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DRAFT INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION
Prepared by the Secretariat

Pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 3277 (XXIX) of 10 December 1974, the attached draft international plan of action is submitted for the consideration of the Consultative Committee.
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Annex. RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS
I. BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

1. In subscribing to the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations undertook specific commitments: "To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ..., to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women, and of nations large and small, ... and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

2. Many conventions, declarations, formal recommendations and other instruments have been adopted since then reinforcing and elaborating these fundamental principles and objectives. Some of them seek to safeguard and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons without discrimination of any kind. Some have the specific aim of eliminating sex discrimination and promoting the equal rights of men and women. Others deal with general concepts of economic and social progress and development, and include international strategies, programmes and plans of action. 1/

3. In these various instruments the international community has condemned sex discrimination as fundamentally unjust, an offence against human dignity and an infringement of human rights. It has proclaimed that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women as well as men in all fields. It has declared that all human beings without distinction have the right to enjoy the fruits of social progress and should, on their part, contribute to it. It has included the full integration of women in the total development effort as a stated objective of the decade of the 1970s.

4. More recently, at the World Population Conference and the World Food Conference, both held in 1974, explicit recognition was given to the need to improve the situation of women as a significant factor in the solution of problems of population and world food shortages.

5. The international community has thus concerned itself with the status of women from the viewpoint both of human rights and social justice and of its implications for social progress and development.

6. Despite these solemn pronouncements and notwithstanding the work accomplished by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and the specialized agencies concerned, the progress made in translating these accepted principles into practical reality has been slow and uneven.

7. It was this situation which prompted the United Nations to proclaim 1975 as International Women's Year, and to call for intensified action to promote equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities of both sexes, to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort, and to involve women widely in international co-operation and the strengthening of world peace.

1/ See the annex to the present paper.
8. Discrimination against women has existed throughout history and in most societies, manifesting itself in different ways, both overtly and covertly, and in differing degrees. The causes are complex. The biological factor of child-bearing and women's traditional role of child-rearing have often been used to justify discrimination against women. Political, economic, social, cultural and psychological factors also play a significant role, however, and the question should be considered as a multidimensional, multifaceted issue.

9. There are basic similarities, and major differences in the status of women in different countries and regions of the world, rooted in the political, economic and social structure and in the cultural framework of each country. There are also marked differences in the needs and problems of different categories of women within countries, which must be properly assessed and taken into account.

10. In general it can be said that, on a global basis, substantial advances have been made in the legal field and the principle of equality of both sexes before the law has been written into the basic laws of a great number of countries. Nevertheless, discriminatory laws, customs, practices and attitudes persist in many parts of the world, and the gap between the de jure and de facto situations of women, especially in the political, economic and social fields, is very wide. In many instances, also, women have remained outside the mainstream of progress and development, and their talents and abilities have not been utilized in the promotion of better standards of living for all.

11. The resurgence of women's movements in the past decade in many countries has brought the question of sex discrimination to the forefront of public awareness. While these movements cannot in any sense be described as homogeneous, one result of their activities is that many women have become more conscious of their own lack of options and aware of instances of subtle as well as overt discrimination practised in long-established social institutions, such as the family, school and university, the work place, the law courts and the mass communications media.

12. Many nations are at present facing urgent and pressing social and economic problems that demand solution, if the very survival and well-being of their citizens is to be safeguarded. These include: high rates of unemployment and under-employment; mass poverty; rapid population growth; food shortages, malnutrition and starvation; under-development; inadequate school and health facilities; lack of trained manpower; shortages of housing and lack of amenities; and undesirable side effects of rapid urbanization and social change. Each one of these problems is complex in itself, and their solution is rendered more difficult because they are interrelated and often found simultaneously, the presence of one aggravating the other. There is growing evidence, moreover, that the status of women and many of these problems are interrelated and that improvements in the situation of women may be a vital factor in the alleviation of the problems.

13. For example, rural women represent between 70 per cent and 90 per cent of the female population in the developing world, and, because of their major and important role in agricultural production, preparation, processing and marketing of food, they constitute a substantial economic resource. Yet, it is in this sector...
that in many countries women's status is lowest and, because they are ill-equipped with the tools of development, their agricultural productivity is seriously affected, and efforts that could help the prevailing world food shortage are largely dissipated.

14. From the demographic point of view women are 50 per cent of the world's population, and approximately 70 per cent of the total female population of the world is estimated to be living in the developing countries. Within this group, there are over 500 million girls under 15 years of age, constituting some 40 per cent of all females in the developing countries. The reproductive patterns that these girls will follow will be a significant determinant of the future rate of population growth in these countries.

15. Illiteracy, lack of education and of training in basic skills is one of the causes of the vicious circle of under-development and low productivity, poor conditions of health and welfare, which has most serious implications not only for women but for society as a whole and for future generations. Illiteracy rates are higher for women than for men, especially in some regions where they are more than 20 or 30 percentage points lower for men than women.

16. As societies evolve from a traditional economy to various levels of modernization and industrialization, women may, initially, be adversely affected by the process. For example, their roles may become less defined, their spheres of economic activity as producers of food and handicrafts may be reduced; their recognized rights to the use of land may be abolished; and their living standards may be lowered by migration to overcrowded urban areas. Hence, it is essential that Governments take specific steps to avoid these and other negative effects when planning for the integration of women in development.

17. Planning should also take full account of the important factors affecting development, on the one hand, and the relationship of those factors to the status of women, on the other. Such interrelationship may include the link between the condition of women, population factors and over-all development. High fertility usually goes hand in hand with low status of women, lack of educational and employment opportunities for them and conditions of poverty, overwork and drudgery. Another interrelationship is that which exists between the mother's level of education and the child's subsequent receptiveness to learning. This determines the degree to which the child is able to exercise a wider range of options for work and higher education in later life. Yet another link exists between the mother's level of health and nutrition, on the one hand, and the mortality rate of her children, on the other. Furthermore, women's level of education and the nature of their occupation affect the extent to which they themselves can participate effectively in political and economic life.

18. Recent years have seen the emergence of new approaches to and concepts of social progress and development, and a growing awareness that States are interdependent. If a new world order is to be established on the principle of equity and social justice among and within nations, and solidly anchored in
conditions of peace and stability, then women must share as equals with men in its creation as well as its benefits.

19. It is in this perspective that the Plan has been prepared, in full recognition of the wide inequalities which exist among countries at different stages of development, and of the wide divergencies in social and economic conditions within individual countries.

II. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

20. The Plan is based on principles long recognized by the international community in existing international instruments, programmes and strategies. It is not intended as a substitute for these, but is aimed rather at stimulating the national and international action required to give practical effect to their provisions, and to achieve the goals of International Women's Year within a broad and multidisciplinary framework, which has hitherto been lacking.

21. The Plan endorses programmes and strategies setting forth similar or related objectives; in particular, the International Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, the programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women, the World Population Plan of Action, the recommendations of the World Food Conference, and the regional plans of action for the integration of women in development, adopted in 1974 for the regions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Africa. Many provisions of the present Plan are based on the recommendations of those global and regional plans.

22. The achievement of equality between women and men implies that both should have equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities to enable them to develop their particular talents and capabilities for their own personal fulfilment and the benefit of society. The Plan does not profess a preferential role for women, but it does imply the re-examination and reassessment of the functions and roles traditionally allotted to each sex within the family and the community at large.

23. The integration of women in development calls for a widening of their political and economic activities, the provision of the necessary skills to make their contribution more effective in terms of productivity, and their greater participation in decision-making, planning and implementation of all policies, programmes and projects. Full integration also implies that women receive their share of the benefits of development, thereby helping to ensure a more equitable distribution of income among all segments of the population.

24. Sustained international co-operation of all countries and peoples is required to achieve peace, which is not just the absence of conflict but depends upon the establishment of justice and equity for all. To this end, the Plan calls for the full participation of women in all efforts to promote and maintain peace, to eliminate racial discrimination and colonialism in all its forms, and to contribute to the realization of self-determination.

/...
25. A further aim of the Plan is to ensure that the actual and potential contribution of women is not overlooked in existing concepts and strategies for development and a new world economic order. Recommendations for national and international action are proposed with the primary aim of accelerating progress in areas where women have been especially disadvantaged.

26. The Plan provides recommendations for action over the 10-year period 1975 to 1985 as part of a sustained, long-term effort to achieve the objectives of the International Women's Year and future United Nations development decades. The action taken will be subject to periodic review and appraisal.

27. It stresses especially action at the national level, supported by the international community through global and regional action programmes. While the recommendations for national action are addressed primarily to Governments, the full support of all public and private institutions, employers, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and other groups and individuals will be required to carry them out.

28. At the international level, the recommendations envisage that all organizations of the United Nations system should take separate and joint action to implement the Plan, including the relevant United Nations organs and bodies, especially the regional commissions, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the specialized agencies, and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

29. The Plan stresses the need for commitment on the part of Governments and the international community to accord importance and priority to measures to improve the situation of women, both as a means of achieving the goals of social progress and development and as an end in itself.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

A. National action

30. Governments should establish their own priorities and specific targets for achieving the goals of the Plan during the 10-year period 1975 to 1985. Quantitative targets should be linked to those set out, in particular, in the International Development Strategy, and the World Population Plan of Action.

31. While integrated programmes for the benefit of all members of society should be the basis for action in implementing this Plan, special measures on behalf of women may be necessary where their status is particularly low and where discriminatory attitudes towards them are strong. These measures should be for an interim period only and should be appropriately phased out as their objectives are achieved.
32. The Plan recommends general measures on administrative and organizational matters, legislation, data collection and research, and the mass communications media. The specific areas selected in the Plan are not intended to be exhaustive but are considered to be the main areas for priority action, namely, international co-operation and peace, political participation, education and training, employment, health and nutrition, family and population change. In implementing the Plan, Governments should pay special attention to improving the situation of women in rural areas.

33. It is recognized that some of the objectives of the Plan have already been achieved in some countries, while in others they will only be progressively accomplished. Moreover, some measures by their very nature will take longer to implement than others. Governments are urged to plan to achieve certain targets by the end of the first five-year period, 1980, such as a marked increase in literacy, the extension of vocational training in basic skills, parity of enrolment at the primary level of education, the establishment of infrastructural services in rural areas, the enactment of legislation on voting and eligibility for election, and on equal pay for equal work, and increased participation of women in policy-making positions at the local, national and international levels.

34. Many of the measures suggested in the Plan could be implemented by a change of emphasis and priorities in national plans and programmes without necessarily incurring additional expenditure. Governments should, however, explore all available sources of support to ensure adequate allocation of funds, including community resources and those of various private funding agencies. Evidence of government funding would enhance the possibilities of attracting international and bilateral assistance.

1. General measures

(a) Policy, administrative and organizational measures

35. As a matter of general policy there should be a clear commitment on the part of Governments to take specific action within the framework of national planning and programmes to promote and implement the objectives of the Plan and to set up appropriate machinery for this purpose where it does not already exist.

36. The establishment of multisectoral machinery within government such as national commissions, women's bureaux and other bodies can be an effective transitional measure for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full integration in national life. Such bodies should include both women and men, representative of all groups of society responsible for making and implementing policy decisions in the public sector. Government ministries and departments (especially those responsible for education, health, labour, justice, communications, industry, trade, agriculture, rural development, social welfare, finance and planning) as well as appropriate private and public agencies should be represented.

37. The functions of such bodies should include the investigation of the situation of women at all levels, recommendations for needed legislative and other measures, including policies and programmes, and the evaluation of the progress achieved in...
meeting the targets established by Governments to implement the Plan. The activities of such bodies should be co-ordinated as far as possible with similar regional and international bodies. These national bodies should also encourage the co-ordination of the activities of non-governmental organizations undertaken on behalf of women, and self-help programmes devised by women themselves.

(b) Legislative measures

38. Constitutional and legislative guarantees of the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of sex and of equal rights of women and men are essential. Equally important is the general acceptance of the principles embodied in such legislation. The adoption and enforcement of legislation is a significant means of influencing public attitudes and values. Wherever necessary, therefore, legislation should be enacted to bring national laws into conformity with the relevant international instruments and adequate provision made for their enforcement especially in each area dealt with in the Plan. International conventions relating to the status of women should be ratified where this has not yet been done.

39. Official bodies, such as law commissions, should be established where they do not exist and entrusted with the responsibility of modernizing laws and regulations and of keeping them under review. Appropriate bodies should be set up to ensure that the provisions of the law are applied without discrimination. These could include human rights commissions, civil liberties unions, appeals boards and the office of ombudsman.

40. Provision should also be made for informing women of their legal rights, of how they may seek redress and for legal aid, where possible free of charge. For this purpose special counselling offices could be established.

(c) Data collection, research and analysis

41. In view of the lack of data and research on many aspects of the situation of women in the context of over-all political, economic, social and cultural development, the scope of inquiry and research should be widened, and a scientific and reliable data base established for the purpose of formulating policy, evaluating progress and analysing differences between countries. National statistical offices should adhere to the standards followed by the United Nations and its specialized agencies for collecting and tabulating statistical data.

42. All census and survey data relating to the demographic, social and economic characteristics of individuals (e.g., urban/rural residence, age, marital status, literacy, education, income, level of skills and participation in both modern and traditional economic activities) and to household and family composition should be reported and analysed by sex.

43. The value of the actual contribution of women to the national economy should be recognized whether or not their contribution is reflected in the national statistics on the economically active population. Many women are automatically
excluded from this category because they are regarded only as homemakers, and homemaking is nowhere considered to be an economic activity. It should also be recognized that in many instances the head of a household or of a family may be a woman; it should never automatically be assumed that a woman can be the head only in the absence of any man. Another large group of women are erroneously classified as homemakers because it is assumed that women do not have an economic activity and therefore their status is not carefully investigated. This is particularly important in the less developed countries where women make a significant contribution, particularly as unpaid family workers in agriculture. These groups should therefore be included in national data gathering and statistics.

44. The extent of women's activities in food production (cash crop and subsistence), water and fuel supply, marketing, transportation and participation in local and national planning and policy-making in all sectors of national life should be measured.

45. Data collection should also seek to elicit information on the quality of life, such as satisfaction with job, income and family relations, use of leisure time and perception of self.

46. Suitable indicators should be developed to evaluate the contribution of women and assess the effectiveness of programmes and policies.

47. Special attention should be given to these broad areas of research:

   (i) Inquiries into customs, traditions, practices, attitudes and values which impede or promote the exercise of equal rights of women and men, and which constrain or increase women's contribution to development;

   (ii) The assessment and evaluation of women's current and potential contribution to the various sectors of national life in relation to the country's over-all development plans and programmes including political life;

   (iii) The interrelationship of the condition of women, demographic patterns and changes, and economic and social development;

   (iv) The extent and nature of women's participation in the labour force; special attention should also be given to the agricultural and service sectors of the economy and the contribution of co-operatives;

   (v) The influence of scientific and technological developments on the position of women and their integration into the development effort;

   (vi) The changing status and roles of women in the family and society and their relationship to sexual behaviour;
(vii) The appropriate technology, including intermediate technology required to maximize employment opportunities and enable women to contribute more efficiently towards over-all economic activity and reduce the negative aspects of mechanization with due regard to over-all productivity;

(viii) The extent and causes of female mortality in countries where it is higher than male mortality, with a view to recommending appropriate medical and social action;

(ix) The division of labour and the time-budgets for women and girls compared to men and boys, with regard to both economic and household activities.

(d) Mass communications media and attitudes towards women's roles

48. A major obstacle in effecting changes in the status of women lies in public attitudes and values regarding women's roles in society. The mass communications media which at present tend to reinforce traditional attitudes have great potential as a vehicle for social change and could exercise a significant influence in helping to remove prejudices and stereotypes and in accelerating the acceptance of women's new and expanding roles. Mass media include not only press, radio, television and cinema but also traditional types of entertainment such as drama, story telling, songs and puppet shows, which are essential in reaching the rural areas of many countries.

49. Governments should encourage the carrying out of investigations and surveys of the positive and negative influences exerted by the mass media in relation to national goals and the changing roles of women and men. Such investigations and surveys should examine the various functions of the media: dissemination of information; education; entertainment; and advertising.

50. Those in control of the media should raise public consciousness with respect to the changing roles of women and men and the serious concern that both have about important issues that affect their families, communities and society at large. They should be urged to project a more dynamic image of women as well as men, and to take into account the diversity of women's roles and their actual and potential contribution to society.

51. Women should be appointed in greater numbers in media management decision-making and other capacities, as editors, columnists, reporters, producers and the like, and should encourage the critical review, within the media, of the image of women projected.

2. Specific areas

(a) International co-operation and the strengthening of peace

52. In order to involve more women in the promotion of international co-operation and the strengthening of peace and in combating colonialism, neo-colonialism,
foreign domination and alien subjugation, apartheid and racial discrimination, the peace efforts of women as individuals and in groups, in national and international organizations should be encouraged.

53. Women should be given equal opportunity to represent their countries in all international forums and especially in the delegations to the United Nations family of organizations. Women should have equal opportunity to serve in the principal organs and committees of the United Nations, including the Security Council and all conferences on disarmament and peace.

54. The efforts of non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations having as their aim the strengthening of international security and the furthering of peaceful coexistence should be supported and women should be given every encouragement to participate actively in their endeavours.

55. A special day devoted to peace should be celebrated nationally and internationally. Meetings and seminars should be organized for this purpose by interested individuals and groups and should have wide coverage in the press and other media. Women should lend their full support to these objectives and explore, together with men, ways to overcome existing obstacles to peace and international co-operation.

56. Measures should be taken to facilitate the free flow of information and ideas among countries, having due regard for their sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention in their domestic affairs, and to promote the exchange of visits between women of different countries to study common problems. Educational, cultural, scientific and other exchange programmes should be expanded and new forms developed in order to facilitate mutual understanding between peoples, particularly the young, and promote the principle of peaceful coexistence. For these purposes the mass media should be utilized fully.

57. Women and men should be encouraged to instill in their children values of mutual respect and understanding and the desire to maintain peace.

(b) Political participation

58. The goal under this part of the Plan is to afford equal opportunity for women to participate in public life and make them aware of their responsibilities as citizens.

59. The right to vote, to be eligible for election and to hold all public offices and exercise the public functions should be enjoyed by women on equal terms with men at the national, local and community levels. Where legislation guaranteeing these rights does not exist efforts should be made to adopt it by the end of the first biennium of this Plan, in 1978. Where special qualifications are required, they should apply to both sexes equally and should relate only to the expertise necessary for performing the specific functions.

60. Governments should establish specific quantitative targets for increasing the number of women in public office and public functions at all levels, including policy-making, and special efforts should be made to meet them.
61. Such special efforts could include the following: (i) the official stand towards equal political participation of women should be reaffirmed and widely publicized; (ii) special governmental instructions for achieving a fair representation of women in public office should be issued and government departments dealing with personnel questions should compile periodic reports on the number of women in the public service and their levels and areas of work; (iii) drives for the recruitment, nomination and promotion of women, particularly to fill important positions, should be undertaken until equitable representation of the sexes is achieved; (iv) educational and informational activities should be undertaken to enlighten the female electorate on political issues and on the need for their active participation in public affairs.

62. Special drives should be undertaken to encourage the increased participation of women and girls in rural, community and youth development programmes, and their access to related training for leadership in those programmes.

63. In order to increase the participation of women as well as other under-represented groups in the political system of each country, nation-wide voluntary contributions of a minimum flat sum could be included in the existing system of taxation to help defray the campaign expenses of all political candidates.

(c) Education and training

64. Equal opportunities for basic education and literacy should be provided on a formal and non-formal basis, according to national needs. This objective is not only a basic right in itself but can be a powerful instrument for social mobility and for reducing gaps between social groups and between the sexes, since it confers the potential for obtaining gainful employment. Governments should relate educational priorities to population projections and to employment opportunities. Programmes should also be related to the culture of the communities concerned.

65. Measures should be taken to promote equality of opportunity for both sexes at all levels of education and training within the context of lifelong education. These measures should conform to the existing international standards and, in particular, to the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, 1960, and to the revised Recommendation on Technical and Vocational Education, 1974, of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. All legal and practical discrimination in access to all forms of education and training at all levels should be abolished.

66. Programmes, curricula and standards of education and training should be identical for the two sexes, even where separate institutions exist for girls and women and boys and men, respectively. Courses for both sexes should include agriculture and other employment-oriented subjects, responsible parenthood, family life and nutrition. Co-education and mixed training groups should be actively encouraged.

67. Dynamic programmes for eradicating illiteracy should be adopted and target dates established for its elimination. Literacy campaigns should include basic training in
agricultural, technical, entrepreneurial and co-operative skills or training for a variety of paraprofessional roles in health, nutrition, family planning and education.

68. The provision and effective enforcement as quickly as possible of free and compulsory primary education for girls on an equal basis with boys should be made. Parity of enrolment for the sexes should be accompanied by a revision of the content and structure of education such as to ensure that it is relevant to national needs and that it prepares the individual adequately for future life.

69. Every effort should be made to overcome high drop-out rates among school-age girls and to enable women to participate in literacy and basic skills programmes. Inexpensive child-care and other arrangements should therefore be organized to coincide with school or training hours to free women and girls from confining domestic work. Special programmes for continuing education on a part-time basis should also be arranged to ensure retention of what has been learned at school.

70. Existing and newly established vocational programmes of all types should be widely diversified, to equip girls and boys for a wide choice of employment opportunities and to match national needs and job opportunities, and should be equally accessible to both women and men.

71. Special programmes need to be established or developed for those living in rural areas, to enable women to participate fully in programmes for social and economic development, to encourage a self-reliant and self-help approach to life and give basic agricultural training including extension work and employment-oriented skills.

72. Special measures should be developed to assist women who wish to return to work after a comparatively long absence, owing in particular to family responsibilities, or who wish to take up employment for the first time at a more mature age to do so.

73. Informational and formal and non-formal educational programmes are required to make the general public, parents, teachers, counsellors and others aware of the need to provide girls with a solid initial education and adequate training for occupational life and ample opportunities for further education and training. This can be partially achieved by widespread mass media programmes to eliminate prejudices and modify traditional practices which automatically accord a secondary role to women and girls in learning or employment situations.

74. Special orientation, counselling and guidance arrangements should be made available to girls to make them aware of the opportunities for education, training and employment open to them and of the education and training required to take full advantage of the opportunities available. Girls should also have equal access with boys to all educational and vocational guidance facilities, and should be encouraged to choose a career according to their real aptitudes and abilities rather than on the basis of deeply ingrained sex stereotypes.

75. Research activities should be promoted which are designed to identify discriminatory practices based on sex with regard to education and training and to ensure educational equality.
(d) Employment and economic roles

76. The goals in this sector are to achieve equality of opportunity and treatment for women workers and their integration into the labour force and to provide them with equal access to the necessary skills. Governments should formulate policies and action programmes directed expressly towards equality of opportunity and treatment for women workers and overcoming the present disequilibrium in their integration in the work force, thereby enhancing their contribution to development. Such policies and programmes, which should be in conformity with the standards relating to the employment of women elaborated by the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation, should include legislation stipulating the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status, guidelines for implementing the principles, appeals procedures, and effective targets and machinery for implementation.

77. Training and education policies should be related to existing and projected job opportunities. In attempting to deal with problems of unemployment and underemployment, special efforts should be made to create a variety of economic roles for women and men and to encourage and support self-employment and self-help activities. Together with such measures, efforts should be made to foster positive attitudes towards the employment of women, irrespective of marital status, among employers and workers and among women and men in society at large, and to eliminate obstacles based on sex-typed divisions of labour.

78. In order to extend women's range of economic roles, co-operatives and small-scale industries can be developed and encouraged with the necessary help and support of government. For example, where co-operatives already exist, women should be encouraged to take an active part in them. New co-operatives, and, where appropriate, women's co-operatives, should be organized, especially in areas where women play a major role, such as food production, marketing, housing, nutrition and health. Co-operatives may also be the most appropriate and feasible arrangement for child-care to enable women and girls to obtain gainful employment.

79. Essential to the effective implementation of the above is the provision of adequate training in co-operatives and entrepreneurial skills, access to credit and necessary seed capital for improved tools; assistance with marketing, the provision of adequate rural social services and amenities, decentralized development of towns in rural areas and basic infrastructural arrangements, such as child-care arrangements, transportation and conveniently situated water supplies.

80. Because of the high proportion of women in the agricultural sector in many countries, it is particularly important that efforts be made to increase their participation at the national planning level in the formulation of integrated employment policies for the agricultural and rural sectors. These policies should include projects for diversification, import substitution and expansion of rural activities for farming, forestry, fisheries, animal husbandry and agro-industries.

81. In urban areas in particular, efforts should be made to provide for the needs of migrant women and low-income working women and their families who live in slums and squatter settlements by providing training, job counselling, child-care facilities and financial aid.
82. Access to skills and the provision of institutional and on-the-job training should be open to women in the same way as to men in every sphere and on the same conditions so as to make them equally eligible for promotion. Training should also be offered to enable women to re-enter the labour force or to enter it at a more mature age.

83. Special attention should be given to more flexible working hours and part-time work for women and men, with a view to facilitating the combination of household tasks and work responsibilities.

84. All women workers should have the right to maternity protection including maternity leave with a guarantee of returning to their former employment and to nursing breaks, in keeping with the principles laid down in the International Labour Organisation's Maternity Convention (Revised) and Recommendation, 1952.

85. Protective legislation applying to women only should be reviewed in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and revised, repealed or extended to all workers as necessary.

86. Measures should be taken to eliminate to the maximum possible extent discriminatory treatment of women in national social security schemes. Women workers should be covered equally with men by all aspects of such schemes.

87. Governments should encourage and stimulate concerted efforts, in particular on the part of employers' and workers' organizations, to bring about a marked improvement in the position of women in employment and occupation and should co-operate with all voluntary organizations concerned with the status of women workers in economic life and in society as a whole.

88. Trade unions should adopt policies to increase the participation of women in their work at every level of the hierarchy, including the higher echelons. They should have special programmes to promote equality of opportunity for jobs and training for women workers and leadership training for women. They should play a leading role in developing new and constructive approaches to problems faced by workers paying special attention to the problems of women workers.

(e) Health and nutrition

89. While everyone has an undeniable right to health, conditions have often precluded the actual enjoyment by women of this right equally with men. The situation becomes more accentuated in societies with considerable shortages of health personnel and facilities and constitutes a high cost to the family, society and development by impairing the productivity of women. Women also need special care during pregnancy, delivery and lactation.

90. Attention should be given to the development of comprehensive simple community health services in which the community identifies its own health needs, takes part in decisions on delivery of health care in different socio-economic contexts, and develops primary health care services within easy access of every member of the community. In the development of primary health care for the entire population,
provision should be made to ensure that women have the same rights and access to that care as men.

91. Within the context of health services, Governments should pay special attention to women's specific health needs by provision of pre-natal and post-natal and delivery services; gynaecological and family planning services during the reproductive years; comprehensive and continuous health services directed to all infant, pre-school children and schoolchildren, without prejudice on grounds of sex; specific services for pre-adolescent and adolescent girls and for the post-reproductive years and old age.

92. Particular attention should be paid to the reduction of certain risks which affect the health of women and their children, including too many pregnancies or pregnancies at too close intervals or at too early or too late an age. Governments should promote the provision of family planning education and services as a means of reducing the above risks and improving the status and health of women. It would also enable women to exercise equally with men their right to decide how many children they will bear, thereby aiding the community to implement national policies in the population field and further the integration of women into development.

93. Easily accessible water supplies should also be provided (including wells, dams, catchments, piping, etc.) for safe potable water as well as sewerage and other sanitation measures to improve health conditions and reduce the burden of carrying water which falls mainly on women and children.

94. In view of women's importance not only as users but as providers of health care, steps should be taken to incorporate them as fully informed and active participants in the health planning and decision-making process at all levels and in all phases. Efforts should be made to encourage women to participate actively in community efforts, to provide primary health care and improve coverage. Moreover, women should have the same right of access as men to any training establishment or course for any health profession and to continue to the highest levels. Practices which exclude women from certain health professions on traditional, religious or cultural grounds should be abolished. Women should also be trained as paramedics and encouraged to organize health co-operatives.

95. In national food and nutrition policies Governments should give priority to the consumption by the most vulnerable groups in the population (adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and young children) of certain types of food produce such as milk and milk products and specially enriched foods. The practice of breast feeding and good feeding practices for the weaning period should be encouraged. Supplementary food programmes for mothers and children in need and for children at imminent risk of malnutrition should be introduced and nutritional deficiencies should be prevented through fortification of staples or other widely consumed foods.

96. Techniques and equipment for food processing, preservation and conservation at the local village level should be improved and made available to rural women. Co-operatives for the production, quality control and distribution of food should be organized to give impetus to this effort and, where appropriate, campaigns to educate the consumer should be organized.

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97. Opportunities should be created for women to contribute more efficiently to the production of proper types of food through vegetable gardens in rural and urban areas through the provision of better tools, seeds and fertilizer. Girls and boys should also be encouraged to grow food in school gardens the produce of which could be used to supplement daily school meal programmes.

98. Mass communications media campaigns on nutrition education should be launched to explore the most effective techniques for introducing previously unacceptable nutritious foods into the daily diets of people. These campaigns should also inform women how to use the family income most economically towards the purchase of more nutritious foods. The exchange of experience on effective nutrition programmes through seminars, informal visits and the publication of suitable menus should be arranged.

(f) The roles of women and men in the family

99. The goal under this part of the Plan is to enable the family to adjust to economic, social and cultural change, to ensure the dignity, equality and economic security of both spouses and create conditions conducive to the balanced development of the child.

100. In the total development process the role of women, along with men, needs to be considered in terms of their contribution to the family as well as to society and the national economy. Higher status for this role in the home - as a parent, spouse and homemaker - can only enhance the personal dignity of a man and a woman. Household activities have generally been perceived as having a low economic and social prestige. However, they are valued by all societies because procreation and the rearing of children are basic functions for the maintenance and perpetuation of the family group.

101. Legislation relating to marriage should ensure that women and men have the same right to free choice of a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent, that marriage below the age of 18 is prohibited to enable a longer period of education for girls and boys, but particularly girls, for personal development and work prior to marriage. Official registration of marriages should be made compulsory and all institutions and practices which infringe upon these rights should be abolished, in particular, child marriage and the inheritance of widows.

102. Legislative and other measures should be taken to ensure that both spouses enjoy full legal capacity and the exercise thereof relating to their personal and property rights, including the right to acquire, administer, enjoy, dispose of and inherit property (including property acquired during marriage). Limitations, where such exist, should apply to both spouses alike. During marriage the principle of equal rights and responsibilities would mean that both spouses should perform an active role in the home, taking into account the importance of combining home and work responsibilities, and share jointly decision-making on matters affecting the family and children. At the dissolution of marriage, this principle would imply that procedures and grounds of dissolution of marriage should be liberalized and apply equally to both spouses; assets acquired during marriage by either or both...
should be shared on an equitable basis; appropriate provisions should be made for
the social security and pension coverage of the work contributed by the homemaker;
and decisions relating to the custody of children should be taken in consideration
of their best interests.

103. In order to assist in the solution of conflicts arising among members of the
family, adequate family counselling services should be set up wherever possible and
the establishment of family courts staffed with personnel trained in law as well as
in various other relevant disciplines should be considered. Free legal aid and
assistance should be made available to needy litigants.

104. Programmes of education for personal relationship, marriage and family life,
including psycho-sexual development, should be integrated into all school curricula
at appropriate levels and into programmes for out-of-school education, to prepare
young people of both sexes for responsible marriage and parenthood. These
programmes should be based on the ideals of mutual respect and shared rights and
responsibilities in the family and in society.

105. In recognition of the growing number of single-parent families, additional
assistance and benefits, wherever possible, should be provided for them. The
unmarried mother should be granted full-fledged status as a parent, and children
born out of wedlock should have the same rights and obligations as children born
in wedlock. Special nursing homes and hostels should be established for married
and unmarried mothers in need, before and after delivery.

106. Social security programmes should to the maximum extent possible include
children and family allowances in order to strengthen the economic stability of
family members. They should be granted directly to the spouse who is actually
taking care of the children.

107. Women should have fully opportunity to participate in the planning of urban
and housing development as well as human settlements. Planning for housing should
take into account the size of the family as well as the need to make provision
within easy reach of dwellings for the necessary social services and facilities for
family and community life, including playgrounds, crèches, day-care centres and
shops.

(g) Population

108. The position of women in the family and in society is inextricably linked with
the demographic processes of growth and decrease, including fertility, mortality,
migration and urbanization. To alter the pattern whereby women are denied full
participation in the development process involves a change in certain crucial
demographic variables, such as age at marriage, age at birth of first child, total
number of children and the interval between births, and age at termination of
child-bearing. Further, the status of women and in particular their educational
level, whether or not they are employed, the nature of their employment and their
position within the family are all factors which significantly influence family
size. Conversely, the right of the woman to decide freely and responsibly on the
number and spacing of her children and to the means to enable her to exercise that
right has a decisive impact on her ability to take advantage of educational and
employment opportunities.
109. The Plan endorses the recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action, especially those relating to the status of women, in view of the interrelationship of the status of women, demographic factors and development. Governments are urged to ensure balanced demographic, economic and social development by closely relating population policies and programmes with measures to improve the status of women.

110. All individuals and couples should have access, through an institutionalized system, such as a family planning programme, to the information and means to enable them to determine freely and fully the number and spacing of their children, and all obstacles to the dissemination of family planning knowledge and services, including legal, social and financial obstacles, should be removed.

111. Both women and men equally should be the target groups of family planning programmes which should be integrated and co-ordinated with health and other services designed to raise the quality of family life. Family planning information services should be included in any organized services that have the confidence and support of the people.

112. Programmes should be formulated for the reduction of infant, child and maternal mortality by means of improved nutrition, sanitation, maternal and child health care and maternal education. Social service and health programmes should also be devised to meet the needs of the elderly and particularly women, who form the majority of that group.

B. International action

1. Global action

113. International action in support of national efforts to achieve the objectives of the Plan will require the co-operation of the entire United Nations system of organizations, properly co-ordinated through the existing machinery, especially the Economic and Social Council and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, which should be strengthened appropriately.

114. Women should be fully involved in policy-making at the international as well as the national level, and be equitably represented among the principal delegates to all international bodies, conferences and committees, including those dealing with political and legal questions, economic and social development, disarmament, planning, administration and finance, science and technology, the environment and population. The secretariats of the international organizations should set an example by eliminating any provisions or practices in their employment policies which may be discriminatory against women. Quantitative targets to achieve an equitable balance of male and female employees at all levels should be established on a biennial basis throughout the decade 1975-1985. This should apply to all substantive areas, and to field posts where operational programmes are initiated and carried out.

115. International action should support existing programmes and expand their scope in the following main areas: drawing up standards to provide the framework for
national policies; data collection, analysis and research, operational activities furnishing technical and material assistance to Governments; and exchange of knowledge and experience.

(a) Formulation and implementation of international standards

116. The preparation of international conventions, declarations and formal recommendations, and the development of reporting systems and other procedures for their implementation are important elements of international programmes and should be continued.

117. High priority should be given in 1976 to the preparation and adoption of the convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, with effective procedures for its implementation.

118. Studies should be undertaken of the effectiveness of the implementation of existing instruments and periodic reviews made to determine their adequacy in the light of changing conditions in the modern world, and of experience gained since their adoption.

119. The need for the development of new standards in new fields of concern to women should be kept constantly under review in relation to the implementation of the present Plan.

(b) Data collection, research and analysis

120. The primary aim of international action should be to assist countries in the systematic collection of adequate data on women, and provide the basis for cross-cultural analysis and comparisons. An index of relevant social and economic indicators should be prepared not later than 1980, in co-operation with the interested specialized agencies, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the regional commissions and other relevant bodies.

121. The Plan also gives high priority to research activities on all aspects of the situation of women. Cross-cultural studies, especially of the causes of discriminatory practices and attitudes and of the mechanisms of change are considered important. Research oriented towards the specific problems of countries and regions should have high priority and be carried out by competent women and men especially acquainted with national and regional conditions.

122. Every effort should be made to promote the exchange of information and research findings making maximum use of existing national and regional research institutes and universities, in order to build up a network for the regular exchange of information. These institutions should include the United Nations University, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and the United Nations Social Defence Institute.
(c) **Operational activities for technical co-operation**

123. Concerted efforts of all organizations in the United Nations system are needed to implement the Plan effectively, through the means of technical co-operation programmes.

124. The United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations specialized agencies, including the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund, the regional commissions, intergovernmental organizations, the bilateral assistance agencies and foundations, and the international and regional development banks, all carry out their work through projects that are highly specific in terms of the objectives to be reached, the resources to be employed, and the target areas and populations for which they are intended. Given the scope and diversity of the world-wide system of assistance agencies, action can be initiated in a large number of areas without delay once the needs are understood and diffused throughout the United Nations system.

125. A deliberate and large-scale effort should therefore be made to ensure that high priority and attention are given to programmes, projects and activities which give women the skills, training and opportunities necessary to improve their situation and enable them to participate fully and productively in the total development effort.

126. Field surveys should be undertaken in each region to assist Governments and the international community by establishing the necessary data base to develop projects which will implement the objectives of the Plan.

127. Existing plans and projects should be scrutinized with a view to extending their sphere of activities to include women, and new and innovative projects should also be developed, especially in such key areas as:

(i) Agricultural development, with special attention to women's role as producers, processors and vendors of food;

(ii) Integrated rural development, stressing training of women and girls in improved methods of farming, marketing, purchasing and sales techniques; basic accounting and organizational methods; fundamentals of hygiene and nutrition; training in crafts and economy;

(iii) Health and reproduction, including family health and child health, family planning, nutrition and health education;

(iv) Education and training at all levels, geared to the opportunities for employment and related economic roles of women;

(v) Public administration, with the aim of preparing women to participate in development planning and policy-making, especially in middle- and higher-level posts;

(vi) Youth projects, which should be examined to ensure that they include adequate emphasis on the needs and participation of young women.
128. The resident representatives of the United Nations Development Programme should play a key role in helping Governments to formulate requests for such assistance within the framework of country programming. Advisory services provided by the specialized agencies in the form of special consultants or task forces could also render assistance in the formulation of project requests. Periodic reviews could be initiated to suggest crucial areas where special support might be needed.

129. Women should participate fully in planning and implementing UNDP country programmes as well as regional, interregional and global projects.

(d) Exchange of information and experience

130. The exchange of information and experience at the international level is an effective means of stimulating progress and encouraging the adoption of measures to eliminate discrimination against women and encourage their wider participation in all sectors of national life. Countries with different political, economic and social systems and cultures and at differing stages of development have benefited from the common knowledge of problems, difficulties and achievements and from solutions worked out jointly.

131. Meetings and seminars, especially those organized under the technical co-operation programme of the United Nations in conjunction with host countries, have proved to be most valuable in extending this type of exchange and experience and should be continued.

132. Educational and informational programmes supported by the international community are needed to make all sectors of the population aware of the international norms established, the goals and objectives of this Plan of Action, and the findings of research and data envisaged under the relevant sections of the Plan.

133. International organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, should strengthen their efforts to distribute information on women and related matters, particularly through periodic publications on the situation of women, their changing roles and their integration into the development effort through planning and implementation policies, as well as the utilization of communications media and aids, and the wide distribution of newsletters, pamphlets, visual charts and similar material on women.

2. Regional action

134. The United Nations regional commissions for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and West Asia should stimulate interest in the Plan and provide national Governments and non-governmental organizations with the technical and informational support they require to develop and implement effective strategies to further the objectives of the Plan in the regions. Where they have not already done so, the regional commissions should establish appropriate machinery for the purpose. This might include a regional standing committee of
experts from countries of the region to advise the commission on its activities directed towards the integration of women in development in relation to those of Governments and other agencies in the region. The committee's functions should be:

(a) To initiate country studies and assist national institutions to identify the types of information needed for a proper understanding of the situation of women and the factors facilitating or limiting their advancement;

(b) To assist with the design and implementation of surveys for collection of data and other information;

(c) To give leadership in the methods of reporting on the situation of women and in the development of indicators for assessing the progress made towards the goals of this Plan in conjunction with regional statistical bodies and international efforts to this end;

(d) To provide a clearing-house for exchange of information which would facilitate co-ordination and mutual support between programmes for the advancement of women at various levels, and for the sharing of relevant experience among the countries of the region.

135. States members of the regional commissions, in requesting technical and financial assistance, should endeavour to raise the priority accorded to projects to enhance opportunities for women and to increase recognition of the importance of these projects for over-all development in consultation with UNDP regional offices.

136. The regional commissions should provide assistance to Governments and non-governmental organizations to identify needed action, develop policies, strategies and programmes for strengthening women's role in national development, and formulate requests for technical and financial assistance for such programmes. They should encourage training institutions in the region to expand their curricula to encompass topics related to the integration of women in development, and assist in the development of training programmes, particularly those whose initial aim is to increase women's potential for leadership and develop the cadres for formulating the programmes and implementing the activities indicated by this Plan.

137. The commissions should also promote technical co-operation between the developing countries of the region, utilizing the existing talent available. Trained women could, for example, offer short-term assistance to women in countries other than their own on a voluntary basis, or as part of a special task force. Special advisers should be attached to the regional field offices in order to strengthen the regional field structure and carry out more effectively the functions and aims described above. They could also seek to stimulate increased contributions of funds for financing programmes for the advancement of women from existing sources of multilateral and bilateral assistance, and to secure new sources of funds, including the establishment of revolving funds at the national and local levels.
138. In implementing the Plan, special efforts should be made by the commissions and other United Nations bodies having regional offices to co-ordinate their programmes with existing United Nations and other regional centres whose fields of competence relate to the aims of this Plan, such as centres for research and training in development training, literacy, social welfare, social defence, employment, health and nutrition and community development.

139. Regional development banks such as the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank as well as subregional banks, such as the Central American Bank for Economic Integration and the East African Development Bank, and bilateral funding agencies should be urged to accord high priority in their development assistance to projects which include the integration of women in the development effort and the achievement of equality. Such assistance would stimulate national support for innovative national and local programmes, including self-help activities.

IV. REVIEW AND APPRAISAL

140. It is essential to review and appraise progress made in meeting the goals of this Plan. Such an exercise should be part of the procedures for the review and appraisal of progress made under the International Development Strategy of the Second United Nations Development Decade. This has already been provided for by the General Assembly in its resolution 3276 (XXIX) of 10 December 1974, by which it decided to consider relevant recommendations of the Conference at its seventh special session and thirtieth regular session in 1975. The Plan should also be considered at the first regular session of the Economic and Social Council in 1976. Provision should also be made for the regular review of the implementation of the Plan by the General Assembly and the Council every two years.

141. The Plan as adopted should also be considered by the regional commissions, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the relevant specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations at their meetings following the World Conference. The discussions and decisions of these bodies concerning the Plan should be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and its relevant functional commissions and advisory bodies (the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission for Social Development, the Population and Statistical Commissions, the Committee on Development Planning, and the Committee on Review and Appraisal) at their sessions in 1976 and 1977. An item on action on the implementation of the Plan should be included in the agenda of the sessions of all these bodies at intervals of no longer than two years.

142. At the regional level, the regional commissions should assume responsibility for monitoring progress towards the greater and more effective participation of women in all aspects of development efforts. Such monitoring should be carried out within the framework of the review and appraisal of the Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The commissions should include information on the integration of women in development in their reports to the Economic and Social Council on the social and economic situation in the regions. They should also
discuss at appropriate intervals (such as every two years) the progress made towards achieving the aims of the Plan of Action. They should encourage Governments to provide equal opportunities for women to be represented on their delegations to the sessions of the commissions and to other relevant meetings.

143. At the national level, Governments are encouraged to undertake their own regular review and appraisal of progress made to achieve the goals and objectives of the Plan and to report to the Economic and Social Council in conjunction, where necessary, with other existing reporting systems, e.g., those of the International Development Strategy, the World Population Plan of Action, the recommendations of the World Food Conference, the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and of the Programme of Concerted International Action for the Advancement of Women.

144. International organizations should review the implications of the Plan in the context of their own programmes, and should make appropriate recommendations to their governing bodies on any revisions of their financial and administrative arrangements that may be required to implement the Plan.

145. It is suggested that the programme should be organized around the following six basic areas: (a) data collection and research; (b) elaboration and ongoing review of international standards; (c) technical co-operation, training and advisory services including co-ordination with national and regional activities of organizations within the United Nations system; (d) review and appraisal including monitoring of progress made in achieving the aims and objectives of the Plan; (e) dissemination and exchange of information and liaison with non-governmental organizations and other groups; and (f) executive and management functions including over-all co-ordination, within the United Nations system, with national and regional machinery referred to in the Plan.