

technologies. A \_\_\_\_\_ now makes available the objectives of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada:

- to provide a united national voice for Women's Institutes of Canada,
- to initiate national programs and to provide resource material,
- to provide a medium of inter-communication among the units of the Federation,
- to provide leadership in the promotion of Canadian agriculture and other aspects of community living,
- to develop responsible citizens through the study of issues of national and international importance.

The First International Conference of Rural Women was held in London in 1929. Forty-six women from 24 countries, including Canada, attended the 4-day conference. In 1930 a conference was held in Vienna where it was decided that a liaison committee of all rural woman's organizations would be formed. Three years later, at the Stockholm conference, the committee was named the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW). This organization now operates in 70 countries and has a membership of nine million in 365 member societies. The ACWW has consultative status with the United Nations and is affiliated with the United Nations organizations of FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO, and UNIFEM.

### **Current Projects**

Nationally, the FWIC is concerned with issues of rural child care, farm safety, legal rights, fair pay, renewal and restructuring, literacy, health, stress on farm families, and financial planning.

Internationally, the ACWW supports programs with concerns such as nutrition, leadership training, farming techniques, money management, family planning, HIV/AIDS awareness, small business development and skill training. A program entitled Water for All Fund helps by providing water tanks, bore wells, hand pumps, education and training. It also supports programs that help improve health and hygiene.

More than one hundred years after the first Women's Institute was formed, this institution continues in its endeavours to improve the lives of rural families.

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### **Selected Publications and Links:**

Witter, S. R. (1979). An historical study of adult education in two Canadian women's organizations: The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and the Young Women's Christian Association of Canada 1870 – 1978. [Unpublished thesis]. Vancouver: University of British Columbia.

Douglas, J. (Ed.). (1958) Modern pioneers for home and country 1909-1959. British Columbia: British Columbia's Women's Institute.

Kechnie, M. C. (2003). Organizing rural women, The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, 1897 – 1919. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.