Report of the Executive Director

Summary

This report of the Executive Director is prepared in response to decision 87/30 I, paragraph 16, of the Governing Council at its thirty-fourth session, requesting the Executive Director to provide detailed status reports on the implementation of the strategy to the Council. The report covers 1987-1988, the first two years of the strategy's four-year work plan (1987-1990), including the Fund's activities in various sectors. As provided for in the strategy, activities focused on training of staff on the conceptual and operational aspects of involving women in population policies, programme procedures and guidelines; undertaking project reviews to identify facilitating and constraining factors in their implementation from a gender perspective; strengthening the capacities of and collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Special Unit for Women, Population and Development has worked closely with all organizational units within the Fund and UN agencies in the successful and timely implementation of the strategy. The report concludes with information on future directions of the Fund identifying priority areas for action.
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Introduction

1. This report has been prepared in response to Governing Council decision 87/30, paragraph 16, which "notes with appreciation the report on an implementation strategy to strengthen the capacity of the Fund to deal with issues concerning women, population and development (DP/1987/38), endorses the proposed four-year work plan; further endorses the Executive Director's decision to give the Special Unit for Women an adequate status in the organizational structure of the Fund; urges the Executive Director to ensure the accountability of all staff for its implementation; also urges the Executive Director to take all necessary measures to facilitate the full, prompt implementation of the strategy, including providing adequate human and financial resources to the Special Unit for Women, and ensuring heightened awareness and training of the Fund's entire staff; and requests the Executive Director to provide detailed status reports on the implementation of the strategy to the Council at its thirty-sixth (1989) and thirty-eighth (1991) sessions".

2. The report covers the first two years of the strategy's four-year work plan (1987-1990), as well as the Fund's activities in various sectors to improve the role and status of women. It is based on information received from field offices and organizational units at headquarters on plans and activities undertaken to implement the strategy. Specifically, the report focuses on the areas emphasized in the Council's earlier decision "to give special attention to improved staff training, monitoring of existing guidelines, instructions and procedures for inclusion of women in development criteria and increasing the effectiveness of the Special Unit for Women within the Fund's headquarters, paying due attention to relevant experiences of organizations engaged in operational activities within the United Nations system, including the possibility of instituting joint staff training programmes in this field" (decision 86/34, para. 3).

3. The Executive Director's report to the Council at its thirty-fifth session on the activities of the Fund in 1987 included a brief presentation on the progress made in the implementation of the strategy and the Fund's efforts to effectively carry out its mandate in the priority area of women, population and development during 1987. The Council, in decision 88/34, paragraphs 15 and 16, reiterated the importance of this area and noted with satisfaction the Fund's systematic efforts in this regard. It also encouraged the Fund to continue to increase support for population-related activities designed specifically to improve the status of women.

4. The women, population and development area received increased attention in UNFPA in 1987 and 1988. The implementation of work plans for 1987 and 1988 heightened awareness among UNFPA staff, both at headquarters and in the field, of the interrelationship between the situation of women in the family and society and demographic trends in developing countries. In addition, the Fund recognized the need for increased training of UNFPA
staff and their national counterparts in operational aspects of incorporating women's concerns into population policies and programmes.

5. In its continuing efforts to ensure that women receive priority consideration in all activities, the Fund is using two main complementary approaches: (a) incorporating women's concerns and needs in the design and implementation of all programmes and projects supported by the Fund, and (b) designing specific activities for the benefit of women as a means of bringing them into the mainstream of population and development activities. These approaches are based on the realization that improvement in the status of women is, in and of itself, an important goal of developmental efforts, in addition to the direct beneficial effects such improvements have on the well-being of their families. Moreover, the status of women has additional significance in the context of UNFPA's mandate because it influences and is influenced by a number of demographic factors such as fertility and maternal and infant mortality patterns. The Fund's complementary approaches have guided programming activities and have permitted the flexibility required to deal with specific socio-cultural situations in individual countries.

6. The range of activities and the extent of implementation of the strategy vary from country to country, depending on the degree of government commitment, the nature and scope of UNFPA-supported programmes in the countries, and the initiative and experience of the Fund's staff.

I. PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

A. Programme and project procedures and guidelines

7. The Fund's strategy on women, population and development exemplifies the Fund's new direction towards strategic programming. In line with this new direction to improve programme and project planning and delivery, and as required by the strategy, UNFPA took measures to provide staff with the tools required for a more gender-sensitive approach to programme and project development. Between November 1987 and April 1988, the Fund reviewed and revised all its policy guidelines and checklists pertaining to the substantive sectors: maternal and child health and family planning (MCH/FP); information, education and communication (IEC); and basic data collection, policy and research. These efforts provided staff with the necessary guidance for incorporating gender issues into the Fund's principal population and development activities. Additionally, the Fund prepared a reporting form on Gender Considerations in Project Development. The form, which was circulated to all staff and participating agencies early in 1988, has since been made part of the revised UNFPA Guidelines for Project Formulation and Appraisal. A completed form is now a required attachment to all projects submitted for approval and funding.

8. Based on the recommendations of the 1984 International Conference on Population and the 1985 Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the
Advancement of Women, which require all United Nations agencies to consider improvement in the situation of women as a central aspect of development assistance. UNFPA updated its 1980 Guidelines on Women, Population and Development to reflect more appropriately these requirements. Issued in May 1988, these updated guidelines take into account inquiries from field staff regarding the definition of programmes and projects designed specifically to benefit women. The guidelines identify in detail specific activities that the Fund considers critical for expediting the integration of women into important population and development endeavours. Such activities include education and training, skill development, entrepreneurial undertakings, awareness creation both for the public and for planners, exchange of information, data collection and research. The guidelines also stress the importance of strengthening national technical capabilities both at governmental and non-governmental levels. As recognized in the strategy, all these areas have a direct effect on improving the situation of women and the well-being of their families, and, at the same time, influencing demographic variables such as infant and maternal mortality and fertility patterns.

B. Programme and project development

9. The first two years of implementation of the strategy saw an improvement in gender-sensitivity in programme and project development, as special attention was increasingly given to women's needs. In the project appraisal and approval processes, programme and technical officers, the Programme and Project Committees, and the Special Unit for Women, Population and Development systematically reviewed all programmes and project submissions to ascertain the roles assigned to women, both as participants and as beneficiaries. These considerations applied to the general aspects of country programmes as well as to each specific project in the substantive sectors. In addition, the budget for each country programme included special allocations to ensure the implementation of activities designed for the benefit of women either as components of larger projects or as specific projects. The country programmes before the Council reflect the results of this aspect of organizational efforts.

10. The Fund's experience, distilled from the review procedures and reports received from the field, showed that, in some cases, programme objectives and strategies were insufficiently explicit with regard to the women's dimension. In addition, there was sometimes a tendency to consider women's issues only in the special category of women, population and development.

11. Field reports clearly indicated that in countries where gender issues were addressed from the first stages of programme development, namely, needs assessment or situation analyses, country programmes tended to reflect the women's dimension adequately and explicitly. For instance, in Ethiopia, where the needs assessment update of December 1986 had identified women as a priority target for UNFPA assistance, the country programme addressed women's concerns directly. In Democratic Yemen,
issues related to women, population and development were considered at the initial stages of programme preparation, and women's concerns permeated the whole programme. In Kenya, initiatives have been taken to review the country programme to strengthen the women in development components in existing projects and to develop guidelines for a possible umbrella project that would enhance the integration of women's concerns in future Government of Kenya/UNFPA country programmes. In September 1988, the United Republic of Tanzania recruited a women in development specialist to discuss mechanisms for effectively incorporating women into projects in population and family life education, demographic training, population planning units, and MCH/FP. In Bangladesh, the Fund initiated a review of women in development projects to ascertain factors contributing to their success. UNFPA's new cycle of assistance to China gives special emphasis to improving the situation of women and the welfare of their families. In Latin America, increasing concern over improving the status of women has been reflected in several recently formulated country programmes, such as those for Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Peru.

12. The Fund will continue to assess the extent to which activities it supports address women's needs and concerns and work to improve their situation. All evaluations of UNFPA-supported projects are required to consider the extent to which women participate in, and benefit from, project activities. A review of evaluation reports has been undertaken to determine the extent and coverage of this aspect as well as to identify lessons related to women's concerns and participation. The results of the review will be circulated to all staff, technical advisers and others involved in project and programme development and implementation in order to improve programming in this area.

C. Problems with current programme and project development procedures

13. The integration of women's concerns should be consciously considered throughout the process of programme and project development. This goal has not yet been achieved. There has been a tendency among some staff members and others involved with projects to consider the women, population and development area as a new and, therefore, additional task to be performed. In addition, guidelines and mandates have been interpreted in a variety of ways, which has affected project design and development, particularly as these relate to "women-specific" projects. More systematic efforts at changing individual attitudes and perceptions will be required so that the new procedures can be implemented routinely.

14. Under the current procedures, country programmes and projects are developed in the field and then submitted to headquarters for comment on the extent to which women's concerns have been integrated. Such procedures do not necessarily ensure that measures considered important in improving women's situation and status are carefully incorporated into population programmes. It is essential to involve relevant UNFPA staff, national or international women in development specialists, women's
bureaux or other identified national organizations that can play an important role in this area from the earliest stages and throughout the programme and project cycle.

15. In this connection, the Fund is ensuring that needs assessments, situation analyses and sectoral reviews emphasize the linkages between women's status and population variables, and provide adequate information for country programming and project development. UNFPA is taking steps to ensure that such programming exercises accurately reflect the information collected through such analyses and reviews. Moreover, to ensure a common understanding and practice among UNFPA staff, the Fund is in the process of clarifying further its mandate and policy concerning special projects designed for the benefit of women.

16. The reporting form on gender considerations in project development and appraisal was less widely and systematically used than expected. The Fund intends to review in 1990 the information provided through this form, on the basis of feedback from field offices, in order to improve on it.

D. Sectoral activities

17. This section of the report provides examples of initiatives taken by the Fund at the field level in the areas of MCH/FP, IEC, training of women in non-traditional areas, addressing women's productive and reproductive roles, and data collection to ensure that project activities respond to the needs of women and provide for their participation and benefit.

Maternal and child health and family planning

18. The achievement of the strategy's main objective -- to ensure that women participate in all population programmes and benefit from the results -- will depend to a great extent on what happens in MCH/FP programmes, the Fund's major area of support. The protection and improvement of the health of women and their families, the promotion of safe motherhood, the extension of outreach, particularly to women in rural communities, and efforts to reduce high maternal and infant mortality rates in developing countries have all been emphasized in the Fund's programmes in this sector. In each of these areas, UNFPA has recognized the importance of working in partnership with both the formal and informal health sectors. For example, the training component of the Fund's MCH/FP programmes has been directed at both MCH/FP service providers and trainers in the formal sector, most of whom are women, and primarily at traditional birth attendants (TBAs) in the non-formal sector, who are responsible for the majority of deliveries in the rural communities of developing countries.

19. In Cameroon, to strengthen the teaching of MCH/FP in 22 medico-sanitary institutions, a total of 60 women out of 80 trainers received training as part of the MCH/FP project supported by the Fund. In Nigeria, state-level training in MCH/FP was provided to nurses, who in turn trained service personnel and TBAs. In Brazil, 4,000 nurses and
5,000 physicians, half of whom were female, were trained in MCH/FP. As part of this UNFPA-supported project, seminars and workshops on the need for improving women's health were held in each state for the benefit of leaders of the Women's State Association and the Brazilian Women's Federation.

20. Recognizing the important role of national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly women's organizations in this sector, the Fund is collaborating with the World Health Organization (WHO) in implementing a project for strengthening the role of women's organizations in MCH/FP programmes. It is expected that, through this project, 200 leaders of women's organizations from the four geographical regions will undergo training and receive information on the importance of family planning in improving health and the social and economic status of women.

21. UNFPA also provided support to The Population Council’s programme for improving the quality of family planning and related reproductive health care and services. Because of the effect of women's reproductive health and fertility decisions on other aspects of their lives, this emphasis on the quality of care has significant implications for the role and status of women. Through its Quality of Family Planning Programme, the Council plans to publish a series of monographs as a means of providing information on initiatives addressing the issue of quality and of stimulating modifications and improvement of existing programmes.

22. An important aim of the Fund in the context of family planning programmes is to raise women's awareness of their rights to "decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children" and to foster provision of the means to protect and practise these rights. Based on this concern, the Fund has approved a project to collaborate with UNESCO in selected countries to develop strategies for examining the extent of women's awareness of their rights and to provide them with updated and accurate information on their rights to family planning information and services.

23. UNFPA has provided considerable support to WHO through its Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) to carry out country-level research aimed at identifying safer contraceptives. The Fund has also supported pioneering research in China to develop more effective contraceptives and to test currently used ones for side-effects and contra-indications.

24. In Zambia, during the MCH/FP programme formulation workshop, action was taken to include gender-specific considerations in the initial stages. Several workshop recommendations were specifically relevant to issues of women in development: to change male attitudes towards contraceptive decision-making, to develop a career structure for women in the nursing profession and in the Zambia Family Health Unit, to extend family planning services to all people aged over 15 and to involve communities in programmes that affect their lives.
Information, education and communication

25. The Fund’s approaches in the IEC sector aim at tailoring programmes to specific needs of specific target groups. Part of the Fund’s concern is to provide both men and women with the relevant information that will enable them to make informed choices and to understand the benefits of child-spacing and the importance of responsible parenthood. The Fund also supports media programming that promotes women’s dignity and equality and that moves the media away from perpetuating sex stereotypes that often hinder women’s progress. Reports from the field indicate three main aspects of IEC projects that have particularly benefited women: training, increasing women’s participation in projects, and disseminating information.

26. Women received training in IEC for such areas as MCH/FP and population and family life education in their capacities as MCH/FP service providers, as trainers, as project personnel and as members of mass women’s organizations. In Mozambique, training in IEC was provided for various female target groups, including MCH/FP nurse tutors, midwives, adult educators and members of the Organization of Mozambican Women. Field staff in Morocco reported on training in communication techniques for female educators, field-workers and communication specialists. In Peru, innovative training packages dealing with sex and family life education were developed for training women trainers working in marginal rural and urban areas. The methodology emphasized the participation of trainees in identifying their training needs and in developing appropriate didactic materials.

27. The field reports suggest an increasing trend to recruit women into project management and into advisory and technical positions as a means of enhancing their role in project implementation and of increasing project responsiveness to their needs and concerns. Projects being managed or assisted by women included, inter alia, the Cameroon Population Education for Responsible Parenthood project, the Mozambique Population and Sex in Mozambican Schools project, the United Republic of Tanzania Family Life Education Programme and the Viet Nam Family Life and Sex Education project.

28. The Fund also draws upon the expertise of women’s organizations and community groups to implement and monitor IEC programmes and to establish a dialogue with media decision-makers. The UNFPA-supported women’s feature project in the Inter-Press Service gave women’s organizations in developing countries opportunity for such dialogue.

29. The population messages disseminated as part of project activities for the formal and non-formal education sectors include concepts related to women’s lives and responsibilities. In the United Republic of Tanzania, special efforts were made to ensure that the messages included in the family life education syllabi for schools, teachers’ guides and pupils books were gender-sensitive, by including the topics of sexual equality and women’s role in development. In Mozambique, materials were developed...
for changing traditional perceptions and practices that hinder the advancement of women. In Liberia, the population and family life project aims at incorporating in the curriculum of 50 pilot schools concepts on population and family life education with the objective of increasing female enrolment in schools, keeping them in school and providing them with skilled jobs. In Morocco, initiatives were taken in the population education project to increase awareness of the interrelationship between socio-economic and demographic factors, health and women’s status and to promote the participation of Moroccan women in socio-economic development.

30. The increasing attention to women’s concerns in Latin America and the Caribbean has led to the need to emphasize and include sex education as part of the training components of projects promoting women’s participation in UNFPA-supported activities. For example, in Jamaica, the Women Centre’s programme on adolescent fertility provides counselling, family life education and training aimed at re-orienting the lives of teenagers who become pregnant before completing primary and secondary education and re-integrating them into the educational system. In Uruguay, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Women’s Institute has been establishing Information Centres for women throughout the country to provide such information as women’s health, sex education and legal rights. In Peru, the Flora Tristan Women’s Organization, an NGO, worked with low-income women in marginal areas of Lima, providing them with information on reproductive behaviour.

Integrated approach to women’s productive and reproductive roles

31. The Fund recognized that the situation of women could be improved more quickly and extensively if programmes concerned with women’s reproductive roles were linked to activities addressing other aspects of their lives. In recent years there has been a trend towards such integrated approaches that address women’s reproductive and productive roles. UNFPA continues to support such multifaceted projects in several countries throughout the world, usually in collaboration with other United Nations agencies. The main purpose is to raise women’s income levels and to provide them with information and services in MCH/FP, nutrition, hygiene, child care, and other health aspects that are essential for the well-being of women and their families. Reports from many countries, including China, Egypt, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, the Philippines, Viet Nam and countries in the South Pacific showed the importance and relevance of this innovative multipurpose approach.

32. In China, the Fund in 1988 approved support to income-generating activities for women factory workers in the three poorest provinces in the northwest as a means of improving household income. The project includes provision for education, training in child care, nutrition and hygiene. In Morocco, UNFPA assisted women’s groups in rural communities in four northern provinces in establishing income-generating activities, combined with training in MCH/FP, hygiene and nutrition. In Egypt, the training of rural women in population and development aims at raising rural women’s income levels and providing them with health education and family planning
information and services. In Indonesia, the women, population and development project, which has been successfully implemented for several years, is a good example of such an integrated approach, including not only women but also other family members and enlisting the support of the community as a whole. An innovative project drawing upon active community participation was implemented in Paraguay where, under the direction of the Rural Extension Services of the Ministry of Agriculture, women in 36 rural communities have started to undertake income-generating activities. Community participation was also an essential component of a project in Costa Rica, where rural women worked together with the staff of the University of Costa Rica to prepare a project of training in income-generating enterprises, in health and sex education and in the development of self-esteem.

Training of women in specialized fields

33. In 1987 and 1988, the Fund also provided specialized training outside the health field to enhance women's participation in decision-making at all levels of the population and development process. Most of this training was in demography, management and supervisory tasks, and research. Although the numbers of women trained in each sector per se may not seem considerable in view of the urgent needs in some countries, this effort was a promising beginning. It is expected that women with these newly acquired skills will have a far-reaching impact on population and development programmes in their countries and, at the same time, act as role models for other women. In view of the important role training plays in introducing women into non-traditional fields, the Fund has taken necessary actions to ensure that the training projects it supports -- including training at the country level, fellowships abroad and attendance at workshops, seminars and conferences -- provide for the increased participation of women.

34. During 1987 and 1988, there was a wide array of national-level training activities that benefited women. In Liberia, for example, the female employees of the Bureau of Statistics were trained in demography. In Malawi, 10 women, out of 66 trainees, received training in demography at Chancellor College; their services were used in a study of traditional methods of birth spacing. Six out of 7 staff members of Somalia's Women's Research Unit were trained in Nairobi in data processing and analysis. In the Sudan, two women statisticians received training in census organization and sampling methods, and three women from the Ministry of Planning were trained in population and development. In Zimbabwe, a management training workshop was organized for women managers from ministries and women's NGOs to improve their planning, project formulation and monitoring and financial management capabilities. In Brazil, as part of the Advanced Population Teaching and Research project at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, professionals from Latin America and Africa, 50 per cent of whom were women, carried out valuable research on women and development, women's health, contraceptive use and population dynamics.
35. With the help of UNFPA-supported training programmes at regional and international levels, more than 250 women from developing countries received training in management and supervisory tasks related to population and development programmes. The training was provided by the Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), an international NGO.

Collection and dissemination of socio-economic data on women

36. A common obstacle cited in most field reports was the lack of socio-economic data on women. This hindered the development of meaningful strategies and programmes that could help improve the situation of women and monitor and evaluate their progress. In many countries, what little useful data on women did exist were scattered and, generally, poorly organized. Moreover, although data on women were collected by various governmental and research institutions as well as NGOs, there was seldom any co-ordination among them.

37. It is the policy of the Fund, as a major donor for population censuses and other data collection activities, to ensure that data are disaggregated by gender in all phases of the process -- collection, tabulation, analysis and dissemination. UNFPA also supports specific surveys and studies to provide additional socio-economic data not covered fully in censuses. In this regard, UNFPA works closely with other United Nations organizations, in particular the Department of International Economics and Social Affairs (DIESA), to develop appropriate methodologies and strategies to bridge the existing data gap.

38. During the period under review, special investigations of particular situations were undertaken to identify the actual needs for data by gender and to obtain information on gender-specific issues, including on socio-economic indicators related to the status of women. UNFPA expects that all the 1990 round of census projects will devote special attention to gender-specific data. Reports from Democratic Yemen, Equatorial Guinea, Malawi, Mozambique and Viet Nam indicate that specific actions are already under way to ensure that the 1990 round of censuses would provide essential data on the demographic and socio-economic situation of women in each of these countries.

39. With UNFPA support, an innovative project was initiated in Malaysia in 1987 to establish a national clearing-house on women in development. The clearing-house will function as the national focal point for identifying, collecting, storing, repackaging and disseminating information on women. Since 1987, the project has published a bibliography, facts and figures on Malaysian women, a directory of women’s organizations and a quarterly newsletter on women. In February 1987, UNFPA sponsored a workshop in Noumea, New Caledonia, to assess the adequacy of available data on women and of the data collection system. As a follow-up to the workshop and as part of a joint mission of UNDP/UNIFEM/UNFPA to 10 South Pacific countries
in 1988, a review of censuses was carried out to identify gaps in data and to develop a microcomputer data base on women.

40. UNFPA supported the United Nations Statistical Office in data compilation, analysis and dissemination. The Statistical Office updated and completed an extensive Women's Indicators and Statistics microcomputer data base. The data, which has been published as a compendium of statistics and indicators on the situation of women, include for all countries indicators such as life expectancy by sex, infant and maternal mortality, marital status and fertility, contraceptive use among married women by method, household headship, literacy rates and labour force participation. These data will constitute an essential input in a forthcoming publication, Socio-Economic Trends and the Status of Women, co-funded by UNFPA, UNICEF and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

41. UNFPA supported a programme of research in developing countries and four seminars on "Determinants and Consequences of Female-Headed Households". The study and the seminars, which were attended by experts from developed and developing countries, were conducted in collaboration with The Population Council.

42. Since mid-1988, UNFPA has collaborated with UNDP in preparing brief country profiles covering basic legal, organizational, socio-economic and demographic information on women and questions relating to their participation in the national development process, including decision-making at all levels. The profiles will provide staff and others interested in such information with an easily accessible reference on the status of women in all UNFPA-assisted countries.

Overview of main problems with sectoral activities

43. Although the Fund made considerable progress in addressing women's issues in the sectoral programmes it supported, most of the programmes were at an early stage of implementation, and there were still difficulties in implementing the Fund's efforts in this regard. In the MCH/FP sector, contraceptive prevalence rates were still low, especially in rural communities, and many women had no access to family planning services. In many developing countries, although women were the major beneficiaries of these programmes, they were seldom consulted or involved in policy decisions or in project development and implementation. Although women constituted the majority of health-care providers in many countries, they seldom took part in high-level decision-making or performed managerial and supervisory tasks. In IEC programmes, women's contributions in determining the content of population education materials were minimal.

44. Field offices encountered problems in attempting to recruit women for training in specialized or non-traditional fields, even in those institutions that had assigned specific quotas for women. The number of women trained in specialized areas, as indicated above, was still
low. There is the urgent need for advocacy, strong commitment and persistent action by all concerned at the national and international levels to ensure that qualified women are nominated for training programmes. In data collection, reports from the field indicated that dialogue between the producers and users of statistics was inadequate and that indicators on the situation of women were not sufficiently disaggregated to ensure that the data collected and disseminated were relevant for planning and programme development. One important area that needs attention in future data collection activities is women’s unpaid work and their contribution in the informal sector.

II. TRAINING OF STAFF

45. During 1987 and 1988, UNFPA paid special attention to the training of staff at all levels concerning issues of women, population and development. The purpose of the training was twofold: first, to sensitize staff to such issues; and second, to provide them with practical methodologies and skills for a more gender-sensitive approach to programme and project development and implementation. Some of the training was specifically oriented to UNFPA staff; other training was conducted jointly with other United Nations agencies for staff from participating organizations and national counterparts.

46. In organizing the training activities, the Special Unit drew upon the expertise and resources of international and regional training institutions such as a Harvard University team, the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) and the Asia Institute for Management (AIM). Each training workshop was the result of extensive discussions between UNFPA and the institution involved. This collaboration was important because the workshops had to respond fully to the needs and responsibilities of the staff concerned and to the Fund’s mandate, experience and expected results. This also exposed these institutions to the requirements, mandates and activities of United Nations agencies. This exposure helped strengthen their capacities for planning and implementing follow-up training activities at sub-regional and country levels.

A. Training workshops on Women in Development for UNFPA staff

47. In 1987 and 1988, three training workshops were conducted by the Fund for both headquarters and field staff. The first of these workshops was part of an orientation and training workshop organized in New York for about 45 UNFPA field staff. The second workshop took place in December 1987 for 29 headquarters professional staff from organizational, operational and technical units. This two-and-one-half-day training workshop was undertaken in collaboration with a training team from Harvard University, which had conducted similar training for other United Nations agencies as well as bilateral organizations. Participants examined an analytical framework related to gender-specific issues and discussed how such issues should be dealt with in the context of project development and appraisal.
48. The third training workshop was held in January 1988 in Mombasa for 26 UNFPA field staff from 25 African and Arab countries. This five-day workshop provided participants with information on the situation of women in Africa and the Middle East, a conceptual and analytical framework for incorporating gender-specific considerations in development and population policies, planning and programmes; and methodologies for making those concepts fully operational. ESAMI assisted with the organization and the conduct of the workshop.

B. Joint training with other United Nations agencies

49. As a follow-up to the top-level Management Seminar on Women and Development held by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) in New York in December 1986, the first of a series of JCGP training workshops was held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, in February 1988 for field staff of the (then) four JCGP organizations -- UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Food Programme (WFP) -- with UNIFEM participating as well. The workshop was attended by 54 participants, including 41 senior staff from field offices and headquarters and 13 national counterparts, mainly from women's bureaux or ministries responsible for women's affairs in the Eastern and Southern Africa region plus Somalia and Sudan. Another joint training workshop for UNDP and UNFPA field staff in the Caribbean and Central America sub-regions took place in November 1988 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Twenty-five participants, including five national counterparts, attended the seminar, which was conducted in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

C. Recommendations of the workshops

50. Participants' assessments of the training workshops were positive. The findings and recommendations that emerged from each workshop helped UNFPA to tailor subsequent workshops to meet the needs of participants. Among the specific recommendations were the following:

(a) To organize a series of regional workshops on gender issues in development for representatives of United Nations organizations at the country level;

(b) To organize workshops for policy- and decision-makers and national counterparts from planning and sectoral ministries;

(c) To develop case studies based on UNFPA projects to be used in future training;

(d) To prepare checklists and guidelines for each substantive sector relating to project development, appraisal and monitoring;

(e) To strengthen the technical capacities of regional and national training institutes to conduct training that is more attuned to the requirements of large-scale and multi-sectoral operational programmes and projects;
(f) To include training on women in development in regular programmes of regional demographic, research and training institutions, particularly those assisted by the Fund;

(g) To conduct, after a period of two years, additional training for those who attended the first round of training.

51. The Fund encountered two main problems in its staff training on women, population and development. The first was the difficulty in identifying appropriate training institutions with the capacity and expertise to undertake operationally related training, particularly at the country level. The second was the lack of training materials and case studies relevant to UNFPA work. UNFPA consulted with training institutions in several countries, including the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Netherlands, with the objective of developing tailor-made training packages suitable to the Fund’s operational activities. The Fund also explored possibilities for having participants from developing countries benefit from the regular courses on women in development offered by such institutions. The results of these discussions have been forwarded to UNFPA field offices, some of which have already identified prospective candidates for those courses.

52. As recommended by training workshop participants and as a means of ensuring follow-up of regional training at the national level, the Fund developed, with assistance from the Harvard University training team, specific case studies based on UNFPA-supported projects in the MCH/FP, IEC and data collection sectors. After extensive discussions with UNFPA headquarters staff on the selection of projects and collection of requisite background information, the team visited project sites. The aim was to hold discussions with UNFPA field staff, national authorities, project staff and project beneficiaries to collect first-hand information for the preparation of case studies. These case studies identify gaps in project formulation and show how projects could be re-oriented to make them more responsive to gender specifications. For the first time, these case studies go beyond simply identifying shortcomings to showing, in practice, how the projects could be made more responsive to women’s needs. As a result, they could also be used as reference material by staff, national counterparts and others involved in developing and appraising projects.

D. Country-level follow-up training activities

53. Increased attention must be given to specific training programmes for national planners, policy- and decision-makers, programme officers and project directors, with emphasis on awareness creation for top-level national policy-makers and planners. The training programmes noted above were, of necessity, geared initially to UNFPA and other United Nations staff, with some participation from government counterparts. However, in response to recommendations, the Fund plans to put more emphasis on practical aspects of the tasks to be performed and increasingly to involve government counterparts, NGOs, staff of the Fund’s executing agencies and regional technical advisers in the training programmes.

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54. During the first two years of the work plan, country-level seminars were held, some under the auspices of the JCGP, to orient and sensitize planners, policy-makers and other decision-makers to issues of women, population and development, particularly in Africa. For example, in the United Republic of Tanzania, with the assistance of UNFPA, a national seminar on Women and Development was organized in May 1988 for women leaders and senior officials of the party and the Government. In all, some 257 individuals participated in the seminar, which covered the role of women in development, MCH/FP, women and law, responsible parenthood and family parenthood, national policy on bringing up children and family, women and energy resources, and national policy on women. Moreover, under the auspices of the United Nations inter-agency group in Ethiopia, an orientation and sensitization workshop was held in 1988 for programming staff on the incorporation of women's concerns in agency programmes. Through these workshops, opportunities were provided to appraise the role and status of women in development and to formulate action plans that will promote their integration in the mainstream of population and development programmes.

III. ENHANCING THE ROLE OF NATIONAL MACHINERIES AND NGOs

55. National bodies established by governments to advance the situation of women, as well as national NGOs, are often constrained by limited technical and managerial capabilities and financial resources. Therefore, strengthening the capabilities of these organizations is among the priorities for UNFPA support. This support is needed to make it possible to benefit from their knowledge and expertise in mobilizing women for participation in development and population programmes, including family planning. During the period under review, UNFPA continued to work closely with international and national NGOs, particularly those that deal primarily with women's issues, in order to benefit from their unique place in promoting community-level activities.

56. A number of national organizations and institutions have benefited from UNFPA support. These include the General Union of Yemeni Women of Democratic Yemen, the Department of Women’s Affairs in the Egyptian Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ghana National Council on Women and Development, the Women’s Bureau in Jamaica, the Women’s Federation in Jordan, the Secretariat for Women’s Affairs in Malaysia, the Organization of Mozambican Women, the Business and Professional Women’s Club and the Women’s Services Co-ordination Committee in Nepal, Flora Tristan in Peru, Viet Nam’s Women’s Union and the Women’s Unit in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Yemen Arab Republic.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF A TECHNICAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

57. To promote greater availability of technical and managerial expertise for programmes and projects in a manner that reflects the concerns of
women, the Fund established a computerized roster of consultants and organizations, currently totalling 116 and 60 entries, respectively, with substantive and practical experience in the field of women, population and development. The data base provides ready access to individual and organizational resources for the Fund as well as for other United Nations agencies. For each region, a listing of experts and organizations with working experience in the region was extracted from the data base and circulated to the concerned field offices.

58. The inventory has already proved an invaluable source of technical expertise for needs assessment; project development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation; and training activities. UNFPA supported efforts at the field level to establish similar inventories to provide needed technical expertise for various tasks. Because of the Fund’s increased emphasis on decentralized programming, such local and regional expertise has become more necessary. The Fund also supported the preparation of a Global Directory of Women’s Organizations Implementing Population Strategy. This publication, in English, French and Spanish, includes 2,000 organizations. The document, prepared by The Population Institute, has been distributed widely, including to national organizations concerned with the advancement of women.

V. INFORMATION SUPPORT SYSTEM AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE

59. As required by the strategy, project-related data were compiled regularly for the development of a computerized project information retrieval system. This system will be integrated with the Fund’s management information system (MIS) once the MIS is fully functioning. In the meantime, the Fund will continue to provide relevant information on developments in the sector to all field staff. UNFPA also prepared for wide circulation, an overview of women, population and development projects it supported in 1986 and 1987, to highlight the importance that it attaches to the status of women and their critical role in population and development programmes. Special sections in the Executive Director’s report on activities in 1987 and 1988 were devoted to activities included in the strategy. Several articles in UNFPA’s quarterly journal Populi and Population newsletter dealt with various aspects of the status of women and its interrelationships with demographic issues. The Fund’s newsletter included articles on pertinent issues related to women’s health, fertility and role in development, among them: "Women: Central to Development"; "Thailand’s Success Story"; "Viet Nam Tackles High Fertility Rate"; "Education, Late Marriages, Slow Sri Lankan Growth Rates"; "Women’s Co-operatives and Rural Moroccans".

60. The China-Japan Workshop on Population Aging, organized with UNFPA assistance in 1988, included special problems of elderly women among identified research priorities. During the Sofia Conference of the
Interparliamentary Union (IPU) in September 1988, UNFPA suggested that the subject of "Women and the Problem of Aging" be included among topics for future consideration. The subject will be taken up during the next informal meeting of IPU, in Bucharest, March 1989.

61. In 1988, UNFPA undertook a review and assessment of experience in the population field over the last two decades (see document DP/1989/37). In each sector reviewed, the assessment included information of direct relevance to women, identifying areas requiring further attention in this regard.

62. In 1988 and early 1989, UNFPA undertook a review of selected projects in Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Jordan, Paraguay, Zaire and Zambia. The purpose of the reviews is to document achievements and constraints with regard to the incorporation of gender-specific issues in the context of each project, with the results providing guidance for UNFPA staff, national counterparts, regional advisers and consultants undertaking project formulation and development, appraisal and implementation. (The completed reports are available from UNFPA.)

63. The 1989 State of World Population Report, entitled "Investing in the Future: Women are the Focus for the Nineties", examines the various roles of women and analyzes their interrelationships with other aspects of population and development efforts. This highly respected publication is showcased each year in a major international media event and is distributed worldwide. The choice of this topic for the 1989 issue, which marks UNFPA's 20th anniversary, is another indication of the importance given by the Fund to women and their concerns.

VI. CO-ORDINATION WITH OTHER UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES

64. As noted throughout this report, inter-agency collaboration at the headquarters level and in the field was extremely important in the implementation of the first two years of the strategy. The Fund has co-operated with and contributed to women in development activities of a number of organizations within the United Nations system, including FAO, ILO, INSTRAW, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women in Vienna, WFP, WHO, IFAD and the World Bank. UNFPA participated in numerous inter-agency task forces, working groups and meetings organized within the United Nations system, such as the inter-agency meeting organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Vienna; contributed to reports on the Systemwide Medium-term Plan for Women and Cross-organizational Programme Analysis on Women; and provided inputs into reports regularly prepared by the Vienna office in response to General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions.

65. The JCGP Working Group on Women in Development actively organized and conducted training workshops at the regional level. In addition, the Working Group took the necessary initiatives to ensure that sufficient attention was given to women's concerns in the work of other JCGP sub-committees.
66. In line with inter-agency activities at headquarters, efforts were made at the field level to promote inter-agency collaboration with the participation of local counterparts. In Ethiopia, an inter-agency group on women in development was established. In Zaire, an inter-agency working group was also constituted, and one of its first tasks was to formulate a national policy and strategy concerning women in development. In Yemen, the Fund collaborated with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the International Centre for Research on Women to design a women in development strategy and plan of action to promote the role and status of women in development. A significant outcome of the inter-agency co-ordination group on women in development in China was the formulation of a proposed UNFPA/UNICEF maternal and child health and family planning project for the 300 poorest counties in the country. UNFPA disseminates information on these field initiatives to its staff at headquarters and in the field to encourage similar action in other countries.

VII. CO-ORDINATION WITHIN THE FUND

67. The successful implementation of the strategy’s work plan for 1987 and 1988 was the result of close co-operation and collaboration among all organizational units within the Fund. As required by the strategy, each UNFPA organizational unit prepares a work plan each year that outlines activities to be undertaken in a particular sector, country or region towards implementation of the strategy. In view of the priority given by UNFPA to population programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Fund elaborated a comprehensive Plan of Action for 1988-1991 to ensure the systematic integration of women's concerns into population and development activities, taking into account the specific needs of the region. (The Plan of Action has been made available to all interested organizations and will be available to Council members at the thirty-sixth session.)

68. As recognized in the strategy, the effective implementation of work plans "will depend to a great extent on the guidance and technical support provided by the Special Unit". The Special Unit is responsible for maintaining close co-operation with the Geographical and Technical and Evaluation Divisions in order to facilitate their tasks related to women, population and development and for monitoring the strategy's progress throughout the Fund. The Special Unit also advises the Executive Director in the formulation of policies and programme procedures required for achieving the Fund’s objectives concerning the incorporation of women’s interests as well as enhancing women’s participation in population policies and programmes.

69. In November 1988, the Fund re-constituted its Working Group on Women, Population and Development to collaborate with the Special Unit in carrying out the Fund’s mandate in this area. The Working Group, which is chaired by the Assistant Executive Director, comprises representatives of each organizational unit within the Fund. A new responsibility of the Working Group is to review the situation of female staff in the Fund with respect to recruitment, career development and committee memberships and to recommend to the Executive Director any improvement that may be required.

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70. The Special Unit is assisted by an Advisory Panel on Women, Population and Development, established in late 1986. The 12-member panel is composed of women from developing and developed countries who have been selected on the basis of their individual talents and expertise. They advise the Fund on policies, strategies and programmes designed to systematically incorporate women’s interests in population programmes. The panel met for the first time in January 1987 to review the draft of the strategy, which was subsequently approved by the Council. Moreover, as specified in the work plan of the strategy, the panel met again to review the draft of this report. During the two-day meeting held in New York on 23-24 February 1989, the panel thoroughly discussed the draft report as well as the work of the Special Unit. The panel’s suggestions have been incorporated into this report.

71. The panel expressed its appreciation for the Fund’s achievements in implementing the strategy’s 1987-1988 work plan. In addition, the panel made specific recommendations concerning strengthening the position of the Special Unit, creating national advisory panels, and securing greater participation of panel members in aspects of project development and implementation. (The report of the meeting is available from UNFPA.)

VIII. FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND DIRECTIONS

72. The main objective of the Fund in this area in the next two years is to continue implementation of the activities outlined in the work plans for 1989 and 1990. As required by the strategy, the Fund will conduct a mid-term review of the implementation strategy in 1989 to assess its achievements in incorporating women’s concerns in all UNFPA-supported projects. The review will focus primarily on the achievements of the 1987 and 1988 work plans and other important aspects.

73. In view of the problems highlighted in this report with regard to current programming practices, the Fund will initiate in selected countries of different regions the application of procedures for incorporating gender-specific issues in early stages of situation analyses and programme development. This process will entail extensive consultations with local authorities and women in development specialists so that appropriate mechanisms can be identified for incorporating women’s interests in Fund-supported programmes and projects. The Fund will continue to focus attention on training activities to ensure that all international staff as well as national programme and project directors, national planners, policy-makers and other decision-makers acquire the skills for incorporating women’s concerns and needs in all population and development activities.

74. In consultation with the national authorities concerned in selected countries, national advisory panels on women, population and development will be created. Each panel will be composed of knowledgeable individuals from different substantive sectors who will be in contact with UNFPA field staff to advise on and support activities that take into account the
specific socio-cultural and other prevailing local practices that have a significant bearing on the type of programmes to be considered for the advancement of women.

75. The Fund will continue its awareness-creation activities, particularly at the country level, on the importance of the role and status of women, their linkage with demographic issues, and the need to address the women's perspective in all population and development policies and programmes. Activities that have already been initiated and have shown indications of success in some countries, particularly those in Africa, will be accelerated, and similar activities will be undertaken in other regions.

76. The reviews undertaken in 1988 of selected population and development projects will be continued, with increasing focus on identifying the factors that contribute to the success of projects as they relate to the improvement in the situation of women. Furthermore, an intensive review of one population country programme in each geographical region will be carried out to ascertain the extent to which the issue of women, population and development has been incorporated into every facet of staff work, the effects of women in development training on staff efforts, and successes or constraints in the implementation of the strategy.

77. Recognizing the importance of the media in disseminating information on the Fund's policy, strategy and mandate in the area of women, population and development, UNFPA plans to organize in 1989 an international seminar on the strategy for representatives of the media. The aim will be to enlist the support of the media in the Fund's efforts to create awareness of women, population and development issues.

78. The Fund will continue to strengthen collaboration with other United Nations agencies and NGOs in the implementation of the strategy, particularly in the areas of training, joint programme and project reviews, and data collection. An important area for collaboration in the next two years will be the assessment of the effects of the economic crisis in developing countries on women, their health, education and employment, as well as the development of strategies and programmes that will not only cushion women against the effects of adjustment programmes but will also ensure long-term sustainable development.

79. For future years, the chief focus of the Special Unit's efforts will be the provision of technical guidance, co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Fund's various policies, directives and programme procedures issued for the purpose of effective incorporation of gender-specific issues in population programmes. In accordance with the Fund's general direction towards decentralized programming, the activities of the Special Unit will be directed mainly at field level in order to facilitate the tasks involved in developing and implementing plans and programmes that respond fully to the needs of all populations concerned.
IX. BUDGETARY EXPENDITURES

80. For the implementation of the activities included in the strategy, the Council had approved the amount of $250,000 for 1987 and $500,000 for 1988. The expenditures given below cover the costs of staff training, development of training materials, project support, programme/project reviews and publication of reports.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>1988</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>$99,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Support</td>
<td>102,150</td>
<td>303,092</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme/Project Reviews</td>
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<td>53,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
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<td>17,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$216,150</strong></td>
<td><strong>$543,872</strong></td>
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81. The budget approved for the implementation of the activities included in the strategy's work plan for 1989 and 1990 is $500,000 per year. No additional budgetary resources are requested at this point.