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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Multinational Programming and Operational
Centre for North Africa (MULPOC)

9-10 March 1981
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Inaugural Meeting of the Subregional Committee on
the Integration of Women in Development

ESTABLISHMENT OF SUB-REGIONAL MACHINERY
TO ENHANCE THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PROCESS OF ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTH AFRICAN SUB-REGION AND TO PROMOTE AND
GUIDE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ECA'S TRAINING AND
RESEARCH CENTRE FOR WOMEN

ATRCW-81-023

K-49.1

A. Background

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), since its establishment in 1958, has increasingly been concerned that all available human resources for the development of African countries are fully utilized. To this end, ECA recognized in its programme as early as 1960 the great potential of women in Africa to accelerate the pace of national and Africa regional development. This recognition is based on a realization of the critical roles women play in health, nutrition, population, agricultural production and the increasing responsibilities they have for the general welfare of entire households. In a developing region such as Africa, where mass poverty, disease, malnutrition, hunger and ignorance act as serious constraints on national development, any input into the raising of living levels of the people becomes at once an economic instrument and a goal desirable in itself. In view of this, the Commission has been concerned that its resolutions on women be translated into realistic programmes of activity at national, sub-regional and regional levels of operation.

2. Activities which have been sponsored by the Commission to assure the full integration of women, together with men, as human resources, in development activities may roughly be divided into four stages, as follows: 1/

- Stage I 1960-68 : This stage consisted mainly of the organization and participation in various regional meetings and seminars.
- Stage II 1969-72 : The Commission's strategy changed significantly during this period, when conferences and seminars became more technical and dynamic. Two posts were created at ECA, in the Human Resources Development Division, to follow-up the implementation of resolutions at national and regional levels; and, following consultations with member States, the ECA Five-Year Programme for Pre-vocational and Vocational Training of Girls and Women (1972-76) was instituted. Training courses and seminars, at national level, were planned with governments, beginning with the East and Southern Africa sub-region.
- Stage III 1973-74 : This period marked the beginning of action programmes, with the Itinerant Training Workshops in home Economics and other Family-Oriented Fields (with FAO), and three-day seminars on

1/ See : Origin and Growth of the African Training and Research Centre for Women of the Economic Commission for Africa, ECA, Addis Ababa, 1977 E/CN.14/ATRCW/77/BD.7.

National Commissions on Women and Development and Women's Bureaux. A sub-regional workshop on Women's Participation in Handicrafts and Other Small-Scale Industries took place in Zambia, and the Regional Conference for Africa on the Integration of Women in Development, with Special Reference to Population Factors, was held in Addis Ababa, in 1974. This Conference formulated the African Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development 2/, which later became an integral part of the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of International Women's Year, Mexico City 1975, and approved by the United Nations General Assembly (Resolution 3520 (XXX)).

Stage IV

1975 :

The African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) was officially inaugurated in March 1975, following resolution 269 (XII) of the ECA Conference of Ministers, February 1975. The Centre forms a Section within the Social Development Division of the Commission, and its work is co-ordinated with other relevant Divisions. The Centre's objectives are:

- to carry out research in areas relevant to the integration of women in development with emphasis on rural areas;
- to provide in-service training, formally and on-the-job;
- to organize the African women's development task force;
- to serve as an information and resource Centre.

Major subject areas included in the activities of the Centre are the following: food and nutrition, including food production, distribution, storage and preservation; handicrafts and small-scale businesses and industries; management of family resources, budgeting, use of labour-saving devices and home improvement; upgrading of wage-employed women; integration of women in national and project planning; and communication and

organizational skills. With this comprehensive set of disciplines and activities, it is believed that a significant movement toward women's full participation in development can be achieved at both national and regional levels, through the various activities of the Centre as described below.

B. National, Sub-regional and Regional Machinery for the Integration of Women in Development Plans and Projects

3. Regional Conferences in Togo (1964), Accra (1968), Addis Ababa (1969), Rabat (1971) and Addis Ababa (1974) have recommended the creation or strengthening of national and regional machineries, at governmental and inter-governmental levels, to assure the full participation of women in national development. ^{3/} At the Rabat Conference on Education, Vocational Training and Work Opportunities for Girls and Women in African countries, a Special Working Group was created to propose the nature and functions of such machineries. At Addis Ababa in 1974, the Region's Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development in Africa ^{4/} adopted the Rabat Resolutions which were in turn endorsed by the ECA Conference of Ministers in Nairobi, February 1975. The Regional Conference on Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action, Nouakchott, Mauritania, 27 September - 2 October 1977, adopted resolutions on:

- (a) the Creation or Strengthening of National Machineries;
- (b) the Establishment of an African Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development.

The Resolutions appear as Annex I and Annex II to this document.

Specific objectives

4. The above-mentioned resolutions of Nouakchott and the Conference paper on the structure and Terms of Reference of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (see Annex III), which is an integral part of the Conference Report, spell out in detail the specific objectives of the Regional and Sub-regional machineries. The machineries adopted by the Conference are intended to assure women's recognition and involvement in all development plans and projects from

^{3/} See National Commissions on Women and Development and Women's Bureaux 073-924, ECA, Addis Ababa, 1973.

^{4/} Op. Cit.

grass-root level through national, sub-regional and regional levels, as well as through a communication and planning network which is integrated with the government and ECA structures at these various levels.

5. At the Africa Regional level, the specific objectives of the African Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development are:

- (a) to assist in building up institutions and programmes especially designed to promote the participation of women in development;
- (b) to assess the changing conditions of women; and
- (c) to set standards and legal models.

6. At each Sub-Regional level, it is recommended, for the consideration of the Council of Ministers, that a special Committee on the Implementation of Plans of Action on Integration of Women in Development should be created and that this Committee should function within the framework of the existing MULPOC. Specific objectives of the Sub-regional Committees will be:

- (a) to receive and review proposals submitted by the national commissions on women and development or similar machineries responsible for ensuring the integration of women in all sectors of national development, with a view of obtaining technical assistance to implement projects;
- (b) to disseminate information and mass communication;
- (c) to exchange knowledge and experience through workshops, seminars, study tours or other technical meetings;
- (d) to ensure that sub-regional development programmes take full cognizance of integration of women in development;
- (e) to initiate country studies and assist national institutions to identify the types of information needed for a proper understanding of the situation of women and the factors facilitating or limiting their advancement;
- (f) to assist with the design and implementation of surveys for the collection of data and other information; and
- (g) to provide clearing house facilities for the exchange of information which promote co-ordination and mutual support among programmes designed to promote the advancement of women at various levels and for the sharing of relevant experience among the countries of the region.

7. It is further recommended that the Council of Ministers may wish to consider assuring the presence of women experts on the Sub-regional Committee, when it is duly established.

8. On the part of ECA, staff members of the ATRCW will be assigned to the MULPOC, in order both to assist in the establishment and operation of the Sub-Regional Committee on the Implementation of Plans of Action on Integration of Women in Development and, in collaboration with the MULPOC team, to assist in the planning, implementation and evaluation of approved projects in the countries of the Sub-region. Appropriate liaison between the work of the Sub-regional Committee and its MULPOC, on the one hand, and that of the individual national machineries existing in the countries of the Sub-Region, on the other hand, will accordingly be established.

**Regional Conference on the Implementation of
National, Regional and World Plans of
Action for the Integration of Women in
Development**

Nouakchott, 27 September - 2 October 1977

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

RESOLUTION I

CREATION OR STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL MACHINERIES

The Conference,

Recalling Resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the World Plan of Action, Resolutions of Conference by African Women - especially Rabat 1971 - and Resolution 269 (XII) of the ECA Conference of Ministers,

Noting with satisfaction the increasing resources being devoted by Governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies including those of the United Nations system and non-governmental agencies to consideration of women's contributions to development,

- 1. Urges Governments in the Africa region to continue and intensify their efforts to assure the promotion of women in all social, economic and cultural plans and programmes;**
- 2. Invites the ECA Conference of Ministers to encourage member States to establish or strengthen their national commissions, bureaux or similar governmental machinery for women's integration;**
- 3. Requests the ECA Training and Research Centre for Women to augment its assistance to Governments in the establishment of such machinery and in increasing its competence for planning and action.**

Regional Conference on the Implementation of
National, Regional and World Plans of Action
for the Integration of Women in Development

Nouakchott, 27 September - 2 October 1977

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

RESOLUTION IV

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AFRICAN REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
FOR THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

The Conference,

Recalling the provisions of the Regional Plan of Action of Africa for the Integration of Women in Development adopted by the Regional Seminar on the Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors in June 1974 recommending the establishment of machinery by the Economic Commission for Africa at the regional level in the form of a Regional Committee to, inter-alia, co-ordinate the work of the national commissions, advise the ECA Women's Programme etc.

Recalling also the provisions of the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of IWY in Mexico City in June 1975 which suggested the establishment of a regional standing committee by the Regional Commission in order to develop and implement effective strategies to further the objectives of the Plan in the region;

Aware of the great need for an integrated organizational machinery within the administrative structure of ECA which would be responsible for planning and programming from the regional and sub-regional to the national levels;

Recommends that the Executive Secretary of ECA, after consultation with the ECA Council of Ministers should take the necessary action for the establishment:

- (i) at the regional level of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development; and
- (ii) at the Sub-regional level, Committees on the Implementation of Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development within the framework of the existing Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) based at Lusaka, Yaoundé and Gisenyi, Niamey and Tangiers, in line with the structure and terms of reference of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee contained in Document E/CN.14/ATRCW/77/WD.4/ADD.2 adopted by the Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development.

Annex II

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Further recommends that the Regional Conference on Integration of Women in Development - of which the current one shall be considered as the first session - be convened once every 3 years, in order to review progress and make proposals in respect of the activities of the ATRCW in particular and of the integration of women in development in general. The next one however, in view of the ECOSOC Resolution 2062 (LXII) adopted at its 62nd session which requested the convening of regional preparatory conference for the World Conference of 1980 should be held in 1979. The report and recommendations of the Regional Conference should be submitted to the ECA Conference of Ministers through the Executive Secretary of the Commission.

Regional Conference on the Implementation of
National, Regional and World Plans of Action
for the Integration of Women in Development

Nouakchott, 27 September - 2 October 1977

STRUCTURE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE
AFRICA REGIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE
INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

1. In the substantive document, E/CN.14/ATRCW/77/WD.4 - Possible Regional Machinery to promote Co-operation and Co-ordination in Africa, two alternative regional structures have been offered :

- (a) The Africa Regional Standing Committee, whose draft terms of references and a suggestion concerning the composition of the Standing Committees as well as details relating to the structure and activities of the ATRCW have been given at Annex I, Parts A and B of the basic document, and
- (b) The Africa Organization for Women in Development, an independent body, whose constitution and terms of reference have been spelt, in Annex II of the basic document.

2. As a result of further consultations which have taken place since the issuance of document E/CN.14/ATRCW/77/WD.4, the Conference Secretariat now wishes to recommend strongly, for the consideration of this Conference the following revised regional machinery for the promotion of co-operation and co-ordination in the process of integration of women in African development.

Revised structure for the regional machinery

3. The regional structure which is now proposed envisages the strengthening of the existing ATRCW work and a large measure of decentralization of the planning and programming of activities to the national and sub-regional levels; and the achievement of a three-tier machinery (national, sub-regional and regional) which is well integrated into the administrative system of the Economic Commission for Africa.
4. At the national level, the national commissions and/or women's bureaux, councils and other national machineries established by governments, will constitute the focal points.

5. At the sub-regional level, a Committee on the implementation of plans of action on integration of women in development, will be established. Each Committee will function within the framework of the existing ECA Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) based at:

- (a) LUSAKA, for the countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa sub-region;
- (b) YAOUNDE and GISENYI, for the countries in the Central (I and II) Africa sub-region;
- (c) NIAMEY, for the countries in the West Africa sub-region; and
- (d) TANGIERS, for the countries in the North Africa sub-region.

NOTE : The MULPOCs are currently being re-organized in order to make them more effective instruments of the groups of member States concerned in the promotion of multi-national sub-regional co-operation. Activities of the MULPOCs are conducted both at ministerial council and at technical levels; and the proposed sub-regional Committees on the Integration of Women in Development will function as technical/advisory committee of the MULPOCs. The activities of the MULPOCs are closely related to existing economic grouping in the sub-region. For example, the ECOWAS Ministerial Council serves as a policy organ for the West African MULPOC.

6. At the regional level, an African Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development will be constituted in order to:

- (a) assist in building up institutions and programmes especially designed to promote the participation of women in development;
- (b) assess the changing conditions of women; and
- (c) set standards and legal models.

Terms of reference of the sub-regional committee

The sub-regional committees will:

- (a) receive and review proposals submitted by the national commissions on women and development or similar machineries responsible for ensuring the integration of women in all sectors of national development, with a view of obtaining technical assistance to implement projects;
- (b) disseminate information and mass communication;

- (c) exchange knowledge and experience through workshops, seminars, study tours and other technical meetings;
- (d) ensure that sub-regional development programmes take full cognizance of integration of women in development;
- (e) initiate country studies and assist national institutions to identify the types of information needed for a proper understanding of the situation of women and the factors facilitating or limiting their advancement;
- (f) assist with the design and implementation of surveys for the collection of data and other information; and
- (g) provide clearing house facilities for the exchange of information which promote co-ordination and mutual support among programmes designed to promote the advancement of women at various levels and for the sharing of relevant experience among the countries of the region.

Forteenth session/Fifth meeting of the
Conference of Ministers

Rabat, 20 - 28 March 1979

ARCC/ATRCW/79/Res. 6 : Structure and terms of reference of the Africa Regional
Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women
in Development

The Conference of Ministers,

Bearing in mind the recommendations of the Nouakchott Regional
Conference on the implementation of the national, regional and world plan
of action for the integration of women in development,

Having considered the report of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating
Committee for the Integration of Women in Development,

Aware of the need to integrate the Africa Regional Co-ordinating
Committee within the system of the deliberative organs of the Economic
Commission for Africa,

1. Takes note of the report and recommendations of the Africa Regional
Co-ordinating Committee on the desirability of amending the constitution
and terms of reference of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee;
2. Decides to amend the constitution and terms of reference of the Africa
Regional Co-ordinating Committee:

(A) By replacing the provisions relating to the composition of the
Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee and its officers with the following:

"The Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee shall be constituted as
follows:

1. Three members designated by each subregional committee (with
the right to vote);
2. The Executive Secretary of ECA (without the right to vote), and
the Administrative Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity
(without the right to vote);
3. (i) The Pan African Women's Organization
(ii) United Nations agencies
(iii) The representatives of donor agencies,

the above will be invited as observers if a particular subject under
consideration is of interest to them.

(B) The Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee shall elect a bureau composed of:

Chairman
First and second Vice-Chairman
Two rapporteurs.

(C) The terms of office of the Bureau will be two years. The Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee will meet once a year when convened by the Executive Secretary after consultation with the Bureau".

(D) The ATRCW will act as secretariat of the Regional Co-ordinating Committee.

(E) The rules of procedure of the Committee shall be the same as those of the Economic Commission for Africa.

(F) By replacing the terms of reference of the Regional Co-ordinating Committee with the following:

"1. To harmonize and co-ordinate the subregional programmes approved within the MULPOCs;

2. To evaluate and implement work programmes, bearing in mind the availability of resources;

3. To organize the exchange of information and experiences;

4. To be represented in the activities and meetings of the United Nations and other relevant organizations;

5. To mobilize resources;

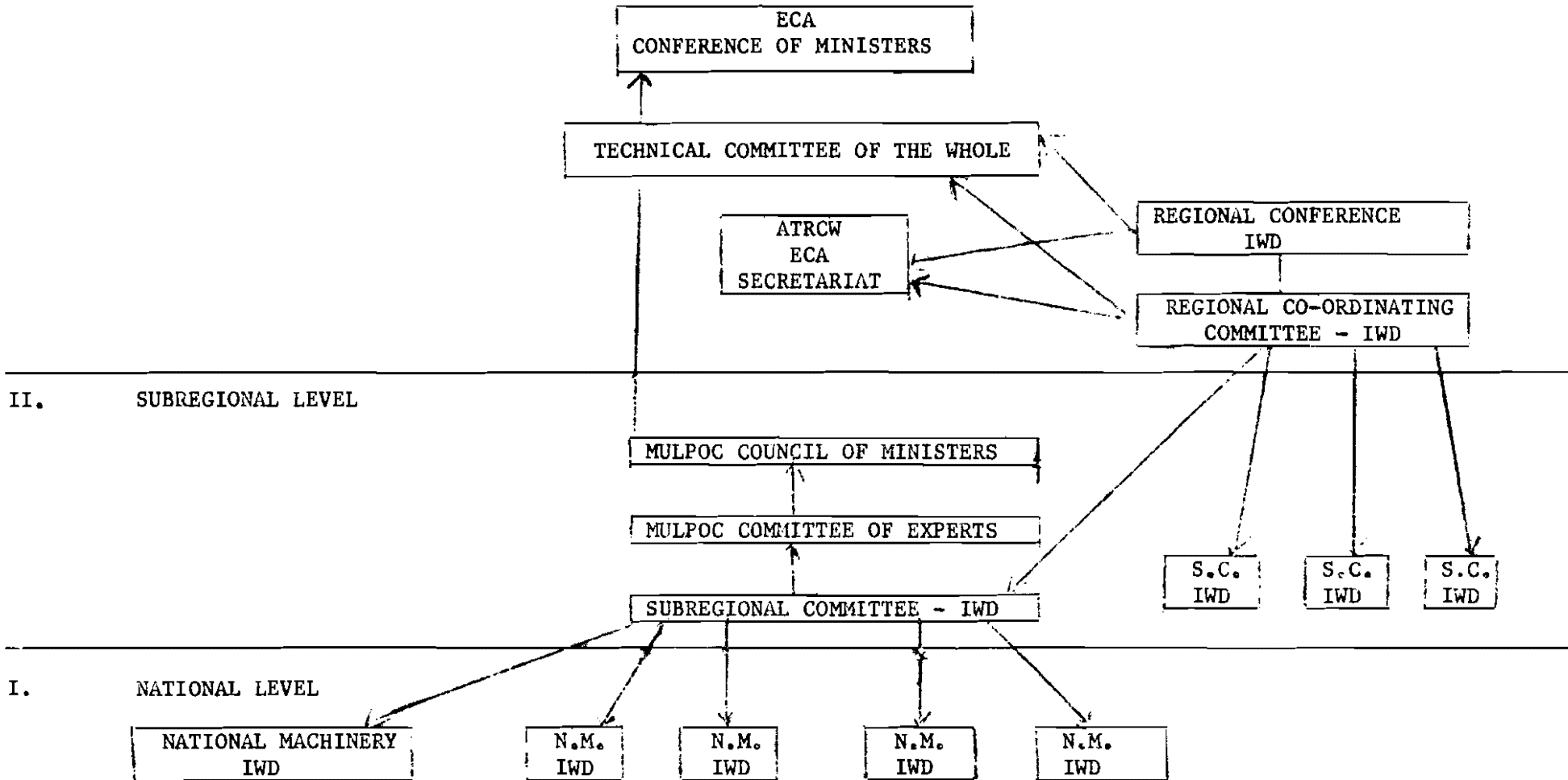
6. To review and evaluate activities carried out in the region in the framework of programmes for the advancement of women;

7. To convene the African Regional Conference on Women and Development every three years;

8. To report to the deliberative organs of the Economic Commission for Africa on the activities and programmes carried out in the subregion (Committee of officials, Council of Ministers)."

NATIONAL, SUBREGIONAL AND REGIONAL MACHINERY FOR THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN
IN DEVELOPMENT

III. REGIONAL LEVEL



Abbreviations: NM : National Machinery
SC : Subregional Committee

IWD : Integration of Women in Development
ATRCW : African Training and Research Centre for Women