

**Choices and voices of IAW to empower women to fight hunger at national, regional and international levels.**

**Let's start now to mobilize our members - targeted actions to reduce hunger**

**I. Some fruit for thought:**

IAW long time understood itself as an equality organization.

**Topics of Congresses**

1949: Women and Human Rights	1976: Action for Equality
1952: Peace and Equality	1982: <b>Employment patterns in the eighties</b>
1955: Status of Women	1986: Traditional Attitudes – Attitudes towards change
1958: Yesterday-Today-Tomorrow	1989: Equality the Continuing Change
1961: Towards Equality	1992: Parity Democracy: The Challenge of the Nineties
1964: Women and Human Rights	1996: The Gild Child
1967: Human Rights – New Social patterns	2002: New Frontiers for a new Age
1979: Education in the Technological Age	2004: Politics, Power & Participation.
1973: Partnership for progress	

It is, however, interesting to note that our various leaderships accommodated development interests of member organizations by organizing national seminars either during statutory IAW meetings taking place in that particular country, or during the 80ies through partnership with development agencies.

For instance:

A regional workshop on handicrafts, training for small business development and better family living was held 1984 in Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea.  
1991 Zambia, energy saving cookstoves in SADCC countries  
1992 Zambia, Seminar on environment and development

For those fond of in IAW history it is interesting to note that we lost “peace” with the coming into being of WILPF, the Women’s League for Peace and Freedom, that did the same as the IWSA did on equality in 1904 to the Council of Women.

“It is ironic that the International Alliance came to concentrate so fiercely on peace in their interwar years, for that was the very issue that did for the Alliance was the suffrage question had done for the Council: divide its members and led to the birth of a new organization, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom”<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ishbel Aberdeen to Gertrud Bäumer. April 1915, cited in Leila J. Rupp „Worlds of Women. The making of an International Women’s Movement.“ Princeton University Press 1998.

## II. Five good reasons for this initiative at the beginning:

### First: The hunger problem is manmade.

It is no blind fate and there could be enough food to feed world's entire population. This is the main message of Brazil's Zero Hunger Programme as presented in the booklet "How to end Hunger in times of Crises" written by Ignacio Trueba and Andrew MacMillan.

You will have enough figures from the panellists and Bettina. Only two figures out of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index here at the beginning that I find particular shameful:

Currently, between 870 million and 1.4 billion people around the world do not get enough to eat. A nearly equal amount – 1.4 billion – are overweight and suffer from health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease as a result. A bit later we will speak about unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

### Second: The Human Rights Aspect

According to the Right To Food Journal of FIAN International (vol. 7, no. 1, 2012) "Women's human rights and the human right to adequate food **have evolved along separate tracks** that need greater coherence and institutional harmonization".

Universal Declaration of Human Rights: art. 25  
„Everyone has the human right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being in food, clothing, medical care and necessary social services.

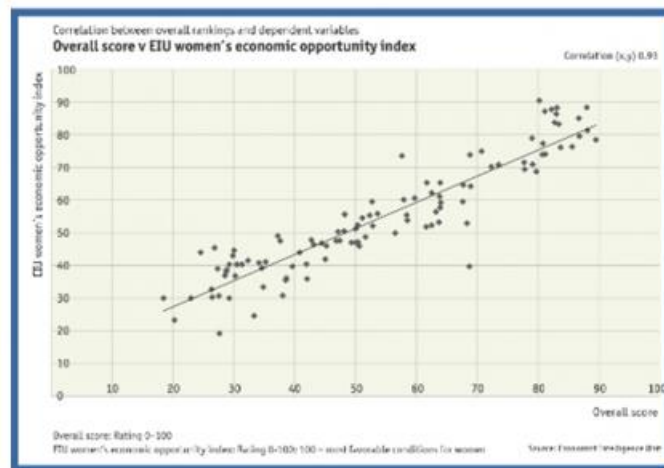
World Conference on Human Rights, 1993. Vienna  
Declaration and Programme of Action 1993: art. 14  
„The existence of widespread extreme poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights; its immediate alleviation and eventual elimination must remain a high priority for the international community

When looking into the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 11.1 we read that "state parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of

living” – yet linking the flow of those rights through “himself and his family”<sup>2</sup>.

### **Third: The correlation between women’s economic activity and food security.**

According to the Women’s Economic Opportunity Index of DUPont’s Economic Intelligence Unit, released July 2012, there is a 0.93 correlation with the Global Food Security Index. As the report states “FAO estimates that if women had access to the same productive resources as men they could increase their yield by 20 to 30%. As women make up 43% of the world’s farmers (contributing to more than 50% of the world’s food production), this would increase total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5% to 4% and reduce hunger globally by 12% to 17%”.



“Women play a crucial and potentially transformative role in agricultural growth in developing countries, but they face persistent obstacles and economic constraints limiting further inclusion in agriculture”<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 11.1 we read that “state parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for **himself and his family** including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions”.

<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Government’s Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative “Feed the Future”.

## Key global development frameworks

- Agenda 21 of the 1992 UNCED
- the Millenium Declaration and the Millenium Development Goals
- the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development
- the 2005 World Summit Outcome
- the outcome of the 2010 HL plenary meeting of the UN GA on the MDGs
- the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2010

all have recognized the need for increased attention to rural areas, and to gender equality and women's empowerment. In the HL Plenary 2010, for instance UN MS highlighted rural women as critical agents for enhancing agricultural and rural development and pledged to ensure equal access for rural women to productive resources, land, financing, technologies, training and markets. In the Istanbul PoA MS reaffirmed those commitments. (At this conference, the former UN Women's ED, Michelle Bachelet, addressed governments saying that "investments in rural women's access to productive resources and financial services can have critical multiplier effects on rural development. And she asked the obvious question:

**"Why isn't this kind of investment happening?"**

**"When so many call for the inclusion of women and a gender perspective, why is the food and nutrition status of women and girls not improving"** asks Anne C.Bellows in 2011.

Fourth: Rural women and the prevention of conflicts.

As the chair of IAWs Peace Commission I am most grateful to Soon-Young for her statement to the CSW 2012, 56<sup>th</sup> session, in which she states that "in many parts of the world, rural women are rising to the challenge in conflict and post-conflict situations." And she continues quoting from the speech of Leymah Gbowee (Nobel Prize Laureate 2012) at the Women Forum Consultation Day: "Rural women are organizing themselves. You just have to plant the seed of possibility" Leymah also told the audience "that rural women in her region are the experts on disarmament because they know where guns are hidden". Soon-Young continues with a quote from Bineta Diop, founder and Chair of Femmes

Africa Solidarité, saying that rural women, are putting in place early warning systems to avoid violence from erupting from elections 2012 in Senegal.

All this is very much in line with my own proposal after the terrible tsunami hitting Indonesia in 2004 that local women and their networks should automatically become part of early warning systems to be established along the coast lines.

Fifth: The theme of our congress.

The Rio + 20 Conference 'The Future We Want' took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012. It was organized to take stock of what results have been achieved since the original United National Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), otherwise referred to as the Earth Summit, in 1992, and to address present and future challenges that are undermining sustainable development.

Women's groups were critical of the Conference because it failed to make a stronger link between women's rights and the environment, and to bring more women experts and activists into the official dialogue and meeting structure.

2012 leaders did agree to establish a post-2015 development agenda that is more comprehensive and people-centered. They committed to develop Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that, in theory, will build on the Millennium Development Goals, making them more relevant to today's challenges. Here is the chance for the feminist movement to get heard.

- **Feminist Visions of Structural Transformations For Achieving Women's HumanRights & Gender Equality in Post-2015 Development Agenda**
- - caution against developing another set of goals without addressing the failure of the current development model rooted in unsustainable production and consumption patterns
- - Post-2015 must be firmly rooted in human rights obligations and commitments from UN conferences
- - Post-2015 must not be driven by donor or corporate sectors.

### III. Setting the stage:

It all started with Bettina's tireless advocacy work at the FAO in Rome which resulted in IAW's visibility and credibility as the voice of women in agriculture and food security among delegates, representatives and members of the UN administration. In an attempt to honour her passionate work, I attended FAO's 37<sup>th</sup> Conference 2011 in Rome. We worked on a statement that you can find in no.1 (2011) of the International Women's News together with my report in English and French.

This presentation to the FAO Conference, together with Bettina's achievements and close relationship with Andrew McMillan, and the election of the Brazilian José Graciano da Silva as FAO's new Director-General, was in a way the door-opener for the initiative that we are presenting today. (Mr. da Silva, as first Minister of Food Security in Brazil, was responsible for the design and implementation of the Zero Hunger programme that has enabled millions of people to escape from hunger).

An interesting result of our insistence that IAW should be recognized as an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) with the capacity of addressing the plenary - and not only as another civil society member organization - was that all INGOs now enjoy a separate partnership arrangement with FAO.

At the same time IAW has been promoting the same subject at the Commission on the Status of Women in 2010 with an oral statement delivered to the CSW plenary.

The focus of the present round table/study course is the presentation of a Training and sharing of information package written by IAW's permanent representative to FAO, Rome, Bettina Corke. A work which has been made possible through the gracious permission by Mr. Trueba and Mr. MacMillan to use their book as basis and reference. The aim is to motivate IAW members based in FAO Member States to take advantage of this guide in working with their governments in hunger and poverty eradication projects towards the

attainment of Millenium Development Goals 1 and 3, and the implementation of CEDAW art. 14.

- **March 2009: Side event, New York Church Centre: What does equal sharing of responsibilities mean for rural women?**
- **CSW 54<sup>th</sup> session 2010** – Beijing + 15 - oral statement
- **FAOs 37 Conference 2011:** The vital role of women in agriculture and rural development – oral statement
- **CSW 56, 2012:** The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges – agreed conclusions
- **CSW 58, 2014:** Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls and access of women and girls to education, training, science, technologies, including the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work.

Let me finish quoting what John Lennon once said and what Prof. José Graziano da Silva choose as conclusion of his speech before being elected as DG of FAO:

**“A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality”**