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**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and
to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled
“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for
the twenty-first century”**

Statement submitted by Association pour la promotion de la lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes et la participation au développement de la femme africaine, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development:

Because women are better at investing and managing their economic activities for the care and raising of the family, they are identified as an unquestionable lever for our country's present, future and long-term development

Although women are active in nearly all sectors, they are more numerous in the informal sector, where they represent around two-thirds of the workforce.

In the market gardening business, the problems encountered are the following:

Transportation of food supplies; distribution and sale at market; risk of enormous losses with perishable foodstuffs; poor management of the commercial process; inadequate techniques for processing, conservation and storage.

Solutions:

Set up supply points for these products across the entire country; programme a broad awareness-raising campaign for people in these zones; encourage road improvement projects, involving local people closely through the various third-degree chieftaincies and civil society organizations, in partnership with the Ministry of Public Works; create training and skills-upgrading facilities for these women, focused on candidates from small and medium-sized enterprises; establish facilities for the purchase, processing, packaging and resale of perishable produce.

Selection of two products: vegetables and tomatoes

The processing, packaging, conservation and storage of vegetables in a processing unit will offer an economic boost for women, by substantially reducing losses due to spoilage; the creation of markets aimed at other women (vegetable stalls, etc.); the creation of jobs; a reliable source of supply for the external market.
