

*Millions of Women Support their families  
with "Informal Sector" work like this*



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*Making Women count in National Policies*

# WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Even though the importance of women workers to informal economic activities is well recognized, many studies have yet to disaggregate data by gender. Existing information does, however, point to the increasing "feminization" of the informal sector--to the fact that in many regions women are becoming the principal source of labour for activities outside the formal economy. And since those income-generating activities make a significant contribution to economic growth, it is crucial that they be supported by development plans and policies.

## EXCERPTS FROM GUIDELINES DRAWN UP AT AN INSTRAW CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR\*

### RESEARCH

*Improve* the collection and utilization of gender-disaggregated data and develop more appropriate methodologies for such collection.

*Research* different aspects of the informal sector at macro/micro levels, such as credit utilization, diversification of activities for women, productivity levels, indigenous technological innovations, etc.

*Encourage* policy-makers and planners to take into account the importance of the informal sector and the central role of women in this sector.

### POLICY FORMULATION AND PLANNING

*Incorporate* the informal sector into policy formulation to promote diversification of activities, increase productivity and improve the condition of women workers while maintaining competitiveness.

*Develop* an enabling environment that will allow small producers, particularly women, to be competitive in domestic and international markets.

*Provide* women with support services through innovative means, for example:

- training, education and extension services
- credit facilities
- marketing assistance
- social security
- other social services such as day-care centres, communal kitchens, etc.

### MONITORING AND EVALUATION

*Assess*, on an ongoing basis, the impact of policies on women in order to identify the need for possible changes.

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\*INSTRAW Consultative Meeting of Experts on Macroeconomic Policy Analysis for Women in the Informal Sector, held in Rome, Italy, from 17 to 22 March 1991.