



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

AEM 203



Introduction to Home Economics Extension Module 4

Module 4 Introduction to Home Economics Extension

Unit I Careers in Home Economic I

1.0 Introduction

The unique scope of training in Home Economics is to evolve, nurture, and develop a dynamic Home Economics programme that is capable of producing the versatile graduates who can occupy various positions in the workforce both in Nigeria and Internationally. At this juncture you may need to revise previous units in this course that dealt with the philosophy, objectives, and scope of Home Economics. Bearing this in mind it will not be difficult to comprehend the vast career areas that are open to a Home Economist.

In this unit and the next we shall consider various career opportunities (not exhaustively!) in Home Economics. In this unit we shall consider career options for specialists in Food and Nutrition, and in the area of Clothing and Textile.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify career opportunities in Food and Nutrition for a Home Economist.
- identify career opportunities in area of Clothing and Textiles for a Home Economist.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Careers in Foods and Nutrition

The graduate who has mastered the basic knowledge and skills in Foods and Nutrition will possess specific competencies to pursue careers in areas as described below:

- i) as nutritionist/dietitian in hospitals
- ii) as community/public Health Nutritionist in the Ministry of Health
- iii) as Nutritionist in Food Industries
- iv) as self-employed caterer or community nutritionist
- v) personnel in catering as Food Service and industries, and in institutions such as hostels, hotels, prisons etc.
- vi) extension worker in Ministry of Agriculture, or Media (both electronic and print) communicator
- vii) as Home Economics representative in the central bodies for planning and administration of policies on Food and Nutrition of the State or Federal Governments
- viii) engaged in teaching at various educational levels, as administrators in education, or as contributor to curriculum development and new teaching strategies of Home Economics
- ix) researcher in Home Economics and related areas (Esugwu 1991)

3.2 Careers in Clothing and Textiles

The graduate who has mastered the basic knowledge and skills in Clothing and Textiles is best positioned to becoming an entrepreneur and employer of labour, or gain lucrative employment as:

- i) garment producer for local and international consumption.
- ii) As self-employed and employer, or employee in textile industry in the area of Textile design.
- iii) Fashion designer and proprietor of fashion houses.
- iv) Clothing retailer.
- v) Teaching of clothing textile as various educational levels.
- vi) Researcher in areas concerned with clothing and textiles.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Describe a problem in Clothing and Textile you would want to research into.

4.0 Conclusion

Career openings in Food and Nutrition are numerous, ranging from self-employment in catering and food service, private community nutritionist, to teaching and researching, employee in hospitals and other institutions, as extension worker, part of planning and administrative bodies concerned with Food and Nutrition policies.

Careers in Clothing and Textile include opportunities to entrepreneurship and employment in fashion and textile designing, garment construction and marketing, teaching at various levels, and researching in the areas of Clothing and Textiles.

5.0 Summary

Careers in the two areas of Food and Nutrition, and Clothing and Textiles have been extensively (but not exhaustively) examined and enumerated.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Enumerate five career opportunities for a Home Economist in Food and Nutrition.
2. What opportunities are open to a Home Economist who wishes to be self-employed in Clothing and Textiles in today Nigeria?

7.0 References/Further Reading

Esugwu, S. O (1991). *Foundation of Vocational Home Economics*, Calabar: Century Press Ltd

Unit 2 Careers in Home Economics II

1.0 Introduction

You will recall that in the last unit the fact was expressed that vast career opportunities exist in Home Economics. In that unit careers in the areas of Foods and Nutrition, and Clothing and Textiles were considered. In this unit we shall examine Home Economics professionalism in the multifarious sub-divisions of Home Management. We shall specifically consider the following areas: Careers in Child Care and Family Relations, Consumer Education, Family Health, and Housing and Utilities.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Homemaking is a career but not a profession. Briefly discuss this proposition.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list and examine career openings in Child Care and Family Relations.
- list and explain career openings in Consumer Education.
- list and explain career openings in Family Health.
- list and explain career openings in Housing and Utilities.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Careers in Child Care and Family Relations

The Home Economist who has received training in child development and psychology/family relations has the competency to hold positions as:

- i. Manager/proprietor of pre-school and nursery institutions.
- ii. Managers in institutions such as orphanages and rehabilitative homes for the young.
- iii. Managers in old peoples home.
- iv. Personnel (particularly in the advisory capacity) in Ministries and Organizations that engage in social welfare for children or families.
- v. Researcher/teacher in child development and psychology as well as areas relationships among family members.

3.2 Careers in Consumer Education

Home Economists are seen to have professionalised their training in Consumer Education and found to have taken up positions as:

- i) Columnists and programme presenters in print and electronic media, respectively, educating the society on how, when, and where to buy, and management of limited family finances.

- ii) Working with government and non-governmental agencies concerned with Rural Resource development.
- iii) Contributors and administrators in co-operative societies Hartzler (1987)

3.3 Careers in Family Health

Home Economists, though not trained to be health workers specifically, but because of their scope of training to include basic training in Family Health, and due to the scarcity of trained health workers, find roles as resource persons, particularly in primary healthcare among the rural and grassroot populations of this country. Primarily engaged as extension workers, they are seen to function during this period performing the following:

As Home Economist agent:

- communicating government policies on health to their clients, the families.
- helping their clients benefit from health related facilities from agencies by acting as intermediaries.
- educating families on activities to prevent home accidents.
- educating families on First Aids for emergencies in the home.
- providing nutrition education that are health promoting for the entire family.
- teaching safe household practices such as personal and environmental hygiene.
 - i) Working with Community Health Personnel monitoring child growth and development.
 - iii) Engaged as part of resource persons involved in research activities, such as assessment of nutritional status in a community.
 - iv) Teacher of Family Health or Health Science in primary and secondary school levels

3.3 Careers in Housing and Utilities

Although professionalism of Home Economics in the area of Housing and Utilities is still in its infancy here in Nigeria, career opportunities in this are abound in the advanced countries due to their advancement in housing, home facilities, housekeeping, and especially their relatively high standard of living which places much premium on home beauty and work simplification for the homemaker. However, more and more Home Economists will be seen to gain livelihood in this area, as housing and the living standards in this country improves. Careers in Housing and related house utilities include the following:

- i) as house planner with housing agencies.
- ii) as interior designer and decorator.
- iii) as furniture designer and maintenance expert.
- iv) working with equipment industry as representative to consumers, and testing household equipment for such industries.
- v) as housekeepers for institutions such as hotels, hostels, hospitals and special homes.
- vi) as teachers and researchers in the area of Housing and Housing Utilities.
- vii) as an extension workers helping rural families in the area of housing and improvising household equipment (e.g. smokeless charcoal stove) for the convenience of the family.

4.0 Conclusion

The multifarious nature of training in Home Management (as an area of Home Economics) has provided various career opening in the sub-areas of Child Care and Family Relations, Consumer Education, Family Health, and Housing and Utilities. In almost all the sub-areas the Home Economist could be self-employed, a phenomenon which is currently being promoted in this country.

5.0 Summary

Professionalism in Home Management has been considered in the light of its sub-divisions – Child Care and Family Relations, Consumer Education, Family Health, and Housing and Utilities. Careers in each of these sub-divisions have been examined.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Enumerate and explain 4 career openings in each sub-division of Home Management.
2. Homemaking is a career but not a profession. Briefly discuss this proposition.

7.0 References/Further Reading

Hartzler, C. E (1987). *Principles and Philosophy of Vocational Career, Education*, Emporia:Emporia State University Press.

Unit 3 Women in Agriculture I

1.0 Introduction

Essentially, Women in Agriculture (WIA) is a programme geared towards achieving full participation of women farmers in agricultural activities, in other words it is a forum for translating field knowledge into specific action for improving women's productivity in agriculture.

This unit and the next will focus on WIA. Specifically in this unit we shall examine the traditional position of Nigerian Women in Agriculture, the constraints to women's full participation in agriculture, the need for an intervention – i.e. the need for establishment of WIA, the establishment of WIA in historical perspective, and the scope of WIA.

In the next unit we shall consider the objectives of WIA, the organization of WIA, the contribution of WIA, and the constraints to WIA operations.

Self-Assessment Exercise I

Write out in full the acronym, WIA

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- write out in full the acronym, WIA.
- enumerate the role of the Nigerian Women in Agriculture.
- discuss the challenges faced by women farmers.
- discuss the need for establishing WIA.
- describe the scope of WIA in terms of spread, activities, and its stakeholders.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Traditional Position of Women Farmers

In Nigeria, women play a dominant role in agricultural activities. In fact they form the backbone of subsistence agriculture. These include the following major roles:

- i) Food crop production, such as yams and other root crops, cereals, seeds like melon, legumes, where they are seen to compete side by side with their male counterparts in land preparation, cultivation, planting, tending and harvesting.
- ii) Domestic animal production – this is an area found to be almost exclusively dominated by women. It is not uncommon to find around the house, especially, in the rural setting, roaming goats, sheep, chicken, duck, and small-hold rabbitries.
- iii) Food processing – post-harvest processing of farm produce is regarded as exclusively the women's role whereby they handle processing activities such as cassava processing into garri, flour, or akpu, threshing and milling of grains, vegetable preservation such as in case of peppers, okro, and many leafy vegetables, and animal products such as fish.

- iv) Transportation and marketing of farm produce and products are activities of farm domain of the women farmer – head-carrying their products on market days, or at best seen to be loaded together with their wares in open vans. They survey where and when to sell.
- v) Storage of food products not intended for immediate sales or consumption by the family becomes the responsibility of the woman farmer. The management of these stores are also at her prerogative (World Bank 1999)

Women generally perform these laborious and time – consuming tasks alongside their gender specific chores of cooking, housekeeping, and child rearing. In spite of this extensive participation of women in agriculture, they are often almost always excluded from family decision making processes that could favor them or their children – expected result is demoralization.

3.2 Constraints to Women Farmers

Following factors have been identified as inhibiting women full participation in agriculture:

- i) In Nigeria, women farmers are often voiceless when it comes to influencing or accessing agricultural policies and projects.
- ii) Gender inequality makes access to agricultural land a tasking venture due to land inheritance system and cultural norms.
- iii) Sex discrimination in the nature of crop type traditionally recognized as women ventures – cash crops like cocoa, coffee, palm crops are traditionally in the domain of male farmers, while women are restricted to food crops, which only fetch subsistence living.
- iv) Use of obsolete and inefficient technology, management and farming methods.
- v) Lack of access to modern agricultural inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers and exotic animal breeds.
- vi) Inadequate involvement of women in agricultural extension services.
- vii) Women hardly have any collateral, or are even traditionally assessed as high risks unless as guaranteed by the male and therefore are barred from accessing capital or credit facilities from finance houses.
- viii) Obtaining their husbands' permission for any engagement, or embarkment on journeys related to agricultural activities, such as workshops.
- ix) Restrictions imposed by some cultures of working with male extension agents.
- x) Child rearing and having to be in possession of their babies reduce their efficiencies as farmers.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

List other challenges faced by women farmers that are not listed here.

3.3 Need for Establishment of WIA

We have seen the position of the Nigerian female farmers as that of unpaid family workers with limited access to land under the biased land ownership. Women are marginalized in obtaining credit facilities, and are restricted by tradition and dearth of information in their quest to produce cash crops. WIA is considered, therefore, as giving voice to the voiceless female farmers. Findings of a study financed by the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) revealed that women make up 60-80 percent of the agricultural labour force in Nigeria. Despite this dominant role played by women in agricultural activities, widespread assumptions that men, and not women, are the main force of agriculture have continued to prevail. As a result, agricultural extension services in Nigeria have traditionally been focused on the male farmers, neglecting the female production force. Most extension activities targeted at women emphasized their domestic role as in child care, family health and nutrition etc.

The state Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) were created in the 1970s with funding assistance from the World Bank, with the main objective of increasing production of both food and cash crops by stimulating agricultural production at the small farmer level. The ADPs contain Home Economics wings in its organization which continued to address only home-related women's activities.

The WIA program was launched with UNDP funds as a pilot seeking to improve agricultural extension services to women farmers through the existing home economics agents who were re-trained in agriculture and extension methodologies, with emphasis on women's agricultural activities.

3.4 Scope of WIA

WIA resource persons are female extensionists highly skilled and knowledgeable in agricultural activities, and charged with the responsibility of passing information, improved technologies and farm inputs to rural women farmers including those that would ordinarily not be reached by male extension workers (World Bank 2000)

WIA covers all aspect of agricultural production including gender – specific activities such as crop processing and utilization, fish processing and preservation, as well as other income generating activities.

Each ADP in each state of Nigeria conducts its WIA initiatives. However, stakeholders in planning, implementation monitoring, evaluation and re-planning include officials of FACU (Federal Agriculture Coordinating Unit) now PCU (Project Coordinating Unit), national and state agriculture and Rural Development, World Bank agricultural staff, as well as local-level stakeholders such as extension agents, women key leaders elected by the women farmer groups.

4.0 Conclusion

WIA (Women in Agriculture) is a forum for translating field knowledge into specific action for improving the Nigerian women's productivity in agriculture.

Women have been known to play a dominant role in agriculture in Nigeria, but despite this their productivity has been hampered by many factors, many of which are gender based, and also by their exclusion from agricultural extension services, unlike their male counterparts.

Revealing studies conducted by UNDP led to the creation of WIA. WIA operates through the Home Economics wing of each state ADPs, where Home Economics extension agents have been retrained in agriculture and extension methodologies specially women farmers in rural areas. WIA encompasses all areas of agricultural activities and exists in each state ADP throughout the Federation. The stakeholders include PCU, representatives of Federal and

State Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the World Bank, female extension workers from each ADP, as well as the rural women farmers as represented by their elected women group leaders.

5.0 Summary

In this unit WIA, as a programme, has been defined. We have examined the traditional position of the Nigerian women farmers, the constraints to women farmers, the need for an intervention to relieve these constraints – i.e. establishment of WIA.

We have also examined the scope of WIA in terms of its geographical spread, activities, and stakeholders.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Enumerate 5 areas of agriculture in which the Nigerian women participates.
2. WIA is known as the “voice of the voiceless Nigerian women farmers.” What were the women voiceless about?
3. Describe the scope of WIA.

7.0 References/Further Readings

The World Bank (2000) Source Book – Participatory Experiences. Nigerian Women In Agriculture <http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/sourcebook/sb0212.htm>

World Bank (1999) Source Book. WIA Project, Nigeria. <http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/sourcebook/sbxwo701.htm>. Washington DC

Unit 4 Women in Agriculture II

1.0 Introduction

In the previous Unit (Unit 19) we started to consider the topic on WIA (Women in Agriculture). We have already defined WIA as a programme geared towards achieving full participation of women farmers in agricultural activities. We have examined the position of Nigerian women farmers, the constraints facing them, the need for an intervention programme, WIA, and the scope of WIA.

In this unit we shall go on to consider the establishment of WIA in historical perspective, the objectives of WIA, its organization, the gains of WIA, and the constraints to WIA operations as at present.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state the history of WIA programme.
- enumerate the objectives of WIA.
- describe the organization of WIA wing of ADP, and job description of the staff.
- state the stakeholders in WIA, and their roles.
- list the gains of WIA programme.
- discuss the constraints of WIA activities.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Establishment of WIA – Historical Perspective

It became clear that despite many years of World Bank assistance in developing Nigeria's agricultural extension service, women were receiving minimal benefits from extension agents. This fact, coupled with the research findings of the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) of 1987, in which women were found to make up 60-80 percent of the agricultural labour force in Nigeria and that they produced two thirds of the food crops, caught the attention of the then Head of FACU (Federal Agricultural Coordinating Unit) and the World Bank division chief on agriculture in the West African Region. They were both committed to proffering a solution to the plight of Nigerian women farmers. In 1988, therefore, their support led to the creation of Women In Agriculture (WIA) programme. WIA was seated within each of the already existing State Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) with a charge to address the gender – related deficiencies of the existing extension program. You will recall from the last Unit that ADPs were created in the 1970s in each state of the Federation through the funding assistance of the World Bank, having as its main objective increasing food and cash crop production at the small farmer level.

Up till this point the ADPs had contained only a Home Economics division responsible for home-related women activities.

WIA was launched as a pilot with UNDP funds, seeking to improve agricultural extension services for women. Existing home economics extension agents were retrained. Pilot research project was launched (with World Bank staff and with FACU) in order to develop guidelines for assisting women farmers. During the pilot programmes, local ADP staffs were used to test out different approaches to meeting the needs of women farmers.

About a year later accounts from each state of different WIA initiatives that appeared to be occurring in sporadic, ad-hoc manners were given. Some ADPs were making tremendous progress while others were not doing anything at all. This led to the first National Planning Workshop of July 1989 to take stock of various WIA initiatives nationwide, share experiences, and develop a three year action plan for each state. This workshop was an all stakeholders conference comprising FACU, Federal and State Agricultural Development Officials, World Bank agricultural staff, and women extension agents (heads of WIA units) who represented the interests of their rural women clients.

Eighteen months after the first workshop, a second National Workshop of the WIA programme was convened to take stock of the implementation of the action plans of the first workshop, identify problem areas, re-plan, make mid-course modifications, and set new annual targets for the WIA programme.

The same groups of stakeholders were brought together. By this time all states had ongoing WIA programmes. There was report of increased demands from the women for information and new technology and this had stimulated response from WIA units and FACU.

The WIA programme as we have it today emerged from several of such workshops as a system in which WIA agents work with groups of women in their area of agriculture operation, with a multidisciplinary approach.

3.2 Objectives of WIA

We have repeatedly defined WIA as a programme geared towards achieving full participation of Nigerian women farmers in agricultural activities.

It could be said that WIA has through its operations the following objectives:

1. orientate and create awareness in the rural women their possible role in agriculture, such as helping them select the type of project they want to engage in.
2. the extension of modern agricultural technologies and inputs to women workers.
3. introduction of simple equipment and farm implements that can easily be operated and maintained by women.
4. initiate and execute projects with pre-existing women organizations in which members are already pursuing a specific goal such as credit or communal work.
5. helping through WIA agents to organize women into blocks or cells or register s cooperative societies so that they can receive ADP assistance, or qualify for credit or farm input.
6. through ADP system use NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) to identify women beneficiary groups.

7. provide first hand working knowledge of the situation and good working relations with the women farmers.
8. adopt a multidisciplinary approach during planning and implementation of sub-projects. For example block extension supervisors, technical specialists and other resource persons from ADP field offices advise or provide technical inputs and monitor their progress on regular basis.

3.3 Organization of WIA

As afore-mentioned WIA programme is housed within the decentralized ADP structure. Each state ADP has field offices staffed by local extension agents, with FACU (now PCU), an Agricultural Planning and Control Parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, playing a coordinating role from the Federal Capital. Hence the structure of WIA itself is also decentralized and integrated into the extension service of the ADP, with female extension workers at the head of every level of operation from the state headquarters down to the villages.

The structure of WIA can be represented by the following organogram and job specifications:

State ADP	Deputy Director
Headquarters	Responsible for overall planning and implementation of WIA
Zonal Level	Subject Matter Specialists

1. assists Deputy Director in supervising and monitoring implementation of WIA at zonal level.
2. interact with research and technology institutions by participating in problem identification and field training.
3. provide support to block extension agents.

Block Level Block Extension Agents.

Work directly with women farmers, identifying and organizing women groups into cell blocks, and registering WIA women groups into cooperative societies.

At the headquarters the WIA Head holds the rank of Deputy Director within the state ADP. Subject matter specialists are specialists in a type of project – e.g. cassava processing, ground nut oil production, animal fattening etc.

A sizeable fraction of Nigerian women belong to cooperative societies or other locally organized associations whose members are united by common age, religion, trade, or economic activity. Several thousands of such groups are said to be in existence already. The functions of such groups include rotating credit and savings, sharing labour, group farming, or borrowing money through cooperatives. Each women group elects four key leaders: president, secretary, treasurer, and adviser. Decision making rests with the group or their leaders. The women participate in all aspects of the project, from identification, to planning and implementation – a phenomenon referred to as participatory approach.

WIA agents at the different levels are government staff assigned to the ADPs from state Ministries of Agriculture and other relevant parastatals, hence the project does not incur salary payment.

WIA, through its agents and operations seek to perform the objectives listed in this unit.

Self-Assessment Exercise I

Mention 5 women groups you know, and identify their functions.

3.4 Gains of WIA

Several positive results have been shown to emanate from WIA programmes – these include the following:

- The number of female extension agents doubled between the first two workshops.
- There was tremendous increase in the number of female farmers in contract with extension services.
- Better identification of female gender needs was being undertaken.
- Male extension workers were being trained in women – related activities.
- Female extension agents succeeded in introducing male extension workers to women farmers
- Registration of women's groups as cooperatives with legal status, had aided their access to bank credits and inputs.
- Increase in women participation in agricultural activities.
- Empowering women leading to alleviating poverty at the family level and hence adding value to general family living.
- Gaining understanding of women's constraints at the local level before any recommendations for policy reform are embarked on.

3.5 Constraints to WIA Operation

The main constraint at the take-off of WIA was reported to be those of mobility and lack of appropriate technologies. Although many states had an increased number of women agents, they were still not reaching their targets due to different levels of access to transportation, as men tended to monopolise the available vehicles and male extension agents were given preference. There was lack of appropriate tools and equipment to relieve women farmers of their basic labour and energy constraints.

Other challenges include the fact that the effectiveness of women farmers as participants in high-level decision forum as desirable and expected was hampered by factors such as dearth of reliable means of public transport, majority of the rural women had never traveled outside their villages, many would have to travel with their babies, and obtaining permission of their husbands to travel posed yet another obstacle.

Thus the female extension agents would have to serve as the women's proxies- this may not always be very reliable representation.

Because the female extensionists have to live in same areas as the women farmers in order to have firsthand knowledge of the situation as well as in good working relations with the women farmers, the WIA staffs have to be attracted and motivated by better conditions of service than their Ministry counterparts

4.0 Conclusion

Research findings of the UNDP of 1987 which revealed that women dominated the Nigerian agricultural labour force, coupled with the fact that women were receiving minimal benefits from agricultural extension agents caught the attention of the then Head of FACU (now

PCU) and the World Bank division Chief on agriculture in the West African Region. Their support led to the creation of WIA (Women in Agriculture). WIA is seated within each already existing state ADP, with a charge to address gender-related deficiencies of the existing extension program and thereby improve agricultural productivity by women. This aim was to realized through certain specific objectives. WIA as a wing in each state ADP is organized in such a way that there are three tiers of staffing – the headquarters at the state ADP, the zonal level, and the Block level in the rural areas. Each tier is headed by a female extension worker, and charged with different aspects of responsibility, and with PCU (FACU) remaining the coordination of activities, with the participatory involvement of female extension agents and the women farmers, who are normally formed into working groups, and the World Bank providing funds and inputs. Several gains have emerged since the inception of WIA, though not without a few constraints to its activities.

5.0 Summary

In this unit we have examined the establishment of WIA in a historical perspective, the objectives of WIA, the organization of WIA as concerns its organization, administration, stakeholders, and activities. We have also enumerated the challenges to its effectiveness.

6.0 Self-assessment Exercise

1. Narrate the historical establishment of WIA.
2. Describe the organogram of WIA staff within the state ADP, and their job descriptions.
3. How does WIA stand to benefit rural women farmers?

7.0 References/Further Reading

The World Bank (2000) Source Book – Participatory Experiences. Nigerian Women In Agriculture <http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/sourcebook/sb0212.htm>.

World Bank (1999) Source Book. WIA Project, Nigeria.
<http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/sourcebook/sbxwo701.htm>