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Statement submitted by RESO-Femmes, 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.



Statement

An anthropological approach focused on the emergence of intermediate-level leaders, cultural comparison and local innovation in order to encourage sustainable development and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the South.

Since 2006, drawing on its research on emerging female political leadership in the regions and on outside sources, RESO-Femmes has been developing programmes to address the practices, performance and expectations of these groups.

By observing these leaders' initiatives, their participatory mobilization techniques and dialogue with various groups, RESO-Femmes has become fully aware of their power as true pressure groups and as bulwarks against local, national and global tensions. Our innovative techniques allow us to gauge their character and performance, in order to gain the support of local populations and other groups (village authorities, elected officials, partners) in vulnerable areas most exposed to poverty and a lack of vital services.

Determined from the outset to take an action-oriented approach, RESO-Femmes has revised its groups' strategy in order to avoid stifling dynamism by engaging in applied research that is ill-suited to the problems facing Africa today. Almost "tailor-made" programmes have been designed, drawing on the rich field experience of their innovations and workaround techniques learnt most recently during periods of electoral tension (an effect produced by global violence as well as North-South relations). Smaller-scale analysis also puts anthropology and its tools for understanding the world as well as contemporary cultures at the service of knowledge and awareness, promoting independent and sustainable development and providing an effective approach to alleviating poverty and compensating for the deficiencies of statistics.

In the light of these experiences, two programme models have been developed:

- The "Gender, Empowerment and Equality" programme structures the participation and influence of RESO-Femmes groups from the top down (that is to say, from the point of view of the international ethnographic corpus and its expectations of reform in favour of "minority" groups) and from the bottom up (that is to say on the basis of observed data and actions accumulated and scientifically analysed since 2001 in Mali;
- The "Water, Sanitation and Food" programme in Burkina Faso, which by itself demonstrates all the tensions and violence experienced by local leaders (gender inequality and discrimination), as well as strategic means to work around these problems, channel them into positive energy and political power (training sessions in Mali) and find alternatives to the social and ideological victimisation encouraged by alliances, thanks to dynamic tools providing measurement against the eight MDGs and adapting those tools to local realities and needs (six anthropological approaches).

As a next step, tools and methods combining local action and global comparative thought, structured around an operational research programme, must be applied to leaders who are ready to involve themselves in cultural and multi-sectoral preventive actions.

This statement seeks to encourage the Council to continue with the reforms undertaken to benefit minorities (intermediate-level leaders and young people).