID), to integrate key gender indicators into PLANSYS. Different categories of target groups have been defined and broken down by gender; this data is now available for the present biennium (refer to Table 1). Further analysis of target groups awaits availability of data from the PLANSYS Outputs Module at the Divisional and Regional levels.

113. By means of a "WID flag" that indicates the relevance of an activity specifically for women, which has been tested and needs some refinement before implementation, the Outputs Module will provide information on WID/gender-relevant training, meetings, publications and databases, and will facilitate future data collection exercises. Dialogue between PBE and ESH will continue to improve the relevance of the PLANSYS Outputs Module for monitoring and appraisal of Regular Programme funded activities.

114. Field Programme Activities. Over the biennium, FAO worked to develop a Gender Assessment Code (GAC) to permit effective monitoring and appraisal of Field Programme activities in pipeline and implementation. The GAC would measure: (a) potential WID/gender relevance; (b) the degree of effective integration of WID/gender issues in the documentation; and (c) the degree to which, in its implementation phase, an activity actually reached women as participants and beneficiaries. Besides permitting improved reporting, the GAC would be useful in identifying discrepancies, such as when there is a high potential for a project to integrate WID/gender issues and concerns but this is not reflected in the project document. Such projects could then be reviewed to correct discrepancies.

115. The IDWG/WID appointed a Working Group composed of representatives from all relevant Divisions to thoroughly examine the possibilities for the implementation of the GAC. While it was considered that the GAC is technically appropriate, the Working Group determined that it would be excessively costly to implement as originally intended. It was agreed that the staff resources required for training on the use of the GAC, coding, analysing and reporting on the data, and providing feedback to Divisions, would not be available unless current workloads were to be rearranged, with resulting costs that would be very difficult to estimate.

116. The GAC could still be used as an effective monitoring and appraisal tool if it were to be integrated into the project appraisal process within FAO. FAO is currently developing a framework



for sustainability analysis for national strategies, policies, plans, programmes and individual projects. It will also prepare sustainability assessment guidelines encompassing social, economic and technical criteria using a multidimensional framework (see Conference Document CL93/10, "FAO Activities Related to Sustainable Development and Environment"). Gender assessment would logically be required within sustainability analysis, and would be facilitated greatly if coupled with economic, social and technical analysis, which is one of the goals of the SEGA Programme. ESHW will work to assure that gender is effectively integrated into the new sustainability appraisal system.

117. The information flow from the field will also be improved over the next biennium to facilitate monitoring. The Field Programme Development Division's (DDF) Guidelines for FAO Representatives' Periodic Reporting will be revised to include systematic reporting on activities relating to the Plan of Action at country level. (These Guidelines were last revised in 1987, before the approval of the Plan of Action.) ESHW also will work closely with DDF to find means to improve information flows from the field through project reporting.

118. In addition, it is recommended that data collected from the previously mentioned exercises be complemented through the analysis of impacts of selected projects. The guidelines and questionnaires prepared to orient evaluation missions should also be modified in order to include consideration of gender impacts.

#### **(4) Providing WID/Gender Expertise and Knowledge**

119. Successful mainstreaming requires the availability of WID/gender expertise and knowledge. This is especially critical at FAO, where the majority of Professional staff have physical and biological science backgrounds rather than social science expertise. FAO has four means to provide this knowledge and expertise to its staff: through (1) consultants; (2) staff training; (3) guidelines and documentation; and (4) staff WID/gender experts. Hiring consultants is an expensive alternative but frequently occurs, especially for Regular Programme activities and projects with major WID activities. Staff training has been largely accomplished. Guidelines and documentation are being prepared to complement training and reduce dependency on WID/gender experts. In the meantime, gender experts from ESHW serve on a large number of Project Task Forces (PTF) and work as closely as possible with other Technical Units on Regular Programme activities, some of which have been described in this Report.

120. As of April 1993, the Coordinating Unit (ESHW) served as a member of 55 PTFs where technical leadership is provided by other Units in the Agriculture and Economic and Social Policy Departments. ESHW is not represented on the PTF of all projects with important WID components; this is particularly true for projects in Fisheries and Forestry. These departments have established their own working mechanisms to mainstream gender issues. The Service was the Lead Technical Unit for 25 projects, many of which were initiated in the 1980s. The number of projects for which ESHW is the Lead Technical Unit has diminished over time, which is appropriate since the goal has been to mainstream WID/gender in all appropriate FAO projects and build the expertise within other Technical Units to effectively deal with WID/gender issues.

121. This reduction in the number of projects for which ESHW is the Lead Technical Unit should help the Service to function more effectively by reducing its workload. ESHW is a Coordinating Unit, and as such must provide inputs to other Technical Units within the Organization to permit these to effectively deal with gender issues. It is proposed that ESHW continue to serve on PTFs where women are or could be significant participants or beneficiaries to assist the mainstreaming process, but that the Service should serve as Lead Technical Unit only for projects of an experimental or pilot nature.



122. Further, it is proposed that, with the implementation of a sustainability appraisal system as mentioned in paragraph 116, DDF would be more able to identify projects that require WID/gender expertise in PTFs. This will almost certainly imply an increase in the number of projects requiring inputs on WID/gender inputs, but this would increasingly be assumed by other Technical Units as their WID/gender expertise continues to develop (as is the case, for example, with Fisheries and Forestry).

123. In addition to the need to integrate gender within an overall system for sustainability appraisal, a mechanism has been partially defined for developing WID/gender expertise, achieving effective within-Division Field and Regular Programme monitoring, and systematically allocating scarce Regular Programme resources for priority Divisional activities. This is drawn from experience with the Core Group on Women and Fisheries in FI. The Core Group has representatives from four FI Divisions and serves as a forum for the discussion of gender issues and priorities. It has established Terms of Reference, and a small amount of seed money from the Regular Programme budget which is intended to initiate priority gender related activities.

124. This Core Group concept would be replicated in other Divisions (effectively replacing the "Focal Point" concept), with the aim of giving the work of each Division a higher profile. In the short term, funds could be used to develop WID guidelines (Technical Supplements) in conjunction with the SEGA Programme. Core Groups could also be assigned the task of Divisional liaison for WID/gender aspects of sustainability appraisal. These Core Groups would be the smallest effective coordination units within the house, which would liaise with the interdepartmental coordinating body on WID/gender and its Working Group, as proposed in paragraph 127. Model Terms of Reference for the Core Groups would be developed through the interdepartmental coordinating body on WID/gender.

#### **(5) Improving Coordinating Mechanisms**

125. The Interdepartmental Working Group on Women in Development (IDWG/WID) was established in 1976 to serve as the Organization-wide policy advisory and coordinating body on WID. ESHW serves as its Technical Secretariat. The IDWG held its 18th Session in April 1993 and has met on average once a year.

126. The agenda for IDWG/WID meetings is determined by ESH. Normally, most agenda items inform members of particular upcoming events of interest or of activities that require input from other units. Often an endorsement of a particular course of action is sought. The discussion of Field Programme activities has been limited. In general, the IDWG/WID has limited effectiveness as a policy advisory body. Active participation is generally limited because the group (some 20 members) is too large for effective interaction. Due in large part to the constraints presented by the group's size, meetings are held infrequently, there is not sufficient continuity in individuals' participation (although most Divisions send representatives), and meetings are held infrequently.

127. A review of FAO Special Action Programmes and interdepartmental coordinating mechanisms, including the IDWG/WID, is currently being conducted under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Director-General. Whatever its outcome, it is intended to establish, in addition to the Organization's main advisory and interdepartmental coordinating body on WID/gender, a Working Group composed of senior-level staff from Divisions with a significant number of WID/gender activities. The Working Group could in turn draw upon expertise from Core Groups formed at the Divisional level. Proposals made by the Working Group would then be discussed by the full interdepartmental coordinating body on WID/gender and, if warranted, endorsed at the Departmental level for action. This arrangement would have the advantage of permitting greater interaction between a smaller number of concerned individuals, which should



also result in greater commitment by Divisions to WID/gender activities since they will have more direct input into the decision-making process.

**(6) The Coordinating Unit**

128. The Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service (ESHW) has been designated as the external and internal Coordinating Unit for the implementation of the Plan of Action on an Organization-wide basis and at regional and country levels. Over the past decade, the tasks assumed by the Technical Unit have continued to expand. Besides being responsible for coordinating implementation of the Plan of Action, the Service is Lead Technical Unit for several Field Projects and PTF member for many additional projects. It carries out a large proportion of the Organization's Regular Programme activities directly related to the eight priority areas of the Plan of Action (including meetings, training, publications, policy advice, research, and database development), and provides various technical inputs and advice to other Divisions within FAO.

129. While the number of staff in ESHW has grown over the past several years to permit the Service to take on these additional responsibilities, this has not offset the increase in workload. This situation may be redressed in the longer term as other Divisions assume greater responsibilities and gain additional WID/gender expertise, but in the short term it is projected that the Service's workload will continue to grow. Increasing the number of Professional staff and streamlining tasks would help overcome this constraint.

**(7) Reporting on WID to FAO's Technical Committees and Governing Bodies**

130. Council Resolution 1/94 (1988) requested that FAO's main Committees include on the agenda of their next sessions an examination of the issues arising from the participation of women in the sectors for which these Committees are responsible, to make specific recommendations for action. At these sessions, recommendations have been made for follow-up actions. Those follow-up actions occurring over the present biennium are reported below. At the same time, WID matters form part of the Programme of Work and Budget and the Organization's Medium-term Plan, which are submitted to both the Council and the Conference.

131. ESH prepared a special progress report for the 12th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in 1993 on the Integration of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development, and contributed to the preparation of the section of the COAG Report on the Programme of Rural Development. In its Report, the Committee noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in gender analysis training of FAO staff at Headquarters and Regional Offices. The Committee endorsed training and other advisory activities in the areas of social and gender-responsive policy, programme and project formulation, in designing methods for reaching and training rural women for decision-making, and on integrating WID issues into themes of environment and sustainability and other mainstream programmes and projects.

132. The Committee also agreed with FAO's focus on women's access to banking services, and it noted that the current programme complies with priorities for improving statistical information, notably in regard to the World Agricultural Information Centre (WAICENT). It noted that in spite of the significant overall budgetary reduction, additional resources had been assigned for work on women's roles in sustainability, natural resources management and environment. It also endorsed policy advice to countries for gender-responsive policy and planning. COAG recognized the central role of women in nutrition and, as a follow-up to the 1992 International Conference on Nutrition (ICN), called for intensified efforts to improve the economic and social status of rural women.



133. A paper on Women and Forestry was presented to the 10th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) in March 1990, which highlighted the main obstacles to women's involvement as participants and beneficiaries in forestry activities. However, the paper did not differentiate between regions. On the recommendation of the COFO, a paper on women in forestry was presented to the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission in August 1992 and another was presented to the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission in August 1993. A paper will be presented to the Latin America and the Caribbean Forestry Commission's session in December 1993.

134. At the 18th Session of the Committee on Food Security (CFS) held in March 1993, a paper on Sustainable Development and Food Security stressed FAO's interventions that take into account the roles of men and women and their unequal access to resources. The CFS Report underscored the need to mainstream women in the agricultural development process by providing them with greater access to and control over resources as they relate to the entire food chain, from production through to consumption.

#### **B. Increasing Financial Resources for WID Activities**

135. At present there is no Organization-wide budgeting system which would permit a quantitative assessment of the amount of Regular and Field Programme resources directed at female beneficiaries. Resources often do not have direct beneficiaries and, even where they do, they are often indivisible (i.e., developing a market centre, the use of which is shared by many people). Efforts to develop project monitoring systems for WID have been concerned with the development of qualitative estimates, but it is not yet clear whether the proposals put forth could be operationalized.

136. As regards the Regular Programme, the only readily identifiable data on financial resources for WID relate to the Coordinating Unit, ESHW, which has received a constant share of resources since the Plan of Action was approved. In the 1990-91 biennium, Sub-Programme 2.1.5.4 "Women in Agriculture and Rural Development" had a budget of \$3.114 million, representing 9.6 percent of Programme 2.1.5 "Rural Development" and 1.46 percent of Major Programme 2.1 Agriculture. For the 1992/93 biennium, the budget was \$3.690 million, or 10.6 percent of Programme 2.1.5 and again 1.46 percent of Major Programme 2.1. For the 1994-95 biennium, the Summary Programme of Work and Budget proposes a preliminary figure of \$3.635 million at the same exchange rate as for the 1992/93 biennium. This represents 11.0 percent of Programme 2.1.5 and 1.45 percent of Major Programme 2.1. The change in the resources for the Coordinating Unit reflects a decrease in the allocation for Headquarters staff training in gender, which has basically been completed.

137. While Regular Programme funds for ESHW have increased over time, this has not kept pace with the demands for assistance placed on the Unit. The number of requests for assistance from ESHW has grown significantly as FAO staff, Member Governments, donors and UN agencies increasingly anticipate gender-related activities within their programmes. At the same time, external funding has decreased; Field Programme resources have declined with the UNDP successor arrangements; and, given their own lack of financial resources, other FAO units and Regional Offices increasingly turn to ESHW to seek co-financing for their new gender-related Regular Programme activities.

138. Examples of difficulties in obtaining financial resources are best illustrated by the efforts to prepare for the 1995 World Conference on Women, to produce gender-disaggregated statistics, and to provide policy advice to Member Governments. For the World Conference, FAO has been requested to assist countries in their preparations for the Conference over the next biennium (see paragraphs 149 to 150), but Regular Programme resources will be insufficient to cover these additional tasks. As regards statistics and policy advice, both are priority activities, and requests for assistance in these areas have increased. Proposals for external funding have been submitted to donor



governments, but funding has not yet been forthcoming and scarce Regular Programme resources have had to be mobilized to initiate some of the work.

139. One possible course of action to overcome these financial constraints could include special appeals to the donor community to earmark a greater proportion of their resources to support the implementation of the Plan of Action, particularly regarding those activities that are key to overcoming the constraints identified in this Progress Report.

#### C. Increasing Female Staff Levels

140. Increasing female staff levels at FAO would not only help to achieve goals of equality within the UN as requested by the General Assembly, but would also facilitate implementation of the Plan of Action in FAO in other areas, since it has been demonstrated that female staff members are more likely to consider the status and needs of women in their development work.

141. In compliance with paragraph 3(d) of Conference Resolution 7/89 to increase the access of women to Professional posts at all levels without affecting the principles of professional quality and equitable geographical distribution, the Organization has made continued attempts to increase the percentage of women in its programmes. Some progress has been made since the Conference deliberated this issue at its 1991 session, although it must be recognized that the UN target of 35 percent by 1995 remains distant. Certainly, identifying qualified female candidates for positions in FAO's specialized technical fields still proves difficult, notwithstanding the assistance received from Member Governments in encouraging qualified women from their countries to apply for such posts. The problems are illustrated by the low number of applications from women (less than 20 percent of the total) received for the 98 vacant posts filled in 1992. Ceaseless efforts are thus needed to encourage a greater number of qualified women to submit applications for positions.

142. In spite of these constraints, some improvement has been made. The overall percentage of women serving at Headquarters has risen from 18.2 percent as reported in 1991 to 19.8 percent at the beginning of 1993, in the Regional Offices and FAO Representations it has remained at 9.3 percent, while in the Field it has increased from 3.4 to 4.6 percent. Although the percentage of women staff in some Technical Units remains low, the proportion in subject areas more traditionally related to women, such as the Economic and Social Policy Department (21 percent), the Department of General Affairs and Information (38 percent), and the Administration and Finance Department (31 percent), is more in line with UN targets.

143. The number of women in more senior positions has meanwhile increased significantly. This is particularly apparent at the P-4 level where the number of women in Headquarters has progressed since 1989 from 34 to 61, representing 17.2 percent of the total staff in this grade, and at the P-5 level where the figure has increased over the same period from 14 to 21, representing 7.3 percent of the total. There are at present four women in the Director category, representing 1.5%. While at these higher grade levels the percentage of women shows room for improvement, at the lower Professional grades the number of women almost equals that of men. At the P-3 level 44 percent of the staff are women and at the P-2 level women constitute 46 percent.

144. During 1992, FAO wrote to Permanent Representatives of all Member Nations requesting their assistance in identifying qualified female candidates from among the nationals of their countries and encouraging them to apply for positions in the Organization. Several governments have acknowledged the Organization's efforts to recruit women Professional staff and a number have transmitted information about female candidates whether for specific vacancy announcements or to be considered as open applications. Efforts were intensified to identify places where external vacancy announcements might be sent and these recommendations were put into action.



145. In line with the relevant Conference decisions, FAO has developed a strategy and over the years has implemented a number of measures to increase the access of women to Professional posts. Many of these measures, such as the issuance of a policy statement, setting of targets, and effort to identify potential women candidates by approaching Member States, FAO Representatives and project managers, have coincided with those recommended by the International Civil Service Commission as contained in its 1992 Annual Report to the United Nations General Assembly.

146. FAO will broaden its efforts to increase the representation and advancement of women and continue to undertake tasks which have been found to be effective in the further improvement of the status of women. Personnel policies will be examined in this context to ensure that no unintentional obstacles exist which would stand in the way of achieving goals which have been established in this important area.

#### **D. Strengthening External Working Relations**

147. The importance of gender issues and concerns was reiterated in the activities relating to the **1992 International Conference on Nutrition (ICN)**. Much emphasis was placed on gender issues and women were active participants in the entire process, which included the execution of national and regional meetings, the preparation of national country papers assessing the nutritional status of populations, the preparation of background papers, and the execution of a Preparatory Meeting in Geneva and of the ICN in Rome.

148. FAO continues to support the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies (NFLS) through the mechanisms that already exist within the UN system to coordinate actions relating to Women in Development. One of these mechanisms is the System-Wide Medium-term Plan (SWMTP). FAO has been contributing to the preparation of reports for the following sub-programmes of the SWMTP.

149. FAO is participating in Ad-Hoc Inter-Agency meetings and commissions coordinated by the Division of the Advancement of Women (DAW) of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, especially to prepare for the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in 1995. The Conference will review progress at national, regional and international levels in implementing the NFLS. In particular, it will discuss the "Platform for Action", which will be implemented for the years to come to accelerate progress. The major themes of this Conference will be equality, development and peace, and special emphasis will be placed on the roles and responsibilities of rural women.

150. FAO will seize this opportunity to involve the entire Organization in the preparatory activities for the Conference. The IDWG/WID has already approved in principle an outline presented by the Coordinating Unit on proposed preparatory activities. It will be active in informing FAO's technical units and soliciting their ideas and contributions. Technical units will be requested to adjust their ongoing activities to better assist women. FAO Representatives will be in a key position to raise Member Governments' awareness of, and interest in, the Fourth World Conference, and also to collect and disseminate information for a country-based needs assessment that is part of the preparatory activities. Regional Offices will provide liaison for FAO Headquarters on matters pertaining to the regional conferences, networks and action programmes. ESHW will carry out specialized activities and will provide technical assistance to other units in their preparatory activities. It has identified special activities with NGOs and national committees, but these will require extra-budgetary funds. Finally, FAO will participate in the organization campaign designed by the Communication and Project Management Division of the UN and submitted to ECOSOC this year.



151. FAO is the lead agency for the ACC Sub-Committee on Rural Development, which reviews as a regular agenda item during its annual meetings the implementation of the NFLS. All UN agencies participating in the meeting report on their activities to promote the role of women in rural development and on constraints identified, as well as make proposals for future cooperation in this area.

152. FAO also cooperates with INSTRAW, UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNSO and ILO, particularly through the development of joint studies and projects. For example, FAO has been collaborating with INSTRAW, UNSO and ILO in the development of methodologies for time use studies in the informal sector. FAO also actively cooperates with non-UN agencies, including international NGOs, federations and unions, especially through meetings sponsored by FAO and by other agencies, and through people's participation projects and women's projects executed by NGOs.

153. Both Regular and Field Programme resources have been mobilized to respond to a variety of international initiatives during the biennium. These include the implementation of Agenda 21 of UNCED and especially of Chapter 24: "Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development"; of recommendations derived from the 1992 International Conference on Nutrition and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, and of activities related to the 1994 International Year of the Family (IYF).

154. As concerns the IYF, the General Assembly proclaimed this Year in its Resolution 44/82, and endorsed its theme: "Family Resources and Responsibilities in a Changing World." The activities of the IYF are being coordinated by the Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Office at Vienna. FAO has developed an internal mechanism to promote activities to benefit families, and participates regularly in the inter-agency meetings and preparatory conferences.

155. FAO participated in an OECD/DAC Women in Development Expert Group seminar on Mainstreaming WID Issues in Development Programmes in May 1992. Important lessons learned through this meeting were that there is a need for a more in-depth analysis of approaches used by various development organizations to mainstream women-in-development activities, and that there is a great need for more inter-agency coordination in support of national WID machineries.

156. FAO has made considerable contributions to reports of the Secretary-General and of the Commission on the Status of Women, to the System-wide Medium-term Plan, and to inter-agency meetings. The Organization seeks to ensure that system-wide reporting and initiatives give adequate attention to the problems and contributions of rural women. However, ESH and the Office of External Relations (OER) will work to ensure that reporting requirements are not duplicative, since reporting is very costly in terms of staff inputs. It would be beneficial if the same report describing agency activities on the advancement of women could be used by FAO's Governing Bodies, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the ECOSOC/General Assembly and for any other inter-agency reporting.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

157. The information provided in this Report has shown that FAO continues to make significant progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development both in its substantive and administrative areas. This Report has highlighted FAO's perceptions of the major issues to be addressed, the constraints encountered and lessons learned, and the challenges that lie ahead, both for the Organization and for member countries.



158. In its substantive programme actions, FAO has developed innovative and successful interventions oriented toward increasing rural women's access to resources, especially to financial resources, extension and training. In many countries, institutional capabilities to deliver these services to rural women have been enhanced and, with the experiences gained, FAO will be better prepared to replicate these successes in other countries. The World Conference on Nutrition provided a forum and a Plan of Action to further diffuse the positive experiences and lessons learned regarding women, nutrition and food security. FAO also initiated implementation of an eighth programmatic priority on "women, sustainable development, natural resource management and environment", which it will continue to pursue vigorously in the context of its actions to implement and follow-up on Agenda 21.

159. The SEGA Programme will work to increase the knowledge and tools available to staff, as well as to extend socio-economic and gender analysis training to developing countries. In the area of policy advice to Member Governments, FAO significantly expanded its support for national WID machineries, began efforts to systematically integrate gender issues into training packages for policy-makers, and established the first Network on Rural Women. Further, it initiated a review of the **Programme for the World Census of Agriculture** in order to improve the collection of data on human resources disaggregated by gender, as a support to the decision-making process.

160. FAO also strove to achieve progress in each of the five administrative priority areas, and this has facilitated its ability to mainstream gender throughout the work of the Organization. Raising awareness among Professional staff was largely accomplished through gender analysis training. Efforts were made to develop the mechanisms and instruments required to appraise and monitor Regular and Field Programme activities, which can assure that gender is adequately addressed and improve reporting to FAO's Governing Bodies. FAO has proposed a number of actions intended to achieve further progress relating to the five administrative priorities including, among others, a review leading to an update of the Plan of Action and its priorities to assure their relevance until 1997, further development of monitoring and appraisal capabilities, and the establishment of an **interdepartmental Working Group** and Divisional Core Groups to improve coordination, as is summarized in Table 2.

161. In view of the progress reported, and the critical analysis of constraints and achievements in the priority areas of the Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development since its adoption by the Conference in 1989, the Conference may wish to provide its comments, guidance and endorsement for actions proposed.



**Table 2: Summary of Means Proposed to Improve Implementation of the Five Administrative Priorities**

(assignment of main responsibilities in parentheses)

General Objective	Regular Programme Mechanism	Field Programme Mechanism
Assure relevance and efficacy of the Plan of Action and the eight programmatic priorities	Establish clear objectives and indicators for monitoring progress (ESH, PBE, IDWG/WID)	Establish clear objectives and indicators for monitoring progress (ESH, PBE, DDF, IDWG/WID)
Improved mainstreaming capabilities	Establish Divisional Core Groups (PBE, ESH, Divisions)  PLANSYS Outputs Modules (PBE, ESH, Core Groups)	Impact Assessment/WID evaluations  Gender integrated into Sustainability Assessment (DDF, ESH, Core Groups)  FAOR Reports, Project Reports (DDF, ESH, Project CTAs)
Greater awareness/gender expertise	Technical Supplements/training through the SEGA Programme (ESH, Divisions)	Technical Supplements/ country level training through the SEGA Programme (ESH, Divisional Core Groups)  Gender training for FAORs
Improved Coordination	Establishment of an IDWG/WID Working Group  Establishment of Divisional Core Groups	Greater ESHW/Core Group participation in PTFs with reduced Lead Technical Unit responsibility (ESH; DDF)  Divisional Core Group members' participation in Divisional PTFs
Increased Financing	Increased external financing (ESH; Core Groups; donors)	Increased donor support (FAORs, DDF, donors)
Increasing female staff	Examination of personnel policies	Examination of personnel policies  Continue efforts to recruit female staff
Improved external relations	Avoid duplicative reporting requirements	Avoid duplicative reporting requirements