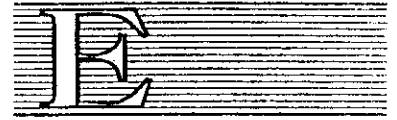


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✓ Fourteenth meeting of the African
Regional Coordinating Committee
for the Integration of Women in
Development (ARCC)

● 19-21 April 1993
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

REPORT ON
THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ECA WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
DURING THE PERIOD APRIL 1992 TO APRIL 1993

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The report is presented to the Africa Regional Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) in conformity with the ECA 1992-1993 work-programme whereby an annual report on activities related to the advancement of women must be submitted to ARCC for review and further harmonization of the promotion of women in the region. In this connexion, the report relates activities undertaken by the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW), the ECA focal point on women issues as well as those carried out by other substantive divisions and services of ECA.

2. The paper reports first on follow-up to the resolutions and decision of the ECA Conference of Ministers. It thereafter gives an account of efforts made by ECA for the advancement of African women in the region including collaboration with other organizations involved in gender activities. In its last part, the report gives a brief on the orientation of the ECA programme of advancement of women during the biennium 1994-1995 as well as an outline of planned activities.

3. Members of ARCC are expected to review this report and make recommendations as to the best way to respond to African women's concerns.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS AND DECISION OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RELATED TO WOMEN

4. The eighteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers adopted two resolutions and one decision on women, namely:

- (a) Resolution 736 (XXVII): Women and access to resources in the 1990s;
- (b) Resolution 737 (XXVII): The role of women in conflict resolution.
- (c) Decision 6 (XXVII) :
 - (i) Recommendation for the nomination of an African woman Secretary-General for the Fourth World Conference on women;
 - (ii) Appointment of the members of the Subregional Committees and ARCC bureaux for the period 1992-1994.
 - (iii) Agenda of the fifth Regional Conference on the integration of women in development

5. The resolutions were addressed to both member States, ECA and other international and regional organizations. Since ARCC members and other partners in development will be making statements on actions taken to ensure effective implementation of these resolutions, this report will only cover efforts made by ECA in this respect.

6. This section of the report will also bring to the attention of ARCC measures taken recently by the United Nations Secretary General in order to bring about equity in women's employment in the United Nations System.

(a) Resolution 736 (XXVII): Women and their access to resources in the 1990s

7. In line with recommendations of the Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: the role of women in Africa in the 1990s, the Conference of Ministers called for greater commitment from member States for furthering the advancement of women. Progressive revision of legal texts, elimination of illiteracy among women, education, promotion of trade of products produced by women, entrepreneurship and setting up of data banks on women were among areas identified for special attention.

8. In response to the call, ECA undertook a number of research studies aimed at expanding the knowledge base on women in order to promote and facilitate the preparation of development programmes and projects addressing real women's needs. While studies were mainly focused on trade and entrepreneurship sectors, a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Abuja Declaration highlights progress made in various sectors and most particularly in education and legislation. Findings and conclusions of the review will be discussed in detail under a separate agenda item. With regard to the databank on women, issues covered so far were expanded to include issues such as violence against women. Apart from the studies, operational activities were developed with a view to foster the economic empowerment of women in the socio-economic and financial fields.

9. The same resolution requested member States to allocate a percentage of their pledges to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development (UNTFAD) to women's programmes. On the other hand, ECA was requested to provide posts for women to each Multinational Programming and Operational Centre (MULPOC) with a view to revitalize the Centres' women's programmes.

10. In response to the resolution, ECA allocated some UNTFAD resources from the contribution of Nigeria to women in development activities. The resources enabled to carry out preliminary activities towards the establishment of the Federation of African Women Entrepreneurs and the African Bank for Women. In addition, ECA pursued the negotiations for reinstating a post of coordinator of the women's programme in North Africa subregion with the assistance of the Egyptian Government. It should be noted that it has been difficult to obtain funding for WID coordinators posts in the other MULPOCs. However, issues related to the advancement of women continued to be tackled within the resources available in the MULPOCs and projects have been developed to support the women's programme in most Mulpocs. Member States are invited to consider following the example of the Egyptian Government.

11. In addition to the above, the Conference of Ministers recognized the need to consolidate African women's entrepreneurial efforts and recommended that ECA should facilitate the establishment of a Federation of African women entrepreneurs. The same resolution requested ECA to study the possibility of creating an African Bank for Women which would contribute to mobilize greater resources for women's activities.

12. In this regard, efforts were made to mobilize resources for the background work. Arrangements have also been made for holding the inaugural meeting of the Federation in Accra, Ghana in May 1993. A pre-feasibility study on the establishment of an African Bank for Women was also undertaken. The study revealed the urgent need for a financial intermediary which will enhance women's capabilities to mobilize resources for their economic activities. A report on activities undertaken in relation with the setting up of the two regional structures will be presented to ARCC separately.

(c) Decision 6: Recommendation of the nomination of an African woman Secretary General for the fourth World Conference on Women

13. Among the decision taken by the ECA Conference of ministers, one called for follow-up action namely the decision to recommend that an African woman be appointed Secretary General of the fourth World Conference on Women scheduled to take place in Beijing, China, from 5 to 14 September 1995. ECA is pleased to report that concerted efforts made by member States, the Organization of African Unity, the President of ARCC and the ECA to ensure follow-up to the decision resulted in the nomination of Mrs Gertrude Mongella, a Tanzanian national, as Assistant Secretary General of the fourth World Conference on women. The decision of the UN Secretary General is highly appreciated and member States are requested to give her full support.

(d) Special measures to improve the status of women in the United Nations

14. Concerned with the full utilization of women's potentials for the achievement of the overall goals of the United Nations Organization, the UN Secretary General has recently taken a series of decisions aimed at enhancing the status of women in the United Nations. The purpose of the special measures is basically to increase the number of women at the highest category of the United Nations System. These measures will not only increase women's employment opportunities but will give to women the opportunity to play a role in the international political and economic spheres and to take an active part in the decision-making process in the world affairs.

15. It is therefore essential for member States to make every effort to seek and ensure wide dissemination of information on vacancies in the United Nations. African women should also be more aggressive in order to increase their number in the high level category throughout the United Nations, particularly in those institutions which have more relevance to the African region.

(b) Resolution 737 (XXVII): The role of women in conflict resolution.

16. In this resolution, the ECA Conference of Ministers requested the ECA and the Organization of African Unity to assist in the organization of the regional Conference on women for peace to be organized at the initiative of the Government of Uganda. ECA had consultations with the Uganda Ministry of Culture, Women and Youth on the issues to be discussed at the conference. ECA will be sending a mission to Uganda in May to finalize arrangements. It is planned to hold the conference in August 1993. The outcome of the conference would constitute a valuable input to the 1994 ECA regional conference on women preparatory to 1995 World conference.

III. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD 1992 - 1993

17. Like for the previous biennium, activities related to the integration of women in development were reflected in all programmes of the ECA in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 40/105 and 40/108. The report shows also efforts of coordination of programmes and activities with other regional, international institutions and agencies involved in the advancement of women.

(a) Implementation of the ECA programme for the integration of women in development

18. The ECA activities related to the integrating women in the development process were articulated around three major areas, namely enhancing the participation of women in development, the improvement of women's skills and opportunities; and development of the information network on women in development. The activities were carried out by both the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) and substantive divisions.

(i) Enhancing women's participation in development

19. In its efforts to increase women's participation in development, emphasis was put on formulation of strategies for the enhancement of the women's role in the development process. Activities carried out in this respect are shown below:

Formulation of Strategies

20. In line with the mandate of the ECA/African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) to assist member States in developing strategies related to the advancement of women, missions were undertaken to Ghana, Kenya and Senegal. The purpose of these missions was to consult with the National Council of Women and Development of Ghana, the Kenya Women's Bureau, the African Women Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) based in Nairobi, Kenya and the Ministry of Women, Children and Family of Senegal on preparations for the Fifth regional conference on women preparatory to the World Conference on women in 1995. Similar consultations were also held with the Ethiopian Minister in charge of Women Affairs in the Prime Minister's Office. It should be noted that the regional conference is expected to lead to the elaboration of a Plan of Action which will be incorporated in the global Platform for Action.

21. In the same context, assistance to member States in enhancing women's participation in development was provided through seminars on strategies of integrating women in development. ECA was able to actively participate, through its Niamey-based Mulpoc, to the seminar on the policy of promotion of women in Niger in Kollo and Niamey from 7 to 8 and 9 to 11 September 1992, respectively. The seminar came up with clearly defined goals and strategies and a plan of action which covers all sectors of social and economic development. The Mulpoc office participated in the drafting of the National Policy on the promotion of women.

22. The same Niamey-based Mulpoc Office took also part in the seminar on the preparation of a Plan of Action in favour of rural women organized by the Ministry of Development, Population and the Promotion of women of Niger from 15 to 17 June 1992.

Participation of women in meetings and conferences

23. There has been a positive trend in the participation of women to the ECA technical meetings and conferences. This was the case for the following which recorded a high female participation: the Third African Population Conference held in Dakar, Senegal, on 11-12 December 1992; the second meeting of the

Coordinating Committee on African Statistical Development held in Nairobi, Kenya in November 1992; the subregional workshop on household survey data applications and analysis held in Mbabane, Swaziland in December 1992; and the Regional conference on Development management in Africa: Thirty years of experience, Emerging challenges and Future priorities held in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, from 8 to 12 March 1993. The presence of women in those meetings enabled to articulate women's concerns in the respective sectors.

24. It is also worth noting that documents presented and adopted by these meetings/conferences devoted sections to women's issues. As an example, the paper on the implementation of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action: Lessons and Prospects included a section on changing the role of women in the development process while the paper on the African family systems in the context of economic development dealt at great length with the changing role and status of women in the family and in the development process. As a result, the Declaration adopted by the Conference contains a section on Women in Development.

25. Similarly, during the above mentioned conference on development management, a round table on the managerial and economic empowerment of women was organized as part of the ECA celebration of the International Women's Day, March 8. The round table as well as a panel discussion on the Role of Women in Peace building organized for the same occasion, raised a lot of interest in the audience.

(ii) Improving women's skills and opportunities

26. The efforts of enhancing women's skills and opportunities were concentrated on promotion of women's entrepreneurial capabilities and economic integration. While ATRCW activities designed to promote women entrepreneurs and their access to resources will be reported to ARCC under a separate agenda item, it should be pointed out that during the period under review, emphasis has been put on the creation of structures which would give to women a strong economic base to face future challenges. In this respect, the main focus has been to stimulate and to consolidate women's entrepreneurship and ensure an enabling environment and adequate support services for both the formal and the informal sectors. Regional integration advocated by the Abuja Treaty was taken into account in promoting women's increased role in the trade sector.

27. In the same spirit, a subregional seminar on financing of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in West Africa was organized by the Niamey-based Mulpoc, in collaboration with subregional and regional institutions of development. The seminar took place in Dakar, Senegal from 7 to 9 December 1992 and was attended by Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal as well as a number of inter-governmental and non governmental organizations. The seminar gave an opportunity to review national policies of promoting and financing small and medium scale enterprises and the experiences of subregional and regional funding institutions in the field. Recommendations formulated by participants seek among other things to expand the current means of funding SMEs; to set up guarantee schemes towards SMEs where they do not exist; to direct more funds to the funding of SMEs; to reinforce promotion services and improve the performance of the enterprises.

28. In the field of agriculture, activities related to the advancement of women were focussed on efforts to increase the number of women extensionists in Africa. In this regard, ECA ensured the preparation of two curricula/training manuals, namely:

- (i) Introduction to agricultural marketing with emphasis on women;
- (ii) Basic principles of agricultural marketing extension with emphasis on women extensionists.

29. These documents will be reviewed by an experts workshop before they can be published and used for training of trainers in agricultural marketing extension services.

30. Apart from the above, it is planned to look into the institutionalization of training of women agricultural marketing extensionists yearly at the Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESAMI) for English-speaking African women and at the Pan-African Institute for Development for French-speaking women. This institutionalization will give the programme the needed continuity and sustainability.

31. Similarly, ECA is planning to organize a training of trainers' workshop on extension agents development in Africa for women entrepreneurship promotion and access to credit in collaboration with the Pan-African Institute for Development East and Southern Africa (PAID-ESA). The main purpose of the workshop is to improve women's technical, management and entrepreneurial skills and to increase the access of rural and urban low-income women to existing credit facilities. The workshop will be funded by the Netherlands Government.

32. It should be noted that on one hand a project on Development of food processing projects aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship in Eastern and Southern Africa subregion has been developed and submitted by the Lusaka-based Mulpoc Office to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for funding. On the other hand, a field project on promotion and development of small-scale industries in the African region with special consideration of women's employment will be implemented and a regional seminar/workshop: Application of available composite flour technology by women entrepreneurs will be organized. However, the two activities will depend on the availability of resources.

(iii) Information network on women and development

33. As in the past, information was one of the main concerns of the ATRCW. ECA continued to publish its newsletter ATRCW Update and the Revue Women and Development of the Great Lakes subregion which highlights issues of interest to African women. A directory of African women experts and an annotated bibliography were also published in 1992 and disseminated to all users. Efforts were also directed towards the creation of a information network between ECA/ATRCW and its correspondents to ensure a systematic and regular flow of information on African women.

34. In addition, there was a greater number of technical publications from different sectors of ECA activities, namely:

- (a) The Guidelines to improve women's work in the informal sector production and management. The Guidelines provides very useful baseline data and information on the economic activities of African women upon which could be developed more action-oriented activities to enhance women entrepreneurship. The Guidelines can be obtained in ATRCW;
- (b) A study on Technologies in the small-scale food industries in rural zones of the countries of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes countries (CEPGL). The document pays particular attention to major factors which will facilitate women's access to and utilization of identified technologies. The study is available at the Gisenyi-based Mulpoc Office.

- (c) The situation of women in trade in both the formal and informal sectors: the case of Malawi. The study is available in the Trade and Development Finance Division (TDFD);
- (d) Traditional trade financing mechanisms, their structures, role function and possible linkages with the modern financial sector. The document is available in the Trade and Development Finance Division (TDFD);
- (e) The integration of women in the modern commercial sector in Mauritania. The study is available in the Trade and Development Finance Division (TDFD);
- (f) The Information Kit on violence against women. The Kit identifies violence as one of the obstacles to the achievement of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and calls for its eradication. It provides a collection of the most significant abstracts selected from different publications which address various aspects of violence against women. The publication is being finalized for publication by the ATRCW
- (g) Strategies to improve contraceptive use to influence demographic trends in African countries, December 1992. The publication discusses knowledge on contraception, levels and trends in contraceptive use, impact of contraceptive use on demographic trends. It presents strategies to improve contraceptive use. These strategies include women as a key factor. Interested persons can obtain the document in the ECA Population Division;
- (h) Assessment of mortality levels, trends and differentials in relation to the goal of "Health for All" by the year 2000 in some ECA member States, November 1992. The study was an attempt at assessing efforts being made by governments in Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Swaziland and Tanzania, towards the achievements of the goal of Health for All by the year 2000. The document is available in the ECA Population Division.
- (i) A study on cooperation in production and marketing of embroidery products in the CEPGL countries. The document is an analysis of the production structure. It suggests cooperation between the three countries of the subregion in the field and more important, the creation of a permanent exhibition of women's products at the subregional level.

35. These publications are available in the ECA secretariat and member States are invited to make use of them.

(b) Coordination with other organizations

36. In line with the System-Wide Medium-Term Plan for the Advancement of women, ECA took part in activities and meetings organized by other organizations of the United Nations System. This was the case for the Brainstorming meeting on gender, training and research: Strategies for mainstreaming organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in collaboration with the African Development Bank (ADB). The meeting took place in Abidjan, from 5 to 9 October 1992. It discussed strategies for effective institutional capacity building on gender training and research. It was noted that gender training has potential in bringing about change in the thinking, perceptions and practices of gender blind mainstream institutions and organizations.

37. In the same spirit, ECA organized its first Regional inter-agency meeting to consider preparations for the fifth regional conference on women preparatory to the World conference. The initiative was highly commended and mechanisms for further coordination of actions at the regional level were agreed upon. The report of the meeting will be discussed under a separate agenda item.

38. In addition, ECA took part in meetings organized by regional intergovernmental bodies. The Lusaka Mulpoc participated in the First Round Table for women in business in the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) which was held in Lusaka, Zambia, from 9 to 11 July 1992. The meeting gave the opportunity to brief member States of the subregion on progress made in the establishment of the Federation of African Women Entrepreneurs. ECA participated in the Workshop for Development of Strategies for Co-ordination and Policy Intervention by the Women's Unit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, from 1 to 2 march 1993. It was an occasion to exchange ideas on programmes of the two organizations directed towards the advancement of women. The other Conference, ECA attended during the period under review was the Franco-African Conference on women held in Paris from 17 to 19 November 1992. The outcome of the conference will be discussed under a separate agenda item.

39. It should also be noted that ECA had visits of the manager of the UNDP Gender in Development programme, the Director of the Pan African Institute for Development ESA, a high level consultant from the United Nations Research Institute for Development (UNRISD). These visits enabled both the organizations concerned to draw plans for future collaboration.

IV. OVERVIEW OF THE 1994 - 1995 WORK PROGRAMME ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN AFRICA

40. Like in the 1992-1993 work programme, activities related to the advancement of women will be spread throughout ECA programmes of activities. This approach enables to have women issues in the mainstream of development policies and programmes and to cover a wider scope of activities.

41. The activities planned for the African Training and Research Centre for Women are reproduced below. They cover the regular programme as well as operational activities developed to complement the programme.

SUBPROGRAMME 9. ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN.

A. Orientation of the subprogramme for the biennium

42. In the past, there has been an over-emphasis on the micro level activities of women particularly income generation. A particular accent has also been put on the inclusion of women concerns in development plans and strategies. This biennium will pursue efforts of enhancing the role of women and their participation in the development process. A new conceptual approach that will analyze development issues from a gender perspective will be developed. In line with the Nairobi Strategies and the Abuja Declaration, emphasis will be on economic empowerment of women through stimulating and consolidating the entrepreneurial spirit of African women and providing increased access to resources both in the formal and informal sector. Special efforts will be devoted to assist women in extreme poverty and suffering from internal strife, civil war and

human rights abuse. Stronger links with other women in development structures particularly NGOs will be established and the data base on women strengthened.

B. Activities

1. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

(e) External Relations

- Development of Linkages with Women's Governmental, Professional and Political Organisations/Associations and NGOs and Women In Development Structures of the OAU, ADB, ECOWAS, PTA, etc. (1994-1995);

2. PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES

(a) Parliamentary Documentation (including official records)

(i) ECA Conference of Ministers:

- Report to the ECA Conference of Ministers on Issues Emerging from the 1994 Fifth Regional Conference on Women in Development (1995);

(ii) United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW):

- Report to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women on the Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women in Africa (1995);

(iii) Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC):

- Various Reports on Women in Development Issues to the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) (1994, 1995);

***(iv) Fifth Regional Conference on Women (1994):**

- (1) - Report on the African woman today and into the 21st Century (An overview assessment of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies to capture the present achievements, challenges and future goals);
- (2) - Report on Women, Peace-Building and Disaster Management (wars, political conflicts and civil strife in Africa: an unacceptable reality; women - a bridge to peace; women as managers and victims in disaster

situations; impact of displacement: women refugees, returnees and internally displaced);

- (3) - Report on Economic Empowerment of Women (Women's responses to economic policies in Africa; Women's contribution in the economic sphere in urban and rural areas);
- (4) - Report on Political Empowerment of Women (participation of women in the democratic process; women in governance, politics and decision-making; national machineries and women's organizations and institutions);
- (5) - Report on Equity and Social Issues (women's rights; gender and culture - looking into the 21st century);
- (6) - Report on Women, Environment and Sustainable Development (women's access to and management of natural resources)
- (7) - African Plan of Action: Report to the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995);

(b) Substantive Services

- * (i) Substantive services to the Fifth Regional Conference on Women (1994);
- (ii) Substantive Services to the Meetings of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) (annual meeting - 1994, 1995);

(d) Ad hoc Expert Groups and Related Preparatory Work

- (i) Expert Group Meeting on the Modalities for the Establishment of an African Bank for Women (1994):
- Report to the Expert Group Meeting on Modalities for the Establishment of an African Bank for Women;

3. **PUBLISHED MATERIALS**

(a) Recurrent Publications (to be included in the United Nations publications programme):

- Three recurrent publications:

- * (i) Issues and Trends in Women's Advancement in Africa
 - once every two years, 1995;
- (ii) ATRCW Update (Newsletter of the African Training and Research Centre for Women)
 - twice a year, 1994- 1995;
- (iii) Roster of African Women Experts
 - once every two years, 1995;

(b) Non-recurrent Publications:

- One non-recurrent publication:

* (i) African Plan of Action (1995)

4. **INFORMATION MATERIALS AND SERVICES**

(a) Booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits:

- A Compilation of International Instruments Relevant to Women in Africa (1994);

5. **OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

* (a) Advisory Services

- Advisory Services to National Machineries on Integration of Women in Development for their preparation for the World Conference on Women (1994-1995);

(b) Group training, including seminars, workshops and fellowships:

- (i) Forum for African Women Leaders on Women's Role in Peace-Making and Conflict Resolution (1995);
- (ii) Seminar on Management and Leadership for Women (1995);

(c) Field Projects:

- (i) Fostering the Empowerment of Women in the Socio-Economic and Financial Fields (1994-1995);
- (ii) Improving Communication and Information Network of the African Training and Research Centre for Women (1994-1995);

6. **CO-ORDINATION, HARMONIZATION AND LIAISON**

43. Co-ordination of activities with Women in Development programmes of (1994-1995):

- INSTRAW;
- UNIFEM;
- Division for the Advancement of Women, Vienna;
- UN Commission on the Status of Women;
- ECA divisions/ MULPOCs;
- WID structures with UN specialised agencies.

V. **CONCLUSION**

44. As shown in the report, ECA pays particular attention to the advancement of women with a view to ensure full utilization of women's potentials in the recovery and development process of the continent. Special accent is put in the implementation of various global and regional instruments adopted by member States. It is hoped that African women will continue to pull their strength towards the achievement of their common goals.

45. For the implementation of its programme of advancement of women, ECA has benefitted from the support and assistance from African member States, donor countries and agencies as well as regional and international organizations. Their assistance is highly appreciated.