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appropriate, the formulation of the system-wide plan. Women's issues gained increased visibility during the United Nations Decade for Women. The world conferences on women held in 1975 and 1980 were important catalysts in linking the role of women inextricably to overall issues of political, economic and social development. Many organizations of the United Nations system have established policies and programmes to promote women's interests. Intergovernmental bodies and international conferences within the United Nations system have recognized the role of women in their areas of concern. Examples are Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (1976), the Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress, and the International Division of Labour (1976), the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (1979), the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (1979), the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy (1981) and the International Conference on Population (1984).

4. Towards the broad objective of development of the United Nations Decade for Women, the plan identifies tasks that are feasible for international organizations to accomplish in the medium term. It seeks to integrate activities directed towards the other objectives of the Decade, equality and peace, as they are both pre-conditions and goals of development. The plan takes as a fundamental premise that the achievement of its objectives requires that its strategies be framed within the context of all relevant development activities of the system. It gives particular importance to integrating women's interests in operational programmes, both by identifying specific areas where operational activities should ensure equal benefit to women and promote their equal participation, and by indicating where changes in project formulation and management procedures can lead to a general improvement in the responsiveness of operational activities to the needs and concerns of women. In particular, the plan encompasses those sectors constituting the subtheme of the United Nations Decade for Women, namely employment, health and education, as well as the other areas included under the major objective of development in the Forward-looking Strategies: food, water and agriculture; industry; trade and commercial services; science and technology; communications; housing, settlement, community development and transport; energy; environment; and social services.

5. The plan is composed of 23 subprogrammes organized into six programme areas. The first four programmes deal with women and development in broad substantive areas of concern, largely based on chapters I and II of the Forward-looking Strategies. The first programme is directed towards the elimination of discrimination against women, a pre-condition for bringing women into the mainstream of development; it constitutes a link with the objective of equality. The second programme deals largely with the economic aspects of women and development, and the third programme with the social aspects. The fourth programme is concerned with participation in decision-making and implementation, a major aspect of the objectives of equality and peace, and links all three objectives. To incorporate those aspects of chapter V of the Strategies that are concerned with means of action, a fifth programme has been designed to improve the usefulness of the main instrumentalities employed by international organizations to achieve their objectives. Finally, to ensure that the Strategies are implemented in a comprehensive and integrated manner, a sixth programme is proposed to deal with the overall tasks of policy analysis, monitoring and co-ordination.

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