

people, especially women and children, exposed to hunger, malnutrition and even starvation. Concrete measures and adequate resources for the benefit of African women should be a priority. The international community, particularly donor countries, should be urged to assist African women by continuing and, where possible, by increasing financial assistance to enhance the role of women as food producers, with an emphasis on providing training in food technologies, thereby alleviating the problems of the continent resulting from extended drought and a severe shortage of food. Donor countries should also contribute to the special funds that have been launched by various organizations - for example, the United Nations Development Fund for Women. Emergency assistance should be increased and accelerated to alleviate the suffering of starving and dying women and children under famine conditions in Africa. Furthermore, given the critical food situation in Africa, aggravated inter alia by demographic pressures, the international community is urged to give priority to and provide support for the efforts of the African countries to overcome this serious situation. These efforts include the Lagos Plan of Action and the Nairobi Programme of Action, as well as the consultation by African Governments on the role of women in food production and food security.

Paragraph 178

Governments should give priority to supporting effective participation by women in food production and in food security programmes and should develop specific plans of action for this purpose. This would ensure that resources are directed towards women's programmes, that women are integrated in all mainstream rural development projects and that projects are located within technical ministries as well as ministries of social affairs. Governments should promote integrated solutions, such as national food policies, which are diversified according to specific natural regions for the improvement of self-reliance in food production, instead of resorting to palliatives or fragmented remedies.

Paragraph 179

Mechanisms should also include monitoring and evaluation and, where necessary, should modify the allocation of resources between women and men in mixed projects; should restructure rural development schemes to respond to women's needs; should assess women's projects in terms of technical and economic viability, as well as on social grounds; and should develop gender-specific statistics and information that reflect accurately women's contribution to food staples. Women's participation in programmes and projects to promote food security should be enhanced by providing them with opportunities to hold official positions, to receive training in leadership, administration and financial management and to organize on a co-operative basis. Research and experimentation should be conducted on food production and storage techniques to improve traditional knowledge and introduce modern technology.

Paragraph 180

Animal husbandry, fishery and forestry programmes should give greater attention to the effective participation of women as contributors and beneficiaries. Similarly, all other off-farm rural production programmes, as well as rural settlement, health, educational and social service programmes, should secure the participation of women as planners, contributors and beneficiaries.