



## Economic and Social Council

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Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

**High-level segment: annual ministerial review**

### **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.

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\* E/2011/100.

## Statement\*

All India Women's Education Fund Association (AIWEFA) was established in 1929. This year the organization completes 82 years of dedicated service for the emancipation of women through education and other empowerment programmes. AIWEFA has the distinction of establishing, in 1932, the first home science college for women in India at Delhi, the Lady Irwin College.

## Recommendations

Drawing from our experiences in fieldwork spanning northern Indian states, 20 villages in Haryana and large slums in Geeta Colony, Delhi (about 20,000 participants), the following strategies have received encouraging results:

(a) Establishment of science and technology linkages between institutions/resource persons and farm women for: (i) the adoption of appropriate agro-based technological interventions towards drudgery reduction; (ii) entrepreneurship development for self-employed farm women; (iii) improved low-cost agricultural practices for optimal land use; (iv) additional health and nutritional component to achieve better health and reduce number of days lost due to ill health;

(b) Literacy was imparted in different groups to: (i) illiterate women for imparting functional literacy skills, sometimes using computers; (ii) newly literate women for sustaining literacy skills;

(c) School education was supplemented by providing tuition in mathematics and English. Computer education was supplemented in Government primary schools through partnership donations of computers, classes and maintenance;

(d) Workshops and awareness meetings were organized for adolescent girls and women to guide attitudinal changes during adolescence: for all-round awareness of physical changes, mental development, behavioural changes towards the opposite sex; to understand and withstand social pressures as comparisons were inevitable; to develop leadership skills; and to realize and accept rights and responsibilities to change their thought processes and effect social change;

(e) Legal awareness classes of laws related to personal life, social life, the workplace, land and others were held;

(f) Health camps and awareness and training workshops included information on childbearing, nutrition, nutritional deficiencies, importance of a clean environment for better health, recognizing common ailments and their prevention, life-threatening diseases, immunization/inoculation information and AIDS-related information;

(g) Counselling for mental health of adolescents was conducted and awareness was created to look for signs of mental illness as opposed to adolescent changes;

(h) Adolescents were identified and attracted to rural/urban sports;

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\* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

(i) Vocational skills training, including setting up of beauty parlours for image improvement and practice of yoga;

(j) Women and gender issues and gender budgeting need to be central to any education plan document.

Goals and commitments with regard to education would be incomplete without sensitizing male counterparts in every level of society, in all administrative, legislative and judicial hierarchies as well as the media to confer the rights of women as equal citizens and reorganization of their dignity as individuals in society.

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