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*Multinational Programming and Operational
Centre (UNECA/MULPOC) for Northern Africa*

28 - 30 March 1994

Tangier, Morocco

**REPORT ON SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE PREPARATION OF
NATIONAL REPORTS FOR THE REGIONAL AND WORLD
CONFERENCES ON WOMEN**

INTRODUCTION AND ATTENDANCE

1. The Sub-regional workshop on the preparation of National reports for the Regional and World Conferences on Women, organized by the African Training and Research Centre for Women, was convened from 28 to 30 March 1994, in Tangier, Morocco for the North African Sub-region.
2. The aim of the Workshop was to sensitize and inform Member States of the objectives of the Regional and World Conferences, to clarify the issues related to the overall preparation of the two conferences; to assist member states in the preparation of the national reports; and to further ensure the maximum understanding of the guidelines for the preparation of the national reports as provided by the Conference Secretariat at the Un Headquarters in New York.
3. The workshop was well attended with almost full representation from five out of six north African countries as following: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia. Libya could not participate. Participants expected Mauritania to have participated as member of Maghreb Arab Union at this sub-regional workshop. Participants were however informed that the workshop was organized according to the ECA based Multinational Programme and Operational Centres (MULPOC) groupings. In this regard, Mauritania attended and participated in the West Africa Sub-regional workshop which was held in Niamey, Niger.
4. South Africa also attended the Meeting with special consideration from the ECA.
5. Representing the UN Family was the ILO, Algeria Office.
6. The following Inter-governmental Organizations also participated in the meeting: The African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD), AATPO, THE MAGHREB ARAB UNION, and the ARAB LABOUR OFFICE.
7. The Representative of the Governor of Tangier was present at the Official Opening of the Workshop.
8. The Guest of Honor was Princess Lalla Fatma Zohra of Morocco.

OPENING CEREMONY (Agenda item 1)

9. The Chief of UNECA/ATRCW, Dr. Mebo Mwaniki, presided over the opening Session and on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the ECA and herself welcomed the participants to the city of Tangier and to the Meeting. Mrs. Mwaniki expressed satisfaction and mentioned that ECA was very honored by the presence of Princess Lalla Fatima

Zohra and the Representative of the Governor of Tangier to this sub-regional workshop. This demonstrated the interest and commitment of the Government of Morocco in the Women and gender related issues, particularly women's concerns in the region, she added. Dr. Mwaniki concluded by thanking the Representative of the Governor of Tangier and Princess Lalla Fatima Zohra for their presence and especially thanked the Princess for her inspiring speech.

10. The Executive Secretary in his speech read by Mr. Don Oben, Officer In-Charge of the Multinational Programme and Operational Centre (MULPOC), Tangier, welcomed the guests and thanked the host country. The Executive Secretary statement focused on the importance of the preparatory process for the national reports on the assessment of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies leading to the regional and global Conferences.
11. Delegates were reminded of the urgency for those countries which have hitherto not established national committees to do so in accordance with the resolutions of the UN commission on the Status of Women and the ECA Conference of Ministers,. Which was vital to ensure a sound and comprehensive preparatory process.
12. It was pointed out that national committees should collect data from as wide a cross-section as possible with emphasis being placed on the role of young people in this regard. Similarly, the quality of the national reports was only as good as the quality of their data input. To this end, he said that, national committees should develop an effective communications strategy which involves and informs the public on the regional conference preparatory to the Fourth World Conference on Women.
13. It was stressed that national committees should be allocated sufficient funds to implement their programme of action and have the right to mobilize funds for their activities. Delegates were urged to console donors who have expressed an interest to provide assistance.
14. In this context, delegates were reminded that everyone involved in the preparatory process was working towards the same goal: a detailed analysis of how far Africa has gone in implementing the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and how the process could be accelerated.
15. Delegates were also asked to give attention to the specific targets set in the Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s in assessing achievements to date and in analyzing how problem areas can be minimized as Africa enters the 21st century.

16. With regard to the communication strategies, the Executive Secretary in his statement further informed the participants of the newly quarterly news letter in French and English which had been launched to disseminate information on the preparatory activities and the offer of the 3 prizes the ECA had organized for the best films on women in the First Africa Film Festival competition sponsored by URTNA, in Nairobi, Kenya.

17. Finally, bearing in mind the importance of the Platform for Action in guiding the future advancement of women, delegates were reminded that the national reports should give an accurate reflection of the situation and provide a vision of future goals to be attained in the next century. It was stressed also that the preparations of the national reports should be completed and submitted to ECA and the Conference Secretariat on time by the deadlines given.

18. Following the delivery of the Executive Secretary's statement by the Officer-in-charge of the Tangier MULPOC, Dr. Mwaniki welcomed and called upon Princess Lalla Fatima Zohra to address the delegates and open the workshop officially.

19. Princess Lalla Fatima Zohra, in her precise speech welcomed everyone to the city of Tangier and the Kingdom of Morocco. She expressed her pleasure to be at the Workshop and further affirmed to the representatives and delegates that the National Union of Moroccan Women was making great efforts and doing all in its power for the integration and advancement of women in general and was giving women in the rural environment particular concern. The Association was vigilant to follow its march for development for the benefit of women and believed in peace and cooperation in all areas among countries, she added.

20. In conclusion, the Princess welcomed the delegates again and wished them a successful workshop.

Vote of thanks

21. Following the Statement of the Princess, the Tunisian delegate, on behalf of the delegates took the floor and expressed gratitude and respect to His Majesty King HASSAN II for the Moroccan hospitality and further thanked Princess Lalla Fatma Zohra for the encouragement of and devotion to the advancement of women in Morocco, the Maghreb and Africa. She further expressed her thanks to the Executive Secretary of the ECA and the Director of the MULPOC for having given them the opportunity to meet, consult and exchange experiences and points of view in order to contribute to the preparation of the Fourth World Conference on Women. She further acknowledged that the proceedings of the workshop will constitute an important milestone and an effective participation.

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22. She concluded by thanking once more the Kingdom of Morocco and the International and Regional Organizations which were taking part in the fulfillment of this workshop.

ELECTION OF THE BUREAU (Agenda item 2)

The meeting elected the following:

- 1. Morocco - Chairperson**
- 2. Tunisia - Vice Chairperson**
- 3. Algeria - Rapporteur**

ADOPTION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA, WORK PROGRAMME AND WORKING HOURS (Agenda item 3)

i) The meeting adopted the following Provisional Agenda:

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Election of the bureau of the meeting
3. Adoption of the provisional agenda and programme of work
4. Review of the outline of national reports
5. Review of progress at national level concerning preparation of national reports
6. Review of progress in preparation for the Regional and World Conferences at regional level
7. Discuss and develop communication strategies and information campaigns to ensure wide publicity of the Regional and World Conferences
8. Discuss measures and mechanisms to coordinate activities relating to the preparation of the Regional and World Conferences on Women as well as the Priority areas for the regional Platform for Action
9. Any other business
10. Adoption of the report
11. Closing Ceremony

ii) The Meeting adopted the following working hours;

Morning session	09:00 - 13:00
Afternoon session	15:00 - 18:00

REVIEW OF THE GUIDELINES OF THE NATIONAL REPORTS (Agenda item 4)

23. The ECA Representative introduced this agenda item by stating that the purpose of this workshop was to clear any confusion and misunderstanding with regard to the guidelines for the preparation of the National Report and to ensure uniformity in the reports of the respective countries.

24. The ECA Secretariat further gave a general overview on the aim of the Regional and Global Conferences which is to answer the basic questions which are:

- i)** What has been achieved since 1985?
- ii)** What are the obstacles?

25. The Secretariat reminded the delegates that the objective of both the Arusha and Nairobi Conferences (Regional and Global) was to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women (1975-1985) on Equality, Development and Peace, and that the strategies adopted entitled;

- a)** The Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of African Women beyond the United Nations Decade for Women; and
- b)** The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the year 2000.

26. The Representative gave a brief introduction to paragraph 35 of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies which emphasized the Declaration of Mexico on Equality of Women and their contribution to Development and Peace, Regional plans of Action, the programme of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women, Equality, Development and Peace, with the Sub-themes - Employment, Health and Education which constitute the basis for the strategies and concrete measures to be pursued up to the year 2000.

27. The Secretariat further reminded the delegates and observers that, the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies were adopted by consensus by 157 countries represented at the Conference in July 1985 and later was adopted without vote by the 40th session of the United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 40/08. In this connexion, the Fifth African Regional and Fourth World Conferences on Women to be held in 1994 and 1995 respectively will review and appraise the implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies by examining progress made, obstacles experienced in their implementation and come up with future actions that would accelerate their implementation.

28. The Secretariat informed the workshop that the guidelines that were going to be discussed were provided by the Commission on the Status of Women to ensure uniform framework. However, there was a provision for flexibility which was intended to cater for individual country variations in dealing with the different issues.

29. The Secretariat highlighted the "eight critical areas of concern" identified by the Commission on the Status of women and further informed the workshop that the themes of the United Nations Decade for Women - Equality, Development and Peace- remain valid today in preparing for the 1995 review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies. She further stressed that in order to ensure broad national and international dissemination, the main body of each national report should be short, usually not more than 50 pages. It should feature the most important national priorities and issues for the advancement of women.

30. The representative further clarified to the workshop that the recommendations and priorities in the national reports would constitute part of the Platform for Action and that information and data from the National Reports would be used to write up an Assessment Regional Report by ECA to discuss and adopt during the Fifth Regional Conference.

31. The Secretariat stressed that the formation of the national committees was vital for the preparation process in general and for the report writing in particular and therefore urged the member states to strengthen the committees.

Composition of the National Committees and Responsibility

Composition

i) The National Committee members should be composed of people from the following areas:

- Ministries of health, education, planning and statistics, social affairs, economics and other relevant ministries and departments;
- Legal bodies;
- NGOs;
- National Research Institutions;
- Other experts and intellectuals on the issue of Gender analysis in development.

ii) **Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the committee should be:

- to take the overall leadership of the preparation of the report;

- *to ensure the participation of all groups concerned and relevant to the gender issue;*
- *to ensure to produce a document that will serve to mobilize women and men to action in the critical areas of concern and have impact on the overall objective of the two conferences.*

The Objectives of the National Reports:

- *To measure the level and evolution of women's and men's participation in the political and economic decision making bodies;*
- *To review the current activities and achievements of governments, national machineries and NGOs with regard to women development;*
- *To highlight the practical problems that hindered the overall progress;*
- *To provide recommendations and strategies to further empower women at every level.*

32. Thereafter, the Secretariat read the guidelines in details and urged the country representatives that the reports should be prepared in time and also informed them of the Regional preparatory Conferences which would take place as follows:

<i>Africa</i>	<i>16 - 23 November 1994, Dakar, Senegal</i>
<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>	<i>26 - 30 September 1994 in Buenos Aires, Argentina</i>
<i>Western Asia</i>	<i>6 - 10 November 1994, Oman, Jordan</i>
<i>Europe</i>	<i>October 1994, Vienna</i>
<i>Asia and Pacific</i>	<i>7 - 14 June 1994, Jakarta, Indonesia</i>

REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN PREPARATION OF THE REGIONAL AND WORLD CONFERENCES AT NATIONAL LEVEL (Agenda item 5)

33. Under this Agenda item, the workshop participants gave an overview of preparations in their countries for the Dakar and Beijing, (Regional and Global) Conferences.

Algeria

34. In her presentation, the delegate from Algeria stated that Algeria has constituted the National Committee for preparations for the Dakar and Beijing Conferences which was presided over by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was responsible for the supervision of all activities related to these two Conferences. A national coordinator has been designated and is aided by two assistants who lead the working groups.

35. She informed the meeting that, three working groups have been set up to analyze and evaluate the implementation of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies and the three goals of Equality, Development and Peace. An editorial committee has been established and is currently responsible for finalizing the report. In fact, the late reception of information and the difficulty in disseminating it at the national level due to the limited means available have prevented a wider awareness raising campaign among the various sectors of the population concerned on preparations for the two Conferences.

36. Continuing her presentation, the Algerian delegate further informed that Algeria tried to meet the deadline for the preparation of the report, but was confronted with the question of whether or not to respect the United Nations guidelines. In response, the representative of the ECA informed her that, Algeria should try to adapt the themes and the suggested approach to the national realities particularly, on the collection of data.

Egypt

37. The Egyptian delegate reported that Egypt regarded the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on women due to be held in Beijing in 1995 as an important opportunity that once again will highlight the status of women in order to promote their advancement in all avenues.

38. In conformity with operative paragraph 1 section B of the Commission on the Status of Women Resolution 36/8 recommending Governments to establish a National Committee or designate a national focal point to initiate and promote preparations for the Beijing Conference, a national committee for the advancement of women has been established.

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39. The national committee is presided by Her Excellence Mrs. Moubarak and is constituted of members representing various ministries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of International Cooperation, Ministry of Education, etc.). The national committee is constituted as well by non official representatives eg. members of national associations, NGOs and a number of public figures.

40. To facilitate the collection of data necessary for the national report, multiple sub-committees have been formed, each one responsible for collecting data in a specific field. It was reported that, the committee was still in the process of collecting data and very soon it will engage in the compilation of the national report.

41. In this regard, Egypt welcomed all forms of technical assistance that could be provided by ECA; more precisely in training a team of nationals in preparing appropriate national reports for International conferences. Undoubtedly, such skills would benefit the country in the long term.

42. Finally, she stated that the national policy was based on encouraging all sorts of activities aiming at the promotion of women in general and rural women in particular taking into consideration Egyptian cultural background.

Morocco

43. The Moroccan participant informed the Workshop, that like other countries, Morocco was preparing for the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing September 1995.

44. She informed the meeting that, in order to respect the United Nations directives on the preparation of the national reports, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs sent a questionnaire to the various departments regarding the following areas:

1. The launching of a study on the development of the situation of Moroccan women since the 1985 Nairobi Conference. The main objectives of this study related to:
 - Updating the state of development of Moroccan Women since 1985;
 - Working with government and NGO officials to find various strategies for the advancement of women;
 - Collecting demographic data to find various strategies for the advancement of women.

2. The creation of a National Commission for the preparation for the Conference was composed of representatives of government departments, Women's associations and researchers and specialists involved on women's issues.

45. It was also reported that within the framework of the preparation for the Conference, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in collaboration with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), organized from 13 - 17 December 1993, a sub-regional workshop in Rabat on Statistics and Indicators relative to women.

Sudan

46. The delegate from the Sudan presented her country's report as follows:

47. Since 1980, women in the Sudan have made many advances in the fields of health, education, women's rights and equality.

48. Headed by the Minister of Social Planning, the National Committee for the preparation of the Fourth Global Conference on Women was established in 1993. This committee has been divided into sub-committees according to the UN indicators.

49. It was reported that the national report would be ready by mid-April. It was also reported that the National Committee holds a weekly meeting to review the work done by the sub-committees.

50. The delegate further informed the workshop that, there were 26 registered NGOs who were also making progress in the preparation of their own report.

Tunisia

51. The Tunisian delegation reported that the Tunisian national report for the 4th Global Conference on Women which will be held in Beijing in 1995 has reached an advanced stage. It would be submitted to the United Nations Conference Secretariat in New York and the ECA in the next few days.

The methodology adopted is indicated below:

1. An inter-departmental commission emanating from the National Commission on Women and Development has been set up. It includes representatives of various departments and NGOs and is presided over by the Ministry of Women and the Family.

The methodology

is indicated below

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2. The members of the Commission have been informed of the contents of the United Nations' Guidelines and have been asked to provide the necessary indicators for the elaboration of the report.
3. A technical team placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Women and the Family has been given the responsibility of collecting the contributions of the various departments and of writing the report.
4. A preliminary version was discussed by the interdepartmental commission on 8th of March, 1994, the occasion of International Women's Day. Remarks and observations made have contributed to the improvement of the final version of the report.

South Africa

52. The South African delegation gave a brief historical background, that, the report outlines the present situation. As South African women were well behind their sisters in the world, the need to collect and supplement information about past conferences was still great. In this respect, a conference was organized in February 1994. Team leaders were elected who will be responsible for all activities and consultation on the themes. The themes are Equality, Development, Peace, with emphasis given to Education, Health, Employment, Youth and possibly focusing on media.

53. In order to obtain more information, several South African women have attended international and regional workshops since October 1993.

54. For the collection of data, four researchers have been commissioned to collect data from recently published NGO and donor organizations' secondary literature. As much as possible, government and NGOs will work together on the report. Advantage has been taken of ongoing international activities to publicize gender issues widely in the country.

55. As such, the South African report was not yet ready. It was hoped to be updated continuously. The report to be presented in Beijing will thus be different from the one presented in Dakar. It is also hoped that South Africa will be given a special status by the organizers of the conferences due to its transitional status and the coming to power in May 1994 of a new government of National Unity.

OBSERVERS

International Labour Organization (ILO)

56. Following the presentations by the participating member states, the representative of the International Labour Organization informed the participants that the Regional Office of the ILO in Abidjan and the various zone offices were ready to give any assistance relating to providing documentation or editorial services for the reports to be presented at the Dakar and Beijing conferences.

Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)

57. The Observer from the Arab Maghreb Union stated that, the coordination of the points of view of participating North African delegations should lead to a commune platform to be presented in the two major conferences. The presence of all participants he said, emphasizes the necessity of converging the different areas of concern of member states of the Arab Maghreb Union including Mauritania. He concluded by stating that UMA hoped to see this proposal taken up by the North African delegations present at the workshop.

AGENDA ITEMS 4 AND 5 - DISCUSSION

58. Following the presentation of agenda item 4 by the ECA representative and briefings by member States on agenda item 5, some issues were raised. These included amongst others the following:

- ECA's support for the preparations of the regional and World Conferences on Women;
- Some indicators as outlined in the guidelines for the preparation of national reports were difficult to quantify. The question was raised whether there were possibilities for modification to reflect countries interest and/or priority areas;
- A question was raised whether the structure and/or format has been followed by other countries;
- There was need for a common position and solidarity among women in Africa;
- Difficulties experienced on obtaining information pertaining to the preparations of the World and Regional Conferences.

59. The deadline of 31 March was too soon for member States to complete the national report and submit it to ECA. Countries wanted to know if the deadline could be extended to allow member states more time to finish it.

60. In addressing these issues as outlined above, ECA representative provided the following ideas.

61. First, the ECA representative gave a historical account of the past regional and world Conferences including their outcomes. Concerning support, she informed member states that ECA was not a funding agency and that ECA with its own limited resources could provide advisory services to member states on request. However, she said that ECA was doing its best to mobilize resources with a view to expanding its activities.

62. With regard to the 8 indicators as given in the guidelines, it was explained that member states were free to make modifications and add any other indicators as and when it was felt necessary. On the structure or format of the national report, participants were informed that the format for the preparation of the national report was standard and being used by all countries throughout the world.

63. Concerning an African common position, it was explained that Africa will adopt a Regional Platform for action which will, following its adoption, be endorsed by the ECA Conference of Ministers and by Heads of States during the OAU Summit in 1995. It will then be presented to the Beijing Conference in September 1995 as an African common position.

64. The flow of information was another problem expressed and it was decided that the meeting should come up with recommendations on communication and information strategies. These should be at the level of preparations for Beijing and beyond. Finally with regard to the deadline, member States were urged to do their best to complete the writing of their reports as soon as possible and submit them to ECA not later than 30 April 1994. It was also stressed that national reports should include inputs from NGOs and other organizations and that only one report was required and that the same report should be sent to the Conference Secretariat in New York.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN PREPARATION OF THE REGIONAL AND WORLD CONFERENCES (Agenda item 6)

65. Under this Agenda item, the ECA Secretariat gave a comprehensive account of the activities of the ECA in regard to the preparations of the regional and Global Conferences.

66. The ECA Representative further informed the workshop that there was an Inter-Agency Task Force which was established to coordinate for the Fifth Regional Conference in preparation of the Fourth World Conference. The Task Force is composed of OAU, UNICEF, UNDP, UNIFEM the African Development Bank, FEMNET and chaired by ECA.

67. On the NGO Forum, the Secretariat informed the participants that, the African Women Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) which focuses on strengthening the role of NGOs in Africa will be responsible for the coordination of the African Women NGO Forum. The NGO Forum will focus on the collective African NGO effort to pursue the implementation of the NFLS for the advancement of women and what the future priorities will be.

68. A lot of work has been done, the main objective being again to sensitize member States, educate and inform them on the objectives of the Global Conference.

69. The Secretariat informed the participants that the ATRCW was working closely with the OAU and other UN Agencies and in this connection has requested them to prepare technical papers for the Conference, Disseminate information on the regional and world Conferences among the NGOs in addition to member states.

70. Also mentioned was the Newsletter, FEMLINE, a news update which is published by the ATRCW and which will serve as a tool to facilitate communication and dialogue among countries while the preparations for these major Conferences are going on.

71. The representative of the ECA stressed that one of the major concerns of ECA is to ensure that African women's interests are fully included in the issues to be brought to the World Conference. In this regard, sub-regional workshops have been designed to be conducted in the 5 sub-regions of Africa: namely East, North, Central, West and Southern Africa.

Agenda item 6 discussion

72. In discussing agenda item 6, attention was given to the agenda of the Regional Conference as outlined in ECA resolution 753 (XXVIII). Under this agenda, participants were also informed of the technical papers/documentation which were being prepared for the regional conference in Dakar. They were informed that, the conference was at the ministerial level starting with experts for the first five days 16 - 20 November followed by the Conference of Ministers from 21 - 23 November 1994.

73. On the issue of NGOs' participation in the inter-governmental meeting both in Dakar (1994) and Beijing (1995), participants were informed that guidelines for determining eligibility of NGOs to participate in regional preparatory activities and/or regional meetings had been sent to all member States. ECA was waiting for the responses from NGOs in order to evaluate, determine and compile a list of NGOs which may be accredited to participate in the inter-governmental meetings in Dakar and Beijing.

Agenda items 7 and 8

74. Under agenda items 7 and 8 the following two areas were discussed:

1. Communication strategies and information campaigns to ensure wider publicity for the Regional and World Conferences;
2. Priority areas for the Regional Platform for Action.

1. **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS TO ENSURE WIDER PUBLICITY FOR THE REGIONAL AND WORLD CONFERENCES (Agenda item 7)**

75. The issue of communication was highlighted in the Workshop as very important both in the preparations for Dakar and Beijing and in the mobilization of men, women and the youth for their involvement in the preparatory activities at the national level.

76. The following views were raised and suggested by the participants during the discussion:

- a) Information campaigns at the national level were necessary and could be initiated at different levels and with different activities such as: the use of the media (radio, television) modern channels of communication, banners, posters, drama, bazaars and so forth;
- b) The use of all UN agencies and specialized national institutions operating at the national level was urged;
- c) Research, studies and surveys on women should be undertaken and the information gathered should be disseminated widely through the media.
- d) Indicators on women's issues should be publicized and monitored to gauge the progress in the improvement of women's issues;
- e) The Meeting stressed that it was important to note that different communication tools should be adopted for different areas of concern.

77. During the Communication strategies discussion, the need to publicize the following areas was also highlighted:

- The economic crisis and structural adjustments effect on women;
- Education, health and nutrition that are the backbones on any advancement of women;
- Illiteracy, the source of all problems, the need for its eradication;
- Poverty;
- Areas of concern of rural women;
- Immigrant women;
- Other specific concerns such as the informal training etc.

2. PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE REGIONAL PLATFORM OF ACTION (Agenda item 8)

78. The draft of the Platform for Action proposed by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women which held its meetings in New York was presented. This Platform identifies the most pressing problems, the strategic goals to be attained and the measures to be taken to tackle them. The following views were expressed by the participants:

- a) Rural women should be taken into consideration in all the priority sectors. FAO has also targeted rural women as priority in agriculture;
- b) Inequality between developed and under-developed countries should be highlighted, especially, the negative economic impact on women of the structural adjustment policies;
- c) The need for industrialized countries to highlight the position of immigrant women (not refugees) as these women were usually forgotten and marginalized. Their countries may not include them in their report. The recommendation therefore was that their plight must be included in the report of the country of domicile;
- d) There was a need for the co-ordination of International Donors so that the partnership between them and the Governments and national NGOs would be strengthened. This will enable national structures to have access to the information emanating from workshops organized by the donors.
- e) It was a recommendation that the national NGOs should be encouraged to have access to the information emanating from workshops organized by the donors.

79. An Institutional framework for the implementation of the Platform for Action was required to prevent it from being shelved. There was need to come up with strategies such as:

- i) effective infrastructure dealing with women's issues at the country level to ensure the mainstreaming of women's issues especially for the critical areas expressed in the Platform for Action;**
- ii) allocation of funds for the implementation of the Platform for Action was very important, otherwise there would be no progress;**
- iii) there was need for the creation of awareness on the Platform for Action throughout all sectors of the community through the media and other means of sensitization;**
- iv) Simplification of the programmes by translating them into major local languages.**

80. The participants were divided into two groups to discuss the above mentioned two areas. The full reports of the working groups are contained in Annex I of the report.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 9)

Under this agenda item, the ECA representative informed the participants that a questionnaire was sent to member States for collection of data to enable it to publish the following:

- i) A Directory of distinguished Daughters of Africa. These forms were sent to Member States but there has been inadequate responses;**
- ii) A Diary for Women in Development, giving brief information per country, detailing the achievements in each country with regard to women. To this proposal only one country out of 52 states has responded.**

Under this Agenda, the African Training and Research Centre for Administration and Development (CAFRAD) informed the workshop that it would be pleased to help ECA in the collection of information where there were gaps.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (Agenda item 10)

Having thus concluded the discussion on Agenda item 9, the Workshop participants adopted the report with amendments.

CLOSING CEREMONY (Agenda item 11)

Under this agenda item, the Sudanese delegate on behalf of the participants thanked the ECA Secretariat for having organized this successful training workshop. She stated that, they have received a great deal of information that was not available to them. This information would no doubt be valuable for the preparation of the national reports and hence for the Dakar and Beijing Conferences the delegate said. She also thanked the Moroccan government for their warm and generous hospitality.

The Workshop was thereafter closed by the Officer in Charge of the MULPOC Tangier on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the ECA who expressed his appreciation to participants as their active participation and invaluable input had ensured a successful and productive workshop. He further urged them to continue in the same spirit throughout the preparations for the forthcoming Regional and Global Conferences.

Report of Working Group I

Communication Strategies and Information Campaign to ensure wider publicity for the Regional and World Conferences

Several suggestions were discussed by the different delegations on how to address this important issue. Among the suggestions the following were stressed:

For the communication strategy to succeed, it was essential that it was pitched simultaneously at three levels:

1. National level

- In order to ensure maximum coverage, decentralization of information is necessary. The provincial and local levels must be taken into serious consideration;
- Both Government and private institutions shall be used including the national machineries, preparatory committees, municipalities, health centers, schools, research centers as well as the media (press, radios and TVs);
- Communication strategies have to target specific groups; for example rural women in some countries listen to radios often, while the urban citizens use the press for communication.

2. Sub-regional level

The ECA plays a critical role in co-ordinating activities and disseminating information at a sub-regional and regional level. Some of the activities include organizing sub-regional and regional workshops.

3. International level

- Because gender issues cut across national boundaries, for example peace and environment, it is important to underline the critical role of multinational cooperations both before and after Beijing, in terms of need for communications assistance.

Recommendations

By analyzing these different problems, the following recommendations were made:

- a) Use of the Media, (Radio, T.V., newspapers etc);
- b) Organizing seminars, workshops, round tables;
- c) Use of modern technology (fax, telexes and other communication systems);
- d) Encouraging information networks at national, Sub-regional and Regional levels;
- e) Use of banners and Posters;
- f) Developing quantitative indicators to eliminate the existing gap between men and women, monitoring and evaluating their impact on the platform for action;
- g) Undertake new research on women and publicize and disseminate existing researches;
- h) Sensitize men, women, youth and raise their awareness on the Beijing Conference and the Platform for action;
- i) Involve men on issues related to women with a sense of partnership;
- j) Ultimately, the communication strategies should be viewed as one of the important ways of addressing various obstacles that could hinder the successful implementation of the Beijing Global Platform for Action.

Working Group II

Priority areas for the Regional Platform for Action

During the discussion of this agenda item, the participants raised the following critical areas as stated in the Draft Platform for Action prepared at the 38th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

- a) The inequality at all levels in the exercising of power and decision making;

- b) The inadequacy of mechanisms, at all levels for the advancement of women;
- c) The insufficient awareness of women's rights recognized at the national and international levels and the weak commitment to them;
- d) The persistent and even increasing burden that is put on women;
- e) The equality of women's access to education, health and related services as well as to other means which would allow them to use fully their capacities;
- f) Violence against women;
- g) The effect of armed and other conflicts on women;
- h) The inadequate use of the media to promote the contribution of women to their societies;
- k) The inadequate recognition and support with regard to the contribution of women to the administration of natural resources and to the protection of environment.

Recommendations

1. The selection of priority areas should take into account the level of development attained by the people of the region as well as the impact that various areas of concern which aims to enrich the African Platform for Action to be submitted to Beijing; issues emanating from the Regional Conference on "Traditional Harmful Practices due to be held in Addis Ababa from 11 to 15 April, 1994.
2. Fund raising at this level of preparation is vital to facilitate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, especially for developing countries. Therefore, dissemination of relevant information with effective communications strategies is important in this process.
3. Because gender issues cut across national boundaries, such as, peace and environment, it is important to underline the critical role of multilateral cooperation both before and after Beijing.
4. It is critical that appropriate institutional frameworks are put in place to facilitate and manage the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

5. The implementation of the platform for action ultimately depends on the budget allowances allocated to it. It is therefore important to budget for both the institutional framework and actual programmes that would come out of the Platform. This activity should not be restricted to the national level, but multilateral agencies also have a critical contribution to make.

6. Finally, one of the key objectives of the Beijing Conference is to promote partnership between men and women, thus, the need to sensitize men on all these issues, involve them in the process of preparing national reports and all other activities being undertaken for Dakar and Beijing, should always be given the priority it deserves.

Documents for the sub-regional workshops in the five sub-regions

The following documents were prepared and distributed for the sub-regional workshops in the five sub-regions namely: East, North, Central, West and Southern Africa.

1. *Guideline for the preparation of national reports for the fourth World Conference on Women by the Secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and peace;*
2. *ECA Resolution 753 (XXVIII); Women in Development, the African regional preparatory meeting (1994) for the world conference on Women: Action for equality, development and peace (1995);*
3. *Resolution 35/4; Preparations for the World Conference on Women in 1995;*
4. *Resolution 36/8; Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women; Action for Equality, Development and Peace;*
5. *Resolution 37/7; Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women; Action for Equality, Development and Peace;*
6. *Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/1993/7); Preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace - Outline and contents of the second review and appraisal on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women - Report of the Secretary General;*
7. *Fact Sheet: Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, 4-15 September 1995;*
8. *Fact Sheet: Conference to set women's agenda into next century;*
9. *Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: The role of Women in Africa in the 1990s;*
10. *The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000 (1985);*
11. *The Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women Beyond the UN Decade for Women (1984).*

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