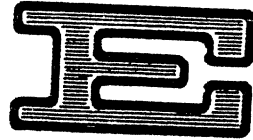


336/400



UNESCO/WA /
REF. & TERM.
UNIT



**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/SD/1992/6
19 August 1992
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA**

Social Development and Population Division

**REPORT ON
ASSESSMENT OF ESCWA/UNIFEM BIOGAS PROJECT
(PDY/88/W01) AND ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING
SUPPORT TO THE WOMAN AND CHILD DIRECTORATE
IN THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN**

During the preparation of this report, Ms. Balqis Badri acted as consultant for the project "Diffusion of biogas technology in Southern Yemen: women's development in Al-Habeel village". The views expressed in this report are those of the consultant and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

A mission was undertaken to Yemen from 11 to 21 December 1991 to propose measures for strengthening the biogas project implemented in Al-Habeel village and to suggest a plan of action for the Woman and Child Directorate (WACD) of the Ministry of Social Security and Social Affairs.

A. Biogas project

The consultant discussed her concern about the extension-programme component of the biogas project with the Director of the Social Welfare Directorate in Lahaj. The following suggestions are relevant to the development of the extension programme:

- (a) Including veterinary education to provide women with knowledge about cow diseases -- how to protect, vaccinate and care for them to minimize losses;
- (b) Including the provision of training for skills which would encourage women to use the kitchen for all cooking processes instead of limiting themselves to the use of the cooking stove. Kitchens in Al-Habeel are empty and contain no cooking appliances or utensils. Furthermore, women still cook outdoors, which makes food contamination a stronger possibility;
- (c) Emphasizing more training and the introduction of skills for income-generation (a list of which was provided);
- (d) Providing funds to be used for strengthening the extension programme, some of which would be used as a revolving fund for financing these cottage industries to raise family incomes and give women financial independence;
- (e) Targeting credit needs and providing credit, mostly for the widowed female heads of households, a number of whom are living in the village;
- (f) Providing funds to be used to compensate families whose cows have died, to be repaid in kind, with the money then used to help desperate widows and female household heads, and to increase the number of those who are willing to utilize biogas technology;
- (g) Holding extension programmes at the village school after school hours to make use of its proximity;
- (h) Introducing training in quality handicraft activities such as straw-weaving, pottery-making, etc., to be provided by contracted trainers specializing in these activities;
- (i) Producing extension videos covering topics such as veterinary education and kitchen use.

Two general recommendations can be made as well:

(a) Including in school curriculums (as part of its home-economics or horticulture curriculum) information and skills related to animal husbandry and biogas technology;

(b) Circulating videos about biogas technology.

B. Woman and Child Directorate

The consultant discussed with a representative of the Woman and Child Directorate of the Ministry of Social Security and Social Affairs in Sana'a the Directorate's structure, strategies, and plan of action. Documents concerning these were revised, and the following recommendations are now put forward:

(a) The project-design strategy of the Directorate should focus on, inter alia, the following integrated elements: the components of food security and production (which are central to any project); environmental protection; health promotion; education and training; institutional strengthening at the regional, national and grass-roots levels; and the introduction and dissemination of appropriate technology. A proposed diagram was handed to them to illustrate the integrated nature of the strategy;

(b) The Directorate should use the model -- not only when formulating its own project documents, but also when monitoring or evaluating other projects;

(c) The strategy, plan of action and Directorate structure should be highlighted in a brochure to be used for introducing the plan of action to potential donors. A special meeting for donors would be convened to discuss this subject in order to identify areas of support for the proposed projects;

(d) The plan of action, which includes six project proposals, should include one project to provide skills for project design and formulation in order to strengthen the staff capabilities in these areas. The following six projects are proposed:

- (i) Strengthening the communications and technical skills of the female executive leaders of the Ministry of Social Welfare;
- (ii) Women returnees. The consultant made major changes in the design and some other changes in the ideas of the project prepared by the Directorate so that it would better answer the needs and objectives of the returnees;
- (iii) Establishing a training centre for kindergarten and nursery-school teachers. This project includes the setting up of a model kindergarten and nursery, and incorporates mother and child health awareness and service delivery into the nurseries' functions;
- (iv) Introducing biogas and promoting the development of rural women in the Tihama area. This integrated project is based on the biogas project in Al-Habeel, but the extension component is strengthened. The project includes the introduction of a revolving fund and veterinary services in its early stages;

- (v) Establishing a rehabilitation centre for former female prisoners. It aims to develop their income-generating skills and provide a framework for social support (in Arabic);
- (vi) Strengthening the ways and means of involving handicapped women to make better use of the existing handicapped centre facilities and to strengthen the women's activities within the centre (in Arabic).

II. MISSION ACTIVITIES

The following activities were undertaken between Wednesday and Friday, 11 to 20 December 1991:

- (a) A meeting was held with Dr. Thoraya Obaid of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to discuss the revised terms of reference for the assignment of the mission and the status of the biogas project;
- (b) A meeting was held with all of the women of the WACD. It was agreed that: (i) the six above-mentioned projects would constitute a priority among WACD activities; and (ii) that the consultant would help the WACD design the project proposals. (The consultant was given all the documents needed to help her carry out this task);
- (c) Daily meetings were held to discuss one project in detail before its final formulation. The consultant suggested that the first project would improve these women's design skills and would make them stronger and more independent;
- (d) A meeting was held at the consultant's request with Ms. Aisha Abdel Aziz, the Director of WACD, and Ms. Sima Kanaan, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Programme Officer, to discuss these project proposals. Ms. Kanaan promised to support the first four projects, as they fall within the domain of UNDP. Ms. Abdel Aziz promised to submit these proposals formally;
- (e) At the request of the consultant, another meeting was held with the Women's Sector Specialist at the Dutch Embassy, to discuss the objectives of these projects. She showed an interest in supporting them -- particularly the second and fourth projects (returnees and biogas), as they fall within the general policy concerns of the Netherlands Government. She indicated that projects such as these which require large funds are subject to the normal government procedures, meaning that a time lapse of at least one year (with close follow-up) was expected before anything could materialize. The project on returnees has a chance of being supported, and the biogas project can be financed from the Embassy's small-projects fund if a small budget is requested;
- (f) A meeting was held with the Director of the Handicapped Directorate and Delinquency Directorate to discuss possibilities for involving more women in the project activities and to support and coordinate work with WACD;

(g) A meeting was held with Engineer Mohamed Hamid, Director of the biogas project in Al-Habeel village. The problems of the project were discussed, as were possibilities for its replication. Mr. Hamid was enthusiastic about the proposal to replicate the biogas project in the Tihama area and maintained that it was in line with the policies of the Ministry of Energy, which is planning to start a project in Tihama as well. He promised to follow-up the issue of coordination with WACD and to study the project proposal;

(h) The village was visited by the consultant, who interviewed six families to whom biogas had been introduced. Two families not using biogas were also visited for comparison purposes. A dialogue with some school students was held regarding the benefits of biogas, the need for extension services, their school curriculums and their future prospects as educated villagers;

(i) A meeting was held at the Social Welfare Directorate in Lahaj with Ms. Ghadirya Fadul, Director of the Extension and Social Welfare Section. The consultant discussed the issues related to extension and use of the revolving funds in income-generation activities. Needed training skills were suggested, as suitable to the environment of the village and for which a market is possible;

(j) The consultant suggested that similar meetings could be held with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Programme Officer, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the British Council to encourage their support for different projects. She requested that the Director of WACD send typed copies of these project proposals to ESCWA; two of these were typed up during the consultant's stay in Sanaa.

III. ATTITUDES TOWARDS BIOGAS INTRODUCTION

1. Results of the interviews and group discussions indicate a positive attitude towards biogas technology. The women emphasize that it relieves them of their wood-collection duties, and saves them time and the money they normally spend buying wood or charcoal.
2. They maintain that the environmental health of the household has been promoted and that the cleaning up of the animal shed has become easier.
3. The planting of onions, vegetables, fruit trees and fodder is important, but requires more extension services.
4. Veterinary services are needed to help cows withstand diseases. No veterinary services or information is currently available.
5. Many women would like to have biogas installed in their houses, but separately rather than as a group unit, so that possible quarrels leading to the non-use of biogas can be avoided.
6. They want, as well, to develop their income-generating skills so that they can buy more cows and pay for the wire to protect their small gardens.

Annex I

OFFICIALS MET (YEMEN)

- Mr. Ali Salih, Director of Planning
- Ms. Aisha Abdel Aziz, Director General, Woman and Child Directorate,
Ministry of Social Security and Social Affairs
- Mr. A. Hamid Aumrani, Director of Juveniles
- Mr. Abdel Rahman Abdel Gadir, Director of the Handicapped Directorate
- Engineer Mohamed Hamid, Director of Renewable Energy Department, Ministry
of Electricity and Water
- Ms. Fatima Mashhar, Deputy Director of the Woman and Child Directorate
- Ms. Rashida Ali, Head of Family and Child Section
- Ms. Hasiba Al-Sherief, Head of Womens' Section
- Ms. Huda Ahmed, Head of Information and Research Section
- Ms. Ghadriya Fadul, Head of the Social Welfare Directorate, Lahaj
Governorate
- The Women's Sector Specialist, Embassy of the Netherlands
- Ms. Sima Kanaan, UNDP Programme Officer
- Dr. Thoraya Obaid, ESCWA Senior Social Affairs Officer

Annex II

TITLE OF PROJECTS PREPARED BY THE CONSULTANT
SUBMITTED TO THE WOMAN AND CHILD DIRECTORATE

Strengthening the communication and technical skills of women executive leaders of the Ministry of Social Welfare

The development of women returnees

The establishment of a model training centre for kindergarten and nursery supervisors

An integrated project of biogas introduction and the development of rural women

The establishment of a rehabilitation centre for released female prisoners (in Arabic--revised by consultant)

The integration of handicapped women in existing facilities (in Arabic--revised by consultant)



