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PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAO GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF ACTION

Table of Contents

	Pages
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. OVERVIEW OF THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF ACTION (GAD POA) 2002-2007	1
III. INSTRUMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE GAD POA (2002-2007)	1
A. AWARENESS RAISING AND REPORTING	2
B. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	3
C. GENDER SENSITIVE INDICATORS AND STATISTICS	4

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IV.	IMPLEMENTING THE GAD POA IN THE BIENNIUM 2006-2007	5
A.	ACCESS TO FOOD AND NUTRITION	5
B.	ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES	5
C.	ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS	5
D.	GENDER-SENSITIVE POLICY AND PLANNING	6
V.	SPECIAL AREAS OF FOCUS	6
A.	DISEASES	6
B.	EMERGENCY PROGRAMMES	7
VI.	PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES	7
VII.	FINAL OBSERVATIONS	8
VIII.	THE NEXT GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF ACTION 2008-2013	9
IX.	RECOMMENDATIONS	9

I. INTRODUCTION

1. FAO's Gender and Development Plan of Action (GAD PoA) 2002-2007 was endorsed by the 31st Session of the Conference (2001/REP para 53). The first progress report on this GAD PoA's implementation was reviewed at the 32nd Session (2003/6) and the second at the 33rd Session (2005/7). The Conference recommended that a third progress report on the Plan of Action's implementation, illustrating the progress achieved during the biennium 2006-2007, be presented at the 34th Session in 2007. This third report gives an overview of relevant activities undertaken, identifies challenges in implementing the GAD PoA 2002-2007, recommends institutional measures to strengthen accountability for gender mainstreaming throughout the Organization and introduces the new GAD PoA 2008-2013.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF ACTION (GAD POA) 2002-2007

2. The GAD PoA constitutes FAO's main policy instrument for follow-up to the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action on Women, the Beijing +10 review, the gender aspects of the 1996 World Food Summit Plan of Action, and the Political Declaration adopted at the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, in June 2002. Through these meetings and agreements, FAO Members committed to supporting the advancement and empowerment of rural women and promoting gender equality in agriculture and rural development. A majority of FAO Members are also party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) the only international legal instrument with specific provisions for rural women (Art. 14).

3. The Plan is consistent with the longer-term orientations and corporate strategies contained in FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-2015 and is rooted in the rolling Medium Term Plan (MTP). The MTP ensures that gender-related commitments are reviewed and updated every two years. Most importantly, the Plan serves as a framework for strengthening FAO's skills, capacities and mechanisms to assist its Members in developing and implementing gender-sensitive national and regional policies, strategies and programmes for agricultural and rural development that can contribute to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular MDG 1 and 3.

4. The GAD PoA (2002-2007) identified four objectives to promote gender equality. The achievement of each objective would be reflected in equitable:

- access to sufficient, safe and nutritionally adequate food;
- access to, control over and management of natural resources and agricultural support services;
- opportunities for employment and livelihoods in rural areas; and
- policy- and decision-making processes at all levels.

5. To achieve these objectives, FAO identified four priority areas upon which to focus its gender mainstreaming efforts: food and nutrition; natural resources; agricultural support systems; and rural development policy and planning.

III. INSTRUMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE GAD POA (2002-2007)

6. The FAO Reform process continued during the current biennium bringing organizational changes at Headquarters and in the field offices, with many technical Divisions witnessing thematic restructuring. In 2006, the Communication for Development and the Education of Rural People units of the ex-Research and Technology Division (SDR) merged with the ex-Gender and Population Division (SDW). In 2007 SDW merged with part of the ex-Rural Development Division (SDA) to become the new Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW), and

moved to the Economic and Social Development Department, while the ex-SDR unit was moved to the Natural Resources Management Department. The new Division was given the focal point responsibility for rural employment, indigenous people and rural development, while continuing its corporate responsibility for gender equality and HIV and AIDS and other diseases of poverty in agriculture and rural development. ESW continues to provide coordination and advice for implementation of the GAD PoA within the Organization and Member Countries.

7. In addition to these institutional changes, the Organization continued to strengthen its gender mainstreaming mechanisms in a variety of ways, as illustrated below.

8. A network of 54 Gender Focal Points (GFP) from 29 divisions contribute to the strategic planning, programming and reporting of gender activities. The presence of at least one GFP in each FAO division ensures continuity in divisional support to the implementation of the GAD PoA. The GFPs facilitate the integration of gender into a wide array of issues such as water management, land tenure, trade, climate change, agro-biodiversity, nutrition, livestock, forestry, fisheries, and bio-energy. During the present biennium, GFP and staff capacity was strengthened through tailor-made gender mainstreaming training seminars co-organized by ESW and different technical units, such as the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE), the Animal Production and Health Division (AGA) and the Forest Products and Economics Division.

9. FAO's newly established Knowledge Forum serves as a direct gateway to the Organization's expertise and knowledge. It makes information on FAO's work on the advancement of rural women and gender equality within the context of food security and agricultural production more accessible to users. For example, the Ask FAO portal has allowed users to interact directly with gender and HIV/AIDS experts. Out of 43 house-wide Best Practices, the five belonging to the thematic issue on Gender and Equity in Rural Societies promote gender mainstreaming experience and know-how, with a special focus on:

- capacity building in sex-disaggregated data for rural and agricultural development;
- gender mainstreaming in agricultural planning;
- knowledge-sharing and capacity building to empower rural women and men as is done in the Dimitra project;
- Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS); and
- The socio-economic and gender analysis (SEAGA) programme.

10. The newly established Thematic Knowledge Network on gender and equity in rural development, which is a virtual community of professional staff and collaborating centres, has strengthened the links between communities of practitioners. The network shares information on policy and technical issues, facilitates exchanging knowledge and resources, and organizes and creates knowledge in innovative ways.

11. Through the Inter-departmental Working Groups (IDWG), which acts as one of the primary mechanisms for facilitating the implementation of the GAD PoA, FAO presented the inter-relations between gender and biodiversity, climate change, energy and desertification at several seminars and meetings. The newly redesigned Gender and Food Security Website provides a gateway to gender-related information in all the Organization's technical areas and links to FAO's gender-related programmes, projects, materials, tools and guidelines.

A. AWARENESS RAISING AND REPORTING

12. During the biennium, FAO continued its advocacy work in a number of ways. FAO hosted the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) in collaboration with the Government of Brazil and the First World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD) in collaboration with the World Bank and the Communication Initiative. Both events succeeded in raising awareness on the importance of gender issues in sustainable development. ICARRD focused on identifying sustainable options that would contribute to reducing rural poverty and hunger, and included two special thematic sessions on "Enhancing

women's leadership and transforming organizations for sustainable rural development" and "Land Rights of Indigenous Women." The Conference highlighted the key principle that a number of fundamental rights of women (as well as indigenous peoples, pastoralists, and vulnerable groups) should be better recognized in policies, institutional patterns and plans, including their rights to land and natural resources, and food sovereignty. During the WCCD, FAO highlighted the importance of communication in sustainable development while giving specific emphasis on gender issues and indigenous people.

13. To re-enforce FAO staff awareness of the role of rural women in agricultural development and food security, ESW continued its on-going sensitization strategy by hosting special events on International Women's Day, World AIDS Day and Child Labour Day. This year on March 8 a symposium was held on "Women's Economic Empowerment and Property Rights" in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Action Aid. This year's theme for Child Labour Day focused on agriculture, and FAO, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), hosted a special event to raise awareness on understanding children's work in agriculture and the obstacles for eliminating the practice.

14. Based on FAO's CEDAW guidelines for reporting on Article 14, the Organization assisted many Member Nations in locating and organizing relevant information on rural women, which facilitated their reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

15. As the lead technical agency for agricultural development, FAO periodically shares information and reports on the progress made in promoting gender equality and the advancement of rural women to other UN agencies, through existing inter-agency mechanisms, including the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE), the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the UN Division on the Advancement of Women (UN DAW), the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the UN General Assembly Sessions. As a lead member of the UN Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), the Division actively supported the formulation of the UN system-wide policy and strategy for gender mainstreaming. In recognition of its extensive work on gender, property rights and HIV/AIDS, FAO was requested to become a co-convenor for the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS.

B. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

16. The Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) Programme is FAO's key programme for capacity development in socio-economic and gender issues. During this biennium, in collaboration with the relevant technical divisions, new SEAGA guides were issued for: Animal Health and Production, with a focus on gender and HIV/AIDS; Socio-economic and Gender Analysis in Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Programmes; and, Addressing HIV/AIDS through Agriculture and Natural Resources Sectors. In addition, the SEAGA guide on Gender and Microfinance was updated to include HIV and AIDS concerns.

17. The Project Cycle Overview Course (POCK), offered by the Human Resources Management Division (ASH) develops the capacity of FAO technical staff in project cycle management. During this biennium, elements of the SEAGA Guide on the Project Cycle were incorporated into the course curriculum and workshops were held with the Fisheries Department to assist staff in integrating gender in their projects. To better mainstream gender concerns in the field programmes and offices, courses are now also being held for FAO country representatives and assistant representatives.

18. The SEAGA tools and guidelines were used by IFAD¹ and World Food Program (WFP)² to develop the skills of their country project staff. The University degli Studi "Roma Tre" in Rome, Italy has integrated some of the SEAGA tools in its Masters Programme in Human Development and Food Security.

19. To gender sensitize middle- and high-level officers from the Ministries of Agriculture, Universities and Civil Society in Latin America, SEAGA training is being offered through long distance courses implemented by the FAO Regional Office for Latin American and Caribbean (RLC) with the support of the Spanish Cooperation Agency (AECI).

20. The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is developing the capacity of Ministries of Agriculture in Asia using their new Learning Resource CD ROM on "Gender and Women in Agriculture and Rural Development in Asia." It has been used to train specialists in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Lao PDR, representatives from various sectors and agencies in collaboration with Ministry of Women Affairs in Cambodia, and an NGO Network, in collaboration with the Green Foundation-India.

C. GENDER SENSITIVE INDICATORS AND STATISTICS

21. To better monitor and evaluate FAO projects and activities several technical divisions in collaboration with ESW have recently developed gender-sensitive indicators in animal health and production, plant protection, water and land management, climate change, emergency operations, forestry, fisheries, rural infrastructure and agro-industries, rural employment, nutrition, trade and markets and energy.

22. Through the FAOSTAT database FAO has been providing sex-specific data on the economically active (agricultural/non-agricultural) population, which was collected and analysed in collaboration with other UN agencies.

23. Through the SEAGA programme, agricultural statisticians and policy analysts from the Czech Republic, India and Norway were trained in the production and use of sex-disaggregated data and indicators. FAO also contributed to the development of agricultural statistics projects that will collect sex-disaggregated data in the framework of the current round of the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA 2010).

24. Technical assistance provided by the FAO Regional Office for Africa helped several Member Countries improve the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data in their agricultural census. The generation of policy relevant information was facilitated through the introduction of the concept of the sub-holder. In Guinea, particularly the Labé Region, collection of sex-disaggregated data at sub-holder level showed a larger percentage of women in agriculture compared to men between the ages of 20 and 54. Sub-holder data in select provinces in Cameroon showed an increase in the percentage of women heads of agricultural holdings between 1984 and 1990.³

¹ Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Moldova, Niger, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Senegal.

² Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burundi, Cameroon, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Germany, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria and Panama.

³ Diana Tempelman, "Status of sex-disaggregated agricultural statistical data." Presentation on 22 March 2007 in Rome, Italy.

IV. IMPLEMENTING THE GAD POA IN THE BIENNIUM 2006-2007

25. The implementation of the GAD PoA entails capacity development, policy advice and technical assistance in the four priority areas. The following section presents selected activities carried out during the 2006-2007 biennium towards reaching the four gender strategic objectives.

A. ACCESS TO FOOD AND NUTRITION

26. FAO seeks to improve equitable access to adequate nutrition and relevant knowledge and resources. Over 2500 households with vulnerable children (orphans and/or HIV and AIDS affected) in two districts of Malawi have been able to improve household food and nutrition security, health and access to training and education through a FAO-led project, funded by the Government of Germany, carried out in close partnership with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WFP.

27. To better assist development practitioners, FAO, the World Bank and IFAD are developing a Gender and Agricultural Livelihoods Sourcebook that provides lessons learned, good practices and innovative approaches to integrating gender in development projects. The Sourcebook integrates gender-based analysis and livelihood approaches into sector-based (i.e., food security) programmes and projects to improve the livelihoods of men, women, boys and girls.

B. ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

28. Recognising that women play a leading role in using and managing fields, forests, crops, water, fish and livestock, FAO promotes gender equality in the access to, control over, conservation of and management of natural resources and agro-biodiversity. In Afghanistan more than 25,000 rural women received inputs and training to increase the benefits of their backyard poultry systems.

29. Through the Gender, Biodiversity and Local Knowledge Systems for Food Security (LinKS) project, development practitioners in eastern and southern Africa developed skills that enabled them to better recognize farmers' local knowledge, practices and skills. The project developed a training manual entitled Building on Gender, Agro-biodiversity and Local Knowledge, which focuses on the linkages between gender roles and relationships, local knowledge systems, agro-biodiversity, conservation of plant and animal genetic resources and food security. The manual is currently being used by local NGOs and universities in eastern and southern Africa.

C. ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

30. FAO continues to promote equality in the access to agricultural support systems, including markets, credit, technology, extension and training. For example, with the increasing commercialization of small farm production, the FAO Livelihood Diversification and Enterprise Development (LDED) programme enables rural farmers to respond to new market opportunities and expand their livelihood strategies. Many LDED activities seek to promote gender equality through livelihood diversification. In the past, enterprise development was limited to large-scale entrepreneurs who could submit business plans directly to public officials and banks. LDED now enables village-level entrepreneurs and community groups to access training and support for enterprise planning. In collaboration with the UN interagency gender group in El Salvador, FAO supports the Enterprise Skills for Adolescent Girls project that seeks to empower adolescent women by enhancing access to agricultural support systems.

D. GENDER-SENSITIVE POLICY AND PLANNING

31. A gender-sensitive policy environment is crucial for promoting gender-sensitive activities. A gender perspective often helps to redress both social and economic inequities. To address food insecurity issues in the Republic of Botswana and Namibia, FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme assisted the governments to formulate gender-sensitive national action plans for food security that seek to increase food production and eliminate inequalities in women's access to productive resources. FAO's technical assistance contributed to mainstreaming gender in Chile's agricultural policy and decentralised structures with the creation of Equal Opportunity Commissions in every province.

32. Under the One United Nations Joint Programme, sponsored by the UN-Spain MDG Achievement Fund, FAO provided inputs to the Viet Nam Joint Programme on Gender Equality. Similarly in China, under the same initiative, FAO has been supporting the overall goal to sensitize national policies and programmes based on the increased use of gender statistics.

V. SPECIAL AREAS OF FOCUS

33. In implementing the GAD PoA, FAO continues to strengthen its work under the four priority areas of intervention outlined in the Plan of Action. However, in the current biennium FAO has expanded its activities to focus on emerging trends that have a severe impact on food security and rural poverty and consequently on MDG 1, as noted below.

A. DISEASES

34. In collaboration with relevant technical divisions, ESW continues to monitor the impact of HIV/AIDS on food security and to support the initiatives of member countries in preventing the worsening of the pandemic and mitigating its gender-related negative effects on food security and nutrition.

35. FAO is supporting the formulation of gender-sensitive national policies to reduce bio-security risks and threats. Under the Support to National Bio-security Initiatives and Policies in Countries Facing High Risks of Outbreaks of Diseases and Pests, FAO is assessing the magnitude and dynamics of diseases, their transboundary aspects, and the combined or cumulative gendered impact on food security, biodiversity, livelihoods and rural development with a view to generate gender-sensitive responses to such outbreaks.

36. To address the HIV/AIDS crisis, which is affecting food security and rural livelihoods, the governments of Tanzania and Zimbabwe developed gender-sensitive agricultural strategies with FAO's assistance.

37. The new PAIA on the implications of HIV/AIDS and other Diseases of Poverty coordinates normative outputs, technical assistance and policy guidance to countries in the agriculture sector (including fisheries and forestry) in order to mitigate the impact of the epidemic and other diseases. The PAIA consolidates and strengthens cross-departmental activities hitherto coordinated through the informal working group on HIV/AIDS, and complements corporate work on gender and food security.

38. To address the continuous outbreak of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in several Southeast Asian countries, which poses a significant threat to the poultry industry and to the livelihood of hundreds of millions of poor (mainly female) livestock farmers in the region, FAO contributed significantly to the development of a global gender-sensitive strategy.

B. EMERGENCY PROGRAMMES

39. Conflicts increase survivors' vulnerability and in most cases women and children are more at risk. The FAO Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division's (TCE) activities in

the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) target malnourished children and mothers. TCE in cooperation with local NGOs, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and WFP provide assistance to women in nutritional centres throughout the country, with the purpose of diversifying the diet of their children through the provision of vegetable crops and planting of sweet potato as a source of vitamin A, the provision of animals as a source of protein and training in agricultural activities. FAO carried out similar projects in Afghanistan, Haiti, Indonesia, Northern Caucasus, Northern Uganda, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan and Timor Leste.

40. TCE and ESW have been collaborating for several years with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance in preparing a Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action called: *Women, Girls, Boys & Men: Different Needs – Equal Opportunities*. They also organised awareness raising activities on gender issues and established a roster of gender advisors funded by the Norwegian Refugee Council. These advisors support selected UN agencies, humanitarian country teams and gender networks in the initial stages of humanitarian emergencies to establish mechanisms ensuring that services are in place to meet the needs of affected communities.

VI. PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES

41. Partnerships and alliances are important to FAO's work. In its Strategic Framework 2000-2015, the Organization emphasizes this through its cross-organizational strategy "Broadening Partnerships and Alliances". Some examples of partnerships that focus on gender issues are given below.

42. In Mozambique, under the FAO-led, Netherlands funded project on paralegal training on land law and land rights, decentralised legal support and capacity building to promote sustainable development and good governance at local level. The work includes women's land rights as one of the important components for training, focusing on how women use formal land rights to overcome customary laws and how paralegals help women to use formal land laws to fulfil their land rights. To date, 115 paralegals have been trained under the project. In collaboration with the Centre for Juridical and Judicial Training of Ministry of Justice, FAO also organised a seminar for judges, prosecutors, police, chiefs, and district administrators on the land law, including women's land rights.

43. In varying partnerships with UNICEF, UNIDO, UNDP, WFP and the U.S. Peace Corps, FAO has been implementing Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) targeting children orphaned by HIV and AIDS as well as other vulnerable youths to improve their agricultural knowledge and life skills. The knowledge and skills acquired by the young girls and boys also help them to develop positive values regarding gender equality and human rights. FAO has established nearly 50 JFFLS in Kenya, Mozambique, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia, reaching over 1,500 young people. Adult Farmer Field and Life Schools (AFFLS) have also been established in Namibia, Tanzania and Zambia targeting poor households affected by HIV and AIDS, with a special emphasis on women-headed households and widows. These schools impart knowledge and skills to groups of male and female farmers to enhance their agricultural production, household food security and income and to strengthen their understanding of how socio-economic vulnerability leads to risk-taking behaviour.

44. Under the umbrella Improving Tenure Security of the Poor project, which is part of the Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between Norway and FAO, ESW supports the Securing Women and Children's Property and Inheritance Rights project in rural communities affected by HIV and AIDS through capacity development and legal empowerment. Activities in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia focus on: safeguarding women's and children's property and inheritance rights through legal empowerment; supporting legal awareness on women's and children's property and inheritance rights; and promoting institutional reform to protect, restore and strengthen property and inheritance rights of women and orphans in rural areas.

45. Through the Dimitra project, FAO is empowering rural women by increasing the visibility of their contributions to development and their access to information on associations dealing with food security and sustainable development. This project, supported by Belgium and the Roi Baudouin Foundation, makes use of both traditional means of communication and new information technologies to promote information exchange and dissemination.

46. To better address the constraints to the sustainable use of aquatic resources by artisanal fishing communities, FAO, in partnership with the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (DFID) and 25 participating countries in West Africa, seeks to improve fisheries communities' livelihoods and raise awareness of fisheries in public-policy initiatives. A set of Gender Policies for responsible fisheries was produced and disseminated.

VII. FINAL OBSERVATIONS

47. FAO continued its efforts to mainstream gender issues under the GAD PoA 2002 – 2007. As also found in the efforts of other UN Agencies, FAO is not devoid of problems regarding effective gender mainstreaming. In spite of good progress achieved in mainstreaming gender issues in FAO's normative and operational work during the GAD PoA 2002 – 2007 reporting period, important challenges remain.

48. Due to budgetary constraints, three out of five out-posted regional officer posts (Regional Office for Europe, Regional Office for the Near East and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean) have been cut, weakening FAO's capacity to mainstream gender issues in the three regions. The out-posted officers provide strategic support in line with regional specificities in gender issues. In order to firmly anchor gender mainstreaming, FAO needs to ensure adequate capacity and resources at the different levels of intervention.

49. The sustained commitment, accountability and proactive support from middle and senior managers to the gender mainstreaming process are essential for the effective implementation of the Plan of Action. Management should lead the process by ensuring that Technical Divisions are committed, accountable and aware of their responsibilities in the implementation of the GAD PoA. The Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation (PBE) and ESW, should continue to collaborate in refining tools to monitor and evaluate progress made in implementing the GAD PoA and assist the technical divisions to monitor and evaluate their progress in fulfilling their GAD PoA outputs.

50. In spite of the mechanisms such as the Project Programme Review Committee (PPRC) to ensure that gender issues are taken into consideration in the formulation process, a system to monitor effective implementation of the gender aspects needs to be developed and put in place. Thus, though gender was considered relevant in 71% of the project proposals reviewed in the PPRC process in 2006, there is no data on the extent of implementation or on actual impact of the gender aspects.

51. The technical divisions must take more responsibility and initiative in ensuring that the capacities of their staff and in particular of the gender focal points (GFPs) are appropriately developed and updated to contribute to the implementation of and reporting towards the GAD PoA. In practice, the responsibility for addressing gender issues is still frequently considered to be the GFP's or ESW's. Moreover, the GFPs should be appointed from senior level staff and their tasks should be considered as part of their regular programme of work and included in their job descriptions and consequently in performance evaluations.

VIII. THE NEXT GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF ACTION 2008-2013

52. The proposed GAD PoA (2008-2013) has adopted a “targeted” gender mainstreaming strategy. The new Plan’s strategy entails the commitment of each technical division to fulfil three gender outputs related to their respective work area. Each division has developed indicators for measuring progress in achieving their gender related outputs over the next six years. These outputs are designed to meet FAO’s four strategic gender objectives and to address four selected global issues that are particularly relevant to FAO’s current and future work – Emergencies, Climate Change and Bio-energy, Diseases and Globalization. By achieving their gender outputs, each technical division will be contributing to the achievement of MDG1 (elimination of poverty & hunger) and MDG3 (gender equality) which in turn lead to the achievement of all the MDGs.

53. The new GAD PoA seeks to address some of the challenges of the previous Plan of Action. Targeted gender outputs will facilitate monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the GAD PoA by ESW/PBE, thereby improving the accountability of each of the technical divisions. The participatory process in which these outputs were developed also ensures each division’s ownership of them.

54. In order to meet these gender outputs and measure their progress, a systematic and comprehensive training programme has also been developed to enhance both the commitment to gender mainstreaming and the skills to carry it out. ESW will work with the technical division’s gender focal points and technical officers to carry out this training.

55. AFH is presently drafting an HR Gender Parity Action Plan. The purpose of the plan is to create a framework that can support the Organization in improving gender balance among its workforce. The plan will include target levels that should be achieved by different organizational entities as well as actions that should be taken during the next years in order to effectively improve the Organization's gender balance. As a next step, the plan will suggest some additional areas to investigate in order to draw conclusions with respect to improving gender balance in the Organization.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

56. This Report represents the final progress report of the Gender and Development Plan of Action 2002 – 2007. FAO has made progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action – in its institutional arrangements, normative activities and in its assistance to Member Nations, especially with regards to the overarching goal of mainstreaming gender within the wider programme of work of the Organization and linking it with the achievement of the MDGs. However, more remains to be done to ensure that the different needs and rights of rural women and men are integrated consciously and coherently, with sufficient resources, in all of FAO’s normative and field activities and especially at the policy level as well as in targeted advice to member countries.

57. The outputs and progress indicators of the new Plan of Action were developed during the 2006-2007 biennium through a detailed and lengthy consultative process involving the GFPs and their respective technical units and are being submitted jointly with the GAD PoA 2002 – 2007 Progress Report to the 34th session of the FAO Conference. As of January 2008, pending the endorsement by the FAO Conference, the Gender and Development Plan of Action 2002 – 2007 will be superseded by the Gender and Development Plan of Action 2008 – 2013. It is recommended that the Conference endorse this fourth Gender and Development Plan of Action (2008 – 2013), the core points of which are included in document C 2007/19.