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### UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW OF THE POST-WCARRD DECADE AND AN AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE: DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S VIEWS AND COMMENTS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document contains the views and comments of the Director-General on the consultants' report entitled United Nations Agencies and Rural Development: A Review of the post-WCARRD Decade and an Agenda for the Future, which is attached as Appendix A. The idea for a critical review of WCARRD related activities originated from the report of the Experts who reviewed FAO's Objectives, Role, Priorities and Strategies (para 7.10 of SJS 3/2), and was subsequently endorsed by the Programme and Finance Committees (C 89/21, para 2.64 (vi)). While the Conference report did not make any specific recommendation on this matter, the Director-General took the initiative to commission the Review of WCARRD Follow-up.

2. The Review was undertaken in collaboration with the other members of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development. The ACC Task Force on Rural Development at its meeting in May 1990 agreed on the scope, terms of reference and the overall plan for the Review as proposed by the Director-General. It also considered the report of the consultants at its meeting in May 1991 and its comments are attached as Appendix B.

3. The main purpose of the Review of WCARRD experiences was to determine what FAO and other UN agencies could do to reinvigorate those items in the WCARRD Programme of Action which are still very relevant.

4. The Review was conducted by a team of three consultants during the period of September 1990 to May 1991. The FAO Secretariat provided all necessary assistance to the Review Team for the completion of its assignment, including logistic support as well as background documents, technical notes and case studies. After briefing in FAO, the team members visited 16 UN agencies, three Regional Commissions and seven countries.<sup>1</sup> The Consultants had the benefit of the replies to a questionnaire sent to

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<sup>1</sup> Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, India, Philippines and Syria.



members of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development, to relevant technical Divisions of FAO and to five Regional Offices of FAO. The direct cost of the Review amounted to US\$195 000, i.e. excluding the cost represented by the time spent by the FAO staff members on this exercise.

5. The Review covers all major aspects of the WCARRD Programme and makes proposals for providing a fresh impetus to the process of rural development taking into account the developments and the new concerns since the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 1979. The Director-General is broadly in agreement with most of the recommendations contained in the Review. In the few instances where he disagrees with the recommendations, he has explained the reasons.

## II. GENERAL REMARKS

6. The Director-General notes with satisfaction that the Review has concluded that the activities undertaken by UN agencies, to support governments in implementing the Programme of Action of WCARRD have by and large been successfully accomplished. Since WCARRD, there has been an increasing awareness of issues of rural poverty among governments and agencies. The Director-General agrees with the conclusion in the Review that the main principles of WCARRD remain as valid in the 1990s as they had been 12 years ago when they were formulated. This view has also been supported by the members of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development, as reflected in their comments (Appendix B). The Director-General endorses the call for stronger inter-agency collaboration, particularly through the ACC Task Force on Rural Development.

7. The Director-General is in agreement with the analysis of the wide scope of the WCARRD Programme and the complexity of the tasks of promoting agrarian reform and rural development as discussed in the Review. He also agrees that the UN agencies' efforts to assist Member Governments in alleviating rural poverty have at times been overwhelmed by other developments both within and outside the countries, such as the serious consequences of the debt situation of many developing countries, their diminishing share in world agricultural trade and the increasing shortage of funds for development purposes.

8. The Director-General notes with satisfaction the overall conclusion of the Review that the agencies took up in earnest the follow-up to the Programme of Action concerning access to resources and promotion of rural non-farming employment; institutional development; gender issues and the environment and sustainable development and that the agencies have done well on the whole. He endorses the call for stronger institutional underpinnings to make popular participation more viable; increased attention to gender issues in sectoral and macro policies; stronger emphasis on environmental protection; and the need to consider the implications of market liberalization on the rural poor.

9. The Director-General is pleased to note the importance given to inter-agency WCARRD policy missions which provide a unique inter-agency opportunity to hold discussions with key policy-makers and to play an 'advocacy' role for poverty alleviation. He also notes that the other agencies participating in the ACC Task Force on Rural Development have generally supported the continuance and further strengthening of the inter-agency WCARRD policy missions.



10. While the Director-General believes that on the whole, the analysis of the various activities of the UN agencies carried out as a follow-up to WCARRD is acceptable, he agrees with the view expressed by the members of the ACC Task Force that the Review could have benefited from a more rigorous analysis of the impact on poverty alleviations of the various activities undertaken by the agencies in the various WCARRD-related programmes. Similarly, he would have preferred a clearer view on how far the agencies have been able to fulfil their mandate, especially called for by the WCARRD Programme of Action, which is referred to in paras 2.8 and 2.9 of Chapter II of the Review.

### III. REMARKS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW

11. The Director-General is in broad agreement with the "Agenda for Rural Development in the 1990s" as presented in Chapter IX of the Review. He considers it to be a useful analysis of trends and issues that are likely to shape the future direction of rural development policies and programmes. However, he would have preferred a clearer linkage between the contents of Chapter IX and the recommendations in Chapter VIII. The Director-General supports the recommendation for stronger emphasis on local self-reliance and agrees that WCARRD concerns should be enunciated through a framework characterized by a growing commitment to sustainable agricultural and rural development based on initiatives by the rural people participating through their own organizations. He agrees that rural development strategies which aim at poverty alleviation should comprise the following elements: mobilization and development of human resources; promoting people's participation; building adequate institutional capacity in developing countries; and encouraging the decentralization of decision-making.

12. While broadly agreeing with the Agenda for Rural Development in the 1990s discussed in Chapter IX, the Director-General considers that the Agenda could have benefited if it were accompanied with more substantive recommendations on specific areas of action. Furthermore, the Agenda would need to take greater account of the variations among different countries and regions, if it were to be operationalized.

13. The Review has made a number of recommendations in Chapter VIII. The Director-General notes that they aim at improving the relevance and quality of the agencies' work programmes in support of poverty alleviation, and that they are based on the analysis of the experiences of the 1980s as presented in Chapters IV to VII of the Review. Although the large number of recommendations make it difficult to comment, the Director-General can accept most of the recommendations and has comments on some of them. They are indicated in the following paragraphs.

14. As regards the recommendations related to the "agencies' own Programmes of Action" (paragraphs 8.4 to 8.8 of Chapter VIII), the Director-General broadly agrees with their thrust and would consider pursuing them within the limits of available resources. In the field of education, training and extension the Director-General, while agreeing with the importance of the proposals made, wishes to stress that the Organization is already engaged in the exchange of documentation and training materials with other UN agencies, has developed methods to promote small farmers' participation in agricultural extension and is engaged in training small-scale entrepreneurs and staff of cooperatives



and other rural organizations. As regards the suggestion that the frequency of the ACC Task Force Newsletter 'Rural Development' be at least twice a year, the Director-General would like to point out that owing to resource constraints facing FAO, it would be possible to implement this recommendation only if other agencies were to share the cost of the publication as recommended by the Review Team.

15. The Director-General agrees with the recommendations made with regard to "Activities in Support of Government Programmes", particularly with those related to gender issues, sustainable agricultural and rural development, human resource development and people's participation. He wishes to point out that FAO is already taking action in these areas. As regards gender issues, FAO is implementing the Plan of Action on Women in Development as adopted by the Conference in 1989, and a Second Progress Report on its implementation has been submitted to the Conference under agenda item 13. Also people's participation is sought to be further enhanced through the Plan of Action on People's Participation, which was discussed by the Council in June 1991 and will be considered by the Conference for adoption under agenda item 12. The Review also makes a plea for greater clarity in environmental matters and for developing in this area a multidisciplinary approach. In this context, the Director-General would like to underline that the Den Bosch Declaration and Agenda for Action adopted by the FAO/Netherlands Conference on Agriculture and the Environment held in April 1991 provides a very useful framework for developing FAO's programmes and activities in this field. Moreover, the Conference will consider under agenda item 7, an International Cooperative Programme Framework for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development - as a follow-up to the Den Bosch Declaration and Agenda of Action.

16. The recommendations regarding the "Advocacy Role for Poverty Alleviation" of the agencies are generally endorsed by the Director-General. However, he considers that the agencies' role should not be restricted only to those activities listed in paragraph 8.15 of Chapter VIII of the Review but should also encompass wider issues of rural development as highlighted in the WCARRD Programme of Action.

17. The Director-General also supports most of the recommendations concerning "Inter-Agency Collaboration", in particular through inter-agency WCARRD policy missions. He agrees with the proposals to strengthen the ACC Task Force which remains the principal forum for inter-agency collaboration in agrarian reform and rural development. A start has already been made in implementing the respective recommendations by fostering inter-agency contacts between annual meetings, by organizing city-based groups and particularly by allocating more time at Task Force meetings for discussion of substantive issues as was the case during the 19th meeting of the Task Force which took place in Nairobi in May 1991. The Director-General has, however, some reservations about the usefulness of the recommendations calling for more regional inter-governmental consultations and regional expert meetings since the present frequency of such meetings seems to be adequate. It may be noted that these reservations of the Director-General are shared by the ACC Task Force on Rural Development (see para 67g of Appendix B).

18. The Director-General notes with satisfaction the conclusion of the Review that inter-agency WCARRD missions are an important instrument of policy advice as they provide a valuable inter-agency opportunity to hold discussions with key policy makers and to play an 'advocacy' role for



poverty alleviation. The Director-General agrees with the recommendations made for improving the effectiveness of the WCARRD missions through adequate preparation, composition of missions, emphasis on policy advice and adequate provisions for follow-up. However, the Director-General would find it difficult to follow up the recommendation to discourage countries from applying for policy review missions if they wished to do so.

19. The Director-General has also some reservations regarding the recommendation to re-establish the Cross-Organizational Programme Analysis (COPA) in the light of the past experience. This reservation is also shared by the agencies participating in the recent meeting of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development (Appendix B).

20. The Director-General looks forward to the comments and views of the Conference on this subject. In the light of these views and comments, the Director-General will consider, subject to the availability of resources, appropriate follow-up to the Review in cooperation with other agencies which are members of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development.



UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:  
A REVIEW OF THE POST-WCARRD DECADE AND AN AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

- A Report Submitted to FAO -

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
ADG	Assistant Director-General (FAO)
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
ARRD	Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
CADRW	Community Action for Disadvantaged Rural Women
CARDNE	Regional Centre on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development for the Near East
CCP	Committee on Commodity Problems (FAO)
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CGIAR/TAC	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research/Technical Advisory Committee
CIRDAFRICA	Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Africa
CIRDAP	Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific
COPA	Cross Organization of Programme Analysis
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
EDI	Economic Development Institute
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESH	Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division (FAO)
ESHW	Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service (FAO)
ESN	Food Policy and Nutrition Division (FAO)
ESP	Policy Analysis Division (FAO)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FODERUMA	Fondo de Desarrollo Rural Marginal
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GNP	Gross National Product



HRD	Human Resource Development
IC	Investment Centre (FAO)
IDA	International Development Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGC	Inter Governmental Commodity Group
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
ITC	International Trade Centre
JCGP	Joint Consultative Group on Policy
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
M and E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NARS	National Agricultural Research System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIC	Newly Industrializing Country
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PP	People's Participation
PPP	People's Participation Programme
RAPA	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO)
RD	Rural Development
SAL	Structural Adjustment Loan
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SARD	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
SD	Sustainable Development
SDA	Social Dimensions of Adjustment
SPWP	Special Public Works Programme (ILO)
TA	Technical Assistance
TC	Technical Cooperation



TCDC	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDTCD	United Nations Department of Technical Cooperation for Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
WCARRD	World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WFS	Women in Food Systems
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women in Development



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) held 12-20 July 1979 in Rome was a milestone in the UN system's quest for a strategy for poverty alleviation throughout the world. It was unique in two other significant ways: it was the largest and the most representative gathering of its kind ever to meet and deliberate on the issues pertaining to agrarian reform and rural development (ARRD), and it presented near-unanimous views on the topics it dealt with. To that extent it represented the world consensus on ARRD as it existed in the late 1970s.

2. The basic principles informing the WCARRD recommendations were: (i) growth is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for rural development; (ii) any strategy for rural development must rest on the building of self-reliant institutions; (iii) it is important to place as much emphasis on the process as on the outcome of rural development efforts; and (iv) macro policies must also be oriented to the tasks of poverty alleviation.

3. The Review Team appointed by FAO was asked to examine the content and effectiveness of the programme and suggest guidelines for future work in ARRD. (The scope of the review is given in Annex V). The team reviewed the work programmes of the UN agencies on the basis of written replies to a questionnaire designed by the team, and discussions at the agencies' headquarters. Responses were categorized under (i) agencies' own programmes of work, (ii) activities in support of government programmes, (iii) the advocacy role played by the agencies in a few key areas, and (iv) inter-agency collaboration. Within these broad categories, the approach of the team has been selective and forward-looking.

4. Before examining the work programmes the team noted that (a) the success or failure of the ARRD effort hinges largely on the government's activities, with UN agencies playing primarily a supporting role; and (b) many exogenous developments may prove important in further influencing the shape of the agencies' programmes.

5. Success of the programme endorsed by WCARRD was predicated upon several assumptions, such as (i) single-minded devotion on the part of the nations to the goals of a poor-oriented rural development programme; (ii) adequacy and strength of institutions to respond to new challenges; (iii) transfer of adequate resources from the developed to the developing world through trade and development assistance; and (iv) determined efforts to curb population growth and ease population pressure on limited agricultural resources. The WCARRD Programme of Action of the UN agencies was seriously compromised by adverse developments in these critical areas.

6. The review of the UN agencies' contribution to implementing the WCARRD Programme of Action begins with their promotional activities, i.e. the catalytic role they played through research, training, monitoring and evaluation, and dissemination of information. Through these activities, together with policy missions and consultations of various kinds, the agencies laid the groundwork for later supportive activities at the national level. These supportive activities, or field programmes, were examined by the review team under four major headings: (i) access to resources and promotion of rural non-farm employment, (ii) institutional



development, (iii) gender issues, and (iv) the environment and sustainable development.

7. The review team's overall conclusion is that all these areas of work were taken up in earnest and as far as can be gauged, done well on the whole. The WCARRD Programme of Action is extremely comprehensive and naturally there were limitations as to what could be achieved. To that difficulty was added the lack of resources to perform a number of tasks, gaps in inter-agency coordination, and newer demands on staff skills.

8. The main gaps in the agencies' programmes pertained to:

- developing a body of knowledge of the poor's mixed livelihoods in order to relate farm and non-farm development planning;
- suggesting institutional underpinnings that would make popular participation viable;
- relating gender issues to sectoral and macro policies;
- going beyond pure environmental protection to an approach to sustainable development which would make environmental protection tolerable, even desirable, to rural poor;
- the implications of market liberalization -- something unforeseen in 1979 -- for rural poverty alleviation, non-farm rural employment and sustainable development.

9. The advocacy role of the UN agencies is discussed by the review team under three broad headings: (i) relaxing trade barriers against less developed countries; (ii) encouraging the flow of funds and development assistance from the developed world; and (iii) fostering technical cooperation activities among developing countries. The review provides several examples of the technical and advisory facilities offered by the UN agencies in their role as advocate for developing countries. Examples of potential scope for greater effectiveness in advocacy through more intense inter-agency collaboration have been pointed out. An important example is in training, especially in the development of entrepreneurial capability among small- and medium-scale exporters. But the greatest unexploited potential lay in TCDC.

10. The role of inter-agency cooperation is becoming progressively more important as the inter-relatedness of ARRD issues is appreciated. At present there is a forum in the ACC Task Force on Rural Development to assist in this process. There are good examples of how the Task Force has functioned to advance or disseminate knowledge via panels and working groups. It also facilitates information sharing among the members. But much more could be done by the members to circulate information about other agencies' ARRD activities throughout their own agencies. The Task Force's potential as a forum for discussing substantive issues in rural development could also be exploited more fully.

11. The review team has had to conclude that despite some strengths (such as the approach to key policy makers at the national level and a more comprehensive view of RD) the Inter-agency WCARRD Policy Missions to countries were not as effective as they might have been. The recent greater specificity of terms of reference for the missions is probably a



sign that they are becoming more relevant to the countries' respective needs. A great deal more thought, however, needs to be given to the choice of countries, preparation for and composition of the missions, and follow-up activities.

12. At the regional level, too, there is a sharpening of focus on specific issues. This is reflected in the regional Inter-Governmental Consultations and regional expert meetings. With this greater demand for region-specific collaboration, the decline in use of Regional Inter-Agency Consultations is unfortunate. How great a gap this leaves in inter-agency cooperation depends on how much joint agency follow-up emanates from the Inter-Governmental Consultations and other regional meetings which representatives of some agencies might attend.

13. The financing institutions and the main concerned agencies undertake a great many policy advisory missions of their own. Of these there is a proliferating number on structural adjustment and rural development. This implies much overlapping and conceivably conflicting advice being offered to governments. There is, therefore, a strong case for a more coordinated approach to the agencies' missions. The ACC Task Force on Rural Development provides one possible forum for achieving such coordination. The Task Force's potential role needs to be much more vigorously exploited in this regard. The suggestion of reviving Cross Organizational Programme Analysis (COPA) should also be considered in this context.

14. There are distinct possibilities for improving upon the agencies' choice of the interventions and modalities. A more effective utilization of the limited human and material resources available to serve the agreed upon goals of rural development could be approached through the following series of steps: (i) spelling out the objectives of each major programme and selecting those objectives where the agency has comparative advantages; (ii) exploring different types and mixes of intervention tasks (e.g. research, training, information sharing, etc.) which make up programme content; (iii) assessing the suitability of different modalities (such as pilot projects, consultations, technical assistance, etc.) to accomplish these tasks; and (iv) monitoring of activities and utilizing opportunities for mid-season correction.

15. In accomplishing the goals set by the agencies, the key factor is the staff involved. The review team was impressed by the enthusiasm and intellectual acumen of many staff members in the UN agencies. However, it was also clear to the team that an emphasis on constantly upgrading staff skills was sorely missing. The team strongly recommends efforts to address this.

16. The importance of upgrading the skills of the staff and systematic planning and programming of interventions can easily be appreciated when it is recognized that the tasks of ARRD in the 1990s will be more complex, and the resource crunch as severe, if not more so, as that of the 1980s.

17. At the dawn of this decade, as in the late 1970s, a world consensus on ARRD is again emerging. The important elements in the current understanding of a poor-oriented rural development strategy are as follows: (i) poverty alleviation involves several kinds of entitlements necessary for the well-being of the poor and their effective contribution to development; (ii) neither the command economy nor the market can, on



their own, deliver all entitlements; (iii) dependence for resource mobilization must shift from external sources of material to the human, social and political resources of developing countries; (iv) the importance of developing human resources for the building of institutional capacity should be fully appreciated; (v) it should be recognized that the political and social processes of rural poverty alleviation are a major determinant of effective results; and that (vi) decentralization is important for relevant, efficient and effective planning.

18. Based on these considerations an agenda for action by the UN system is suggested in the review, at both the global and regional levels.



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

1.1 During 1988-89, FAO carried out an in-depth review entitled, FAO's Objectives, Role, Priorities and Strategies and FAO's Field Operations. The study recommended, inter alia, that the WCARRD follow-up experience over the last decade should be reviewed to determine what FAO and other institutions of the UN system could do to reinvigorate those items in the WCARRD Programme of Action which are still very relevant. It was also suggested that such a review be carried out by external consultants and in collaboration with other members of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development.

1.2 Following approval and endorsement of these recommendations by the concerned FAO bodies, the Director-General took the initiative in commissioning this review. The findings of the review will be submitted to the next session of the FAO Conference in November 1991 together with the Third Progress Report on WCARRD Follow-up.

1.3 A team of external consultants undertook the review with active cooperation of the staff of FAO and other UN agencies. The ACC Task Force on Rural Development in its meeting in May 1990, agreed on the scope of the review (see Annex I), which also served as the broad terms of reference for the consultants. Looking to the constraints of time and resources, and the complexity of the task, flexibility in the approach as well as coverage was, clearly, indicated.

1.4 An open-ended questionnaire was designed containing a number of check points on which specific information was sought. (The list of check points is appended as Annex II). These questionnaires were sent to all members of the ACC Task Force as well as to all the relevant technical divisions of FAO. It was clearly indicated in the covering note that "all the questions may not be relevant for every agency/division". Twenty-two United Nations agencies and seventeen divisions/units and the five regional offices of FAO, replied to the check points. (The list of the agencies responding to the check points is provided in Annex III). The replies, which varied greatly in coverage and depth, provided the principal source of factual information for the review report.

1.5 The review team had an opportunity to examine the individual replies and a summary prepared by the FAO Secretariat. The team assembled at FAO Headquarters in the middle of September 1990. A programme of meetings with the responsible staff of the main agencies had been arranged. The team members, accompanied by FAO staff, visited 16 UN agencies and three Regional Commissions. (The list of the agencies visited and the officials met in this connection is provided in Annex IV.) They also visited seven countries: Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Philippines and Syria, as well as Bangladesh and India. The first five of these countries had received Inter-Agency WCARRD Policy Missions while Bangladesh is host to the Centre for Integrated Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) which received support under the WCARRD follow-up programme. The purpose of these visits as well as the one to India was to understand country officials' viewpoint regarding UN agencies' role in implementing the WCARRD Programme of Action.



1.6 After reassembling in Rome in early November, the review team had further meetings with relevant FAO technical staff (the list of these officials is included in Annex IV). A draft was prepared by mid-December, and was circulated among FAO divisions. The comments of the divisions were subsequently incorporated to the extent felt necessary, in the draft which was then circulated to the members of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development in March 1991. The comments of the members as well as further comments from FAO staff were studied in April 1991 and a final manuscript was prepared in May 1991.

1.7 It was an extremely difficult and challenging task, more so because there had been no previous comprehensive review of the UN agencies' role in agrarian reform and rural development to guide the team. The four-yearly WCARRD Progress Reports (the first two of which had been submitted to the FAO Conference in 1983 and 1987) concentrated on review of the implementation of the WCARRD programme at the country level. Similarly some aspects of the agencies', particularly FAO's, programme related to WCARRD had been reviewed by individual consultants, but this was the first time that a comprehensive review of the performance of FAO and other UN agencies in fulfilling their WCARRD mandate was being undertaken. The external consultants undertook the review in consultation with the staff of FAO and other UN agencies bearing in mind the scope of the review agreed at the meeting of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development in May 1990 (see Annex I). This document also served as the broad terms of reference for the review. Recognizing the nature of the task, and the time and resource constraints, some flexibility in approach as well as coverage for the study was recognized to be inevitable.

1.8 The enormity and the complexity of the task is reflected in the fact that WCARRD made nearly 120 recommendations for national and nearly 40 for international action. The recommendations for international action were specifically addressed to more than a score of the United Nations agencies. At the same time, the WCARRD Programme of Action was not the only mandate to fulfil for any of the concerned agencies, including FAO, which had to carry out this Programme along with many other activities. It was thus very difficult to draw boundary lines for the review's scope. With conventional methodologies for programme evaluation this review could not have been carried out satisfactorily, at least not within the time available.

1.9 The review team proceeded in three successive stages. To begin with, the underlying principles of the WCARRD Programme of Action were identified. These were: (i) emphasis on growth with equity and people's participation in order to promote rural poverty alleviation, (ii) emphasis on institution building, (iii) the importance attached to the process of development, and (iv) recognition of the importance of macro policies.

1.10 As a next step, agencies' work programmes which broadly satisfied these criteria were grouped together in four major areas, i.e. UN agencies' own programmes of work; activities in support of government programmes; advocacy role for poverty alleviation; and inter-agency collaboration in rural development.

1.11 As a third step, within each area, key themes were selected for in-depth discussion and review. For example in the area of the agencies' own programme of action, the themes selected were: (i) basic and action-oriented research; (ii) education, training and extension;



(iii) monitoring and evaluation; (iv) dissemination of information and findings; and (v) strengthening national development management capabilities. Similarly, four important themes were selected while discussing activities in support of government programmes, i.e. (i) access to resources and employment; (ii) institutional and human resource development; (iii) gender issues; and (iv) the environment and sustainable development.

1.12 In the area of "advocacy", and also while discussing inter-agency collaboration, some key items were identified and reviewed. In the case of the former, the programmes relating to the following aspects were critically reviewed: (i) relaxing trade barriers; (ii) encouraging the flow of funds; and (iii) fostering technical cooperation activities among developing countries. For the latter, attention was concentrated on the following: (i) ACC Task Force on Rural Development; (ii) Inter-Agency WCARRD Policy Missions; and (iii) inter-agency meetings and global and regional consultations.

1.13 Taken together these themes covered the major programme thrusts of the United Nations agencies in the field of agrarian reform and rural development and enabled the review team to arrive at a judgement on the nature, quality and outcome of these efforts.

1.14 Some explanation of the relative coverage of the activities of different UN agencies may be necessary at the very outset. The reader may find relatively greater attention paid to the activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. In part, at least, this was by choice. FAO was designated as the lead agency for implementing the WCARRD Programme of Action and hence deserved a fuller treatment. Also the fact that more information was readily available from FAO influenced the presentation to some extent. In the case of some of the agencies -- and these fortunately were very few -- information supplied was scanty.

1.15 The review is organized in three parts. In Part I, the genesis and background of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development is discussed, the implicit assumptions behind the approach of the Conference are underlined and important subsequent developments which could have affected the quality and the magnitude of the efforts addressed to the rural poor are outlined. Part II reviews UN agencies' efforts to implement WCARRD recommendations in a few key areas. Part III summarizes what the review team considers the main issues in rural development in the 1990s, and makes suggestions on the future direction of efforts aimed at poverty alleviation through agrarian reform and rural development during the coming decade.



PART I

CHAPTER II

WCARRD: GENESIS AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION - AN OVERVIEW

The initiative of FAO

2.1 The World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD), held 12-20 July 1979 in Rome, was a milestone in the UN system's quest for a strategy for poverty alleviation throughout the world. It affirmed the belief that economic growth was not a sufficient condition for poverty alleviation and enjoined governments and the international community to pursue activities which would effectively implement a charter for the rural poor. The UN System of Specialized Agencies and the Regional Economic Commissions were asked to spearhead this new approach through promotional and advocacy roles and through support to governments.

2.2 But the beginnings of WCARRD lay years before 1979. Starting with the UN General Assembly's Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, a series of conferences was organized by different UN agencies in their respective areas of operation - to mould world opinion and redirect adequate resources in favour of programmes oriented toward the poor. These conferences took as their theme the issues pertaining to food, population, employment, water, environment, housing, primary health care, and so on. Thus they all addressed poverty alleviation, conquest of hunger and enhancement of the quality of life of the poor. WCARRD represented a culmination of these activities.

2.3 For FAO this conference was even more significant. Since the mid-1960s a number of studies had been pointing to a disturbing trend towards greater incidence of poverty in the rural sector of developing countries. Problems in existing agrarian structures were identified in these studies as a major factor inhibiting rural development and rural poverty alleviation. FAO convened a World Land Reform Conference in 1966. Further, it appointed a special committee to look into the question of agrarian structure. The committee, known as the Special Committee on Agrarian Reforms, gave its report in 1971. The committee concluded that defective agrarian structures and a lack of popular participation were two of the main obstacles to economic development in general, and agricultural growth in particular. The FAO Conference and Council discussed these issues in great detail in the years that followed and resolved, in 1975, that FAO should take the lead in convening a World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. Thus, for the second time in less than 15 years FAO was to draw the attention of the world community to the need for structural changes in rural areas.

The Consensus of 1979

2.4 WCARRD was remarkable for two important reasons. First, it was the largest and most representative gathering of its kind ever to meet and deliberate on the issues pertaining to agrarian reform and rural



development. Over 1 400 delegates representing 145 countries, 22 United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, and 19 inter-governmental agencies participated in the Conference. Second, the WCARRD documents truly reflected an international consensus on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ARRD) as it prevailed in the late 1970s. In its Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action (also known as The Peasants' Charter), it brought together various strands of thinking on ARRD and presented near-unanimous views on the topics it dealt with.

2.5 It is possible to discern the important elements underlying the world consensus on Rural Development which came to be reflected in the Programme of Action adopted by WCARRD. These were:

- (i) Growth is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for rural development, the primary objective of which should be to meet the basic needs and improve the quality of life of the poor in rural areas. If this objective is not consciously pursued, irrespective of the rate of growth and level of 'development', the poor will continue to be bypassed.
- (ii) A strategy of rural development must be a sustainable strategy. This implies two things: that the strategy must rest on building self-reliant institutions and that it must be multisectoral (that is, that the Programme of Action for alleviating rural poverty should encompass income-enhancing measures, measures for equitable distribution of assets and measures to improve the quality of life of the rural poor.)
- (iii) Because it is important to lay as much emphasis on the process of development as on its outcome, the participation of beneficiaries in planning, implementing and evaluating rural development programmes and policies is essential.
- (iv) Rural development cannot be pursued in terms of isolated local-level projects, though these are important. A strategy of poor-oriented rural development means that governments must orient their development policies to this objective. It also has implications for international action, particularly for the United Nations system.

#### The Programme of Action and the UN System

2.6 The principles underlined above are fully reflected in the WCARRD Programme of Action. This Programme is a comprehensive one -- according to some critics too comprehensive. It comprises nearly 120 proposals for national and nearly 40 for international action. The Programme set forth the following objectives, grouped here into major areas of concern:

- (i) that the rural poor be enabled to have access to fixed factors of production in agriculture, i.e., land, water and natural resources;
- (ii) that the rural poor obtain access to variable factors of production, i.e., agricultural inputs, markets and services;



- (iii) that priority be accorded to the generation and extension of technology for small farmers;
- (iv) that importance be attached to the creation of non-farm employment opportunities;
- (v) that due emphasis be placed on human resource development (i.e., education, health, nutrition, training and extension);
- (vi) that women be enabled to participate equally in development;
- (vii) that development be environmentally sustainable;
- (viii) that rural development be promoted with the full participation of people, i.e., through active involvement of NGOs, producers' and workers' groups and cooperatives;
- (ix) that macro-policies (i.e., fiscal, price, trade, and investment policies) support grassroots efforts in rural development.

Member countries undertook to report to every other biennial FAO Conference on their progress in implementing policies and programmes in these areas. The 1981 FAO Conference requested countries to present their first reports to the 1983 FAO Conference, thus initiating the four-yearly reporting cycle.

2.7 The locus of most activities for rural development was clearly to be with the governments and the people of Member Nations. However, the UN organizations, and FAO in particular as the lead agency, was expected to play a significant, supporting role in assisting Member Governments to meet the above objectives.

2.8 More specifically FAO and the other United Nations agencies were called upon to perform the following tasks:

- (i) Monitor agrarian reform and rural development: in particular, developing socio-economic criteria and methods for monitoring and evaluation of rural development, undertaking periodic review of national policies in this regard, and examining the level and flow of funds for ARR. Also, to sensitize governments of member countries to realities of rural poverty through information-sharing campaigns.
- (ii) Organize and promote socio-economic and technological research, including, inter alia, strengthening the indigenous capacity for research, promoting exchange of experience and analyses among developing countries, and assisting in the formulation of national economic policies for agrarian reform and rural development.
- (iii) Expand technical assistance in all areas of agrarian reform and rural development and undertake periodic reviews and analyses of performance and progress in technical assistance activities related to agrarian reform and rural development,



in particular, the implementation of the WCARRD Programme of Action.

- (iv) Stimulate public and private investment in rural development with special regard to projects and programmes which have a significant impact on poverty alleviation.

2.9 The UN agencies were also assigned an important advocacy role in the international arena, for:

- ensuring equitable terms and fair access to commodity markets for the developing countries, and equitable terms for small producers within the developing countries;
- facilitating economic and technical cooperation among developing countries;
- encouraging a flow of resources from developed to developing countries which is consistent with overall economic and social objectives.

2.10 The instruments and modalities available to the agencies to fulfil these objectives included: (i) the development of socio-economic indicators of rural development and their use in a number of developing countries; (ii) global, regional and country-level studies on rural poverty; (iii) training and institution-building; (iv) periodic monitoring of different aspects of progress in rural development; (v) round-table discussions of specific topics; (vi) inter-agency meetings, the most important among these being the meetings of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development and its subsidiary bodies; (vii) inter-agency WCARRD follow-up policy missions; and (viii) participatory rural development projects in selected countries.

2.11 The Programme of Action was not only endorsed by the large world gathering, but was accorded, subsequently, a formal approval by the entire UN system. The UN General Assembly discussed and endorsed the WCARRD recommendations (Resolution A/RES/34/14 of 19 November 1979). ECOSOC too approved the Programme (Council decision 1981/185 of 23 July 1981) and asked FAO to prepare every four years a report entitled "Review and Analysis of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development", for the Council's consideration. The ACC Task Force on Rural Development in 1980 accepted the WCARRD Programme as the framework for coordinated efforts by the UN system for rural development at country level.

2.12 In order to prepare its technical divisions at Headquarters and its regional offices, FAO made certain institutional arrangements and undertook a reorientation of programmes. (These are given in Annex V). Among the former the most noteworthy were the establishment of an Inter-Departmental Committee on Rural Development, an Inter-Divisional Working Group on Rural Development (to assist the Committee), and six ad hoc sub-groups to provide guidelines and action proposals on various subject matter areas.

2.13 Programme re-orientation included, inter alia,

- identification of rural poor groups to be targeted;



- development of new approaches to institutions, production systems and technologies;
- staff sensitization and training in the WCARRD principles;
- the establishment, together with other agencies, of key principles for operational guidelines for implementation of WCARRD;
- directives to FAO representatives for guidance in their discussions with Member Governments.

2.14 After the Programme of Action was accepted, there was a flurry of activity in FAO and in other United Nations agencies, especially in the first quinquennium following WCARRD. Missions were mounted, consultations were organized, policy documents were prepared, socio-economic indicators were developed and projects were canvassed. There was, in general, a great deal of enthusiasm and purposeful activity.

2.15 It will be our endeavour in the following pages to examine the nature and substance of the UN system's major activities, what seems to have been the outcome and what lessons can be drawn from the experience of the UN agencies in the area of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development over the past decade.

2.16 Two comments are relevant at this point. First, it should be recognized that FAO's (or for that matter other UN agencies') efforts to assist member countries in alleviating rural poverty may at times be overwhelmed by other developments within a country or in the external environment facing it. The review of efforts by FAO and other agencies could not, therefore, be related directly to the extent of poverty reduction or lack of it. It is for this reason that this introductory chapter is followed by a brief review of developments in the 1980s which could have had significant impact on the activities of the agencies.

2.17 In the second place, the WCARRD Programme, as mentioned earlier, was perhaps too comprehensive. Practically every measure of rural development, and some going beyond rural development, were accommodated in this Programme. In order to make the review more specific, our effort focuses on those activities in the WCARRD Programme of Action which were mandated to the UN agencies. The scope of the review has purposely been kept narrow and selective. Only such an approach could give some indication of the efforts expended and the results achieved in fulfilling the objectives of WCARRD.

2.18 The follow-up activities to be reviewed may be grouped in four categories: (i) activities which form the regular or core activities of the agencies and are planned and executed more or less on the agencies' own initiatives; (ii) activities at the field level, mainly to support the national programmes of ARRD; (iii) the advocacy role of the agencies in facilitating trade, aid or technical assistance with the objective of strengthening ARRD programmes and, (iv) collaborative and joint action by the UN agencies to fulfil the objectives of WCARRD.

2.19 Grouping of the activities within one category or another is more to facilitate the review than to establish their distinctiveness.



CHAPTER III

ASSUMPTIONS OF WCARRD AND REALITIES OF THE 1980s

3.1 Viewed against the principal objectives of poverty alleviation in rural areas and enhancement of the quality of life of the rural people, the decade following WCARRD presents a mixed picture of achievements and failures, though the balance is distinctly towards the negative side. The Human Development Report of UNDP (1990) pointed out the positive as well as the negative side of, what it called, the Balance Sheet of Human Development. Among the positive achievements, it mentioned that average life expectancy has increased, school enrolment has gone up (for girls at a rate faster than that for boys), per capita income in developing countries has increased by nearly three percent per annum, more people have access to health services and safe drinking water, child mortality rates have halved, much larger numbers of people have better sanitary facilities and the per capita daily calories supply has improved significantly. There are, however, two disturbing factors which lead to a more sombre assessment.

3.2 In the first place, the "average" levels of these socio-economic indicators conceal some glaring inequalities, and the latter mask severe deprivations suffered by a large number of people in respect of all the basic goods and services reflected through these indicators. In developing regions which experienced actual economic decline the impact of this deterioration fell more sharply on the poor. In other regions where overall performance, judged by growth in per capita GNP, showed improvement the benefits did not accrue proportionately to the poor. It would be wrong to derive any satisfaction from the average growth in the critical variables for human development without, simultaneously looking into the pattern of distribution. And the latter does not leave much room for satisfaction.

3.3 The second disquieting factor is the enormity of the tasks on the one hand and the pace of achievements on the other. Whether it is health or nutrition or education or habitat, even if the pace of development is maintained at the rate achieved during the last 10 to 15 years, it may take another 40 to 50 years to provide these basic services to all households in the developing countries.

3.4 The strategy of WCARRD, with its emphasis on access to productive resources, markets and skills for the world's poor, was aimed at accelerating the pace of poverty alleviation. In the event, the pace of poverty alleviation as given by indicators of social advancement, was not much better in the 1980s than in the 1970s. In fact, the 1980s are referred to widely, and rightly so, as the "lost decade for the poor". The two progress reports on WCARRD follow-up (for the periods 1980-83 and 1983-87) bring this out with all supporting evidence. Why should this have happened? Why could not a programme of action, which claimed widest possible support at international fora, be delivered at the grassroots level?

3.5 It is important to understand the socio-economic developments that took place in the 1980s and juxtapose these with the assumptions, explicit or implicit, which the signatories of the comprehensive and ambitious



programme of WCARRD had made. This may help towards a more realistic review of the achievements of the United Nations agencies in supporting WCARRD's Programme of Action. Success of the programme endorsed by WCARRD was predicated upon several assumptions, such as (i) single-minded devotion on the part of the nations to the goals of a poor-oriented rural development programme, (ii) adequacy and strength of the institutions to respond to the new challenge, (iii) transfer of adequate resources from the developed to the developing world through trade and through development assistance, and (iv) determined efforts to curb population growth so that population pressure on limited agricultural resources would be eased, or at least would not worsen. The Programme of Action of the UN agencies was seriously compromised by developments in these inter-related areas. The first assumption is being dealt with in the Third Progress Report on WCARRD Follow-up. The importance of the second is reflected in the activities of agencies depicted in Chapters IV and V. Numerous as these were, their total content was to leave much on the agenda of institutional development for the 1990s. In this chapter we will briefly review developments in the last two and examine their impact on the major thrust and orientation of the Programme of Action, more particularly those aspects which affect the functioning of international agencies in rural development.

#### Background Environment of the 1980s

3.6 Since the functioning of the international agencies during the 1980s was so strongly affected by the adverse prevailing conditions in the international economic environment, it is necessary to note here those aspects of the developments of the 1980s that undermined international support, specially those that have seriously reduced the access of developing countries to international markets and to external resources for development.

3.7 These supportive actions were needed more than ever in an economic world which experienced a sudden change from a decade (the 1970s) of uneven but rapid growth, particularly for developing countries, to a highly recessive economic environment emerging in the early 1980s.

3.8 The sharp economic downturn in developed countries following the second big increase in oil prices inevitably had its effect on developing countries. The effect manifested itself in several ways: the reduced growth rate in the world economy sharpened the constraints in commodity markets through rising protectionism in industrial countries; a decline in the terms of trade of developing countries and high world interest rates which increased the service charges of external debts. Finally, lending by the commercial banks reached negligible levels while external development funds were reduced.

3.9 The outcome for most developing countries were much more serious external and internal imbalances. During the 1980s the debt situation reached crisis level with debt services charges representing over 40 percent of the annual export earnings of the Latin America region and Caribbean and over 20 percent of the Africa region. Despite years of economic adjustment and rescheduling of debts many countries in these two regions have seen the possibility of stabilization in their accounts recede further. Asia was much less seriously affected as a whole. Shortly after the crisis of early 1980s a newer polarization in terms of economic



performance was observed between developed and developing countries and among regions of the latter. The growth rate in developed countries equalled or exceeded those of the 1970s. On the side of the developing countries, while strong growth was recorded in Asia, due mainly to the success of East and South East Asian NICs, China and India, many countries in Africa and Latin America regressed in development by most accepted indicators.

3.10 On the trade side, even though developing countries have a diminishing participation in the share of world agricultural trade, they are still dependent on agricultural exports as a main source of their foreign exchange earnings. Despite continuous commitments made by industrialized countries in various fora to roll back protectionism, virtually no action has been taken to enhance market access for agricultural products of developing countries. In the meantime the agricultural terms of trade of the developing countries have continuously deteriorated with values for 1988 that were on average 20 percent below those of 1979/81.

3.11 Developments in the financial environment during the 1980s presented developing countries with an increasing shortage of funds for development purposes. On the multilateral side, very severe and complicated conditionalities imposed on Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs) not only limited the total amount and the disbursement pattern of external credit but also seriously reduced the availability of domestic funds.

3.12 On the side of bilateral aid, as was mentioned in a recent FAO publication, in spite of the impressive contribution that a number of donor countries have been making, the usefulness of development assistance is limited due to the tying of aid.

3.13 As a consequence of those factors that have negatively affected the availability of external resources, and mainly because of the decrease in International Development Agency (IDA) lending to agriculture in the 1980s, the developing countries became much more dependent on bilateral assistance and non-concessional funds. The lack of growth in concessional funds to agriculture in absolute terms and the corresponding increase in non-concessional flows have amounted to a hardening of the terms of official assistance in recent years which made rural development a more difficult task and the work of international agencies more challenging. An illustration of the magnitude of this change is the sharp fall in the share of concessional funds in total multilateral commitments from a peak of 54 percent in 1979/80 to 38 percent in 1985/86.

3.14 A combination of FAO and OECD data on capital commitments by purpose of use, for the subperiods 1974-79 and 1980-86, confirm that non-concessional flows from multilateral sources became relatively more important and this then imposed a "higher cost" of external assistance to those countries engaged in rural development programmes. In addition the same data reveal the emergence of a new pattern of external support for agriculture and agro-related development with the following distinctive characteristics:

- i) There has been a shift in the final destination of funds from supporting activities in the specific areas of crops and livestock toward supporting a broader field of regional development and land settlement.



- ii) Agricultural services and especially rural credit depend now much more heavily on non-concessional funds than ten years ago. The direct implication of this is an increase in the cost of credit and other basic services to farmers. The increase in the cost of credit has specially impacted on agricultural producers in adjustment-pursuing countries where there has also been an elimination of government subsidized credit for small farmers. The same can be said in reference to rural infrastructure where the share of non-concessional funds in total commitments has increased from 7 to 11 percent.
- iii) Assistance for activities relating to the manufacture of inputs and to agro-industries has significantly declined. At the same time, as a result of aid-tying practices, the supply of inputs to developing countries doubled its percentage share of total aid between 1974/79 and the mid-1980s. There is abundant empirical evidence that tying aid raises the cost of the import component of projects (particularly in the case of tractors, water-sprinklers and fertilizers). On the other hand, the resulting smaller support given to agro-related industries makes the agricultural sector, and particularly the small scale sector, more vulnerable.
- iv) The annual growth rate of total technical cooperation flows to agriculture has declined from 6.4 percent for 1974-79 to 0.3 percent in 1980-86. A similar trend was observed in the flow related to direct technical cooperation grants and loans (3.9 to 0.4 percent) but a much sharper reduction in the case of the technical cooperation component of capital grants and loans (13.4 to -0.1 percent).

3.15 Along with the difficulties in the external environment, the extremely severe adjustments undertaken by many developing countries to remove very long-lasting structural imbalances have aggravated the general financial situation to the detriment of their abilities to meet their investment needs.

3.16 On the positive side we must count the political willingness of the whole world to development of more collaborative relations between developed and developing countries in a general environment of no confrontation.

3.17 This then provides the background against which the UN agencies implemented their programmes.

#### Impact on the Functioning of the Agencies

3.18 These macro level developments provided both challenges and opportunities to FAO and the United Nations System in their work on poverty alleviation and rural development. Paucity of resources in a large number of member countries exacerbated the problem of counterpart funding and jeopardized several projects and programmes. More importantly, in keeping with the trend in the thinking on the role of the state, the



agencies had to gear themselves to work with truncated and, in quite a few cases, demoralized bureaucracies.

3.19 The relative importance attached to the different functions of agencies also changed. In countries undergoing structural adjustment the drastic cuts in public spending implied an uneven impact on different groups of people. The task of identifying the "gainers" and "losers" was taken up by FAO and other UN agencies. Most of the agencies went beyond this identification exercise and advocated in conditionalities as well as strategized budget cuts to prevent undue hardships to the poor and ensure minimum supply of basic services. Support requested from the agencies on macro policy formulation, and the agencies' need for an expertise in this area, is an example of this changing context.

#### The Influence of Demographic, Environmental and Technological Trends

3.20 The international and national policy environments added new dimensions to the tasks of rural development. There were, also, more abiding secular trends which impacted on the policies and programmes of national governments and international agencies. The most important among these was the continuing high rate of growth in population in the developing countries. With the exception of East Asia, no developing region could succeed in bringing down the rate of growth in population in the 1980s to any remarkable extent. The continuing high growth rate was particularly glaring for the African region which already had a rate of growth of population of approximately three percent per annum.

3.21 In addition to population problems in countries with high growth rate, some countries face the problem of coping with the effects of past high rates of population growth on the age structure and spatial distribution of the population. The impact of changes in age structure on the labour force, health and educational services, and the demand on rural infrastructure should be considered in the analysis of population and rural poverty related matters in several Asian and Latin American countries. In the context of population education and gender issues, it is important to stress that access to family planning information and services is very difficult within a frame of severe poverty. Poor men and women from peasant communities, with low educational levels, do not usually have access to sound family planning information, education and services, as is the case in urban areas. As UNFPA says in the state of World Population, 1990: "Poor people cannot choose on these important and delicate matters".

3.22 The "agricultural frontier" was reached not only in densely populated countries of the Asian region, but also in the so called land-abundant regions of Africa and Latin America. In all such cases it led to cultivation on marginal lands and more fragile eco-systems with attendant risks. Marine and inland fisheries were exposed to similar pressure resulting in diminishing incomes to artisanal fisher folk, increased social conflicts, and in some cases irreversible depletion of fish stocks. The need for more systematic thinking and for collective action was recognized. It was fair to assume that UN technical agencies would provide the lead, first in understanding and then in tackling the threat of environmental degradation.



3.23 During the 1980s there was considerable agreement on the fact that severe poverty, rapid population growth and environmental degradation reinforce each other in the rural areas of most developing countries. In fact, within the context of rural poverty reinforced by rapid population growth, immediate actions for survival have taken over sound agricultural practices, damaging the environment and placing in jeopardy the perspective of a sustainable rural and agricultural development.

3.24 Deforestation emerged as the most important, and most widespread, manifestation of environmental degradation in developing countries. Extension of cultivable area, rising demand for fuel wood and, in some cases, encroachment on forest lands for industrial and urban purposes made a serious and adverse impact on land under forests. The international community's attention was soon focused on the ways and means of stopping this destruction which was affecting the livelihood and the quality of life of all people, but particularly of the poor. On the agenda of action of the international agencies, protection and expansion of forests occupied a progressively higher place. Besides, there was also an increasing interest in slowing down deforestation and managing tropical forest in a sustainable manner -- both economically and environmentally. This coincided with a major reorientation of forestry towards involving rural people as both participants and beneficiaries.

3.25 Pressure of population on land and the diminution of land holdings -- and an ever-increasing number of small farmers -- had some other significant implications for agencies concerned with rural development.

3.26 In the first place, it meant generating and extending technologies for small farms. The technology centred on high-yielding varieties, which ushered in a "green revolution" in certain -- especially well watered, well irrigated -- parts of developing countries between the mid-sixties and mid-seventies, was losing its momentum even in those areas. For rain-fed areas and other "difficult" regions a size neutral technology had yet to be evolved. This was a clear and persistent challenge before FAO, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) System, and National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS). Less than adequate success in this direction explains to a significant extent the persistence of rural poverty in several parts of the developing regions.

3.27 Secondly, the growing paucity of arable land and the resulting high commercial value for the land had far reaching consequences for the agrarian reform programmes which were encouraged and supported by the international agencies. The sacrifice entailed in surrendering progressively more valuable land became high, and consequently the task of sequestering surplus land for redistributive purposes became more difficult. Where compensation for sequestered land was involved, it became extremely difficult to compensate the affected landowners anywhere close to market prices of land. New thinking on access to land and security of tenure became imperative.

3.28 A third implication was a growing demand for land registration and titling. A general tendency towards decollectivization and decommunalization held broad sway in the 1980s. Land registration and land titling was an expression of the same tendency. The rising value of arable land, and use of land as collateral for credit were other important reasons for a demand for individual titling. The international agencies



such as FAO were receiving more demands on "survey and settlement" type of operations than for assistance in land reform programmes.

3.29 During this period it was also becoming evident that the growing rural population of developing countries could not be absorbed in agriculture alone, even after taking into account the possible intensification of agriculture. Expansion of non-farm rural employment opportunities at a pace much faster than was the case in the previous decade, emerged as essential to ensure adequate livelihood for a large number of rural people. Both FAO, in its publication, Agriculture: Toward 2000, and ILO in its several Employment Reports, made this point abundantly clear. However, the strategy for decentralized non-farm activities was not thought through clearly, - much less experimented with. Therefore, beyond reiterating the experience of Japan in its early phase of industrialization or of Taiwan and South Korea in the later years, no experience-based guidelines were available. Again, a different type of strategic thinking and an innovative pattern of assistance were demanded by this growing need for occupational diversification in the rural areas of the developing countries.

3.30 The underlying principles of the WCARRD Programme of Action such as concern for poverty alleviation, involvement of women in development, people's participation and institutional growth were as valid in the 1980s as they were at the time of the Conference. There were, however, far reaching developments in the international economic environment and national growth strategies which, when juxtaposed with the worsening natural resource situation, added new dimensions to the old concerns. The institutions of the United Nations System were faced with the tasks of assisting national programmes to address these issues and concerns through reorienting their own programmes to make them more relevant and effective, and taking their advocacy role for the developing countries at the international fora far more systematically. How they performed these tasks on their own and in collaboration with one another, is examined in the next part of the review.



PART II

CHAPTER IV

AGENCIES' OWN PROGRAMMES OF ACTION

Preamble

4.1 Any review of the UN agencies' contribution to implementing the WCARRD Programme of Action must begin with their promotional activities. The Peasants' Charter called on them to do this by pursuing a catalytic role through research, training, monitoring and evaluation, and dissemination of information. These, together with policy missions and consultations of various kinds, would constitute the area in which the agencies undertook initiatives to prepare the ground for later supporting activities at the national level in support of WCARRD principles. The response of FAO, the lead agency on rural development, would be by far the most important. Other agencies were to claim in their replies to the review team that they did not consciously undertake a follow-up to WCARRD; they found that WCARRD objectives were their own. Agencies cannot, of course, impose activities on member countries. Nevertheless the quality of the groundwork performed by the agencies in de facto promoting WCARRD was bound to influence countries' reception of ideas for activities.

4.2 The World Conference in 1979 called on the Director-General of FAO to reorientate, expand and strengthen FAO's activities towards the WCARRD Programme of Action. To facilitate this, FAO's Regular Programme budget allocation for the Rural Development Programme increased from US\$12 million during 1978/79 to US\$21 million for 1982/3. The donors pledged an additional \$15 million to FAO's Regular Programme for the immediate objectives of:

- inducing wider national development activities,
- paving the way for the formulation of antipoverty rural development investment projects supported by multilateral agencies, and
- helping donors to identify programmes and projects for poverty eradication.

4.3 The greater part of these resources was utilized by the Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division (ESH), which was the focal point in FAO for WCARRD follow-up activities, to undertake a generic package of promotional activities. The remainder of the money facilitated a large number of missions, consultations and expert meetings, many of which are mentioned in Chapter VI. When the extra-budgetary funds were finished in 1983 normal Regular and Field Programme budgets had to be relied on to maintain the momentum.

4.4 In the event these groundwork preparations for an active field programme, and similar activities by other agencies, became both intensive and wide-ranging, and often provided a basis for substantial field programme activities. For instance, many original training activities were



adapted to become forms of technical assistance. The growing knowledge of the agencies themselves became an input to general project formulation and policy advice. It is simply not possible to identify a cutoff point when catalytic efforts following WCARRD ended and newly-fashioned supporting Field Programmes began. This means that there is no easy demarcation of the activities which have been drawn upon to write Chapters IV and V.

4.5 Here, in Chapter IV, the primary classification of Agency promotional activities, as depicted in the WCARRD Programme of Action, provide the subjects of the five following sections. However, strengthening national development management capabilities is dealt with in Chapter V.

## I

### Basic and Action-Oriented Research

4.6 Within a few years of the World Conference, FAO had developed an extensive research programme to improve knowledge of key issues of agrarian reform and rural development and to provide recent data to member countries. The volume of this core WCARRD research is impressive. The subject titles record a search for an information base to poverty alleviation strategies. There have been at least 19 in-depth country studies on rural poverty and schemes for its alleviation, many of them undertaken to help countries with weak research capabilities to obtain a profile on poverty. Their usefulness has been enhanced by some major synthesizing publications. Most of the other studies undertaken are strongly related to establishing a body of knowledge, albeit very modest, on the dynamics of rural poverty: how it arose and how it was changing. These include research programmes on landlessness, land tenure systems and pastoralism. The series is still ongoing, after ten years, because of the great variety of circumstances to be understood. In recent years, other agencies have also come out with substantial studies on poverty alleviation. A particular reference may be made to the World Bank's World Development Report for 1990, and UNDP's Human Development Report.

4.7 In this package of agrarian research the titles themselves do not indicate a shift in emphasis during the 1980s. However, FAO's and several other agencies' research on land tenure has been increasingly influenced by trends to privatize communal lands. Also, both FAO and ILO have recently developed an interest in changes in land allocation of former centrally planned countries. Much of the UN system's current research programme on land issues seems to concentrate on reform of present tenure relations rather than land redistribution. Research on land issues appears therefore to have been influenced by changes in agrarian strategies. Special mention should be made of the late start made on examining land issues from the point of view of gender. The World Bank has two projects stemming from the same collection of data, one generally addressing land rights in sub-Saharan Africa, the other more specifically addressing land rights issues with respect to women in sub-Saharan Africa. Collaboration between FAO Services has led to a few studies on women and land rights in Asia and one in Latin America, while ILO has made a modest beginning with some country case studies from several regions. But there is, as yet, no proper information base on which to devise a policy of land rights for women.



4.8 Since the technical departments of FAO undertake most of their research through exploratory pilot projects in the field any influence of WCARRD has to be seen in the approach to these projects. A WCARRD influence, in terms of identifying poverty alleviation instruments, or improving the poor's access to resources, was not much in evidence in the early 1980s. Since then there has been an accelerating trend in pilot projects to targeting small farmer or disadvantaged groups. Moreover awareness of WCARRD in FAO is now such that efforts are nearly always made to introduce participatory approaches and to screen the design for gender implications. An important means to this is provided by the research of the Development Support Communication Branch which has produced guidelines and manuals on different media and approaches, as well as audio-visual training materials.

4.9 In some instances agencies' action-oriented research has been influenced by trends towards privatization of services, signalling recognition of the growing importance of assisting small farmers and women to establish effective links with market-oriented institutions. FAO has commissioned a paper on the Role of Public and Private Agents in the Agricultural Sector. UNIDO has been conducting practical research within the framework of technical cooperation activities with a view to enhancing linkages between rural economies and the manufacturing sector. But while there is a strongly expressed desire to do much more research on improving the access of the poor to markets, given the likely increasingly urgent demand for it, it remains in 1990 in an embryonic stage. In contrast to studying what might be undertaken on market access UNRISD and ILO are investigating how markets have, in fact, altered as a result of price adjustment and market liberalization, and who are the gainers and losers. To the extent that understanding what is currently happening could be a valuable input to the design of pilot projects favouring the poor, agencies appear to be complementing each other's research. Nevertheless, the subject of the reshaping of markets during economic adjustment is so important that it is necessary for all agencies, particularly FAO, to give more attention to it.

4.10 There is not a great amount of research being done on small farmer technology. In the past most international and national research units have concentrated on yield improvements of individual crops, their improved adaptability to different agro-ecological environments and tolerance to pests, diseases or adverse soil conditions. Under FAO's Farming Systems Development Programme, some research work has been done on crop rotations and on the integration of crop and livestock systems with a holistic approach keeping in view the socio-economic situation of the farm household. IFAD is identifying small farmer technologies which use minimal purchased inputs. But this, it was claimed, was due to adjustment policies increasing input costs. It is now looking at technologies for environmental protection and sustainable development, and with its focus on the disadvantaged should be examining options for small farmers. Another approach is being taken by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAPA). RAPA is trying to explain why there are so many pockets in the region which have not adopted new technology in recent decades by taking a closer look at the implications of those technologies for broader aspects of farmers' livelihoods.

4.11 One reason for the modest amount of research on small farmer technology seems to be that attention is increasingly focusing on why small farmers do not adopt the technology that does exist. Whether or not



it is the fault of the supporting services of the technology's delivery system should be answered by the many pilot projects to improve access to variable inputs and services. But even if it is, the responsibility of researchers of agricultural technology in the post-WCARRD era is to find technologies to meet small farmer specifications in the real socio-economic world. There are, however, likely to be other causes of non-adoption. The Forestry Department of FAO has been aware of the importance of understanding local knowledge and technology, and uses participatory methods to understand local motivations.

4.12 WCARRD accorded high priority to sustainable development. The amount of research-based knowledge in this area is now growing. The Environment and Energy Programmes Coordinating Centre in FAO has put together a collection of papers on different aspects of sustainable agriculture and rural development, and has recently completed a draft proposal for strategies and agenda for action (see Chapter V). In 1990 the ILO started a programme of conceptualizing and definitional research in a similar vein. UNEP has started in collaboration with African governments an innovative programme, AMCEN, with the objectives of environmental conservation, alleviation of poverty and general economic and social development in Africa. Such programmes are also being initiated in Latin America and Asia. UNEP's advisory services to developing countries include Environmental Plans of Action, National Conservation Strategies, Plans of Action to Combat Desertification, and National Soils Policies. The CGIAR/TAC have published a comprehensive review of physical and socio-economic issues with the title Sustainable Agricultural Production: implications for international agricultural research. A number of agencies, including the World Bank and UNDP have gone some way to discussing the conceptualization of SD through the use of thematic special chapters in their main annual review publications.

4.13 Many international agencies have recently been working together to more clearly define sustainable development, to address the question of whether equity and growth need be compromised by sustainable development, and how the selection of agricultural technology relates to the management of natural resources. The documents prepared for the FAO-Netherlands Conference in mid-April 1991 should establish clear guidelines not only for research but also, it is hoped, for an agenda for action. For the UN system as a whole the forthcoming UN Conference on Environment and Development, to be organized in Brazil 1992, could be an important landmark.

## II

### Education, Training and Extension

#### Agencies' staff training:

4.14 After the World Conference the immediate priority was to educate FAO staff in the content of WCARRD and its implications for departmental activities. A training programme with reading materials ("Follow-up Seminar on Rural Development") was one of the first ground preparation activities undertaken on the additional resources to the Regular Programme. Altogether 150 subject matter specialists (or roughly 20 percent of non-administration professionals at headquarters) from all technical divisions passed through these courses. While it is difficult to



assess the effectiveness of this training, because of other influences on the spread of awareness there is no doubt that a major effort was made to secure attention to WCARRD throughout the Organization.

4.15 In the last few years the agencies have, one after the other, started in-house training on gender issues. No other substantive subject of WCARRD has been the focus of so much staff training. Of the main agencies the World Bank and UNDP have taken the lead with very extensive coverage of their staff. FAO has introduced staff training on gender issues through specific workshops, while WFP and IFAD have included gender in their general staff training for some time. But ILO and UNIDO are still at the planning stage. However, with some exceptions, notably FAO's Forestry Department, there appears to be a general deficiency of reinforcing literature on gender issues. The case studies which are the basis of most gender training in the UN system need to be supplemented by more synthesized material and guideline exercises.

4.16 There has been very little staff training on SD issues, although UNEP has developed materials for its training workshops on economic analysis for environmental issues and FAO organized two in-house seminars on Environmental Impact Assessment in 1989.

Other activities:

4.17 UNESCO is the lead agency in education. One of the organization's main priorities in its action during the last decade was to foster the development and renewal of primary education and to promote the total elimination of illiteracy, particularly in rural communities. Its work involves the integration of education with rural environment, social attitudes and production needs. Particular attention is given to the needs of rural women by the provision of training courses, refresher courses and seminars designed to improve their status and allow them to participate in and become integrated into national life in all its aspects. Training courses were also organized for various target groups to develop technical skills. The Regional Commissions were in the forefront in developing such training courses, for small farmers, women, policy analysts, planners, etc..

4.18 All agencies and Regional Commissions conduct courses in skill acquisition at regional and national levels to further the competence of officials, NGOs and group representatives in planning and implementation. If the training of agencies other than the lead agency were not directly influenced by WCARRD they certainly included some WCARRD priorities. Many of the materials used in training emanate from technical studies and pilot projects, and therefore from the agencies' own catalytic initiatives.

4.19 Through discussion with Member Governments agencies effectively initiated training on subjects which were close concerns of WCARRD. Moreover, some of these initiatives, such as the training of local and district level health, shelter and environmental officers, combined WCARRD objectives and more recent trends toward decentralization. There is also a growing interest in strengthening the private sector through training to facilitate rural development. For instance, UNIDO has recognized the consequences of structural adjustment by training bankers and "holders of resources" in the private sector to appraise investment proposals in a new context.



4.20 What is of particular interest is the development of new training materials which meet WCARRD priorities. There have been three discernible areas of change.

4.21 The first is the incorporation of (i) the findings of the pilot projects which tested a wide variety of participatory approaches, and (ii) parts of the solid body of technical papers and synthesizing reviews into teaching materials for colleges, universities, extension services, NGOs, etc. This applies to both formal and informal training. The use of these materials has encouraged the trend toward multidisciplinary training. In an evaluation of its Regular Programme training activities in 1987, in which 73 000 people participated, FAO noted the increased emphasis given to socio-economic subjects in this form of technology transfer.

4.22 The second, and more recent, innovation has been adaptations of curricula to perceived changes since 1979 in the role of extension officers and local level facilitators. This, for instance, was a subject of the Global Consultation on Agricultural Extension which FAO organized in 1989. The stronger interest in women's economic roles has led to efforts to relate some parts of home economics to mainstream agricultural extension material in innovative ways. In another instance, the influence of market liberalization trends has encouraged "market training" for agricultural extension officers working with small farmers. More recently FAO has developed materials on sustainable development for NGOs.

4.23 The third area of change relates more strictly to the modality of education and training for people at the grassroots level. There has been a common refrain among agencies that materials should be meaningful to rural communities if participatory modalities are to be successful. This includes translation into the vernacular language and incorporation of local indigenous knowledge. These changes have already been initiated; for instance, in educational and training materials concerning marketing, credit and settlement programmes of special note is the work of FAO's Development Support Communication Branch whose training and other field projects have opened the door to increased participation of rural people in assessment and management of their situation.

4.24 Some background influence on these changes might be attributed to the Financing Institutions, UNDP and the World Bank. Both are heavily committed to improving the effectiveness of training and extension services. UNDP sees an increasing role in planning skills acquisition for rural communities themselves. The World Bank, a major source of funds, has set out very specific guidelines for its lending for extension initiatives.

4.25 Despite these achievements it should not be supposed that WCARRD follow-up initiatives in training activities are complete. For local relevance there is much need for refinements and adaptation, and the information base of training materials on some main planks of the WCARRD Programme of Action (notably gender issues and non-farm rural employment) needs to be further improved.

4.26 It can be concluded that there has been an immense amount of agency innovative and promotional activity in education, training and extension in support of WCARRD objectives. The single most important innovation has been the development of participatory training materials. But FAO, other



agencies and Regional Commissions have tended to go their own way. There is, of course, a good argument in support of creative disorder and overlapping. But the profusion of training materials is such that users, particularly at the local level, are often in the hands of donors or executing agencies in the matter of choice of materials. A mechanism needs to be found to match user choice with producer choice.

### III

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

4.27 Chapter VII describes the instrumental work of two successive panels on monitoring and evaluation (M and E) in the ACC Task Force on Rural Development, the second of which is still active. FAO took a strong promotional role in what became a very extensive dialogue on socio-economic indicators. Some of its own work predated 1979. But within three years of the Conference, pilot studies on the use of a draft list of indicators had been undertaken in more than 20 countries, and four Regional Expert Consultations had studied the results. There followed many more pilot projects, a substantial reduction of the list, development of conceptual frameworks, refinements and prioritization of indicators, and identification of related sets of data. A number of significant papers were published. Many FAO Services (dealing with statistics, rural development, marketing and credit, nutrition and women in agricultural production) made an input to this major promotional effort. The other agencies commented on various drafts of the socio-economic indicators through their membership of the ACC Task Force. This long exercise culminated in 1988 in the publication of Guidelines on Socio-Economic Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluating Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, which was accompanied by technical studies and methodological reports on particular subjects such as women, the landless and rural development.

4.28 The Review Team learned that in those agencies which had noted its existence, this publication had proved extremely useful. But the work done by the Statistics Division and the Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division of FAO amounted to a spur to thinking rather than a definitive answer. Even within FAO different services were devising their own approaches and methodologies for their specific activities.

4.29 The subjects covered include farm data analysis, rural financial intermediaries, nutrition, women in agriculture, and socio-economic information for fisheries and forestry. Computer technology is facilitating monitoring schemes that would not have been possible before 1979. But the prime motivation seems to be the stronger emphasis since WCARRD on researching and working at the local level with the due regard to the social context that that entails.

4.30 One consequence of this is the new interest of a number of agencies in participatory M and E. For instance, the World Bank is giving increasing attention to participation in rapid rural appraisals. An indication of the general interest in participatory M and E is given by the fact that a handbook for training field workers on it, published by RAPA, is currently in its third edition and being translated into two Asian languages. CIRDA and AIT are already applying the handbook in training.



4.31 All UN agencies now practice project M and E, most utilizing procedures built into the project. One Regional Commission suggested that it was time to standardize the independently-developed sets of indicators for comparative usage.

4.32 There are, however, three final points to be made which are of relevance to the 1990s. The first relates to inadequate representation of certain items among socio-economic indicators. These include recording the presence of farmers'/workers' groups and cooperatives, and gender differences in agriculture and non-farm activities. The relevant FAO Services, as well as some other agencies and the Regional Commissions, have pronounced these to be the main areas of M and E development in the 1990s. It is important to mention in this context that INSTRAW is handling the statistics component of an integrated UNDP-funded project, "Improving African Women's Role in Informal Sector Production and Management", which will culminate in a policy maker's handbook on compiling statistics on women in the informal sector. Time-use surveys and enterprise surveys are promoted as a means of measuring informal sector participation.

4.33 The second point concerns the importance of monitoring WCARRD objectives at the macro level especially during economic adjustment. There is a danger of little or no reporting from Africa, and to a lesser extent from Latin America, where statistical services have been seriously affected by fiscal constraints. An alternative data source is the development since 1988 of Social Dimensions of Adjustment (SDA) - related socio-economic indicators sponsored by the World Bank, UNDP and the African Development Bank. The World Bank has prepared papers on assessing the SDA in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1990 there was a Technical Consultation -- FAO/World Bank/UN Statistical Office -- on the WCARRD Socio-Economic Indicators, the SDA project and the National Household Survey Capability Programmes, with the purpose of possible coordination and harmonization among the three sets of data, especially at the national level. Recommendations along these lines were made, inter alia, on the harmonization of concepts and classification, the disaggregation of data by gender, and the systematization of data on food, consumption and nutrition. The future dividends of this collaboration, in terms of monitoring WCARRD elements, could be very substantial. On a more general level, UNRISD is currently reassessing the relevance of its socio-economic indicators for monitoring the impact of economic adjustment.

4.34 The third point refers to a subject that is in danger of being lost sight of. Micro level data collected with the explicit understanding of informing macro policies is not always used for that purpose. A case in point is the census of agriculture which collects data, inter alia, on the numbers and distribution of small holdings. The last published analysis of this data refers to 1980. The data gathering and analysis capacity in some countries, and the resource crunch in the agencies may come in the way of utilizing micro level data for macro policy formulation. But if the importance of such an approach is agreed to, ways and means should be found to overcome the difficulties.

4.35 Finally, something should be said of the agencies' evaluation of themselves. Such exercises provide a feedback, not only into activities which help to improve their future relevance, efficiency and effectiveness, but also into the quality of advice to countries on project and programme formulation. Field projects in general have tripartite



evaluations. The main agencies take evaluations very seriously. Beyond this, agencies might evaluate samples of projects (or of Regular Programme activities with related field projects), chosen thematically. In FAO such evaluations are synthesized every two years for management at all levels, including that which gives overall direction to FAO's programmes. In general the agencies have made significant advances in the 1980s in making more systematic use of evaluations, although these were not necessarily related to a WCARRD follow-up.

#### IV

##### Dissemination of Information and Findings

4.36 Strengthening information systems is seen as helping to provide a firm foundation for development planning and action. There are two main channels for dissemination of information: distribution of publications and meetings.

4.37 Publications have one distinct advantage. Because they are an exercise in distillation they can draw together in summary form the best and most relevant thinking that is ongoing in UN agencies. All agencies publish results of research, training and technical cooperation activities periodically, and distribute them widely (to Governments, UNDP field officers and development aid institutions and sometimes to NGOs). But the regular publication is said to be also highly prized. Newsletters are viewed as an effective instrument and are gaining in popularity.

4.38 The most effective way to disseminate information to a more activist audience is widely agreed to be the use of technical studies as inputs to workshops and seminars at national level or below. Regional meetings do not on the whole attract participants who follow up on what they have learned. A particularly successful form of meeting is the round table on a selected subject of WCARRD, for which special technical papers (sometimes in the form of synthesized research findings) are written. For example, women's involvement in the cooperative movement was the subject of an interregional consultative meeting convened by INSTRAW in cooperation with the Women in Socialist Society Research Commission of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. In addition to exchanging experiences, participants recommended policies and programmes to upgrade women's management skills, marketing techniques and access to credit.

4.39 FAO Regional Offices and Regional Economic Commissions play a critical role in dissemination of documentation through their extensive networking. For example, RAPA passes on information through networks on 20 specialized subjects, and RLAC on 22. Round tables for technicians and representatives of national institutions are organized through these networks.

4.40 There is a common recognition of the need to extend the network of dissemination - and gathering - of information to non-official users, such as national research institutions and NGOs. Where such a network already exists agencies claim there is a need to make it "denser". But financial constraints were frequently mentioned as the main obstacle to this.



4.41 What is often overlooked is the importance of disseminating materials among UN agencies themselves. The review team found that agencies knew relatively little of each other's current, and frequently past, research and pilot testing in spite of the forum provided by the ACC Task Force on Rural Development where activity reports are regularly presented. Instances were also found of a lack of this kind of communication between departments of the same agency, notably on gender and participation issues. The mushrooming of agency initiatives on the implications of economic adjustment for poverty-focused strategies shows every sign of going the same way.

4.42 The activities of the agencies in research, M and E, and training contributed, in a variety of ways, to promoting priorities implicit in the WCARRD Programme of Action. The inadequacies and omissions have been pointed out whenever relevant. More importantly, the agencies acted to initiate poor-oriented development strategies in developing countries. It is this which would determine the success or failure of the agencies in the task of alleviating rural poverty.



## CHAPTER V

ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

5.1 Field projects during the 1980s appear like a vast crop of experiments gradually turning into established forms of Technical Assistance. What were once patently pilot projects agreed to by Member Governments were gradually augmented by official requests for similarly-based project formulation advice or training. Increasingly, therefore, agencies' field programmes and policy advice to Governments adopted the elements of a WCARRD-based approach which were so much in evidence in their pilot projects of the 1980s. In this chapter these efforts are reviewed under four main subject headings of the WCARRD Programme of Action for countries: (i) access to resources; (ii) institutional development; (iii) gender issues, and (iv) the environment and sustainable development.

## I

Access to ResourcesAccess to Land:

5.2 There are two aspects to the international agencies' contribution to improving access to land and water. The first is the technical assistance that is given to improving and conserving land and water resources so that the productive agricultural land area is enlarged. The second is to devise more equitable terms of access among the community through land/tenure reform, forms of water users' associations, etc. FAO is the most important technical agency on these issues and is the repository of institutional expertise on land legislation and knowledge of models of local cooperation over water. Its efforts concentrate on the small farmer.

5.3 WCARRD has had the effect of changing the approach to land improvements. Instead of pursuing technically-determined field activities farmer priorities are now incorporated after participatory discussion. FAO's work on soil surveys, land evaluation and land use planning has assisted Member Governments to prepare land tenure reforms as well as settlements. FAO also supports water management schemes based on small farmer groups.

5.4 Since 1979 a number of projects in all regions were conducted on land tenure analysis, land reform and land settlement programmes. These included assistance to Governments in the preparation of comprehensive agrarian reform projects, advice on agrarian policies, land settlement projects, as well as land tenure and cadastering assistance. The technical studies on land tenure dynamics, evolution of landlessness and land resources management, referred to in Chapter IV, constituted the pool of basic information for Governments interested in improving equitable access to land and water for their populations.

5.5 With the shift of interest in Asia and Latin America from land redistribution to improving tenancy conditions, and with the focus in



Africa on the protection or appropriate adaptation of customary tenure there has been a change in the kind of request for legal services. Many new requests concern adapting the legal status of traditional land tenure systems to market-oriented systems. Advice is normally given in a set of options. What is of particular interest is the introduction in this kind of assistance of the concept of phased evolution of traditional land tenure systems. This offers time to establish an advocacy and a legal basis for tenure for women. Recently some studies were undertaken by FAO to examine the impact of the law on women's access to resources. But the issue of women's access to fixed factors of production needs strong Government support for agencies' technical assistance to have an impact.

#### Access to Variable Factors of Production:

5.6 The lead agency for WCARRD has long been concerned with delivery systems of farm inputs and of credit and marketing services. The success of agrarian reforms, or the sustainability of land redistribution, depended crucially on facilitating equitable access to variable inputs. WCARRD reinforced this message in the context of poverty alleviation and by emphasizing the importance of participatory mechanisms to improve access. Trends to market liberalization during the 1980s meant that small local producer groups would have to deal with new sources of inputs and services, and delivery systems for these will have to be strengthened.

5.7 FAO is contributing, especially in Latin America, through networking and training, to innovative experiments with established large-scale cooperative management units which help to bring into existence small homogeneous producers' associations. In Africa less has been done to experiment with new forms of cooperatives. FAO's cooperative programme is working in several countries of all regions with forms and modalities which would ensure larger shares of value added going to producers. In field projects undertaken by Services in FAO whose work relates to identifying improved ways of delivering inputs and services to small farmers, grassroots participatory approaches are now normally applied.

5.8 Recognition of the importance of facilitating access to input and service markets for any strategy of poverty alleviation is widespread among international bodies. Much of the Field Programmes of other agencies in this area relate to innovations in broadening and extending the network of institutions at the local level through participatory methods, much as the FAO is doing. IFAD and UNDP give strong support to participatory approaches to improving access to input delivery mechanisms. The ILO does this through its programme on cooperatives and all forms of workers' associations. The ILO's substantial programme on cooperatives is now largely committed to helping established cooperatives to independent and autonomous status within the new market-orientation of economies instead of being mere conduits for varying degrees of étatisme.

5.9 In many instances pilot research projects have been influenced by trends to privatization of services indicating recognition of the growing importance of facilitating market access. Some progress in this field was achieved in a few countries (e.g. Guinea and Benin) where FAO and the World Bank cooperated in assisting the Government in decentralization and public service "disengagement". However, it is not clear that the lead



agency on WCARRD has allowed for the full significance of privatization in its Field Programmes.

5.10 In all subsectors of the rural economy there is one input that is unique in that it facilitates access to others: credit. It would be difficult to find a single UN agency that is not involved in TC projects to try out innovative schemes. The World Bank has consistently directed 15-17 percent of its total agricultural lending to agricultural credit projects, whether self-standing or as components of projects in other sub-sectors. IFAD has credit schemes as the core of most of its projects. The ILO operates credit schemes in 40 countries for rural non-farm activities. UNCHS is putting its main emphasis on mobilization of revolving funds and conditions to attract clients' savings. FAO itself has a great many credit schemes for farming and other income gaining activities. The Regional Commissions are involved in training programmes for rural banking institutions to improve services to low-income groups.

5.11 There has been a profusion of pilot credit projects in all regions during the 1980s. In the process the Grameen Bank has become one of the most famous examples of poor-oriented credit delivery mechanisms. Amongst the agencies IFAD did most to help distribute throughout the world the seed of this experiment started in Bangladesh. There have been numerous local adaptations. They are, of course, inseparable from adaptations of the participatory process of organizing small homogeneous groups of borrowers.

5.12 These innovations in credit delivery have a long way to go before they can be seen as contributing to poverty alleviation on a global scale. What appears to be missing is a mechanism for taking stock and drawing out the implications of the credit experience throughout the UN system, and distilling and disseminating the findings. The cost effectiveness of the varied credit projects and their ability to mobilize resources need to be clearly demonstrated before they are replicated en masse.

#### Access to Non-Farm Rural Employment:

5.13 The ILO is the lead agency on employment of all kinds. Its approach to rural employment issues has been to encompass all sub-sectors. For instance, it sees rural employment as closely linked with the survival of small-scale family-based farms. The conclusion today for Asia is that with the increase in landlessness during the past decade, the appropriate strategy for that region is agricultural growth coupled with small scale industrialization. That realization is also spreading to other regions of the world with the active support, inter alia, of the Regional Commissions. ESCAP, for example, jointly with ILO implemented the project on promotion of non-farm employment among rural workers in Asia.

5.14 The ILO's Technical Cooperation Programme covers different kinds of rural employment promotion. It is backed by research into (i) linkages between agriculture and rural industry, and (ii) appropriate technologies. Field activities linking agriculture and non-farm employment are exemplified in the Special Public Works Programme. Although the primary objective is employment creation, other objectives include the expansion of agricultural production and marketing capacity through construction of physical infrastructure. It also invests in human resources through developing social sector infrastructure, designed to improve living



conditions and protect the environment. The sub-Programme on several small industries and non-farm employment includes research and dissemination of information on appropriate technology. Technical cooperation undertaken in this sub-Programme includes a variety of income-gaining activities. A major facet of the entire Programme is to promote labour-intensive work processes.

5.15 The overall design of ILO's rural employment promotion is to use short-term employment to create the conditions for long-term employment. But this design does not rest solely on economics. Initiatives concerning cooperative and workers' organizations, workers' education, and training and development of human resources, are also taken to encourage the right conditions for effective employment.

5.16 UNIDO is the lead agency to play the central role in and be responsible for reviewing and promoting the co-ordination of all activities of the United Nations system in the field of industrial (non-farm) development. Regardless of size and location of industrial enterprises, UNIDO has been promoting the industries which utilize materials produced by the rural economy and produce goods that are utilized by the rural economy. Rural small-scale industrial enterprises are promoted by UNIDO aiming at (i) improving the business environment; (ii) improving the national capabilities of institutional infrastructure; (iii) creating non-agricultural alternative, supplemental and complementary employment and income creating opportunities in the rural area; and (iv) introducing and improving entrepreneurial, managerial and technical industrial skills in support of promoting the rural small-scale industries.

5.17 Although non-farm rural employment falls in ILO's mandate, the FAO has a closely related interest in that employment in and outside primary production activities are linked. The objective of seeking solutions to poverty alleviation imposed an obligation on FAO to assess how changes in land availability, agricultural technology and tenurial arrangements were absorbing, or making redundant, labour in the primary producing sub-sectors of agriculture, livestock and fisheries.

5.18 The large research programme that FAO mounted as a follow-up to WCARRD included studies that were, effectively, on poverty and the survival strategies of the poor. They elicited information on diversified livelihood portfolios. With increasing man-land ratios gradations of landlessness emerge which lead to a large section of the rural poor straddling farm and non-farm activities. Some preliminary analysis of recent FAO studies suggest a trend in all regions of "a greater share of total time still spent in agriculture but an increasingly greater share of income coming from non-farm work".

5.19 There are serious implications in all this for poverty alleviation strategies in the 1990s. The main one is the need for intersectoral (and therefore inter-ministry) planning of rural livelihoods. At the same time policy reforms in the direction of market liberalization are altering relative profitabilities. Governments require an information and analytical base from which to proceed. The fact that small farmers are involved in non-farm occupations is well-recognized. What is not yet clear is why they are not willing to leave agriculture altogether. This is not explained by the common assumption that agriculture is a necessary low-yielding but gilt-edged activity which underwrites riskier but higher



yielding non-farm activities. Small scale farming (and pastoralism) was extremely risky in the 1980s. There is a lot more investigation to be done for a proper analysis, not least on gender compositions of household work and income-asset portfolios. Yet assistance in this kind of investigation at the national level does not seem to be undertaken anywhere in the UN system.

5.20 FAO has synthesized the studies it undertook as part of its WCARRD follow-up including non-farm employment issues. However, since FAO does not have a specific mandate in this area its programme does not provide the basis for response to Member Governments' requests for projects or policy advice on this aspect of rural development. One obstacle is that FAO deals with Ministries of Agriculture, and rural employment objectives fall only partly within their province.

5.21 Through its main interest in supplying credit to small scale producers IFAD supports many non-farm income gaining activities particularly those using local materials and supplying local markets. UNIDO is in the process of strengthening its integrated response with the mobilization of interdisciplinary service functions such as studies, meetings, technology information services, technical cooperation activities and investment promotion, in order to enhance the industrial contribution to rural development. It has been approached by UNDP and the World Bank to strengthen institutions other than the Small Industries Development Organizations, including private sector institutions. ITC is strengthening local capacity to identify export markets for rural products.

5.22 It is reasonable to assume that national economic reforms are changing rural employment opportunities. Certainly Member Governments are hopeful that policy reforms will lead to new openings in promoting forward and backward linkages between agriculture and the non-farm sector. It is, however, difficult to get a sense that the UN system is ready with policy advice to maximize the new advantages. Most attention is being given to the social dimensions of adjustment (SDA). Some of the SDA attention, given by the World Bank and UNDP at least, will lead to employment creation but it is likely, in the first instance, to resemble activities to increase the physical and social production-supporting infrastructure.

5.23 Non-farm employment in the context of sustainable development (SD) also requires attention which is so far lacking. It is not enough to think only in terms of sustainable agriculture. Indeed it is only when farm employment and non-farm employment are seen along-side each other that issues of SD can be clearly perceived.

## II

### Institutional Development

#### **Human Resource Development:**

5.24 WCARRD implicitly endorsed the view that human resource development (HRD) was vital not only as a means to human well-being *per se* but also to enhance the quality of human skills and energies dedicated to agriculture and rural development, and to ensure that people develop the full potential to participate effectively in decision-making processes that



affect them. Thus WCARRD called on governments to provide the public utilities and services necessary for balanced human development. Shifts to market-oriented economies have presented both challenges and opportunities for HRD.

5.25 Chapter IV commented at length on the agencies' catalytic programmes of education, training and extension which were transformed into numerous country projects. Curricula have changed and target groups are more in line with WCARRD priorities. UNESCO, the lead agency on education, has done much along these lines to strengthen education's contribution to rural development. A wide variety of country projects have been developed from these programmes demonstrating different modes of relevant skills acquisition and mechanisms for delivering them. As a direct influence of WCARRD, FAO's agricultural extension and training advice and field projects include a strong bias on human resources development, including increasing the participation of women and rural youth and the integration of population factors into this programme. This is supported by the Development Support Communication Branch which uses low-cost audio-visual methodologies to improve training and educational activities.

5.26 The importance of health and nutrition to HRD is well-illustrated by the evidence of rural workers' organizations taking improved health, along with education facilities, as an early objective. WHO is the lead agency on these matters. During the 1980s it contributed training and guideline materials to strengthen trends towards decentralization of primary health care. Many of these activities are now community-based, and WHO's field programme includes a great deal of help to countries to develop plans and delivery systems, particularly to reach the "vulnerable periphery". In this there is much cooperation with NGOs. In its training and infrastructural activities WFP helps to moderate immediate hunger and invest in sustainable alleviation of it. The type of projects it supports helps to address the problems of people in low-income, food-deficit countries and within them to target specific groups. It provides strong support to the landless, primary school children, expectant and nursing mothers and inadequately nourished children. It also promotes effective use of health and education facilities by giving incentives for regular attendance in clinics and schools. FAO's Food Policy and Nutrition Division has given technical assistance and prepared training materials for managers of group feeding programmes, including those of WFP, thereby improving the effectiveness of food delivery, distribution, storage and consumption.

5.27 Alternatively better food availability is made possible through food security policies. FAO sees its many projects on prevention of food losses as promoting household food security. Through its Commodities and Trade Division it maintains a strong advisory role on food security policies affecting adequacy and stability of supply as well as access by poor households.

5.28 FAO has made a specific contribution to indicators for monitoring nutrition. It is working on an interesting scheme of monitoring the nutritional status of the community through the schools, and has developed guidelines and manuals for introducing food and nutrition into rural development planning. WHO operates a simpler version through community leaders. It is currently training staff of Ministries of Agriculture and Departments of Statistics in monitoring and early warning techniques. It



also checks a selection of proposed TA projects for their nutritional implications but has not the resources to check all proposals.

5.29 UNCHS has developed an approach to shelter based on the assumption that housing is not supplied by government but is a consumer good like any other and therefore demand for it contributes to rural production and employment. In practice this means the mobilization of funds for people's largest single expenditure in life and the upgrading of informal sector construction activities. Regional Commissions undertook many activities under the programme of rural centre and settlement planning.

#### **People's Participation and Institutions:**

5.30 The ILO, with its unique work with rural workers' organizations and cooperatives, has a major role in promoting people's participation (PP). Its work has always mainstreamed PP although the developmental context has changed. Activities in the area of rural workers' organizations range from country field studies and advisory-cum-exploratory services to training and multi-country seminars. The ILO's cooperative programme has a new facet in the participatory development of "pre-cooperatives". A highly successful application has been the development, with WFP, of village cereal banks in Africa. For instance, after having seen the success of 100 cereal banks demonstrated in its country the Government of Senegal extended the programme to 600 with more in the pipeline. The FAO also has a successful cereal bank programme in the Sahel. Some of the Regional Commissions, notably ECLAC, have made significant contributions to the development of cooperatives in their respective areas.

5.31 In FAO, people's participation and grassroots organizations are becoming central themes in many activities and these themes are now regularly taken into account when appraising project documents and formulating investment projects. The FAO's promotional Swedish-supported Umbrella Support Programme for People's Participation (PPP), 1981-86, resulted in 18 project identification/formulation missions, 21 technical backstopping missions and thence to a number of PPP field projects. Of over 30 projects identified, 13 found funding. The initial Swedish seed money of \$650,000 led to other donors' support for field projects amounting to over \$3.4 million. Currently the support for PPP projects is coming from the governments of the Netherlands and Italy.

5.32 Participating practices however now extend, in a variety of forms, throughout FAO's technical divisions. But participation has also been used in group formation for non-farm income-gaining activity and for involving women directly. The Forestry Department's "Community Forestry" has played a leading role in the development of participatory approaches. But for the Forestry and Fisheries Department, and for those Services whose work relates to institutions through which to deliver inputs and services to farmers, PP approaches have also become de rigueur. Many UN agencies, including Regional Commissions, promote people's participation as a part of local-level planning.

5.33 The financial institutions have placed great stress on participatory methods of drawing the poor into the process of development. They have also, especially UNDP, set an example to the UN system in involving NGOs in this approach. UNDP and IFAD, at least, involve NGOs in both identification and execution stages. The World Bank has gone further



to use staff seconded by NGOs in its African Region to provide technical support to Bank projects for the promotion and strengthening of farmers' associations. "Partnership" forms may extend to subcontracts of projects to NGOs. WHO, for instance has some form of official relations with between 200 and 300 NGOs. Among other agencies, UNFPA has made determined and sustained efforts to bring NGOs into the fold.

5.34 One of the more interesting forms of participation, much in evidence in both the FAO's and ILO's programmes, that has emerged from country projects is the promotion of primary, homogeneous "building blocks" whose strength can be augmented by a form of federation with a larger unit -- a cooperative, farmers' association or rural workers' union. Participation has, therefore, become not merely a matter of mobilizing people to articulate their own needs assessment and to share in planning and implementation, but to build facilitating and enabling institutions at the local level which represent the interests of the people beyond the lifetime of a project.

5.35 Some of FAO's PPP country projects are now to be used to test participatory monitoring and evaluation. Experienced field staff will be used to conduct special training activities in other projects. The World Bank has also mandated beneficiary participation in project design at the appraisal (review prior to implementation) stage, as detailed in one of its Operational Directives.

5.36 It has to be recognized that some Member Governments are unsure as to where this approach is leading in national political terms. It is one thing to mobilize people to do something that happens to accord with government intentions. It is something else to leave behind an organized group that has a mind and agenda of its own. The agencies are well aware of this problem and seek to involve Member Governments in the implementation of small scale participation projects with the ultimate objective of promoting strategies which would support participatory RD initiatives. The most promising way of doing this is by encouraging a dialogue between governments and NGOs. UNDP is taking a lead in this, but a number of agencies as well as the Regional Commissions are entering the field. Moreover, NGO staff are being trained in participatory methods by a number of agencies, CIRDAP and at least one Regional Commission. FAO organized a workshop for Asian NGOs to exchange information and approaches. The role of First World NGOs in strengthening NGOs of the Third World should not be forgotten. Nor should their influence on UN agencies' strategies for involving local people and on donors' support for them.

5.37 But there are other problems which suggest that the future of people's participation is not yet secure. Launching properly conducted participation projects is expensive and the lead time in preparing the local people (commonly quoted as three years) may have a negative effect on prospective donors. It is also a field for purists to claim fine gradations of differences between their own and others' methods. Without some means of stock-taking and renewed advocacy there is a danger of agency, as well as donor, fatigue settling in in the 1990s. And this when sustainable development will require those seeking livelihoods in rural areas to find some modus vivendi with their physical environment, and when further market liberalization, not always friendly to the poor, will take place. The UN system and donors need to seriously ask themselves "if not the participatory way forward, then -- realistically -- what?".



5.38 FAO is currently drawing up a Plan of Action for People's Participation. The FAO Council, meeting in June 1989, requested that such a plan should be developed for discussion by the FAO Council in June and the Conference in November 1991.

**Strengthening national development management capabilities:**

5.39 Activities in this area include national and regional consultations, expert meetings and advisory missions of a sectoral or more specific nature. For the UN system in general these were not necessarily focused on WCARRD principles although concern for the rural poor and themes for meetings reflected much of the WCARRD Programme of Action. FAO's main initiative on directing Member Governments' thoughts on planning after 1979 was to organize 16 Inter-Government Regional Consultations on the follow-up between 1979 and 1989, with the express objective of providing guidelines for developing national programmes of action. The early ones at least were intended to define the immediate follow-up and to assist in national policy formulation. Later meetings had more specific agendas, relating to regional priorities.

5.40 Round tables and expert consultations, usually thematically organized, are particularly useful for influencing senior nationals and these instruments are used widely among the agencies. For instance, FAO has organized 19 such meetings, regionally, on subjects including land tenure, landlessness, monitoring indicators, poverty alleviation strategies and agricultural extension. The WCARRD Inter-Agency Policy Missions assist countries in the formulation of policies and strategies directed towards the rural poor (see Chapter VII). There are also policy advisory missions which each agency sends to countries on their request. The work of the World Food Council in the field of food strategies could be mentioned in this connection. In 1979, the basic concept of food strategies was developed by WFC in a series of regional consultations with developing and developed countries. This was in the first part of the 1980s, and has been followed by periodic regional reviews.

5.41 But it is the policy advisory missions that come closest to direct assistance in policy and plan formulation. Those of the three principal agencies (FAO, the World Bank and UNDP), at least, are now conducted against a background of structural adjustment. Through these efforts FAO has established a closer working relationship with the World Bank. But all the main agencies are involved in very large numbers of these policy advisory missions, as well as in their usual country programming exercises in which targeting the poor has become more important. For instance, FAO has conducted many agricultural sector and sub-sector missions directed to institution building in the form of project and policy analysis, planning, monitoring and institutional reorganization. Some of FAO's support for strengthening credit and marketing institutions were carried out within the framework of market liberalization policies. In particular, FAO's Food Security Assistance Scheme is mandated to provide assistance to countries for the preparation of comprehensive national food security programmes. The World Bank has its own priority. Its sectoral and sub-sectoral missions assess the consistency of macro policies with development strategies with a view to facilitating sectoral loans. It also conducts joint planning exercises. Given the recent emphasis of the Bank on poverty alleviation programmes, these missions could be used as important tools to strengthen management of poor-oriented development. In this connection



mention may be made of extensive efforts by UNDTCD to build national capacity to more effectively plan and manage national debts, public sector investment, foreign aid, community/local development, social development, etc.. The department has a Development Planning Advisory Branch, which provides advisory services to governments.

5.42 There has also been considerable agency support for strengthening national M and E capacity.

### III

#### Gender Issues

5.43 WID programmes of the UN system were strongly influenced by the Decade of Women and the 1985 Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies. The following paragraphs should be viewed bearing in mind this caveat.

5.44 All forms of TA activities, although not all actual TA activities, have been utilized to address women's particular difficulties in integration in agriculture and rural development. Advisory missions have tended to target national women-in-development (WID) machineries, agricultural support services, sub-sectoral programmes and development plans. There has been a great increase in training projects devoted exclusively to women's concerns, but gender has emerged strongly as a dimension in the design of other training projects too, particularly those of small group development and delivery systems.

5.45 Women and New and Renewable Energy Sources (NRSE) is an innovative programme of INSTRAW. "Women in NRSE" was the topic of its regional training seminar held in October 1989 in Ethiopia, where a prototype multi-media training package was tested. In cooperation with the ILO-Turin centre, the Institute organized a 4-week training seminar on the same topic for trainers in March-April 1990. A core group of trainers from Africa received training on use of the multi-media package in local-level workshops. It was also the topic of two national seminars organized by INSTRAW in June 1990 -- in Egypt and Tanzania -- with the aim of adapting new training modules for national and local contexts.

5.46 The Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service (ESHW) in FAO extended much of its catalytic promotion of WCARRD into country activities, especially under its Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development. The priorities under the plan included the new focus on gender analysis and training workshops, coding of FAO projects under the priority of project development and monitoring, reorientation of home economics curricula and policy advice to member governments. Many of the activities were covered under its two umbrella programmes, "Community Action for Disadvantaged Rural Women" (CADRW) and "Women in Food Systems" (WFS). As a result the miscellaneous group of development projects of the first year or so after WCARRD quickly gave way to more structured groupings of projects. Nine countries received projects under the CADRW programme, while in a larger number of countries a rich assortment of projects were developed under the WFS programme. All of the latter (at least) have been reviewed at national workshops.

5.47 During the second half of the decade ESHW technically backstopped about sixty field projects a year. But whereas around 1984 the greater



part of FAO's advocacy of gender issues rested with ESHW's field projects, in 1990 the technical divisions, especially those concerned with education, training, extension, credit and other input supplies (the variable factors of production) have shared significantly in this role. Gender sensitivity has also been a mark of FAO's participatory approaches to community forestry, artisanal fisheries and water users' associations. But this did not follow a uniform pattern throughout FAO.

5.48 This change was encouraged by acceptance by FAO's Committee on Agriculture in 1983 of the shift in thinking away from seeing women as home economists and users of rural energy to seeing them as producers and earners facing gender-differentiated access to resources and services. This gave a sharper focus to FAO's gender-related programmes.

5.49 The financial institutions, IFAD, UNDP and the World Bank, have demonstrated a commitment to gender factors. The chief mechanism for introducing gender into field projects is through the system of scrutinizing proposals and setting conditionalities. FAO's Investment Centre has developed its own socio-economic and farming systems approaches to gender in the appraisal of projects for IFAD and World Bank funding. An increasing number of agencies are scrutinizing a sample of projects while UNDP explained to the review team that it has instituted procedures for scrutinizing all project proposals. The actual imposition of conditionalities depends on several things, not least the agency head investing the scrutineers with this authority. UNDP seems to be the only body where this authority is clear. The World Bank, in addition to having already established a separate WID Division, has recently allocated one WID specialist to each region (four in total) to help ensure that the Bank's country projects include designs to improve the conditions of women through investments in human capital and access to productive resources. ITC sees most of its work on facilitating markets for rural exports as involving women. Virtually all the main agencies have their own guidelines on how to make gender an integral part of their projects and practically all UN agencies, as well as the Regional Commissions, have launched economic projects, training programmes, seminars, symposium and publications to make their own contributions in this area. The Forestry Department of FAO has gone further to publish a policy paper and a significant number of case studies from which training material has been derived.

5.50 The response to gender of FAO's other technical departments has largely concerned credit and group formation mechanisms. They have not, as yet, been concerned with land. It is readily admitted that the issue of women and land is extremely difficult. Yet it is critical, especially for rural poverty alleviation in Africa. The subject of women's access to the main fixed resource in rural areas is, frankly, stalled at the stage of preliminary studies (see Chapter IV). Significant movement is going to test the UN system's commitment to gender issues to the limit.

5.51 Throughout the UN system gender-differentiated technology needs remain an undeveloped subject. It is unlikely to move ahead of development of small farmer technology which itself receives so little attention. The African Network of Rural Technology Centres is said to be taking up the subject but their influence will be quite insufficient for the task. FAO is undertaking catalytic research on ways to identify women's technology needs. But this recent innovation will take years to feed into country projects.



5.52 Population education has been included in many FAO and ILO projects. It has been associated with a fast growing number of income gaining activity projects for women. FAO and ILO are each backstopping a substantial number of these. The intention is to create economic and social, particularly educational, opportunities for women and the provision of the necessary services and facilities to enable them to take a balanced view on productive and reproductive activities. However, this vehicle for population education can go only as far and as fast as income-gaining activity projects are implemented. There is no attempt in the UN system so far to relate demographic behaviour to the economic policy environment, although the ILO, together with UNFPA shows signs of preparing the ground for such future advisory missions.

5.53 FAO and other agencies concerned with macro-policy formulation have shown only a modest inclination so far to mention gender or women. In FAO the ESHW Service has prepared a paper on women and structural adjustment. But there is nothing in the long list of FAO's structural adjustment policy missions that hint of a gender dimension. The ILO has recently started looking at structural adjustment and gender in its research programme. It is easier for sectoral and sub-sectoral advisory missions to see the relevance of gender in the impact analysis of what they propose. A new entry point for gender in macroeconomic policy advice might come from the World Bank/UNDP/African Development Bank Social Dimensions of Adjustment (SDA) Programme in African countries. An SDA document on the "Role of women under structural adjustment" was commented on by UN agencies. Gender is already being mentioned in relation to the disaggregation of categories of the poor, the outcome of user charges for health and education services and the allocation of new job opportunities. But this still leaves out the question of the different abilities of female and male producers to respond to price and market reforms. The Investment Centre, with its numerous gender-sensitive project appraisals which also give regard to the macroeconomic policy context, is well placed to give a lead on this.

5.54 Articulating the economic, as well as the social, consequences of gender biases in market operations will be important to future policy advisory missions not only on economic adjustment and transformation, but on environmentally, economically, socially and demographically sustainable development.

5.55 As much a follow-up to its 1989 Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development as to WCARRD, FAO is establishing a database on women in agriculture which includes activities in support of government programmes for the improvement of gender-disaggregated data on human resources in agriculture.

#### IV

#### The Environment and Sustainable Development

5.56 The lead agency on the environment is UNEP which, not being an implementing agency, plays a catalytic and coordinating role, and is the most important clearing house for information. It has one environmental economist and tries to develop guidelines for environmentally-safe agriculture. It issues an annual State of the Environment, and has published Environmental Perspectives Towards Year 2000 and Beyond. It does



not, however, pretend to a leading role on sustainable development (SD). The respective roles of the agencies in SD should be clarified through the 1992 UN Conference on "Environment and Development".

5.57 For both appraising the costs and gains of different SD options, and selecting an option that is socially sustainable the people concerned must be involved at all stages of planning. The approach to SD therefore has to be multi-disciplinary and participatory.

5.58 Since 1984 there has been an Environment and Energy Programmes Co-ordinating Centre in FAO to ensure that environmental issues should permeate the whole of FAO's work. An Inter-Departmental Working Group on Environment and Sustainable Development also helps to give guidance to the technical divisions. FAO has recently produced a document, Strategies and Instruments for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development, for discussion at the FAO/Netherlands Conference on Agriculture and the Environment, held in April 1991, and thereafter intended as FAO's main input to the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil in 1992. The background papers to the FAO/Netherlands Conference cover some of the most important and hitherto under-explored themes, such as environmental accounting.

5.59 In the meantime the Fisheries, Forestry, Agricultural and Economic and Social Policy Departments of FAO, as well as WFP, are already deeply involved in projects incorporating environmental concerns and have produced technical guidelines. FAO organized an Expert Consultation on Strategies for Sustainable Animal Agriculture in Developing Countries in 1990. There is more careful screening of projects for their likely impact. The Investment Centre has its own guidelines for appropriate project appraisals. Some People's Participation Programme projects implemented environmental protection schemes. Since 1988 the Programme has been developing educational and training materials for NGOs which are emerging as the key groups to train on SD. FAO has also started training programmes, for instance for district planners.

5.60 The main funding institutions are leaning heavily towards SD projects and policies. For instance, IFAD has gone on to a participatory conservation strategy combining short-term output and income improvements with longer-term measures for environmental protection. It is also seeking out low-cost environmentally-positive technology packages. UNDP has created a unit in its Policy Bureau to address ecological issues and has formed an inter-bureaux task force concerned with the sustainability of development. The World Bank now has a department devoted to the environment. It also has environmental specialists in both its research and operations departments, and is developing an approach which draws in NGOs. It has approved an operational directive which calls for an assessment of the environmental impacts of each project. Regional Commissions notably ESCAP, have taken up a number of environment-related activities in collaboration with UNEP. These range from advisory services to governments, to the preparation of the legislative framework for environmental protection and management at national level. ECLAC has a long-standing involvement with the topic of sustainable development. It has published "Sustainable Development: Changing Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment". As part of preparatory activities for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, other Regional Commissions have demonstrated similar involvement in their respective areas.



5.61 ILO is still at the stage of questioning what kind of a SD programme it should pursue, while UNRISD's current research programme includes aspects of popular participation and gender in SD. Finally, UNESCO runs training courses, workshops and seminars on conservation and the protection of the environment.

5.62 There appears to be common agreement in the UN system that the concept of SD or sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) deserves a lot more attention than it has received. This subject, which encompasses so many WCARRD principles, did not receive, in the 1980s, the attention it deserved. But a beginning has been made in recent years.



CHAPTER VI

THE ADVOCACY ROLE FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION

6.1 In recognition of the crucial importance that facilitating access to markets, financial resources and technical expertise would have for the success of national rural development efforts, the WCARRD Programme of Action gave specific mandates to FAO and other UN agencies to advocate in favour of developing countries in order to overcome protectionist policies, distortions in international markets, inadequate technical cooperation and insufficient resource flows.

6.2 The Programme of Action also asked FAO and the UN agencies to play an advocacy role in the fields of poverty alleviation, agrarian reform, equity and people's participation. The connection between hunger and poverty has always been emphasized by the UN system. The World Food Council in its Cairo Programme of Action (1989) suggested specific hunger alleviation targets. These have been incorporated in the International Development Strategy for the 1990s. Similar advocacy roles have been played by other agencies in their respective areas.

6.3 The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the performance of FAO and other UN agencies in playing this role, specifically in the areas of: (i) relaxing trade barriers against less developed countries and facilitating entry into new markets; (ii) encouraging the flow of funds and development assistance from the developed world; and (iii) fostering technical cooperation activities among developing countries. Success in meeting these objectives could have a profound impact on rural development, assisting in the reduction of external and internal imbalances and resource gaps.

I

Relaxing Trade Barriers and Facilitating Entry into New Markets:

6.4 Being the lead agency in this matter the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) plays an important advocacy role supporting developing countries in both trade and aid negotiations. As regards to trade, UNCTAD has been advising developing countries, at their requests, on negotiations within the context of the Uruguay Round of GATT, assessing the implications of proposals of general concern and in preparing their own proposals. While UNCTAD has been performing these supportive activities, the more specific issues relating to agricultural trade have been considered at many national, sub-regional and regional seminars and workshops. A complementary contribution has been provided by FAO which has given specific assistance to GATT's Secretariat and requesting countries in the Negotiating Groups in Agriculture, Tropical Products and Natural Resource-based Products. FAO's developments on producer subsidy equivalent indexes and its work on food standards and plant quarantine were very useful to different GATT Working Groups since they permitted a discussion of trade liberalization on more technical grounds and put a limit on the common practice of using sanitary arguments to restrict trade. FAO's efforts and assistance to developing countries in establishing and strengthening national export certification programmes and the contribution of the Codex Alimentarius were of remarkable



importance for the improvement of quality and safety of foods entering the international markets.

6.5 Another important supportive action of UNCTAD is in the area of promotion of international trade through the work of its International Trade Center (ITC). Given the crucial importance of market information for a greater participation of developing countries in world trade, ITC took the initiative in helping developing countries build up market data banks at country level with a view to connecting them to a global information system. FAO is also working in this area, and scope and willingness for closer cooperation exist on both sides.

6.6 Through its Commodities and Trade Division, FAO has helped to increase the competitiveness of developing countries in international markets. Actions taken have been both country specific and of a much broader scope at regional/global levels. Among the first, supporting activities include policy advisory services, training, and institution building. Those directed to regional or global audiences are generally aimed at creating a more favourable climate for freer trade in agricultural products.

6.7 The institutional mechanism in FAO for advocacy in international trade is the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) which is the umbrella under which four Inter-Governmental Commodity Groups (IGGs) function. While both producers and importers are members of these groups, FAO assistance is provided particularly to developing countries.

6.8 Guidelines for national and international actions concerning production, consumption and nutrition, food aid, trade and reserve policies are developed by each IGG and are aimed at development and expansion of the product of concern. The implementation of guidelines in each participating country is reviewed and monitored by the group itself which periodically makes an assessment of progress in achieving the objectives and suggests remedial action when needed. As an example of this, FAO has for many years denounced the unfavourable effect of meat, milk and milk-product importations at subsidized international prices on the development of the animal sector in the developing countries.

6.9 From data collected at country level and country case studies, the group makes generalizations on specific commodities on the basis of which it conducts its advocacy work -- mainly through "publicity" directed to a very specific commodity-related audience. The diffusion of FAO's work is through specialized publications: the Commodity Review and Outlook, the Food Outlook, and Foodcrops and Shortages.

6.10 At the regional level FAO's commodity programme is emphasizing countries' trade-related problems, addressing them by specific commodity groupings. In Africa, besides assisting the African Groundnut Council and the African Oil Palm Development Association, FAO is planning a regional commodity workshop to be held in 1991 concerning basic food policies and the effects of market liberalization. In Asia, FAO has recently joined ESCAP in promoting the formation of a Timber Community in the Asia and the Pacific Region. FAO has also joined UNCTAD in implementing a programme of workshops on Negotiations with Transnational Corporations in the Tropical Hardwood Sector.



6.11 In Latin America and the Caribbean, the FAO Regional Office joined other regional organizations in undertaking a series of studies on regional tariff preferences and trade which are expected to improve commercial dialogue among Latin American countries and ultimately result in greater intra-regional agricultural trade.

6.12 Among the other UN agencies, the pioneering work of ILO in establishing a trade dialogue between producers' cooperatives in Latin American countries and consumers' cooperatives in developed countries must be mentioned as a good example of advocacy for more direct access to existing markets. This action will contribute to the enhancement of the cooperative sector in Latin America, which has traditionally played a significant role in the marketing of agricultural products. The Regional Commissions are quite active in organizing activities dealing with the expansion and liberalization of trade, trade promotion and development, regional trade and monetary cooperation. Assistance has been provided to the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries in solving their trade problems.

6.13 One area which appears not to have received sufficient attention from the international agencies -- at least not in any comprehensive or integrated manner -- is the increasing need for policy advice and technical assistance for the evaluation and development of new markets. ECLAC has organized seminars on "Policies for Strengthening of Agro-industrial Export Chains". This is a useful initiative, but much more needs to be done in this direction. This is particularly true at a time when the World Bank and the regional development banks, as part of broader adjustment programmes, are emphasizing the reorientation of agricultural production towards export markets. Many times this is done without accurate knowledge of market potentials (frequently these are very small and highly sensitive market niches), ignoring the fact that export countries could be duplicating efforts in reaching the same overestimated markets. Specific research is also lacking in the identification of new mechanisms by which small farmers may gain wider and safer access to the export markets of traditional food commodities.

6.14 Related to the need to strengthen national capabilities for export, there is scope for more intensive inter-agency collaboration in training, especially in activities directed to the development of entrepreneurial capacity for exports among small and medium-sized farmers' and producers' organizations. FAO could contribute a great deal to the joint effort that EDI and ITC have undertaken in this area.

## II

### External funds for development

6.15 As a consequence of a more difficult financial situation the developing countries' need for advocacy has significantly changed both in terms of total effort needed and the type of advocacy to be played.

6.16 In response to these new requirements, which are substantially different from those envisaged by WCARRD in 1979, the international agencies are now giving as much attention to obtaining more favourable lending conditions for developing countries as to obtaining additional resources for development. In one way or another most of the UN agencies



dealing with multilateral financing institutions have tried to influence lending policies in order to soften the negative impacts of structural adjustment programmes on the poor. UNICEF took the lead in trying to influence World Bank conditionalities on SALs with its promotion of "adjustment with a human face". It has enjoyed some success in this, but more importantly made a unique contribution to furthering an international dialogue on the prerequisites of poverty alleviation.

6.17 Other agencies like WHO, UNESCO and UNEP adopted a similar position on this point. All recognized that the type of advocacy needed in times of structural adjustment goes far beyond getting more financial resources. They were, effectively, urging the financial institutions and governments to target those resources more precisely to the poorest. One innovative way of exercising such persuasion is making joint pronouncements with a financing institution on policy-related issues. An example of this is a forthcoming book on The Health Impacts of Development Policies under Structural Adjustment to be published jointly by WHO and the World Bank.

6.18 As a result of lessons learnt from their own experiences the leading financing institutions, such as IMF and the World Bank, have incorporated the Social Dimension of Structural Adjustment in policy dialogue with developing countries. UNDP and IFAD are also important partners in these and similar activities. In a way the financing agencies themselves are playing an advocacy role by restructuring their development programmes and making them more manageable and offering more flexible conditionalities. Concrete benefits of this new approach to poverty alleviation are still very limited since efforts have been essentially compensating measures rather than well-integrated parts of the Adjustment Strategy.

6.19 Being conscious of the additional burden that SAPs impose on the rural poor, WFP started to design food aid projects as an advocacy device in support of countries that were implementing policy reforms. Countries have benefited in three different ways: the monetization of food aid, the availability of food for the implementation of Food for Work Programmes, and the availability of food for Food Distribution Programmes. To take into account food supply changes in developing countries WFP has introduced a new modality of food aid comprising triangular transactions and trilateral operations.

6.20 Another important shortcoming of SAPs is the implicit over-estimation of the capacity of the private sector to respond to the "more favourable" economic environment. UN agencies, aware of this, have been pressing for a more prolonged and easier transitional period. To compensate for the serious damage of SAPs to government institutions and especially to their capability to provide agricultural inputs and services, IFAD is introducing its own conditionalities on field programmes. Its loans will normally include a credit component for institution building.

6.21 The ACC Task Force on Rural Development's Working Group on the Impact of Macro-Economic Policies on the Rural Poor has continuously emphasized the need for more coordinated action on the part of UN agencies. Financing institutions in general are working in a more structured and formal way in trying to reorient their programmes. In order to improve coordination among different financing agencies in project planning, implementation and evaluation, a Joint Consultative Group on



Policy (JCGP) was created in 1989 and UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, IFAD and WFP are active members. They organize an annual High Level Meeting to discuss programmatic issues with policy implications.

6.22 UNCTAD plays an active advocacy role for developing countries in the rescheduling of credits and loans. It makes a case for debt relief in the overall context of a debtor country's adjustment and development efforts and its need for long-term financing. The performance, future priorities and aid requirements of debtor countries are monitored by UNDP which organizes round tables (at which UNCTAD is a regular participant) on individual developing countries.

6.23 A very effective way of mobilizing financial resources to alleviate poverty in rural areas is through investment projects. Within the framework of cooperation agreements with the main multi-lateral financing institutions, FAO's Investment Centre (IC) is assisting developing countries in formulating and preparing investment projects which will attract capital resources from these institutions. The Centre is assisted in this work by FAO's technical divisions. As to conditionality, the Centre considers it is not its responsibility to participate in loan negotiations and that such matters belong exclusively within the bank/country dialogue.

6.24 At the project level IFAD has demonstrated a particular sensitivity to the more severe socio-economic conditions prevailing in the rural areas during the 1980s. This is a clear example of an advocacy role for poverty alleviation which has a direct influence on the work of the IC. It is claimed that "greater emphasis is now given to the design of projects oriented to resource-poor farmers, small herders and artisanal fishermen". Greater attention has been paid to "identification of beneficiaries and targeting". Gender and environment issues have been progressively incorporated in project formulation and NGOs increasingly accepted as having a crucial role to play in the implementation of projects. While the response of the IC to the rural development concerns of other funding agencies is quite positive, it is still rather reactive than proactive.

6.25 Not much coordination can be observed among the agencies' supportive actions directed at bilateral donors. IFAD and UNICEF appear to be more active than other agencies in promoting continuous dialogues between recipient countries and donors. IFAD incorporates visits of donors to countries in its project monitoring and evaluation system.

6.26 Finally, in the context of the very restricted and diminishing external resources of the 1980s, UN agencies started a new form of advocacy -- to enhance the financial capacity of rural areas by mobilizing local resources. Examples of this include IFAD's initiative for the promotion of self-help group saving mechanisms in rural communities, ILO's Special Public Works Programme (SPWP) on rural infrastructure, and WFP's and FAO's Community Forestry Programme. A distinctive characteristic of these pilot community-based social investments is that they usually require a very modest amount of capital which makes financing easier, with funds coming from local government budgets, NGOs or the community itself.



III

Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries:

6.27 The observed trends in bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation in various fields of agricultural development led to an increasing gap between the amount of technical aid the developed countries are providing, and the recognized needs of the developing world. In an attempt to fill that technological gap, and as part of the search for appropriate cost-effective pathways to self-reliance, the developing countries undertook an increasing number of TCDC activities in the 1980s.

6.28 TCDC is an area of work in which coordination is the most important factor of success, much more important than even the volume of monetary resources. It calls for a very active inter-agency collaboration. This need has not yet been met, at least not to the extent necessary.

6.29 In response to WCARRD's Programme of Action, FAO has significantly increased its commitment to TCDC both in number of activities and allocations to them. Despite the difficult resource situation during the 1980s, FAO managed to triple allocation of funds to TCDC over a five-year period.

6.30 FAO-supported TCDC activities have covered a wide range of measures:

1. Documentation of TCDC capacities and needs at country-level to contribute to filling the information gap recognized as the main constraint to more cooperation.
2. Promotion of technical cooperation networks as a long-term mechanism for continuous dialogue and consultation.
3. In-depth reviews and diffusion of selected success stories related to rural development projects or TCDC experiences.
4. Support of regional/subregional rural development centres (CIRDAP, CIRDAFRICA, CARDNE) and inter-country training.

6.31 TCDC is strengthened by information networking and regional training. Therefore if its potential is to be realized this is an area for future action in the 1990s. Chapter IV referred to the subject matter networks of RAPA and RLAC. Their effectiveness has been demonstrated by the increasing number of regional activities performed in the last five years.

6.32 Each one of the UN agencies in its specific area of concentration, and in an isolated way, is doing an increasing number of TCDC activities. An example of a very innovative way of fostering international cooperation in grassroot institution building is provided by UNIDO's support to technical assistance among agricultural cooperatives in Latin America whereby well-established, usually larger, cooperatives seek out expertise and transfer it to newer ones. UNICEF's promotion of new developments in water pumps, storage facilities for drinking water, etc. may be cited as an outstanding example of TCDC. Most agencies perform TCDC activities through inter-country study tours, exchange of national specialists,



regional technology centres, seminars, government consultations and the like.

6.33 While TCDC has gained a remarkable recognition in recent years, there is a general feeling that progress has not been in accordance with the vast potential that remains unexploited. Recognition of that potential is evidenced from the resources side with OECD countries' increasing interest in providing trust funds to finance TCDC programmes.

6.34 The main obstacles to more rapid and widespread utilization of TCDC seem to be: inadequate understanding of its potential effectiveness; insufficient knowledge of the TCDC resources available; and a lack of skills to apply existing know-how to project identification and implementation.

6.35 As a means of strengthening countries' ability to use TCDC, FAO has suggested the establishment of focal points at country level to identify needs and capacities, and to prepare requests and offers in a more systematic and ongoing manner.

6.36 The potential of national research and training institutions is still underutilized in south-south cooperation. The weak development of NGO-government working relations has limited NGO participation in TCDC activities.

6.37 We may conclude this chapter recognizing that advocacy is an endless process that, when successfully performed, will result in a greater need for more specific supportive activities. This highly dynamic process will continuously change the picture in terms of "winners" and "losers" and the intricate relationships between them. Agencies will have to be very alert to new demands and offer a more coordinated response than they have offered during the past decade.

6.38 Recognizing that the future of rural development will continue to be affected by highly protected world trade, an increasing scarcity of financial resources and a limited level of technical cooperation activity, advocacy support on behalf of developing countries will be even more important in the 1990s.



## CHAPTER VII

### INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The mandates of most of the United Nations agencies cover subjects which were discussed in WCARRD and on which specific recommendations were made. Whether explicitly or by implication, a large part of the UN system is addressing its work programme to the concerns expressed in WCARRD: poverty alleviation, people's participation, sustainable development, women in development. A perusal of basic objectives and thrust of the programmes of the agencies may give the impression of a great deal of overlap and duplication of efforts. And to some extent that is the case. But it needs to be remembered that each agency looks at different aspects of poverty alleviation or rural development from its own perspective and in the context of its main objective and clientele (including a specific ministry). For example, the work of FAO and ILO on rural non-farm employment or that of FAO and WHO on nutrition, or FAO and UNIDO on rural industrialization, or FAO and UNEP on environment may look similar, but in fact may have separate orientation. If such distinction is truly there, there is no harm in more than one agency looking into similar facets of a generic and comprehensive programme such as rural development.

7.2 In such cases, however, cooperation and whenever possible collaboration between agencies is very much desirable. The agencies are cognizant of the merits of such cooperation. A number of ad hoc as well as more regular arrangements are made by the agencies to pursue common goals. For example, FAO and WHO are currently engaged in a major collaborative effort in organizing an International Conference on Nutrition. More regular efforts are made under the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination, e.g. the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities, which is responsible for coordinating UN agencies' activities in the statistical field. Relative to the WCARRD Programme of Action, one of the most important inter-agency fora is the ACC Task Force on Rural Development. Since 1976, 29 UN agencies have come together under the umbrella of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development. Apart from its regular meetings, the Task Force has organized sub-groups on important aspects of rural development (panels on Monitoring and Evaluation and People's Participation, and Working Groups on the Impact of Macro-Economic Policies on the Rural Poor and on Industrial Contribution to Rural Development) to provide fora for technical discussion, to arrive at agreements on methodological and operational issues, and to undertake joint activities. The ACC Task Force's contributions in support of WCARRD-related activities will be discussed in detail in Section I of this chapter.

7.3 WCARRD recognized the importance of macro policies in pursuing the goals of rural development. FAO, as the lead agency, took upon itself the task of assisting policy-makers in the developing countries to orient their policies in favour of equity and participatory growth, particularly in rural areas. An important instrument of policy advice is the WCARRD Inter-Agency Missions. From their inception in 1981, 25 missions had been organized by 1990. The approach, content and outcome of these Missions are examined in Section II.

7.4 As a part of WCARRD follow-up activities, a large number of inter-agency meetings were organized at global and regional levels. There



were workshops, round tables and consultations on more specific items. These meetings were held to sensitize the participants as well as to make advances on conceptual and operational aspects of the WCARRD-related programme. The main themes and the modalities of these meetings are commented upon in Section III. Apart from these more regular and/or structured efforts, inter-agency collaboration takes place at the field level in numerous ways. The main lessons from such joint activities are underlined in Section IV.

I

ACC Task Force on Rural Development

7.5 As mentioned above, one of the most important fora for inter-agency collaboration in Rural Development is the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination's Task Force on Rural Development (hereafter referred to as the Task Force). The Task Force met for the first time in March 1976, in Washington D.C. at the World Bank's headquarters. Since then it has met at least once a year. In 1978 the Secretariat of the Task Force passed to FAO and has remained there since. The Assistant Director-General in charge of FAO's Economic and Social Policy Department is Chairman of the Task Force. Twenty-nine UN agencies are members.

7.6 The Task Force performs three important functions. First and foremost, it provides a forum for the exchange of information and ideas on different aspects of rural development. For this purpose the constituents of the Task Force circulate written reports and make oral presentations on their agencies' activities and approaches, some of which include under subheadings the stated priorities of WCARRD. This task is facilitated by the newsletter Rural Development brought out by FAO on behalf of the Task Force. A criticism of the functioning of the Task Force and which was echoed in the Review Team's discussions with officials of different agencies, was that (a) too much time is devoted to agency reports; (b) these reports are generally descriptive; and (c) very little input is provided by other agencies in terms of comments on the activities of a particular agency. We find some justification in this criticism. The reports of meetings held in the earlier years of the Task Force indicate that substantive discussion of the concepts and issues of rural development were more frequent. The ACC Task Force provides an excellent opportunity for engaging in constructive dialogue on important aspects of agrarian reform and rural development going beyond information-sharing.

7.7 The second important function of the Task Force is to provide a forum for the discussion of inter-agency collaborative activities. The most significant of these activities were the Inter-Agency WCARRD Policy Missions. Other activities in the area of rural development which require endorsement or support from UN agencies are also referred to the Task Force. For example, FAO's proposal for the preparation of this "Review of FAO's and UN Agencies' Experiences in Implementing the WCARRD Programme of Action" was discussed and endorsed by the Task Force in May 1990 thus ensuring full support and cooperation from the agencies.

7.8 The third important activity is the in-depth review and discussion of chosen themes by the Panels or Working Groups established by the Task Force. The Task Force has made commendable progress through this instrumentality. At present four panels/sub-groups are functioning:



(i) Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development; (ii) Panel on People's Participation in Rural Development; (iii) Working Group on the Impact of Macro-Economic Policies on the Rural Poor; and (iv) Working Group on Industrial Contribution to Rural Development. Because of the paucity of time, the functioning of all the panels, sub-groups could not be reviewed. A brief description of the constitution and functioning of the Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation and the Working Group on Macro-Economic Policies will bring out the modalities of these mechanisms for inter-agency collaboration.

7.9 Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation: A Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation was established by the Task Force at its second meeting in September 1976, to formulate proposals on the types of information each agency should attempt to obtain for the design, monitoring and evaluation of its poverty-oriented rural development activities, and to make inter-agency comparison possible. ILO was the convenor of this Working Group. On the basis of the recommendations of the Working Group, the Task Force decided in 1978 to establish an inter-agency panel of professionals with experience in monitoring and evaluation, with the limited objective of offering concrete proposals for operational definitions and a set of indicators for evaluating rural development activities. The Panel met in Rome in 1979 and concluded its task by making a set of recommendations.

7.10 Subsequently, following a review of the Task Force in 1981, the Task Force agreed that implementation of the recommendations of WCARRD concerning monitoring and evaluation of rural development programmes constituted one of the most promising areas for inter-agency collaboration. Therefore, in 1981 an Inter-Agency Panel On Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development was set up to continue work in that direction. The World Bank, as convenor of the Panel, organized a Round Table Conference in October 1981. On the basis of decisions taken by this conference the Task Force approved the preparation of guidelines on operational procedures for monitoring and evaluation -- guidelines which should be of use not only to UN staff but also to officials in governments and non-governmental organizations.

7.11 In 1983 IFAD took over convenorship of the Panel. In the next few years the Panel drafted and published in 1984 the Guiding Principles for the Design and Use of Monitoring and Evaluation in Rural Development Projects and Programmes. These guidelines are highly appreciated by all users and scholars in the subject, and can be considered a concrete result of inter-agency collaboration through the ACC Task Force on Rural Development.

7.12 Working Group on the Impact of Macro-Economic Policies on Rural Poor: At the Sixteenth Meeting of the Task Force in 1988, members discussed the importance of structural adjustment policies and their effects on the rural economies of developing countries. It was suggested that a Working Group comprising FAO, IFAD, ILO, INSTRAW, UNDP/DTCD, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO work out the draft outline for a study on this issue. The Working Group had two meetings, the first in October 1988 and the second in April 1989. At the first meeting the scope of the study was defined. The Group decided that the major objectives of this exercise would be the following: (i) preparation of a policy analysis framework using a limited number of indicators; (ii) testing this policy analysis framework in a number of selected countries to be chosen on the basis of differing socio-economic conditions; (iii) disseminating the knowledge gained



through this exercise among policy advisors in the developing countries and providing training for this purpose.

7.13 A draft document titled, The Impact of Macro-Economic Policies on the Rural Poor: Analytical Framework and Indicators, was submitted by UNDP at the second meeting of the Working Group. The Working Group discussed this document, agreed on the future course of action, and requested that UNDP undertake field testing in one or two countries. At the last meeting of the ACC Task Force, in 1990, UNDP provided an interim report on progress made under this programme. The Task Force was informed of a case study initiated in Niger and plans to carry out similar studies in Ghana, Jamaica and Madagascar.

7.14 An additional initiative taken by the Task Force was discussion of the impact of structural adjustment in the eighth and ninth sessions of the Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation, with a view to exchanging experience in the monitoring and evaluation of structural adjustment policies and programmes initiated under those policies.

7.15 Thus, the international community could collaborate in tackling important methodological issues connected with macro-policy changes, through Panels and Working Groups of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development. This forum has still more potential for meaningful inter-agency collaboration. Chapter VIII of this Review will return to this topic.

7.16 In recent years less prominence has been given to WCARRD follow-up by the Task Force as agencies' commitment to their own programmes has grown (for instance, Global Shelter Strategy, Education for All, Health for All, etc.). However, this did not prevent the addition of a regular item on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for Rural Women from being included in the Task Force's agenda from 1987 onwards, nor the creation of a new Working Group on Industrial Contribution to Rural Development in 1989.

## II

### Inter-Agency WCARRD Policy Missions

7.17 The WCARRD Programme of Action accorded high priority to inter-agency missions. The relevant recommendation states: "FAO, through appropriate UN Inter-Secretariat machinery and at the specific request of the country concerned, (should) undertake periodic reviews with each country in respect of its policies, programmes and resources devoted to the objectives and targets outlined in the Programme of Action, and of the support provided to these efforts by the relevant international organization". A few years later, in 1983, the FAO Conference re-emphasized the importance of these missions. By 1990 FAO had launched with the help of other UN agencies some 25 Inter-Agency Policy Missions. Of these the one on Madagascar recently returned from the field. In the following narration information pertaining to the first 24 missions is examined.

7.18 In spite of the FAO Conference's reiteration of the importance of these missions, the number of missions dropped sharply in the second quinquennium after WCARRD (i.e. 1986-1990), from seventeen in the first



quinquennium (1981-85) to seven in the second. There is also a marked shift in the regional composition of the countries where missions went. In the first quinquennium the largest number of missions went to the countries of Africa, but in the second five-year period none (except the last mission in 1990 which went to Madagascar) went to this region. Practically all the missions in the second quinquennium went to Latin America and Caribbean, with the exception of one mission to Asia (The Philippines).

7.19 It seems, from the list of countries selected for missions in different years that in some cases at least the missions were organized at the initiative of high-level FAO officials, and the "request" from the country followed. In any event there is a need to spell out the criteria for selection of countries for WCARRD Policy Missions. There is no harm, in fact a good deal of merit, in FAO's advising countries as to the usefulness of such missions and discouraging those which appear not yet ready for missions -- after proper study of the background, of course. Hardly any purpose is served by sending missions to countries which are institutionally not prepared to implement WCARRD strategy.

7.20 A related question is the scope of the missions. The comment was made in several quarters that the scope of WCARRD missions is too wide and comprehensive to be of any operational value to the country and that a more focused and narrowly defined mission would be of greater practical value. The Review Team examined this issue in all its ramifications, and concludes that missions dealing with specific issues or problems can usefully be organized by FAO's technical services; a High Level Inter-Agency Mission is justified only if the objective is a more comprehensive policy review. Also, the missions as they are constituted provide an opportunity to meet and hold discussions with all relevant policy makers -- an opportunity that is utilized. To the extent that the concerns of WCARRD cannot be looked after exclusively by ministries of agriculture or natural resources, extensive dialogues with still other policy makers could serve the WCARRD objectives more effectively.

7.21 Though the terms of reference of these missions still cover the three broad categories; (i) review of agrarian policies, (ii) setting priorities and deciding on the key areas of action, and (iii) assistance in project preparation, within each category previous vague and general requests are being substituted by more concrete requirements and suggestions. The other point worth considering in this regard is whether these missions should also assist in project identification. On balance, we endorse the suggestion of an earlier review of the WCARRD Missions (Ojala, 1984), that a high level policy advisory mission should not be distracted from its main tasks by hunting for bankable projects. If need be a follow-up mission can take up this task.

7.22 Since serious policy dialogue is to be established with governments with the objective of orienting development policies along the lines of the WCARRD Programme of Action, both the composition of the missions and their modus operandi could be improved. The size of the missions varied from 5 in Oman (4 in the second mission to Sri Lanka which was basically a single-agency FAO mission) to 21 in Costa Rica. The average size of the 24 missions was 10 members. However, there is no correspondence between the size and complexities of a country's economy, society and polity on the one hand and the size and composition of the mission on the other.



Most of the Latin American missions were large, 12 to 15 members or even more, irrespective of the size of the country.

7.23 Nearly one third to one half of the mission members were from FAO. The composition of FAO staff participating in the missions does not reflect a conscious effort to include those units of the Organization which are directly concerned with the WCARRD Programme of Action. For example, since 1983 no one from ESHW -- the Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service -- has participated in the WCARRD missions. One explanation offered was that the ESH participant(s) were able to look after women's issues. The Review Team was not completely convinced. Similarly, participation from the crucial Policy Analysis Division (ESP) or the Food Policy and Nutrition Division (ESN) has been very infrequent.

7.24 Among UN agencies, participation by ILO has been fairly regular (17 out of 24 missions), while the Regional Economic Commissions participated in a large number of missions (16); so also UNDP (15), WFP (12), and UNESCO (12). Each was represented on at least half of the missions. WHO was a fairly regular participant in earlier missions (11). Participation of other agencies (IFAD, UNIDO, UNICEF, UNDTCD, etc.) was sporadic. Among the more important UN agencies UNEP did not participate in any mission. Nor did the World Bank although it was invited on many occasions. Since these missions are high-level policy missions, it is important that the best possible international advice on policy matters be available to the countries. This objective can be only partly fulfilled if WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO or UNIDO are not participating in the missions. It is also important to explain how the composition of a mission is decided.

7.25 Preparation for these missions does not get adequate time. With very few exceptions, all preparatory work is done by the lead agency (FAO) or by an FAO-appointed consultant. The contribution of other participating agencies or of the countries inviting the mission is negligible. For FAO staff as well, the time available for preparation is very limited. Rarely is the task force for a mission set up more than 2-3 months beforehand, and there are no meetings of the mission members from other agencies before departure for the country. Presumably, it is expected that the members will be able to assess the situation and advise the government on the basis of their accumulated experience, knowledge and insight. If mission members have sufficient policy advisory experience at high levels and are supported by adequate staff work, these assumptions may not be totally unrealistic.

7.26 The short duration of the missions themselves (none stayed more than 10 days) has militated against the initiation of a process of inter-agency collaboration and joint action. This was unfortunate in view of the need to strengthen coordinating mechanisms and develop sustainable collaborative activities at the country level.

7.27 The strengths and weaknesses of the missions are fully reflected in the nature of recommendations made. Apart from the fact that the recommendations made by later missions are more specific, the structure and pattern of recommendations vary from country to country. Generally they cover all major WCARRD concerns, but their relevance to the country-specific situation is not always clear.



7.28 For the purpose of more detailed examination the Review Team selected nine mission reports, three belonging to the early period 1981-83, three to the mid-period 1985-87 and three more recent ones, 1988-90. The comments made above on the basis of the general study of twenty-four mission reports -- on selection of countries, composition of FAO team, participation of other UN agencies, extent of preparedness, terms of reference and the recommendations of the missions -- were further corroborated by these more detailed studies.

7.29 There is one indirect benefit of the mission reports which should not go unrecognized. In several instances the mission report acted as an arbitrator in public debate on a crucial issue. For example, the stand taken by the mission on agrarian reforms in the Philippines strengthened those elements in the government's policy-making bodies who were pleading for agrarian reforms in their country. Similar benefits accrued in some of the Latin American countries. For example, the mission to Ecuador was successful in persuading the Government to retain the special fund for rural development, FODERUMA. The "advocacy" role of the WCARRD missions should not be underestimated.

### III

#### Inter-Agency Meetings, Inter-Governmental Consultations and Round Tables

7.30 Apart from more structured, and regular, inter-agency collaboration, specific attempts are continuously made to bring together agencies to work in the area of rural development. More important among such efforts are periodic Regional Inter-Agency Meetings, Regional Inter-Governmental Consultations and Round Tables.

7.31 In all the regions except Asia and Pacific, FAO has organized inter-agency consultations on WCARRD-related issues. In Asia and Pacific, ESCAP had set up (in 1977) an Inter-Agency Committee on Rural Development which organized such meetings. So far four Inter-Agency Consultations have been organized in Africa, five in the Near East and seven in Latin America and the Caribbean. Unfortunately, enthusiasm for such Inter-Agency Consultations seems to have waned after 1985. Since then there have been only two such consultations, both in Latin America. (However, Inter-Agency Committee on Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific is an exception. It is an active body, which met only recently, May 1990, to discuss the strategies for integrated rural development in that region).

7.32 These meetings were attended by a large number of UN agencies, including UNDP, WFP, ILO, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, Regional UN Commissions, UNIDO, UNCTAD/GATT and FAO. The agenda of all these meetings was somewhat uniform. FAO, as lead agency, reported on the recent and ongoing activities of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development. The representatives of all agencies, including FAO, presented reports on their activities in specific countries of the region or those covering the whole region which contributed to the objectives of poverty-oriented rural development. The meetings discussed ways to achieve improved collaboration and coordination among the agencies in the execution of programmes and projects of common interest. The termination of these meetings must weaken the total network of inter-agency relations, especially at a time when there are indications in Inter-Governmental Meetings that agendas and themes are becoming increasingly region-specific.



7.33 It is important to treat regional Inter-Agency Consultations as effective fora for extending the impact and activities of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development at the regional and country levels. Since rural development issues are specific to countries, UN agencies should be able to strengthen, or at least facilitate, the regional and country-level activities for the rural poor through these meetings.

7.34 In Latin America and the Caribbean the regional inter-agency meetings, from 1984 onwards, were held together with round tables on specific issues facing the implementation of the rural development programme in the region. It would be beneficial if other regions followed the practice of discussing specific issues after exchange of information and views of a general nature.

7.35 A large number of Inter-Governmental Consultations on WCARRD-related subjects were organized in various developing regions: three in Africa, six in Asia and the Pacific, five in Latin America and the Caribbean and two in the Near East. There was a lull in these activities during the period 1986-88. Since 1989 there has been a revival. These consultations were intended to provide guidelines for developing national programmes of action. The initial meetings were held largely for the purpose of defining most immediate regional follow-up action and to assist in the formulation of national policies which were expected to lead to national programmes. The UN agencies were invited to these consultations and many of them attended.

7.36 Topics for discussion at these WCARRD follow-up meetings were identified by FAO. Over time, greater specificity has occurred in the agendas for discussion. For example, the first consultation in Asia (in 1979) dealt in a general way with arrangements for follow-up by the countries on the subjects addressed by WCARRD. By the third consultation (1983) more specific themes of regional concern were emphasized, e.g. delivery systems for small farmers, marketing and price policies, people's participation, social forestry, women and rural development, etc. By the fifth consultation, newer aspects of these themes were taken up for discussion, e.g. the role of NGOs in community forestry, experiences and strategies for promoting non-farm employment, problems of artisanal fishermen. The same trend could be discerned in Latin America where, beginning with general discussions, the more recent consultations included topics such as problems of indigenous populations of Latin America and the Caribbean, recession in the Latin America region, structural adjustment and rural poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean, the impact of technology on the production activities of women in Latin America, and the associative forms of production in the agrarian reform programmes.

7.37 In Africa as well, where only three Inter-Governmental Consultations have taken place so far, the discussions have begun to evolve from general to more specific regional concerns such as the impact of land tenure and agrarian policies on common property resources in Africa and the role of women in rural development in Africa.

7.38 The trend in discussions is to bring topics of relevance to the region concerned into sharper focus and provide a forum for the exchange of views and experiences. These consultations are generally well-planned and well-prepared. However, there is no mechanism in place to assess the follow-up of these international meetings.



7.39 A large number of expert consultations and round tables were, organized at the initiative of FAO and with support from other UN agencies on WCARRD-related issues. Earlier consultations were organized mainly around socio-economic indicators. The concerned UN agencies were invited to attend these consultations and develop joint programmes. (In early 1990, FAO's Statistics Division organized a workshop with the participation of the UN Statistical Office and the World Bank to harmonize its work in the area of monitoring and evaluation of agrarian reform and rural development with similar efforts in other UN agencies). The subjects of round tables were more varied in the latter years. Somewhat more focused and regionally relevant topics might be selected for such round table discussions. However, a large number of these meetings confined discussion to different aspects of agrarian reform. These opportunities could have been utilized to discuss other important planks of the WCARRD Programme.

7.40 An important instrument for inter-agency collaboration which seems to have been neglected throughout the 1980s is the Cross Organizational Programme Analysis (COPA). The Economic and Social Council, at its second session of 1979, requested that a COPA of agencies' rural development programmes, conducted by United Nations organizations, be submitted to the Council at its second regular session in 1980. The ACC Task Force on Rural Development in its meeting in 1979 felt that such an exercise should constitute the baseline for future evaluation of the implementation of rural development activities by the United Nations system, as called for by the WCARRD Programme of Action. However, after this initial exercise undertaken in 1980, no further effort has been made in this direction.

#### IV

7.41 Apart from these modalities of inter-agency collaboration, a variety of collaborative arrangements exist, in fact too numerous to recount in this short review, at the field level. Examples range from networking on a common theme to assistance from one agency in implementing a Technical Assistance Project of another. In between one can find countless joint efforts in institutional development, training, strategy and policy formulation, research, co-sponsorship and/or co-financing of projects.

7.42 A review of a few of these joint projects, and discussions with the staff of the agencies as well as with government officials, bring out a few lessons which seem to have wider applicability. In a nutshell, these would include:

- There are some outstanding examples of collaborative inter-agency field activities in areas such as agricultural research, forestry, fisheries and women in development. At the same time there are some technical as well as policy and institutional topics where not much collaboration is evident, e.g. rainfed agriculture and non-farm employment, though scope certainly exists.
- Inter-agency collaboration is weakest in the areas which are common to two or more agencies. However, some improvement is taking place in this regard, as illustrated by FAO and WHO's



collaborative efforts to organize the International Conference on Nutrition.

- Cooperation among the funding agencies, e.g. World Bank, UNDP, IFAD, UNFPA, WFP is good and expanding.
- Inter-agency projects have a better chance of success when the lead agency has acknowledged technological competence, e.g. the Fishery Programme spearheaded by FAO.
- UNDP's coordinating role at the country level is not universally effective. UNDP alone cannot be faulted for this; other agencies (for example, the World Bank) which play a coordinating role in some countries have not fared much better. Part of the reason is that countries do not perceive coordinated action of the agencies, even in a particular sector or area, as always in their interest.
- The technical collaboration programmes have a better chance of success than those involving sharing of funds. To share either 13 percent (i.e. the overhead charged by the agencies) or the "glory" of accomplishing the task is difficult enough; to share both is well-nigh impossible.
- For field action, in contrast to intellectual deliberations, collaboration of more than two or three agencies has rarely proved fruitful, unless activities and tasks are clearly assigned among the participating agencies.
- Working contacts at the staff level between all relevant agencies are fairly good. It is at the higher bureaucratic levels that problems -- relating to funding, turf, etc., -- which may detract from collaborative action have to be faced.



CHAPTER VIII

SUMMING UP: LESSONS LEARNT IN PROGRAMME  
CONTENT AND PLANNING OF ACTIVITIES

8.1 In this chapter the material presented in Chapters IV to VII is viewed from the overall perspective of the WCARRD Programme of Action, and a few recommendations are made for improving the relevance and quality of the agencies' work programmes. Some comments are made as well on management of the WCARRD follow-up programme. The purpose here is to draw lessons from the experiences of the 1980s and to recommend appropriate modifications in programmes and modalities in the light of this experience, with a view to strengthening the efforts of the UN system in support of rural poverty alleviation in the 1990s.

I

8.2 Though WCARRD as such is seldom recognized (except at FAO) as the inspiration for the agencies' rural development activities, the UN system contributed, through a variety of efforts in the years following the World Conference, to the building up of a world consensus on poverty alleviation, participation of beneficiaries, the relevance of gender issues and environmental protection. The principles enunciated by WCARRD are influencing in a profound way the UN system's rural development activities, both those initiated by the agencies and those undertaken in support of the Governments' programmes. These ideas also have found expression in projects funded by inter-governmental and bilateral agencies. Yet a number of deficiencies can be observed in programme content as well as in planning and implementation procedures, especially the former. Many of these lacunae, as noted earlier in the text, were due to factors beyond the agencies' control.

8.3 In the following paragraphs the comments are organized around the important areas of work for the agencies, i.e. (i) agencies' own programmes of work; (ii) activities in support of government programmes; (iii) the advocacy role of the agencies; and (iv) inter-agency collaborative activities.

**Agencies' own Programmes of Work**

8.4 The promotion of WCARRD principles by the UN agencies comprised research, education, training and extension, and development of socio-economic indicators for monitoring and evaluation. None of this package of activities could be said to be irrelevant. In so far as studies and field experiments led to training, consultations and technical assistance, there was a consistency of activities as well. What was done in this promotional catalytic package was done in earnest and, as far as can be gauged, done well on the whole. There is, however, scope for making these activities more effective. With this end in view, in the field of research and studies the Review Team would recommend the following:

- As data limitations continue to be a major constraint in assessing trends in rural poverty and in analysing the impact of



public policies on poverty alleviation, systematic collection, analysis, and dissemination of data deserve high priority in the work programme.

- The task of conceptualizing and inductively analysing new but extremely important subjects has yet to be tackled satisfactorily. For example, ongoing work on improving access of the rural poor to input and output markets and to agricultural services deserves further strengthening. Particular attention should be focused on countries undergoing structural adjustment programmes or shifting from centrally planned to market economies.
- There is a need to strengthen linkages between CGIAR centres and national agricultural research institutions on the one hand, and relevant UN agencies on the other.
- While we applaud the attention given to environment and sustainable development in recent years, further work is suggested on poverty-environment linkages, or methods for environmental accounting, and the assessment of strategies for sustainable development in different agro-ecological zones with particular emphasis on vulnerable areas and population groups.
- There is a need for studies for appropriate legislation and supportive implementation mechanisms to ensure adequate and equitable land rights especially for women.

8.5 On education, training and extension, the major recommendations following from our analysis are that:

- the agencies strengthen their arrangements for exchange of documentation, training materials and methods for training in WCARRD-related areas;
- as a follow-up to the Global Consultation on Agricultural Extension which involved strong cooperation with several agencies, further collaboration be encouraged in developing and testing methods for agricultural extension, particularly in the area of small farmers' participation;
- training of small scale entrepreneurs and staff of cooperatives, rural organizations and small private enterprises be considered in the fields of rural industry, enterprises and trades, rural credit institutions, rural input and output markets etc., and not be restricted primarily to government officials.

8.6 An important example of the agencies' contribution to agrarian reform and rural development in the post-WCARRD decade is the development of widely accepted indicators of socio-economic progress. More work in this area is needed, and the following suggestions are offered:

- There is a need for disaggregation of indicators by rural/urban population, by socio-economic category and by gender. Current efforts in this direction need to be accelerated.



- Appropriate indicators need to be devised for people's participation, local-level planning, natural/common resource management, etc.
- Concepts and measures should be refined in order to bring out women's role in agriculture and rural development.
- Techniques have still to be developed for environmental assessment and implications for the poor.
- Methods need to be devised to capture linkage between agriculture and non-farm activities.
- Perhaps most importantly, methods and procedures are needed for utilizing the findings of Monitoring and Evaluation in the mid-season correction and revision of programmes, to the extent these relate to the agency's programme of work.

8.7 The role of information dissemination is as crucial for promoting the WCARRD principles as it is for successful replication of projects and programmes. The newsletter Rural Development provides a good forum for disseminating information on the rural development activities of the agencies. However, to make the process of information sharing more effective we offer the following recommendations:

- that the frequency of the newsletter Rural Development be increased from annual to at least twice a year. Other agencies might share the cost of publication which at present is borne exclusively by FAO;
- that major studies on poverty, people's participation, sustainable development, etc., be brought out through commercial publishers, not only to reduce the financial burden on the agencies but also to ensure wider distribution. For similar reasons, staff working papers, discussion papers etc., could be submitted for publication in academic and specialized journals;
- that much greater attention be given to the dissemination of information on UN agencies' rural development activities within the agencies themselves, to better acquaint staff with the activities of their own and other UN agencies.

8.8 While the agencies can initiate effective programmes of agrarian reform and rural development, these programmes can be sustained only if institutional capability is created in the countries. A great deal of past activity in institutional strengthening has focused on delivery mechanisms for services and inputs. While this has proved useful, the institutional underpinning for rural development requires a more comprehensive exercise. Because of its importance, institutional development truly warrants a separate treatment, however the Review Team presents the following basic suggestions here:

- that the agencies provide Member Governments with technical and legal assistance for institutions, particularly at the local level;



- that the agencies assist in promoting constructive dialogue between governments and NGOs; and
- that the agencies lay special emphasis on training local government officials, group leaders and NGOs in specific rural development issues as well as in participatory methods.

#### Activities in Support of Government Programmes

8.9 The success or failure of the WCARRD Programme of Action hinges on the policies and activities of the Governments. These will be reviewed extensively in the forthcoming Third Progress Report on WCARRD Follow-up. The agencies, however, can contribute in a significant way to the Government activities mainly by bringing the fruits of their research, evaluation, pilot projects, etc. to the designing of technical assistance. By and large, this work has been accomplished successfully by the agencies. Increasingly, agencies' field programmes and policy advice have adopted a WCARRD-based approach. In Chapter V, the main activities in this regard were reviewed under four headings: (i) access to resources; (ii) institutional development; (iii) gender issues; and (iv) the environment and sustainable development. The main recommendations emanating from this discussion are listed below.

- 8.10 - There are two aspects of access to fixed resources: (i) improving and conserving these resources and, (ii) ensuring equitable terms of access to resources. Both deserve equal attention.
- In areas where there are gross inequities in land holdings, redistributive land reforms may be necessary. Perhaps, more important in the current situation is the need for tenancy reform to protect poor and vulnerable farmers.
  - The emerging issues in land tenure, particularly in the societies where traditional forms of land tenure are in transition (e.g. in countries of Africa), need careful study and a plan of action. Particular caution must be exercised in some of the countries to see that land titling does not take away women's rights as they existed under customary land tenure practices.
  - Women's access to land is still on an unequal footing in most developing countries. Legal and institutional methods are needed for establishing a more equitable pattern.
  - There is an urgent need for a change in public policies, and legislation wherever necessary, to protect the rights of the rural poor to communal property, i.e. forests, common grazing lands, tanks, ponds, etc.
  - As to variable resources i.e. agricultural inputs, services and credit, the growing importance of markets (as against public distribution systems) has created transitional problems for poor farmers. These groups need assistance in order to have an equitable and profitable interaction with the markets.



- A number of UN agencies are encouraging or supporting experiments with different forms of delivery systems inputs, services and credits, e.g. cooperatives, pre-cooperatives, and joint-sector enterprises. Mechanisms are called for to take stock of these various efforts and draw lessons for future action.
- The importance of non-farm employment in poverty alleviation programmes for the rural poor has not been sufficiently appreciated. Two basic aspects of rural development programmes should be addressed to encourage productive employment in the non-farm sector: (i) strengthening agriculture and non-farm linkages, and (ii) generating and popularizing appropriate technologies.
- The place of non-farm employment in sustainable rural development is an important issue on which further systematic work is required. In particular, the role of non-farm employment in absorbing surplus labour in marginal agricultural areas needs to be carefully explored.

8.11 Throughout the Review institutional development has been emphasized. Two aspects of institutional development are of greater relevance in the context of Technical Assistance, (i) human resource development and (ii) institutional underpinning for people's participation.

- On the former, while the importance attached to health and nutrition in the Technical Assistance programmes of many agencies is appreciated, the time has come for the impact of these programmes on poverty alleviation via human capital formation to be made more explicit.
- Also deserving emphasis is the need to improve the targeting of human resource development programmes to reach the rural poor and other disadvantaged sections, e.g. women and children.
- There is a big gap in understanding of the latter, i.e. the institutional correlates of people's participation. Some suggestions on this topic were made earlier in this chapter. It may be added that a number of experiments on formal and informal groups are being carried out in various developing countries. The lessons of successes and failures of these experiments are not as widely known as they could be.
- One of the important lessons is that decentralized institutions can facilitate people's participation, especially participation of the rural poor. In this there is an advocacy role for the agencies which so far has not been performed as effectively as it could be.

8.12 A remarkable change in thinking seems to have occurred on gender issues. WID programmes of the UN system were strongly influenced by the Decade for Women and the 1985 Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000. The basic objective has been to address women's particular difficulties in integration in agriculture and rural development. Issues which merit fuller attention include:



- women's tenurial rights to land;
- gender-differential technology needs;
- effects of structural adjustment programmes on women; and
- relating demographic behaviour to women's issues.

The Review Team recommends that the agencies' own activities as well as their TA support to government programmes give greater emphasis to these issues.

8.13 The Review Team noted a growing awareness of environment issues in the UN system. A related concern for sustainable development is also shared by the agencies. However, the programme content as well as the implementation strategy need greater clarity. It is anticipated that the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 will spell out the issues and options in a clear manner. As preparation for the UN Conference, and as part of their regular programmes, the agencies have started work on these concerns. Important areas where concerted action by the agencies is recommended include:

- the evolution of methodologies and institutional support to make sustainable development a participatory movement, so that the poor do not have to sacrifice their immediate interests for the long-term future of the community as a whole, or, if they must. make such sacrifices they are compensated for doing so;
- the development of methodologies and institutional support to approach the issue of sustainability in a multidisciplinary way;
- looking into viable alternatives for rehabilitating poor producers in marginal and ecologically fragile areas; and
- examining macro policy, particularly - but not only - the fiscal policies, with a view to assessing their impact on the environment.

8.14 The Review Team is convinced that the question of sustainable development cannot be divorced from the more basic questions regarding the design of development (e.g. can a consumerist society protect the environment in the long run?) It is to be hoped that when the agencies meet at the Conference on Environment and Development they will also try to forge a consensus on the Design of Development.

#### Advocacy Role of the Agencies

8.15 In Chapter VI we gave some illustrations of the technical and advisory services offered by the UN agencies in their role as advocates for developing countries. As stated earlier, the limited overall success in these areas during the 1980s was due largely to an unfavourable international economic environment. However, there is scope for strengthening the programme for advocacy. The Review Team recommends that:

- policy advice for the development of new markets and access to export markets for small farmers receive high priority;



- inter-agency collaboration in training for entrepreneurial capacity for exports among farmers' organizations be enhanced;
- inter-agency cooperation and coordination for TCDC efforts be given high priority; and that
- information networking and regional training, in order to make TCDC more effective, be strengthened.

#### Inter-Agency Collaboration

8.16 Issues in agrarian reform and rural development are inter-related, and they are also the concerns of several agencies. Collaboration among the agencies, therefore, is of vital importance. The Review Team looked into three aspects of inter-agency collaboration in somewhat greater detail: (i) the functioning of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development, (ii) Global and Regional Consultations and (iii) Inter-Agency WCARRD Policy Missions. Based on this study the following suggestions are offered:

- The ACC Task Force on Rural Development, which is the principal forum for inter-agency collaboration in agrarian reform and rural development, needs to be strengthened. In particular,
  - (i) through the fostering of inter-agency contact between annual meetings. This could be accomplished by encouraging staff from different agencies who are working on similar projects to exchange notes as they see fit;
  - (ii) by organizing city-based groups on the general theme of rural development and poverty alleviation, or on specific themes being discussed by the Panels of the Task Force (a beginning could be made in cities where a large number of UN agencies are located);
  - (iii) by allocating more time at Task Force meetings for discussion of substantive issues (as reported earlier, there are several areas where the knowledge base is very weak and therefore the sharing of agency representatives' experience and thinking on some of the issues would be beneficial to all);
  - (iv) organizing such substantive discussions around the issues identified in Chapter IX of this Review as those which could constitute the agenda for 1990s;
  - (v) seeking continuity not only in the Chair and the Secretariat of the Task Force but also in the members who represent the various agencies, particularly those who participate in the discussions of the Technical Panels of the Task Force; and
  - (vi) bringing the proceedings of the Task Force meetings to the attention of relevant staff in all member agencies on a formal and regular basis.



8.17 One of the main thrusts of this Review is that while there are a number of major problems common to all developing regions, there are many region-specific concerns which require special action. This calls for greater recourse to regional Inter-Governmental Consultations and the regional expert meetings.

- The decline in regional inter-agency consultation is unfortunate, and the Review Team recommends that a high priority be attached to this activity.
- Inter-governmental and regional consultations (attended by representatives of various agencies) could be used to develop a coherent plan containing a number of specific follow-up activities for the region to be carried out by the different agencies in a series of collaborative or complementary programmes.

8.18 The WCARRD Policy Missions have some in-built advantages, as noted in Chapter VII. They take a comprehensive view of rural development policies, provide an opportunity to approach key policy makers at the national level, and allow an inter-agency perspective on development issues. As was noted earlier, however, these missions were not as effective as they might have been, and reasons have been provided earlier in the text as to why this may have been so. In order to strengthen this instrument of inter-agency collaboration, it is recommended that:

- FAO discourage countries from applying for comprehensive policy review missions if they are not yet ready for them;
- adequate preparation be made before each mission is launched, including meeting of the concerned agency representatives to review the available information and formulate an outline for discussion;
- composition of the missions, in terms of the membership from different agencies and different divisions of the lead agency, FAO, be consistent with the major issues that the mission is likely to tackle;
- these high-level missions not be distracted from their main tasks by hunting for bankable projects; and that
- there be clear and adequate provisions for follow-up, at least for monitoring implementation of the mission's recommendations.

8.19 The financing institutions and main concerned agencies undertake a great many advisory missions on their own. Of these there is a proliferating number on structural adjustment and rural development.

8.20 There must be much overlapping, and conceivably conflicting advice being heard by governments.

8.21 It is recommended that the agencies develop a procedure for informing each other in advance of planned country policy missions in the area of rural development in order to avoid duplication and overlap. The forum of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development could be utilized for this purpose.



8.22 The UN system might also consider re-establishing Cross Organizational Programme Analysis (COPA) which would go beyond making an inventory of proposed policy missions and:

- examine where potential scope exists for collaboration on rural poverty alleviation, especially in sustainable development.
- identify present collaborative efforts which are relevant and effective, and which can be built upon.

## II

### Developing Agency Programmes

8.23 As in the beginning of the last decade, so in the beginning of the 1990s there is a world consensus on poverty alleviation. We have reviewed the principal components of this strategy in the previous chapters: emphasis on entitlement, a balanced role for the state and the markets, stress on institutional development, decentralization of decision-making, importance of non-governmental organizations, concern with macro-policies, and the like. Such substantive areas should constitute the framework for design and implementation of poor-oriented rural development efforts by UN agencies. It is recognized that resources available to perform these tasks will be no more abundant in the next decade than during the course of the 1980s, and may well be less in view of a decline in the real value of official development assistance.

8.24 It is not our purpose, nor is it possible, to suggest a list of "do's and 'don'ts", much less to draw a blueprint for future activities. However, we do believe that the lessons drawn from past experience in the planning and implementation of rural development can be of help in suggesting a systematic way of planning the deployment of agency resources to respond to the proposed agenda for the 1990s.

8.25 In programme planning and implementation, more effective utilization of the human and material resources available to serve the agreed-upon goals of rural development could be achieved through a series of steps, grouped as follows:

- (i) spelling out objectives of each major programme and selecting those objectives where the agency has comparative advantages;
- (ii) exploring different types and mixes of intervention tasks (such as research, training and information sharing, policy advice, monitoring and evaluation and advocacy) which make up the content of each programme;
- (iii) assessing the suitability of different modalities (such as pilot projects, consultations and round tables, technical assistance and missions) for accomplishing these tasks; and
- (iv) monitoring activities and utilizing opportunities for mid-season correction.



8.26 Agencies are bound to find that they do not have sufficient resources to complete everything or to complete individual items in the best way possible. It may be necessary to curtail the agenda, but care must be taken not to use this as an excuse to jettison the more difficult activities, thus weakening a programme's balance and coherence. Not everything that needs to be done can be done. Not everything that could be done has to be done. However, the work that is done should have maximum effect which can only come from the logic and internal consistency of the programme. The agencies are urged to consider monitoring their overall programmes, not just individual activities, with these values in mind.

8.27 The Review Team anticipates that the more promotional activities on regular programmes in the 1990s will include advances in statistical and monitoring techniques and much conceptualization of sustainable projects and systems. In both cases it is difficult to see how comprehensive programmes can be developed by separate divisions, departments and even agencies. A means to more pervasive joint planning than has been seen so far will be needed.

8.28 At present the WCARRD lead agency, FAO, uses the system of Inter-Departmental Committees and Inter-Divisional Working Groups to enable different parts of the agency to collaborate on common issues. The committees take decisions and appear to have powers to enforce them. The Working Groups provide the input to these decisions. There are about a dozen sets of these arrangements in FAO, one of which addresses Rural Development. (Its six ad hoc sub-groups, formed to help launch the WCARRD programme were disbanded in the early 1980s.)

8.29 One procedural option for in-house collaboration is the establishment of new selective ad hoc sub-groups. But this does not take account of the need to cross-fertilize ideas between one IDWG and another (for instance, the IDWG/WID and the Steering Committee and Central Task Force on Sector and Structural Adjustment Policy Work). There may be a case for "link sub-groups" which have the right to be heard by all relevant IDWGs.

8.30 Finally, the Review Team was impressed by the enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity of many staff members of the agencies when discussing the challenging issues of rural poverty alleviation that to date have been so little developed. Agency staff are, by and large, well-motivated and eager to carry out the tasks set forth by WCARRD. Using this energy to best advantage will require an appropriate combination of intellectual and management skills. The Review Team found in talking to staff members that their skills were often narrow and compartmentalized. Cross-fertilization between departments within the agencies was inadequate, most critically between those dealing with micro subjects and those dealing with systems and macro-sectoral issues. The demands that WCARRD and new development thinking of the 1980s placed on the pre-existing skills and work processes of the UN system were probably underestimated.

8.31 We strongly recommend constant efforts to retrain the staff. Sensitization of staff to new objectives, though important, is not a substitute for upgrading skills.



8.32 Poor-oriented rural development in the 1990s will be more difficult in terms of complexity and inter-relatedness of the tasks and resources needed. At the same time the international agencies have sufficient good will and experience to rise to this challenge in an effective way. But the difficult work ahead will require more than good will or even optimism. It will require more creative leadership and more determined action at all levels than have ever been mustered before.



PART III

CHAPTER IX

AGENDA FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1990s

9.1 WCARRD drew a consensus in 1979. Its principles hold today. On several occasions the Review Team heard agency staff comment reflectively along the lines of "WCARRD is needed more than ever" or "how right they were in 1979". So why is it necessary to reformulate issues of rural poverty alleviation as faced by the international community in the 1990s? While the major rural development goal of poverty alleviation and enrichment of poor people's lives remains valid in the 1990s, lessons learned from trying to promote WCARRD objectives, as well as developments in the last decade justify a reassessment of the overall strategy of poverty alleviation. Thus there are two basic reasons for a reassessment which underlie all others:

- The institutional prerequisites for meeting certain WCARRD objectives were underestimated.
- New international economic and domestic policy environments have altered the substantive agenda.

9.2 We are, therefore, looking towards a decade in which the emphasis will be on encouraging more local level development initiatives in contrast to installing projects designed from outside. All this points to a very much stronger emphasis in the 1990s on local self-reliance. This has implications for the implementation of WCARRD objectives. But WCARRD concerns will also have to be interpreted through a framework characterized by a growing commitment to sustainable development and by the spread of market liberalization.

A. Global Issues

9.3 Here we highlight the main substantive areas of rural development that the international community is likely to have to contend with in the 1990s.

- (i) **Establishing a firm relationship between sustainable development and poverty alleviation:**

9.4 Among the continuing concerns of poverty alleviation, sustainable development emerges as of primary and overarching importance. The difficulties of grasping this subject's intricacies and of drawing up a programme of action for it have been attended to in Part II. What must be pointed out is that there can be versions of sustainable development which hold hidden traps for the poor. At such time as the linkages between environmental, economic and socio-political sustainability have been identified and relevant action strategized, the question "Has this exercise fully incorporated the goal of rural poverty alleviation?" needs to be asked.



9.5 Sustainable development in its most reduced form might be described as development with sufficient protection of the environment to make it physically supported. There is an immediate conflict. It is a common occurrence that fragile ecosystems carry populations that are particularly poor, and that have least room to manoeuvre to modified livelihoods. The conflict is no better described than in a note to the Review Team from a FAO department. "Sustainable strategies for development are in conflict with the alleviation of poverty in many countries. The growth of population is reaching levels at which the resources of good land can no longer support it. Agricultural frontiers are shifting towards the forest, and more government intervention is required to manage the remaining natural resources".

9.6 Investigation into how far indigenous knowledge of the environment can resolve the conflict, and participatory approaches to identify this and plan on it, are obvious precludes to other initiatives. But it would be dangerous optimism to expect this to be sufficient for a happy reconciliation of livelihoods and environmental protection in the foreseeable future. Short- and medium-term income necessarily foregone will hurt the poorest most. The long-term gains are for all. Environmental economics and accounting are crucial to any programme of assistance to Member Governments to identify what is sustainable and who is being asked to surrender what income for how long. Even in less vulnerable areas the most immediately profitable development opportunities may have to be restrained because they are not environmentally sustainable. The many possible different inter-sectoral linkages will have their own implications for environmental sustainability. There is therefore a process to be established of identifying options and assessing their respective short-term and long-term, private and social, costs and gains. Planning for sustainable development must not simply be a case of reaching an economically optimal allocation of resources. Poverty alleviation and equity demand consideration of transfer payments, compensation and public investment in long-term dynamic efficiency. This will not be easy in an era of market liberalization and orientation towards short-term allocative efficiency.

9.7 But in any policy environment sustainable development entails other things. The above indicates the importance of economic sustainability. It also implies there must be a contract between local people and the state, and this can only be won through the political process of popular participation and decentralization. Finally, sustainable development includes demographic sustainability. The economic, social and political arrangements must be conducive to a spatial distribution and rate of growth of population which do not undermine efforts in other fields.

**(ii) Poverty alleviation in the context of growing importance of markets:**

9.8 This is not to be seen simply as the advent of a struggle of small producers against larger traders. It is worth bearing in mind that the experience of small producers in a command economy was often a struggle against arbitrary procurement prices and public sector mismanagement. Moreover, private traders might be of any size and come in large numbers. The purpose of liberalization is to encourage competitive efficiency among all suppliers of goods and services.



9.9 The poor face two major handicaps in the context of growing importance of the markets. The first relates to the difficulties of "entry". They remain at the margin both as producers and as consumers. They also do not share equitable benefits from market transactions even after their entry into the market stream. In order to facilitate the poor's entry in markets and to ensure equitable benefits from market transactions an understanding and, wherever necessary, an intervention in favour of the poor will be needed.

9.10 Secondly, local institutions that support the poor in market transactions need much strengthening. The economic efficiency of these institutions depends on democracy. Leadership, its obligations and its tenure of office must be popularly sanctioned. In some countries revamped cooperatives with new independence and autonomy may suffice. In others some other institutions, depending on local conditions, may have to be put in place.

9.11 But the private sector is not always ready to expand into the vacuum left by the retreating command economy. Also where market distortions are severe there will be commercially less favourable areas (far from the tarmac road or fertile areas) which will not attract private traders on present comparative advantages. These areas are likely to be populated by the poorest, most marginal producers and comprise the ecologically most fragile systems. There is a real danger that the needs of these areas will be overlooked when the benefits of liberalization elsewhere provide political satisfaction. Here there is still a role for government - most likely an amalgam of central and local government. Officials at these two levels may need to be trained to undertake the new tasks.

9.12 These two situations are not mutually exclusive; there will frequently be a mix of private sector and government roles. UN agencies will have to look at situations objectively, not ideologically, to identify which kind of institutional strengthening is most appropriate to a strategy of poverty.

**(iii) Land tenancy, management and conservation:**

9.13 Access to land remains one of the most important means of poverty alleviation in the developing world. We have more to say on it when discussing specific regional issues. However, there is another aspect of land ownership and tenancy which deserves serious attention. And that pertains to the relationship between land management and environmental protection.

9.14 There is a growing appreciation that small scale farming is, in most current situations, more environment-friendly than large scale farming. But the status of the tiller is also an important environmental consideration. Security of access to land encourages investment in its long term production-bearing capacity. Therefore agrarian reform (more strictly tenure reform) of the 1990s will increasingly take as its main objective safe land management practices along with increased security of tenure or land ownership. This appears to be the main reason for the increasing number of requests by government for technical assistance in cadastre and land registration.



9.15 The subject of the relationship between tenant status, land use and public management of land in environmentally vulnerable areas is in its infancy. But the Review Team heard about it in discussion with all agencies concerned with the farm sector and/or the environment. At the moment technical skills on land assessment are being supplied through the UN system. But the demand for these skills and for an awareness of socio-economic influences is likely to be of a magnitude that justifies training programmes and expert meetings. Because an intimate knowledge of the locality is crucial to successful planning, the training should incorporate approaches to popular participation in land management planning.

9.16 This will be one of the first practical exercises in planning sustainable development. Its outcome depends critically on good inter-agency collaboration.

**(iv) Non-farm employment:**

9.17 The altered man-land ratios since 1979 and the increasing threat of land degradation through its over-exploitation signal an important necessary change in the strategy of rural poverty alleviation. There will be an ever increasing reliance on diversified non-farm employment to provide livelihoods for the growing population, particularly women, because of the rising percentages of rural households headed by women (who have a more tenuous hold on land).

9.18 This realization comes at a time when economic policies are favouring production from the existing agricultural sector with price incentives. The larger supply of raw materials and greater farm sector purchasing power that ought to follow from this provides the basis of hopes of designing livelihoods which effectively retain value added in rural communities. The exploitation of forward and backward linkages that this implies will best be achieved, in terms of maximizing employment creation, with a good information base to which aspiring small scale and micro entrepreneurs, women as well as men, have access.

9.19 An improved infrastructure would help this process by dramatically enhancing the economic profitability of non-farm rural employment. In addition, it could help to prevent depletion of scarce rural energy sources and water pollution by provision of alternative energy and water supplies to rural industry.

**(v) Technology:**

9.20 There are large pockets of small farmers where new technologies have not been adopted. As a result a number of small and marginal farmers, who are potentially viable, remain non-viable and poor. Researchers claim the technology is scale neutral but that there is a problem of delivery of inputs and support services. If this problem cannot be solved, then the technology is not appropriate to the socio-economic context. There may be other reasons: risk, limited purchasing power or opportunity costs of more labour intensive farming. Farm technology cannot be viewed in disassociation with the rest of people's livelihoods. Gender aspects of labour and cash inputs, and of opportunity costs and produce appropriation, are also of relevance to technology design.



9.21 Technical assistance for the generation and extension of appropriate small farmer technology, market research and a market data bank will be a crucial ingredient for sustainable incorporation of small farmers into market oriented rural development processes.

9.22 Research on small farmer technology has been too narrowly based in the past. The advent of biotechnology for coarse grains and secondary food crops will move the research scene to rainfed, upland and marginal cropping conditions where some of the poorest farmers reside. There are great opportunities, and great dangers. Agency staff talk in terms of "we have, at most, ten years to get our act together". A large part of that act must be an advocacy role for the UN system; mobilizing resources for socio-economically based agricultural research programmes and strengthening the TCDC network on appropriate farm technology.

9.23 The principles of technology research implicit in the above apply also to the non-farm sector where choice of technology will be an important determinant of employment creation.

(vi) The popular participation process and its institutional underpinning:

9.24 Development thinking and practice will continue to move away from what is technologically possible or most profitable in the short term. The rural development agenda is now dominated by the subject of livelihood support systems, which are not to be subsidized indefinitely but rather to be invested in so that they can ultimately 'pay their own way' in the market without threatening the environment. Ten years ago such an agenda would not have been possible. It is now at the core of the social dimensions of adjustment debate. But if these ideas are to be translated into action then baseline information and development options have to come from the most reliable source there is, the grassroots. That means that the people must be mobilized through a process which they trust. The most suitable agents to facilitate that process are NGOs, peasant and workers' organizations and local level government bodies.

9.25 In the past the case for popular participation and NGOs has rested largely on issues of distribution and equity. The Review Team believes that in the 1990s the ultimate objective of rural development must be the creation of adequate and viable livelihoods. It also believes that the involvement of people at the grassroots level in the design of these livelihoods is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for achieving this objective. Popular participation with the support of NGOs should now be seen primarily as an economic resource to be strengthened and multiplied, and encouraged towards its effective deployment.

9.26 Securing an independent and autonomous role for popular participation should involve the UN system in advocacy of politically free NGOs, on the one hand, and ways and means to strengthen self-reliant people's organizations, on the other. The former, if properly equipped, can be supportive to the latter and can assist in imparting organizational skills to local leaders.

9.27 The institutional underpinning of popular involvement in development decision making extends to local government bodies. Devolution of planning authority is likely to become more important in the 1990s. The most common practice of this would be for central government to pass



quantities of monetary resources to provincial or district governments to be allocated by the latter. Local government will therefore have a much more active decision making role than in a centrally controlled command economy. It will have much more to discuss and collaborate on with people's group organizations. But it will also, in all probability, find itself trying to mobilize additional, local and non-local, resources through an advocacy role or through direct organization. Few local administrations would have adequate skills for these new functions at present.

(vii) Gender:

9.28 For the greater part of the 1980s gender issues were raised in the UN system in the form of putting together an information base, inserting gender items in general M and E, and drawing up checklists for appraising, monitoring and evaluating projects (all these exercises considered incomplete in 1990 by agencies' WID units), and researching and publishing numerous case studies of rural women. This basic promotional activity is dominated by concern with projects at a time when the mood of the development community has moved from projects to processes. Were there sufficient resources to finish this agenda of the 1980s and move forward, then there would be no problem. But in practice financial constraints demand that priorities be decided. The most important action for the UN system on gender in the 1990s is to shift its programme towards ensuring a full role for women in institutions which underpin processes of popular participation. One part of the unofficial verdict on the Decade of Women given at the 1985 Nairobi Conference was essentially that women-in-development networks have been successfully established. Effort should be made in the 1990s to realize the dividends from that investment in networking.

9.29 There remains the question of how gender is to influence macro-economic policies. The other part of the verdict of the congregation at the Nairobi Conference was less flattering about achievements in this area. The expression "mainstreaming gender issues" remains an ill-defined catchall phrase. It could mean applying the questions in checklists for projects, with some adaptation, to policies. Gender factors can only be said to permeate policy considerations when analysis goes beyond checking options already basically drafted to influencing the early drafting of policy options.

9.30 Sustainable development and market liberalization provide the setting for raising the subject of gender in a way that immediately challenges policy makers. For instance, policy makers of the 1990s will be concerned with encouraging positive supply responses to price changes. There are a host of gender issues in elasticities of supply. The effective use of policy instruments in the field of credit creation, investments in new comparative advantages and expenditure on basic human resource development in the pursuit of a production outcome can be fashioned to ensure that both sexes make their best contributions. The respective roles of women and men in rural economies touch on the environment in different ways. Women and men work with different natural resources. If means to obtain income or basic needs which are friendly to the environment are to be devised due regard must be paid to gender-differentiated roles.



9.31 Population growth will be a more serious issue of development in the 1990s than in the 1980s. There is already growing awareness that gender relations of production and exchange, both within and outside the household economy, are one of the most important determinants of - fertility behaviour. Therefore development options that are sustainable in the long term cannot include postponement of improvement in the economic status of women.

**(viii) Participatory processes in human resource development for self reliance:**

9.32 Popular participation is a socio-political process aimed at encouraging the mass of the people away from the dependency syndrome towards self-reliance in terms of a heavier concentration on internal resource mobilization and decision making. The quality of that participatory process is not only dependent on the quality of its institutional underpinning but on the stamina, alertness, basic education, skills and free time of the participants. Therefore successful popular participation rests partly on promotional investment in human resources development.

9.33 The emphasis on participatory methods and local self-reliance should therefore not be seen as a substitute for expenditure on health, education, water and sanitary facilities, etc. Rather it helps to give direction to the deployment of social sector budgets. If the poorest, the illiterate, and overburdened women are to join effectively, and not just nominally, in the participatory process then targeting of these budgets on them has justification beyond that of assisting these least advantaged. The role of entitlement in poverty alleviation strategies does not stop at ameliorating poverty. Entitlements became an investment item in the strategies themselves.

**(ix) Macro policies:**

9.34 There are already signs that the 1990s will see attempts at fine tuning of macro policies. There are no longer many serious advocates of a narrow interpretation of structural adjustment or of total dependency on market forces. The recent development of sectoral (including social sectoral) adjustment loans, the changing regime of conditionalities and the emerging philosophy behind the World Bank/UNDP social dimensions of adjustment programmes in Africa, are all suggestive of a fundamentally different approach to economic development. At the same time macro policies have to serve their primary purpose of resolving internal and external imbalances, whatever the time frame. There will be a need for an orderly agenda for a dialogue on the options for linking macro policies to poverty alleviation. Items on this agenda might include:

- demands on government budgets, especially for human resource development.
- the inclusion of relevant micro level economic analyses, especially on the elasticities of supply, in the process of formulating macro policies (their packaging, their sequencing, their time frames).
- the means to facilitate an effective market infra-structure.



- a re-examination of the "terms of reference" of macro-economic policies, especially the relation between the objectives of short term and long term efficiency, in the light of the requirements of sustainable development.

9.35 In fact, the next decade should see a reversal of roles; from the micro level having to adapt to the paramountcy of macro policy demands, to the macro level being informed and instructed by micro level analyses. If this is to be successful the different agencies of the UN system will have to find a way to design more appropriately their numerous policy advisory activities.

#### B. The Regional Focus

9.36 Chapter VI pointed out that agendas for regional meetings were increasingly focusing on issues that were region-specific. In order to be of operational significance the UN system's global strategy on poverty alleviation will need to take into account regional characteristics of the regions which will be most important in the 1990s.

#### Asia

9.37 A feature of agrarian structure in Asia which has a much larger applicability than probably any other characteristic is the heavy and growing pressure of population on land. Understandably, therefore, the Asian countries have given high importance to agrarian reforms and sought assistance of the international agencies in the formulation and implementation of these reform measures. But the experience of the 1980s suggest that new and innovative thinking is needed on this aspect of public intervention as the prospects of redistributive land reforms recede and its usefulness is being challenged. This would mean that a flexibility will have to be imparted in the agrarian structure without sacrificing the security of tenure or fair returns to the labour and investment in land by the tenants. The importance of access to land as a powerful measure for poverty alleviation will remain valid, but progressively larger numbers of workers will have to shift from agriculture to non-agricultural occupations.

9.38 An important lacuna in the land reforms in most Asian countries is their neglect of the common lands. The disappearance of the commons or their pre-emption by the rich and powerful of village society has blocked opportunities for income generation from the products of the commons, apart from doing irreparable ecological damage. International agencies will have to act as advocate for a policy on the commons which combines sustainable development with establishing the rights of the poor to these resources.

9.39 Different types of organizational innovations have been tried out to provide the poor access to forestry, fisheries and water resources. Yet more innovative thinking and coherent action is needed to define a proper balance of private and communal rights in these resources and identify different forms of organization to optimize their use.

9.40 Small farmers dominate the agrarian structure of Asia, but they are concentrated in ecologically difficult regions and their products get lower priority at the national level. A large proportion of these



non-viable farms are potentially viable if proper technology is generated and disseminated and a supportive infrastructure is evolved. A large number of initiatives are going on in the area of appropriate technology, which has to be scale neutral, low risk, and low input based, and yet which would ensure "high value added". This is where the need for experimentation and learning from experience in diverse conditions becomes necessary. The role of international agencies emerges as extremely useful.

9.41 Even with all the attention given to small farmers one has to realize that the bulk of those operating miniscule holdings or working on marginalized lands cannot be rehabilitated in agriculture. This is also obviously true for a vast army of the landless and near-landless labour. Diversification of the rural economy deserves a very high priority in any programme of poverty alleviation. At present this process of diversification is very slow, even in countries where the overall rate of growth has been satisfactory. The question of diversification of rural economies, particularly that of rural industrialization, will assume a critical importance in Asia in the 1990s.

#### Latin America and the Caribbean:

9.42 For many countries of the Latin American and Caribbean Region, the term "the lost decade" is an understatement of the damage suffered both in terms of real income loss and de-industrialization. Two external forces were the main causes of the regional economy receding: the foreign debt burden and the terms of trade deterioration. The limitations of the prevailing developmental approach in the region, concentrating on urban industrialization and unequal distribution of income and wealth also contributed to the present situation.

9.43 At the sectoral level, ECLAC/FAO data indicate that the agricultural sector was comparatively less affected by the crisis than other sectors of the economy. However, while data show a dynamic agricultural sector with great "leading role" potentialities, there is also clear indication of a regression to a previous stage of development when the Region was much more dependant on the exports of primary products. During the 1980s small farmers' potential contribution to food security and agricultural growth has been ignored. The specific economic incentives which favoured agricultural exports resulted in higher profits for commercial farmers. The outcome was the introduction of modern labour-saving inputs that permitted significant productivity gains in both land and labour was rapidly incorporated. This modernization process had two important implications for rural poverty: (i) it was a highly concentrating, exclusive and distorting process, since its benefits not only failed to reach small farmers, but it also aggravated rural unemployment; and (ii) it worked against regional and national food security since exportables were substituted for basic foods which in some countries have had to be imported as a result.

9.44 Two priorities for LAC in the coming decade will be incorporation of small farmers into mainstream agricultural growth and provision of livelihoods for surplus population of rural areas in both farm and non-farm income generating activities. With the present difficulties for increasing the agricultural frontier, the decreasing capacity of agriculture to absorb more labour, and receding employment opportunities in the urban sector, the future of rural development in LAC will require a



more creative way of thinking to maximize all employment opportunities in both farm and non-farm sectors. At the same time in those sub-regions of the continent where latifundias prevail, and intensive use of land is ignored, redistributive land reform measures are relevant, in some cases even urgent.

9.45 The promotion of additional farm employment in the Region at a time when agrarian reform is not on the agenda of either governments or main political parties will require innovative ways of facilitating the access of landless rural workers or small holders to natural resources, other physical assets, and inputs and services. Land-leasing, partnership or any other institutionalized form of crop-sharing may effectively contribute to the moderation of rigidities that limit agricultural expansion. In some areas of the humid tropics where additional, though ecologically fragile, land is still available. New environmentally-sound land settlement programmes may be developed. Land titling, in both reformed and new developed lands, is necessary to promote long-term investments and an adequate conservation of natural resources.

9.46 The most important contribution to rural poverty alleviation in the LAC Region is expected to come from the non-farm sector, mainly agro-industries. By contributing to the reduction of unemployment this will provide greater scope to break the vicious circle of rural poverty and natural resources deterioration. Properly designed non-farm employment creation can reconcile sustainable development with poverty alleviation. But priority given to agro-industry necessitates awareness of the negative side effects that recent export-oriented agro-industries have had on rural labour markets (seasonal instability, wage discrimination, etc.) and labour conditions (by-the-job payment, lack of social security, etc.).

9.47 The institutional environment for the 1990s will be one of more decentralized national/state bureaucracies with greater collaboration between public and private sectors for the delivery of agricultural inputs and services in a market-oriented economy. This will require institutional restructuring at different levels, human resources development and the strengthening of peasants' and workers' organizations. A strong institutional framework will help to secure the entitlements of the rural poor and the satisfaction of community needs which the market alone cannot do.

#### Africa

9.48 This region is the one that has suffered most from external shocks and inappropriate domestic policies. At the aggregate level population growth has outstripped food output growth for many years. The massive price and market distortions that have been built up over the years can be unravelled only with painful dislocations. At the same time this process of transformation provides opportunities to lay down structures for locally-determined expansion of livelihoods.

9.49 The increase in farm producer prices that came with structural adjustment policies was successful in an initial boosting of agricultural production. But it is clear that market liberalization alone cannot deliver much more output growth. This is frustrated in the first instance by a badly deteriorated physical infrastructure. Beyond that there are limitations imposed by an inexperienced private sector and inadequately developed human resources and political processes at the local level. For



a positive development outcome the institutional base needs a great deal of strengthening.

9.50 Environmental degradation in Africa is spreading, in some areas rapidly. The consequences are seen in migration, changes in income sources and increasing poverty. The poorest people will be found in the ecologically most fragile areas. If sustainable development is not to include the solution of a widespread exodus or resettlement, a programme of action has to be devised which receives involvement of, and legitimization by, local people. This gives further urgency to a strategy for participatory rural institutional development in which local government and NGOs are able to forge a strong alliance.

9.51 Any success on this front is likely to be temporary unless population growth rates can be moderated. Africa is the only region where there are no clear signs of this change. The main reason must be that women do not yet see any incentive to reduce their fertility. An analysis of current household labour deployment and women's terms of access of land and income easily explains their dependence on reproduction for status and economic assurances. Paths to rural development must be sought which reduce this dependence.

9.52 But gender also affects farmers' response to macro-economic policies. It is recognized that the particular malaise of African food production is largely attributable to the neglect of women's own farming. One important factor to be taken into account is the numbers of women-headed farms, long thought to be around 30-35 percent. But many other women have their own account fields within the household economy.

9.53 Small farmer technology, especially women-oriented technology, needs a great deal more research and networking. It is a sign of the failure of this kind of research that women's particular needs have only recently been put on the research agenda.

9.54 Modern adaptations of customary land rights will be a major plank of agricultural planning in the 1990s. Its value in poverty alleviation will not be maximized unless women's land rights are secured in the process. The necessary emphasis on women in the 1990s is due to the fact that women play a majority role in the rural economies of Africa but that their resource standing is the weakest link in these economies.

#### Near East

9.55 The Near East includes some of the richest countries in the world, the large oil exporting countries, as well as a few of the least developed countries. Irrespective of GNP the institutional infrastructure in practically all these countries is weak, and people's participation in decision making only at a rudimentary stage. The task for the 1990s for the Region would centre round the institutional underpinning for people's participation.

9.56 The Region also faces the problem of ecological degradation and consequently a threat to sustainable development. The arable land is limited in comparison to the total geographical area. More intensive cultivation on these lands without recuperating their fertility may turn them to waste lands. The pressure of population on the limited area makes



the management of the land resource very difficult. The situation is further aggravated due to the desire of practically all countries of the Region to achieve self-sufficiency - not only self-reliance - in food. The environmental damage that such an indiscriminate drive for food grains production can cause is obvious. Also it leads to severe distortions in economic policies, particularly in the pricing of agricultural commodities and subsidization of agricultural inputs. Regional collaboration in setting agricultural goals on the basis of comparative advantages should be very high on the agenda of the 1990s.

9.57 The countries of the Region have made commendable efforts in providing physical infrastructure in the countryside and invested heavily in social sectors. However, utilization of these facilities leaves much to be desired.

9.58 In a number of countries in this region the participation of women in the development process, particularly in the process of decision making is marginal. Over the 1980s the situation has not changed for better in most of the countries; in quite a few it has worsened. As with the inequality between genders, inequality between different sections of population in their access to the natural resources of the Region has also widened. But poverty in absolute terms has gone down remarkably.

9.59 International agencies can assist the Region mainly in four directions. First and foremost is the institutional development task. Participation of rural people in decision making tasks would require not only constant sensitizing and educating but also evolving institutional forms which are congruous to the local cultural and social traits. Secondly, the assistance in the natural resource management, particularly in the land and water management should be a high priority for this region. This would be a multi-disciplinary task, and the international agencies can play a lead role in accomplishing this task. The same applies to the task of obtaining optimum returns from the investment made in infrastructure as well as in social sectors. Finally, there is a whole area of macro policies. The agencies can assist in the evolving macro policies for proper management of resources, in evolution of incentive systems, in mobilizing resources, in defining relative roles of centralized and decentralized decision making, etc. More importantly, they can assist in strengthening national capabilities to perform all these tasks.

9.60 Stabilizing population size or moderating growth rates will be an overriding concern for the 1990s. We have not dealt separately with population issues because they are inherent in many of the subjects listed above. For instance, we believe that human resources development and greater local socio-political power-wielding will do much to turn people's attention to planning the future of their children. We would add to that the importance of improvements in the personal resource and social status of women, since unequal gender relations are not always a rational basis for planning families.



ANNEX I

Scope of the Review

It is proposed that the Review focus on the experience in the follow-up to the WCARRD Programme of Action, with particular reference to FAO's activities, and cover the following key aspects:

- (i) Assessment of the continuing relevance of the main thrusts of the WCARRD Programme of Action, and the clarity and coherence of the programme objectives in support of rural development and agrarian reform;
- (ii) The adequacy of strategies and design for implementation, including policy and operational priorities, selection of means of action, coverage of countries assisted and links with other related programmes;
- (iii) The adequacy of planning, programming, coordinating and implementing various activities related to the WCARRD Programme of Action (advice and policy studies and dissemination of information, formulation and implementation of projects) as well as of cooperation with other UN agencies, and in liaising with donors;
- (iv) Effectiveness in the mobilization and utilization of extra-budgetary resources;
- (v) Efficiency of programme implementation, both for Regular Programme activities and field projects, reflecting their relevance in relation to national programmes for agrarian reform and rural development, and the support received by assisted governments;
- (vi) Assessment of outputs and achievements of the WCARRD Follow-up Programme, especially the catalytic role of assistance through Regular Programme or field projects for wider action by the recipient governments, other agencies and donors;
- (vii) Assessment of the extent of the effects and impact achieved, and of actions taken by the recipient countries in support of agrarian reform and rural development;
- (viii) Identification of key factors that have facilitated or impeded the programme implementation and achievements; and
- (ix) Suggestions and recommendations for improving the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the WCARRD Follow-up in the future. Particular attention should be given to identifying the priority areas which FAO could pursue cost-effectively and in a complementary manner with other UN agencies and interested donors.



ANNEX II

CHECK POINTS FOR NOTES FROM UN AGENCIES AND  
FAO DIVISIONS/UNITS FOR THE WCARRD FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

- Note:
- (a) All the questions may not be relevant for every agency or FAO division/unit.
  - (b) Wherever applicable, please give time, staff weeks and money spent on the activity or the task.
1. Give a brief account of the agency/ FAO division/unit's main activities undertaken since 1979 in the area of agrarian reform and rural development (ARRD). Copies of any evaluation reports on these activities will be appreciated.
2. What are the major changes in the approach and orientation of the agency/ FAO division/unit's agrarian reform and rural development (AARD) programmes and activities, including staff sensitization, since 1979?
3. During the last decade what measures (such as, policy advice, technical studies, training, projects) were undertaken:
- (a) to promote gainful employment in
    - (i) farm sector
    - (ii) non-farm sectors?
  - (b) to facilitate equitable access to or distribution of
    - (i) land and land-related assets
    - (ii) credit
    - (iii) farm inputs
    - (iv) services?
  - (c) to remove gender discrimination?
  - (d) to contribute to quality of life through improvements in
    - (i) health facilities
    - (ii) education facilities
    - (iii) nutrition interventions
    - (iv) provision of shelter for the marginalized sections, and/or backward regions?
  - (e) what measures were taken to help in the protection of environment within these programmes?



4. (a) In what ways was people's participation in planning and evaluation of economic and social activities promoted?
  - (b) In what ways were grass-root organizations (e.g. cooperatives, farmers' associations and rural workers' associations) promoted/strengthened?
5. How were the capabilities in planning, analysis and implementation of ARRD programmes enhanced in the member countries:
- (a) in formulating and executing supportive policies?
  - (b) in formulating and executing long-term strategies?
  - (c) in formulating and executing programmes?
  - (d) at the project level?
6. What measures were taken to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of the agrarian reform and rural development programmes and projects at national and regional levels and to develop socio-economic indicators? What more needs to be done?
7. What measures were taken to strengthen training, extension and education in rural areas? What more needs to be done?
8. What actions were taken to foster international cooperation through:
- (a) encouragement of TCDC?
  - (b) mobilization and transfer of resources from developed to developing countries?
  - (c) support to developing countries in trade negotiations?
  - (d) support to developing countries in aid negotiations?
9. What methods, or combination of methods, you find most effective in addressing the issues listed under 2 to 8, under different circumstances:
- (i) Technical studies and dissemination of research findings.
  - (ii) Organization of round tables and workshops.
  - (iii) Regional or global expert consultations.
  - (iv) Inter-agency country missions.
  - (v) Other (specify).

(Please list the activities under above headings, yearwise, giving the time and resources spent on these).



10. In your overall assessment of the programme of your agency/ FAO division/unit, what factors facilitate sustainable and participatory development?
11. In your overall assessment of the programme of your agency/ FAO division/ unit, what were the main bottlenecks and obstacles (administrative, institutional, national macro-economic policies, changes in international trade, foreign debt, etc.) encountered in achieving the objectives of agrarian reform and rural development in the developing countries?
12. What are the likely priorities and main areas of concentration of your programmes in future, in the light of your own experience and changing international priorities and conjunctural factors?
13. What are the plans of the agency/ FAO division/unit in the areas listed above (2 to 8) for the coming 5 to 10 years?



ANNEX III

UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES, REGIONAL COMMISSIONS AND FAO OFFICES  
WHICH REPLIED TO CHECKPOINTS FOR THE WCARRD FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

AGENCIES AND REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)  
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)  
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)  
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)  
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)  
International Labour Organisation (ILO)  
International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women  
(INSTRAW)  
International Telecommunications Union (ITU)  
International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT  
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS (Habitat))  
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
United Nations Department of Technical Cooperation for Development  
(UNDTCD)  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC)  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)  
United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)  
United Nations University (UNU)  
World Bank (IBRD)  
World Food Programme (WFP)  
World Health Organization (WHO)

FAO

Development Law Service, Legal Office (ODG/LEGN)  
Animal Production and Health Division (AGA)  
Land and Water Development Division (AGL)  
Research and Technology Development Division (AGR)  
Agricultural Services Division (AGS)  
Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development (DDA)  
Investment Centre (DDC)  
Field Programme Development Division (DDF)  
Commodities and Trade Division (ESC)  
FAO Population Programme Coordination (ESDP)  
Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division (ESH)  
Food Policy and Nutrition Division (ESN)  
Policy Analysis Division (ESP)  
Statistics Division (ESS)  
Fishery Policy and Planning Division (FIP)  
Forestry Department (FO)  
Information Division (GII)  
Regional Office for Africa (RAFR)  
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAPA)  
Regional Office for Europe (REUR)  
Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLAC)  
Regional Office for the Near East (RNEA)



ANNEX IV

UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES, REGIONAL COMMISSIONS, COUNTRIES VISITED  
AND KEY PERSONS CONTACTED

AGENCIES AND REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

CENTRE ON INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (CIRDAP)

Mr A.S. Haque, Director  
Mr D.P. Pandyal, Ass. Programme Officer  
Dr U. Srinivase Raghavan, Admin. Officer  
Mr Ataur Rahman, Ass. Admin. Officer  
Mr Salehuddin Ahmed, Programme Officer  
Mr Mohammed Yayha Waliullah, Programme Officer  
Mr K.A. Raju, Documentation Officer  
Ms Shireen Kamal Sayeed, Project Associate  
Ms Fahmeeda Rahman Wahab, Research Associate  
Mr Moim, Action Research Fellow  
Mr Marram, Training Fellow

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (ECA)

Mr E.P. Pallangyo, Officer-in-Charge, Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division  
Mr M.A. Zaman, Chief, Rural Development Section  
Mr B. Mulugetta, Farm Management/Rural Development Officer  
Mr Ouadrigo, Marketing Section  
Mr Bakeyoko, Production  
Mr Francois Rene, Fisheries

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC)

Mr L. Lopés-Cordovez, Director, Joint ECLAC/FAO Agriculture Division  
(JLAC)  
Mr E. Ortega, Agricultural Economist (JLAC)  
Mr C. Morales  
Mr N. Gligo, Coordinator, Joint ECLAC/UNEP Environment Unit  
Mr R. Downei, TCDC Networking  
Ms I. Arriagada, Rural Women's Programme

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)

Mr Sultan Z. Khan, Chief, Agriculture and Rural Development Division  
Mr Pyakuryal, Agriculture and Rural Development Division  
Ms Lim, Project Consultant

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

Mr M. Kato, Chief, Evaluation Service (PBEE)  
Mr C. Joly, Officer-in-Charge, Fertilizer and Plant Nutrition Service  
(AGLF)  
Mr A. Kandiah, Technical Officer, Water Resources, Development and  
Management Service (AGLW)



- Mr M.S. Zehni, Director, Research and Technology Development Division (AGR)
- Mr J.H. Monyo, Executive Secretary, Technical Advisory Committee, CGIAR (AGRC)
- Mr L.S. Botero, Chief, Environment and Energy Programmes Coordinating Centre (AGRE)
- Mr B. Muller-Haye, Chief, Research Development Centre (AGRR)
- Mr A.G. Scherer, Chief, Marketing and Credit Service (AGSM)
- Mr E.S. Seidler, Senior Officer (Marketing) (AGSM)
- Mr R. Gusten, Director, Investment Centre (DDC)
- Mr S. Walker, Adviser, Investment Centre (DDC)
- Mr A. Regnier, Director, Field Programme Development Division (DDF)
- Mr Ramadhar, Chief, Interregional and Global Programmes and other Special Matters Unit (DDFG TCDC)
- Mr B.P. Dutia, Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Policy Department (ES)
- Mr W.D. Maalouf, Officer-in-Charge, Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division (ESH)
- Mr Riad El-Ghonemy, Consultant (ESH)
- Ms J. Dey, Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Officer (ESHD)
- Mr M. Meliczek, Chief, Rural Development Analysis and Organization Service (ESHA)
- Ms N. Forni, Senior Employment/Manpower Officer (ESHA)
- Mr J. Rouse, Senior Officer (Cooperatives/Rural Organization) (ESHA)
- Mr B. Harms, Cooperatives/Rural Organizations Officer (ESHA)
- Mr W. Polman, Institutional Cooperation Officer (ESHA)
- Mr M. Lins, Chief, Agrarian Reform and Land Settlement Service (ESHL)
- Mr T.C. Varghese, Senior Officer (Land Tenure/Settlement) (ESHL)
- Ms A. Spring, Chief, Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service (ESHW)
- Ms M. Randriamamonjy, Senior Officer (Women in Development) (ESHW)
- Ms M.J. Mermillod, Senior Officer (Home Economics) (ESHW)
- Mr F. Sizaret, Officer-in-Charge, Nutrition Planning, Assessment and Evaluation Service (ESNA)
- Mr T. Kelley White, Director, Policy Analysis Division (ESP)
- Mr X.M.A. Charoy, Chief, Statistical Development Service (ESSS)
- Mr C.M.H. Morojele, Senior Officer (ESSS)
- Mr M. Fila, Chief, Fishery Development Planning Service (FIPP)
- Mr M.R. de Montalembert, Chief, Forestry Planning and Institutions Service (FODP)
- Mr J. M. Heering, Coordinator, Tropical Forestry Action Plan (FODT)

FAO/LIAISON OFFICE FOR NORTH AMERICA (LNOR)

Mr H.W. Hjort, Director

FAO/REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (RAPA)

- Mr H. Tsuchiya, Deputy Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific
- Mr D.H.J. Abeyagoonasekera, Senior Regional Rural Development Officer
- Mr F.J. Dent, Regional Soil Management and Fertilizer Use Officer
- Mr Y.S. Rao, Regional Forestry Officer
- Ms A. Stephens, Regional Home Economics and Social Programme Officer
- Ms N. Bethke, Programme Officer (Thai Affairs)
- Mr T.C. Ti, Regional Economist (Food Security and Food Marketing)
- Mr R.B. Singh, Regional Plant Production and Protection Officer
- Mr V.L.C. Pietersz, Regional Fishery Officer



Ms M. Bayckx, Nutrition Officer

FAO/REGIONAL OFFICE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (RLAC)

Mr L. Sandoval, Regional Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Officer  
Ms V. Lattes, Regional Home Economics and Social Programme Officer  
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ANNEX V

STRATEGIES, PLANS AND ACTIVITIES OF FAO  
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WCARRD  
PROGRAMME OF ACTION

I. The Mandate

The Programme of Action assigned to FAO, as lead agency in the UN system for implementation of WCARRD, a key role.

The Twentieth Session of the FAO Conference, which took place four months after WCARRD, was of the view that a substantial and global follow-up programme requires special efforts by the international community, in particular FAO.

Accordingly, the Conference authorized the Director-General to mobilize the staff and resources of the Organization to assist countries in the field of agrarian reform and rural development. It also called upon donors to provide FAO with voluntary funds to enable a quick and efficient response to requests from Member Governments for assistance. Following this mandate, the Director-General gave his instructions and directives to accord high priority to its implementation.

II. The WCARRD Impact on FAO

The lead agency role has brought a new dimension to FAO's work in rural development. Certain organizational arrangements were made and programme alterations initiated.

1. Establishment of an Inter-Department Committee on Rural Development

Because the multi-disciplinary and integrated framework of the Programme of Action encompassed the work of the whole of FAO, the Director-General established an Inter-Departmental Committee on Rural Development (IDCRD) at the ADG level. This Committee was given the major responsibility in advising the Director-General on the effective implementation of the Programme of Action. It advises on policies and priorities for FAO's rural development programmes, on related administrative and budgetary requirements and on FAO's cooperation with other agencies in the area of rural development, particularly in respect of FAO's leading role and participation in the ACC Task Force on Rural Development.

2. Inter-Divisional Working Group on Rural Development

An Inter-Divisional Working Group on Rural Development, consisting of nine Division Directors, was set up, with the Director of ESH as the Convenor, to assist the Inter-Departmental Committee to review progress and provide advice. The Divisions involved in the Working Group also prepare technical papers in their areas of specialization for consideration of the Inter-Departmental Committee.



3. Ad Hoc Subgroup to deal with various subject matter areas

Six ad hoc subgroups were established to prepare guidelines and action proposals on certain crucial elements of the Programme of Action; namely, (1) social and economic indicators, (2) monitoring and evaluation, (3) women in development, (4) people's participation and organization, (5) training and (6) nutrition. These groups drew their membership from more than 20 different units covering all departments.

4. Reorientation of the Headquarters and Regional Activities

The FAO units, including the Regional Offices, took action to reorient their technical programmes to take into account the major policy goals underscored by WCARRD.

The WCARRD Programme of Action entailed both the identification of rural poor groups and a new approach to institutions, production systems and technologies. This orientation is reflected in documents to FAO bodies such as FAO Conferences, Regional Conferences and the Committee on Agriculture, 1981 and 1983. It is also reflected in the content and resource allocation of specialized technical programmes such as forestry for local community development, the small farmers' development programme and support to artisanal fishermen. In regard to the field programme, a review and reorientation of existing and new projects was undertaken. WCARRD follow-up projects, oriented directly to the rural poor and financed mainly from extra-budgetary sources, were implemented. A steering group for administration and coordination of these activities was appointed.

Finally, in order to instil WCARRD concepts in the technical work of FAO a staff orientation and training programme was introduced. Reading materials were printed in English, French and Spanish and 3000 copies made available to FAO staff and to collaborating agencies.

III. Assistance to Countries  
Strategies for implementing WCARRD Programme of Action

1. Guiding Principles

In order to meet governments' requests for assistance in formulating and implementing their own national programmes of agrarian reform and rural development FAO, in consultation with other agencies, prepared a document entitled "Key Principles for Operational Guidelines in the Implementation of WCARRD Programme of Action". Operational guidelines were drawn up in specific subject-matter areas (such as people's participation, women in development, monitoring and evaluation).



2. Steps taken to assist countries

In a letter of 16 April 1980 to the FAO Representatives, the Director-General called upon them to make initial contacts with Governments to obtain their views on the type of assistance and support that countries would like to have from FAO. The Director-General emphasized that the FAO Representatives should concentrate on the following aspects, in their discussions with Member Governments:

- (i) Identifying priorities and areas where assistance under the programme would be required, and conveying these ideas to FAO headquarters;
- (ii) Advising the Government if requested, on the establishment of a governmental mechanism at the appropriate level to ensure inter-ministerial coordination for the programme; and
- (iii) Working out the mechanism and modalities for inter-agency cooperation at the national level.

The second approach was intensive support to those countries which have requested FAO's special attention in the implementation of the WCARRD Programme. Within a short span of one year, six countries requested FAO for inclusion in such an intensive national support programme and missions were mounted to comply with these requests.

IV. Discussion of WCARRD in the Governing Bodies, Technical Committees and other FAO bodies

As mentioned earlier, the Twentieth Session of the FAO Conference, which met a few months after the convening of the World Conference, deliberated upon the operational aspects of the Programme of Action and adopted a resolution which inter alia requested the Director-General to submit a report on initial progress achieved to the Council in November 1980 and to the Twenty-first Session of the FAO Conference. Accordingly the Seventy-eighth Session of the FAO Council considered a progress report on action arising out of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. The FAO Regional Conferences which were convened in 1980 and 1981 discussed regional and country specific programmes. FAO Technical Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in dealing with socio-economic matters in its sixth session in 1981, took up discussion on follow-up to WCARRD from the point of view of technical considerations. The Committee in its report "appreciated that FAO, by its follow-up of the WCARRD Programme of Action, had risen to the challenge of its timely and planned implementation. The Committee expressed satisfaction that FAO had actively assumed the responsibilities conferred upon it by the WCARRD Programme of Action and the FAO Conference Resolution 7/79 of November 1979, both in regard to the mandate given to it in areas of its own competence, as well as in regard to its responsibilities as the lead agency in the UN system for rural development". (Report of the Sixth Session of the Committee on Agriculture, para.138). In the meanwhile, the Programme Committee



of the FAO Council reviewed in 1981 the regular programme allocation made to agrarian reform and rural development in depth and made specific provision of funds during 1982-83 biennium for countries to report progress to the FAO Conference in 1983, as called for in the WCARRD Programme of Action.

The FAO Conference, in its twenty-first session in 1981, discussed a comprehensive document on "Follow-up to WCARRD". In its report, the Conference "expressed satisfaction at the progress achieved so far towards the objectives of the WCARRD Programme of Action ... It noted that the new Programme of Work of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development reflected more closely the priorities of the WCARRD Programme of Action" (Report of the Twenty-first Session of the FAO Conference). The FAO Council, in its eighty-second session in 1982, discussed follow-up of WCARRD.

In 1983, the FAO Conference reviewed the first Progress Report on WCARRD, which initiated the four-year cycle of reporting by countries to the FAO Conference, and adopted a resolution which expressed satisfaction with the work done by the UN agencies. In 1987, the FAO Conference considered the second Progress Report on WCARRD Programme of Action, which will constitute a regular feature in every other FAO Biennial Conference.



**REPORT OF THE ACC TASK FORCE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT ON ITS  
NINETEENTH MEETING**

Nairobi, 22 - 24 May 1991

Item 8: (ii) Review of FAO's and UN Agencies' Experiences in implementing the WCARRD Programme of Action	Paragraphs 63 - 68
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63. The Task Force discussed the report of the WCARRD review which was prepared by a team of external consultants. It recalled that the proposal for undertaking this review, including its scope, was discussed at the eighteenth meeting of the Task Force in May 1990. At that meeting the Task Force has welcomed the proposal and had endorsed the proposed scope of the review, which subsequently served as the terms of reference for the review team. The Task Force members had also agreed to collaborate in the preparation of the review.

64. FAO conveyed its appreciation to Task Force members for their cooperation and assistance throughout the review exercise. Particular mention was made of the useful written submissions on agency objectives and programmes in rural development as well as the discussions with the team of external consultants during their visits to 16 UN agencies and organizations and three regional commissions.

65. In discussing the report, the Task Force's general conclusion was that the report's usefulness could have been considerably enhanced had it contained an in-depth and more rigorous analysis of the impact on poverty alleviation of the various WCARRD-related programmes undertaken by the agencies in the last decade. Almost all the agencies which had contributed material to the review either in the form of written submissions and/or discussions with the consultants, felt that the report did not adequately reflect the information which they had provided about their activities. While a few factual errors were noted, the main concern was with gaps in the report's coverage of a number of important substantive action areas such as rural small-scale industrial enterprises, settlements, and rural-urban linkages. It was also felt that some of the recommendations would have been more useful if they had been supported by more detailed analysis of the agencies' activities and were more specific by regions and sub-regions.

66. Several agencies questioned the assertion (p. A66, para. 8.2 in the report) that "WCARRD as such is seldom recognized (except at FAO) as the inspiration for the agencies' rural development activities". While agreeing that WCARRD did not initiate international concern for and action on rural poverty alleviation, it was nonetheless recognized by all agencies as a significant milestone in a continuing process of international initiatives in this area since the 1960s. The consensus was that WCARRD principles, even if not explicitly referred to in agencies' policies and programmes, represent nevertheless a set of ideas which have



received recognition in the UN system. There has undoubtedly been an increasing awareness of rural development activities within a coherent conceptual framework as part of their overall national development plans. It was felt that the various specific action plans adopted by a number of agencies in the last decade did not supersede but rather complemented the WCARRD Programme of Action, which still remains valid.

67. In reviewing the report, the Task Force focused its discussions on the recommendations contained in Chapter VIII and the Agenda for Rural Development in the 1990s given in Chapter IX of the report. A number of agencies commented on specific recommendations and voiced reservations on some of them. After further discussions, the Task Force, while expressing support in general for the recommendations and the Agenda for Rural Development, noted the following observations which were made on several specific recommendations. (References to page and para. numbers in parentheses in sub-paras. (a) to (i) below are to those in the report.)

- (a) As regards the observation in the report that little research was being done on small farmer technology (p. A27, para. 4.10) and the related recommendations (pp. A72-A73, paras. 8.4 and 8.5), it was generally agreed that much greater priority should be accorded to developing a range of technologies for resource-poor farmers and pastoralists in less-endowed areas. In addition, it was felt that a major problem lay in the adaptation of existing technologies to meet the specific conditions and needs of small farmers in different localities of many countries. There was also a related need to improve the extension of tested technologies to small farmers, and to ensure the timely supply of good quality inputs at reasonable prices as well as credit facilities.
- (b) A suggestion was made to consider the possibility of putting under one cover for dissemination all agency training materials in WCARRD-related areas and translating them into the languages of the member states (p. A73, para. 8.5).
- (c) As regards the recommendation calling for land and tenancy reform (p. A69, para. 8.10), it was recognized that land reforms were highly necessary in certain situations. However, it was further acknowledged that land and tenancy reforms had proved to be difficult to implement and that they needed to be seen within the wider context of rural development, taking into account specific country situations. It was further agreed that in considering this issue it would be necessary in many cases to make a trade-off between equity and efficiency. In some cases productivity-enhancing measures would need to be given priority as a precondition for and means to attaining equity goals in the medium term.
- (d) It was recognized that further elaboration was necessary on the recommendations concerning the measures to be taken in support of government programmes for promoting rural small-scale industrial enterprises aimed at poverty alleviation (p. A70, para. 8.10).
- (e) In discussing the recommendation regarding gender issues (pp. A70-A71, para. 8.12), several Task Force members were of



the view that the report underestimated the advances made in recent years and pointed out that their agencies had established WID divisions. It was, however, agreed that there was a need to accelerate the practical implementation of WID and gender-sensitive policies and programmes.

- (f) The recommendations regarding the advocacy role of agencies (p. A71, para. 8.15) drew a number of specific comments. It was generally agreed that the advocacy role of the agencies for the main thrusts of the agencies for the main thrusts of the WCARRD Programme of Action was necessary and needed to be strengthened. It was felt that the advocacy role should be extended to a number of other vital areas in addition to those listed on pp. A71-A72 in para 8.15.
- (g) While there was general agreement with the constructive recommendations concerning inter-agency collaboration (p. A72, para. 8.16), doubt was expressed about the usefulness of the recommendation calling for more regional inter-governmental and inter-agency consultations (p. A73, para. 8.17). It was felt that such meetings would serve little purpose unless they were adequately prepared with substantive documentation, proper representation and follow-up.
- (h) General support was expressed for the continuance and further strengthening of the Inter-Agency WCARRD Policy Missions (p. A73, para. 8.18).
- (i) With regard to the recommendation (p. A74, para. 8.22) to re-establish Cross Organizational Programme Analysis (COPA), there was a general consensus that previous experience with COPA had been unsatisfactory and that its revival would not be useful.

68. In general, the Task Force members felt that the Agenda for Rural Development in the 1990s (Chapter IX of the report) provided a useful forecast of trends and issues that are shaping the future direction of rural development policies and programmes. However, they expressed disappointment that this assessment was not accompanied by more substantive recommendations on priorities or specific areas for action. It was also noted that the regional summaries were couched in too general terms and they did not take sufficient account of the substantial variations among countries within regions in terms of natural and human resource endowments, institutions and national development policies and programmes. In particular, it was mentioned that the issues relating to the Africa region needed to be addressed in the light of the varying conditions that prevailed in different sub-regions.