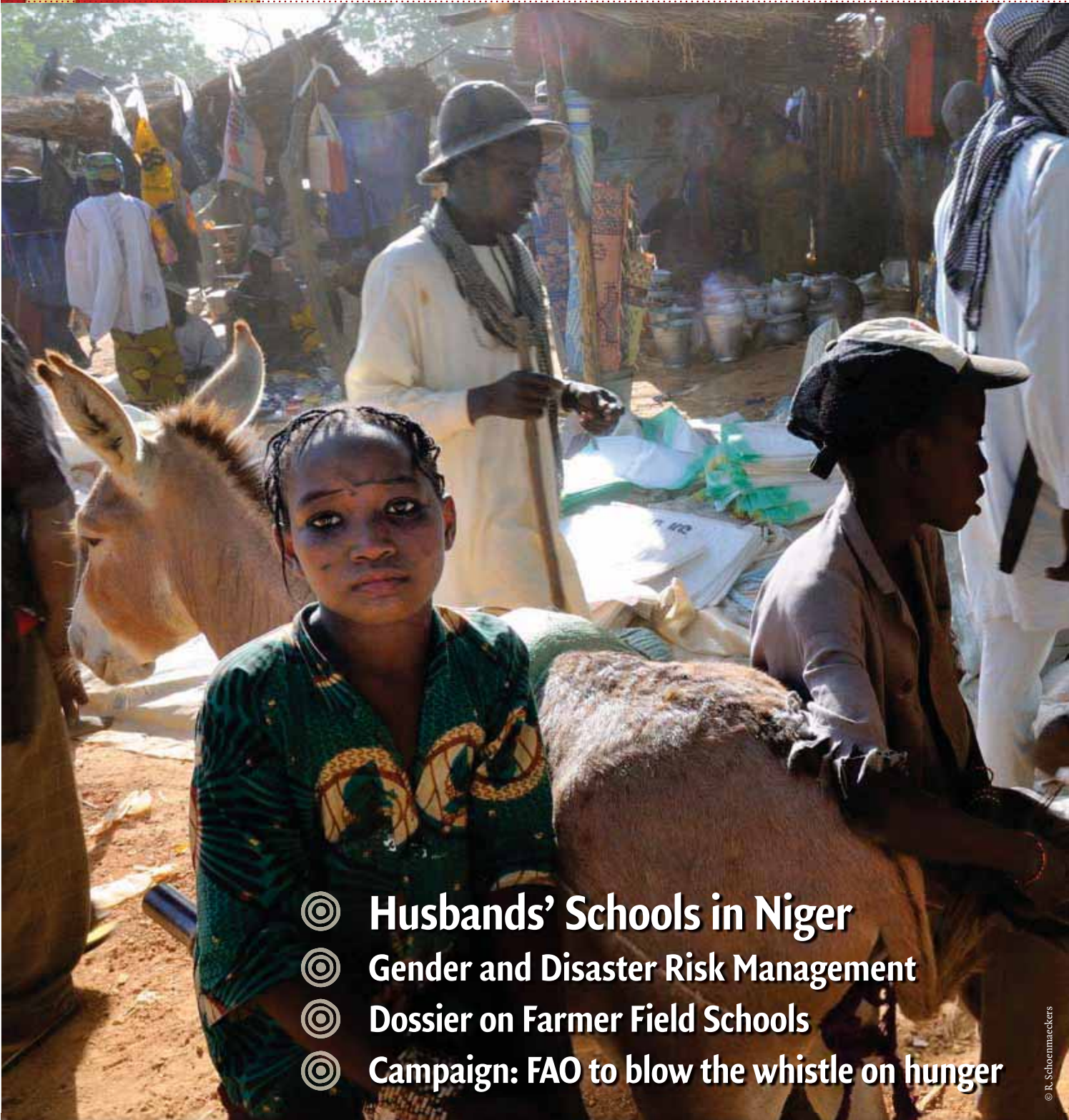




# Dimitra Newsletter

RURAL WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT



- ◎ **Husbands' Schools in Niger**
- ◎ **Gender and Disaster Risk Management**
- ◎ **Dossier on Farmer Field Schools**
- ◎ **Campaign: FAO to blow the whistle on hunger**

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# Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our spring issue. We are very pleased to announce the birth of Yero, the son of our colleague Maartje and her partner Seydou. We wish little Yero, the youngest member of the expanding Dimitra network, a long and beautiful life in a world that is more just and free from poverty and hunger.

This Dimitra Newsletter gives examples of strategies and innovative projects that are important to share widely. In Niger, for example, where the maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world, UNFPA has developed an innovative strategy to involve men in promoting reproductive health and to encourage behaviour change at the community level. In these “Husbands’ Schools” (Ecoles des Maris), it is the men who persuade their wives and other men in their community to let women go to health centres to give birth in good conditions.

We present a participatory action research project on women and land in Senegal, initiated by “Groupe de Recherche Action sur le Foncier au Sénégal” (Action Research Group on Land in Senegal) (GRAFOSEN). The implementation of the research is the result of collaboration between grassroots organizations, NGOs, universities and ministries. These include the NGO Enda Protection Naturelle (Pronat), Dimitra’s partner in the region.

The management of disaster risks is an area in which the gender approach is being increasingly integrated because it has become clear that disasters do not affect women and men in the same way. The article in this issue presents the lessons learned on this subject by FAO concerning food and agriculture.

Climate change is another area which is integrating gender more and more. Its effects are greater on women than on men. The article written by Dimitra’s focal point in Tanzania explains this in detail.

In Kenya, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is greater in rural areas where more than 80% of the population live. Of those infected, more than 60% are women and girls. Rural women living with HIV are often exposed to a high risk of gender based sexual violence. The article of the Insti-



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tute of Policy Analysis and Research presents this issue.

The series “Women’s Portraits” is dedicated to Elise Muhimuzi, Permanent Secretary of CONAFED (Comité National Femme et Développement or National Committee for Women and Development) in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In particular, Elise describes how CONAFED was first set up and has grown.

The field schools in their various forms are the subject of a special dossier. The different methodologies used by FAO are reviewed, from traditional Farmer Field Schools to Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools for vulnerable youth which integrate the fight against sexual violence and HIV/AIDS as well as entrepreneurial training.

Other articles are devoted to the sustainable management of natural resources, particularly in Cameroon. Dimitra’s partner there highlights some successful experiences in this field.

Finally, after the usual section on resources, you will find information on the new FAO campaign to denounce hunger. It is about creating a global dynamic to challenge world leaders to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger through a world petition.

We hope you find this issue useful and enjoyable and, as always, your suggestions and comments are welcome.

Happy reading!

Marcela Villarreal  
Director  
Gender, equity and rural employment Division  
FAO, Economic and Social Development Department



FOOD AND  
AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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