



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 May 2005

Original: English

Substantive session of 2005

New York, 29 June-27 July 2005

Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

**Achieving the internationally agreed development goals,
including those contained in the Millennium Declaration,
as well as implementing the outcomes of the major
United Nations conferences and summits: progress made,
challenges and opportunities**

Statement submitted by All India Women's Education Fund Association, 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 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2005/100.

Statement

All India Women's Education Fund Association (AIWEFA) just celebrated its Platinum Jubilee in March 2005. The organization has dedicated itself to the advancement of women in all sectors with emphasis on education. It has been working intensively on capacity-building, awareness generation, skill development, organization of women in Self Help Groups (SHGs) for their empowerment etc. AIWEFA also took up networking with other NGOs under the UN NGO IRENE and has been able to form partnerships with a number of other NGOs in the country with similar objectives.

Apart from combating poverty and deprivations of all kinds — economic, social, cultural and political — women feel excluded in the development process and fail to get basic amenities for their quality of life. One such area is the availability of sanitary latrines for their comfort. The absence of this facility has caused a great deal of health hazards for women, taken its toll upon their enrolment in schools (for want of this facility in the schools) and even been a cause of violence against them. (Women are molested when they go in the dark, at the end of the day or early in the mornings to ease themselves.) AIWEFA has, therefore, undertaken a project for creating a sanitary latrine facility in three villages in Haryana under their rural development project. The programme involves awareness generation of the benefits of sanitary latrines, provision of the technology for building cost-effective latrines, encouraging the householders by providing some components for the latrine and guiding them in the construction of the latrines. The households in the three selective villages have gone through the training phase and are now involved in the construction. This will have a very strong demonstration effect in the area and help many other villagers to adopt this technology and improve their quality of life.

The organization of women into SHGs has been a major step in preparing the community to adopt new ideas and change their traditional practices, some of which have deprived women of a great deal in the facilities, like sanitation, clean environment, security etc. The training on nutrition, health practices, use of clean water and sanitation, all of which are part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), reach this community very effectively and pay high dividends in terms of a higher quality of life. AIWEFA is proud to have been able to work with the rural people to fulfil their urgent needs.
