

Paragraph 281

Policies, programmes and projects aimed at or incorporating especially vulnerable and underprivileged groups of women should recognize the particular difficulties of removing the multiple obstacles facing such groups and should place equal emphasis on addressing the social, economic and human dimensions of their vulnerability and their underprivileged positions. Measures needed to provide them with immediate assistance should be supplemented by comprehensive long-term plans to achieve lasting solutions to their problems. These will usually necessitate global efforts in resolving the special problems of vulnerable groups, of which women are a significant part.

Paragraph 282

Basic to all efforts to improve the condition of these women should be the identification of their needs and hence the gathering of gender-specific data and economic indicators sensitive to conditions of extreme poverty and oppression. Such data should contain spatial, socio-economic and longitudinal characteristics and should be designed specifically for use in policy, programme and project formulation and implementation. Monitoring efforts at national, subregional, regional and international levels should be intensified.

A. Women in areas affected by drought

Paragraph 283

During the Decade, the phenomenon of drought and desertification grew and developed incessantly, no longer affecting merely some localities in a single country but several entire countries. The scale and persistence of drought constitutes a grave threat, particularly for the countries of the Sahel, in which famine and a far-reaching deterioration of the environment set in as a result of the desertification process. Hence, despite the considerable efforts of the international community, the living conditions of the peoples, particularly those of women and children, which were already precarious, have become particularly miserable.

In view of that situation steps should be taken to promote concerted programmes between the countries concerned for combating drought and desertification. Efforts should be intensified for the formulation and implementation of programmes aimed at food security and self-sufficiency, in particular by the optimum control and exploitation of hydro-geological resources.

A distinction should be made between emergency aid and productive activities. Emergency aid should be intensified when necessary and as far as ever possible directed towards development aid.

Measures should be adopted to take into account women's contribution to production, involve them more closely in the design, implementation and evaluation of the programmes envisaged and ensure ample access for them to the means of production and processing and preservation techniques.