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**UNITED NATIONS  
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE  
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN.**

**in cooperation with**

**SOLOMON ISLANDS COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
Distance Education Centre**

**REPORT FROM THE**

**National Training Seminar on  
Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development**

**24 - 28 August 1998  
Honiara, Solomon Islands**

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## **I. Introduction**

The national training seminar on Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development was held in Honiara, Solomon Islands from 24 to 28 August 1998.

The seminar, organized by the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) in cooperation with the Solomon Island College of Higher Education (SICHE) Distance Education Centre, was attended by 30 participants from various government departments and organizations (see Annex I).

The seminar was opened with statements by the Director of SICHE and the representative of INSTRAW (see Annex II). The provisional agenda was adopted by all participants (see Annex III).

## **II. Overview of Training Methodology and Seminar Procedures**

Ms Borjana Bulajic, Social Affairs Officer and INSTRAW representative, introduced the modular training package on "Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development". The package was designed to target senior officials of Ministries of Environment, Natural Resources, Planning, Women's Affairs, Education, Health, etc; development planners and provincial or local authorities in charge of environmental programmes and projects; engineers in charge of designing technologies for environmental projects; university professors, trainers and managers of national training institutes and educational institutions training staff on various aspects of women, environmental management and sustainable development; and representatives of non-governmental and women's organizations involved in environmental projects.

The multi-media modular training package on "Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development" consists of five modular units, namely: (i) Agenda 21; (ii) Women and Environmental Health; (iii) Women as Agents of Change in the Development Sector; (iv) Women as Managers of the Environment; and (v) Women, Environmental Indicators and Capacity-Building Programmes.

The major advantage of the modular training package is that it can stand on its own without any further inputs from external sources. Clear instructions are given with each session as to exactly what material is required, so that local instructors can coordinate their lectures with accompanying transparencies. The modules are not uniform but can be adapted to the specific circumstances of each local community or target group. In other words, it is possible to adjust the modules to fit different training needs. All the modules contain training situations that enable the user to acquire the knowledge and skills that make up the teaching objectives in as short a time as possible. Trainers, university professors and experts in this area should undertake further adaptations for specific country situations.

Each modular unit is comprised of several components: (i) a description of the general and specific objectives of the package and the main characteristics of the target groups; (ii) a written text to prepare the lesson/presentation; (iii) additional reading for users; (iv) detailed bibliography; (v) tools for feedback control in each modular unit; (vi) a key-issue checklist to discuss the major points presented in the unit; (vii) an evaluation form; (viii) a trainer/user's guide including a generalized lesson plan and instructions for the organization and conduct of a training session; (ix) lists of the requisite hardware, documents and audio-visual materials; and (x) audio-visual materials, transparencies, which can be used separately for very short sensitization sessions.

## **III. Presentation and Discussion of Introductory Module: Agenda 21**

Ms Bulajic then presented the Introductory Module: Agenda 21. The main objective of the module is to acquire greater knowledge of the mandates and activities of INSTRAW and the United Nations system in the implementation of Agenda 21, with particular chapters relevant to women.

The modular unit covered the following areas:

- Guiding Mandates and Principles on Women, Environment and Development (WED)

- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)
- Agenda 21 - Chapter 24: Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development
- Women, Environment and Sustainable Development
- Alternative Approaches to Sustainable Development
- INSTRAW programme on women, environment and sustainable development.

Ms Bulajic explained that during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro (June 1992) also known as the Earth Summit, Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration were adopted by 172 participating governments. The Rio Declaration is a set of 27 principles whose goal is to establish a new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation among states, key sectors of societies and individuals. Principle 20 states that "Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential for achieving sustainable development." The Conference was an important event for women in that it achieved consensus on the crucial role of women in promoting sustainable development and recognized the need for strengthening women's expertise in the fields of environment and development as well as enhancing their legal and administrative capacities for decision making and promoting managerial roles. Ms Bulajic presented in detail Chapter 24 of Agenda 21 - Global Actions for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development and Alternative Approaches to Sustainable Development.

Environmentally sound and sustainable development is not only a "trendy" phrase, it is a commitment made by the entire international community at the Earth Summit, embodied in the Rio Declaration and in Agenda 21. However, much must be done to bring this concept to concrete reality and to elaborate on the close relationships between economic growth, environment and development; between international trade and financial flows; and, above all else, to direct greater attention to the crucial connection between environment, population and development; and between women, environment and sustainable development. The subject of Women, Environment and Sustainable Development encompasses *inter alia*, such varied areas as agriculture, water, energy, and forestry. Moreover, it includes all aspects of women and the environment within the context of socio-economic, cultural and political development as well as the effects that the global environment has upon their lives.

Ms. Bulajic then explained that INSTRAW is an autonomous body of the United Nations established in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations with a unique mandate to serve as a vehicle to promote and undertake policy-oriented research and training programmes at the international level to contribute to the advancement of women worldwide. Within this context INSTRAW plays a critical role in efforts to achieve the global agenda of gender equality and sustainable development. INSTRAW conducts catalytic training activities in close collaboration and coordination with agencies within and outside the United Nations system. She elaborated on INSTRAW's programme activities in the area of women, environment and sustainable development; women, water supply and sanitation; and women and new and renewable sources of energy.

Following the presentation of the training seminar methodology and Introductory Module, the participants discussed two main issues: (i) various training methodologies used at the provincial level, and (ii) the national implementation of Agenda 21 and the Beijing Platform for Action.

The participants pointed out that the main training methodologies used for training seminars at the local level are practical demonstrations, visual materials, posters and games. The seminars are usually of one to two weeks duration. Other training approaches are applied through village demonstrations where mobile teams explain methods for combating chronic malaria; ways to improve kitchen facilities; and provide information on nutrition and sanitation. The importance of practical training for women was stressed. The advantage of using local languages was also stressed.

The participants also discussed the importance of providing women and children with educational pamphlets. The problems encountered in the successful implementation of the training seminars were: lack of proper transport; lack of adequate finance; cultural problems and attitudes towards certain training seminars for women; weather conditions during the rainy season; different languages; and the criteria used for selecting participants at the provincial level.

The role of church leaders, village leaders and chiefs was stressed as an important aspect of the successful implementation of training seminars. It was also explained that husbands were often reluctant to allow their wives to attend the seminars. It is crucial that the leaders and husbands understand what the benefits of the training seminars are for the community at large. Additionally, the training seminars need to be followed-up by concrete income-generating activities for the families such as small-scale enterprises for sewing and others.

The participants also highlighted the need for training seminars aimed at environmental conservation and management. Also, in certain provinces women are the landowners and should be trained in preparing and analyzing contractual agreements. Finally, the need for conducting more training seminars at the rural level was highlighted.

Concerning the implementation of Agenda 21, most participants noted that they had no prior knowledge of Agenda 21 and the Beijing Platform for Action. The lack of communication and cooperation due to poor financial resources at the national level was identified as one of the main problems for the implementation of these two plans of action.

The participants agreed on the need to establish a national committee that would be composed of representatives from various Ministries, women's organizations, non-governmental organizations, and church groups for the implementation of these documents at the provincial and local levels as well as the preparation of national documents. A network of various representatives could be established for the coordination of activities for the implementation of both Agenda 21 and the Beijing Platform for Action.

#### **IV. Presentation and Discussion of Module I: Women and Environmental Health**

Module I was presented by Ms Verzilyn Isom, Head of Family Health Unit, School of Nursing and Health Studies. The main aim of this module is to create an awareness of environmental health issues related to women in the Solomon Islands and how these issues could be integrated in the development process.

Ms Isom explained that human health is essential for sustainable development, for without health, human beings cannot be engaged in the development process, combat poverty and care for their environment. In turn, care of the environment is essential for the sustenance of human well-being and the development process. The fundamental conditions and resources for health are peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable ecosystem, sustainable resources, social justice and equity. She stated that the maintenance and improvement of health should be the foremost issue of concern when discussing the environment and sustainable development.

In the Solomon Islands the most immediate problems are ill health and premature death caused by biological agents in the human environment - in water, food, air and soil. For example the proportion of the population with access to safe water in the period 1991-1994 (national coverage) was 68 per cent; and the proportion of the population with access to proper disposal of human excreta for the same period was 68 per cent in urban areas and 10 per cent in rural areas.

In the Solomon Islands women are the primary victims of poor environmental management because they are involved in activities associated with the environment, such as: preparation of food for the family, caring for the children, gardening, and managing households. Women and children are often more vulnerable to the health risks associated with poverty and inadequate standards of living.

Women in the Solomon Islands experience additional vulnerability during pregnancy and childbirth as evidenced by the maternal mortality rate: 549 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (Maternal Mortality in the Solomon Islands, 1993). Among the contributing factors are low social status, low literacy rate, malnutrition, multiple pregnancies, anaemia and malaria. Most pregnant women in the Solomon Islands are anaemic due to frequent births (1998 total fertility rate 5.8); poor nutrition education, stress due to extra workload, and conditions of chronic malaria in the country. Women suffer more from diseases associated with inadequate water and sanitation and from respiratory problems associated with smoky environments (for example, cooking on open fires).

Ms Isom pointed out the need to improve women's income, education, health, and nutrition, which could greatly reduce maternal mortality and morbidity. She recommended that:

- The Solomon Islands Government along with international agencies place a higher priority on developing a sustainable basis for the health of their people and country.
- Policies be established to overcome traditional beliefs and values that have negative consequences for women's health. For example, involving women in decision-making bodies especially towards development and women's reproductive rights.
- Education and economic opportunities for women be increased.

Following the presentation of Module I, the participants were divided into four working groups and worked on three questions:

1. Why are women not part of any decision-making body in regard to development?
2. What are the main health and environment problems in the Solomon Islands?
3. What strategies would you recommend to improve the overall environmental health situation of women?

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#### **1. WHY ARE WOMEN NOT PART OF ANY DECISION-MAKING BODY IN REGARD TO DEVELOPMENT?**

The working groups identified various factors that hinder women's participation in development-related decision-making instances. It was generally agreed that these negative factors are result of deeply rooted paternal societies, which contain strong cultural barriers for women's advancement. Consequently, at the national and provincial levels women are dramatically under-represented in decision making. There is only one female Member of Parliament and a limited number of women at the decision-making level in both the public and private sector. The following factors were also pointed out:

- Education - very few women have enough education to reach decision-making levels. Their access is restricted due to negative parental decisions about girls attending schools. Since schools are located at a far distance, parents worry that the young girls might become pregnant and prefer that they stay home and get married.
- Unequal employment opportunities.
- Social barriers – Jealous spouses (husbands are jealous that women have income-generating

capabilities and jobs and are therefore reluctant to allow their wives to work). Also, women are taught to keep silent as they are brought up in a society where they are not expected to be vocal.

- Maternal responsibilities of women.
- Women perceive themselves as inferior because of the male-dominated culture. Hence, they lack confidence and courage.
- Peer pressure from women themselves hinders their own participation in decision making.
- Historical development mode- strong and usually negative colonial influence regarding women's engagement in public life.

#### **2. WHAT ARE THE MAIN HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT PROBLEMS IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS?**

The working groups identified the following main health and environment problems in the Solomon Islands:

- Diseases resulting from poor nutrition, which in turn, is a consequence of change of eating and consumption patterns.
- Growing proportion of sexually transmitted diseases among young women as a result of lack of education, lack of income, and promiscuity.

- Health problems arising out of a lack of proper disposal of waste, including hazardous chemicals.
  - Diseases transmitted by vectors, mosquitoes, flies, hook worms, etc.
  - Occupational health hazards.
  - Health problems resulting from domestic violence.
  - Health risks arising out of poor water supply, inadequate housing and squatter practices, rapid population growth, rapid and unorganized urbanization, etc.
- 3. WHAT STRATEGIES WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SITUATION OF WOMEN?**
- The working groups identified the following strategies for the improvement of the overall environmental health situation of women in the Solomon Islands:
- Improve educational, social, economic and political status and opportunities for women and young girls.
  - Improve access to information and provide information that will increase awareness on environmental issues and health.
  - Conduct more training seminars.
  - Introduce a participatory approach in environmental management, so that communities become aware of their role in the developmental efforts.
  - Increase networking, consultation, and follow-up between relevant government organizations, NGOs, communities, religious organizations and individuals.
  - Increase/redirect community awareness of the importance of shared decision making and health information at all levels.
  - Involve women in decision making, planning, implementation monitoring, and evaluation of development policies and programmes.
  - Design appropriate training for women.
  - Prioritize land for food gardens and improved nutrition.
  - Increase women's access to finance.

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## V. Presentation and Discussion of Module II: Women as Agents of Change in the Development Sector

Module II was presented by Mr. Terence Titiulu, School of Natural Resources, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). Mr Titiulu began his presentation by providing a brief background on the Solomon Islands. Most people in the Solomon Islands (about 80%) live in villages and are engaged in subsistence agriculture. The Solomon Islands is a nation of villages that is almost entirely dependent upon their forests and reefs for their livelihood. The population is now approximately 400,000 with an average annual growth rate of 3.5 per cent. About 90 per cent of the total population are Melanesians and the rest are Polynesians, Micronesians, Chinese, Europeans and others. Women make up approximately 50 per cent of the total population.

The country is already inextricably linked to the world economy and therefore, will have to address both international and national issues as new development initiatives are undertaken. He stressed that crucial for sustainable development is the support for local culture and customs, strengthening of land ownership, protection of the environment and enabling all indigenous peoples to benefit from it.

The country is very much male-dominated where power and decision making are concerned. Women are the food producers in the country. They are also involved in firewood and water collection, childcare and various other domestic duties. Despite their long hours spent attending to these matters, little is done in recognition of their productive contribution. The culture tends to suppress women's involvement in public activities. Women are conditioned and perceived as second-class citizens within their own clans and families.

Because of this culture there is inequality between women and men in the sharing of power and decision making at all levels, i.e., men assume positions of power and make decisions whether it be within the family or community, irrespective of women's interests; there is a lack of awareness of and



commitment to internationally and nationally recognized women's rights; unequal access to education, health services, environmental issues, employment and other means to maximize awareness of rights and the use of women's capacities persists; violence against women is present; and there are insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women.

Mr. Titiulu, than explained that Module II addresses the specific key indicators as listed under "The State of the Global Environment". He applied these indicators in the Solomon Islands context, pointing out the following:

### **ENERGY**

The specific indicators for this sector, for both urban and rural areas are those related to the use/quantity of firewood or coconut fronds, the use/quantity of gas/kerosene stoves, the use of kerosene for light, etc. Also, the same indicators could be applied to measure the quality of life, for example, the proportion of use of fuel (kerosene) stoves as compared to use of gas stoves; the change of cooking style (number of meals per day reduced); and number of children fed with food bought in shops (nutritional value altered).

### **HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

Specific indicators should be used to measure and highlight the problems faced by women both in urban and rural human settlements. In this regard, Mr Titiulu pointed out the following issues and problems requiring attention:

- Provision of social services - no water supply; limited or non-existent roads, transport facilities, medical care, schools, garbage removal services.
- Sanitary conditions - toilet facilities are either non-existent or very poor, alternative natural sites are mainly used such as the beach or the bushes.
- Inadequate or inappropriate housing - overcrowded due to *wantok* system commonly practiced and thereby increasing susceptibility to health problems.
- Standards of living - very low standards of living due to financial problems.
- Approaches to shelter planning and construction- traditionally within the Solomon Islands culture males dominate the modern approach to shelter planning and construction.
- Unsafe working conditions – the home environment is at times dangerous due to cooking on open fires using firewood. Eye damage and lung problems result as do other associated respiratory problems due to inhalation of smoke from the firewood.

### **WATER RESOURCES**

Specific indicators that would measure the access and quality of water supply are crucially important for the development process. These indicators are especially important for women as they are most affected by environmental degradation since they are involved more in cooking, washing, cleaning up, etc. But indicators should also be devised to point out to the extent to which indigenous people and women are involved in water resources management. This is necessary, because the indigenous populations of the Solomon Islands, and in particular women, are often much more knowledgeable about water resource management and should therefore be consulted before decisions are made on any activities associated with the area in which they live.

### **POPULATION**

Mr Titiulu then pointed out that indicators to measure the empowerment and the status of women are very important for the Solomon Islands because of the following reasons:

- Women's roles are traditional: food producers, daily household activities, child bearing and caring for older and handicapped persons.

- Women have no choice of when to get married (unable to control their fertility) and young women are often married to older men, the youth and inexperience of these young women affects their own well-being and that of their families.

The issue of the girl child should be specifically addressed in this regard, as in the Solomon Islands males are seen as priorities over females particularly in access to education. This results in females leaving school earlier than males. Most females are therefore, poorly educated and hence, have little control over their future.

It is also important to address the issue of male education, responsibility and participation as most males still uphold the view and ideology that females are inferior and therefore, should not be equal with them.

Indicators as to the reproductive patterns and family planning should also be devised, since in the Solomon Islands there is very little education/awareness of male and female reproductive patterns. Traditionally reproduction and family planning is considered taboo, therefore, it is never talked about at home. Children learn about it in school and from friends and are therefore in danger of learning the wrong concepts. Empowerment of women and the improvement of their social, economic and health status is essential for control of population growth and sustainable development.

In concluding Mr Titiulu explained how some of the problems could be controlled in the Solomon Islands by involving women. He specifically mentioned population and health associated problems, education and training, food and diet, standard of living, forestry activities, water management and others. He added that locally, some of the obstacles hindering women's active involvement in the key development areas mentioned are the lack of shared decision making as well as gender roles, culture, religion, family, violence and the employment situation.

Following the presentation of Module II, the participants were divided into four working groups to work on the following questions:

1. How are women involved in the sectors of energy, human settlements, food and agriculture, forestry, water resources and waste management?
2. What kind of participation do women have in policies, programmes and projects related to various developmental sectors?
3. What would you recommend for a more effective involvement of women in national development policies?

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#### **1. HOW ARE WOMEN INVOLVED IN THE SECTORS OF ENERGY, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, WATER RESOURCES AND WASTE MANAGEMENT?**

The working groups identified the following areas of involvement:

##### **Energy -**

- Women use the following energy sources: firewood, kerosene, petrol, diesel, gas stoves, charcoal, solar, hydropower. (Women are involved in the collection of firewood for cooking; use of kerosene for household activities. Women purchase petrol for transporting products from gardens, fishing, and

markets. The use of solar energy is marginal and only a few projects in the villages are currently being implemented.) Some comparative differences exist between village dwellers and urban residents.

##### **Human settlements -**

- To a certain extent women decide settlement location, however, there is also urban drift where women move to towns with husbands who are employed. If women manage to get jobs in town, they are usually low-paid jobs as house girls.
- Women participate in improving village life, e.g. where to put toilets, standing pipes etc. and also in decision making on housing conditions, surrounding environment, domestic facilities for

use at home, and in the use of time spent in household activities - collecting water, cleaning homes, fund-raising to improve standard of living, e.g. sale of food, arts and crafts, etc.

#### Food and agriculture -

- Women are the main producers and preparers of food, their major activities being gardening and fishing. They are involved in sustainable agriculture being knowledgeable in farming systems and techniques, seasons, crop varieties, shifting cultivation and land management.
- Women sell the food surplus from their own gardens at the markets to generate income.

#### Forestry -

- Women's involvement in deforestation is marginal - minor firewood collection. The logging industry creates the worst deforestation and environmental degradation problems, e.g. Ringi, Ysabel.
- Women are sometimes involved in forestry projects where they are landowners in certain parts of the Islands.
- Women depend heavily on forest resources as a food source as well as for shelter and medicine (herbal plants).
- Women plant fruit trees and other trees that provide shade for community activities and also cut trees on a selective basis.
- In certain islands women are involved in forestry projects and participate in timber processing, bookkeeping/accounting, and land use planning but in others they are often overlooked when it comes to certain forestry development projects.

#### Water resources -

- Women are the main collectors of water and mostly use water for domestic purposes - washing, cooking, and other household chores.
- Women are more concerned in conserving water where there is a shortage and are involved in the campaign for protection of water resources.
- Women provide labour for water supply projects.

#### Waste management -

- Women are more involved in disposing waste both in urban and rural areas and are the managers of household wastes. They are involved in cleaning, disposal, and recycling. Both men and women are involved in collecting bottles.

## 2. WHAT KIND OF PARTICIPATION DO WOMEN HAVE IN POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS RELATED TO VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTAL SECTORS?

The working groups identified the following important aspects of women's participation:

- Although there are very few women in policy-making positions, recently women have begun to gain recognition in this area. Women are mostly involved in policy making related to: nutrition (land, decision making, implementation); agriculture (extension officers, planning, implementation, training); health (planning, decision making, implementing). However, most women are involved in policy formulation especially in projects directly involving women. Most other development sector policies are produced by men.
- Women are often overlooked when proposing certain development programmes and projects.
- Women participate fully in projects attached to church organizations and village groups such as Mothers Union, Dorcas Society, SICA Women's programmes, Solomon Islands Women's Network (SIWNET), Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT), Sup sup gardens, RWSS (Construction - labour supply), etc.
- Women are implementers of policies (they provide quality labour and are very committed) but need to be more involved in preparing policies on population, health, nutrition, electricity, community development and children's rights.
- Women need to be involved in projects and programmes in the following areas:
  - awareness raising
  - implementation - directing, supervising, labour
  - planning
  - managing
  - monitoring and evaluation

## 3. WHAT WOULD YOU RECOMMEND FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES?

The working groups made the following recommendations:

- Improve network systems between existing women's organizations
- Empower/strengthen and recognize established women's organizations
- Improve coordination between women's organizations and government officials and promote and encourage women's participation at all levels of decision making, planning and implementation of development policies.

- Promote women's achievements through the media
- Encourage women's leadership at all levels
- Appropriate/qualified women should be employed and/or serve as representatives at national development planning for policy formulation
- Prior to formulating national policies women's ideas and needs should be incorporated
- Establish an avenue for women's groups/representatives to examine and sanction/endorse certain policies prior to implementation in cooperation with relevant government authorities
- Government should pass legislation on women's policies
- Provide gender balance in the public and private sectors
- International organizations should be asked to provide funding
- Equal opportunity in education for both women and men
- Awareness raising among political leaders and decision makers
- Promote equal opportunities in employment
- Skills training, technical and leadership training should be provided to women through collaboration with governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector on specific areas

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## VI. Presentation and Discussion of Module III: Women as Managers of the Environment

Mr. John Peter Peniop, of the School of Humanities and Science - SICHE, presented Module III. He explained that the aims of the module are to raise awareness about the fact that women can contribute significantly to the management of the environment to attain sustainable development; to help participants understand the relationship between women and natural resources, water resources, environmental sanitation and waste management; and to identify practical ways in which full integration and participation of women in environmental management can be achieved.

Mr. Peniop explained that the pursuit of development aims has also brought about a number of environmental problems that are detrimental to human kind, animals and plants. This calls for better management of the environment and natural resources such as soil, water, forests and energy. In this process women are increasingly recognized as a group that can play a major role in managing natural resources at the household and community levels.

The traditional roles that women play in our communities like child bearing, family care-giving, food producing, fuel and wood gathering and water collecting place women in a good position to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner so that future generations are not victimized by our present actions. Because of their close association with nature, upon whose resources women depend for the survival of their families, women more than any other group should be concerned for the environment.

Women have proven over the years that they can and have contributed in one way or another to the well being of the environment and the natural resources it contains. Some examples of overseas women's groups working in this area include the Green Belt Movement of Kenya and the Acao Democratica Femina Gaucha (ADGF) of Brazil. In the Solomon Islands, the Megapod Project on Simbo is one example of women's efforts in environmental management.

Although women's abilities to manage the environment are now recognized, they are not given due consideration when it comes to dealing with issues that affect the environment such as logging, mining, hydropower plants and other development projects. Women's full participation in environment and natural resource management is also hampered by factors such as their lack of education and training, lack of participation in planning, programming and implementation of projects, lack of financial means and cultural restrictions on what women can do and say. If women were to fully participate in natural resource management these constraints could be overcome. Traditional attitudes towards women

discourage their full participation by, for instance, treating women as a subordinate group within society. These attitudes need to be changed.

He explained that water, one of our most basic needs, is unfortunately an increasingly scarce and finite resource. Of the total water found on Earth, only about 2.5% is fresh water. Of this 2.5%, only about 0.3% is found in rivers and lakes which are renewable and to which humans and animals have access. The current trend of increasing world population suggests that the amount of water available to each person is becoming more and more scarce. The Solomon Islands, being a country with one of the highest population growth rates in the world, will certainly face acute water shortage problems in the future if adequate water resource management is not implemented now.

Women are more affected by water scarcity than men because they use water in their daily activities (cooking, washing, doing laundry, etc.). In rural Solomon Islands where there is no piped water supply system, women are the ones who fetch water. Some have to walk or paddle long distances just to collect water. Hence, it is very important that women should be given the opportunity to actively participate in water resource management.

Unfortunately, women are rarely seen or treated as managers of water resources. The top-down decision-making approach to water resource management projects often overlooks the important contributions that women can make. This can lead to inappropriate management of water resources, which can have critical impacts on women and communities.

A recent workshop on "Gender and Water Resource Management" highlighted one of the major constraints to the effective integration of women in water resource management in the Solomon Islands. This constraint relates directly to gender roles and responsibilities such as women's subordinate position, lack of access to and control over resources and lack of self-confidence.

International conferences and agreements have recommended a number of policies, which specifically identify the need to involve women in water resource management. Agenda 21 contains a number of important policies to ensure maximum participation of women in all areas of water resource management, but unless the Solomon Islands implements these policies in a practical way, they will be useless.

Environmental sanitation, which relates to the disposal of household wastes and hygienic practices in and around the home, is very important for improving health and well being. Women who are managers of the home have crucial roles in influencing and changing behavioural patterns of family hygiene to prevent sanitation-related diseases like dysentery and diarrhoea.

Women's influence is particularly important in the following areas of environmental sanitation: water hygiene and consumption of safe water, human waste disposal, safe wastewater disposal and drainage, solid waste disposal, proper personal hygiene and food hygiene. In order for women to effectively carry out their roles with respect to the above they need to be personally aware that their practices can significantly affect the nature of water maintained in the rural areas. Women's roles are not only confined to their families but can be extended to their communities. Women can be involved in project activities such as data collection, designing and planning projects, promotion, construction, operation and maintenance, education, management and monitoring of sanitation projects.

Exploitation of natural and other resources to produce needed goods has, unfortunately, also produced waste products that are not disposed of in a safe manner. This threatens the survival of humankind and other living species. Waste products also degrade the environment and contribute to increased health risks.

Environmental degradation can be manifested either at the macro or micro level. The former includes acid rain, depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, pollution of surface and underground water sources, desertification and species extinction. The latter includes improper disposal of human and household wastes. Waste management encompasses management of all forms of waste produced by human activities. It is a process by which wastes are safely disposed of or recycled. The process involves the following areas: sanitation, solid waste disposal, liquid waste disposal, gaseous wastes, industrial wastes, hazardous and toxic wastes, and waste reuse (composting, bio-gas production, aqua-culture and recycling).

Women as those who are mostly involved with safeguarding the health of family members have a great concern for the proper and safe disposal of wastes to reduce the risks of diseases and to provide a safe environment for their children. Women are therefore central to waste management. Their full participation should be encouraged in all sectors of communities and the country. Women's contributions in all of these areas exist and should be maximized. Policies that promote full integration of women into environmental management exist, but if they have not been implemented they are totally useless.

Following the presentation of Module III, the participants were divided into four working groups to work on the following topics:

1. What are the main water, waste management, and environmental sanitation problems experienced in provincial and urban areas? What are the solutions to overcome the problems?
2. Identify practical ways for women to be involved in national policies, programmes and projects in natural resources management. For example, current water/forest bill; traditional/modern management systems; actions of women's organizations and government officials.

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**1. WHAT ARE THE MAIN WATER, WASTE MANAGEMENT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED IN PROVINCIAL AND URBAN AREAS? RECOMMEND THE SOLUTIONS TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS.**

The working groups identified the following problems:

**Water -**

- scarce supply and insufficient sources of water
- Water pollution due to developments in agriculture and use of chemicals
- Contamination-human wastes and animal wastes
- Industrial pollution
- Inconsistency of power supply
- Inadequate supply of water-bore holes
- Rental fees to landowners
- Cost of treatment chemicals and disinfectants
- Dispute over land where source is located
- Vandalism
- Gardening at water source
- Logging
- Poor water management through irresponsibility and lack of maintenance skills
- Poor drainage for waste water

- Lack of finances for establishment and maintenance (Leaking taps, faulty pipes and meters)
- Low pressure from head (water source)
- Inappropriate technology
- High water usage by industries and construction affecting residential areas

**Waste Management -**

- No treatment plant
- Discharge of waste into the ocean.
- Pollution of marine ecosystem/sea
- Shortage of disposal sites
- Land pollution/acquisition of new site (they become breeding place for flies and mosquitoes)
- Air pollution
- Unhealthy for scavengers
- Inadequate disposal facilities
- Water-borne disease, unhealthy environment
- Dumping of old metals from machines, vehicles, etc.

**Environmental Sanitation -**

- Epidemic of diarrhoeal diseases/communicable diseases
- Epidemic of water-borne diseases
- Creates unsightly conditions

The working groups made the following recommendations for improvement:

Water -

- Conduct awareness-raising programmes
- Endorse the Water Bill currently presented by the Ministry
- Impose high penalties on persons responsible for contamination/pollution or water sources/pipes, etc.
- Enforce existing by-laws (conservation/forestry/water)
- Provide training to maintain water tap systems. The training should be conducted in cooperation with SIDT, NGOs, Ministry of Health, SIWA
- Provide ways / means and appropriate plumbing in urban areas and water supply and sanitation in rural areas
- Provide fences at stand pipes, wells, to keep out stray animals
- Shelters at stand pipes for privacy
- Basic plumbing training for residents
- Establish policy on dual flush cisterns for every contractor

Waste Management:

- Encourage composting, reuse, reduce and recycle
- Effective enforcement of legislation/by-laws
- Provide sewerage treatment plant
- Government must prioritize public amenities/facilities
- Provide appropriate disposal facilities for different types of wastes
- Dig holes for rubbish disposal
- Copra waste to be used as fuel
- Separate disposal of household wastes from hazardous wastes
- Incineration of hospital and hazardous wastes must be far from residents
- Provide fund-raising mechanisms for communities to maintain and upgrade the water supply and sanitation systems

Environmental Sanitation -

- Use of appropriate technology
- Mass education/awareness before, during and after project process
- Housekeeping courses must be encouraged - proper usage of sinks
- Establishment of a policy that all waste water must be directed to a septic tank or central system

2. IDENTIFY PRACTICAL WAYS FOR WOMEN TO BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.

**E.G., CURRENT WATER/FOREST BILL; TRADITIONAL/MODERN MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS; ACTIONS OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.**

The working groups made the following recommendations:

- Reinforce the need for education/awareness raising for people to fully understand the problems and undertake preventive measures - this should take place particularly in the family, churches and schools
- Encourage communities to undertake initiatives in this regard; they do not need to rely totally on the Government for services
- Provide for more health awareness programmes - health talks, drama, video
- Provide more opportunities for women to participate in policy making, by allocating a certain number of seats for women from lowest level at council, provincial, assembly, and parliament levels
- Representation of women in all levels must be a requirement
- A national policy on women should be put into place
- National Council of Women (NCW) should be very vocal in addressing women's issues
- The channel of communication should be Ministry for Women Affairs, NCW, Provinces
- Women should be encouraged to participate and become involved in policy making in consultation with: responsible Ministry, NCW, Provinces, SICA and other churches, Chiefs, etc.
- Train more women and enable their attendance in different courses
- Women's organizations need to work more closely with the Ministry of Youth and Women's Affairs
- Establish more cooperation between women's organizations and leaders
- Establish close links/cooperation between different ministries on certain relevant issues, policies, programmes and projects of common standing to them
- Promote and expand coordination between women's organizations in urban and rural areas since the majority of women live in villages
- Gender issues should be included in school curriculum as a long-term strategy
- Organize talk shows in the media

- Strengthen 'OLKETA MERE' (radio programme focused on women run by Solomon Islands women's network)
- Promote/encourage 'pressure/lobby' groups on environment and women's issues
- Need to develop 'self-respect' as a 'role-model' (motherhood etc.)
- Encourage women to become involved in committees they must be part of it - to liaise with programme staff
- Provide/help recruit women managers, etc. in national programmes at all levels.

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## VII. Presentation and Discussion of Module IV: Women, Environmental Indicators and Capacity-Building Programmes

Mr. Shane Tutua from the School of Natural Resources, (SICHE) presented module IV of INSTRAW's Training Package on environmental indicators and capacity building. The objective of the presentation was to raise awareness among the participants at the workshop on the importance of environmental indicators and capacity building, on the one hand, and to reflect upon these two issues within the current context in the Solomon Islands, on the other hand. Also, the presentation aimed to raise various issues for discussion in the plenary session.

### Environmental Indicators

Mr. Tutua explained that the environmental indicators are measurable impacts of human activities and/or decisions on the environment, which are used as checks for sustainability of policies, programmes and projects. They are tools used by decision makers to evaluate their decisions. If the activities or indicators are positive then they must be sustained or multiplied; if negative then something must be done so as not to deviate from the goal of sustainability. Environmental indicators can be used to measure human decisions at the national, provincial and local or community levels. Sectoral and community-level environmental indicators should also be developed so that signs of unsustainability are checked before the effects became national issues.

Further on, Mr. Tutua noted that there is a need to develop gender-sensitive set of environmental indicators. He argued that this is necessary because:

- Women are co-partners in environmental/resource management.
- Women are disadvantaged.
- Women's activities need to be made more visible/recognized.
- Women feel the impacts of environmental degradation/resource scarcity more than men.
- Women's needs should be better addressed.

Mr Tutua then gave some examples of environmental indicators that might be used in the Solomon Islands, such as:

- Number of women in village meetings on development projects
- Number of women in decision-making positions at the national level
- Time consumed by women in looking for food, water, and firewood
- Health of women
- Life expectancy of women
- Income of women (rather than income of family only)

After this general presentation, Mr. Tutua noted that there is no framework of environmental indicators as of yet in the Solomon Islands, particularly to address the national performance of sustainability. However, he stated that this issue will be addressed and indicators will be developed in the National Biodiversity Strategic Plan, which is still in the process of being drawn up. However, he stated that it is not clear if this will include the socio-economic indicators of sustainability. At present, any set of environmental indicators used is at the project level, for example, SPREP-Government Projects like the



Arnavon and Komarindi conservation projects that have their own sets of indicators for sustainability. Some NGOs also have their own set of indicators, which are used for checking the sustainability of their projects in the rural communities.

He further identified the problems and the reasons for such situation:

- There is no baseline data of information
- Monitoring to measure changes may take a very long period (lack of funds, especially small projects)
- Difficulty in selecting appropriate indicators of sustainability due to many variables involved
- Government priority - how much does the government value indicators of sustainability?

Following this, Mr. Tutua made the following recommendations:

- Establish a working group qualified in identifying appropriate indicators and their link to sustainable development - a standard framework of indicators relevant to the Solomon Islands, including socio-economic as well as natural (physical/biological) indicators of sustainability.
- Identify suitable gender-sensitive environmental indicators for all aspects of development and environmental management.

### **Capacity Building**

The second issue addressed in the presentation of Module IV was that of capacity building. Mr. Tutua explained that capacity building refers to the ability of people and institutions to manage natural resources, technology and investment within potentially solvable, difficult and complex situations.

Capacity building involves:

- Strengthening of the institutional framework which processes capacity-building programmes and policies
- Developing human resources to define policies, operate institutions and processes: to implement and enforce policies, to conduct research, to internalize and use knowledge thus gained, and to ensure genuine public participation and accountability.

Capacity building is important for empowering people to enable them to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively manage their own resources and environment. Capacity-building programmes are implemented in various ways, namely by public awareness raising, formal education, and training.

Mr. Tutua further identified the following target groups that are in need of capacity building:

- Decision makers
- People in business/administration sector
- Managers/technical personnel
- Trainers in environmental/resource management
- Community groups/stakeholders
- Young women and men

He then addressed the issue of women and capacity building specifically, noting that with the realization of the productive role of women in a country's economy and development, training and capacity building of women is necessary for them to effectively participate in achieving sustainable development.

Capacity building for women should build upon their knowledge of local resources and should include:

- Leadership and management skills
- Research and monitoring of development projects

- Science and technology

After this general presentation of the importance of capacity building for women, Mr. Tutua addressed the situation in the Solomon Islands. He stated that capacity building for women is progressing well. More women now have access to education and a good number of women have first and graduate degrees. Fewer women though, have science and technology education at the tertiary level. However, it is hoped that the disparity between men and women having access to tertiary education will be reduced in the near future. This is already showing as indicated by:

- Increasing numbers of women being sent to overseas tertiary educational institutions, taking up courses in business, economics, management, science and technology, etc.
- More women attending SICHE, as indicated by the construction of new women's hostels at Kukum and Panatina Campuses for women.
- Half of the agriculture and forestry groups at School of Natural Resources are women.

These new developments are especially pushed by donor countries like Australia and New Zealand whose sponsorship encourages increasing participation of women and equal educational opportunities for both women and men.

In the environmental and natural resource management area of sustainable development, there are few people, let alone women, who have tertiary qualifications majoring specifically in environmental and resource management. Most capacity-building activities to address management of resources are fragmented - occurring at project levels (for example, Anarvon and Komarindi Conservation Project) and in various sectors like the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries departments - looking at specific resources with commercial value. These sectors, however, often work in isolation.

He then mentioned few good examples of project-level capacity building in resource management, such as the SPREP-SIG conservation projects at the Arnarvon Marine conservation area and the Komarindi conservation area. Conservation officers are given training in community-based natural resource management. Also the local communities involved were trained in environmental awareness, participation in planning, and in implementing the policies of the project.

NGOs are also very much involved in capacity building of rural communities to manage their own resources. Some of these NGOs are:

- SOLTRUST - Training people in forest resource management
- SIDT - Runs awareness programmes in environmental and resource issues as well as in health issues. Trains women in managing their own water supply and sanitation programmes.
- SICA - Village Education Programmes.
- APACE - Runs workshops for women on micro-hydro electrification systems and how to use the energy for community development. Also trains in appropriate planning.
- WWF - Awareness raising. Trains staff in resource management. Assists in drawing up natural resource management plans for local communities.
- Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project - Awareness raising. Capacity building for women and men in managing their own water and sanitation projects.

Mr. Tutua pointed out that the Solomon Islands is doing rather well in keeping up with the Agenda 21 initiative. What is needed is to instill in the population the realization that whatever they are trained in, whether it be in the areas of socio-economics, natural resources or engineering, it will have an effect on the society and environment.

There is a need for training in environmental and resource management, for example in drawing up environmental and resource management plans, research methods, monitoring and evaluation. This is both for women and men. What is needed is training directed specifically at integrated

environmental/resource management for a holistic approach to environmental/resource management and sustainable development.

Mr. Tutua concluded his presentation by recommending the following:

- A national capacity-building programme in the country, specifically to address environmental and resource management. For example, a national institute for environmental and resource management.
- Training of trainers in community-based environmental and natural resource management.
- Women should be trained in solid waste management, especially to help them use their creativity in re-using things considered wastes – e.g. old tires, plastics, etc.
- A body to coordinate, identify and recommend for training, in the area of “women, environmental management and sustainable development”. An inventory of women and their qualifications should be included.
- Institutional strengthening and linkages/networking between institutions and organizations involved in sustainable development, as well as direct linkages between educational institutions like SICHE, and stakeholders or interest groups, for capacity building.
- Any capacity building must build around indigenous knowledge and socio-cultural backgrounds, which have influence on sustainable development such as altruism, togetherness, respect for elders and siblings.

Following the presentation of Module IV, the participants discussed environmental indicators and capacity-building programmes in a plenary session. It was pointed out that in the Solomon Islands environmental impact assessment is undertaken. As an example, the mining industry report was discussed. The environmental impact study is prepared by the relevant national offices and is made available to relevant actors in the area of environmental policies, programmes and projects.

It was also pointed out that the National Biodiversity Plan is in the process of being prepared and some environmental indicators are encompassed within the plan. In the environmental bill that is also under development, environmental standards in accordance with international standards are used.

It was explained that the environmental database is in the process of being established. It is an extensive and costly programme and requires inputs from various relevant governmental and non-governmental agencies, as well as women’s organizations. The main problem with the compilation of the environmental database is the lack of data and the lack of sharing of existing data among various organizations.

The participants also discussed various forms of possible fund-raising. It was pointed out that there is a need to work together and have project profiles that would be developed into full project proposals ready to submit at the request of various donors. Concrete examples of obtaining funds from different multilateral and bilateral funding agencies were also discussed. It was agreed that the participants would prepare within their organizations relevant project profiles and share them with other representatives for possible funding. It was underlined that there is a need for more synchronized and coordinated efforts among the national organizations to cooperate in the development and implementation of relevant projects.

The need for capacity building in the area of environment was highlighted and although some activities are taking place at the national level, more programmes for human resources development are essential for the country.

The participants reiterated the need to establish a national committee comprising various representatives from governmental offices, NGOs such as SIDT, women’s organizations, provincial

organizations, SICHE and others for the effective establishment of plans and projects on women, environmental management and sustainable development.

It was also highlighted that the persons selected to attend various international conferences and symposiums should, on a regular basis, brief officials involved in the particular activity at both provincial and national levels. It was recommended that the Ministry of Women's Affairs should undertake initiatives for projects related directly to women's issues. The Ministry of Environment is undertaking various projects related to environment policies and programmes. Cooperation between the two should be further strengthened, particularly in sharing relevant data and information of on-going programmes and projects.

Concerning the sharing of environmental data, the representative from SIWA offered to share the geographical information system (GIS) that they have in their offices. The representative from the Ministry of Forests also pointed out that the Ministry has data on forests as well as botanical plant specimens and would be willing to share with other interested participants. It was recommended that a list of organizations having various aspects of environmental data should be established and circulated.

## **VII. Conclusion**

Prior to the closing of the seminar, the participants adopted the report by consensus. The seminar was closed by the Deputy Director of SICHE and the representative of INSTRAW. During the closing session the Director of SICHE distributed diplomas to the participants.

Annex I

**List of Participants**

**Organizers**

INSTRAW  
Borjana Bulajic  
Social Affairs Officer  
One UN Plaza, 44th St.  
Room DC1-1106  
New York, N.Y. 10017, USA  
Tel: (212) 963-0834  
Fax: (212) 963-2978  
INSTRAW-NY@un.org

SICHE  
Irene Paulsen  
Head of Distance Education  
Distance Education Centre  
P. O. Box G-23  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 30796  
Fax: (677) 30989  
decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb

**Participants**

**Kedson Ago**  
Labour Officer  
Labour Division  
Ministry of Commerce, Employment and Tourism  
P. O. Box G26  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 21849  
Fax: (677) 25818

**Eric Gagahe**  
Solomon Islands Ports Authority  
P. O. Box 307  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 22646

**Moses Biliki**  
Director  
Department of Forest, Environment and  
Conservation  
Ministry of Forest, Environment and  
Conservation  
P. O. Box G24  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 25848/24325  
Fax: (677) 21245

**Lucy Hora**  
Conservation in Development  
Solomon Islands Development Trust  
P. O. Box 147  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 25389  
Fax: (677) 21131  
Email: sidt cid@welkam.solomon.com.sb

**Gideon Bourou**  
Ministry of Forest, Environment and  
Conservation  
P. O. Box G24  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 25848  
Fax: (677) 21245

**Joe Horokou**  
Senior Environment Officer  
Ministry of Forest, Environment and  
Conservation  
P. O. Box G24  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 25848  
Fax: (677) 21245

**Sophia Chottu**  
YWCA/SI  
National Programme Coordinator  
P.O. Box 494  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 22661  
Fax: (677) 21339

**Verzilyn Isom**  
Solomon Islands College of Higher Education  
P. O. Box G23  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 30111  
Fax: (677) 30390  
e-mail: decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb

**Jessie Fa'arodo**  
Solomon Islands Christian Association  
(SICAFOW)  
P. O. Box 520  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 25096  
Fax: (677) 26150

**Tony Jansen**  
Project Manager  
APACE  
P.O.Box 556  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
E-Mail: tonyj@welkam.solomon.com.sb

**Nancy Jolo**

Rural Water Supplies Project  
Ministry of Health and Medical Services  
P. O. Box 349  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 20830  
Fax: (677) 24019

**Roselyn Kabu**

Project Coordinator  
APACE  
P. O. Box 556  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 39551  
Fax: (677) 21339

**Kate Kamaka'a**

Health Education Officer  
Ministry of Health and Medical Services  
Kirakira  
Makira Province  
Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 50101

**Ernest Kolly**

School of Nursing & Health Studies  
Solomon Islands College of Higher Education  
P. O. Box G23  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 30111  
Fax: (677) 30390  
e-mail: [decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb](mailto:decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb)

**Godfrey Narasia**

Senior Planning Officer  
Planning Office, Tulagi  
Central Province  
Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 32100  
Fax: (677) 32063

**John Peter Peniop**

Solomon Islands College of Higher Education  
P. O. Box G23  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 30111  
Fax: (677) 30390  
e-mail: [decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb](mailto:decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb)

**Virginia Pilua**

Women's Development Division  
Ministry of Youth, Women and Sports  
P. O. Box G39  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 23091  
Fax: (677) 26316

**Moses Rouhana**

Soltrust  
P. O. Box 748  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 30948  
Fax: (677) 30468

**Anna Saeni**

Senior Administrative Officer (Personnel)  
Provincial Office  
Auki  
Malaita Province  
Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 40253  
Fax: (677) 40220

**Peter Satu**

President  
Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 23727

**Stephen Siapu**

Chief Administrative Officer  
Ministry of Youth, Women and Sports  
P. O. Box G39  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 21640

**Myknee Sirikolo**

Botanical Officer  
Solomon Islands National Herbarium  
Ministry of Forest, Environment and  
Conservation  
P. O. Box G24  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 22370  
Fax: (677) 31245

**Terence Titiulu**

Solomon Islands College of Higher Education  
P. O. Box G23  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 30111  
Fax: (677) 30390  
e-mail: [decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb](mailto:decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb)

**Shane Tutua**

Solomon Islands College of Higher Education  
P. O. Box G23  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 30111  
Fax: (677) 30390  
e-mail: [decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb](mailto:decsiche@welkam.solomon.com.sb)

Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development Seminar  
Solomon Islands

**Martina Ului**

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries  
P. O. Box G13  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel/Fax: (677) 30049

**Freda Unusi**

Community Education and Consultation Officer  
Solomon Islands Water Authority  
P. O. Box 147  
Honiara, Solomon Islands

**Eva Wagapu**

Women's Development Division  
Ministry of Youth, Women and Sports  
P. O. Box G39  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 23091

**Solomon Waraka**

Chief Field Officer  
Agriculture Division  
Kirakira  
Makira Ulawa Province  
Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 50080  
Fax: (677) 26316

**Jim Waroka**

Deputy Director  
Solomon Islands Development Trust  
P. O. Box 147  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 25389  
Fax: (677) 21131  
E-Mail: [sidt@welkam.solomon.com.sb](mailto:sidt@welkam.solomon.com.sb)

**Tina Wawane**

P. O. Box 752  
Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 24807

## Annex II

### Opening Statements

#### **Mr. Gabriel Taloikwai, Director, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education**

Honourable Minister of Forestry, Environment and Conservation, Hilda Kari, Permanent Secretaries, Representative of INSTRAW, Borjana Bulajic, Head of Distance Education Centre of SICHE, Irene Paulsen, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, I warmly welcome you all to this Training Seminar.

This week-long Seminar is co-hosted by INSTRAW, the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the Distance Education of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education. The College is most grateful for the valuable assistance from INSTRAW, which enables the College to co-host this Seminar. And it is a pleasure to extend a special welcome to Ms. Borjana Bulajic, the INSTRAW representative who is here assisting the College in organizing and leading the Seminar. We wish you a pleasant stay in the Solomons.

This Seminar would not be possible without the initiative taken by the Distance Education Centre of SICHE. And the Centre is renown for taking this kind of initiative to seek and obtain assistance from international agencies and institutions for the advancement of its functions. Because of this, the Centre is often quoted in the Pacific Region and the Commonwealth as a fine example of how to move on ahead in the delivery of education by Distance. The College is very proud of this and is pleased that the assistance received on each occasion is always a great relief on the meager resources of the College. Irene and her staff have been doing a wonderful job for the College.

This Seminar is the beginning of a long-term commitment by the College to make Solomon Islanders, men and women, more knowledgeable about environmental management, sustainable development and utilization of renewable energy resources, through its Distance Education Centre. Because by the end of the week, a permanent capacity will be in place at the College to continue to offer the courses by Distance. This capacity will be in the forms of printed materials and resources from INSTRAW for adaptation if ever necessary, more skilled lecturers for delivering materials by Distance Education the logical support needed.

The participants at this Seminar are the first to benefit from increased knowledge and awareness on environmental issues, and the importance of sustainable development, as well as better utilization of renewable energy resources. You are encouraged to apply the knowledge and awareness gained during the Seminar, and also to share these with those around you. Environmental and sustainable development issues are issues not only for women but for everybody, including men and children. We all have a vested interest in creating and preserving the kind of environment conducive to a better and healthier living. Everybody has a vital part to play and because of this, we should also have access to any knowledge which should assist us preserve our environment.

The College wishes you all a worthwhile and enjoyable week-long Seminar. And when you return to your workplace and communities, that you do so safely.

Thank you.

#### **United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, Ms Borjana Bulajic, Social Affairs Officer**

Honourable Ministers, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of Dr. Yakin Ertürk, Director of INSTRAW, it is a pleasure to welcome you to the INSTRAW training seminar on Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development. INSTRAW is particularly grateful to the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) and the Government of Solomon Islands, through its Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Rex Stephen Horoi in New York for requesting that the Institute organize the first national training seminar on this issue in Solomon Islands. I would like to express



particular thanks to Ms. Irene Paulsen, Head, Distance Education Centre, Ms. Eva Wagapu, Mr. Steven Siapu, Mr. Gideon Bouro, and all the other staff for assisting in the organization and conduct of the training seminar.

In welcoming the national lecturers and participants, I would like to reiterate INSTRAW's appreciation to you as you will share with us your experiences and provide advice and guidance for future action.

One of the common themes of all United Nations conferences of the 1990s, is the emphasis on the importance of women's empowerment for the attainment of sustainable development. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, June 1992, was an important event for women in that it achieved consensus on the crucial role of women in promoting sustainable development and recognized the need for strengthening women's expertise in the fields of environment and development as well as enhancing their legal and administrative capacities for decision making and promoting managerial roles for women.

In the Rio Declaration, Principle 20 states that: "Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore, essential for achieving sustainable development." Agenda 21 in Chapter 24, entitled "Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development" stresses important linkages to the Fourth World Conference on Women. Agenda 21 also outlines activities for the participation of women in sustainable development in the sectoral and cross-sectoral chapters and in the section on the means of implementation. During the Rio Conference a request was made that governments submit for review and appraisal a progress report on the implementation of these activities to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China in 1995. The Platform for Action adopted in China, identified Twelve Critical Areas of Concern, of which Strategic Objective K is devoted to women and environment.

At UNCED the importance of capacity building at all levels was recognized and acknowledged in the Rio Declaration. Within Agenda 21, Chapter 37 entitled "National Mechanisms and International Cooperation for Capacity Building in Developing Countries", paragraph 37.8 "...Calls upon various bodies and institutions of the United Nations system to assist and reinforce countries, upon requests, on matters relating to human resource development, legislation, natural resources and environmental data...". In one of the twelve critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, education is identified as a priority for Governments, international organizations and donors.

The issue is complex: it includes all aspects of women and sustainable development, within the context of socio-economic, political and cultural development as well as the effects that the global environmental conditions have upon their lives. The chemical and radio-active contamination of soils, air and water, the decreasing biodiversity, the alarming rate of the depletion of resources and deforestation pose not only local but global problems which increasingly jeopardize the very survival of humankind. Much must be done to bring this concept to concrete reality.

It demands a holistic approach on behalf of development planners, policy makers, non-governmental organizations, women's organizations, the private sector and others in order to transform women, environment and sustainable development from a general concept into pragmatic actions at all levels.

In the light of the above, it becomes evident that considerations on women, environmental management and sustainable development need to address the issue of women's transformatory empowerment so that women are not only supported in the capacity to cope, are supported in the process of transforming the power structures that hinder them from becoming full and equal partners with men in the development process.

INSTRAW, is an autonomous body of the United Nations established in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and with a unique mandate to serve as a vehicle to promote and undertake policy-oriented research and training programmes at the international level to contribute to the advancement of women worldwide. Within this context INSTRAW plays a critical role in efforts to achieve the global agenda of gender equality and sustainable development. INSTRAW conducts catalytic training activities in close collaboration and coordination with agencies from within and outside the United Nations system.

INSTRAW prepared the training package on "Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development" in 1996, as a major part of INSTRAW's programme on Women and Sustainable Development, in response and as a follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in particular Agenda 21, the Plan of Action of the World Summit on Social Development and the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women. The package was prepared in cooperation with the ILO/Turin Centre. The training package should be seen as a tool to address the global problems of women, environmental management and sustainable development. The subject matter is complex, multi-disciplinary and integrated into every aspect of society. The purpose of the training package is not to tackle each issue, but rather to present overall existing problems, and possible solutions and policies on various aspects of the subject matter.

Applying the training package within the context of the Solomon Islands, this national seminar aims at: (i) contributing to an integrated approach in the organization and management of environmental policies and programmes through the integration of women's needs as well as their participation; (ii) increasing the awareness and sensitizing planners, officials, trainers, and experts in charge of environmental policies, programmes and projects as well as non-governmental organizations of the need to involve women in planning, management, implementation and evaluation of environmental programmes and projects; and (iii) creating a core group of facilitators and educators trained to conduct similar seminars at vocational and training institutes at national and community levels, thereby ensuring a multiplier effect.

I look forward to your active participation and hope you will openly share your experiences, problems and solutions.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am confident that the outcome of this seminar will be successful and hope that your experience here will prove useful to your country in carrying out their activities in the field of women, environmental management and sustainable development.

### Annex III

#### Agenda

Opening of the seminar

Adoption of agenda

Overview of training methodology and seminar procedures

Technical Session I - Presentation and Discussion of Introductory Module: Agenda 21

Technical Session II - Presentation and Discussion of Module I:  
Women and Environmental Health

Technical Session III - Presentation and Discussion of Module II:  
Women as Agents of Change in the Development Sector

Technical Session IV - Presentation and Discussion of Module III:  
Women as Managers of the Environment

Technical Session V - Presentation and Discussion of Module IV:  
Women, Environmental Indicators and Capacity Building Programmes

Adoption of the report

Closing of the seminar