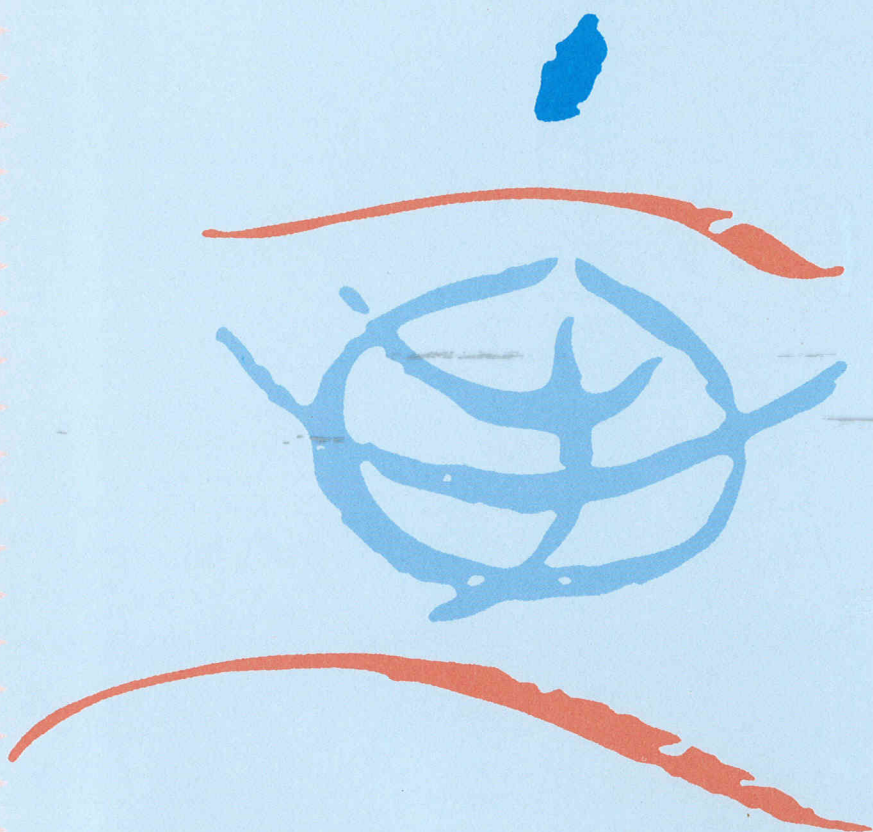




Education and training

For Women and Girls

FACTS AND FIGURES



1. Education and Training of Women and Girls



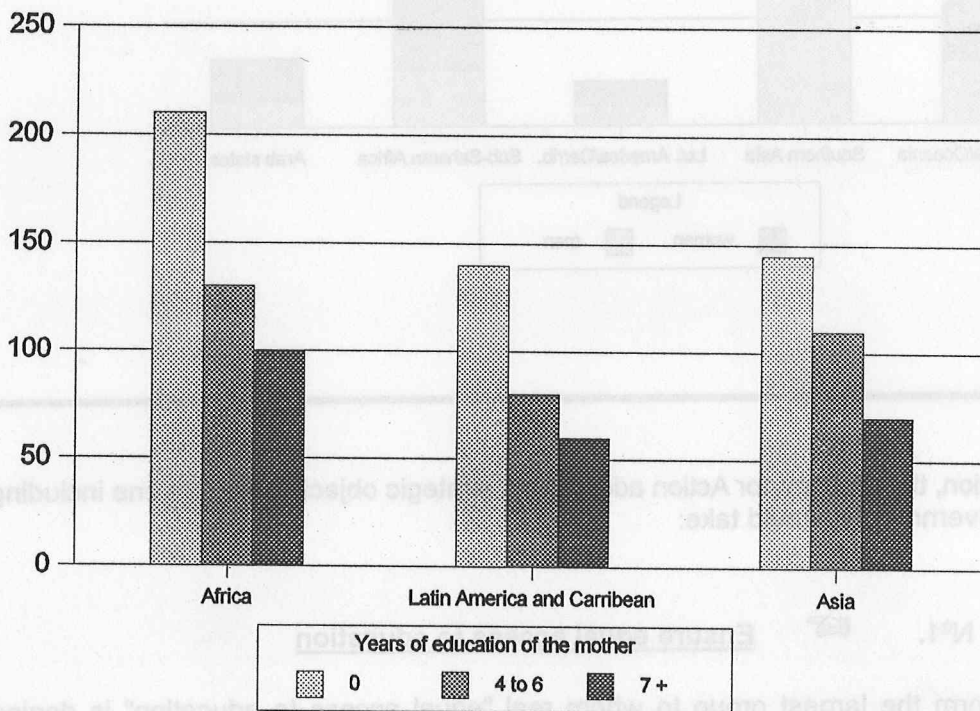
Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. /.../ Literacy of women is an important key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family and to empowering women to participate in decision-making in society. Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women, with its exceptionally high social and economic return, has proved to be one of the best means to achieving sustainable development and economic growth that is both sustained and sustainable.¹

Table 1. 1

Educated women have healthier children²

CHILD MORTALITY AND MOTHERS' EDUCATION

Under 5 mortality per 1,000 live births



Five years after the adoption by the World Conference on Education For All (Jomtien 1990) of the World Declaration on Education for All, the Beijing Conference noted that, in spite of the efforts made, the gaps have not been reduced as is shown in UNESCO's latest estimates. According to UNESCO, in 1995,

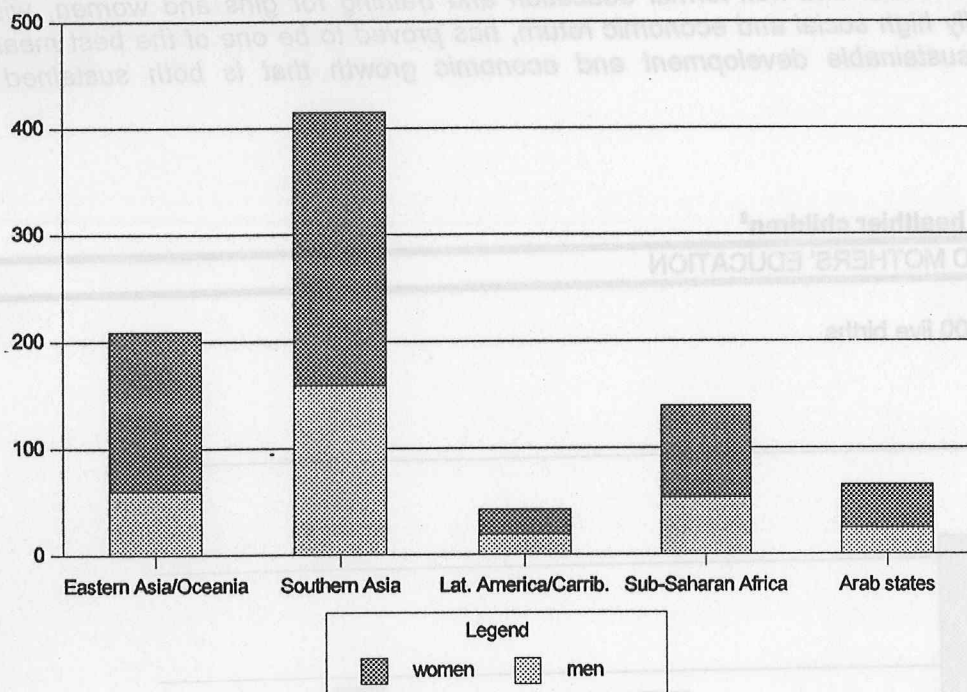
¹ Beijing Platform for Action, paragraph 69.

² Source: Summers, 1994

63.8% of the 880 million illiterates recorded in the world's population were women (64.1% in the year 2000)³ and some 148 million children aged from 6 to 11 years, of whom 86 million are girls, will not have access to primary education in the year 2000⁴.

Table 1. 2

Estimated number (millions) of illiterate people aged 15 and over in the year 2000



To remedy this situation, the Platform for Action adopted six strategic objectives, each one including a set of measures that governments should take:

Strategic objective N°1.  Ensure equal access to education

Women and girls form the largest group to whom real "equal access to education" is denied. The obstacles in this situation are known and clearly identified. They are most frequently cultural, "the burden of traditions", but are also economic. When a poor family has to pay to send children to school, if it has to make a choice, it will choose the boy and the girl will remain in the family, especially to help with domestic tasks. The Jomtien Conference on Education for All had very ambitious objectives, in terms of schedule. Because of the economic situation, the different kinds of obstacles encountered are slowing down the progress.

³ UNESCO World Education Report 1995

⁴ UNESCO World Education Report

