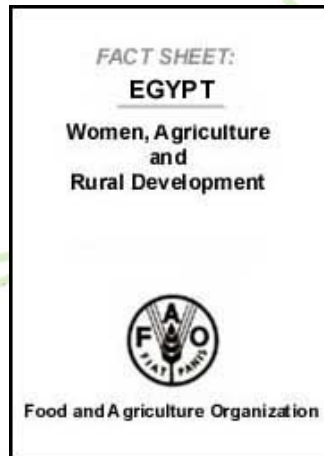


The Egyptian Women in the Egyptian Agriculture

From a Modern point of view

*(A brief **Re-review** for the: Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development –FAO-Studies)
A Study by:*



*Re-review to the modern modification
By:*

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Contents:

The International Convent of Human Rights, Article “2”	3
Abstract	4
Introduction	5
General Data.....	6
Importance of Agriculture to the economy.....	7
Access to Agriculture Recourses and Services.....	8
Dimensions and Determinants of rural poverty	9
Agriculture Extension by position and gender	10
Role of Women in Agriculture	11
Sharing of power and decision – making	12
Mechanisms to promote the advancement of Women	14
Selected programmes in support Women in Agriculture, Forestry and fishers.....	15
Summary.....	16

The International Convent of Human Rights

Part II

Article 2

- 1- *Each state Party in the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Convent by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures.*
- 2- *The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the present Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, **Sex**, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.*
- 3- *Developing countries, with due regard to human rights and their national economy, may determine to what extent they would guarantee the economic rights recognized in the present Convent to non-nationals.*

According to the Article 2, paragraph 2 of the International Convent on Economic, Social and Culture Rights, the States “undertake to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the present Convent will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, **Sex**, language, religion, political of other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

The Covenant, however, goes on to provide, in Article2, paragraph 3 that “developing Countries, with due regard to human rights and their national economy, may determine to what extent they would guarantee the economic rights recognized in the present Covenant to no-nationals.¹

¹ Paul Ricoeur, Philosophical Foundation of Human rights, UNESCO, 1985.

Abstract:

Women's struggle for their rights goes back to the early 1920s when the Egyptian Feminist Union was formed. Its impact was increasingly felt from the 1950s. Egypt ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) with reservations in 1981, and has signed other international conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The Constitution gives women equal access to education, employment and work opportunities, equal pay for equal work, and social security. Egyptian civil law, in accordance with Islamic law, gives women the right to possess and control property, and to inherit, although women receive only half as much as men. While no laws restrict women's ownership of land and livestock or access to credit, discrimination may exist due to custom and tradition, lack of awareness among women of their rights, or lack of strict implementation of the laws.²

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² Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights.

1. Introduction:

The agricultural sector is of great importance in most countries of the world, especially in developing countries. That is not only because **agriculture** provides food and clothing resources, but also because it contributes in supplying the industrial sector with its needs of primary materials. In addition, **agriculture** is an essential source for employment. Moreover, the revenue from agricultural exports plays an important role in supporting the country's economy as it is a resource of foreign currency, which alleviates the burden on the balance of payment and enables the country to import the needed food and industrial commodities. Meanwhile, **agriculture** increases the capability of the society to implement economic development plans and programmes.³

On the other hand the ***Labor force growth has outstripped the demand for labor***. Demographic trends partly explain the increase in labor supply over demand. During 1988-1998, the labor force increased at an average of 523,000 workers per year while according to official estimates, employment increased by 435,000 on average, leaving a deficit of 88,000 workers annually to join the ranks of the unemployed. These trends are likely to continue in the near future as the labor supply is forecast to grow at 2.6 percent for 2001–2010.⁵ For the next ten years, the average number of new job seekers will increase to 638,000 per year compared to the capacity of the Egyptian economy to create 435,000 jobs annually over the last decade.

A more significant measure of labor supply should take into account the output of the educational system, as well as the dropouts who join the labor market every year as job seekers – an estimated 896,000 persons in 1999/2000.⁶ Assuming that the domestic economy generates 435,000 jobs and that 90,000 migrate annually, the total labor absorption amounts to only 58.6 percent of supply or a deficit of 371,000 jobs a year.⁴

³ The Future of Egyptian Agriculture in International Trade
Mohammed Al-Santarisi Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University, Cairo CIHEAM Options
Mediterranean's

⁴ Employment and Unemployment in Egypt: Conventional Problems, Unconventional Remedies
Samir Radwan, Working Paper No. 70 -August 2002-

2. General Data:

Table 1: Distribution of Employment (1998) and Labor Market Demand (2001-2005):
By Economic Activity

Sector	Employed		Labor Market Demand	
	Thousand	%	Thousand	%
Agriculture	8993	42	65	4.6

Sources: Employment: CAPMAS, Labor Force Sample Survey 1998; Labor Market Demand: The Demand Side in the Egyptian Labor Market.

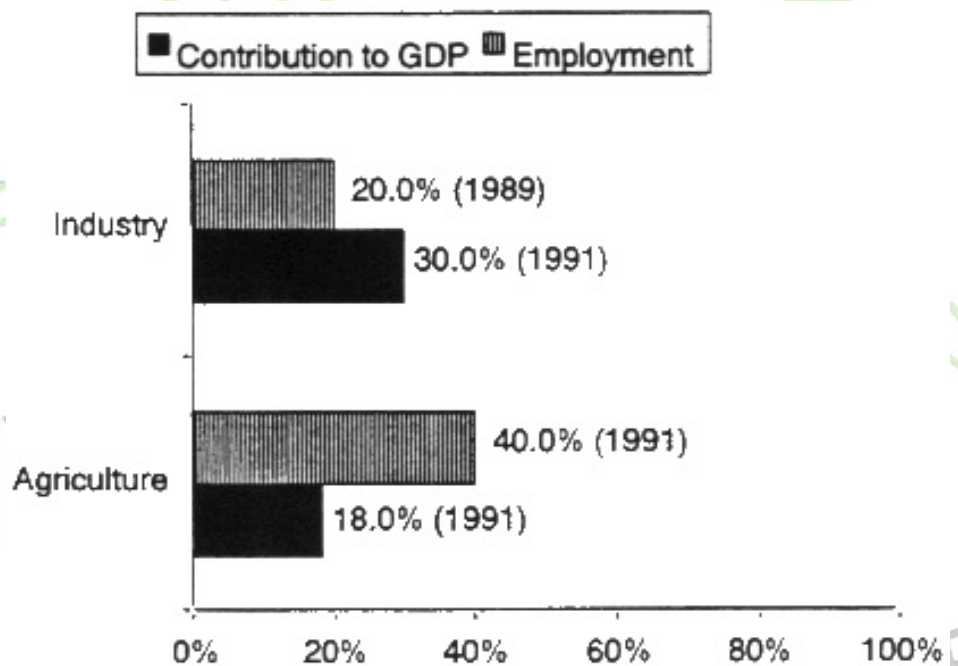
- The contribution of agriculture to employment growth declined by 0.4 percent; between 1988 -1998. While that of the private non-agricultural sector increased (38.3% of growth). Most of the increase in private sector employment has been in the informal sector.
- According to some estimates, the informal sector accounted for 51 percent of total employment in 1990, and increased to 54 percent by 1998. Moreover, the share of women in informal employment increased from 33 percent to 39 percent and that of men declined from 67 percent to 61 percent during the same period. These statistics point to a trend toward the increased feminization of the informal sector. The following figure provides the distribution in and outside establishments.⁵

⁵ Employment and Unemployment in Egypt: Conventional Problems, Unconventional Remedies
Samir Radwan, Working Paper No. 70 -August 2002-

3. Importance of agriculture to the economy:

Agriculture is important to the national economy, accounting for 18% of the GDP in 1991, and employing 40% of the labour force. The principal crops are cotton, rice, wheat, sugar cane and maize. Food and livestock account for 8% of total exports. The country's self-sufficiency ratio of wheat increased from 25% in 1981 to 45% in 1992. Government agricultural policy, which is designed to enhance agriculture as a major contributor to the national economy, includes measures to promote privatization and decrease government controls and subsidies.⁶

Sectoral Contributions to GDP and Employment



Source: Europa World Yearbook, 1994

⁶ Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights

4. Access to agricultural resources and services⁷:

Land: In 1989, men comprised about 76% of land owners, while only 24% of land owners were women. Landholding size is overall larger for men than for women. Under the land reclamation scheme, men and women have equal access to land but women comprise only 7.4% of those who have obtained newly reclaimed land. Far fewer women than men have applied, due to the difficult living and farming conditions on newly-reclaimed land.

Livestock: While rural women spend the majority of their working time in agriculture on animal husbandry and can legally own livestock, most decisions are made by men.

Forestry: Egypt does not have forests.

Water: Although 97% of rural areas are supplied with sources of drinking water, the provision of sanitary drainage facilities is still inadequate in 93% of these areas. Because of the unhealthy conditions resulting from the discharge of waste water in the streets, rural women still prefer to wash and do their household cleaning in canals and drains. However, the discharge of domestic and untreated industrial wastes in open water conduits exposes women to disease.

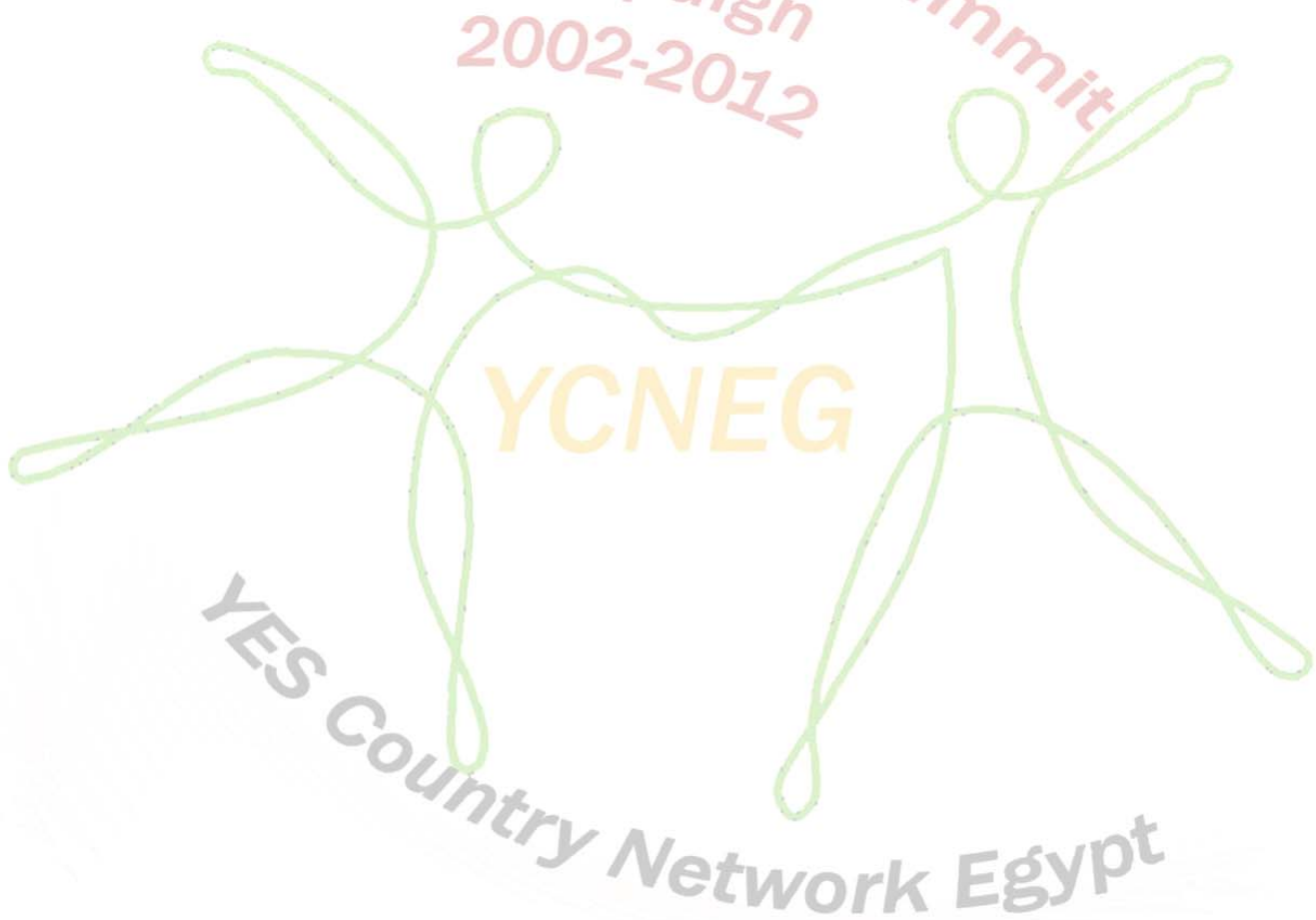
Credit: Under the Principal Bank for Development and Agricultural Credit (PBDAC), 88% of short-term production loans and 84% of investments loans were extended to men in 1993, while women received only 12% and 16%, respectively. Loan size for men and women was about the same. Women have greater access to credit through agricultural credit societies than through the Bank.

Extension services and agricultural training: Few village-level agricultural extension workers are women, which explain in part the extremely limited contact women farmers have with agricultural extension services.

⁷ Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights

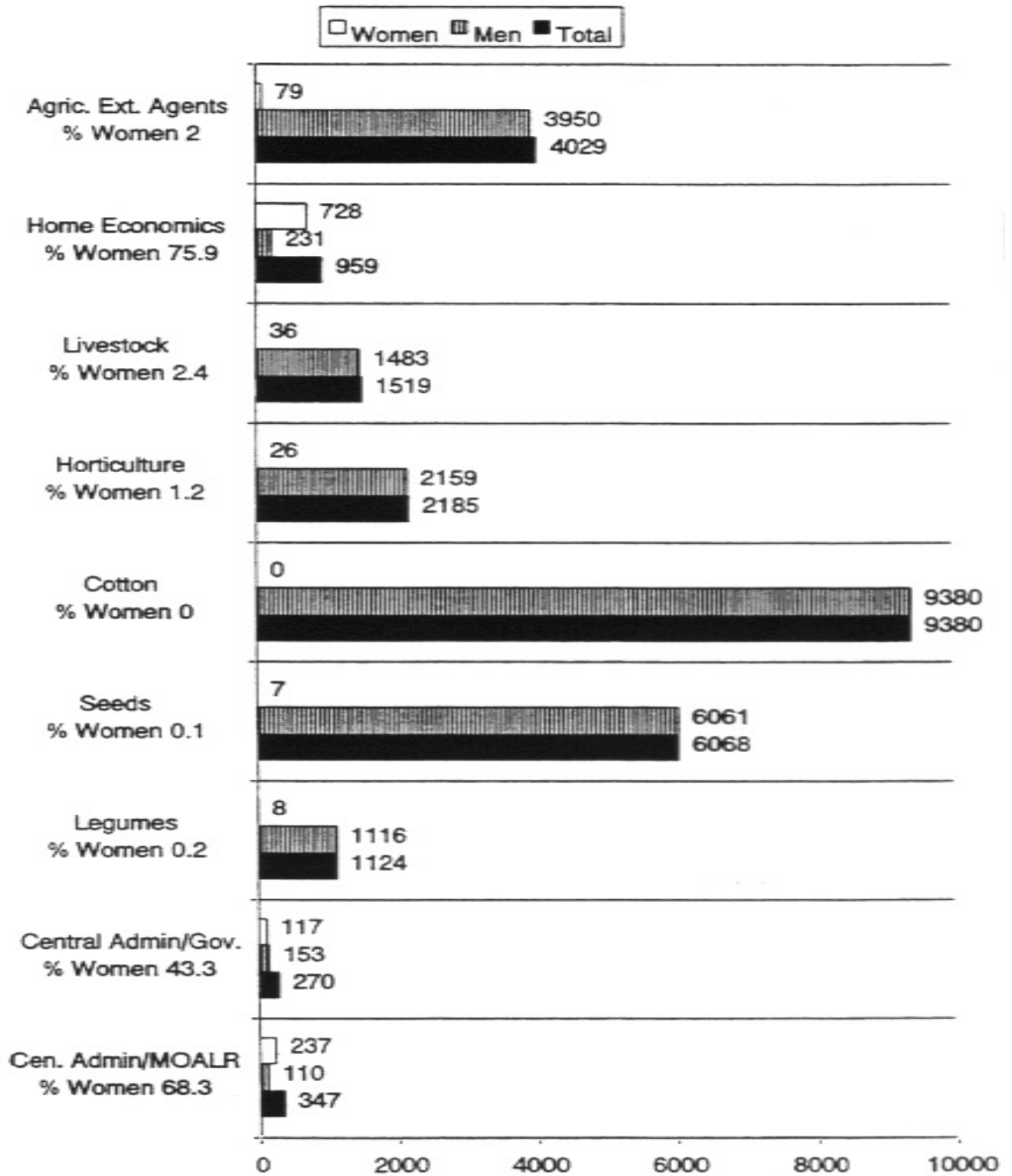
5. Dimensions and determinants of rural poverty:

Environmental degradation, particularly water pollution, has created unhealthy conditions, and the change in the ecology of the Nile River has resulted in decreasing fish catch and biodiversity, and loss of income among fisher folk. **Male migration** to urban areas and other countries has increased the burdens women bear as heads of households. **Illiteracy** rates are about 38% for men and 62% for women. Although **malnutrition** has decreased, it is still a serious problem with about 35% of rural children stunted compared with 26% of urban children.⁸



⁸ Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights

6. Agricultural Extension Staff by Position and Gender, 1993:



Source: Central Administration for Extension, MOALR, 1 993, Note: The figures for Central Administration in Governorates and MOALR are limited to agricultural professionals

The inequality between and women in access to agricultural training is shown by data from MOALR and the National Agricultural Research Project (NARP) only 3 out of 6,497 participants in on-farm research between 1987 and 1993 were women; there was only one woman among 745 participants in field days; and no women among the 129 participants in residential training More men than women have benefited from improved animal traction, irrigation tools, post harvest threshing devices, food storage facilities and transport⁹

7. Role of women in agriculture¹⁰

According to official statistics, only about 4% of those economically active in agriculture in 1986 were women and this rose to about 10% when unpaid family labour was included. However, statistics often do not reflect the true contribution of women to agriculture because they exclude women's subsistence production and domestic work. Surveys show that majority of rural women participate in agricultural activities, particularly those related to food security and animal production. More than 50% of rural women are actively involved in tasks such as fertilization, weeding, harvesting, sacking, marketing and storage. Some also undertake ploughing and irrigation. About 70% of their working time in agriculture is devoted to animal husbandry.

Division of Labour by Gender, While the division of labour between men and women varies by crop, overall men carry out most of the land preparation, planting, weeding, irrigation and pest control. Women contribute moderately to seed preparation, fertilization and harvesting, and significantly to storage and marketing. Food processing is the primary responsibility of women. In animal husbandry, men are primarily responsible for the care of water buffalo, donkeys, cows and sheep, while women carry out most of the milking, processing and marketing of milk and animal products. In fisheries, fish catching, feeding and marketing are primarily men's tasks, while women contribute about 52% of the labour in fish processing and net-making, and carry out 42% of net maintenance and repair. Women

⁹ Source: Central Administration for Extension, MOALR, 1 993

¹⁰ **Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights**

also carry out virtually all domestic tasks, including water and fuel collection, and food processing and preparation.

Gender Relations in Decision-making in Farming Activities, Data from a 1993 sample survey suggest that rural women participate little in decision-making at the household level in irrigated areas. Men have almost exclusive authority on matters related to seeds, buying and selling of livestock and land, use of herbicides and agricultural machinery, what to grow and where to sell produce. Women make decisions on poultry and contribute to decisions on agriculture projects and the vaccination of livestock¹¹.

8. Sharing of power and decision-making

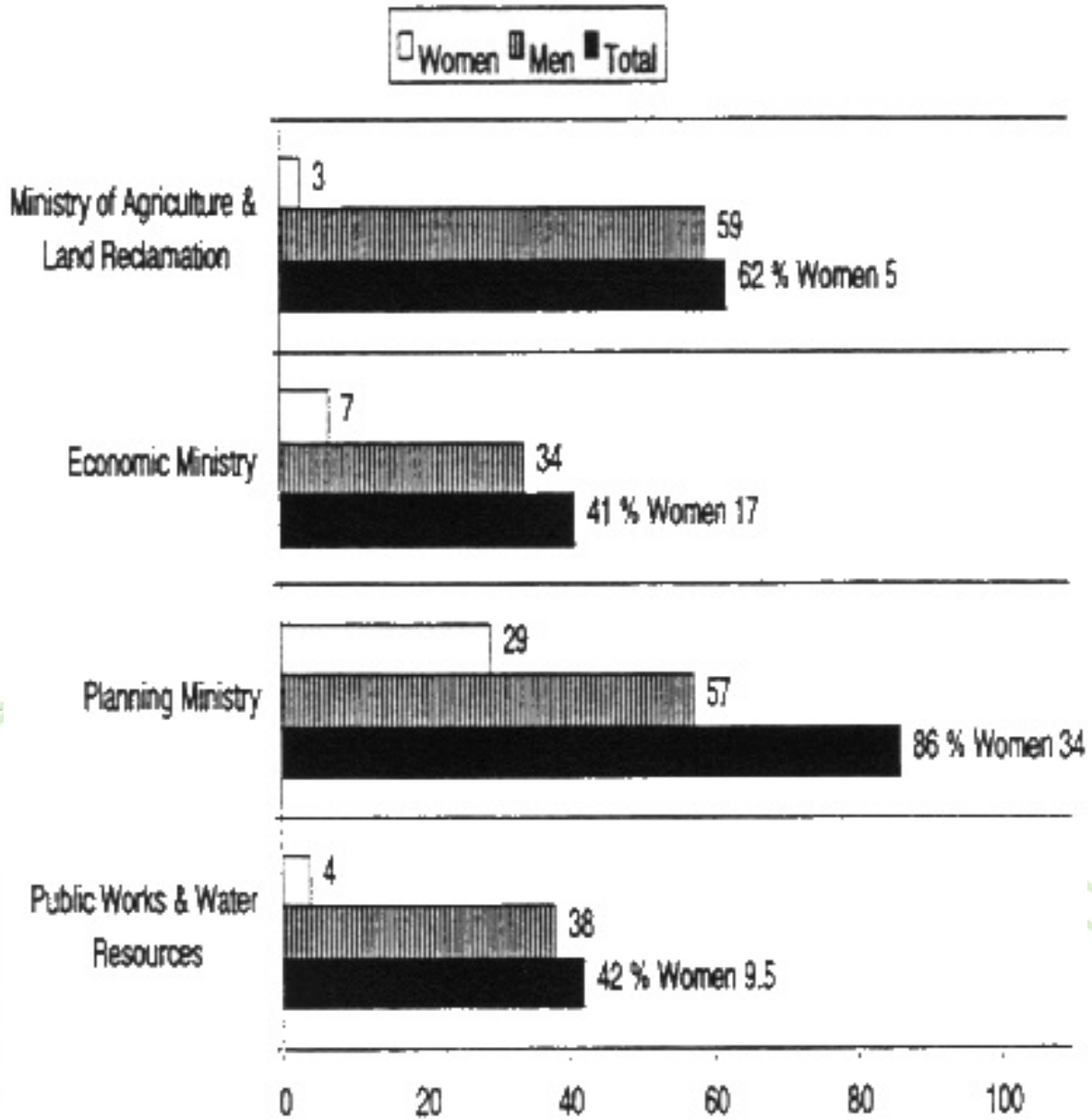
Members and Officers of Agricultural/Rural Organizations, Agricultural/rural organizations include: multi-purpose local cooperative agricultural societies, offering agricultural and social services and loans, with almost exclusively male members and officers; agrarian reform societies under the supervision of the General Authority for Agrarian Reform in the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MOALR), offering services and production facilities, with exclusively male members and officers; land reclamation societies under the supervision of the General Authority for Rehabilitation, with no women members.

Women in Decision-making Positions in Ministries and Government Bodies, In 1986, women held less than 6% of decision-making positions in ministries and government bodies.¹²

¹¹ Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights

¹² Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights

Women in Decision-making Positions in Ministries, 1993



Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics, 1993

9. Mechanisms to promote the advancement of women

National Machinery, The Department of Women's Affairs in the Ministry of Social Affairs, created in 1977, is the technical secretariat for the National Commission for Women. Revitalized in 1993, the Commission is comprised of four committees: information, legislation, economy, and political life and decision-making. The Department of Women's Affairs executes projects recommended by the Commission and in 1994 was handling 13 -donor-sponsored development projects in literacy, income generation, family planning and health.

WID Units or Focal Points in Technical Ministries, The Policy and Coordination Unit for Women in Agriculture (PCUWA), established in the MOALR in 1992, aims to increase women's access to agricultural services and resources, improve their socio-economic status, and increase agricultural productivity and production. It works with the various departments and institutes of the Ministry to integrate issues of concern to women into the mainstream of MOALR's programmes and policies. Funding is still required to fully operationalize the Unit.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), NGOs working in the field of women and development are coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs.¹³

10. Selected programmes in support of women in agriculture, forestry and fisheries

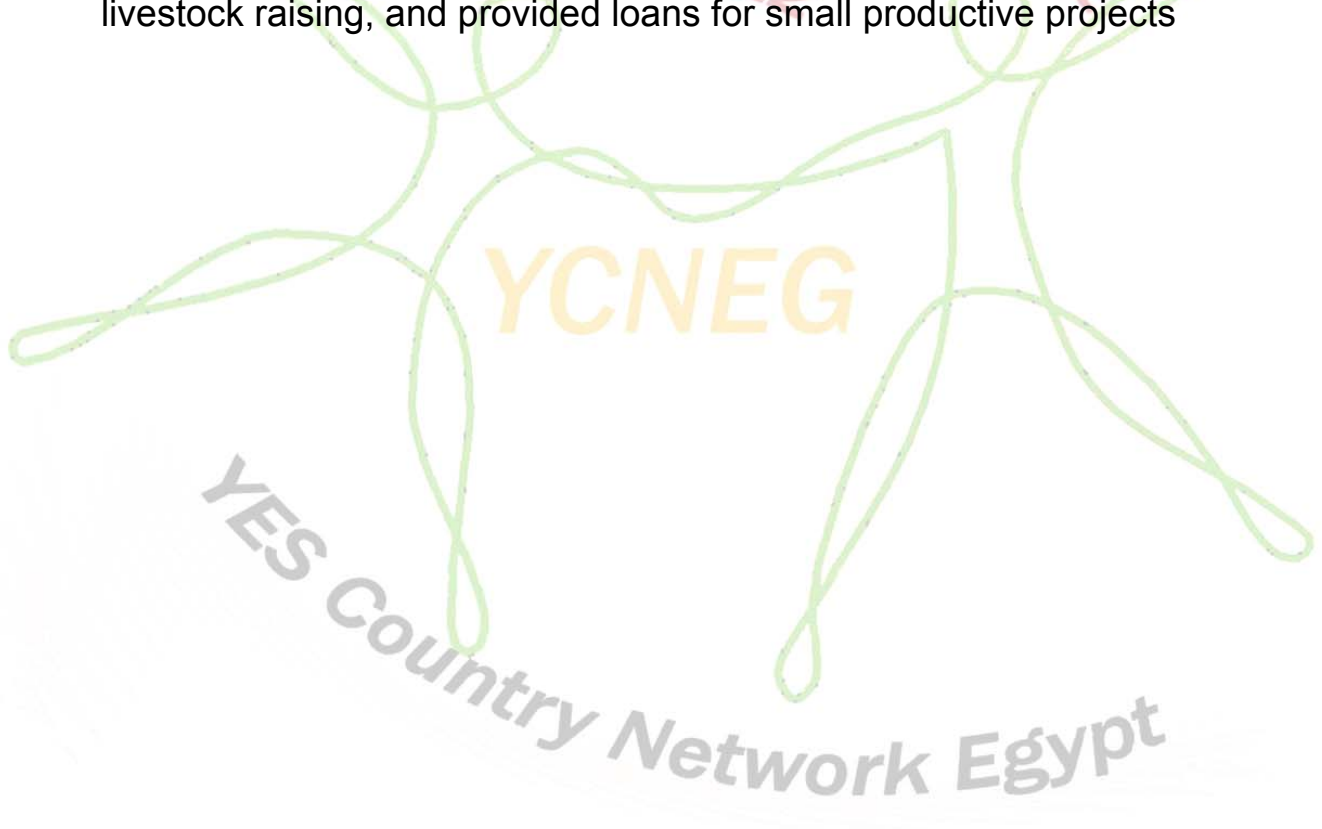
Policy Planning and Research

Recognizing the need to mainstream women's concerns and needs in agricultural policy and practice, the Ministry of Agriculture established the PCUWA in 1992, with Research and Strategy Development as one of its three main wings

¹³ Fact sheet: Egypt - Women, agriculture and rural development, Women Rights

Access to Agricultural Resources and Services

A number of innovative projects have been designed to increase women's access to agricultural resources and services. The Project on Productive Activities for Women Settlers in New Lands involved women in identifying their needs and priorities and in planning, organizing and implementing women's development centers for income-earning activities. As a result, the first women's cooperative society, the Agricultural Cooperative Society for Food Security, was formed. An ILO-supported project included training in income-generating skills, awareness meetings and provision of credit, and an FAO-supported project trained women in food industries, poultry and livestock raising, and provided loans for small productive projects.



Summary:

Agriculture provides food and clothing resources, but also because it contributes in supplying the industrial sector with its needs of primary materials. In addition, **agriculture** is an essential source for employment. Moreover, the revenue from agricultural exports plays an important role in supporting the country's economy as it is a resource of foreign currency, which alleviates the burden on the balance of payment and enables the country to import the needed food and industrial commodities. Meanwhile, **agriculture** increases the capability of the society to implement economic development plans and programmes.¹⁴

This means that we have to work all together, one hand, without discrimination of any kind, and sure respect the role of each one of us,

And this is the main aim of our paper, a thankful message to every mother and women and girl serve our Egypt.

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