

### **III World Congress Rural Women Spain 2002**

Before we begin our combined report we both would like to express to The Board of CRDC and Ralph Schultz our deepest thanks for the opportunity to attend the III World Congress for Women in Madrid and your support.

Looking back now to complete this report the time seemed to go fast while we were in Madrid. Sometimes feeling overwhelmed with all the things to take in, learn and see we now know just what a special and rare experience it was to be able to attend as well as how much we are able to bring back to share with other women through discussion, encouragement and inspiration.

#### **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September**

On arrival in Madrid we were taken to the Hotel Tryp, Grand Via, Madrid. This being the first day we were able to rest and 'check out' the city with the highlight that night for some being the Bull Fight! Helen being a firm non-supporter of bull fighting didn't attend and Liz was still in mid-flight. Listening to the comments made by women over breakfast the following morning we only missed a barbaric traditional custom which although still well supported is becoming a concern to modern Spain.

#### **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

Agri-Tours organised trip to Hontibilla to visit the head office of the Ferderacion Nacional de la Mujier Rural's office and new headquarters / development centre. The federation for Rural Women is supported by the Spanish Government and has a membership of 150,000 women.

The new centre being built is a huge building the size of at least two basket ball courts will cater for women to attend courses which will help them in self esteem and skill development to be able to go back and value add to their communities whilst giving them skills for an occupation. In the initial stages the courses will cover office administration, computer skills, jam making, arts and basket making. The centre has the facilities to accommodate and cater for the women attending which means intensive short courses can be run without the added constraints usually felt for women who have to travel and stay away from home.

The trip to visit the centre was also a great chance to say Hola! to some Spanish women who attended the Conference.

In the afternoon we travelled onto the city of Sergovia where we were welcomed officially by La Major Sergovia and all given a pin resembling the cities symbol, the aqua duct built in 1000BC. A tour through the Civic Hall and Council rooms led onto lunch hosted by La Major and finally a walking tour of Sergovia.

#### **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October**

Visit to the School of Fernando de Henares of the Agriculture Ministry for a lecture on the AFRE (Spanish Irrigation Systems Association)

We were given a description of the agricultural areas of Spain, being told Southern Spain, the richest region for agriculture in Spain had soils which are mainly sandy with good temperatures so irrigation was largely used in this area. This area produced a lot of vegetables for Europe and is known as the "sea of plastic" because of all the hydroponic cropping.

After a general talk / presentation from the director and staff members we were given a computerised demonstration of the irrigation system being developed at the centre.

The irrigation system being developed is a running model on the centres property which grows cereals, citrus, fruits, flowers and vegetables.

“When we irrigate society discusses with farmers, water is given to the community who has preference over the farmer”

A basic run down on the working model follows: the Local Communities own the water, with the farmers, as part of the community going to the irrigation co-ordinator who is notified of the amount of water needed for the crops the farmer will grow. All the farmer needs to do is ring and order his water; the amount, the time it will arrive and the time to be shut off. The water order is then typed into a computer which controls the piped water to the particular farm and /or even field. Water is piped to the fields from a central spot to the round reservoirs/ wells on farm. The system allows the farmer to order water in ‘real time’.

This system is currently running in seven regions.

In closing we were told that before exporting this system there is still a lot more development to do as the system has been developed for Spanish conditions.

The Irrigation Centre has Researchers from other countries studying at the Centre and also has short courses in Irrigation for Farmers. The Research continues on this computerised irrigation system, tape irrigation systems developing in Israel as well as Spain and Salinity to name a few.

### **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2003**

The Congress attracted a strong and enthusiastic following of more than 1500 delegates from 78 countries. The Australian contingency was the second largest after Spain, with 160 delegates attending hailing from all states and territories of Australia.

The overall theme of the Congress was 'Global Village', and papers presented covered an extremely diverse range of subjects. Some of the topics included ageing and depopulation of rural areas, food security and safety (particularly the debate on genetically modified plants and animals), public policy encouraging female participation in rural areas in different countries, leadership and extension strategies.

Key debate and discussion at the conference centred on the effects of globalisation on rural women and communities, particularly the detrimental affect that US and European Union subsidies were having on other countries ability to raise agricultural products for food. The Australians present were visible in their opposition to subsidies and market access controls, however we felt the African nations were very effective, using the opportunity to direct attention to US and EU trade policies ensuring that over 66% of their population continue to live in poverty, the majority of that group living in rural areas.

The 1<sup>st</sup> World Congress of Women was held in Melbourne in 1994, and organised by a group of women from Gippsland, Victoria. Australia has a strong affiliation with the event, and many of the Australians attending felt they played a lead role in the proceedings.

Six Australian primary industries, rural and political representatives presented papers during the conference.

- Senator Judith Troeth, “Public Policy in Support of Rural Women – The Australian Approach”
- Australian Women in Agriculture (AWIA) President Jan Fitzgerald
- Sheena Boughen – “Up the Creek without a Paddle: Women, Water & Sustainability”
- Mary Salce – “Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling- Formation of Agrofood Associations”
- Karolee Wolcott – “Are Community Tele-Centres the Answer?”
- Chief Economist ABARE, Fran Freeman – “Women in Agricultural & Rural Development: The Importance of Women in Managing Change”

Sessions were presented lecture style with little or no opportunities for questions. This disappointed some of the delegates. However, we found meal times were an excellent

opportunity to mix with delegates from other countries, and share information and experiences.

The majority of attendees from other countries were urban-based bureaucrats (government and NGOs), as opposed to the make-up of the Australian delegation of predominantly farmers and agribusiness staff. Only one presentation (Jan Fitzgerald) featured images of the rural areas and activities where speakers represented, which may also reflect on the largely bureaucratic make-up of the Congress.

Also evident from content and attendance, was a dichotomy between top-down policy-based strategies (These appeared to correlate with speakers from socialist administrations.) and local, grass-root driven activities and strategies. Content in the Congress also polarised between service and information technology issues in developed countries, and the ability to meet basic needs such as food and health in non-developed nations.

Noteworthy at the conference were the colourful traditional costumes worn by the African and Southern American women. Although some of the Australian women wore green scarves and red scarves for the NSW contingent, they paled in contrast to the vibrant and luxuriously textured dress worn with pride by these women!

Briefings were held with Senator Judith Troeth in the evening after the first two days of the Congress to provide a forum for discussion for the Australian delegation. Many of the Australian women aired criticisms of the Congress administration and content at the briefings. However, many of these complaints were based on cultural expectations of how events are run in our country. In addition, it's possible that some of the women who made criticisms were not used to networking, or not confident in engaging within a large group of strangers, so training before the next Congress in these areas may be useful.

The Congress was absolutely fantastic and we both met some amazing women and men from Australia and around the world who will provide us useful contacts as well as friendships.

In closing we again thank CRDC for giving us the opportunity and support to attend. We look forward to disseminating information from its proceedings, encouraging ongoing activities, and action for the next Congress.

Helen Zilm  
Liz Alexander

**October 2**  
**Official Opening**  
H.M. Queen Sophia of Spain

Presenting to a crowded auditorium of international delegates, Queen Sofia said the recognition of women, as a significant aspect of economic and social development could not be held back.

The Queen said the development of leadership roles in business, the recognition of woman's role in family and community, and the pursuit of the highest standards of health and education, particularly in third world countries, were priority issues.

She welcomed delegates and encouraged them to drive forward, utilizing the opportunity the Congress provided to establish further planning and development for rural women.  
([http://abc.net.au/rural/congress/news/021002\\_2.htm](http://abc.net.au/rural/congress/news/021002_2.htm))

**October 2**  
**Opening Lecture: "Rural Women in the Global Village"**

**Mrs Sissel Ekaas**  
**Director, Gender and Population Division, Sustainable Development Department. Food Agriculture Organisation (FAO), United Nations**

- Marginalisation of women in globalisation. Criteria for assessment should not be restricted to economic measures, but should include and factor in environment, social and gender. Globalisation may exacerbate existing inequalities.
- Trade liberalisation favours; economies of scale to small-scale farming, privatisation of resources to public utilities & services, corporate research and extension to government extension and intensification rather than diversification of activities.
- Women's labour often supplements male labour but is invisible and is undervalued in national economies and statistics. Women's labour is often overlooked in investment schemes and by policy makers.
- HIV/AIDS, male migration, ageing, civil & inter-national wars, and conflict means that older women head many rural households eg. Grandmother raising grandchildren orphaned by AIDS.
- CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) – Article 14 – recognised rural women in their own rights. Adopted 1979 by the UN General Assembly, & often described as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end discrimination.
- Food and Agriculture (FAO) works for 'Food for All' – people centred, sustainable agricultural & rural development, and gender equality. Regional activities include:
  - In Africa, working with statisticians so gender is collected with agricultural census.
  - In Asia and the Pacific, initiatives are in the area of distance learning for rural women and girls.
- Overview of international policy developments for women's equality since 1996
  - 1996: World Food Summit, Rome calls for equal access by women to food, water, credit and use of natural resources i.e. gender equality.
  - November 2001: Gender & Development Plan of Action (2002 – 07)

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- June 2002: World Food Summit in Rome reviewed at five-year mark. Event sent resolution to the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainability Development, calling on all countries that had signed CEDAW article 14 to action it and set up monitoring databases. It also called for more participation of women and more access of women to natural resources and energy.
  - July 2002: Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainability Development (WSSD)
  - Ongoing: Sustainable Agricultural Research & Development, & Anti-hunger program (SARD)
  - 2003: WTO Cancun, Mexico.
- Food Aid Day and Telefood were mentioned as examples of projects supporting rural women eg. Beekeeping in Samoa.
  - More information is available at [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

## **October 2**

### **Working Session “Gender, Sustainability Development and Food Security”**

#### **Mrs Guo Ruixiang**

**Senior Program Officer, UN Development Program, Chinese Office. Peoples Republic of China.**

- 75.5% population is in rural China (over 940 Million).
- China has only 7% of rural land but this feeds 22% of world's population.
- Women make up 48.8% of the rural population but make up 70% of the agricultural labour force.
- In addition, rural women do 90-100% of household work.
- 70% of rural women are illiterate and access to extension services is skewed (42.5% male and 14.2% women).
- According to national poverty line (US\$ 0.66 per day), 30 million rural poor.
- 90 million rural inhabitants in China earn less than US\$ 1/day.
- Micro-credit assists rural women out of poverty, especially if combined with community capacity building.
- There is still dominance of men in decision making about land, housing, village elections, despite more women heading households due to labour migration of men to cities for work.
- Land distributed through males.
- Higher female illiteracy rate and very limited access to education, technology and IT. Now working on an AUSAID project incorporating gender equity especially on efficient use of water.
- Contact details are: [ruixiangguo@vip.sim.com](mailto:ruixiangguo@vip.sim.com) or [ruixiangguo@hotmail.com](mailto:ruixiangguo@hotmail.com)

#### **Mrs Maria Cuvi**

**Associate Researcher, Latin American School of Social Sciences & Director, Academic Seminar at Pitzer College (EU), Republic of Ecuador.**

- Andean ants of Andean Mountains provide diverse, ethnic mosaic.
- Most of the rural population under 30 years of age.
- Roughly half the rural population live in poverty.
- Rural areas have experienced an exodus of people to Western societies.
- Image of rural populations more complex than media portrays.
- Urban women's organisations are not dealing with issues of conservation or sustainable development

- Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) & state institutions not interested in rural women's role with environmental management.
- Believes an important role for women to use verbal histories & their experiential knowledge of nature in community-based policy.

**Mrs Linda Swarcina**

***Associate Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, US Department of Agriculture, USA.***

- Stated importance of USA in influencing world food safety policies through US's comprehensive programs for meat and poultry for import and export.
- Infant mortalities have reduced dramatically through Service's actions, but still high level of diarrhoea - some food related.
- Food borne illness estimated to cost America US\$ 1 billion each year.
- 90 years ago first food laws enacted in the US, after poor meat abattoir conditions published and followed by public outcry.
- 6 years ago introduced a new microbiological program (possibly referring to HACCP Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point).
- US food borne illnesses have declined since system introduced.
- Increased public participation to help science based policies to be introduced.
- Food borne disease is preventable; USDA provides public education programs in the USA for consumers and food handlers, eg. "Bac Off"; campaign to encourage people to wash their hands (!).
- Listeriosis with pregnant women; a pamphlet for pregnant women developed in partnership with USDA, the medical profession and industry.
- Campaign to increase the use of cooking thermometers so dangerous bacteria are killed during cooking.
- Stated food safety education is a local issue not global, but can share ideas.
- CODEX (Codex Alimentarius Commission) process helps other countries improve their own internal food safety policies.
- Very noticeably did not mention US policies on genetically modified produce and labelling.

**Mrs Isabel Peutz**

***Head of Food Safety Unit (FSU), Directorate General for Agriculture, European Commission***

- CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) moving from mass production to quality-based production, especially regional products.
- Encourage production but with environmental and social protection, believed rural women could play a strong role.
- Still strong opposition by farmers to any change in the CAP.
- EU has many food safety scandals (often associated with waste), eg. Re-using sugar coating of hormone pills in pig feed, re-using cooking oils, re-using animal carcasses/by products leading to well-publicised outbreaks such as BSE, Foot in Mouth, Belgian chickens (dioxin poisoning).
- Currently drafting major changes to the CAP, in attempt to regain consumer confidence.
- CAP review objectives are for agricultural produce to be:
  - Economically competitive
  - Ecologically sound
  - Socially acceptable

By encouraging value adding on farm, the value of the environment, rewarding protecting countryside and to encourage farmers to become involved in marketing their own produce/products.

- Review aims to decouple support from production & remove incentives to overproduce. EU states it aims to shift to producing quality food and rural development; however farmers are protesting against this.
- Subsidies to become linked to production of quality produce with high food safety standards.
- Currently 10% spent on rural development but indicated this will triple to 30%.
- Funds will be reduced if animal welfare and workers WH&S standards are not met.
- Working towards a complete ban on antibiotics in all livestock feeds.
- FSU lobbying in CAP draft review for;
  - Market orientation (consumer led production)
  - Guaranteed fair income (20% of Union farmers receive 80% of funds)
  - Respect for the environment
  - Simplification of red tape
  - \$ Assistance to farmers to improve quality, implement QA systems, marketing own products

**Hon. Mrs Hajiya Aisha M.S. Ismail**  
**Minister for Women's Affairs, Nigeria.**

- Situation of rural women in Africa has deteriorated, due to HIV/AIDS & civil war.
- 10 years ago, 40% of Africans lived below the poverty line, today over 60% of Africans live below subsistence level. Literacy rate is more than 50%.
- Suffer from lack of access to water and natural resources and a declining natural environment. Eg. Desertification; Less rainfall than 10 years ago, so desert is increasing by km per day.
- Strangled by indebtedness to other countries.
- Most of programs for African countries to repay their foreign debt have not succeeded. These continued payments are continuing the debt for Africa.
- Questioned how the World Bank, IMF, can tell African countries not to subsidise farmers when US government subsidises its farmers.
- Described Nigerians as "Watchers of Globalisation"
- Trade barriers restrict Nigerian participation in globalisation – no resources eg. to address phytosanitary barriers.
- Stated strongly that African countries need access to markets not aid. If Africans can sell their products then they can build what aid now gives. This would also mean these projects meet their own requirements, eg. Setting up classrooms, clean bores.
- Closed her session by saying Nigerian Women can achieve things with dignity.

**October 2**

**Simultaneous Workshops**

1. Globalisation, Poverty & Food Security
2. Social and Territorial Equity
3. **Role of Rural Women in the Agricultural Sector and in Rural Environment**

**Attended by Helen Zilm**

**Mrs Carolyn E Sachs.**

**Professor of Rural Sociology and Women's Studies, Director of Women's Studies at Penn State University. USA.**

- Women in Agriculture and invisible farmers
- Women do the majority of work in agriculture worldwide

- Women do typical work that is closer to the table in space and time.
- Globalisation –

women are involved in labour intensive crops. Their labour is the preferred labour force due to low wages and perception of more flexible hours. Women are especially vulnerable to exposure to pesticides.

- The Home Garden –

women provide a wide range of vegetables, herbs and fruits. They provide nutrition and food security in drought or when there is a short supply of grain crops.

Women have extensive knowledge of crops and animals having a different knowledge to men.

- Women's Seed Saving –

Have a responsibility to seed selection and storage making their decisions due to the multiple uses of crops. Women in Peru have 56 varieties of Potatoes and 28 varieties of Oca.

Ethiopian women have saved wheat for pasta, beer and foods.

- Women are involved in sustainable agriculture in USA, Australia, UK & Netherlands.

- Women have limited access to land. The access they do have is through husband, father or sons. 89% of women in the USA have their names on the land deeds, but this doesn't mean they have a role in decision making.

- Women's Policies need to –

Provide women with more access to capital, land and credit

Provide food for their families

Need to spend income of sale of food on family well being

Have more formal education

Extension targeted to women with more women's extension agendas

Consider women's knowledge

Women's interests represented at ag policy time table

Be involved in global land, trade and science policies

- This Congress is one effort to have women's voices heard to insure security of food.

**Mrs Alice Barthes.**

**Researcher at the National Institute of Agricultural Research (NRA). Dept of Rural Economic and Sociology. Laboratory of Dijon. France**

This Speaker delivered in French. It was very hard to understand her presentation when the Interpreter finally commenced.

**Mrs Sara MaFlores**

**Researcher at the Institute of Social Investigation. National Autonomous University (UNAM) Republic of Mexico**

This Speaker delivered in Mexican.

**Mrs Xiemena Flores.**

**Consultant for Socioeconomic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA). Department of Sustainable Development. Service for gender Development. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. (FAO). Bolivia**

- Women are continued to be seen as invisible, yet we know this is not true and its proven.

- Men are receiving more extension services accesses of information than women with the introduction of GM Technology.
- Men and women have different knowledge and information for biodiversities and agricultural policies.

**Mrs Zara Ramdan Ahmed.**

**Head of International Relationships. National Union of Saharan Women.**

- Western Sahara – South Africa 2/3rds occupied by a foreign force – Morocco. Morocco does not respect the Saharans rights.
  - Women have a huge task to organise the refugee camps since 1975.
  - Miracles have occurred, the Saharan people have been able to survive, and women have made this happen. Their efforts mean that most of our children go to school and grow plants and vegetables in the desert.
  - Saharan women in the refugee camps contribute to the lives, social and economic aspects. The women were the first victims of this situation in 1975 and they coped with this harshness.
  - In the Saharan community women do participate.
4. Rural and Farming Women. Dynamics of Demography; Migrations, Ageing, Depopulation
  5. Technologies for Research and Innovation on Agricultural, Rural and Fisheries Development
  6. **Effect of the Media on Rural Development and the New Information Technologies**  
Attended by Liz Alexander

**Chairman**

**Mr Miguel Angel Gozala**

**President EFE Agency, Spain.**

- EFE media agency covers more than 150 000 Latin speaking cities.
- Chair showed some recent press cuttings that illustrated the different roles of women in Spain, including:
- Miss Spain not attending the Miss World competition in Nigeria due to the women sentenced to death by stoning for adultery.
- Wife of President of Catalonia standing behind president in traditional role.
- Female Bank President meeting the King of Spain.

**Mr Carl B Greednige**

**Director General, Technical Centre Agricultural & Rural Cooperation (ACP/EC), The Netherlands.**

- CTA represents 77 countries in the Caribbean and Pacific
- Cotonou Agreement: joint socio-economic and cultural contracted program between EU and African and third world countries for Agricultural and Rural Development.
- Regards rural women's empowerment as a priority for poverty reduction and perceive gender IT divide.
- Works within political, socio-economic & cultural contexts, agricultural & rural development, information & communication development
- Priority areas are mainstreaming gender, national policy, human capacity building.
- CTA has a range of programs, publications, rural radio, web pages etc. eg. Publication "Where there is no vet".
- Also support the legislation changes towards an enabling legal environment for rural women.
- Often use radio eg. Rural listening clubs for women, community radio, and a mix of radio and Internet eg. Women's Net Radio Exchange in South Africa, video, mobile phones, drama.

- Support women's efforts to get women content into projects.

**Mrs Sonja Hillgren**

**Editor, Farm Journal. Vice President, Editor Farm Journal Media, USA.**

- Traditional mass media operates top down
- Only ways for readers to give feedback is letters to editors, demonstrations, & interviews but generally only city people interviewed.
- Political & financial capitals direct news content.
- Concentrates on disasters, not everyday challenges.
- Believes interactive more useful for country readers.
- Stated that Farm Journal has moved from mass media to two-way conversations with readers.
- In 1862 US established system of Universities & Agricultural Colleges.
- 1877 Farm Journal founded.
- 1920s Farm Journal became the first magazine to produce different editorials and advertisement for different regions and industries, targeted message.
- Described Farm Journal as "vehicle to communicate success messages".
- Media now includes farming TV show, AgData TV, company that produces farm newsletters and an interactive web site [www.agweb.com](http://www.agweb.com), which targets content to individual readers. (Must be able to generate advertising income.)
- "Peoplelink" website connects rural craft people with world markets via new IT, through village knowledge centres. In Ghana, the village knowledge centre downloads the US weather maps then broadcast results via loud speakers to village fisherman.
- I questioned speaker on her opinions on the city media divide, mentioning that urban communities are incorrectly informed on rural issues & this results in urban-lead, government public policy affecting farmers & a social licence to operate being jeopardised. She stated that Farm Journal was unconcerned and that it was no sue trying to influence urban media, as it would have no effect. Perhaps the greater numbers and strength of the USA farm lobby means this is not an issue?

**Mr Isidoro Laso**

**Scientific Officer, Electronic Commerce Unit, Directorate General Information Society, European Commission.**

- EU introducing strategy to become knowledge-based via "eEurope" 2005 program.
- Aims to set up modern public on-line services to enable dynamic information dissemination and sharing.
- Includes: eGovernment, eLearning, eHealth
- Efruitrace; traceability in fruit sector, to become a competitive advantage for European produce.
- EU has grants available for advancing these strategies eg food safety/traceability.
- For more information see [www.europa.eu.int](http://www.europa.eu.int) or contact the speaker at [isidro.laso@cec.eu.int](mailto:isidro.laso@cec.eu.int)

**Mrs Cema Bolabola**

**Coordinator, Continuing Education Service, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.**

- Identify learning needs of rural people and use mass media to promote.
- University covers 12 countries, thousands of islands in the Pacific, five time zones, and 33 million km<sup>2</sup>.
- Culture, tradition & religion strongest in rural areas.
- Poverty of opportunity for rural people, rural areas are on the periphery of centres of development (urban areas).
- Education aims to assist development, about change and empowerment.

- 3 semesters per year (14 weeks per semester).
- Can empower to challenge institutions that control lives and destiny.
- Mainly print based as no IT infrastructure.
- Also use radio plus local facilitator/tutor/mentor and print.
- Radio non-interactive described by islanders as “the only thing that covers all islands except sunshine.”

**Mrs Coucha Mayoral**

**Science & Technology Officer, Information Society, Spain.**

- Spanish Internet statistics shown no split between urban & rural figures.
- Very low uptake in comparison to Australian usage.

**October 3**

**Working Session “The Role of Rural Women in Agricultural & Sustainable Rural Development”**

**Hon. Mrs Rahmah Kassim**

**Secretary-General, Ministry of Rural Development, Malaysia.**

- Declining share of agriculture in total workforce (industrialisation & urbanisation)
- Dropping contribution to GDP, 1990 - 19%, 1999 - 14%
- 330 000km<sup>2</sup>, 24 million population
- 2001; 44.3% female labour force, 46% rural women, 17% employed in agriculture
- 15% rural households living in poverty
- Listed as critical success factors for Malaysian programs: political stability, policies well understood & translated, consistent budget support, well-informed politicians, well-designed policies
- Upward trend in agricultural services & multi-cropping (paddies, cocoa, rubber, cash crops)
- Case Study 1 (1991): 70% of households regard agriculture as main household income, 80% of women involved directly/indirectly in tasks (predominantly manual).
- Case Study 2, Muda area:
  - 100 000ha irrigation area, around 63 000 farmers
  - Mechanisation has decreased women’s manual labour by 75%
  - Young males are migrating to urban areas for better jobs
- Aim to get rural women to participate in mainstream economic development
  - IT sector
  - Service sector eg. Farmstays
  - Cottage industries and handicrafts
  - Value adding (food processing)
- Social role for women in voluntary work with pre-school development and community assistance, and ensuring family unit cohesiveness
- Stated in Malaysia there is Rural Development Ministry, + 6 direct & 17 indirect government ministries contributing to rural development

**Mrs Da Adela Backiel**

**Director, Sustainable Development, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), USA.**

- Listed international policy initiatives previously covered that contribute to rural women’s development.
- WDSS, Johannesburg

- Declaration & Plan of Implementation of Action
- Partnerships
- Commitment to Agenda 21 (negotiated documents committing groups to action & prioritising partnerships) Includes:
  - Improving access to resources
  - Adapting technology to suit women's work
  - Capacity building
  - Making visible women's issues in policies

**Mrs Fran Freeman**

**Chief Economist, Trade, Australian Bureau of Agricultural & Resource Economics (ABARE), Australia.**

- Figures below all refer to Australia
- Twice as many women who live on farms have post-secondary school qualifications compared to their male counterparts; this doesn't vary across age groups
- More women from farms are employed in professional occupations than women living in urban areas, with more than ½ of these in the areas of nursing and teaching
- Most rural women are actively involved in farm financial management rather than on-farm or agronomic activities
- Averaged across Australia, 30% of rural income is earned off-farm with 30% of women and 25% of men pursuing income from off-farm work
- Those farms with off-farm income, on average, had greater incomes than those who didn't have members earning money off-farm
- Farms with household members undertaking secondary education through their working lives have more profitable farms on average than those that don't
- Women contribute greatly to rural communities through volunteer work
- Case Study - Grameen Bank, Bangladesh, (micro credit example)
  - 95% female clients
  - 98% loan recovery rate
  - Owned by poor
  - Loans must be income generating eg. Housing & educational loans
  - 16000 loans for mobile phones
  - 42% of families lifted above the poverty line through income generating products/services acquired via loans
- Globalisation produces more rapid pressures for change
- Pressures greater/worse than they need to be because of subsidies, money goes to few not many
- % GDP of agriculture decreasing in developed countries
- Urban bias to investment in developed countries
- Full paper available at <http://abc.net.au/rural/congress/papers/paper-franfreeman.pdf>

**Mrs Angelina Heerens**

**Directorate General for Agriculture. European Commission.**

- ¼ population live in rural areas in Europe
- Denmark is aiming to mainstream gender in policies
- Little useful content in presentation

**Mrs Jose Fernandez Aguerri**

**President Local Action Group TEDER Earth Estella, President Montejurra Condominium, Navarra Rep. Spanish Network Rural Development, Spain.**

- 24% of Spain's population live in 80% of the area of Spain (rural)
- Migration of young people & the fast ageing of the farming population strong concern (60% of population over 55, 6% under 35 years of age)
- Health, education services & infrastructure need improving to draw young people back
- Food health issue for group, natural resource management very minor concern.
- Group is working towards the development of cooperatives to gain efficiencies in marketing & purchasing.
- More men than women in rural areas
- Women's paid work tends to require travel & is professional; traditional work as collaborator on farm is unpaid
- EU member countries do not list female contribution of farm income
- Local Action group encouraging farm tourism (stated this would assist environmental management), workshops preserving cultural heritage, increasing the role of education to change habits etc.
- Speaker stated Local Action group aims to take into account women's feelings by not competing, but sharing.

**Mrs Marina Moya Moreno**

**President ADESIMAN, National Network Rural Development, Spain.**

- ADESIMAN set up in 1997, National Federation of 70 smaller rural representative groups
- Direct benefits to those in the Federation include: support from being part of a national group, exchanges of information & cooperation, travel
- Each province has a strategy incorporating local participation and local needs
  - Using & harnessing local resources
  - Adapting workers to changes in diminishing industries
  - Infrastructure, health care, recreation
- Local development management stated to be transparent and profitable
- Aims to foster entrepreneurial skills
- "Men do not want to give up what they have; women have to be smart enough to gain equal opportunities".

**October 3**

**Working Session "Leadership & Involvement of Rural Women"**

**Mrs Jan Fitzgerald**

**President, Australian Women in Agriculture (AWiA), Australia.**

- Four key themes:
  - Passion (for enhancing rural Australia)
  - Persistence (keep your eye on the ball)
  - Participation (work for consensus, not confrontational)
  - Perception (accept women who lead locally)
- Spoke about the Australian Women in Agriculture's National Learning Network, described as a network of networks, nurturing society.
- "Change oneself, by example you will change others".
- PowerPoint presentation displayed good photos of farming operations and rural life in Stanthorpe.

**Mrs Terry Gilbert****President, American Women's Bureau, Agricultural Farming Office, USA.**

- US Agriculture and the Role of Farm Women changed dramatically over the past 20 years.
- Previously role of rural women was just support, but now in leadership, eg. US Secretary of Agriculture is a woman.
- Consumers concerned about environment and food safety.
- Communicating to young people from the non-farm sector.
- Promoting agriculture in schools via teaching materials and 'adopt a farm' scheme, and a continuing educational program (accredited) for teachers to use to teach agriculture.
- Membership & communication challenges – farms are consolidating 6 million to 2 million in? years. (Figure not given)
- 2 major promotional events held each year in each state of the USA with strong media focus.
  - Agweek (beginning spring planting)
  - National City Week (thanksgiving)
- US population only spends 10% of income on food so have a "Food Check Out" day, to promote the fact the US has cheap food (Spain spends 18%).
- Farm Bureau has over four million members of their organisation.
- Highlighted social aspects of group; eg. Young farmwomen members are involved in school P&Cs, CWAs & religious youth groups.
- Bureau works within policy debates, & working with political leaders.

**Mrs Sara Hlupekile Longwe****Executive Director, African Women's Development & Communications Network (FEMNET), Kenya.**

- A framework for leadership and mobilisation to address rural gender issues.
- Gender blindness is pervasive.
- Some past and present programs window-dressing, address technical aspects, not really addressing underlying causes.
- Most world policies sit on the shelf, eg. UNESCO Passport to Equality, Beijing +5.
- Feminism requires commitment to end gender disparity with political will to change it.
- Feminism under many unnecessary labels these days; Marxist, liberal, capitalist, radical, due to disengagement from issues and effects.
- Levels of severity ranging from least to most as reflected in discussion so far at conference;
  - General developmental needs
  - Women's' special needs, biological
  - Division of labour in home
  - Household decision making
  - Issues: violation of rights, statistical (systemic)
- All socialised to believe in patriarchal beliefs as pre-existing, & men benefits.
- Levels of Equity from highest level to lowest; dynamic, issues present all the time.
  - Welfare
  - Access
  - Conscientisation/ awareness
  - Mobilisation
  - Control
- Strategic Plan imperative; Elements should include; situation analysis, policy imperatives, problem identification, goals, intervention strategies, implementation

- strategies, objectives, implementation sequence, management system (must be participatory), and a system of monitoring & evaluation
- Identify whether it is gender issue or not.
- Act local, look to global framework.

**Mrs Matilde Casa**

**President, Women's Commission, Committee of the Agricultural Organisations in the EU (COPA).**

- COPA started 1968
- Stated that subsidies are imperative to the future of rural women in EU.
- 31-34% farm labour done by women in EU.
- Issue of farm labour not being recognised eg. Social security payments.
- Development schemes fail due to a lack of understanding of areas and situations (male bureaucratic planning).

**October 3**

**Simultaneous Workshops**

1. Gender and Public Policies
2. Women's Involvement in the Association Networks in the Rural Spanish Regions
3. **Agricultural Extension & Training for Development & Leadership**  
*Attended by Liz Alexander*
4. Associations & Cooperatives in the Agrifood Sectorial
5. Multifunctionality in Agriculture & New Opportunities for Employment in the Rural Sector
6. International Cooperation & Development Aid

**October 3**

**Simultaneous Workshops**

**"Agricultural Extension & Training for Development & Leadership"**

**Hon. Mrs Hua Fuzhou**

**Vice President, Chinese Women's Federation, People's Republic of China**

- Of China's 1.295B, over 800 M are rural.
- 70% of rural population are women and children, 55% are female.
- FNFC (Federation National des Femmes des Chine) set up in 1949.
- 5 principals of FNFC: Mobilisation, Education, Representation & Participation, Service, Union & Cooperation
- Currently there is a five-year program assisting rural women with micro-credit and micro-loans 592 rural districts, 20 Agricultural zones.
- Pilot project used as a guide; commerce skills, scientific & technical information.
- Now concentrating on training – 5M rural women/year is trained (technical, formal, livestock, vegetables, forestry etc).
- 700 volunteer experts provided on-farm training to western Chinese rural areas.
- Also publish books (34 titles), 400 million distributed.
- 6 Women's rural colleges set up through donations – training 100 elite to train others in a model/mentor system.
- 120,000 women are encouraged to plant trees for reforestation (100,000 hectares planted).

**Mrs Colien Hefferan**

**Administrator, Cooperative Research, Education and Extension Service, US  
Department of Agriculture, USA.**

- Gains in women's education have resulted in a 43% decrease in nutritional health problems as literate women can then read instructions and teach children.
- Female farmers receive only 5% of the world's extension services and only 15% extension officers are women (1% in Egypt).
- Political mention of the Taliban and Afghanistan as an example of how ignoring women's education is detrimental for development.
- USA is promoting a free or subsidised school lunch program worldwide that is only available to schools with both male & female children as students in 3100 countries.
- USDA and 105 universities deliver extension program and is stakeholder driven, looking to encourage community builders & stabilisers, as well as innovators and entrepreneurship.
- Where do they live, what do they want? Community needs to dictate programs.
- Eg. Texas A&M offer leadership program for Armenian rural women, business skills training in Nigeria & South Africa (Ghana).

**Mrs Tsakanio Ngomane**

**Department of Agriculture & Agricultural Extension (South Africa), Pennsylvania State University, USA.**

- Stated that extension needed to move away from systems and return to individual beliefs and cultural practices.
- Extension services are often highly politicised.
- Highlighted that in 1974 only 35% of world leaders were democratically elected, in 1996, figure had risen to 66%.
- Democracy & extension are linked through desire to extend principles of inclusion, respect & tolerance, and responsibility for common good.
- Knowledge is power; main mechanism whereby autocratic regimes control communities.
- In Africa, extension officers are often the only "face of government" and are often poorly resourced and trained and are generally male.
- Many surveys have recorded farms as male dominated households (but many later found these males worked away or were under 14 years). Extension services are designed for males – and de facto female-headed households are treated as male headed.
- Need to eliminate duplication of programs to same clients.
- Need to appoint more female extension staff, improve quality at colleges.
- Rural development/human capacity approach not technology transfer is best for these areas.
- Concluded that politics must be removed from extension.

**Mrs Claudia Ranaboldo**

**Researcher, Bolivia.**

- The Bolivian Parliament now has 25% women members.
- Currently privatising extension services that then will concentrate on middle to large producers.
- Has over 1000 Non Government Organisations (NGOs) many of which provide extension.
- In Peru, have grants to farmers to buy technical equipment (and then hired by producers).

**Mrs Amani Al-juneidi**

**President, Women's Development Unit, Centre for Agricultural Services (TCAS), Palestine Territories.**

- Described the extension structure and services in Palestine.
- Speaker had very heavily accented English and unfortunately was difficult to understand.

**Mrs Brigitte Roggendorf**

**Federal Ministry of Consumers Protection, Food & Agriculture, Federal Republic of Germany**

- Women entrepreneurship ideas are often blocked, as it would involve the reorganisation of farm/village labour.
- Women are often held back by poor self-esteem.
- Education/vocational training especially in IT for older women to assist re-entry to the workforce.
- Need active involvement of public themselves and focus on personal development and personality training.

**October 4**

**Working Session "Public Policies in Support of Rural Women"**

**Senator Hon. Mrs Judith Troeth**

**Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry, Australia.**

- Parliamentary secretary since 1997.
- 1<sup>st</sup> World Congress of Agricultural Women, Melbourne, 1994 pivotal in directing public policy in Australia.
- Australia is as big as the US continent but only with population of 19 million.
- National Farmers Federation peak farming lobby group representing diverse commodity/industry groups.
- Most farms family enterprises; While women joint decision makers on farm (business & family roles), generally the male partner had production and political roles (joined industry organisations); until recently women were 'invisible' farmers.
- Networking & alliance important because of distance.
- 4 NGOs for Agricultural Women:
  - CWA, running 70 years +, emphasis community volunteer work
  - AWiA, 10 years, production oriented
  - Foundation of Australian Agricultural Women, 1994, support & scholarships for women
  - Women's Industry Network Seafood Community
- Federal responsibilities include rural research & development, ag & vet chemicals - NRA (National Registration Authority), EMS, organic agriculture, and rural women.
- 3 phases of public policy: 1. Infrastructure, 2. Resources, 3. Mainstreaming.
- Phase 1. 1996 Rural Women's Unit & state and federal Taskforce set up. National Forum on Women in Agriculture & Resource Management held in 1997, resulting in National Plan.
- Commissioned research found that women managed 32% of farms, produced 28% farm output and earned 81% of off farm income. Rural women provided 48% of the total value of the agricultural sector (including domestic, community & off-farm work), and are twice as likely to have tertiary education as farming men.
- Phase 2. Office of the Status of Women (with a national rural women's secretariat) that reports to the Prime Minister.
- Phase 3. Aim to increase rural women's influence at all levels via mentoring and corporate governance training.

- Regulatory approach no good, as some women do not want to work on boards etc.
- Improve rural communities, do business better through partnership with rural women.
- Full paper available at <http://abc.net.au/rural/congress/papers/paper-senatorroeth.pdf>

**Hon. Mrs Virgilia Matabele**

***Minister of Women & Social Action, Mozambique.***

- Mozambique covers 802 000km<sup>2</sup> and sustains 17M population
- 2/3 of the populations live in poverty.
- 53% population are women but education levels are low and inhabit the lowest levels of poverty.
- Levels of HIV in pregnant women are very high.
- 33% of MPs are female and three out of twenty Ministers are women.
- Action Plan for the Removal of Absolute Poverty (PRAPA), revised annually and includes gender issues.
- Traditional law puts land and resources in male hands; however Land Law now allows women to control land.
- Rural Extension Service encourages change in rural areas.
- Mozambique Rural Women Networks and the General Union of Cooperatives (90% women) help rural women with access to credit, tools, livestock and markets (local and global).

**Hon. Mrs Lisette Garcia Bustamante**

***Vice-Minister, National Women's Institute, Republic of Chile.***

- Created in 1990s when Chile became a democracy.
- National Women's Institute is a government department and promotes public policies such as gender equality issues.
- Major mechanisms for addressing rural women issues include:
  - National EEO plan with goals and Minister's responsible for these goals.
  - A roundtable of rural women from all over Chile.
  - Specific policies and budgets for gender equity issues.

**Mrs Wendy Quintero Gallardo**

***General Manager & Special Trustee Delegate, National Trust Fund for Communal Development, Republic of Mexico.***

- Feminisation, due to the migration of males to the USA or cities is occurring, leaving more farm households headed by women.
- In 2000, 34% of the workforce was female, but earned 39% less despite EEO laws.
- Rural women die earlier (69 vs. 73 years) and twice as likely to die in childbirth.
- National agrarian land registry allows land to be passed to descendants, including female descendants.

**? Speaker Not Listed in Programme**

- Speaker spoke in Portuguese; there was no translation service and no overhead or PowerPoint presentation.

**4 October**

**Master Lectures**

**"Rural Women: For World Peace and Human Development"**

**Hon. Mrs Graca Machel**

***Chair, Foundation for Community Development (FDC), Recipient Prince of Asturias Cooperation Prize, Mozambique.***

- Summarised her view of the proceedings of the Congress, emphasising;
  - Contribution of rural women to peace building
  - Women's rights in rural development
  - The impact of HIV on rural women, communities
  - Women's rights in general
- Peace more than absence of conflict – provides for the continuing fulfilment of basic needs and rights, “not just when the bullets stop”.
- Armed conflict harms women: rape perpetrators are never brought to justice.
- Must address fundamental issues of food production
- “EU & US subsidies literally take the bread out of the mouths of our children, when you give \$ to one group of farmers and not another group who are the majority.”
- Emphasised market access a key issue for African countries.
- “Unjust and grotesque” that some women in the west who use the latest expensive health technology to choose the sex of their children while African rural women die in childbirth, without basic health care.
- Must build bridge between north (EU) and south (Africa) to address these inequities.
- Concerned rural women still silent with no visible voice; conference made up of bureaucrats – rural women need to talk about their needs directly.
- Poverty is increasing in many countries, women dieing of preventable diseases, increasing illiteracy.
- HIV AIDS is a huge problem, Eastern Europe, Caribbean, Asia, and Africa; Due to literacy and culture, women can't protect themselves. AIDS causes death of women and turns women into unpaid carers of partners and AIDS orphans.
- Much talk at the conference about women's roles – it is women's rights at issue.
- Need to change mindset; Human rights are women's rights.
- 23 years for 17 countries to ratify CEDAW (1997 UN Women Rights convention), and still 97 countries to do so.
- Compared to the Children's Rights Bill – 13 years for all countries to ratify with the exception of only USA and Somalia (USA has signed but not ratified and Somalia has no government).
- No country in the world has true gender equality.
- Mainstreaming okay, if it acknowledges differences.
- Not happy with describing countries eg. China, as 'markets' vs. 'people', result of fever of market forces.
- Received a standing ovation; generally considered best speaker of the conference. (Wife of Nelson Mandela).

**Mr Federica Mayor Zaragoza**

**Former Director UNESCO, President Scientific Council, Ramon Areces Foundation, Spain.**

- Questioned why does UNESCO, UNICEF, NGOs come to Africa to tell the African teachers how to teach according to the latest western models, instead of listening to the Africans.
- Rico Berta Self-taught, farmer, 1996: Visited each house, asking not how can we teach you, but how can we help you? Asked individuals in villages “How can we help you to lift your self esteem?” to design better extension programs in India.
- Education serves to strengthen values.
- Bangladesh women “Look when the monsoon comes, the rain comes through the roof, and we'll now have iron.” Invented 'pop-rice' (like popcorn) and sold to gain proceeds to roof houses. Women were illiterate, but didn't need to learn to read; an example of identifying programs that build self-esteem.
- UNESCO requested Graca Machel to head program called “Listening to Africa”.

- First draft of the declaration of human rights was written by Ghandi, consulted many people, his mother was a great influence (illiterate).
- The West has spiritual poverty eg. Invests in weapons rather than addressing rural third world poverty.
- International cooperation is decreasing; human development must take place
- Amount that Western countries are contributing to aid poor countries has dropped to less than .07% of their GDPs, with the exception of the Nordic countries.

#### **October 4**

##### **Closing Ceremony "Ceremonial Bowl"**

An African woman thanked the Spanish Government and announced that the next congress will be in Africa. The announcement met with excited response by a large contingency of African representatives.

Six African delegates took to the stage, for the handing over of the official Congress Bowl - a wooden bowl crafted in Orbost, Australia, where the Congress began in 1994.

Accepting the appointment on behalf of Africa, Chair of the Foundation for Community Development (FDC), Mozambique's Graca Machel said the Congress bowl symbolised the production of food and the feeding of the family and community, which was generally the responsibility of women. She said too often the women got the smallest portion out of the bowl they had filled. "By the next conference, I want to hear that more women have access to that bowl and I want her to have more out of that bowl."

Mrs Machel appealed to each member of the audience: "When we meet in four year's time in Africa, each one of you have to report on four things which correspond to the four years that you have acted practically, to meet the reality of what we have been discussing here.

"Maybe you will manage to have more women educated, more assets ... maybe you'll take part in advocacy. But you have to decide for yourself, four things that you have to do to account for, so that in four years time we do not meet and talk about the same things, at the same level. We have to be accountable for the progress we have made, from now, until you come to Africa."

The exact host country within Africa has not been confirmed, though South Africa has been discussed as the likely choice.

The Africans pledged to make their Congress more interactive, with greater representation of farming women.

See ABC Website ([http://abc.net.au/rural/congress/news/041002\\_5.htm](http://abc.net.au/rural/congress/news/041002_5.htm))

#### **Speakers**

- **Hon. Mr Eduardo Zaplana Hernandez-Soro**, *Minister of Labour & Social Affairs, Spain.*
- **Hon. Mr Miguel Arias Canete**, *Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food, Spain.*
- **Hon. Franz Fischler** *Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development & Fisheries, EU.*
- **Hon. Mrs Concepcion Dancausa Trevino**, *Secretary General of Social Affairs, Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs, Spain.*
- **Hon. Mrs Carmen de Miguel Garcia**, *Director General, Institute for Women, Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs, Spain.*

Congress ended on a high note with our heads still spinning after 3 days of intensive listening and networking, back on the buses and then the quick dash to the Hotel to collect bags and make the afternoon plane to London.

Not everyone flew home, many women choose to take the opportunity to travel or investigate other industries, areas on their own after the Congress.

Each and everyone who went made sure they were able where possible to fit as much in before travelling home to Australia.

Liz Alexander flew London – Sydney after the Congress.

Helen Zilm had made plans to fly to England to visit the Research Centre in Bedfordshire where Dr Steve Parkin is based and then catch up with friends who live close to Bedfordshire.

Unfortunately one of the young Wool Women on the tour became very ill on the last day, with the tour guides and the majority of us not realising how ill until we were all literally boarding the bus and plane. Helen decided to stay with Estelle leaving Spain 2 days later only to get to England where Estelle convalesced for a few more days until she was well enough to board the plane.

#### **Things we can do on returning from the Conference:**

- present where there is an opportunity to forums, industry groups explaining some of the issues from the conference and generally from our tour.
- encourage women to take an interest in women's issues, policies and programs offered to benefit themselves and their families by government, NGO's and Industry
- present our thoughts / feedback to the NGO's and Government groups compiling papers
- use the network of WinCott
- start the discussion and planning to support and encourage cotton women to attend the next conference.
- start planning for a specific cotton tour for the next conference

#### **CONGRESS FEEDBACK SITE**

[http://www.mtas.es/mujer/rural/mujer\\_rural/english/programa.htm](http://www.mtas.es/mujer/rural/mujer_rural/english/programa.htm)  
and for feedback and to offer suggestions to help plan the next one  
[www.worldruralwomen@hotmail.com](mailto:www.worldruralwomen@hotmail.com)

#### **CONGRESS PAPERS**

Congress papers from Australian speakers and other information are available from [www.abc.net.au/rural/congress/default.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/rural/congress/default.htm). The official Congress site did not post any information in English after the Congress.

#### **OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES**

Other useful websites for information regarding rural women include:  
Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women (FAAW)  
[www.faaw.org.au](http://www.faaw.org.au)

Australian Women in Agriculture (AWiA)  
[www.awia.org.au](http://www.awia.org.au)

Country Women's Association (CWA)  
[www.cwaa.org.au](http://www.cwaa.org.au)

- Appendix A** Event Programme
- Appendix B** Australian Email discussion group 'Summary of Congress'
- Appendix C** Media coverage of participation
- Appendix D** Cotton Australia Issues & Update (Central Queensland) 14 October 2002.
- Appendix E** WinCott Newsletter No.7, November 7 2002.
- Appendix F** Invitation from CHDC Luncheon, Emerald.
- Appendix G** PowerPoint presentation CHDC Luncheon, Emerald.