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United Nations International Research
and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

INSTRAW PROGRAMMES

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STATISTICS AND INDICATORS ON WOMEN

The work of INSTRAW in the area of statistics has spanned the period since its inception to the present, and expanded over the years. Beginning with two research studies on improving concepts and methods in data collection, and the compilation of statistics and indicators on the situation of women, the statistics programme has sought to improve the quality of data as well as their adequacy and utilization for policy formulation concerning women and development. The Institute has also conducted training at national and subregional levels to generate awareness on the importance of statistics and in some cases to also train users and producers of statistics in the production and use of sex-disaggregated data. Most of the Institute's work in this area has been conducted in close collaboration with the Statistical Office of the UN Secretariat.

Throughout the 1980-1990 period, research activities under this programme have included:

- Subsequent to comprehensive investigations on the availability/adequacy of data on women, the Institute has prepared and published two technical publications which were reviewed and revised by the Expert Group Meeting on Improving Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Women, 11-15 April, 1983: Compiling Social Indicators on the Situation of Women and Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Women.
- Review of the concepts, definitions and methods applied in international statistical classification systems, such as ISIC, ISCO and ICSE. Preparation of position papers and reporting on the revision of such standard classification systems.
- Publication of comparative economic statistics on women compiled from secondary sources, entitled "Women in Economic Activity: A Global Survey (1959-2000).
- Case studies on statistics and indicators available on women in the informal sector. Country studies were conducted in Mexico, Venezuela, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Congo, The Gambia and Zambia. Preliminary results of these studies demonstrate the types of data from which some direct and/or indirect measures of women's participation and contribution in the informal sector could be derived. A synthesis of these case studies are currently being prepared.
- Methodological Study on Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Elderly Women. This study will be presented to the Expert Group Meeting on Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Elderly Women (28-31 May 1991) for review and revision. It deals with new concepts and methods for the collection and analyses of data on elderly women which would cover broad areas of concern for policy formulation.

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Within the training component of the programme on statistics on women, INSTRAW organizes and conducts training workshops designed to promote a dialogue between producers and users of statistics to improve the scope and quality of information available on women in different national data system. Fifteen workshops have thus far been organized, namely in: Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Pakistan, Dominican Republic, Sri Lanka, Greece, People's Republic of China, Costa Rica, Indonesia, India, Ecuador, Senegal, Puerto Rico, Malaysia and Sudan. These workshops have been organized and conducted in collaboration with other UN agencies and with relevant national institutions and/or agencies.

During 1991, the Institute will conduct the following training activities:

- Subregional Workshop on Statistics and Indicators on Women for French-speaking African Countries, Mali, 10-15 June 1991.
- Consultative Meeting of Experts (CME) on Macro-economic Policy Analysis of Women's Participation in the Informal Sector, Rome, 18-22 March 1991. This Meeting is organized as a follow-up to the results of the statistics programme on women in the informal sector. The meeting is expected to lead to policy formulation and guidelines for women in the informal sector.

While INSTRAW's contribution to making women's role and status visible in statistics is widely recognized much work remains to be done in research in order to make women's economic role and status more visible. The training workshops have provided favourable occasion for users and producers of statistics to become more aware of the need for and importance of reviewing and improving statistics and data systems so as to eliminate sex bias.

Drawing from the results of this programme, INSTRAW is currently preparing a Plan of Action for going into a new phase of work on statistics and indicators on women for the next biennium.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES FOR PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS ON
WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

As an attempt to systematize the inclusion of women and development components into all mainstream development programmes and projects as well as to improve project implementation of women-specific programmes/projects, during the 1988-1989 biennium INSTRAW began work in this programme. Such work has been and will continue to be applied both to the Institute's work in the form of self-evaluation, and activities undertaken within the United Nations system.

The first stage of this long-term research programme has entailed a survey of approaches by United Nations organizations on "The Women in Development Dimension in Evaluation Methodologies". This study was presented at the Consultative Meeting on Monitoring and Evaluation Methodology for Programmes and Projects on Women and Development which took place from 8 to 10 November 1989 in New York.

At this Meeting, the survey was reviewed and it is currently being updated on the basis of direct interviews. The publication of the final document is planned for late 1991. Also to be included in this final publication is an expanded introduction with discussion on the current theoretical thinking on evaluation along with an overview of current approaches to evaluation.

Future activities in this programme will include programme evaluation guidelines and approaches which will consider the effects of structural adjustment processes, the feminization of poverty, the significance of women's work in the informal sector and the interrelationship of socio-economic aspects with the environment, among others.



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IMPROVING AFRICAN WOMEN'S ROLE IN INFORMAL SECTOR PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT

In African countries women comprise the majority of those engaged in the informal sector in petty trade, weaving, dressmaking, or food vending. They are usually poor and illiterate, they frequently work under unhygienic and hazardous conditions and have little access to credit facilities or training.

Given the conditions under which these women work, any attempt to ameliorate their situation needs to be multifaceted. Interventions need to range from changing the policy environment to increasing their productivity through training, investment, improved technology and improved institutional frameworks. Such an approach requires precise quantitative information on the role and situation of African women in this sector.

Within the United Nations system, INSTRAW has been given the responsibility for implementing the statistics component of an integrated project Improving African Women's Role in the Informal Sector Production and Management, funded by United Nations Development Fund (UNDP). Additional components of the project such as policy, training and credit are being implemented by other UN agencies and bodies and an inter-agency steering committee advises on the co-ordination of the different components. The project findings are made available to relevant bodies where decisions concerning regional and national adjustment programmes are made, as the worsening economic crisis has caused changes in the policy environment of the informal sector.

From the statistical data gathered on this project, a Handbook on Compilation of Statistics in the Informal Sector, in Industry, Trade and Services was prepared for use by national statistics offices. A Synthesis of Pilot Studies on Compilation of Statistics on Women in the Informal Sector in Industry, Trade and Services in Four African Countries was also prepared as a practical application of the methods contained in the technical handbook.

These publications were revised according to the recommendations of two regional workshops (23-27 July 1990, Zambia, English-speaking countries; and 8-12 October 1990, Burkina Faso, French-speaking countries). The workshops also recommended target users for the publication which include: national statistical services; statistical units of the various ministries/departments, parastatal and non-governmental organizations involved in the collection of data; planners; policy makers; institutions responsible for Women and Development; and organizations including research institutions interested in the development of the informal sector.

As a follow-up to the present project, the revised handbooks will be used as tools for training at national workshops in the four project countries. These workshops are scheduled to take place in May and June 1991.

Future activities in the project will include the preparation of a handbook on the compilation of statistics on women in the informal sector in agriculture in Africa as a complement to the handbook on trade, industry and services.

In order to give more publicity to the issue of African women in the informal sector, an upcoming issue of INSTRAW News will be devoted to the topic of Making African Women Count in National Policies. The focus will be on the activities carried out within the framework of the project and the results of these activities.



WOMEN'S CHOICE AND ASSESSMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

INSTRAW's programme on this topic has involved research studies covering trends in women and technological development. From such research the linkages of women with available technological options were documented raising the all important question "What choice of technology for women?" The results of this research were compiled into a volume entitled Women's Access to Technology: Myths and Realities, INSTRAW, 1990.

Continuing phases of this research programme currently focus on the existing socio-environmental parameters of investment/transfer of technology in developing countries. Such research includes a state-of-the-art review and critical assessment of existing literature with special emphasis on the social impact of proposed technologies on women. Also envisaged in the programme is a review and assessment of evaluation methodologies of selected international financial agencies in order to identify existing approaches and apply them to current project planning and evaluation procedures on investment/transfer of technology. Finally, guidelines and checklists of indicators on the social impact of technological acquisition and investment in developing countries with special reference to the position of women, will be formulated. Emphasis will be placed on their applicability to the micro enterprise level at the pre-investment stage in both the public and private sectors.

GENDER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

INSTRAW has long been involved in environmental issues through its on-going programmes on sectoral issues such as women, water supply and sanitation; women and new and renewable sources of energy; and women and technology. These programmes have been approached in terms of promoting favourable environmental management.

During the present biennium, 1991-1992, INSTRAW has shared global concern for environmental issues by launching one of its newer programmes on Gender, Environment and Sustainable Development.

Women are the main, but largely neglected, environmental managers, especially in the developing countries. However, their health and livelihoods -and hence their ability to act as effective agents for conservation- are often destroyed by environmental degradation and by conservation projects which do not take into account their central role in development.

In its current programme, INSTRAW is approaching environmental research with a gender perspective to establish the central role of women in the environment and their contribution to the ecosystem. This research consists of two phases: Phase I, which is now in its concluding stage, consists of a state-of-the-art on women, environment and sustainable development and provides a theoretical framework on the issue, it surveys actions and agents performing in the field and assesses what remains to be done at policy and decision-making levels. Phase II, consists of the designing of a methodology for approaching further research and training on the subject.

Activities for 1991-1992 include:

1. Preparation of public information and training materials:
 - Poster with theme, "Stitching together we mend the future of our planet," for distribution at the Global Assembly of Women and the Environment which will take place in Miami, in November 1991 and at the Earth Summit, in Brazil, in June 1992.
 - INSTRAW cards and postcards of selected artworks, to be made available for sale at various international meetings.
 - A 10 minute sound-slide package on the subject of women, environment and sustainable development.
 - The preparation of a training Policy Development Resource Portfolio on Gender, Environment and Sustainable Development based on the INSTRAW research studies. The portfolio will be tested in a sub-regional meeting in Cairo, in 1992, and will be presented and distributed at the Earth Summit, in Brazil, in June 1992.
2. Publication of the first issue of INSTRAW Special Publications Series will be on the topic of Women, Environment and Sustainable Development.
3. INSTRAW is sponsoring three women from the Caribbean region, who are activists in ecological recuperation or conservation of the environment, to participate in the Global Assembly of Women and the Environment in Miami, in November 1991.
4. INSTRAW is participating in many international meetings and conferences on environment throughout 1991 and 1992, including the Global Assembly of Women and the Environment in Miami and the Earth Summit in Brazil.



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WOMEN, WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

Inadequate water and sanitation facilities are one of the most critical problems faced by the developing world today. In the present decade, approximately 80 per cent of all illness and diseases can be attributed to inadequate water supply and sanitation (WSS) facilities. In developing countries, women and children often spend eight or more hours a day fetching polluted water. Women, as the primary water carriers, managers and users, and as family health educators, play a paramount role in WSS management. Because of this, they need to be involved in all stages of WSS projects and at all levels of WSS programmes and policies. They need to be trained in the socio-economic, technical, health, environmental and scientific spheres of WSS development. These are the basic premises underlying INSTRAW's work in WSS projects and programmes.

INSTRAW is a member of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council; a member of the Steering Committee for Co-operative Action on Water Supply and Sanitation and jointly with UNDP/PROWESS chairs the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women and Water Supply and Sanitation.

In the three areas of research, training and information, INSTRAW promotes the involvement of women in WSS projects and programmes.

In 1986, INSTRAW prepared, in co-operation with ILO-Turin Centre, multi-media training packages on "Women, Water Supply and Sanitation" produced for senior officials in charge of water programmes and projects, development officials, engineers, non-governmental and women's organizations. Five national training seminars have been organized in Africa - in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Nigeria - during 1987 and 1988. A regional training seminar for the Asia and Pacific region was held in Thailand in 1989. INSTRAW is now in the process of updating the training packages in co-operation with UN Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCO) and they should be available in July 1991.

In co-operation with the Fondation de l'Eau in 1989, INSTRAW prepared a training module on "Women, Water Supply and Sanitation" aimed at the community level. This package complements the INSTRAW-ILO/Turin Centre training package on same subject.



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WOMEN, NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY

INSTRAW was given the leading role as the main co-ordinating agency in the United Nations systems on issues of Women and New and Renewable Sources of Energy (NRSE) at the Ninth Session of the Inter-Agency Group on NRSE, held in New York, 1990.

Since 1985, INSTRAW has acted to ensure that United Nations agencies consider the impact that their energy programmes and policy statements have on the status of women. The reliance of policy-makers and planners on data that incorrectly interpret the role of women in the development process not only results in decisions which adversely affect women, but also in proposed activities which are liable to fail.

Although this is widely acknowledged, a great deal of confusion remains on how women's issues are involved and, in particular, how best to devise policies, formulate programmes and design projects to reflect this involvement. INSTRAW has a special role to play in improving the data base on women. By collecting the existing information and analysing it it can make it available to international assistance agencies as well as governments and non-governmental organizations. This information is used as the basis for developing training materials and conducting training seminars:

Past activities under this programme have included:

- A booklet on "Women and Energy in the Implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action" (1984)
- An Expert-Group meeting on the Role of Women and New and Renewable Sources of Energy, convened by INSTRAW in co-operation with the Institute for Developing Countries (Yugoslavia) which was held in Santo Domingo from 11 to 15 February 1985.
- The establishment of an interregional network of contacts to promote the incorporation of women into energy activities to implement the Nairobi Programme of Action.
- An Annotated Bibliography - "Women and New and Renewable Sources of Energy": UN Sources and Non-UN Sources (1980-1987).
- A manual on "Improved Stoves - An Integral Part of Energy-Saving Strategies" (1988)
- "Multi-Media Training Packages on Women and NRSE" prepared during 1989-1990. The general objectives of this project are: to contribute a new approach in the organization and management of NRSE systems through the integration of women's needs, as well as their participation in planning, technical operations and maintenance, assessment and implementation of NRSE programmes and projects. The training packages have been successfully tested in a regional training seminar and two national training seminars in Africa conducted in 1989 and 1990.

During 1991-1992 INSTRAW will continue to conduct training seminars on "Women and New and Renewable Sources of Energy" at national and regional levels.

INSTRAW is currently implementing a three-year project "Promotion of Women's Involvement in the Use of New and Renewable Sources of Energy" funded by UNDP.



CREDIT FOR RURAL WOMEN

One of INSTRAW's major programmes has included the research of cultural, economic and social constraints which limit rural women's access to credit from formal financial institutions in developing countries. The identification of those constraints is an important task and an indispensable step in changing the prevailing trends of policy-making which tend to overlook women's needs.

Past activities in this programme have included research studies to assess rural women's access to credit at the regional level. Consultants prepared papers on the access of rural women to credit in the regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean which also included some national case studies. These studies were subsequently published by INSTRAW under the title "Women and Credit", 1990.

One issue of the Institute's newsletter, INSTRAW News No. 15, was devoted to the topic of women and credit and was accompanied by a supplement which presented a case study on women's access to credit in the Dominican Republic.

An interregional training seminar on "How to Improve Banking for Rural Women" was jointly organized by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), INSTRAW and the Mediterranean Institute of Management, held in Cyprus from 19 to 30 November 1990. The seminar's objective was to acquaint participants from rural financial institutions mainly from the African and Asian regions with successful and replicable banking services, systems and procedures. The report of this meeting will be published by INSTRAW in 1991.

As a follow-up to this seminar, another training seminar is tentatively scheduled to take place in 1991 at INSTRAW headquarters in Santo Domingo on credit schemes for rural women in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Based on the experiences of these seminars, training materials on women and rural credit will be elaborated. Training will be addressed to policy and decision-makers at the national level (bankers and managers in the private banking system, senior officials in government banks and finance institutions, as well as other financial intermediaries such as NGOs and development agencies) to sensitize and train them as to the needs and credit-worthiness of women. It is envisaged that these training materials, after initial testing and revision, will be made available in a training package.

CURRICULA ON GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Training is one of INSTRAW's principal activities and its Board of Trustees has placed priority on the training of academics and researchers on issues of gender and development, particularly in developing countries. As a response to this, one of INSTRAW'S on-going work programmes concerns the integration of Gender and Development issues into university curricula. As part of this programme, INSTRAW has been involved in regional surveys with the purpose of assessing the status of the field in different regions and preparing handbooks to help academics especially in developing countries, to design WID courses or integrate WID issues into mainstream ones.

Thus far, the U.S. Council for INSTRAW, INSTRAW's focal point in the United States, has co-operated in the compilation of curricula from the United States, and the resulting handbook will be published by INSTRAW as a reference guide for professors both within and outside the United States.

The next phase of this programme involves the preparation of a series of regional handbooks. In this regard, INSTRAW is collaborating with ALDoS in Italy in surveying WID Studies in Europe, followed by the organization of a European Seminar in Italy in December 1991.

The same is planned for the Latin American and Caribbean region. In 1992, INSTRAW will be carrying out a comprehensive survey of WID Studies in the Latin American and Caribbean region, to be followed in the Spring of 1993 by a second regional workshop which would aim at producing a handbook to be disseminated throughout the region to universities and academic centres. Other regional surveys and workshops will follow to produce handbooks for the Asian and Pacific region.



USE OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

The role of communications in development is essential and ranges from education and training, information dissemination, to facilitating further research necessary for the development of science technologies and technical know-how.

However, one of the most debated issues is the role and potential of communications technologies for development, particularly in terms of the impact of these on women and the role of women in the use of such technologies. Strong research efforts are still needed in order to identify the possibilities and potentials of using communication technologies for women and development, taking into account women's requirements and participation and identifying and defining various types of communications support materials and the modalities of international co-operation that could help to achieve it.

For these reasons INSTRAW began its programme on Women and Communications. Previous stages of this programme included an International Consultative Meeting on Communications for Women in Development (Rome, 24-28 October 1988).

During the biennium 1990-1991, research has begun on designing a country profile on women and communications. Information will be gathered and analyzed on existing communications systems and resources at the country level in Latin America and the Caribbean and the potential of traditional/modern communications for the benefit of rural and urban women in addition to the role of women in communications as workers and producers. Other elements to be examined are women's education in communications and through communications technologies, the effects of communications on women (as beneficiaries of technology, negative stereotyping, targets of consumer advertising) and the role of women in communications as agents of change.

Research at the country level is being conducted in three selected countries - Argentina, Colombia, and Dominican Republic. The first participatory planning meeting of the three countries to set up comparative research designs to be followed in developing the country profiles was held from 11 to 14 February 1991. At this meeting communications material for the three countries were also presented and screened by a large audience of women's organizations and groups. A later stage of the programme will entail the development of training materials based on the country profiles to be tested in three workshops by national audiences and to be later used within the selected countries.