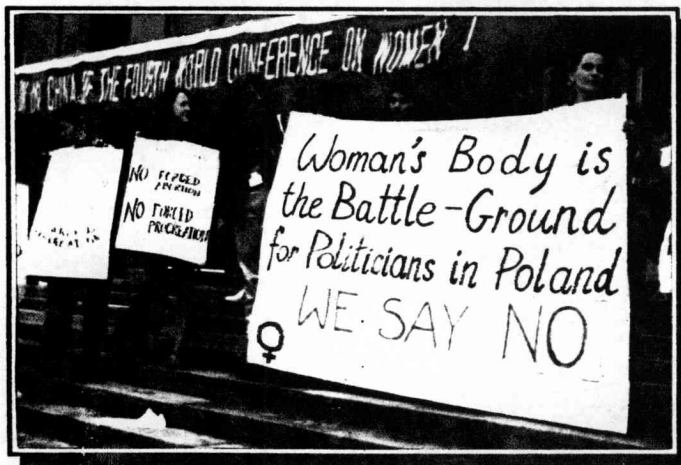


WETV

Preview

Beijing, China

September, 1995



Report and Survey



The Global
Access
Television
Service

Le service
de télévision
mondial

La Red
de Television
de Acceso
Mundial

Voices & Visions
Report of the WETV Preview
Broadcaster Survey
Beijing, China
September, 1995



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Message from the President, WETV

During September, 1995, WETV, a unique new international television network, offered a "Preview" of its service on the occasion of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women.

By choosing to preview the network from a major UN conference, WETV was able to demonstrate the validity of its two underlying premises:

1. There is a wide demand from broadcasters and their audiences for lively, culturally-sensitive programming and;
2. International agencies are seeking new ways to enhance their communication efforts, especially through the powerful medium of television.

The Beijing Preview enabled WETV to give broadcasters, and their viewers, a window on the largest women's conference ever held.

WETV's all-woman team in Beijing produced 12 daily programs in English and in Spanish, focusing on the key themes of the conference and preceding NGO forum. Additionally, WETV pre-packaged and distributed 15 programs in English, eight in Spanish and eight in French. These incorporated some of the best and most recent videos on gender and development produced by institutions of the UN family, development banks and NGOs.

The network constructed to distribute these programs ranged from international satellite broadcasters such as TV5 and Omega in the Americas, and major national broadcasters such as Doordarshan in India and Radio-Television Malaysia, to satellite-to-cable operators. Up to 50 countries were reached, with at least 25 broadcasters re-transmitting the daily satellite signal, and 29 broadcasters carrying the pre-packaged programs.

Based on broadcasters' reports, the audience reach was in excess of 300,000,000 viewers.

The UN and other agencies which contributed gender and development programs gained a world audience at a particularly timely occasion, when many viewers' attentions were focused on issues surrounding women's striving for equality. One minute of advertising time varies widely in cost but would be several thousands of dollars on many of the networks which carried the service, such as Doordarshan (India), 20 million viewers, and RTM (Malaysia) with 6 million viewers.

For WETV, the Beijing Preview was the first of a series of broadcast events leading up to the full operational launch of the network. We look forward to continuing cooperation with our institutional and private-sector partners and our network of broadcast affiliates in 1996.

-David Nostbakken

Voices & Visions The WETV Preview

PART I:

Description of the Beijing Initiative

"Ghana Television would like to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely...the programs were well received as they helped to bring home more forcefully the message of Beijing."

At 1600 hours UTC on September 4, 1995, more than a year of intensive planning became reality when WETV, the Global Access Television Network, went on the air from Beijing, China. In Part I, this document describes why WETV previewed its service from the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women. It also outlines the complex process of planning and coordination required to organize coverage of the largest women's conference in history. Part II provides an assessment of the reach and impact of WETV broadcasts, as reported by the participating broadcasters. Part III looks at some of the lessons learned.

The Origins

In the Spring of 1994, Gertrude Mongella, recently appointed Secretary General of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women spoke to an overflow audience in the auditorium of the International Development Research Centre in Ottawa. In outlining the challenges facing the organizers of the last major women's conference of this century, she stressed the importance of the mass media in accurately reflecting the reality of women's lives and the need to reach world audiences with global coverage of these issues, presented in a comprehensive and non-sensational fashion.

Her visit occurred near the mid-point in the research and development phase of a unique initiative sponsored by IDRC and more than 30 other international agencies and private-sector interests. This was for

WETV, an attempt to create a television system that would provide access to this powerful medium by voices seldom heard, including women. In a subsequent meeting in New York with Gertrude Mongella and her colleagues at the Conference Secretariat, David Nostbakken, WETV's Executive Director, was invited to support the Conference as its major developmental broadcaster. After analyzing the challenges and risks, WETV decided to advance its planned start-up of regular broadcasts by almost nine months, and create a "preview" to coincide with the Fourth World Conference.

Why Beijing?

WETV "had two purposes in its Beijing Preview," according to David Nostbakken. "First, from the start, one of our objectives has been to work for the equality of women by raising public awareness of the issues at stake. Women's perspectives and attitudes are vital if WETV is to support a diversity of cultural and social expression, and to support sustainable human-centred development."

So, it was apparent immediately that WETV could perform a major service in putting its emerging global network at the services of women and gender issues.

"Secondly, what better venue could we find to demonstrate what we had argued: that television plays a dominant role in shaping people's attitudes and that in turn is necessary to bring about a public policy agenda conducive to positive changes affecting groups like women?"

For WETV, this second objective had several facets. In providing an alternative form of television coverage for a UN Conference, WETV sought to demonstrate that television stations, particularly those in developing countries, would carry issues-oriented programming in prime time. If this could be shown, clearly potential Mosaic Time buyers - essentially public sector organizations at the national or international level - would be encouraged to buy time.

"Most of the other media were running together after crises, or trying to get images of Hilary Clinton or a few other VIPs. We covered the 12 issues of the Conference and it was so rewarding to gain access to women leaders from all over Latin America and the world, who had no other access to television, to talk about what the Conference was really all about. As a journalist, I will never forget this experience."

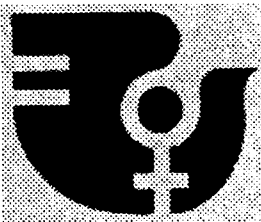
*-Mirtha Villa, Uruguayan
journalist and WETV
Spanish-language
presenter.*

Additionally, it was important for WETV to prove to private-sector investors that audiences of significant size could be reached by global coverage of such an event. (Although it must be stated that WETV is designed to offer a variety of informative and entertaining programming, not just conference coverage.)

The Process

Planning for the Beijing preview proceeded on several fronts simultaneously. Teams of WETV Secretariat staff and consultants were formed to work on:

- Beijing Preview Programming
- Technical Configuration of the Network
- Fund-Raising
- Relations with Affiliate Broadcasters
- Public Affairs and Communication



Parallel with these activities, work continued on the Research and Development Phase of WETV, including corporate funding-raising, targetting early 1996 for the start-up of regular WETV broadcasting to Affiliate Broadcasting organizations. While the inter-action energized the entire planning process, it also had consequences on WETV's development which are still being assessed.

Program Planning

With the appointment of Sylvia Spring, an experienced documentary video producer and gender consultant, as Executive Producer, and the creation of an internal Programming Group, six months of intensive planning and consultation began. Two site visits to Beijing confirmed the professional and technical challenges that would need to be surmounted there, during a period of great political uncertainty about China's relations with the UN Conference Secretariat.

Coordination was established with the Conference Secretariat in New York, the NGO Forum organiz-

ers, the International Women's Tribune Centre, and other groups.

Two basic decisions were made early on: Firstly, it was decided that WETV should have an all-women's team in Beijing and that Chinese resources should be used to the greatest extent possible. Jessica Liu, an accomplished producer and director from China now living in Canada, was recruited as production manager and China Liaison person. Two experienced journalists were engaged from developing countries: Rizu Hamid, a producer from Zimbabwe with much BBC experience, and Mirtha Villa of Uruguay, a widely-known on-air personality.

Secondly, the Programming Group recommended that WETV take an issues-oriented approach to the coverage. "From the experience of the World Population Conference in Cairo, in 1994, we knew that television networks would focus on day-to-day events and, inevitably, the hot public debates that seemed inevitable among regional blocs over many elements of the proposed Platform of Action. Additionally, it seemed likely that Chinese domestic issues, including their human rights record, would dominate much of the international coverage," concluded David Nostbakken.

As well as dealing with issues of gender, there was a strong feeling among some WETV programmers that WETV's preview should address other major developmental issues. A proposal was considered to produce a two-hour daily show, Welcome to the Global Village, which would include Beijing Coverage within an envelope of other programming of broader interest.

Throughout the planning process, concerns emerged regarding the stability of the Beijing-based Conference, as the Chinese government moved the NGO forum from Beijing to Huairou, causing an NGO protest. Severe logistical difficulties caused WETV to reconsider the viability of the preview launch effort. These also had a negative effect on donor interest and support for activities associated with the Conference.

"The medium of television is critical if women in the developing world are to achieve their objectives of sustainable economic and social development and equality. Your decision to dedicate the preview of your global television broadcasting service to coverage of the 12 critical issues of concern...is a unique service to the women of the world."

***-Noeleen Heyzer,
Director, UN
Development Fund for
Women (UNIFEM)***

A go-no-go decision process ensued. Three months before the conference it was decided to proceed. But, when it became apparent that international agencies were unable to invest significant funds in the global communication needs of Beijing, WETV too had to scale back its ambitious plans.

The final design consisted of:

- 15 minutes of daily coverage of the NGO Forum and Conference, in English and Spanish, for 12 days, transmitted by satellite from Beijing, and
- 15 pre-packaged English-language programs of from 30-45 minutes, on related development issues, delivered to participating broadcasters by courier, in advance of the conference. An additional eight similar programs were provided in Spanish.

"Congratulations to you and all the WETV team on the successful launch of the WETV service...as a preview of what's to come from the fully operational service, I think you've whetted many appetites."

***-Access Network,
Edmonton, Alberta***

Two weeks before Beijing, TV5, the French-language public broadcasting consortium, responded to WETV's invitation to carry French programming. WETV provided eight half-hour pre-packaged programs in French. These were aired on TV5 in Canada, the Caribbean and Latin America, with a audience reach of 6.1 million viewers.

To obtain material for the pre-packaged programs, WETV invited 50 international organizations to submit existing videos for showing by WETV during the preview. The response from the Communication Divisions of the UN family and other international agencies was immediate. Producers Bruce Paddington and Lyell Shields packaged these together with public service announcements (PSAs) and 5-minute vignettes on the situation of women (The 5-Minute Project). Most television networks and stations ran these back-to-back as a "one hour special". The advantage for the UN and other organizations which provided documentaries, was that their products gained world-wide exposure to an audience of interested and concerned viewers, attracted by the daily satellite transmissions from Beijing. (A description of the satellite transmission and the pre-packaged programs is found in Appendices II and III, respectively). The best and most recent documentaries on

gender and development, it is clear that these would never have obtained such wide exposure, otherwise.

The Beijing team, like official delegations and other media groups, faced enormous logistical problems in China. The team was permitted to arrive only the day prior to the event; hotel arrangements were switched, and inconvenient; transport was difficult at best, and editing and uplink facilities were fraught with problems. These were overcome only with good humour and enormous energy. The practical result was two-fold. First, the quality of WETV's coverage of the 12 basic issues of the conference was limited somewhat by the inability to line-up interview subjects; however, in retrospect, most key figures were reached. Secondly, day-to-day coverage was virtually impossible, as the WETV team had no entry to the main conference venue and little way of learning what was going on at the main conference. Fortunately, the strategy was to cover issues rather than day-to-day events. However, the result was that a planned daily "roundup" of conference events was impossible.

Technical Challenges

Tele globe Canada, a Canadian international telecommunications service provider, was WETV's first private-sector investor and undertook to arrange world-wide satellite distribution of its signal from Beijing, China. A network of six satellites was set up, (as shown in Appendix II) to enable any of the participating broadcasters (or in fact any others) to bring down the unscrambled signal.

For the Asia-Pacific Region, the signal was transmitted from China Central Television in Beijing to the Indian sub-continent via the Intelsat IOR 63 satellite and to Indonesia, Papua-New Guinea and Australia via Intelsat POR 174. For the remainder of the world, the signal was sent directly to Tele globe's two Canadian down-stations and then retransmitted to the Americas on POR 174, Galaxy VIII, AOR 325.5, and to Africa on AOR 335.5.

"When I returned from Beijing to my job as a teacher I found that everyone was aware of the Conference and what was going on, thanks to WETV. My students, fellow teachers and the cleaning lady all knew what was going on in Beijing. I have never encountered that before!"

*-Lucie Carido,
Director of
Communication,
Uruguan Women's Forum*

In Latin America, Omega S.A., a satellite broadcast distributor based in Argentina, relayed the Beijing feed and solved the problem of high down-link costs by providing its signal to participants at no charge. Omega went out of its way to provide additional feeds when reception problems were reported.

To reduce cost, all editing was done in Beijing, rather than directing the feed to a central control in Ottawa for editing and forward transmission on the satellite network. This placed a major burden on the Beijing production unit, as it had to provide a final edit for all out-going material. It also made it impossible for the Ottawa programmers to correct satellite feed false-starts or "outages" from CCTV. In particular, WETV Ottawa had no control over the feeds to Asia. Several of the "lessons learned", mentioned below, relate to the experience WETV and Teleglobe technical specialists gained as a result.

"Please accept our congratulations on the successful launch of WETV..As one of the co-founders of this initiative, we are extremely pleased with the response from the Affiliates and broad-based support for WETV."

***-Garaj Dhanarajan,
President,
Commonwealth of
Learning.***

Funding

WETV's original budget for the "Welcome to the Global Village" preview was in excess of \$C1,000,000. It became apparent, quickly, that the funds available to the UN for Beijing communication activities were severely limited. WETV approached a number of private, corporate donors with little response, with the exception of Teleglobe Canada. Finally, in the three months preceding Beijing, The Netherlands, Canada, Norway and Denmark agreed to provide funds to finance part of the Beijing preview. A small, generous donation, was received from the Canadian gender NGO, Match International, and additional funds were drawn from core contributions to WETV by The World Bank and IDRC.

The result was that some of the \$500,000 direct costs of the Beijing Project had to be underwritten by WETV from its own developmental funds.

Relations with Affiliate Broadcasters

In establishing a network for the Beijing Project, WETV could draw upon a tangible asset: almost a year of discussions with some 50 national and regional television networks, TV cable operators and satellite TV providers. Given the concerns over the apparent conference instability and ensuing donor reluctance to fund conference-related activities; and the need for WETV to take a go-no-go stance until it was certain of some success, WETV sent out its first offer of programming only in June, 1995, barely 60 days before the conference commenced. Several broadcasters later commented on the need for more advance notice, to integrate 12 hours of programming into their schedule, especially as September is the start of the new programming year, for many. Deputy Executive Director Derrick Poon-Young and Latin American director Carl McMullin spent many hours on the telephone, to convince program directors that WETV's program offering would be of strong interest to their viewers. Their arguments were borne out: most TV stations carried the full WETV hour in prime time and left it there for the entire 12 days; some repeated the programs after the event.

WETV coverage was broadcast in Latin America where the network has the advantage of a fully-functioning Regional Office in Montevideo under Carl McMullin. He reported:

"Our success rate in Latin America was very high, considering the technical difficulties of delivering a satellite signal from Beijing across a continent many thousands of miles away, and on a shoestring budget. (Satellite time to cover a soccer match in Asia costs \$300,000.) Participants were committed to the project and worked hard to make it a success. Old contacts were strongly reaffirmed and new ones solidified."

"This was a very good way to cover an event as important as Beijing; It was a very interesting experience for the state network and we have a lot of expectations for the future."

*- Director, Channel 5,
Montevideo*

Public Affairs and Communication

With a very limited budget, the public affairs and communication group, coordinated by Charles Morrow, had a difficult assignment. It had to support fund-raising

efforts among more than 50 organizations, help "sell" the Beijing programming to up to 50 broadcasters, encourage the cooperation of UN and other agencies in providing programs, and finally, promote the event through the international news media. Four newsletters were produced during the 12-week run-up to Beijing and numerous media relations activities were undertaken in Ottawa, New York and Beijing.

"Voices & Visions finished last week and we too are exhausted but very satisfied. Five Nicaraguan women were interviewed and this makes us believe that in spite of being a small country Nicaragua wasn't left out."

*-Florence Jaugey,
Managua*

PART II

ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS - BROADCASTER SURVEY

An assessment of the reach and impact of the Beijing initiative was undertaken with the assistance of the IDRC's evaluation specialists. The support of researcher Sherrill Johnson was invaluable.

Broadcaster response was assessed through a questionnaire and follow-up telephone survey as well as through anecdotal responses from individual broadcasters.

Survey Analysis Section 1: Overall Quality

Daily Satellite Feed from Beijing

When asked to evaluate the overall content relevance and production value of the daily WETV satellite programming, the majority of broadcasters rated it as good. Two rated it as fair. None rated it as poor.

When asked about the consistency of the content relevance and production value of the daily WETV satellite programming, the majority of respondents rated it as consistent, while four found it variable.

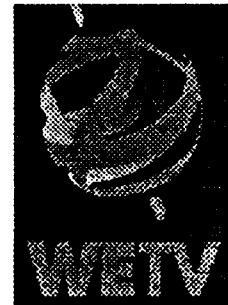
A majority of respondents did not experience any significant technical problems in receiving or airing the satellite feeds, while eleven did experience technical problems. Where problems occurred, details were provided for WETV personnel. Problems noted include: sound distortion or loss of level, outages on the satellite signal to Asia, failed transmission from Canada (or other transmission problems), false starts, and difficulties 'adjusting the audio subcarrier.'

Pre-Packaged Material

Prior to the conference, WETV provided 15 pre-packaged programs in English and 8 in Spanish, of 30 to 45 minutes each.

Eight 30-minute programs were also prepared in French. Tapes of these programs were delivered by courier in the two weeks prior to the opening of the NGO Forum. Respondents were very happy with the overall content relevance and production value of this material, with most rating it as good. Of the remaining respondents, two rated the material as fair.

When asked if the pre-packaged programs were received in a timely manner, the majority responded that they were while seven respondents noted problems, either in not receiving the material early enough, or in clearing the video-tapes through customs.



Other Coverage, Locally Produced Material

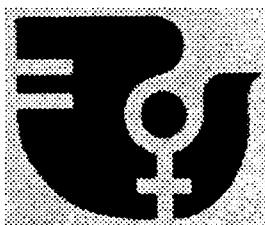
It appears that in half the broadcast areas served, other stations failed to provide any coverage of the Beijing conference. Nine respondents noted other coverage in their areas, but in four of these cases the average coverage from other stations was less than five minutes per day. In one instance other coverage was between 5-10 minutes daily, while in four cases it exceeded 10 minutes per day.

When asked if any locally produced material (for example, phone-ins or interviews with representatives of women's organizations) was shown in the

same time period the response was split, with eleven broadcasters responding affirmatively, and eleven negatively.

A few noted interest in producing more local material, but felt more lead time would have been needed to do this effectively. (In its announcements of the Beijing offering, WETV had urged broadcasters to be in touch with national conference committees, and local women's groups, to organize local-interest programming.)

Examples of locally produced material included: interviews with national women's organizations and the councils of women; local women's programming shown during the Beijing Conference; news and public affairs shows; interviews (both English and local language); satellite news coverage from Beijing; and local news coverage of the conference and local events by women's organizations. India noted that all regional television stations had produced local programs to supplement WETV's material broadcast on the Doordarshan III network from Delhi.



Section II: Daily Coverage

Satellite Coverage

WETV reports indicate at least 25 broadcasters carried the 12 satellite feeds. Half used all 12. In the majority of cases where only some were used it was due to technical problems in receiving the satellite feed rather than a lack of interest in the programming. Only one station edited the satellite coverage.

The time slots allocated for the satellite programming vary according to the broadcasting station. Most were shown at some time in the evening, with three stations providing multiple time slots throughout the day.

Mosaic Material

Of the fifteen pre-packaged programs provided, the majority of respondents used all or some of the programming. In all, 29 broadcasters used all or some of the programs. Those who indicated using only some of the programming used between nine and twelve of the programs. The one respondent who did not use the pre-packaged material indicated this was because of problems getting the material through customs.

Broadcasters who used the Beijing satellite feed indicated that the pre-packaged material was shown immediately after the conference coverage. Stations which used only the pre-packaged programming used it in generally either the early evening or during local prime time. Only two respondents chose to edit the pre-packaged material.

In the weeks following the Beijing Conference, a number of stations were observed to be still using pre-packaged material. Vision TV in Canada was running the 5-Minute vignettes as late as early December.

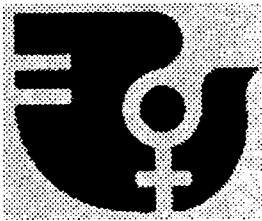


Section III: Future WETV Coverage

General Coverage

When asked about interest in future WETV coverage of this type of major event, the respondents indicated a very strong interest, with 28 responding affirmatively. There were no negative responses, and only one broadcast station which was not sure of future interest. The Spanish questionnaires asked if stations were interested in this coverage regularly or occasionally, and six indicated a preference for regular coverage.

Several suggestions were made as to how WETV programming could be made more relevant and interesting to broadcasters. Many focused on finding ways in which locally-produced material could be incorporated into WETV programming. It was felt this would assist in developing local capacity and make the programming more locally relevant by highlighting the local implications of universal concerns. From a WETV perspective, this requires preparing programs with pre-set slots for local programming, as well as providing information and material to broadcast stations early enough to allow for the preparation of appropriate local additions.



Local stations were interested in co-producing material on themes such as women and development, as well as providing suggestions to WETV about future areas of programming interest. One suggested that WETV programming could highlight the accomplishments of individuals in the broadcast regions in order to establish credibility as well as to attract audiences to otherwise remote happenings. One respondent congratulated WETV for not attempting to compete with established television news services, and felt there was a more valuable role to play in producing and broadcasting alternative, issues-oriented material on topical events such as a global conference. Another respondent encouraged more live satellite feeds which allow local stations to set up interactive activities (such as phone-ins) after the broadcast. It was felt that WETV coverage could be a good catalyst for local discussion programs.

Future Programming Interests

Several stations indicated specific areas of interest. Responses fell into two categories: types of programming, and particular themes of interest. Suggested programming types include those targeted at children, youth, global magazine or music shows, dramatizations of social problems, conference coverage, educational/training programs, and coverage of regional events.

Themes which emerged as being of particular interest include the environment, development, child labour, child abuse, world aboriginal issues, the Far North, popular culture, sustainable agricultural practices, democratic development, violence, drug abuse, and coverage which was gender sensitive. It was felt that programming should reflect the universality of many of these issues.

It was felt that programs would ideally combine coverage of relevant social issues and problems but present them in a way that offered international appeal. One respondent recommended theme shows which could compare regional and national approaches to different topics, while another suggested documentaries which chronicle the experiences of individual countries with universal problems. These would showcase different approaches which might be relevant for other countries. Another suggestion was using dramatization as a way to present relevant issues.

"Thank you so much for your outstanding coverage of the Beijing Conference...I am astonished that it was covered each night and yet so well put together...As we know, the popular press consistently plays up the controversy at the Conference but your programs emphasize the positive."

***- Caller from
Nova Scotia,
Vision TV, Toronto***

Other suggestions, comments, recommendations

One theme which emerged in this section was the need for local broadcasters to work collaboratively with WETV in order to receive the maximum benefit from WETV programming. Local broadcasters indicate an interest in contributing ideas and programming to WETV as well as receiving WETV materials.

It was also noted that local broadcasters need time to develop local programming which can complement WETV material, and as such need as much lead-time as possible in order to do so. One broadcaster suggested a minimum of three months advance notice in order for local programming to be coordinated around material provided by WETV. Finally it was noted that a better satellite feed would have facilitated a wider broadcast of WETV's Beijing coverage.

***"Congratulations!
WETV has begun by
doing precisely what
you have said it
should do. It is a
clear alternative,
well put together,
closer to genuine
people, not mere
images, and very
nicely shot and
edited. Highest
commendation and
congratulations."***

***-Gerald Filson,
International Baha'i
Movement***

Part III - Lessons Learned

Lessons learned from the Beijing Initiative may be grouped under four headings:

Beijing Programming

The WETV team, comprising a number of professionals who had not worked together before, arrived in Beijing on August 26. On August 28 they began shooting a feature on Chinese Women, and on August 30 they commenced coverage of the NGO forum. From the start of the official Conference, on September 4, the team worked night and day to shoot, edit and deliver a finished 15-minute package in English and Spanish. Innumerable logistical, geographical, linguistic, technical and bureaucratic (even weather) problems were largely overcome. Daily coverage was uplinked for 12 days as planned.

- coverage would have benefited by having full time researchers-journalists to feed-in "what's happening" on a continuing basis; as a consequence, a planned, brief round-up of daily events was produced only on the final day;

- a dedicated Spanish-language director-researcher was lacking;
- the vast geographic layout and complexity of the issues created immense problems for a crew of under 20, including translators and drivers. CNN had a crew of more than 30 to produce a much shorter daily package;
- direct experience in news coverage is essential for key production personnel. WETV's crew were experienced in documentary production, not news;
- because of budget cuts, a technical director was not provided. Production personnel filled the gap, with difficulty.

Technical Configuration of the Network & Delivery of Videos

For economy, satellite programming was relayed directly to the six satellites serving participating broadcasters. Final editing was done in Beijing, under often difficult circumstances. Had the Beijing team relayed their program to WETV Ottawa for editing and technical correction (sound, etc.) WETV would have had greater control of the final product. In the event, the signal was relayed directly from Beijing to two Asian-Pacific satellites, and from Beijing to two Teleglobe Canada ground-stations, from which it was relayed automatically to four satellites serving the Americas and Africa. Technical problems both in Beijing and at the Canadian ground stations provided daily anxious moments. Having a Canadian studio receive, and if necessary re-edit the programs, would have given WETV better control over technical aspects, even replacing segments in which sound or picture suffered from transmission problems.

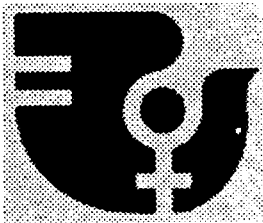
A number of broadcasters had difficulty clearing WETV videotapes through their local customs, indicating the need for good lead time in distribu-



tion of such tapes. In some cases, broadcasters had to pay the downlink costs of national telecommunication agencies. Some creative solutions were found. In Nicaragua, Frank Pineda and Florence Jaugey, free-lance producers of developmental videos, obtained a \$5,000 grant from a Nordic embassy to pay down-link costs.

Fund-Raising

WETV's fund-raising efforts were complicated by the fact that the Secretariat was already in the midst of fund-raising for its over-all development, and start-up. Special fund-raising proposals were prepared for several development agencies with which WETV was already in discussion. By funding the Beijing project, at least one supporter delayed funding for WETV's start-up. Additional representations were made to the UN Beijing Conference Secretariat, a fund-raising committee established to support Conference communications, and to a number of private-sector enterprises. Lessons learned:



- conference planners discount the importance of communication outreach thus this component is almost always under-funded;
- corporate sponsors and advertisers require a guarantee of carriage; as funding commitments from public agencies were received less than three months before Beijing, corporate sponsorships were impossible to obtain;
- gender is not on the top of the corporate agenda;
- remarkably, perhaps, WETV and most other communication groups involved with Beijing (such as The Earth Times, Women's Feature Service, and UN Secretariat itself) found that their fund-raising efforts among public-sector groups were less productive than anticipated. The reason for this is unclear: it may reflect "conference fatigue"; the place of gender in the current international dialogue; exhausted financial resources, or a combination of all three.

Relations with Affiliate Broadcasters

WETV had the advantage of almost a year's contact with a network of some 50 broadcasting organizations, many of which had signed letters of interest in taking the WETV service. Although the invitation to take the Beijing service, free of cost and unscrambled, was provided only in June, broadcasters were quick to signal their interest. As indicated in Part II, those who took the Beijing feed or the pre-packaged programs included national public or private television networks, cable operators, satellite-to-cable systems and local broadcasters. Additionally, since the Beijing feed was "free-to-air" WETV suspects that a number of other broadcasters picked it off the satellites and used portions of the feed, without notice to WETV. Individual viewers in some areas, such as the Caribbean, could also access the signal.

By providing 12 hours of programming on a major world event, WETV feels it has consolidated its relations with the broadcasters who took all or portions of the service. This will stand WETV in good stead as it negotiates contractual agreements with broadcasters to take the service on a daily basis, in 1996.

The personal contacts with individual station managers and program directors will be invaluable in this regard.

. . .



BROADCAST PARTNERS - BEIJING PREVIEW

Africa

Ghana Broadcasting Corporation
South African Broadcasting Corporation
Uganda TV
Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ITV, Tanzania

Asia

Doordarshan, India
Radio-Television Malaysia
EMTV, Papua-New Guinea

Europe

KNR-TV, Greenland
DR-TV, Denmark

North America

Satellite Communications for Learning (SCOLA), USA
Vision TV, Canada
Television Northern Canada
TV5 Canada

Caribbean

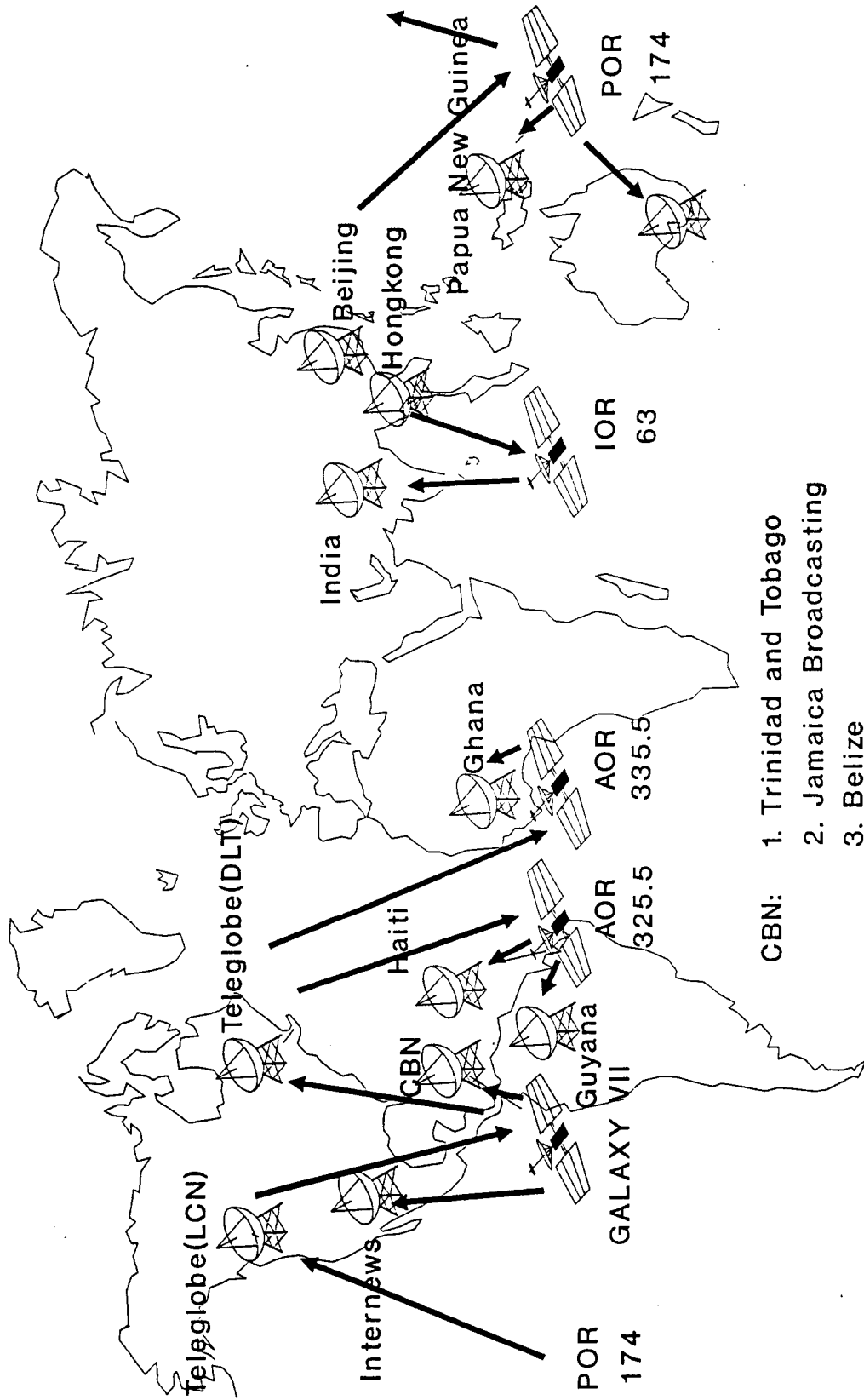
5 Great Belize Television
Guyana TV Broadcasting
Helen Television System, St. Lucia
Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation
Trinidad & Tobago TV
Tele 7, Haiti
CARIMAC, University of the West Indies, Jamaica
ICRT, Cuba

Latin America

Channel 22, Mexico
Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicacion Educativa (ILCE), Mexico
Channel 7, Peru
SENAC, Brazil
TV Cultura, Brazil
Channel 10, Uruguay
Maxima Vision, Uruguay
Channel 5, Uruguay
Nunoa TV, Chile
Omega Cable, Argentina
TV5 Amerique-latine
Channel 4, Nicaragua

WETV SATELLITE VIDEO NETWORK

(for the Beijing Conference on Women)





Voices & Visions

October 1995

..... *A WETV Preview*

United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women
Beijing, China

A Landmark Event in International Communication

WETV — the world's first global access television network — had a reach of up to 300 million viewers with its ground-breaking coverage of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women.

"This is an historic moment in broadcasting," said David Nostbakken, President and CEO. "Our Beijing coverage marked the first time that so many people in so many countries were able to share coverage of the issues of a major international conference, in three languages." The "Preview" of WETV was provided for 12 days in English and Spanish. Eight days of programs were also provided in French. "We are extremely pleased that our broadcast partners helped bring the Beijing Conference to viewers everywhere. Coverage was broadcast in prime time in many major markets. This clearly indicates the strong desire on the part of broadcasters and audiences in the North and the South for in-depth, topical coverage of major world events of this type."

A network of six satellites relayed the WETV signal from Beijing to broadcast partners in Africa, Asia-Pacific,



Europe, the Caribbean, and North and South America. WETV expects to provide similar in-depth coverage of the major United Nations conference of 1996, the

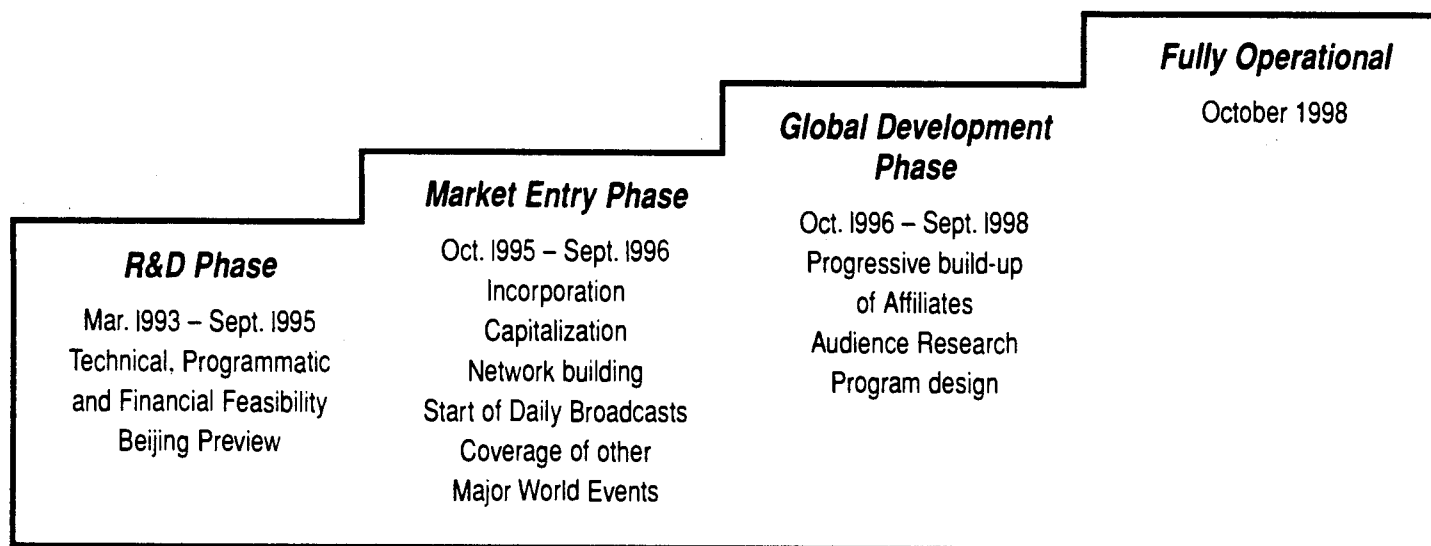
Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). June 3-14, 1996 in Istanbul, Turkey.

"The 20th Anniversary of the first Habitat Conference in Vancouver will provide the opportunity for a major assessment of the state of the world's living environment," said Mr. Nostbakken. "We need to rekindle public concern for the deterioration of global human settlements and shelter. WETV's broadcasts will help create an informed public opinion on these complex topics, underpinning the efforts of the international community and national governments to construct a sustainable plan of action on the living environment for the next 20 years," he said.

A partnership venture initiated by the International Development Research Centre, WETV plans to begin regular daily satellite transmissions to Affiliate Broadcasters in 1996. Its programming will aim to "illuminate, inspire and educate" and will emphasize in-depth coverage of international development issues, a continuing review of the state of the world's environment, programs of popular cultural expression, including music and drama, programs aimed at youth and educational series.



WETV's GROWTH STRATEGY



Two years in development. WETV went on air at 4 P.M. GMT September 4, 1995 with its first transmission of programs from the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. The WETV network established for the event consisted of public and private broadcasters, including several major national networks, cable outlets and satellite distributors. The offering was unscrambled and offered free of cost to broadcasters as a public service to further the cause of women's equality. CIDA, Norwegian and Danish development agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Match International, the World Bank and WETV itself, funded the event, at a direct cost of less than \$500,000.

For the network, the preview was but a microcosm of WETV programming: for WETV will offer much more than in-depth coverage of international development conferences. However, our objective was to demonstrate that more meaningful public affairs programming built around a global event such as the UN Conference would be of interest, firstly to broadcasters and secondly to their viewers. In summary, the WETV preview achieved:

- daily coverage of the Conference via satellite to at least 25 broadcasting organizations covering up to 50 countries, with a reach of up to 300 million viewers;
- 12 45-minute supplementary programs on gender and development issues gathered from international agencies and the United Nations. Most stations broadcast this together with the daily satellite feed, in most cases, as a one-hour special examining the issues of gender and

related development issues, in depth.

- gave world-wide distribution, as part of the package, to the 5-Minute Project: vignettes produced by independent woman producers and examining the situation of women in their countries;
- gave free exposure to the UN50th and other issues, by folding in public service announcements from the United Nations and other agencies:

No other broadcaster approached WETV's 12 hours of programs on women and development issues: major international networks provided a 3-5 minute daily report, often focusing on Chinese political issues. WETV's strategy, in approaching broadcasters prior to Beijing, was to favour those who had already expressed interest in the concept. Our assumption was that they would give prime time to the transmissions and would take pains to involve their audiences and local NGOs in the event. Thus, the objective was not only to seek mass audiences but committed broadcasters. This proved to be a sound strategy; most of the stations which received the material broadcast it in high-audience slots and many repeated it and are still running the Mosaic programs, several weeks later. Initial reports indicate many stations organized additional local programming to achieve greater educational impact. And they are seeking to become WETV partners.

So, WETV achieved a further objective: building a network of Affiliates committed to airing the type of programming WETV and its Mosaic Partners will provide.



WETV's Beijing Programs

October 1995

*The preview program of the WETV network, **Voices and Visions**, was designed to help television viewers worldwide participate in the last major conference on women's issues this century: the culmination of two decades of effort to achieve greater equality for women. In cooperation with United Nations agencies and programs and other international organizations, WETV offered participating broadcasters a unique package ~ combining daily topical coverage by satellite with some of the best and latest documentary programs on gender and development issues. **Voices and Visions** had two parts:*

A Daily Satellite Transmission

Each day, September 4-15, WETV's all-woman team in Beijing shot, edited and uplinked up to 15 minutes of coverage of the event. These segments included some of the following:

- Front and Centre, a five-minute report on one of the 12 key issues of the conference, shot mainly at the NGO Forum with inputs from a variety of women's regional perspectives;
- What's Up? a daily, two-minute report by Zimbabwe journalist Rizu Hamid and Mirtha Villa, a reporter from Uruguay. They spoke with women from around the world and provided behind the scenes conference reports;
- Site sights, a one-minute daily visual taste of the events at the NGO and UN conferences;
- Express Yourself, gatherings of young women at the conference to exchange ideas, feelings and reactions to the hot issues of the day;
- Speaking Out, an opportunity for women to speak out on issues they care deeply about.

B Mosaic Program Showcase

Prior to the conference, WETV pre-packaged a series of 12 programs consisting of 35-40 minutes of videos on women's issues. These tapes were delivered by courier to participating broadcasters in advance of the conference. The pre-packaged programs included the following segments:

- Mosaic Program Showcase: documentaries produced or financed by WETV's partner organizations on issues related to the 12 conferences themes.
- The 5 Minute Project: Five-minute videos by independent women producers from around the world. These examine women's lives and concerns within their societies;
- Public Service Announcements: how our partners are addressing Women in Development issues (30 seconds each).

The Beijing coverage and these segments were put together by the participating broadcasters for a daily one-hour "special" on Beijing. Some also integrated segments into regular news and public affairs programs.

Mosaic Programs

WETV's pre-packaged program series was the Mosaic Program Showcase, which featured documentaries either produced or financed by our partner organizations on the 12 elements of the Platform for Action of the UN conference. The programs were:

1. "All We Expect," by the **Micronutrient Initiative**, Ottawa, Canada. Time: 24 minutes. This documentary looks

at nutrition as a basic human right. The problem of micronutrient deficiencies is examined from the point of view of women, using a 13-year-old girl from Zimbabwe as a thread which ties together the need for iron, iodine and vitamin A. Laden with images of women from Asia, Africa and Latin America, this video is both informative and entertaining. English.

2. "*Mirrors: Victims of War*," by the **International Committee of the Red Cross**. Time: 45 seconds. This public service announcement for the UN Geneva Conventions encourages respect for the Geneva Conventions. English & Spanish.

3. "*Larisa and the War*," by the **International Committee of the Red Cross**. Time: 14 minutes. An international Red Cross worker from the former Yugoslavia reports on the Bosnian war from her haven in London, using footage from Sarajevo and other locations in Bosnia. Larisa's own parents are still in the country. The program shows her work, including delivering a refugee child to its mother. English.

4. "*Tomorrow We Will Finish*," by **UNICEF**. Danish Television. Time: 25 minutes, 30 seconds. This drama is shot in Nepal. It is the story of a young girl, the abuse she endures and her daily work. The program offers insights into her intolerable situation. English.

5. "*Rights of Passage*," by **UNICEF**. Time: 26 minutes, 30 seconds. Shot in Nicaragua, India, Jamaica and Burkina Faso, this program examines puberty and conditions of poverty and abuse among young girls in Nicaragua. In India, we follow a young girl with a desire for education. In Jamaica, we visit the Women's Centre to talk to pregnant teenage girls. The Burkina Faso segment explores the practice of female genital mutilation. English.

6. "*Make a Little Difference*," by the **UN High Commission for Refugees**. Time: 14 minutes. This film interviews refugee children from India, Kenya, Uganda, Vietnam, Ethiopia and El Salvador. Their statements about their plight and dreams are highly moving. English & Spanish.

7. "*Refugee Women: The Courage to Move Onward*," by the **UN High Commission for Refugees**. Time: 15 minutes. This documentary looks at the situation of women in refugee camps. Their lives are fraught with the dangers of rape, abuse and family ostracization as they carry on with meeting daily needs for water and firewood. Shot in Iraq, Somalia, Honduras and Asia. English.

8. "*The Change Agents*," **NRK (Norwegian Broadcasting System)**. Time: 27 minutes, 50 seconds. This program shows the futility of some Northern development projects and demonstrates women's initiatives in sustainable projects such as one in Uganda. English.

9. "*Waves of One Sea*," by **International Baha'i**. Time: 21 minutes. This film focuses on African women, as they dis-

cuss the upcoming Beijing Conference at one of the preparatory committee meetings. English.

10. "*Brazil: The Bad Fairy Godmother*," by the **UN Development Program**. Time: 10 minutes. One in two births in Brazil are performed by Caesarean section. Tubal ligation operations are offered by politicians in return for votes. One in four women are sterilized. This film contrasts young girls protesting Caesarean sections with a woman who is expecting her 12th child. English & Spanish.

11. "*North-South: Our Mothers, Our Daughters*," by the **International Development Research Centre**. Ottawa, Canada. Time: 26 minutes. Young women in Zimbabwe are moving forward with confidence and assuming positions of power within the country. English.

12. "*Women in Societies*," by the **UN Department of Public Information**. Time: 10 x 3 minutes. This series of brief profiles shows women's achievements in different countries. English & Spanish.

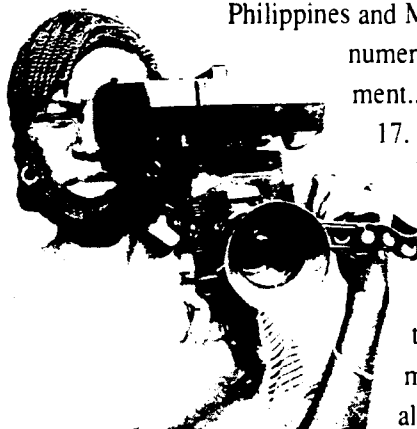
13. "*Houses Like Castles*," by the **Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs**. Time: 24 minutes. This documentary looks at the role of Arab women in Yemen, profiling an all-girls school, and an Arab wedding, while men, women and girls give their views on the veil and other aspects of traditional Arab life. English.

14. "*Smart Women Don't Smoke*," by the **World Bank**. Time: 9 minutes. A scathing denunciation of the tobacco industry with several moving testimonials and a revealing look into the industry's advertising practices. English

15. "*A Woman's Place*" series by the **United Nations Environmental Program**. (6 x 12 minutes each) & "*The Alarm Rings Softly*" - a mixture of theatre, music and documentary are melded into a powerful indictment against violence towards women. English.

16. "*Not for Ourselves Alone*," by **UNIFEM**. Time: 24 minutes. The travels of a Kenyan woman are followed to the Philippines and Mexico and in the process we are shown numerous examples of women's empowerment.. English.

17. "*Women of the Third World*," from the **World Bank's Global Links** series, details women's role in the production of food and products, with the observation that most of their contributions go unrecognized in the economic measurement of the world's gross national product. English.





A Beijing Moment

WETV journalist Rizu Hamid (left), Gertrude Mongella (middle), Secretary General, Fourth World Conference on Women, and David Nostbakken, President and CEO, WETV (right).

18. *"Women Eat Last,"* by the **World Food Program**. Time: 11 minutes. A disturbing look at the phenomena all too prevalent in some developing countries in which men and boys have priority in the family's food supply, as women and girls are deemed to be of lesser value. English.

19. *"Women: Key to the Future,"* by **UNFPA**. Time: 19 minutes. Focuses on environment and development issues, showing women from all walks of life, including traditionally male-dominated vocations. English & Spanish.

20. *"Letters From Our Lives,"* by **Canadian International Development Agency**. Time: 26 minutes. A look at the plight of disabled women in developing countries, which most often do not have the social programs to assist women as they struggle to gain control of their lives and provide for their families. English.

21. *"Agents of Change,"* by **Rockefeller Foundation**. 24 minutes. The road to industrialization often leads to environmental destruction in developing countries. Women can play a vital role in reversing this process if they are included in the decision-making process. English.

22. *"Zulia Mena,"* by **HABITAT**. Time: 12 minutes. The story of Zulia Mena, a community activist who tries to improve the living conditions of black families in Colombia. Spanish.

23. *"Palestine: Peace According to Husnieh"* by **UN Development Program**. Time: 11 minutes. An historical overview of the Arab-Israeli war contextualizes this story of Husnieh, a Palestinian woman entrepreneur who works in the textile manufacturing business. Husnieh travels to Italy to observe Western techniques and to visit an ILO training centre in Turin. Spanish.

23. *"The Forgotten Farmers"* by **FAO**. Time: 28 minutes. This program exposes the vulnerability of women in the food chain. Discrimination prevents ownership, yet the rigid division of labour places the responsibility for feeding the family mainly on women. This theme is explored on three continents, in various capacities ranging from farming and ranching to banking and credit procedures. Spanish.

24. *"Nutrition: A Global Challenge"* by **FAO**. Time: 17 minutes. The paradox of plenty is examined in relation to malnutrition and poverty. This program explores the role of women as family food providers and care-givers. Spanish.

25. *"Cameroon: A Root for Life"* by **UN Development Program**. Time: 10 minutes. Manioc, a bountiful crop in the rural areas, is being replaced in the cities by rice and bread, which need to be imported. This documentary shows how re-introducing manioc to the cities will increase employment and women's economic power and reduce the country's reliance on imports. Spanish.

5 Five Minutes from Around the World

The 5-Minute Project was an initiative of Women's International Productions, which has commissioned independent women producers from around the world to produce five-minute programs on key themes of the Beijing Conference. WETV, as an associate producer and co-sponsor, was proud to make these outstanding videos available as part of our Preview.

The videos represent a global forum in which women producers examine the lives of women and issues affecting them, within their own societies. The themes include problems of employment, human rights, war, decision-making, education, health, the environment, poverty, violence, the way women are depicted by the media and special concerns of the girl child.

HABITAT II OPPORTUNITY

As WETV's second major initiative in support of the United Nations, the network expects to offer global exposure to issues of human settlements during the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul, Turkey, June 3-14, 1996.

The complex issues of human settlements and shelter need to be illuminated in ways understandable to a broad audience. Television is the ideal medium to inform and educate, and so create a groundswell of public concern conducive to reaching consensus on a Global Plan of Action.

WETV is able to mount world-wide coverage of Habitat II thanks to the experience gained in offering broadcasters 12 days of live coverage of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, from Beijing, China, a site fraught with logistical difficulties.

WETV's "Beijing model" involves eight successive steps:

1. Consultation with official agencies, NGOs and broadcasters to determine how the complex conference issues can be communicated well to diverse audiences, in many countries.
2. Planning, drawing upon the insights of official organizations, and WETV's team of multi-disciplinary specialists in broadcasting and communication.
3. Mobilization of resources from foundations, bilateral agencies, NGOs, broadcasters and sponsoring organizations.
4. Recruitment of a world-class, professional, multi-lingual team, sensitive to the issues at stake.
5. Design of a satellite network of world reach, but at moderate cost, employing the latest in international communication technologies.
6. Promotion of the event to the international news media and NGOs, with the help of the U.N.'s own communication resources.
7. Program delivery to WETV's already-established network of Affiliate Broadcasters, and other occasional use stations and networks, with a potential reach of up to 300 million.
8. Evaluation of the results, with the aid of WETV's research resources within the International Development Research Centre and other research-oriented partner organizations.



"The preview of WETV, timed as it is to coincide with the Fourth World Conference on Women, is of great importance for the success and impact of this historic international gathering...I would like to invite the agencies and programs of the United Nations to alert WETV regarding film and video resources that could further amplify these issues."

— Gertrude Mongella, Assistant-Secretary-General and Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women



"The medium of television is critical if women in the developing world are to achieve their objectives of sustainable economic and social development and equality. Your decision to dedicate the preview of your global television broadcasting service to coverage of the 12 critical areas of concern...is a unique service to the women of the world."

— Noeleen Heyzer, Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)



"The service provided by WETV during this the UN's Fiftieth Anniversary year will be particularly helpful in reaching out to broad constituencies, old and new, across national, political and social boundaries, bridging gaps of understanding regarding the work of the United Nations. Congratulations on creating a television service that will bring the diverse voices of all regions to every corner of the globe."

UN50 Secretariat



WETV DRAWS WIDESPREAD SUPPORT

SENIOR FIGURES IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, BROADCASTING ORGANIZATIONS AND THE MEDIA SUPPORT CONCEPT

International Development Leaders

"WETV will bring the private sector and the public sector together in bringing the best programming on environmental issues to people around the world. The preview of WETV, timed as it is to coincide with the fourth World Conference on Women, is of great importance for the success and impact of this historic international gathering."

- Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Program.

"The modern media with its capacity to reach people everywhere, through videos, television, radio and the Internet really permits people to understand each other, to feel a sense of community across national and sectoral boundaries. WETV, this cooperative world television organization, is one of the most innovative examples of the new breed of television...it unites people throughout the world which enables them to communicate with countries and sectors in a very new way; it is a product of the innovative processes which were successfully launched as a result of Rio."

- Maurice Strong, President, The Earth Council.

"WETV is exploring innovative ways in which programming from all over the world will be "Mosaic-ed" back to people to describe to them what possible options they have to take control of their lives. Basically, WETV will make it possible to transmit all over the world messages and programming on development from a wide range of development organizations. We are pleased to be associated with it."

- Ashok Khosla, Chairman, Development Alternatives

"I congratulate WETV on this innovative concept. I look forward to cooperating with you in creating broad public awareness around the issues of the 2nd UN Conference on Human Settlements."

- Wally N'Dow, Secretary General, Habitat II.

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- Lelei LeLaulu, Public Affairs Director, UN50 Secretariat

"I am most favourably impressed by the vision and scope of your undertaking, the considerable efforts expended in its development and the broad and diverse base of international support it has attracted to date. I sincerely believe that WETV could constitute a major Canadian contribution to global understanding and culture, and I wish you every success in Beijing. CIDA is prepared to consider some further funding dependent upon demonstrable results following your Beijing launch..."

- Christine Stewart, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)

"WETV's mandate presents an interesting challenge and opportunity...I am very pleased to note that WETV will launch its service in conjunction with the Fourth World Conference on Woman, thus demonstrating Canada's strong commitment to equality for all women around the world."

- Raymond Chan, Secretary of State (Asia)

"Please accept our congratulations on the successful launch of WETV...As one of the co-founders of this initiative, we are extremely pleased with the response from the Affiliates and broad-based support for WETV."

- Gajaraj Dhanarajan, President, Commonwealth of Learning.

"This is to emphasize my highly positive assessment of the achievements accomplished by WETV ... I indeed became the first to pay in my contribution for a seat at the \$1,000,000 table of Patrons, and am much looking forward to realizing our full participation."

- Robert W.M. Birks, President, Panicaro Foundation

The Global Access Television Service

Broadcasting Organizations

We are happy to inform you that Ghana Broadcasting Organization is interested in signing on as an Affiliate of WETV. We look forward to a very dynamic and successful launching and subsequent operations of WETV.

- Mark Duodu, Director of Television, GBC.

"It is with great pleasure that I convey to you the interest of FESPACO in collaborating with WETV in the establishment and operation of the Global Access Television-WETV."

- Philippe Sawadogo, Secretary-General, Pan American Film and TV Festival, Ougadougou

"Congratulations to you and all the WETV team on the successful launch of the WETV service...as a preview of what's to come from the fully operational service, I think you've whetted many appetites."

- Peter Palframan, Director of Finance, Access Network, Edmonton, Alberta

"My admiration for what you have accomplished in the face of extreme adversity is unbounded. Somehow, once you're up and running, today's crises become yesterday's folklore."

- Peter Flemington, Director of Programming, Vision TV.

Congratulations! WETV has begun by doing precisely what you have said it should do. It is a clear alternative, well put together, closer to genuine people, not mere images, and very nicely shot and edited. Highest commendation and congratulations."

- Gerald Filson, International Baha'i Movement

"I write on instructions of our Prime Minister, Mr. Patrick Manning, to advise that Trinidad and Tobago is very interested in hosting WETV. We wish to invite you to meet with our Prime Minister here in Trinidad at your earliest convenience to discuss a financial package relevant to the opportunities presented."

- Louis See Ling, Chief Executive Officer, Trinidad & Tobago Television

"We stand ready to assist you in any way possible and would be happy to view your presentation for possible consideration by the Board of Directors..."

- Hubert H. Alleyne, Executive Director, Royal Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd.

"Voices and Visions did a superb job of addressing the human dimensions of the (Beijing) Conference...keep the human spirit, ethics and accessibility to many voices in focus."

- Vision TV, Toronto

The Global Access Television Service



"Thank you so much for your outstanding coverage of the Beijing Conference on Woman. I am astonished that it was covered each night and yet so well put together. As one who has worked all year empowering women in Nova Scotia via the Beijing Conference, "Voices and Visions" helps to interpret things on the spot."

- Vision TV Viewer Response log.

"We organized a daily program with live phone-in debates: many called just to congratulate us on the initiative and thank us for having contributed to opening a new space for information and exchange of ideas."

- Channel 4, Managua, Nigragua.

National and International News Media

"Former Vision TV head David Nostbakken and other Canadians have long understood how important being "on" television is to the developing countries of the southern hemisphere...That is why Nostbakken and company have founded WETV, a global access television service designed to show the southern hemisphere to the southern hemisphere and the southern hemisphere to the northern...I have a strong feeling WETV is going to make a difference."

- Peter Trueman, STARWEEK Magazine.

"WETV is one of those idealistic projects that the Western world shouldn't be doing at a time of constricted budgets. Yet our survival on this planet dictates that do it we must."

- Peter Newman, MacLean's Magazine.

"A Canadian-led group is trying to reverse Walt Disney Co.'s avalanche on to the world's television screens with a global satellite channel covering development issues. WETV has global vision."

- Michael Urlocker, Financial Post.

"Critic's Choice: - More than 200 million TV viewers around the world will follow events at the troubled 4th UN World Conference on Women thanks to a preview of WETV, a new Canadian-based international television channel."

- Toronto Star.

"Voices and Visions, the daily transmission by WETV of the Fourth World Conference on Women...is one of the efforts of the mass media to focus on women's issues. WETV is dedicated to redressing the balance in which media coverage is skewed to a male perspective."

-The Earth Times, Beijing, China.

"Move over Ted Turner and Rupert Murdoch: before too long, Canada will be elbowing its way into your space as an international satellite broadcaster. The world will be watching the Beijing Conference and will take the measure of a unique, Canadian-grown international television service as well."

- Playback, Toronto.

The Global Access Television Service