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SUMMARY OF ACTION-ORIENTED ASSESSMENT OF RURAL WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Administrator

Summary

The Action-Oriented Assessment of Rural Women's Participation in Development is part of UNDP's evaluation programme undertaken jointly with Participating and Executing Agencies. The Assessment consists of four regional desk reviews and four country case studies, the latter including programming missions as a prominent feature. The study testifies to the constraints that limit or prohibit women's participation in development and points to ways of overcoming these obstacles, elaborating on the advantages and modalities of including women in technical co-operation projects and programmes. In this summary the Administrator makes recommendations, emerging from the Assessment, for a number of actions to increase the efficiency of the United Nations development system in promoting the integration of women in development. The Governing Council is asked to endorse these recommendations.

INTRODUCTION

1. As stated in DP/448, the present exercise forms part of UNDP's evaluation programme. It is also an important part of a series of continuing UNDP activities aimed at promoting and increasing women's participation in development. In 1975, educational and informational activities 1/ were initiated, followed by detailed Guidelines on the Integration of Women in Development 2/. An attempt has also been made during the past five years to monitor the progress achieved in involving women in projects 3/. It has become clear that while there has evolved a greater acceptance and fuller understanding of the role of women in development, difficulties are encountered in actually programming for women's participation in development. The chief aim of the current UNDP assessment is, therefore, to improve the United Nations system's capability to offer programming advice to Governments at the project level in this area.

2. A further purpose of the study is to make a special contribution to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women (WCUNDW), to be held in Copenhagen in July 1980. The Conference will review and assess, at the mid-point of the United Nations Decade for Women, the progress and obstacles encountered in attaining the objectives of the Decade and prepare a programme of action for its second half (1980-85), designed to implement the World Plan of Action 4/. Within this framework and UNDP's mandate of providing technical co-operation, the Action-Oriented Assessment was conceived as a joint Agency/UNDP undertaking.

1/ See DP/83; Ester Boserup and Christina Liljencrantz, Integration of Women in Development - Why, When, How, UNDP, New York, 1975; Irene Tinker and Michèle Bo Bramsen (eds.), Women and World Development, Overseas Development Council, Washington, D.C., 1976; UNDP, Women in Development - Courses for Action (audio-visual aids).

2/ UNDP, G3100-1.

3/ See DP/127 and DP/319/Add. 3.

4/ Preparatory Committee for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Report of the Preparatory Committee on its Second Session, United Nations Headquarters, 27 August - 8 September 1979 (A/CONF. 94/PC/12).

3. In view of the considerable number of resolutions and recommendations adopted by intergovernmental bodies in order to emphasize the need to pay special attention to the plight of rural women ^{5/}, it was decided to limit the assessment to this particular section of society. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was invited to be the lead Agency among other Agencies with substantial mandates in rural development: i.e., the International Labour Organization (ILO); United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and World Health Organization (WHO). In addition, the Regional Commissions have been involved to varying degrees and three funding organizations - United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Food Programme (WFP) - have collaborated where possible on the study. UNDP has co-ordinated the exercise and is preparing the final report in consultation with the Agencies concerned.

4. Interagency meetings were held in the fall of 1978 to establish a methodology for the exercise. It was agreed that the best way of handling the conflicting demands of broad geographic coverage and the need for intensive examination of specific problems at the country and project levels would be to divide the Assessment into two parts: (i) desk reviews, which would attempt to give a brief outline of the situation of women in each of the four developing regions, including relevant technical co-operation projects; and (ii) country missions.

5. Against the backdrop of the four regional reviews, four country case studies, one for each of the main developing regions, constitute a major part of the study. These studies are based on the results of four programming missions: to Rwanda, the Syrian Arab Republic, Indonesia and Haiti. They also include a profile of the situation of rural women in each of these countries ^{6/}.

6. The selection of mission countries was based on two main considerations: first, that the Government be interested in receiving such a mission; and second, that UNDP resources for technical co-operation be available to permit programming of activities of special interest to rural women. As resources available for the current programming cycle (covering the years 1977-1981) were in many instances fully committed, the number of countries that could be considered for missions was quite limited.

^{5/} See, for example, General Assembly resolutions 3505 (XXX), Integration of women in the development process; 3520 (XXX), World Conference of the International Women's Year; 3523 (XXX), Women in rural areas; 31/175, Effective mobilization of women in development; 33/200, Effective mobilization and integration of women in development; as well as World Conference of the International Women's Year, Declaration of Mexico - Plans of Action, United Nations, 1975; World Employment Conference, Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action, WEC/CW/E. 1; WHO, Report of the International Conference on Primary Health Care, Geneva, 1978; World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Report, FAO, 1979.

^{6/} The amount of information available varies from country to country.

7. Concerning the substantive content of the study, it was agreed to concentrate on the sub-theme of the World Conference: rural women's employment, health and education, with the important proviso that all aspects of women's work were to be included under employment. In addition, rural women's role in development planning and implementation is discussed, but briefly, since data on this topic are scarce.
8. In addition to these general regional reviews and specific country case studies, the exercise contains a short summary of a few global and interregional projects of special interest to women.

I. MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SUBORDINATION OF WOMEN

9. In the main study, the causes of the adverse effects of development on women are more fully examined within a "Conceptual Framework." Here, it will suffice to summarize the argument as follows. Since the subordination of women exists beyond and outside a general system of social stratification, special measures need to be taken in planning and implementing development strategies to arrest and reverse the marginalisation of women from crucial social processes 7/.

10. While problems specific to women manifest themselves across the board, they can to a large extent be traced to three key areas: the data base for development planning; education and training; and technological change. These are briefly reviewed, indicating the consistent bias which leaves women, in particular rural women, behind in all aspects of development. Nevertheless, practitioners of development are gradually realizing the overwhelmingly negative effects of bypassing women in development. As a result, current development strategies are beginning to accord women, either explicitly or implicitly, a more prominent role both as participants and as beneficiaries of development.

11. Among the considerations leading to this position is the realization that much of the development effort has been weak in its attempt to reach the majority of the population in most of the developing countries. Hence there has been a shift towards development strategies which are characterised by a more appropriate, people-oriented approach. This implies that such basic development services and facilities as education, employment, health care, credit, etc. must be made more widely available. Furthermore, to offer a realistic alternative, such strategies must to a large extent be ultimately self-supportive; i.e., they must be based on an enlarged productive input by available human resources. In both respects, women's role in development, not least in rural areas, deserves special attention, as has, inter alia, been noted by the Committee for Development Planning 8/.

12. For rural women, new initiatives are particularly urgent in the areas of agricultural production, cottage and small-scale industry, credit, marketing, energy, technology, potable water supply, sanitation, primary health care, education and training. More generally, the 'women's dimension' in planning, as participants and beneficiaries, should be fully taken into account at all levels of administration.

7/ See also, World Conference of the International Women's Year, Declaration of Mexico - Plans of Action, United Nations, 1975, para. 20 of Declaration.

8/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 7 (E/1979/37).

13. Among the justifications for special attention to rural women are the crucial but neglected role played by women as agricultural producers, particularly of food, which is quite often in short supply; the growing importance of their non-agricultural employment as a source of family income; the need to lighten their burden of hard and exhausting household chores; and their urgent need for preventive and curative health care for themselves and their families. Unless they receive this type of assistance, the productivity of rural women's work, already pitifully low, can only decline further.

14. To conclude, it may be noted that if all sectors of society are to be integrated into the development effort, there is every reason to consider the participation of women as full and equal partners as essential to this effort.

II. REGIONAL REVIEWS

15. Most of the information for the regional reviews has been derived from the various Agency and Regional Commission reports submitted to the regional preparatory meetings to the WCUNDW, held in the course of 1979 in each of the major development regions 9/. These reports include information about technical co-operation activities, but it should be noted that it is very difficult to provide systematic information about women's participation (or lack thereof) in projects. The main reason is that project classification is by sector of activities and women's participation is, to varying degrees, of concern to all sectors. Additionally, there is often no way of telling from a project title whether women are involved or not; nor do implementation reports necessarily address themselves to the subject. Consequently, it is possible that reported activities understate the extent to which rural women participate in development as assisted by the United Nations development system.

16. As UNDP's current effort to develop an institutional memory 10/ includes women's participation among project descriptors, it may be possible to provide more systematic information on the subject in the near future. At present the problem can only be identified.

17. The regional reviews reveal clearly that the severe handicaps and hardships encountered by rural women in coping with changing, and all too often deteriorating conditions, are now largely recognized. Nevertheless, the specifics and details about rural women's problems with respect to work and employment, health and education are far from well-known and vary substantially within as well as between regions.

18. For example, women's aggregate labour force participation as estimated by ILO on the basis of national censuses and surveys for 1975, is highest in Africa (about 29 per cent) closely followed by Asia and the Pacific (about 26 per cent). The figure for Latin America is much lower (17 per cent) and the one for Arab States the lowest of all (4.4 per cent) 11/. As discussed in the full report, however, there are in

9/ For list of documents, see Annex.

10/ Part of the Integrated Systems Improvement Project (ISIP).

11/ Unweighted averages computed from ILO, Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1978, Geneva, p. 15ff.

many instances reasons to question the accuracy and comparability of the figures. Studies aimed at clarifying these questions, and assistance aimed at improving the data base, therefore constitute an important and urgent area of technical co-operation, primarily involving the ILO and the United Nations. As more, and more productive, income-generating activities are a priority in terms of rural women's needs and desires, more accurate information on this subject is of crucial importance for planning purposes. The ILO is also involved in a few projects concerning vocational training, small-scale industries and co-operatives in rural areas. UNIDO similarly reports some degree of assistance to rural industry involving women.

19. FAO is assisting women in a great number of projects which involve home economics, extension services, co-operatives, and fisheries. Many forestry projects, assisted by FAO, provide wage employment for women. The wide scope of FAO activities is probably at least in part a result of the special instructions and guidelines to all field staff on the integration of women in development issued by FAO in 1975 and updated in 1977.

20. With regard to health, rural women are generally at a disadvantage, since existing facilities are inaccessible to them. To rectify this situation, and in line with current development thinking on the subject, the development of primary health care systems is of increasing interest to Governments, as reflected in many WHO-assisted projects. Assistance in the provision of potable and more accessible water is also of special interest to women, and is an area where WHO and UNICEF often co-operate. FAO provides considerable assistance in Better Family Living and nutrition programmes, as does UNESCO in various forms of family and population education.

21. In the field of both formal and non-formal education, rural women again constitute the most disadvantaged sector of society. Though female, as male, illiteracy varies substantially from region to region and from country to country, it is generally very high among adult rural women. It should, however, be noted that since the enrolment of both sexes in primary education has increased considerably in recent years, there is reason to believe that the situation may improve. Increased female enrolment at the secondary level is more problematic for the following reasons: women's dependence on their daughters as helpers, deep-seated customs and behavioural norms that require girls past puberty to stay at home, transport and security problems, etc. FAO, the ILO and UNESCO are involved in different kinds of adult education and training projects that aim to assist rural women to overcome their handicaps in this broad area. A few ILO-assisted projects concerning employment promotion and planning are also of special interest to women.

22. Rural women's participation in development planning and implementation is a rare phenomenon. Rarer still is a technical co-operation project aimed at changing this situation. However, a few planning projects, involving women as participants and beneficiaries, to be assisted by the United Nations are under preparation and may in due course offer some much needed experience and guidance on the subject.

23. Special programming assistance for women is being provided by UNDP in two regions. In Asia, a regional project provides for three women's programme officers to be attached to the Asia and Pacific Centre for Women and Development under the guidance of a co-ordinator. Similarly, in Africa, a women's programme officer is to be stationed in each of the multinational programming and operational centres (MULPOCs) in Lusaka, Niamey, Gisenyi and Yaounde. Since both these projects have only just begun, it is too early to give details of their operations.

24. It is important to note that, although the subject of women in technical co-operation is discussed under the broad headings of employment, health and education, all the problems discussed are necessarily closely interrelated and must be perceived in an integrated context. Similarly, despite their different mandates, there is considerable overlap in the various Agencies' activities in providing urgent assistance where rural women are concerned.

III. COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

25. The country case studies, involving Rwanda, the Syrian Arab Republic, Indonesia and Haiti, all include a fairly extensive discussion of the situation of rural women, mainly covering their traditional position in society and current conditions of work and employment, health and education. These country profiles serve two main purposes. In the first place they illustrate the type of problems confronting rural women, problems that in some respects are similar to all or most developing countries and in others are specific to the country in question, or to a smaller group of countries. Second, they provide the background information necessary to make programming proposals relevant and meaningful to the rather wide audience to which the action-oriented assessment addresses itself.

26. One general conclusion that emerges rather forcefully from the country profiles is that rural women's situation will rarely, if ever, be adequately described by macro-data alone. Intensive, village level studies constitute an absolutely necessary complement. While this conclusion applies to analyses of rural life in general, it is particularly pertinent to women's conditions because of the general inadequacy of macro-data concerning the extent and nature of women's work. More than one country profile clearly illustrates the substantial but largely unrecognized contribution of women to family income and subsistence. A related finding is that employment and income are often derived from very poorly paid non-agricultural rather than agricultural work, a situation that has evolved in response to the increasing shortage of cultivable land.

27. All the programming missions, working in close collaboration with the Governments, achieved substantial results, and illustrate, above all, that special assistance is needed for the development of new or modified forms of technical co-operation. For budgetary as well as other reasons, the Governments have not in all instances been able to take final decisions on the mission proposals, which cover a very wide range of activities. At the present stage, the results of the missions may be summarized as follows.

Rwanda

28. The proposals for action in Rwanda, a small, landlocked country in the east-central part of Africa and one of the poorest in the world, mainly address themselves to the implementation of the Government's plan d'action communale (communal plan of action), which is a key instrument for rural development in the current five-year plan. A more specific framework for the mission's work was provided by a seminar on "Co-ordination of Services and Integration of Women in Development," held in Kigali in

November 1978 and assisted by FAO/ECA. Its original goals were to initiate a programme for the integration of women in development, with assistance from FAO and ECA, and to decide upon a plan of action for the co-ordination of services in rural areas.

29. As part of its deliberations, the seminar concluded that, as a general principle, women's role in society should not be dealt with as a separate issue but should rather be considered as an integral part of rural development. As a result, the proposals for action advanced by the seminar focused on the co-ordination of services at the commune level and on the most appropriate way of making such services available to rural families, bearing in mind the reciprocal role of men and women in the family - as parents and as agricultural producers - and at all levels of organization of services: in the communes and at the prefectural and ministerial levels.

30. The main recommendations of the seminar were:

(a) That centres communaux de développement et de formation permanente (CCDFP - communal centres for development and training) should be promoted in each commune (which is the smallest administrative unit and of which there are 143 in the country);

(b) That the centres should become the focal points for all activities undertaken at the communal level and for co-ordination of these activities;

(c) That all agents from the various ministries (Internal Affairs, Education, Health, Agriculture, Social Affairs, Youth and Sports), who are working in the communes, should contribute to the training offered by the centres to farming families and leaders to be trained among them;

(d) That a permanent team of five trainers should be appointed to each centre; and

(e) That the curriculum should include agriculture and animal husbandry, population, nutrition, housing, health/sanitation, water, home economics and literacy training.

31. Within this comprehensive framework, the mission proposed that the Government establish a master plan for the development of the CCDFPs. Such a plan is needed not only for the purpose of co-ordinating government services but to co-ordinate the substantial assistance provided by a large number of outside organizations, private as well as public, which all have their own rules of procedure, their own separate agreements with the Government, etc.

32. As concerns technical co-operation, the Government is above all interested in receiving assistance enabling it, in a short period of time, to train the personnel that will be responsible for the implementation of the plan at different administrative levels. Thus, it is suggested:

(a) That UNDP provide assistance in the establishment of a co-ordinating unit in the Ministry of Social Affairs (according to the wishes of the Government, the technical adviser should preferably be a woman);

(b) That FAO, through its TCP programme, assist in the training of trainers at the prefectural level;

(c) That UNICEF, in two phases, provide assistance in the form of stipends and equipment for the training of instructors, who will staff the CCDFPs.

33. In addition, it is suggested that FAO assist in the prevention of post-harvest losses (through its PFL programme) and that a component of special interest to women be added to an on-going pork production project (RWA/74/009). The new component should, by means of extension services, assist women in the raising of poultry and rabbits, which could provide a badly needed and highly nutritious supplement to the family food supply. It is also proposed that UNFPA fund the population component of all training activities included in the CCDFP plan. Through the mediation of the multi-national programme and operational centre (MULPOC) in Gisenyi, it is hoped that some training in management and administration might be provided by ECA. A women's programme officer is to be stationed at this centre to ensure the integration of women in all the activities of the MULPOC.

34. The general principles involved - decentralized development with joint programmes for men and women - may make the Rwandese approach to rural women's problems of considerable interest to other countries as well.

Syrian Arab Republic

35. The Syrian Arab Republic is relatively highly urbanized, but agriculture remains the most important economic sector; rural development, in particular land reclamation and irrigation, is of major concern to the Government. Here, the proposals for action relate to on-going and planned projects and, in addition, point to new projects.

36. Among on-going projects, an important proposal is to add a component to the UNDP/FAO-assisted Wool Grading Centre (SYR/72/007), aimed at reviving traditional weaving crafts among Bedouin women. The proposal is based on a report prepared by an anthropologist employed by the project. Initially, the new component would assist in organizing Bedouin women for training programmes where the older women would teach the younger ones how to use the traditional handlooms, a skill that is disappearing. The interest in such a programme among Bedouin women is strong, given that the drudgery of washing and spinning the wool can be overcome. Wool yarn would therefore be provided by the Wool Grading Centre. The revival of weaving along these lines could provide a good source of income for Bedouin families throughout the Badia region. Once weaving has again become a common skill, co-operatives, educational and health centres could be developed and, at least in part, supported by these same Bedouin women. To implement these later stages, further assistance would be needed, for which tentative proposals are also made.

37. Another proposal focuses on the continued involvement of rural women in the UNDP/FAO-supported Integrated Agricultural Development Project (SYR/72/004). At the present stage, it is proposed to provide an extension expert who will assist in the development of special services for rural women and their families, and to support the undertaking of a socio-economic survey of rural households in the Deir-ez-Zor region to provide a basis for the planning of all relevant development activities in the region.

38. The mission also recommends various other activities that fall within FAO's programme, such as the promotion of village wood lots and the investigation of the potential of charcoal as fuel, and of bee-keeping as a source of income for rural women. Additionally, it suggests establishing a women's section in the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform (in the context of a Government request for FAO assistance in the strengthening of the National Extension System) and introducing a course on "Rural Development" in the Agricultural Colleges along the lines of a pending UNFPA/FAO proposal.

39. Suggestions are made to introduce technical co-operation components into such WFP projects as the Reforestation and Establishment of Green Belt (Syria 2418), which involves a great number of female workers. Further training in forest nursery skills could be provided in combination with literacy and population education.

40. Several proposals for new projects are made. One concerns UNDP financing of an interagency project, executed mainly by the ILO, with FAO and UNESCO participating, and also involving WFP and UNICEF. The proposal addresses itself to the serious economic and social problems created by various forms of male migration: from one rural area to another to work during peak periods; from rural to urban areas in search of construction or other employment; and from rural areas to neighbouring countries short of labour. This pattern of migration creates serious problems for the women and children, who are left behind without adequate resources to support themselves and without access to such basic services and amenities as health care, education, water and sanitary facilities. Through seven Community Development Centres (CDCs), the Government is attempting to deal with these problems and create conditions that would encourage people to remain in rural areas. The proposed project would assist in strengthening and expanding this programme through collaboration with three of the seven CDCs.

41. On the basis of a detailed feasibility survey, covering physical resources, skills, services and felt needs, the project would provide a combined training and service programme with components of functional literacy, primary health care, common services and group activities for working women (such as child care, washing, transport of water), skills training, recreational, educational and cultural facilities.

42. Three proposals would involve technical co-operation with UNESCO. One concerns problems of communication in maternal and child health care programmes, the messages of which are often poorly understood by rural women. It would involve studies of population communication, population education in the schools, and mass media techniques and methods suitable for rural areas.

43. Another suggestion is to establish a rural experimental centre for elementary and technical education for girls. The proposal addresses itself to the twin problem of (1) rural girls not being able to attend school because they must help their mothers in the home and in the fields or because parents will not let girls attend school with a male teacher or because they are married at a very early age; and (2) the curriculum has very little relevance to everyday rural life. Towards overcoming these problems, the project would assist in establishing a pilot centre for several hundred girls in a rural area. The centre would offer basic education, accompanied by non-formal education to meet the practical needs of the community and the environment. On a more limited basis the centre would also offer more advanced technical education, designed to meet present and future labour demands.

44. A third proposal for UNESCO assistance aims at ensuring the participation of rural women and young girls in the development process. The project would be undertaken by the Syrian Women's Union and would consist of a series of studies that would provide the basis for a broad programme of action designed to overcome the material and psychological barriers that tend to prevent women from playing an active role in modern life.

45. Proposals are also made for assistance in the establishment of a National Centre for the Advancement of Women in Development through training, research and documentation; for the provision of a Women's Programme Officer in the UNDP office in Damascus; and for a TCDC project that would arrange of a training study tour for Arab women on protected vegetable cultivation.

46. More general recommendations are made concerning women's active involvement in agricultural co-operatives and for a study of the definition and measurement of rural women's participation in the labour force.

Indonesia

47. With 140 million people, Indonesia is the fifth most populous country in the world. It consists of a huge archipelago of more than 13,500 islands, of which about 1,000 are inhabited. Its UNDP country programme of \$69.5 million for the 1977-1981 programming cycle is the second largest.

48. The programming mission's proposals for action, arrived at in close consultation with the Government, mostly concern on-going, approved or planned projects. The proposals have subsequently been reviewed by the Government and the following summary takes the Government's comments into account.

49. Three of the proposals concern large-scale UNDP/FAO-assisted projects, which are in the preparatory stages of implementation. The timing for planning women's participation was therefore ideal. One of these projects concerns a second phase of assistance to Transmigration Planning, Project Preparation and Monitoring (INS/78/012). The general objective of the transmigration programme is to stimulate economic growth in the outer islands, in particular agricultural production, and to ease population pressure in Java, Bali, and Madura. It is anticipated that the current preparatory assistance to the programme will, inter alia, lead to the inclusion of a pilot project for appropriate post-harvest technologies for rural women in small farm households and transmigration schemes.

50. The second project concerns assistance to small farmers, tenants and sharecroppers to improve their income through agricultural extension, research, training and field action (INS/78/008). The main recommendation, accepted by the Government, is simply that women should be included on an equal basis with men in training and other project activities. Should the lack of trained female staff make it impossible to assist women to the same extent as men, women may have to be treated somewhat more selectively than men, but this does not affect the basic principle of including women in project activities.

51. The third large-scale FAO-executed project is to assist in the improvement of rain-fed and mixed farming systems for small farmers in South Sumatera and West Java (INS/78/007). Here, too, since small farms depend on the labour of men, women and children, it is important to include the women on an equal basis with men in the development programme, which will include such services as credit and village co-operatives.

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52. Detailed proposals were made for women's participation in three UNDP/WHO-assisted projects, which are expected to become operational later this year, or possibly in 1981. One aims to improve the state of health in Irian Jaya through a primary health care programme in which local women will be taught skills and attitudes fundamental to dealing with problems which directly concern the health of their families (INS/78/063). An important part of the project is to train the trainers at different levels: i.e., health centre nurses and midwives and specially trained community health workers.

53. The remaining two WHO-executed projects are very similar and concern rural water supply in Nusa Tenggara Timur (INS/78/052) and South Sulawesi (INS/78/051). These projects, in addition to providing potable water to as many as possible of the rural population, will aim to teach people how to conserve and utilize water properly, how to protect water from contamination and how to store water properly for household use. The education programme will be directed at women since they are the primary users of water in household activities. However, for such a programme to be effective, it must be part of a more comprehensive development and education programme. These projects, therefore, will also include training in income-generating activities, literacy, numeracy, home organization and management, etc.

54. For a few on-going UNDP/UNESCO-assisted projects, proposals were made to ensure that women's interests would be fully taken into account. One such proposal concerns assistance to the national programme for Education Planning, Evaluation and Curriculum Development (INS/78/030). Within the framework of the existing work plan and budget, a specific fellowship programme for female officials was suggested and, with minor modifications, accepted by the Government. Another proposal affects a project entitled Improvement of General Secondary Teacher Education in Five Fields of Study (INS/78/070), a project that is designed to improve the competence of teacher educators in the higher teacher training institutions in Indonesia. The project will, *inter alia*, train 25 Master Trainers in five selected fields of study. The Master Trainers will in turn be responsible for the training of 100 Institutional Trainers located at the teacher training institutions. The idea of taking certain steps to ensure that women's interests are fully considered was accepted; the modalities for achieving this goal will be the subject of further consultations.

55. It was also suggested that a new component for the writing and publishing of books and other texts of interest to rural women on a pilot scale be added to the current activities of the UNESCO-executed project concerning Technical Support to the National Book Development Advisory Council (INS/78/076). After trials in rural libraries, and possible changes and modifications as indicated, large editions would be produced for nationwide distribution. The proposal is accepted in principle and will be discussed further with the Government as part of wider consultations concerning the functioning of the Council.

56. Suggestions were also made concerning technological problems of special relevance to women, to be looked into by a UNDP/UNESCO/UNIDO mission to formulate a project proposal for the Application and Development of Appropriate Technology for Rural Development (INS/78/028). If such a project materializes, women's interests will be taken into account.

57. A final proposal for on-going projects referred to the UNDP/United Nations-assisted project that supports the Central Bureau of Statistics (INS/72/002). It is suggested that some work be undertaken under the aegis of this project in two areas of special interest to women: (a) statistics on time use and (b) special tabulations on rural women's role in the economy. The feasibility of this proposal is the subject of further consultations with the Government.

58. A key proposal for new projects concerns the Associate Minister for the Role of Women in the Ministry for People's Welfare. The post of the Associate Minister was created in 1978 and entails important functions of active participation in the planning and monitoring of projects and programmes of special interest to women entrusted to the various technical ministries of the Government of Indonesia. To perform this function in a constructive and productive way, the Associate Minister requires the assistance of a small but competent and specialized secretariat. As the skills required are in short supply, special training is needed before the Associate Minister can be provided with the necessary assistance. At the moment she has only two advisers, one of whom is provided by UNICEF. It has been suggested, therefore, that a programme of training and technical co-operation be instituted with the assistance of UNDP. The first step would involve the engagement of a consultant for the formulation of a detailed request. The Associate Minister welcomes the idea of engaging a consultant as suggested.

59. The Associate Minister for the Role of Women also welcomes an FAO proposal aimed at developing a system for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of rural women's active participation in agriculture and rural development. More specifically she would like to identify, on a systematic basis, possibilities for women's participation in rural development; establish criteria for the evaluation of the impact of women's participation in development; and hold a workshop with Government departments that are responsible for women's programmes.

Haiti

60. Haiti is the poorest country in Latin America and is, like Rwanda, one of the designated least developed countries in the world. The rural population, which constitutes between 75 and 80 per cent of the total, consists overwhelmingly of small farmers who eke out a precarious living by means of very primitive agricultural methods. Holdings are very small, loss of soil due to erosion has reached alarming proportions and food production no longer meets the needs of a population of about 5 million. The Government of Haiti has consequently given rural development a very high priority in the current five-year plan (1976-1981). The programming mission's recommendations are consistent with this priority.

61. The main recommendation concerned women's participation in a large-scale UNDP/FAO-supported project aimed at Strengthening the Extension Service (HAI/77/003). A key objective of the project is to strengthen peasants' co-operation through group formation. Strong emphasis is given to the role of women, as leaders and participants, in these activities. Many other activities are also of special interest to women, as is clearly indicated in a draft project document that has subsequently been prepared by the Government.

62. Another project, for which various activities of immediate interest to women have been initiated and programmed, is the Protection and Management of the Mountainous Valley of the Limbé Basin (HAI/77/005). The steps taken include the undertaking of a pilot survey of socio-economic conditions with the assistance of Institut Diocésain d'Education des Adultes and the organization of a community development team, consisting of members of the local population and two United Nations Volunteers. Through participation in the team's work, it is expected that women will be encouraged to play a more active role in community affairs. Other activities of special interest to women include the manufacture of improved storage facilities for food, in particular grain (rats are a major problem); the provision of drinking water (poor quality and lack of water constitute a major health problem); construction of roads; provision of a midwife and health care facilities; and the creation of cottage or small-scale industry centres that could produce articles not only for the tourist trade but for the needs of the community itself.

63. While it is not yet possible to draw up detailed plans for rural women's participation in the programme of the National Institute for Vocational Training (HAI/78/021), such activities are planned and a detailed work programme will be prepared by the ILO in the near future.

64. Finally, an "umbrella" project for assistance to activities of special interest to women is being established. It will be drawn upon as the need arises, either for independent activities or to include "women's components" ^{12/} in projects where such activities had not been foreseen.

65. A point applicable to all the country case studies is that a large number of the project activities suggested could benefit from the employment of volunteers. Additionally, there is considerable scope for TCDC, particularly in training programmes.

IV. GLOBAL AND INTERREGIONAL PROGRAMMES

66. Towards a greater understanding and better solution of problems specific to women across the regions, UNDP is supporting a number of global and interregional projects and programmes. Two of these undertakings do not exclusively address themselves to women, but are of major interest to them. One is The National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP), which was launched in 1979 to help developing countries obtain vital information for development plans, policies and programmes through continuous and integrated household surveys ^{13/}.

67. The programme, which will operate at the national, regional and interregional levels, is expected to establish NHSCP projects in about 85 countries (with a minimum target of 60 countries) over a period of 10-12 years. Since the role of women is central to the

^{12/} The expression "women's components" is used as shorthand for whatever type of activity may be indicated. It is not meant to suggest that women's programmes will be pursued in isolation from other project activities. However, as women's work and other duties in many respects differ from those of men, activities specially designed to help them are usually needed.

^{13/} UN/ST/ESA/STAT. 92/Rev. 1, 15 November 1979.

very existence of households, such a massive undertaking, focusing on the structure, composition and productive activities of households as affected by the development process, necessarily has wide implications for women. It is therefore hoped that women will be invited to and will avail themselves of the opportunity to play an active role in NHSCP at all levels. The programme was sponsored jointly by the United Nations, UNDP and the World Bank. It is also supported by UNFPA and UNICEF and has attracted the interest of several bilateral organizations for technical co-operation.

68. Another multi-organizational, interregional programme has been initiated as part of the activities of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990). The programme is still under elaboration, but it is clearly of major concern to women, in particular rural women. So far UNDP support is provided for three projects, involving the selection and testing of hand pumps to be used in rural areas (GLO/79/010), the development of demonstration projects concerning low-cost water and sanitation techniques (GLO/78/006) and the development of drinking water supply and sanitation programmes (INT/78/010). The latter project is being executed by WHO; the other two by the World Bank.

69. Two interregional projects consist of action-oriented studies. Of these, one is entitled Action-Oriented Study of the Role of Women in Rural Development, and is led by Professor Scarlett Epstein of Sussex University, U.K., in association with Dr. Ranjit Senaratne of Sri Lanka. It has the active collaboration of the national extension services in the five Asian countries where it is undertaken: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The 11 researchers are Ph.D. students, mostly women, from the five countries, enrolled at universities in their respective countries. Although located in Asia, the project is viewed as an interregional undertaking because its results, practical as well as research findings, are expected to be of general relevance. A recent project conference, held in Sri Lanka, testified to the good progress of the researchers in their village studies, which are undertaken by means of participant observation; i.e., the students live in the villages and share the villagers' life. UNDP is but one of several financial supporters of this project.

70. The findings of the studies vary of course from case to case, depending on a multitude of social, economic, cultural and geographical factors. In most instances, the pressure on resources, resulting in landlessness of major proportions, emerges as the most important general feature. Related to this situation are a number of other features, such as a decline in family cohesion, leaving women to fend for themselves in societies where women have traditionally been sheltered and protected by the home, and a rapidly growing dependence on different kinds of low-productivity, poorly paid non-agricultural work as the only or major source of income. Women's opportunities in this kind of environment, which is cruelly competitive for both men and women, are further hampered by their typically very low level of education and by social attitudes, which in many, but not all instances, are strongly opposed to women's work outside the home.

71. The effect of differing social attitudes on women's position is perhaps most concretely demonstrated in the sex ratio of a population. Since it is a well-established fact that, under non-discriminatory conditions of life, male mortality is higher than female mortality, it is quite startling to note that in some of the countries included in the study with comparable levels of living - reflected, *inter alia*, in similar levels of mortality - the sex ratio varies substantially depending on how girls and women are treated. If their status is high, they live longer than men; if their status is low, the opposite is true. This relationship emerges very clearly in the village level studies. Other social factors of major importance in women's lives derive from the

kinship structure: for example, under patrilineal and patrilocal extended family systems, whether marriage is village endogamous or exogamous. In the former case the woman moves to her husband's home at the time of marriage but stays in her own village and thus remains close to her family; in the latter she moves to her husband's village, where she knows nobody and hence suffers the risk of maltreatment by the in-laws.

72. Though action programmes will only be introduced in the next stage of the study, planning for such programmes is underway. In one case it will include a "package" of programmes with elements of nutrition training and rehabilitation, health education, food preparation for sale, improved utilization of kitchen gardens, improved water and fuel supply, stove improvement, functional literacy, mat weaving and credit facilities. In another case, where a large number of male emigrants to the Middle East provide the village with considerable income at the same time as their extended absence from home is significantly changing women's traditionally highly subordinate position, education and training programmes are being considered together with dairy and poultry farming.

73. The second action-oriented study consists of a component of a project concerning the Planning and Administration of Public Works Schemes, implemented by the ILO. The women's part is a study of the conditions of women's participation in public works and of the effects on women of such programmes, depending on whether it is the women themselves who participate or their husbands. The study is being undertaken by research institutions in India and the United Republic of Tanzania, countries which both have extensive experience of public works programmes.

74. To facilitate the provision of credit to low-income women, UNDP is providing assistance to Women's World Banking (WWB), an undertaking that has been organized by a group of women from developing and developed countries. The objective of WWB is to create a mechanism, whereby women can obtain loans from local credit institutions for business undertakings. Specifically, WWB, which is registered in the Netherlands as a foundation, will establish a fund, which will be used to guarantee loans to applicants who have viable business proposals but lack collateral. To facilitate the linkage between prospective loan applicants and credit institutions, women's organizations or individual correspondents associated with WWB will be active in participating countries, alerting women to sources of financing and advising them how to obtain it. The initial support is for part of the cost of an interregional workshop held in Amsterdam in March 1980. The workshop will develop a two-year plan of action for the commencement of operations in at least one country in each of the main regions. This second stage of activities will be supported by the regional programmes of UNDP.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

75. A major finding of the Action-Oriented Assessment is that government interest in and understanding of rural women's role in development has reached the point where action is in most instances not only possible but opportune. This is confirmed by the four programming missions as well as by other similar missions. In response to this situation, a heightened sensitivity to the potential for increased participation in development by women and a more systematic and vigorous effort to provide the necessary assistance to Governments is called for on the part of the United Nations development system. Although steps have already been taken, it must be recognized that to mobilize the complex United Nations development system into effective action in such a comprehensive field as women's participation in development is a time-consuming process which requires different types

of action at different stages. The stage now seems set for an intensive action programme, including special programming assistance to overcome the remaining obstacles posed by lack of experience and competence, bureaucratic inertia, remaining attitudinal barriers, and the need to reallocate resources. (While the latter is often noted as an obvious problem by Governments, it is no less relevant to United Nations organizations.) Towards this end, the Administrator recommends that the Governing Council endorse the following recommendations with respect to UNDP-supported projects and programmes 14/:

(a) While much has been accomplished by education and information programmes already undertaken by the United Nations system, considerably more action is needed to overcome attitudinal barriers and to increase the knowledge and skills of UNDP and Agency staff - and government officials as appropriate - in the programming and implementation of project activities of special interest to women. Therefore, training activities of special relevance to the promotion of women's participation in development should be incorporated into all existing training programmes and made part of those that are yet to be developed by the system. To determine how such training should most usefully be developed and conducted, inter-organizational consultations should be held, utilizing the appropriate machinery.

(b) Steps should be taken urgently by UNDP, United Nations Capital Development Fund, and Participating and Executing Agencies to ensure that the necessary special assistance is given to the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of women's participation in development. More specifically, the capability of UNDP field staff should be strengthened by means of special training as indicated above and sufficient staff time should be allocated for activities of special interest to women. The Country Programme Management Plan should specifically cover project activities of special interest to women. Furthermore, particular and careful attention should be paid to women's interests in all programming and evaluation missions. Such attention should include the selection of mission members competent to deal with women's interests.

(c) As an integral part of providing special programming assistance, all Agencies which have not already done so should prepare guidelines and instructions on women's participation in technical co-operation for their field staff. In view of the largely decentralized mode of operation of the United Nations development system, such instructions are crucial, as is indicated by the performance of organizations which have already issued such instructions and guidelines.

(d) The data base required for the actual planning for women's participation in development projects and programmes should be strengthened. In this connexion, the Administrator makes the following recommendations:

(i) Systematic studies of women's work should be undertaken in order to obtain more accurate information, bearing in mind also the likely need to modify the conceptual basis of the data collection. Such studies are needed to correct the frequently misleading information that currently exists. For example, women working longer hours than men may be reported

14/ Although the Assessment is limited to rural women, the recommendations are believed to be applicable also to urban women.

as economically inactive. More accurate information on women's work will also assist in correcting the erroneous assumptions on the subject that are central to the neglect of women's role in development. A number of technical co-operation projects in this area already exist, assisted in particular by the ILO and the United Nations (including the Regional Commissions), but a considerable expansion of this type of work is urgently needed. Good opportunities for such expansion will emerge as part of the interregional National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP), sponsored by the United Nations, UNDP and the World Bank, which is about to become operational. At the country level, NHSCP will include household surveys on a wide range of topics pertaining to the socio-economic conditions of women, including employment. Such surveys also appear to be well suited to regional or subregional TCDC undertakings, possibly with co-ordinating support from the ILO and the United Nations.

- (ii) Country profiles on the situation of women should be prepared, in order to facilitate the understanding of women's special problems and potentials as active participants in development ^{15/}. The profiles should include a careful assessment of cultural, economic and social factors affecting women's role in society. They may be prepared by nationals or, if desired, by external researchers with the active participation of knowledgeable persons from the country in question. In either case the cost is very modest. The profiles should indicate where further studies may be needed. If competently done and widely distributed, country profiles are very useful as a stimulus to and guide for programming and as a benchmark for monitoring the progress made in integrating women in development, as participants and as beneficiaries.
- (iii) In all data collection, systematic attention should be given to the need to attend to the data problem both at the macro and micro level. The complementary nature of the two types of data is vividly illustrated in the country case studies included in the Assessment.

(e) A report on the progress made in implementing the country mission recommendations and in improving the United Nations development system's performance in systematically ensuring women's participation in development should be presented to the twenty-ninth session of the Governing Council (1982).

^{15/}This is also one of the general recommendations of the UNDP Guidelines.

ANNEX

Commission and Agency Reports submitted to the Regional Preparatory Meetings of the World Conference for the United Nations Decade for Women used in the preparation of the Assessment

ECA

Progress and Obstacles in achieving the minimum objectives of the World and Africa Plan of Action: A Critical Review. United Nations, 1979. E/CN. 14/ATRCW/79/W.D. 1.

ECWA

Recent changes and trends in the situation of women in the ECWA Region, United Nations, 1979. E/ECWA/SDHA/CONF. 4/3.

ESCAP

Review and Appraisal of Progress Made and Obstacles Encountered at the National Level in Asia and the Pacific. United Nations, 1979. PSA/RPWCDW/2.

ECLA

Women in Latin America: The Situation as regards the Implementation of the Regional Plan of Action, United Nations 1979. E/CEPAL/CRM. 2/L. 2.

FAO

Review and Analysis of FAO Programme (1975-1979): Integration of Women in Rural Development, and Policies and Future Programmes Trends (1980-1985).

- One for each region.
- Summary versions of these four reports.

ILO

Activities in African Countries of Special Interest to Women Workers, ILO/WN. 9/1979.

Activities of Special Interest for Women Workers in Western Asia, ILO/W. 6/1979.

Women Workers and the Development Process (Asia and the Pacific), ILO/W. 7/1979.

Activities of the International Labour Organization in favour of Women in Latin America, ILO/W. 4/1979.

UNESCO

Report on UNESCO's Programmes and Activities concerning Women, 1979 - Chapter 3 of this report refers to activities undertaken by UNESCO in each region (1975-1980).

United Nations

Activities of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD) submitted for the ECA/ECWA/ESCAP/ECLA Regional Preparatory Meetings of the World Conference for the United Nations Decade for Women.

WHO

Report to the Africa Regional Preparatory Conference. ECA/ATRCW/SPAG/01.

Report of the Western Pacific Region of the World Health Organization to the Regional Meeting, Damascus, 1979.

Women and Health: A Report to the Pan American Health Organization. Mayra Buvinic and Joanne Leslie, International Centre for Research on Women. May 1979.

UNIDO

Report prepared specially for UNDP "Forward-looking Assessment of recent years efforts to increase rural women's participation in development," 1979. (N.B. Not submitted to Regional Preparatory Meetings in toto, but as statements by UNIDO representatives.)
