

International Conference on
"Africa: The Challenge of
Economic Recovery and
Accelerated Development"

Abuja, Nigeria
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CONTRIBUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (INSTRAW)

TO

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICA:
THE CHALLENGE OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY
AND ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT

INSTRAW sends to the organisers and delegates of this august and important ECA conference on "Africa: The Challenge of Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development" greetings and best wishes for successful deliberations.

INSTRAW, aware of the contribution that women in Africa can make towards economic recovery and development, has carried out activities at the national subregional and regional levels relevant to women's participation and contribution in the development process in Africa. INSTRAW has played an active role in the United Nations Development Programme's Forth Cycle Regional Programme for Africa. The focus of the Institute is to improve African women's role in the Informal sector production and management. We all know that while the informal sector lacks organization and viability to attract credit facilities, the survival of a significant proportion of African families depends on this sector, which has over the years absorbed the surplus Labour. INSTRAW's efforts are aimed to evaluating the role and contribution of the informal sector of which women form a large part, to the national economy, and strengthening its linkages with other sectors of the conomy. It will, among other activities, review and intensify data collection activities on, as well as statistical analyses of, the informal sector.

This will not only increase the overall understanding of the complexities of the sector, but also lead to greater understanding of women's economic roles and their social responsibilities in the development process.

In keeping with INSTRAW's mandate, the Institute develops programmes to enhance women's role in the policy of individual and collective self reliance in developing countries.

In Africa, in the area of training, the Institute has developed training programmes at national level to enhance women's participation at all levels in water resources management. It hopes to do likewise in other sectors of development such as women and the use of new and renewable sources of energy.

Priority has also been given to ensure that women's role is reflected in co-operative endeavours particularly with regional development banks and it is hoped that joint programmes could be developed in the near future.

INSTRAW is fully aware of the role that the women in Africa can play in contributing to its economic recovery. The Institute's programmes ensure that women participate in mainstream development which in keeping with INSTRAW's catalytic role are carried out in close co-operation with national, regional, international bodies involved in women and development issues.