



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación



# CONFERENCE

## Twenty-eighth Session

20 October - 2 November 1995

### FOURTH PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION FOR INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

## CONTENTS

	Paragraphs
BACKGROUND	1-2
PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN OF ACTION	3-4
SUBSTANTIVE ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN	5-45
Project development and monitoring	5
Extension and technical training	6-12
Sustainable development, Natural Resource Management (NRM), and environment	13-20
Food security and nutrition	21-25
Gender-analysis training	26
The SEGA Training Programme	27-29
Training materials for gender analysis	30-31
Gender-responsive information	32-33
Gender-responsive policy support and advice to member countries	34
Improving statistics	35-39
Influencing policy formulation	40-44
Strengthening WID machinery	45

	Paragraphs
INNOVATIVE MAINSTREAMING ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN	46-64
The revision of the Plan of Action	47-49
The Fourth World Conference on Women	50-61
Affirmative action issues	62-64
DRAFT DECISIONS	65

## BACKGROUND

1. In its 27th Session in 1993, the Conference requested that a Fourth Progress Report be prepared for its 28th Session in 1995 it also called for revision of the Plan of Action (C 93/I/REP/3), as per the First Progress Report's provision for periodic review of priority implementation areas in order to assure their continued relevance. Consequently, the Report and revised Plan of Action are presented for review and approval.
2. The activities described in the Report demonstrate that FAO continues to make significant progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action for Women in Development, both in its substantive and administrative priority areas.

## PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN OF ACTION

3. In its substantive programme actions, FAO continued to develop innovative interventions oriented toward increasing rural women's access to and control of productive resources, especially through improved extension and training. Many Organization activities highlighted the crucial roles played by rural women in such areas as food security, household nutrition and family well-being, demographics, and ecologically sustainable development. In many countries, the institutional capabilities to recognize the differential needs and constraints of rural women as opposed to men has been strengthened, and the ability of these institutions, both government and non-government, to deliver services that reflect these differential needs and constraints has been enhanced. By learning from these experiences, FAO will be better prepared to replicate successes in other countries and to develop even better interventions in the future. Section III provides examples of 1994-95 achievements in the substantive areas of Gender-Sensitive Project Development and Monitoring, Gender Analysis Training, and Gender-Responsive Policy Advice to Member Countries.
4. FAO also strove to achieve progress in the administrative priority areas, especially in regard to the very special effort to revise the Plan of Action and to the preparatory and follow-up activities to the Fourth World Conference on Women. Section IV of this Report provides information on activities undertaken during the biennium to mainstream WID/gender issues both within the Organization and in Member States. Draft decisions for the Conference are presented in Section V.

## SUBSTANTIVE ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

### Project development and monitoring

5. Project Development and Monitoring activities and related Regular Programme (RP) support undertaken in 1994-95 to implement the Plan are wide-ranging. However, due to space limitations this section presents only a representative sampling from three FAO action areas: extension and technical training; environment, natural resource management and sustainable development; and nutrition and food security.

### *Extension and technical training*

6. *Mainstreaming Women in Training.* In Nepal, to counter the mobility problems of rural women, the Animal Production and Health Division (AGA) created a mobile training unit in Nepal that travelled directly to villages and, as a consequence, women came to constitute 45 percent of all trainees. Similarly, in Latin America, AGA held training courses as one-day events so as to better accommodate women's schedules; women now constitute 60 percent of all trainees and 55 percent of attendees at project-related meetings. This training also includes information on how to legally register community groups, which 21 women's groups and associations have now done. In The Gambia, AGA sought to improve animal management and marketing skills of 10 000 women farmers through the construction of demonstration sites in selected villages.



7. In a number of vegetable marketing projects in Lesotho and Nepal, the Agricultural Services Division (AGS) is assisting extension services to provide a package of rural services for women, including training in production planning, improved post-harvest techniques and producer-market linkages. The fertilizer projects of the Land and Water Development Division (AGL) include farmers' field days focusing on the roles and responsibilities of women in plant nutrition, vegetable production, plant nutrient management and group vegetable gardening.

8. *Reorienting Agricultural and Home Economics Curricula.* FAO is assisting Member Nations to train present and future agricultural extensionists and home economists in the importance of technical and managerial training for rural women to better understand how to deliver appropriate services to women.

9. To better serve rural families, the Division on Women and People's Participation in Development (SDW) assisted the Governments of Sri Lanka, Nepal, Hungary, Ethiopia, Gambia, Tunisia and Uganda to reorient their agricultural extension training and delivery systems to make them more participatory, and client and gender-responsive. Close links established with regional groups such as the Home Economics Association for Africa and the Asian Regional Association for Home Economics helped to evaluate home economics training and to reorient curricula so as to meet rural families' needs.

10. In 1994, SDW produced a guide for Member States to reorient curricula entitled "Rural Households and Sustainability: Integrating Environment and Gender Concerns into Home Economics Curricula", and in 1995 released new versions of two major publications - the "Extension Reference Manual" and the "Extension Training Guide", drawing on SDW experiences in a five-nation (Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zimbabwe) project to improve extension work with women. An FAO manual on "Improving Agricultural Extension Work with Rural Women" is being adapted by RAFR with the University of Ghana, Faculty of Agriculture, and the Department of Home Science to specific training needs in Ghana. Assistance is being provided by SDW to projects designed to reach rural women in remote areas including the ongoing project in Mali funded by the Belgian Government, "Assistance aux groupements des femmes de la zone encadrée de Kayes Nord" to increase and diversify food production and increase nutritional status, introduce income-generating activities, improve access to water and consequently extend the period of cultivation and, finally, assist farmers in establishing local markets.

11. FAO began to elaborate a series of case studies in Africa and Asia on female enrolment trends in agricultural colleges and universities in developing countries. This complements the preparation of directories of such institutions that present the numbers of male and female students and faculty members. The directories for Africa and Central and Eastern Europe were printed in 1995. During the biennium, SDW held eight regional roundtables on agricultural education, highlighting the need to increase female enrolment in agricultural programmes. Summary reports of each were published in all UN languages in 1994.

12. The AGS Division revised its training manual on "Farming Systems Research and Extension" to make it more gender-responsive. In 1994, FAO published a case study entitled "Extension 'Woman to Woman' - Training Peasant Women Liaisons to reach Peasant Women": it summarizes lessons learned from FAO Field Projects in Honduras between 1986 and 1992 in providing training and extension services for and through rural women and extension staff. Based on experiences gained in various African countries, AGS and SDW also published "Managing Income-generating Rural Activities: Village Group Training" for use by trainers and extensionists.



*Sustainable development, Natural Resource Management (NRM), and environment*

13. A large number of FAO activities aim at enhancing women's roles in sustainable development. A more specific body of efforts centres on researching and raising awareness about the links among environment, poverty, population, and rural women.

14. *Women, natural resource management and environment.* A draft study entitled, "The Role of Indigenous Women in Genetic Resources Management in Guatemala" was undertaken in areas where varieties of maize have been domesticated and adapted by small-scale farmers. A second study, entitled "Study on the Access of Indigenous Populations in Bolivia and Mexico to Ecological and Productive Resources," has been planned to look at the gender-differentiated access to forests and crop land, as well as community and family labour organization for the exploitation of these resources.

15. In response to the interest expressed by the Dutch Government, a mission was undertaken to Zimbabwe to formulate a gender-sensitive project on "Development of Indigenous Technical Knowledge and Practices for Natural Resources Management and Household Security in Communal Areas". The project aims to produce an institutional mechanism and research methodology for the development and eventual incorporation of indigenous technologies and practices into the policies, programmes and action plans of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Water Resources Development (MLAWRD).

16. In 1994-95, the Forestry Policy and Planning Division (FON) published a document entitled "Guidelines: Integrating Gender Considerations into FAO Forestry Projects" in all FAO languages. Moreover, gender is given close attention in all FON publications and audio-visuals. Examples include the following, released in 1994-95: "Common Forest Resource Management" (an annotated bibliography of sources on Africa, Asia, and Latin America); "Introducing Community Forestry" (an annotated list of topics and readings); a field manual on "Tree and Land Tenure: Rapid Appraisal Tools;" and a video entitled "What is a Tree?" The Forest Resources Division (FOR), in 1994, published a summary technical text on "The Challenge of Sustainable Forest Management: What Future for the World's Forests?" The book highlights forest product based income generating opportunities for women as well as men. A second volume with individual papers on this subject is forthcoming.

17. In Myanmar, SDW is assisting four UNDP-funded projects as part of the Human Development Initiative, all with a Natural Resource Management (NRM) and gender focus: on the sustainable development of mangrove areas, community fuelwood lots, low-input agriculture, and environmental rehabilitation of the country's Dry Zone.

18. *Women, Population, and Environment.* A Round Table of Experts on Women, Population and Environment in Southeast Asia was held at FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2-6 May 1994, out of which came a report entitled "Environment, Women and Population: Technical Issues and Policy Guidelines for Agricultural and Rural Development in South-East Asia". A "Population Education Manual for Outreach Workers" was developed and published in 1994 by the Institute for Population and Development, Manila, under FAO's technical guidance. The Manual provides a wide range of methods for integrating gender-sensitive population messages in ongoing non-formal education and training programmes in rural areas.

19. Also, as part of the current FAO/UNFPA TSS arrangements, cooperation with UNFPA Country Support Teams (CST) included an independent evaluation mission to Mozambique for an ILO/UNFPA project entitled "Strengthening of the Organization of Mozambican Women". SDW also liaised with UNFPA CST for East Africa and with UNFPA CST for Arab States. On both occasions, recent FAO and UNFPA achievements in the area of Women, Population and Development were shared and grounds were set for future cooperation. ESH/SDW continued to take



part in the technical backstopping of a UNFPA project in China, the Mother and Child Health Care and Family Planning (MCH/FP).

20. Technical assistance was provided to the FAO Regional Office for the Near East, Cairo, in conceptualizing a policy-issues paper on Women, Population and Environment in the Near East, to be developed in 1995. As part of SDW's efforts to promote cooperation with NGOs, a seminar on FAO's concepts and methodologies in identifying policy issues in the area of Women, Population and Environment was offered at the Nucleo de Estudos da Mulher e Relações Sociais de Gênero (NEMGE), of the University of São Paulo, Brazil.

#### *Food security and nutrition*

21. FAO works to support women's contributions to food security and nutrition, and 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 the necessary resources. FAO also gives special attention to women's own nutritional needs, which are especially at risk for single mothers and all pregnant or lactating women.

22. *Food Security.* The Food Security Assistance Scheme of FAO's Commodities and Trade Division (ESC) takes gender issues into account in its initial assessment and identification of the root causes of, and possible solutions to, food insecurity at household, community, and national levels. During 1994-95, FAO provided such analyses to six African, two Asian, and 12 Latin American nations. Similar gender-responsive assistance is given at regional level to the Customs Union of Central African States (UDEAC), the Economic Community of West (ECOWAS) and Central (ECCAS) African States, the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA), and the Preferential Trade Area of Eastern and Southern African States (PTA). In implementing all these efforts, ESC has also emphasized hiring women to work as consultants and national counterparts.

23. *Nutrition.* During 1994-95, as follow-up to the 1992 International Conference on Nutrition, FAO's Food Policy and Nutrition Division (ESN) provided technical assistance to a number of countries for assessing national food security and nutritional status and for drawing up National Plans of Action for Nutrition. With the World Health Organization, ESN held expert consultations on human nutrition requirements with specific emphasis on disaggregating requirements by sex, childbearing and lactation status, and other gender-relevant variables. ESN also contributed to gender-specific studies of food toxicoses, and is producing guidelines for involving women in the participatory formulation of nutrition projects.

24. *Traditional Foodstuffs in Household Food Security.* ESN also promotes household food security in another way: through greater attention to wild or domestic under-utilized traditional foodstuffs, whose identification, use, and preservation are nearly always the purview of rural women. These foodstuffs are particularly important in food deficient countries for reducing vitamin and mineral deficiencies by diversifying diets, and for improving the economic status of poor households, especially women. Traditional foods are also often multi-purpose, providing for such needs as medicines and dyes. In the aggregate, they exploit the full range of localized agro-ecological niches and are almost always more tolerant of or resistant to drought, pests, or disease than introduced crops. Increased recognition of such unique biological resources also pays bonuses in the form of added incentives to maintain biodiversity, in which women play a key role.

25. An ESN project in Niger, for example, emphasizes the consumption of indigenous foods rich in Vitamin A to combat blindness and other deficiency diseases. Women organize in groups to learn new solar drying techniques and to receive training in a number of supporting areas, including nutrition, literacy, and access to and management of credit. ESN also works with vendors of traditional street foods throughout Africa, where 80 percent of such vendors are women.



### Gender-analysis training

26. If women are to benefit from and participate in development significantly, specialists and policy-makers must be sensitized to gender issues, and all Member Nations' and the UN system's capacity to design and execute gender-responsive projects, programmes, and policies expanded. This involves training at various levels.

#### *The SEGA Training Programme*

27. As reported in the last Progress Report, FAO, along with UNDP and the World Bank, initiated the Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis (SEGA) Programme. The Programme is continuing as a collaborative effort of FAO, ILO, INSTRAW, UNDP and UNIFEM, with the assistance of USAID and the Government of the Netherlands.

28. The basic intent of SEGA is to promote a new paradigm for people-centred development programming. A conceptual framework incorporating macro (inter-household) and micro (intra-household) level socio-economic and gender analysis with people's participation and conflict resolution has been developed and is being operationalized through a "SEGA Field Manual" accompanied by an open-ended series of "Technical Supplements", which will be concise, sector and sub-sector specific guides to utilizing the SEGA paradigm. These Supplements will be extensively cross-referenced with the Field Manual so that additional information can be easily retrieved by the intended target users including sector specialists and planners who identify and design development programmes and projects.

29. At this time, major sections of the Field Manual have been prepared in first drafts, and training modules are being developed by ILO. SDW expects to initiate testing of these modules in early 1996.

#### *Training materials for gender analysis*

30. In addition to the SEGA activities, FAO has been involved in developing other gender analysis training materials. For example, FON is supporting the development of a gender training package for Central America by the regional NGO Mujer y Desarrollo. Also, in coordination with FAO projects in South America, FON is developing a Spanish-language guide for field workers on women and forestry, in preparation for 1996-97 training of such workers.

31. In 1994, the Fishery Industries Division (FII) produced a training and information video on "Gender in Rural Fisheries" that focuses on men's and women's roles, time use, access to training, and fishing priorities and needs. Further, it outlines the development of a gender-sensitive fishing project, and links gender to environmental and broader political and socio-economic issues.

#### *Gender-responsive information*

32. An important aspect of on-job training for technical specialists is to inform them about, or raise their awareness of, significant gender issues through such means as reference documentation, workshops and seminars. To this end, in a 1994 issue of FAO's *World Animal Review* devoted to dairy development, three articles focused exclusively on gender issues in livestock development. In 1995, SDW disseminated a "Study on the Role of Women in Indian Dairy Cooperatives" to raise awareness of gender issues in this area. SDW also contracted the World Women's Veterinary Association (WWVA) to prepare a case study on "Local Knowledge in Animal Health and Production Systems - Gender Perspectives", in Bolivia, while AGA conducted similar studies in Kenya with the Kenya Veterinary Association and in Tanzania with Sokoine University. AGA also included gender in an FAO-sponsored Dairy Development Seminar held in Harare in 1994.



33. In 1994 FAO Panel of Experts on Agricultural Engineering of the AGS Division devoted one full day of its three-day Session to gender issues in technology development and transfer. To increase women's participation in rural organizations, SDW financed a "Workshop on the Role of Women in Farmer Self-Help Organizations in West Africa" with the International Cooperative Alliance's West Africa Regional Office, a "Study on the Role of Women in Rice Production/Marketing Cooperatives in Bolivia," and a "Study on the Role of Women in Rural Trade Unions in Latin America."

#### **Gender-responsive policy support and advice to member countries**

34. Gender-responsive policy support and advice cover a wide range of activities including improving the data base for policy decisions, directly influencing policy formulation, and strengthening WID machineries.

#### *Improving statistics*

35. Based on the efforts of SDW and the Statistics Division (ESS) in 1991-92, and on the results of ESS, RAFR, and RNEA case studies completed in 1993 on disaggregating agricultural census data by gender in seven Near Eastern countries, ESS is preparing a manual to be released during the next biennium entitled "Programme for the World Census of Agriculture 2000". The manual's supplemental guidelines are intended to improve gender disaggregated data on human resources through agricultural censuses. At the Asia and Pacific Commission for Agricultural Statistics' Regional Meeting in Manila in 1994, ESS staff shared the information they have gained through presentation of a paper entitled "Statistics on Women Obtained through National Agricultural Censuses and Surveys."

36. ESS also shared its methodological findings on gender and time use at the XV Reunion of the International Association for Time Use Research, as well as at the Time Use Project Meeting of the UN's International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

37. At the regional level, with SDW assistance, the Regional Office for Europe (REUR) initiated a two-year project to furnish gender-responsive agricultural databases and country profiles for policy and programme formulators in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. RAFR has also embarked on a programme to compile statistical databases on women's work and working conditions in agriculture for all African countries, for use by national policy-makers and planners. RAFR is also collaborating with the national statistical departments of Togo, Benin, and Benin to improve existing agricultural statistical data collection systems in order to obtain more gender-specific information for planning purposes. Togo has already begun to modify its regular agricultural survey along these lines.

38. In the Near East, FAO developed a project to improve the collection and dissemination of gender-disaggregated data in agriculture and rural development through agricultural censuses and surveys. Under the project, national case studies on improving gender disaggregated data were prepared for several countries in the Near East (Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey). These reports were discussed at a workshop held in Cairo, 26-28 July 1994. Based on the results of the workshop, guidelines for the production and dissemination of data disaggregated by gender were produced for similar undertakings in other countries in the Near East and in other regions of the world.

39. Other Technical Units are working to incorporate or improve gender-disaggregated statistics. For example, the Policy Analysis Division (ESP) is completing its work on K2, a computerized system that will permit assessment of the impacts of a wide range of agricultural policies on key variables, including gender disaggregated information on the labour force, income distribution, nutrition, and population. FAO's Fisheries Department (FI) redesigned its questionnaire for national



statistical offices to report employment in fishing in such a way as to include gender ratios in all tasks within this sector. At the same time, FI established a computerized system to facilitate the dissemination of such data.

### *Influencing policy formulation*

40. To assist Near Eastern countries undergoing structural adjustment to strike a balance between economic growth and the needs of rural women, RNEA has established regional research task forces to provide information on such issues as the growth of women-headed households and the impact of male migration on women's roles and workload. As a means of promoting policy dialogue and advice on WID/gender topics, RNEA created "WIDIALOGUE" in 1994 as a quarterly newsletter that has attracted a wide readership including policy-makers. Similarly, the FAO-sponsored Latin American and Caribbean Network, which since its initiation in 1993 has grown to 24 Member Nations, pursues such dialogue in its annual bulletin, "Redes."

41. FAO supported China's Research Centre for Rural Economy, of the Ministry of Agriculture, to conduct a study in six provinces examining gender factors in household agriculture and food production activities. Two studies were undertaken through a TSS-1 project in China; the Institute of Sociology focused on the effects on rural women of rural-to-urban migration under market-oriented reforms while the China Population Information Research Centre examined demographic variations and regional differences with a gender perspective. Findings were reported in a national symposium organized by the Government of China, UNDP and FAO in 1995.

42. The Information Division (GII) advised the Governments of the Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, and Guinea Bissau on national development communication policies with particular reference to the problems of rural women. GII has also undertaken gender-disaggregated qualitative research and baseline surveys to identify how communication strategies and policies can help empower women.

43. During 1994-95, the Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP) held workshops in Southeast Asia and Eastern Africa for government policy makers and scientists on policies improving household horticulture and food security, with an emphasis on women's roles.

44. ESH/SDW supported the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to develop policies on women in agriculture and rural development. Eight national institutions developed technical papers and held a national symposium in Hanoi in December 1994. Draft policy guidelines are currently being drafted by the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Committee on the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam. Also in 1994, FAO published "Politique et stratégie de développement en faveur des femmes rurales," an analysis of collaboration between FAO and Member Nations of Africa, to facilitate their policy work for integrating rural women into agricultural development.

### *Strengthening WID machinery*

45. During 1994-95, a majority of the requests for SDW policy assistance centred on the creation or reinforcement of national-level WID machinery by: training staff in management, organization, and gender issues; establishing coordinating mechanisms between WID units and other government entities and NGOs; and preparing national strategies and plans of action. Details of FAO's activities in these areas are included in the later discussion of actions relating to the Fourth World Conference on Women.



## INNOVATIVE MAINSTREAMING ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

46. This section focuses on several activities undertaken by FAO during the biennium to encourage the mainstreaming of WID/gender issues into the work of the Organization and of the Member Nations. It also discusses affirmative action issues within FAO.

### The revision of the Plan of Action

47. At the request of the 27th Conference, FAO reviewed the continued viability of the FAO Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development (1989-1995). Despite the impact of the existing Plan, highlighted in this and the three preceding Progress Reports, this review found both operational and substantive needs for revisions to the Plan. Most importantly, the review recommended that the scope of the Plan and its priorities be clarified and limited in order to concentrate scarce resources on obtainable goals, that the priorities more accurately reflect FAO's substantive areas of work and realistically achievable goals, and that verifiable indicators be developed to facilitate monitoring of progress and reporting. The revision was also found to be timely since FAO's leadership, organizational structure, policies and priorities have been changing and evolving over the last two years.

48. The revised Plan of Action for Women in Development (1996-2001) eliminates the earlier Plan's focus on eight substantive priority areas, with numerous prescribed activities that were difficult to monitor and found to be too encompassing to implement effectively. In their place, the revised Plan (C 95/14, Supplement 1) emphasizes three strategic objectives for promoting gender equity in achieving sustainable development in FAO's substantive areas of work, and highlights four key areas of interrelated actions to achieve these three objectives. The result is a more systematic and programmatic approach that will allow FAO to concentrate human and financial resources on these more achievable and measurable objectives. The revised Plan also eliminates the earlier focus on five administrative priorities in favour of establishing more effective mechanisms for providing advice on implementing the Plan of Action, for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Plan, and for achieving equal employment opportunity targets.

49. The methodology for revising the Plan of Action was developed to make the revision as participatory as possible. First, Division Directors and Senior Management were convoked to discuss the proposed revision and it was agreed that each Technical Division, plus the Division of Personnel, would develop a formal, internal WID Divisional Programme of Action for the medium term (1996-2001). Second, SDWW, the coordinating unit, facilitated 1/2 day consultations with staff of 65 Services from 25 Divisions that are technically responsible for the Plan's implementation. Third, to promote the advancement of rural women in their own areas of competence, these Technical Divisions and Services developed draft WID Programmes of Action with realistic objectives, activities, outputs and monitoring indicators. Fourth, these draft Programmes were prepared and submitted to SDWW and PBEE for review prior to finalization. Finally, SDW consolidated these Divisional Programmes and incorporated them into the FAO Plan of Action for Women in Development, 1996-2001. This Plan guides the implementation of FAO's mandate related to the NFLS and to the Platform for Action that stemmed from the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.

### The Fourth World Conference on Women

50. FAO undertook extensive activities to promote rural women in the preparation of and follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (WCW). In 1994, through the "FAO Assistance in Support of Rural Women in Preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women - Phase I" programme, FAO provided technical and financial support to a total of 16 countries in their preparations for Beijing: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, the Eastern Caribbean, Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, Lebanon, Namibia, Peru, the Philippines, Tanzania, Tunisia,



Uganda and Zimbabwe. Additional missions were sent to Nepal, Niger and Rwanda to facilitate country-level preparations for the Conference.

51. Under Phase I, assistance was provided to Ministries of Agriculture (MOAs), and/or the women's machinery in each country, to carry out an in-depth analysis of available information on rural women, to prepare a sectoral report on rural women to be included in each country's national report for the Beijing Conference, and to hold a workshop to discuss critical issues affecting rural women that were addressed in the sectoral report. These reports are also intended for use by the Ministry of Agriculture and the national women's machinery as a working document for promoting the advancement of rural women.

52. Phase II activities under this programme are to strengthen national capacity to implement the Platform for Action, which was adopted at the WCW. At present, the Government of Norway is supporting Phase II activities in Namibia, Nepal and Tanzania, and FAO continues to seek donor support for such activities in the remaining countries that participated in Phase I of the Programme.

53. Technical assistance was also provided at the regional level for the development of regional programmes of action that were presented at the WCW, and FAO participated in all the regional preparatory conferences, organized by the Economic Commissions.

54. In Africa, a Regional Synthesis Report was prepared based on the sectoral reports on women in agriculture and rural development of nine African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Congo, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Sudan, Tanzania and Zimbabwe). For Asia and the Pacific, FAO also prepared socio-economic studies on women in agriculture and rural development in China and Viet Nam, as well as a paper on women and agro-based small enterprises with a focus on credit and training in Asia, for distribution at the WCW.

55. In Europe, FAO initiated a project to compile data and information and prepare country profiles on women's role in agriculture and rural development in Central and Eastern Europe. Based on the results of the profiles, a regional synthesis report was prepared and presented at Beijing. A total of ten countries were involved in this effort: Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Latvia and Bulgaria.

56. In Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO supported the preparation of sectoral reports on rural women in Bolivia, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela. The document "Rural Women of Latin America and the Caribbean", prepared with FAO support, was included in the regional report presented at Beijing. FAO also published a case study on Women in the Peruvian Amazon, which analyzes the situation and roles of women in the social and economic context of the Peruvian Amazon.

57. Under the Regional Programme of Action for Women in Agriculture in the Near East (RPAWANE), support for the preparation of sectoral reports on women in agriculture and rural development was provided to 17 countries: Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The synthesis of these RPAWANE reports served as a regional input to the Beijing Conference, and the recommendations were translated into a Plan of Action for Women in Agriculture in the Near East to cover the decade, 1996-2005. In addition, FAO prepared a paper on women in resource-management and the environment - a Near East perspective, that was distributed at Beijing.

58. At the international level, FAO undertook activities to ensure that important issues such as food security, migration, environmental degradation and other concerns, which have a strong impact on rural women and communities, were discussed at Beijing. The Organization prepared specialized information materials, including country fact sheets, to relay simple and concise messages on rural



women's roles in sustainable agriculture and food security. FAO also prepared an updated bibliography on The Role of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development and produced an activities report detailing its support to rural women and the on-going women in development programme. Both documents were distributed at the WCW.

59. FAO also coordinated its activities with a number of joint UN efforts and programmes by participating in Inter-Agency Meetings, including the Commission on the Status of Women, the OECD/DAC/WID Group Meetings, and many Expert Meetings and Informal Consultations. FAO prepared the section on "Women's access to land and natural resources" for the 1994 update of the World Survey on Women and contributed to the section on "Women's access to credit and financial institutions". In addition, FAO participated in the global information campaign regarding the Conference by distributing and, where necessary, supplementing the materials provided by the UN Information Division.

60. FAO provided support to the International Federation of Agricultural Producers for the preparation of a document titled "From the Women Farmers' Perspective: A Synthesis of the Results of the Regional Preparatory Meetings for the Fourth World Conference on Women". The document was presented at a technical consultation for women farmers in March 1995, during the 39th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the last preparatory Conference for Beijing.

61. In addition, FAO developed an internal information campaign to inform its staff about the Conference and to encourage their contribution to preparatory activities. FAO also provided regular updates and "Information Notes" to Member Nations, as well as within FAO, on Conference preparations and its own programme of activities in preparation for Beijing.

#### Affirmative action issues

62. Although progress has been made since the 1993 Conference, the UN target of 35 percent female professional staff by 1995 has not been reached. Identifying qualified female candidates for positions in FAO's specialized technical fields still proves difficult, notwithstanding Member Nation encouragement of applications from qualified female nationals. For example, only about 22 percent of all applications received for vacant posts filled in 1993 were from women, although they constituted 25 percent of those selected. A still stronger push therefore needs to be made to encourage applications from qualified women. In spite of these constraints, some improvement has been made. The overall percentage of women Professionals serving at Headquarters has risen from 19.7 as reported in 1991 to 20.4 in 1994, in the Regional Offices and among FAORs from 9.3 to 10.3, and, in the field, from 4.1 to 8.0.

63. The number of women in more senior positions has increased during the last three biennia. For example, at the P-4 level the number of women in Headquarters has progressed since 1989 from 34 to 67, representing 19.4 percent of the total staff in this grade, and at the P-5 level the figure has increased over the same time period from 14 to 22, representing 7.9 percent of the total. There are at present seven women in the Director category, representing about 5 percent of the total. While at these higher grade levels the percentage of women needs to be increased, at the lower professional grades the number of women is more equitable. At the end of 1994, women constituted 46.2 percent of the staff at P-3 and 46 percent at P-2 level.

64. The revised Plan of Action brings a renewed focus on the issue of affirmative action for women as both Professional Officers and as consultants. The indicated activities include updating and expanding consultancy rosters, and examining personnel policies to ensure that no unintentional obstacles exist that would stand in the way of achieving goals that have been established in this important area.



### DRAFT DECISIONS

65. Based on the forgoing discussions, FAO recommends the following decisions for the Conference:

- a) in view of the progress reported in the priority areas of the Plan of Action since its adoption by the Conference in 1989, it is recommended that the Conference endorse this Fourth Progress Report on the Implementation of the Plan of Action.
- b) considering the rather unique nature of the Programmes of Action of the various Technical Divisions of FAO, it is recommended that the Fifth Progress Report on the Implementation of the Plan of Action be presented to the 29th Conference in 1997, and that reporting concentrate on the progress made during the next biennium in meeting the objectives of these various Programmes.
- c) finally, it is recommended that the Conference adopt the revised FAO Plan of Action for Women in Development. While this Plan would be effective for the years 1996 to 2001, FAO can adjust this document, as changing events and developments dictate, at the request of any succeeding Conference.