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Expert Group Meeting on Women
in Agro-Industries,
Vienna, Austria, 14 - 18 October 1985

REPORT * (meeting on Women in
Agro-Industries).

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Expert Group Meeting on Women in Agro-Industries was held at Vienna, Austria, from 14 - 18 October 1985. It was organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Financial contributions of the Governments of the Netherlands and Norway made the convening of the meeting possible.

2. The meeting was convened by UNIDO as part of the programme to implement its mandate to promote the integration of women in industrial development. The size and complexity of the subject of women in industry make it necessary to take a sectoral approach to the question of how to promote a greater involvement of women in industry. A consideration of the various branches of agro-industries provides an appropriate starting point for the sectoral approach, in view of women's historical role in most societies in providing basic consumption needs derived from agricultural products, such as food, clothing etc.

Objectives

3. The objectives of the meeting were as follows:

(a) To assess the current situation of women in agro-industries in developing countries;

(b) To evaluate the situation, trends and future prospects of agro-industries in the developing countries with a view to enhancing the participation of women in those industries, as producers, consumers and decision-makers;

(c) To propose guidelines for planners and policy-makers in Governments, bilateral and multilateral development institutions, national machineries for the advancement of women, and national and international non-governmental organizations with respect to policies and programmes to ensure the improved participation of women in agro-industries as well as to identify areas requiring further research.

I. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

4. The majority of developing countries have been affected by the recent prolonged economic recession. They are experiencing, in various degrees, high unemployment and underemployment, inflation, burdensome foreign debts, a reduction of both domestic and export demands and are suffering from a lack of financial resources for development. In addition, structural issues such as population growth, rapid urbanization and modernization of rural areas contribute to the overall problems.

5. In this context, which is characterized for most developing countries by the inability of the agricultural sector to absorb the growing labour force in rural and peri-urban areas and by the limitations of the modern industrial sector to provide sufficient employment, the main issues following the recent global economic recession are more and more related to employment creation, income generation, food self-sufficiency, equity distribution and participation of women in the economy.

6. It is essential that the growth and development of both the agricultural and industrial sectors are promoted so as to be mutually reinforcing and that the needs and contributions of both rural and urban populations are taken into consideration in planning this development.

7. Agro-industries are of major importance for developing countries as a basis for self-reliant development. These industries can lay the foundation for a sustainable industrial fabric by local transformation of natural resources and by linking industrialization with agriculture.

8. On the basis of current trends it is forecast that by the year 2000 approximately half of the population in developing countries will be living in urban areas. Regional development of agro-industries around smaller towns should be promoted so as to bring such industries closer to both the natural resources to be processed and the human resources to be employed. In particular such a policy could increase the opportunities for employment and income generation in those areas thus helping to reduce rural/urban migration.

9. The development of agro-industries, whether in urban or rural areas, should be used to stimulate rural development. Agro-industries should be encouraged to use traditional, small-scale farming structures for their inputs. In particular, they should work with women farmers who have frequently been overlooked in the development of cash crop production.

10. The importance of agro-industries for women results in part from women's historical role in most societies in providing for the fulfilment of fundamental consumption needs. The role played by women extends beyond production; preliminary, primary and secondary processing, to the storage, packaging and marketing of agro-based products.

11. However, women's efforts in this field are largely unrecognized and undervalued. The tendency to overlook women's role has incurred certain economic and social costs and hindered real development. Self-reliant development, which satisfies essential consumption needs, creates jobs and promotes balanced development, will have to strengthen and valorize the participation of women in agro-industries at all levels.

12. The informal micro- and small-scale production sector within national economies plays a vital role in supplying goods and services, generating incomes and providing employment and should therefore receive greater attention. It requires a small investment per job, maximizes the use of local resources, develops a modern entrepreneurial class, achieves a multiplier effect through employment creation, (both wage and self employment), and develops income-generating activities in rural and urban areas. It is also the sector of the economy in which the largest number of women is already active and it provides an easy entrance point for women who have been displaced from agriculture.

13. Despite the possible linkages between the medium- and large-scale agro-industrial sectors and the informal micro- and small-scale sectors, there are also differences between the two sectors. In order to address effectively the current most pressing development issues, each country should adopt two sets of policies: one set supporting the development of informal micro- and small-scale agro-industries and the other the development of medium- and large-scale agro-industries, both of which take into account women's concerns and issues. A greater emphasis should be given to informal micro- and small-scale agro-industries.

14. In view of the above the expert group meeting decided to formulate and present two separate sets of recommendations, one for the informal micro- and small-scale industrial sector and the other for the medium- and large-scale industrial sector.

A. Recommendations related to
the informal micro- and small-scale industry sector

I. Policy making

15. Government policies should be specifically designed to direct stronger support and more resources to the informal micro- and small-scale industry sector.

16. Industrial development strategies should balance the development of the small-scale informal sector of industry with the expansion of medium- and large-scale industry, and strengthen the linkages within the industrial sector. It should be realized that the informal, micro- and small-scale sector is essential also to forming the basis for progressive economic and social development as well as sustainable industrial development.

17. Those overall policy elements should also be translated into operational sectoral policies in the areas of production, technology, marketing, taxation, research, science and technology.

18. Measures should be taken to promote the geographical dispersal and diversification of existing or new production activities, based upon the development of appropriate technologies. These measures should be implemented in both urban and rural areas in order to achieve a regionally balanced economic development.

19. Research should be carried out on the informal sector with a view to demonstrating the significant contribution of this sector to the economy in general and the industrialization process in particular and to mobilizing resources for its further development. Research should also be carried out to demonstrate the contribution of women within this sector.

20. The choice of products to be produced, while taking into consideration the present situation of a country in the world economic system, should be oriented towards fulfilling the consumption needs of the population. The problem created by the diminishing demand for products from the informal sector that are replaced by formal sector products should be given adequate attention, particularly at the policy level. Alternatives should be sought, such as increasing the productivity of existing production units through the introduction of improved technologies and the provision of support services in order to enable women to increase their output or improve the quality of traditional products and thus become, or remain, competitive in relation to similar products produced in factories.

II. Support measures

21. Support measures for the informal micro- and small-scale sector must follow an integrated approach, in particular with regard to credit, extension services, training and other forms of technical assistance. In addition an appropriate institutional framework is necessary in order to make the concrete application of these measures fully effective.

Animation and group formation

22. Action, supported by policy measures, where necessary, should be taken to support new and existing forms of co-operative work arrangements in the areas of production, marketing, financing, design and input purchasing in order to support micro- and small-scale producers, particularly women faced with problems of unequal power relations;

23. Animation for women at the village level is also an important element in order to address effectively such questions as the familiarization of women with the formal banking system, mobilization of entrepreneurship and group formation.

Training and education

24. Formal education should be more practically oriented and girls and young women should be encouraged to take up vocational and technical training in non-traditional fields. Training should focus on both existing and new production activities, bearing in mind that vocational training should be supplemented by additional measures, such as entrepreneurship development and credit, in order to lead to job-creation and/or self-employment. In view of the multiple roles of women, as producers, consumers, managers of households,

training strategies should be designed specifically to ensure women's participation by including, for example the following approaches:

- (a) On-the-job training;
- (b) Mobile training units to extend continuing training programmes to women in rural and peri-urban areas;
- (c) Part-time training and off-season training;
- (d) Seminars promoting the exchange of experience and ideas among women at all levels and providing opportunities for the exchange of information between planners and beneficiaries of the training programmes;
- (e) Identification of sources of technical expertise and dissemination of information regarding these sources;
- (f) Fellowships for training women at inter-regional technical centres;
- (g) Mobilization of entrepreneurial capacities;
- (h) Training of trainers in order for them to relate effectively to the specific needs of women trainees;
- (i) Development of appropriate training material.

Credit financing

25. Credit, and more specifically access to credit is one of the main factors in the development of the informal micro and small-scale sector, and the problem is especially severe in the case of women who are often landless who have no property rights over land or equipment and therefore have no collateral for obtaining loans.

26. In order to promote women's participation in the sector, credit facilities must be made available to women on an equal footing with men. Specific measures for women should include loan revolving funds, guarantee schemes, special funds within financial institutions earmarked for women and other innovative approaches to financing including placing less emphasis on direct collateral and the creation of financial institutions focussing specifically on micro enterprises. Special attention should be given to the familiarization of women with the banking system and to providing them with assistance both in making loan applications and in financial management.

Extension services

27. Government and non-governmental extension services for this sector should focus special attention on women working in the informal micro- and small-scale sector:

- (a) Particular attention should be paid to the training of extension workers and to the production and dissemination of appropriate training materials;
- (b) Extension workers should be sensitized to the specific needs of women and a greater number of extension workers should be women;
- (c) Extension services should cover managerial, financial and technical aspects;
- (d) Wherever possible extension services should institutionalize the systematic collection of data, disaggregated by sex, related to micro- and small-scale industries;
- (e) Where they do not already exist multi-purpose extension centres should be established, preferably within a network, in order to function as training centres for communication and the exchange of information, and as locations for support services for women such as health care and day-care centres. Existing centres should be strengthened in order to take up these functions.

Technology

28. Measures should be taken to upgrade traditional technologies and/or to introduce appropriate new technologies, especially those that have no negative impact on health. Therefore technology involving hazardous chemicals should be excluded. Information about such existing technologies should be made available to women, particularly through the exchange of information among developing countries. Whenever possible, the development and upgrading of appropriate technologies should lighten the burden of women and should be introduced using local entrepreneurs and resources including those of local research and development (R&D) institutes. Support measures should be devised to enable women to obtain the inputs and know-how required for the maintenance and repair of their production equipment.

Support for new and/or existing enterprises

29. The establishment of new and/or the expansion of existing enterprises should be facilitated through the following measures:

- (a) Market research;
- (b) Surveys of resources and existing technical capabilities;
- (c) Identification of partners for co-operation;
- (d) Compilation and distribution of easily understandable manuals and other education materials identifying possibilities for enterprise creation and containing guidelines for the establishment of agro-industries, particularly small-scale, as well as guidelines for the storage and hazardous aspects of the products to be utilized in such industries;
- (e) Provision of guidelines and advice to assist in obtaining favourable conditions for the transfer of technology;

These measures should be implemented by using the existing institutional framework (extension workers, banks, government departments etc.).

III. Implications for action

National level

30. Women should be included as active participants in the design, planning and implementation of agro-industrial projects on all scales and in all branches, so as to ensure that women's participation is not confined to informal small projects in a few industrial branches but is integrated into the overall development of countries and regions.

31. Private and government agencies at the national, provincial and local levels should be more concerned and active about the participation of women in agro-industries particularly in the informal micro- and small-scale sector. Steps should be taken to fully establish and implement a policy for the sector.

32. The collection, analysis and dissemination of data related to women's activities in agro-industries should be given greater importance especially for those women involved in the informal micro- and small-scale sector.

33. Gradual adjustments to existing programmes and projects should be made to comply with four basic criteria:

- (a) The formation of explicit labour legislation that does not discriminate against women in the informal sector;
- (b) The building and strengthening of local private and public delivery capacities so that they are truly decentralized and closely connected with the realities of women and rural/urban areas;
- (c) The establishment of co-ordinating bodies in the form of national, regional and local committees;
- (d) The establishment of a simple monitoring and follow-up system that is integrated into the decision-making process.

Development agencies

34. Multi- and bilateral development agencies, institutions and organizations as well as national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should co-operate in projects that involve women as equal participants in promoting the upgrading of traditional technologies and the use of new technologies in agro-industries so as to increase the productivity and efficiency of women's labour in the informal micro- and small-scale sector, both in those branches in which they are already heavily represented and in those where they are not.

35. The capacity of headquarters and field staff of multi- and bilateral development agencies to assist Governments in the planning and implementation of agro-industrial programmes and projects so as to integrate women in a positive way, should be strengthened by providing them with relevant information, e.g. by compiling and distributing detailed guidelines and organizing seminars and training courses on this subject.

36. Development agencies should provide technical assistance and training as catalytic elements in order to:

- (a) Formulate, update and adjust government supporting policy-framework for informal micro- and small-scale agro-industries;
- (b) Improve planning and design capabilities of departments/institutions involved in agro-industries with a view to incorporating women's concerns.

37. Development agencies should, when necessary, provide continued direct support to integrated development programmes of informal micro- and small-scale enterprises with a special emphasis on agro-industries and the participation of women.

38. Development agencies should support the collection, analysis and dissemination of data with regard to women's activities in agro-industries, particularly those involved in the informal sector.

39. Development agencies should ensure that the integration of women is an integral part of development programmes directed towards informal micro- and small-scale industrial development in addition to promoting specific women's projects in the sector. Adequate financial resources should be made available for this purpose.

UNIDO

40. UNIDO should pay special attention to the elaboration of policies and procedures for the development of the informal micro- and small-scale industry sector and for technical co-operation in the area of the integration of women in agro-industries which should be provided to Governments and non-governmental organizations in order to encourage further co-operation in this field. This policy should be reflected in the different levels of the organization, in the design of technologies, the programming and planning of technical co-operation activities, their design, implementation and evaluation, taking into consideration the overall social and economic environment.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

41. The planning, programming and design capabilities of local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the development of informal micro- and small-scale agro-industries should be improved, assisted and expanded by Governments, development agencies and donor institutions, both morally and financially. UNIDO should support such activities at the national level.

B. Recommendations related to
the medium- and large-scale industry sector

I. Policy-making

42. It is essential that women become more involved in the organizations and institutions responsible for making policies on agro-industries at sectoral, national, regional and international levels. Institutional arrangements are needed to ensure that the promotion of women's participation in agro-industries occurs at a sectoral level and that such efforts are co-ordinated at a national level and with women's organizations.

43. Women should be included in such bodies as exist to advise on the development of agro-industries. Increased efforts are needed to raise women's participation especially at senior levels in other national policy-making bodies responsible for agro-industries such as ministries of agriculture, industry, and planning, UNIDO national committees and the like, so that women's interests may be well articulated. At the same time, Governments should ensure that all members of such bodies are made more sensitive to women's roles, interests and their potential impact on overall development.

44. National machineries for women and women's organizations in each country should establish linkages with the relevant national policy-making organs to review agro-industrial developments on a regular basis. These machineries and women's organizations will, in most cases, need assistance in developing the expertise necessary to undertake such reviews. Such assistance could be provided by UNIDO, among others.

45. Considering that investment decisions play a crucial role in making the choices among the various development policy options, technology options and location of enterprises, women need to influence a broad range of policies and activities including credit facilities, fiscal policies, and systems of

incentives. In particular, they should influence directly investment decisions being made in agro-industries, whether by governmental bodies, national private and public enterprises, or transnational corporations.

46. One way women can influence investment decisions is by becoming owners or shareholders of agro-industrial enterprises. This will necessitate giving women access to financial resources. Several ways are suggested:

(a) International and regional development banks should channel special lines of credit for women through local banks;

(a) Governments should develop special credit schemes for women entrepreneurs offering loans at favourable rates on a long-term basis;

(c) Governments should provide incentives for the mobilization of savings for both men and women for productive undertakings.

(d) Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and external banking facilities should use a special capital fund to guarantee loans to women, facilitate women's access to banking, and stimulate women's entrepreneurial activities;

(e) Loan schemes for particular agro-industrial projects and those that provide special technical assistance should allocate a certain percentage to women entrepreneurs.

47. Another way of allowing women to influence investment decisions is to encourage and promote more women to become managers in agro-industrial enterprises. Governments should also promote women workers' participation in decision-making at enterprise level. Women employees in agro-industries should be involved in works councils and trade unions.

48. All pre-investment feasibility studies should take into consideration broader socio-economic issues, particularly their effects on women and women's interests. Special measures should be taken to promote the participation of women in these studies.

49. The choice of technology in agro-industries has important implications for the participation of women in these industries. While technological choice determines the quantity and quality of employment opportunities for women in large-scale agro-industries, it can affect the very existence of micro- and small-scale agro-industries. It also affects women as consumers. These interests of women therefore need to be taken into account when agro-industrial technologies are chosen or developed.

II. Support measures

50. In the medium and large-scale industrial sector, support measures are also necessary to increase and improve the participation of women in agro-industries at all levels.

Technology

51. Women should be involved in the development and adaptation of technologies through active participation in research and development (R&D) institutions, national research and/or science and technology councils and the like. This involvement should extend to both process and product technologies.

52. The impact on women of new technologies used in agro-industries needs to be studied in order to identify their positive or negative effects on women. Such studies should be carried out by UNIDO and other relevant institutions with a view to recommending appropriate policy responses.

Improving women's role at the enterprise level

53. Women as wage earners are largely concentrated in a few sectors in low-level, semi-skilled, labour-intensive occupations. For example, there are very few women managers, designers, or technicians. In addition, many jobs held by women in agro-industries are of an insecure nature such as temporary work, contract work or seasonal work. Therefore, Governments should take measures to improve women's working conditions through equality legislation and labour legislation based on ILO standards. These measures should also apply to home-based workers. Provision should be made for the establishment of day-care facilities and other essential social services which enable women to take up paid work. The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities 1/ should be implemented.

54. At the level of the enterprise, personnel policies and practices must be reviewed and positive action programmes drawn up. Recruitment and promotion policies must encourage the entry of women into managerial, technical and non-traditional occupations. Hiring policies only favouring young single women must be reviewed and policies adopted to promote security of employment, remuneration and career development. Women should be given the option of working at night but proper facilities must be made available such as canteens and transportation.

55. Internationally-recognized standards of health and safety, and of handling of hazardous substances must be enforced in all sectors of agro-industries in both foreign and locally-owned enterprises.

56. In their negotiations with transnational corporations, Governments should ensure increased participation and adequate working conditions for women. The Code of Conduct on transnational corporations, which is still under preparation, should be adopted and implemented at an early date. Measures relating to the employment and working conditions of women should be included in the Code. UNIDO should intensify its efforts to assist developing countries in co-operating in the transfer of technology and improving of their bargaining positions.

57. UNIDO should carry out a study on the growing trend of subcontracting performed by women to investigate ways of improving conditions in this system and of using it as a means of furthering industrial development.

Promotion of entrepreneurship

58. The potential of women as entrepreneurs in the agro-industrial sector has not been fully realized at the medium and large-scale levels. Women wishing to start a business in agro-industry or to raise the scale of their agro-industrial activities may need assistance in management, organization, product and process development, and marketing. Promotional services such as those offered by Governments, chambers of commerce and industry, manufacturers' associations etc. should provide the necessary assistance to women entrepreneurs in all these fields.

1/ ILO Convention No. 156: Convention concerning equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers: Workers with family responsibilities.

59. In countries where women do not yet have juridical personality appropriate legislation should be enacted to facilitate women's access to credit.

60. Women should be made aware of their rights and responsibilities as borrowers. National machineries for women and other women's organizations should undertake studies on women's credit worthiness and circulate this information to investors and bankers.

61. Women entrepreneurs should be encouraged to join chambers of industry and commerce, or industrial federations, to take advantage of the services and networks such organizations provide, and to ensure that these organizations consider and pursue the particular problems of women.

Institutional infrastructure

62. The agro-industrial sector includes institutions for product and technology development, packaging, techno-economic information services, quality control, marketing, economic studies, etc. Efforts should be made to increase women's participation in these institutions and to ensure that they take women's interests into account in their activities.

63. Educational and training policies and programmes play a crucial role in enabling women to move into higher qualified and technical jobs. Accordingly, girls must be strongly encouraged to undertake scientific, technical, economic and business studies. Trainers and educators should be sensitized to the need to orient them into non-traditional areas of occupation. Career guidance and counselling services for girls should be set up with the help of women's organizations and non-governmental organizations, among others.

64. Apprenticeship training, vocational training and managerial training and adult education will also play an important role so that women can upgrade their skills and move into supervisory and technical jobs including quality control, product development, design, engineering, market research etc.

65. There must also be training and retraining programmes, particularly at the enterprise level, with regard to new technologies, so that women can take advantage of the new employment opportunities that these technologies offer.

66. Appropriate facilities, residential, sanitary and the like, should be provided in order to facilitate women's participation in training programmes. Efforts should also be made to offer training courses at times compatible with women's family responsibilities.

67. Special training should be provided for key decision-makers, such as personnel managers, bankers etc. to sensitize them to women's concerns.

68. UNIDO should draw the attention of Governments to the necessity to nominate women to industrial training courses.

Protection of consumer's interests

69. Consumer protection can have a big impact on the quality of life and health of populations. Women who are the primary providers of essential consumption goods to their families have a large interest in promoting food standards, quality control and fair pricing policies. Women's organizations

can take the initiative in consumer protection, including the testing of products. Initial funding may be required from Governments or other institutions.

70. Consumer's protection can also be organized on the regional level, as is the case in South-east Asia. Among other activities, consumers' groups have effectively carried out product testing as well as training and information seminars for women. Participation in consumer's protection programmes can facilitate access for women to positions in agro-industrial management, product and process development, and quality control.

C. Special measures

Surveillance

71. The emergence of high technologies has rapidly changed the conditions of the international production system. Production capacities built up in the past have proved to be vulnerable and crisis-stricken. An advance awareness of these changes can mean time is gained for the reaction of all partners in development. A continuous surveillance of forces affecting industrial development is being carried out in most large corporations and in Governments and institutions of industrialized countries. Similar surveillance is urgently needed in developing countries. For Latin American countries, an industrial restructuring and surveillance scheme is being initiated jointly by UNIDO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Similar systems should be initiated in other regions. In this way, new skill requirements, new trends in the location of industries and major changes in industrialized countries' industrial, trade and financial forces and their repercussions on the industrialization of developing countries can be monitored and evaluated. Such surveillance systems should give special attention to the assessment of the impact of major development forces on the role of women in the industrialization of developing countries and on prospects and approaches to enlarge this role to enable women to prepare themselves for it. UNIDO should ensure that this dimension is included in the surveillance systems in which the organization is involved in, particularly in the agro-industrial sub-sectors.

Data base, information and research

72. Statistical information on women in industry in general and agro-industries in particular is extremely limited. Therefore, national statistical offices should be requested to gather the necessary disaggregated data, to tabulate it in an appropriate way and to publish and circulate it widely. UNIDO may take the initiative to elaborate proposals in collaboration with the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Statistical Office to improve the collection of statistics on the participation of women in manufacturing industries including agro-industries.

73. Bank loans and other financial institutions should classify the use of their services by gender.

74. It is recommended that pilot studies should be conducted in one or two countries in each continent to examine the situation of women in the agro-industrial sector, including women as entrepreneurs, to determine what data now exist and what types of data are appropriate. The countries selected should have a generally high level of data availability so that the resulting reports may illustrate what can be done to improve the data on women in agro-industries.

75. A study should be conducted of the sources and concepts used in measuring the participation of women in the agro-industrial sectors. A case study in countries with different types of data availability and different levels of women's participation should be conducted with a view to improve existing concepts and methods.

D. Recommendations for follow-up by UNIDO

76. The Expert Group Meeting requests that this report should be addressed through the Director General to the highest policy-making bodies of UNIDO, the Industrial Development Board and the General Conference. The report should also be addressed through UNIDO to the appropriate policy-making bodies at national and regional levels, such as the next meeting of the African ministers of industry, the UNIDO national committees and the like.

77. UNIDO is also requested to take the appropriate measures to follow up on the recommendations listed in this report. The issue of the role of women should be seen as an inherent element in any strategy and policy formulation for renewed industrialization. Therefore, UNIDO's global, sectoral, country and regional studies should include this dimension. The issue should also be included in the System of Consultations, particularly in those consultations devoted to human resource development and to agro-industrial subsectors.

78. In view of the importance of agro-industries in all regions and taking into consideration the great differences in the social and economic conditions, UNIDO should organize regional meetings on women in agro-industries in the Latin American, African and Asian regions.

79. In view of the importance of the Lagos Plan of Action ^{2/} adopted by the African Heads of State and the call by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in its regional strategies for the integration of women within the framework of the Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA), UNIDO should include in its programme for IDDA issues on the integration of women in all programmes and projects, particularly in the agro-industrial subsectors and include projects specifically designed for women.

80. The co-ordinating role of UNIDO's "Focal Point for the Integration of Women" should be strengthened and given the necessary institutional support to fulfil its functions.

^{2/} General Assembly Resolution 35/66B of 5 December 1980.

81. Sensitization and training programmes on women in industrial development should be organized for staff members (men and women) of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, including UNIDO.

82. UNIDO is requested to develop information and training material and brochures on selected agro-industrial subsectors for use by women's group organizations.

E. Recommendations for follow-up activities by participants

83. For the conclusions and recommendations agreed upon by the Expert Group Meeting, to be implemented, participants to the Expert Group Meeting should ensure that follow up action is taken up with their organizations or national government institutions so that the programmes and actions recommended are accorded the appropriate attention.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

84. The Expert Group Meeting was attended by 16 experts from 15 countries and 16 observers from governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental and United Nations organizations. 4/

85. The Expert Group Meeting on Women in Agro-Industries was opened by the Director General of UNIDO, Mr. Domingo L. Siazon, Jr. In his opening address, he pointed out that this meeting was the second one he had addressed as Director-General of the newly independent specialized agency. The first meeting was on UNIDO's industrial technology information system. He felt that the subjects of the first two meetings underlined the priorities attached to them by the organization. He also pointed out that UNIDO as a specialized agency had inherited a strong mandate to promote a greater and more equitable involvement of women in industrial development from previous General Conferences 5/, and that for the fulfilment of this mandate there was a need to build up a stock of knowledge and data on women's current and potential participation in industry, sector by sector. Since agro-industries were usually the first industrial sector in which developing countries entered in their efforts to modernize their economies, and since they provided natural links between agriculture and emerging industrial structures, they represented a good starting point for UNIDO to increase its efforts to enhance the role of women in industrialization.

86. The provisional agenda was adopted by the meeting. 6/

87. The participants decided to have two working groups to discuss the issues presented. The first working group considered the issues concerning women in agro-industries in relation to the informal micro- and small-scale industry, while the second working group considered the issues in relation to medium- and large-scale industry.

88. Each working group elected its own chairperson and rapporteur. Ms. Singla (India), was elected chairperson of the first working group and Ms. M.L. Tapio-Biström (Finland) and Ms. M.P. Caetano da Silva (Brazil) its rapporteurs; Ms. M.R.Q. Franco (Philippines), was elected chairperson of the second working group and Ms. L. Stewart (Belgium) and A. Weston (England) were elected rapporteurs. UNIDO staff from the Division of Industrial Operations and from the Division of Industrial Studies contributed to the deliberations of the working groups.

89. The conclusions and recommendations agreed upon by the working groups were discussed in plenary and adopted by consensus. The report of the meeting was adopted by consensus at the closing session on 18 October 1985.

4/ The list of participants is attached in Annex I.

5/ The agenda is attached in Annex II.

6/ Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation (ID/CONF.3/31 chapter IV) 1975;
Third General Conference of UNIDO, Resolution on Women and Industrialization, (ID/CONF.4/Res.1) 1980;
Fourth General Conference of UNIDO, Resolution 9 Integration of Women in Industrial Development, (ID/CONF.5/Res.9) 1984.

III. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

90. Introductory statements were made by the Head of the Agro-Industries Branch and the Head of the Sectoral Studies Branch of UNIDO.

91. After giving a definition of agro-industries as used by UNIDO 7/, the Head of the Agro-Industries Branch indicated that while agriculture occupied about 45 per cent of the population of the world, there were great differences between developing countries containing 57 per cent of the world population and developed countries covering 12 per cent of the world population. There were even greater differences from country to country, both within the developed and developing regions, and from one continent to the other within the developing regions. The total amount of arable land available in developing countries (700 million hectares) was not however significantly greater than that in developed countries (600 million hectares). By the year 2000, there would be sharp increases in population, particularly in developing countries while the amount of arable land available would remain the same. That meant that there would be a proportional shift in employment from the primary sector to the secondary and tertiary sectors. That also meant, that food industries and agro-based industries in general would have to be developed to increase their productivity in order both to provide employment for and to satisfy the needs of a growing number of people. Women who were now mainly occupied in agriculture in the developing countries have to be ready for the shift from agricultural occupations to other economic activities based on industries and services. To achieve this end, adequate training for women was needed and new industries based on food processing and the transformation of agricultural products in general must be developed.

92. The Head of the Sectoral Studies Branch indicated that while macro-statistics seemed favourable to women's participation in manufacturing industries, particularly in developing countries where their participation as a whole was growing faster than in the developed ones, the increase in women's participation tended to be concentrated mostly in low-waged and low-level positions. New technologies based on informatics, micro-processors and genetic engineering would have a tremendous impact on agro-industries in the coming decades and would affect these industries in developing countries and the participation of women. UNIDO's study programme favoured an integrated or systems approach to agro-industries. Special methodologies and models had been elaborated which could also be used for studying the impact of various development or policy options on women. Specific requests from Governments to this effect would be welcomed by UNIDO.

Presentation and discussion of background papers

93. Two major background papers had been prepared by the UNIDO secretariat for this meeting 8/, "Women and the Growth of Agro-Industries in Developing Countries", by J. Fath, consultant, and "Women's Participation in

7/ Food, beverages and tobacco (ISIC 311-314), Textiles (ISIC 321), Wearing apparel (ISIC 322), Leather and footwear (ISIC 323 and 324), Wood products and furniture (ISIC 331 and 332).

8/ See ID/WG.452/1 and ID/WG.452/2 respectively.

Manufacturing in Developing Countries, with Emphasis on Agro-Industries", by M. Petritsch, consultant. These papers were introduced to the expert group meeting by the consultants.

A. Women and the growth of
agro-industries in developing countries

94. This first background paper provided considerable information (based on data presently available) on the structural characteristics and growth pattern of agro-industries as well as the perspectives for agro-industries up to the year 2000, subsector by subsector (in agro-food industries, textiles, leather and wood industries). The advantage of this information was that it provided valuable indications on directions that could be explored and developed in order to increase women's participation, not only in creating and maintaining processing units but also in finding job opportunities in already established industries. The requirements and constraints pertaining to these two different directions were also examined by the paper.

95. Finally, the paper made proposals with respect to strategies that could be devised by Governments, non-governmental organizations and donor agencies in order to facilitate women's participation in agro-industries. Such strategies included among others:

- (a) Survival strategies (e.g. upgrading of traditional techniques used by women and their communities);
- (b) Opening of new frontiers (in sectors and occupations where women are not yet present);
- (c) Development of entrepreneurship;
- (d) Protection of consumer's interests;
- (e) Development of training for women, particularly in non-traditional areas and new professions;
- (e) Building up and strengthening of information-transmitting capacities;
- (f) Transformation of attitudes and behavioural patterns regarding women's employment and participation in industry.

B. Women's participation in manufacturing
in developing countries, with emphasis on agro-industries

96. The paper examined the effects of current trends in the world economy on the manufacturing sector in developing countries and their impact on the participation of women, the situation of women in the informal and formal sectors of the economy, particularly in relation to the processing of agro-based products and women's participation in manufacturing in the agro-industrial subsectors, illustrated by the example of women in food-processing as shown in case studies.

97. Women in many developing countries were presently caught between the breakdown of rural economies on the one hand and the stagnation of the modern sector on the other. Problems of landlessness and lack of employment in rural areas led to increasing urban migration but formal sector employment in urban and peri-urban areas was not available for most urban migrants. This forced many of them into marginal forms of employment in the informal sector.

Of those women who did find formal sector employment, many were engaged in putting-out work and others were in redeployed industries (often in export processing zones) comprising two groups of workers that were particularly subject to recurring lay-offs and unemployment.

98. The paper concluded that in order to be effective and, most importantly, to have a lasting effect, any measures designed to improve the participation of women in agro-industries must form an integral part of a longer-term overall development strategy directed towards creating a coherent national productive system that permitted a more integrated form of development. Such strategies should, as far as possible, take into account all aspects of the wide range of economic roles currently played by women and their potential contribution to the economic development of society.

99. In the ensuing discussion, a number of important issues were raised. There was a direct relationship and strong inter-linkage between the development of agro-industries and the overall development policy in each country: Those linkages directly affected the participation of women, both in industrial development in general and in agro-industries in particular. A development policy strategy which was based on self-reliance was clearly more conducive to the development of strong agro-based industries and at the same time provided more opportunities for participation by people, particularly women, in such industries.

100. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that women constituted a huge human resource potential in rural areas. It was not a question of shifting the female population from their family environment to other working places, but of fully utilizing the human resources available locally through the local and regional development of agro-based enterprises, with the necessary training of rural women.

101. Training women for job opportunities was considered to be critical by many participants. They also emphasized other elements to be considered in the development of agro-based industries such as credit, land, equipment and technology, extension services, transport facilities, and so on.

102. The difficult living and working conditions of women engaged in textile and other export-oriented industries, particularly in the free-trade zones, were pointed out. The problem of the transformation of family life and family structures when new industries were created was also emphasized.

103. There was a need to upgrade the activities already carried out traditionally by women in the developing countries, for example in the food-processing or textile sectors, so that these activities might become the basis for industrial ventures, and to ensure that new agro-industries being developed in those sectors did not displace women. In addition, it was considered important to take special affirmative action measures in order to facilitate women's participation in existing and growing agro-industries.

104. Other aspects to be considered in developing agro-based industries and integrating women included marketing and appropriate legislation, where needed. It was also pointed out that there was a strong inter-linkage between the development of such industries and the availability of agricultural raw materials on a steady basis. Related issues included possible competition

between the satisfaction of people's needs and the utilization of the same raw materials for industrialization (hence the need to regulate and increase the production of agro-based products).

105. Finally, the need to organize women in trade unions and in co-operatives was emphasized in order to strengthen their negotiating and economic capabilities, both as workers and as entrepreneurs. Examples were given of organizational processes and experiments carried out in developing countries that included disadvantaged groups of women or women engaged in low-level activities.

106. At the presentation and discussion of the two background papers, the general debate focused on specific topics related to the overall issues of women and their participation in agro-industries. In some cases, special reference was made to the national case studies prepared for the meeting - (see Annex II).

C. Women and transnational corporations

107. The issue of women in transnational corporations was introduced by the official from the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC) who indicated that the general trend currently was for transnational corporations to withdraw from plantation activities (except for tea and sugar in a few specific countries) and to concentrate more on other sectors such as food processing, textiles and electronics. A study on women and transnationals, conducted jointly by UNCTC and the ILO for the Nairobi Conference to Review and Appraise Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women revealed that those sectors tended to be mainly labour-oriented and to employ women in low-level jobs where their purchasing and negotiating power was usually very low. It was suggested however, that Transnational Corporations could play an important role in the industrialization of developing countries and become agents of change in the development process.

108. In the general debate that followed this comprehensive presentation, a number of issues were discussed, focusing mainly on the negative aspects of Transnational Corporations, but also suggesting some avenues where they could be used for the benefit of women and their societies.

109. In view of the above, it was pointed out that, given their size and status in developing countries, transnational corporations should be required to provide training for people, especially women, in return for the benefits that they were deriving from those countries. It was also pointed out that the Code of Conduct for Transnational Corporations, which was still under preparation, should include to the extent possible some provisions with respect to the use of female labour. After some discussions it was proposed that UNIDO and UNCTC should undertake studies on the operation and strategies of transnational corporations in developing countries and their implications for women.

D. Monitoring industrialization trends

110. The Acting Head of the Regional and Country Studies Branch, stated that there was currently a need to be more decisive in developing strategies for

industrial development. Uncertainty came from the fact that there is no longer a clear-cut division of labour between North and South and that there was no niche in the long term where developing countries (and women) could establish themselves in terms of industrial development. Therefore, strategies had to be developed almost on a case-to-case basis. This was the reason why UNIDO, in co-operation with ECLAC, had established a new surveillance programme Industrial Restructuring Surveillance Programme (IRES). The purpose of this programme was:

- (a) To study and closely monitor the situation of key industrial sectors;
- (b) To consult with the industrialized countries on a regular basis to review the trends and strategies of major corporations in these fields (what types of products could be marketed abroad, at what level, with what technology, and so on).

111. It was pointed out that not only Governments but also women's groups and trade unions should be made aware of this information in order to provide a better basis for decision-making in relation to their strategies and their operations. Among other advantages, such monitoring programmes should be useful in preparing and training the population for the new technologies needed in the development of new industries.

112. It was indicated that some countries had already taken measures to initiate such surveillance and monitoring programmes at the national level. The debate also emphasized the need to make the documentation arising from the said programmes available to research opinion in universities and decision-makers in general etc. UNIDO representatives at the country level as well as UNIDO advisory missions to the developing countries should provide would-be women entrepreneurs, organizations and co-operatives with information on industrial trends.

E. The role of women in small-scale industries

113. Another official of the UNIDO Regional and Country Studies Branch informed the meeting about the advantages that small-scale industries presented for developing countries:

- (a) They provided a growing ground for entrepreneurship;
- (b) They offered investment possibilities for small investors and producers;
- (c) They were closer to the markets and consumers and therefore more responsive and adaptable to their demands;

114. In view of the above, small-scale industries should provide more opportunities for women. In addition, they could use the existing skills and crafts of women and were more flexible in terms of seasonal constraints (food industries). Finally, women could play a greater role as consumers and in terms of quality control in such industries.

115. Continuing on the subject of the development of small-scale industries, the representative of the Canadian International Development Agency indicated that studies ^{9/} carried out on the development of agro-based industries,

^{9/} See: CIDA, An Integrated Development Framework for Women in Agro-Industries, by J.C. Lorin.

particularly where women's work was concerned, showed that there was a qualitative break (as apposed to a quantative expansion) when an industry went from micro/small-scale to medium and large scale; there was a change of products, of processes, of markets and of consumers.

F. Technology

116. Emphasis was placed on the need to upgrade technology with a view to facilitating the activities carried out by women and increasing their productivity. Among the examples given for such upgraded technologies were: cassava graters, presses to extract the juice from cassava, solar driers, fish smokers etc. Specific projects involving or based on the use of those technologies already developed in some countries could be presented to UNIDO in the future.

117. One delegate reiterated the fact that in many cases the introduction of mechanization had displaced women from activities where they had been predominant and which had provided a significant income for themselves and their families (such as milk- and food-processing). While this was deplorable, the meeting should nevertheless attempt to provide guidelines that would help women in establishing industries in the areas mentioned. Some examples of project ideas to upgrade technologies used by women for consideration by UNIDO in future programmes were elaborated and are attached in Annex IV. They would need to be preceded by feasibility studies.

G. Data collection

118. The lack of data was repeatedly emphasized as well as the need to improve the data collection process. In this context the meeting was informed of the work carried out in this area by the Center for International Research in the USA. The United States Bureau of the Census has gathered statistics that provided a data base disaggregated by sex and by urban/rural residence as well as analytical reports by regions. Such statistics were published in the "Women of the World" series and could be made available to the participants. The representative of the Bureau of the Census of the United States also indicated that her organization would welcome suggestions as to what kind of statistical data were needed, and concluded by saying that recommendations and ideas discussed at the meeting would be proposed to the United States Agency for International Development for future "Women in Development" programmes and projects.

119. With regard to data collection, one observer wondered whether, beyond the collection of statistical data, UNIDO should not be interested in carrying out more in-depth case studies in co-operation with interested universities, national research institutions and other relevant United Nations agencies. Such in-depth studies would show the consequences and trends of industrialization in relation to women. Case studies of this type were carried out by UNESCO, for example, in Japan, Senegal and India, among others. The meeting was informed that UNESCO will continue to promote small-scale specific studies in selected countries on the broader socio-economic and cultural factors affecting women's status and living conditions in rural and urban areas.

120. One delegate emphasized the necessity of developing entrepreneurship in rural areas and taking advantage of the legal, social, cultural and other facilities that might exist in a given country towards this end. It was also suggested that women's groups and would-be entrepreneurs should themselves be involved in the process of data collection.

H. Facilitating measures

121. Credit and management were considered as crucial factors in women's involvement in agro-industries.

122. The question of credit for women who wanted to become entrepreneurs and engage in informal micro-, small- or medium-scale enterprises was raised. The representatives of Women's World Banking emphasized in this connection the need to provide women with loan revolving funds and loan-guarantee schemes, such as those offered by Women's World Banking.

123. One delegate pointed out that available studies clearly outlined the role of management, in the development of small- and medium-scale enterprises. Therefore, there was a need to train women as managers, not only of their own enterprises but also as managers employed at the medium- and top-level echelons of industries being established. There was also a need to train both women and men who could influence the decision-making process as regards the employment of women.

124. The representative of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women stated that the membership of her organization covered about 250,000 women in 70 countries, half of them in developing countries. Among the prerequisites for developing small- and medium- scale enterprises, the following should be strongly recommended:

- (a) Provision and enforcement of legislation on compulsory education for women;
- (b) Provision of vocational training for women;
- (c) Measures to facilitate the ownership of land by women (particularly the land on which the women themselves were working);
- (d) Provision of credit to women;
- (e) Provision of institutional support such as extension services, advisory and monitoring services etc.

125. In the same framework, a participant emphasized the role that extension workers could play in working with women in the rural areas. In order to enhance the capabilities of extension workers in that respect, training components on women in development issues should be included in the curriculum for all agricultural and industrial extension agents (male and female). Efforts should also be made to increase the number of female extension workers; however, it was pointed out, that although that recommendation had been repeatedly put forward over the last ten years or so, the number of female extension workers was still significantly smaller than that of their male counterparts in most developing countries. It was therefore suggested that studies should be undertaken in order to assess the reasons for that situation and the constraints encountered in attempts to change it.

I. Co-ordination

126. Finally, with respect to the creation of small-scale industries in the Africa region, particularly in the field of agro-industries and in relation to the Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA), it was suggested that UNIDO should co-ordinate its action with that of the African Training and Research Center for Women (ATRCW) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which had already gathered important information and experience in working with women in Africa (most specifically in the field of food production and processing). Co-ordination and co-operation should also be sought with other United Nations agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (formerly the Voluntary Fund of the UN Decade for Women).

127. The observer from the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) stated that the issues being discussed in connection with the promotion of women's participation in agro-industries were of particular interest to INSTRAW in view of the Institute's mandate to support and carry out research, training and information activities to help ensure the integration of women into the mainstream of development, particularly in developing countries. INSTRAW would be willing to co-ordinate activities with UNIDO and other organizations to promote research, training and dissemination of information to increase women's participation in agro-industries at all levels.

128. While expressing the view that more meetings like the present one should be held, some delegates emphasized that the question of follow-up and implementation of the recommendations and ideas emanating from the meeting would be critical. Delegates also stressed that the lack of data and the lack of infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, increased the difficulties of working with women in those areas. Finally, the necessity of considering the problem of women in agro-industries within the more general perspective of the overall development process was emphasized.

Annex I

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Expert Group Meeting
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of agenda
 - introductory statements
4. Women and the growth of agro-industries
5. Women's participation in manufacturing in developing countries with emphasis on agro-industries
6. Role and conditions of women in agro-industries; review of main issues by participants
7. Appointment of working groups and approval of programme of discussions
 - Group I - Women in the informal/micro and small-scale industry sector
 - Group II - Women in medium- and large-scale industries
8. Reports of the working groups
9. Adoption of the report of the working groups and of the Expert Group Meeting.
10. Closure of the Expert Group Meeting

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Experts

Ms. Hayfai Abdul Rahman
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Ms. Ann Weston
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Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Background Papers

- ID/WG. 452/1 Women and the growth of agro-industries
in developing countries
- ID/WG. 452/2 Women's participation in manufacturing in
developing countries with emphasis on agro-
industries

Conference Room Papers

- CRP.1 Address of the Director-General of UNIDO Mr. Domingo L. Siazon, Jr.
- CRP.2 Philippines MA. R.Q. Franco
Women's participation in the agro-based
manufacturing sector Philippines
- CRP.3 Yugoslavia T. Vukina
The position of women in the Yugoslav
agro-industrial complex N. Svob-Dokic
Yugoslavia
- CRP.4 Kenya S. Alambo
The role of women in agro-industries
(the Kenyan experience) Kenya
- CRP.5 An integrated development framework for Jean-Claude Lorin
women in agro-industries Canadian International
Development Agency
- CRP.6 International federation of business J.W. Ngugi
and professional women Member of the Interna-
tional Federation of
Business and Professional
Women
England
- CRP.7 Women and work: a strategy for L. Stewart
employment and development International Confedera-
tion of Free Trade Unions
Belgium
- CRP.8 Cuba N. Perez Rojas
Notes on women in the Cuban sugar agro-
industry Cuba
- CRP.9 The role of women in public agro- G. Sipic
industrial enterprises in developing
countries International Center for
An illustrative case Developing Countries
Yugoslavia

CRP. 10	India agro-industries: sub-sector un- manufactured tobacco and tobacco products	S. Singla India
CRP. 11	India agro-industries: sub-sector wood and wood-based industries	S. Singla India
CRP. 12	Women in agro-industries and the Commonwealth	Ann Weston Commonwealth Secretariat England
CRP. 13	Statement	Naomi Okada Japan
CRP. 14	Indonesia industrial development integration of women in agro-industries	K. Sosro Indonesia
CRP. 15	Indonesia industrial development women workers in the textile industries	K. Sosro Indonesia
CRP. 16	Federative Republic of Brazil case study: records of a seminar "The Role of Women in Agro-Industries"	M.P. Caetano da Silva Brazil
CRP. 17	Malawi expert group meeting on women in agro- industries	F. Msiska Malawi
CRP. 18	Ghana general comments of women in agro- industries using Ghana as an example	F. E. Dovlo Ghana
CRP. 19	China the role of Beijing's women in the socialist construction and moderniza- tion of the City	Huang Miao-xian China
CRP. 20	Nigeria women and the growth of agro-industries in Nigeria	O. M. Lipede Nigeria

Annex IV

EXAMPLES OF PROJECT IDEAS

Proposal No. 1

UNIDO should consider a study to investigate the upgrading of traditional vegetable oil production and its impact on women, the vegetable oil industry and the nutritional status of the population. A pilot project should be developed with an integrated approach to vegetable oil production, paying special attention to the use of by-products, provision of spare parts and maintenance services. The results of this project and its impact on women should be evaluated and recommendations made for its application to different regions and vegetable oil raw materials.

Proposal No. 2

UNIDO should consider a pilot project to establish multi-purpose production units in the food processing industry to determine the effectiveness of different production processes for improving the participation of women and decreasing the effects of seasonality.

An evaluation study is also recommended to determine the impact of this approach on women and on improving the development of horticultural processing activities (fruits, vegetables etc.).

Proposal No. 3

Traditional crops should be utilized to a greater extent for food and other uses. Integrated processing techniques have been developed, for example for cassava and coconuts, which could be operated at various scales of production.

Two pilot projects should be established in selected African countries to evaluate the effectiveness of the newly developed integrated processing techniques with regard to improving the economic viability of processing these products, improving women's participation and working conditions and increasing local food availability.

Proposal No. 4

In order to promote the development of the leather, wood, clothing and food agro-industrial sectors and to increase women's participation in these sectors, UNIDO should organize training courses for women in product design, production management, quality control and market techniques. Evaluation and follow-up components should be included in the training projects to assess the impact of these activities on the development of specific enterprises and on women's participation.