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United Nations system objectives

- (i) To support and strengthen national, regional and international action so as to reduce the rate of female illiteracy by 30 per cent by 1995; to combine literacy with civic education;
- (ii) To promote equal access to secondary and university education, as well as to non-formal education;
- (iii) To strengthen action to promote universal primary education, with special attention to the situation of girls, whose enrolment and drop-out rates remain a significant problem;
- (iv) To increase the enrolment of girls in non-traditional subjects.

Strategy

The low rate of enrolment in primary education among girls and the high level of illiteracy among adult women have a direct relationship. The high incidence of illiteracy among women constitutes a major handicap in achieving equality with men, and a serious barrier to the full participation of women in development. The plan deals with this key issue by means of a two-fold strategy. First, to ensure that girls have equal access to primary education, appropriate facilities, adequate programmes (including programmes to improve the health and nutritional status of girls) and a sufficient number of competent teachers must be provided. Parents must be sensitized to the importance of educating girls. Application of the relevant provisions of the UNESCO Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (adopted in 1960) will continue to be encouraged and monitored. Audio-visual and printing material, showing the importance of schooling for girls will continue to be developed and disseminated. Technical assistance will continue to be provided in designing and implementing policies promoting equal access to education. To the extent possible, multilateral funding (grants and loans) for development of primary education will be conditional on the provision of equal access for girls and boys.

Secondly, to improve the rate of literacy among adult women, funding and technical assistance will be provided in support of national literacy and civic education programmes for women. Regional seminars will be continued and extended to help national authorities develop teaching and learning materials and train instructors, planners and supervisors in the design and implementation of literacy and civic education programmes and campaigns.

The organization primarily responsible for implementing this subprogramme is UNESCO.