

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON WOMENS EMPOWERMENT, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND SECURITY

THEME ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND GENDER

Monrovia, Liberia 7- 8 March 2009

Introduction

During the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, Peace and Security, a two-day session on the gender dimensions of climate change, environmental protection, and sustainable development was organized. The purpose of the session was to strengthen women's participation in sustainable development and climate change; to make leaders aware of women's roles in natural resource management and the linkage between gender and climate change; and to highlight the various sources of financing that could enhance women's leadership. The theme lead for the session and its preparations was Aira Kalela, Special Representative on Climate Change and Gender of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the reporters were Hannie Meesters and Rebecca Pearl from the Global Climate Change Alliance.

The climate change session attracted about 100 participants from a wide range of countries and sectors (see annex). High level participants included H.E. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland; H.E. Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland; H.E. Astrid Thors, Minister of Migration and European Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Finland; H.E. Catherine Namugala, Minister of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources, Zambia; H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Minister for Environment and Tourism, Namibia; H.E. Dr. Eugene H. Shannon, Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy, Liberia; Margot Wallström, Vice-President, Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy, European Commission; Monique Barbut, CEO, Global Environment Facility; Anna Tibajuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT and Päivi Kairamo-Hella, Secretary General and Chief of Staff, Office of the President of Finland.

The session generated the Monrovia Call for Action on Gender and Climate Change, which will form the basis of ongoing collaborations between the session leaders and participants. A rich debate concentrated on four main issues and concrete recommendations were presented on further action. Two side events on gender and climate change, organized by the Global Gender and Climate Alliance and Oxfam, were integrated into the program of the climate change session.

This report contains three main parts:

- (i) Monrovia Call for Action on Climate Change and Gender
- (ii) Recommendations on enabling the participation of women in mitigation and adaptation of climate change
- (iii) Summary of discussions on climate change and gender

CALL FOR ACTION ON GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE INTERNATIONAL BY THE INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON WOMEN' S EMPOWERMENT, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY MONROVIA, LIBERIA 7- 8 March, 2009

We participants in the Gender and Climate Change sessions representing women leaders of governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations, academia, media and other stakeholders thank Their Excellencies, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of the Republic of Liberia and President Tarja Halonen of the Republic of Finland for convening the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership, Development, International Peace and Security 7-8 March in Monrovia, Liberia. The colloquium provided a forum to reflect on the impact of climate change in developing countries on the daily lives of women, in particular, and also women's possibilities to participate in mitigation and adaptation to climate change. In the light of our deliberations we:

Recognise that climate change will undermine most seriously efforts to poverty eradication and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, so that it raises serious questions of climate justice and equity. Recognise that a gender sensitive strategy is a precondition to the rising challenges of sustainable development.

Note with concern the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change presented in its 4th Assessment Report, that climate change may affect most strongly the poorest regions and people, especially women, young people and children through impacts on agriculture, food security and availability of water, which are traditionally women's tasks in many developing countries.

Recognise that women and young people have the skills and capacities to adapt to climate change, and they can also be powerful actors e.g. by planting trees, maintaining forests and developing ecological food production and sustainable household energy which are also creating new sustainable jobs. Likewise they can play central role in changing the consumption and production patterns to sustainable ones. Thus awareness raising, information and using traditional knowledge as well strengthening women's networks is important.

Acknowledge the historic momentum of the ongoing negotiations on a new global and comprehensive climate agreement and the commitment of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to agree on the new commitments and action in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Call upon all Parties and relevant intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations and other stakeholders to co-operate and to do their utmost to achieve the new agreement on climate change, and in this process pay particular attention to encouraging women to participate in the negotiations and urge parties to incorporate gender considerations into the new agreement in order to lay foundation for gender-sensitive efforts to implement the agreement in the most cost effective way.

Further call upon governments and other stakeholders to create an enabling environment for participation of women at the local, national regional and international level in decision making on climate change and in activities to implement these decisions.

Request governments, the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN system in the context of delivering as one, other relevant international organisations and financing institutions in the context of current and coming programmes and priorities to support the implementation of the climate commitments and actions by planning for information sharing, training and other forms of capacity building to encourage women's participation in the mitigation and adaptation activities including risk prevention and management as well as making the necessary resources and technology available both for men and women. Special consideration need to be given to developing gender sensitive financing.

Recommendations for further action

In the discussions under the theme climate change and gender four main issues were considered:

- (i) basic information in the gender related impacts of the climate change
- (ii) what can women do to address climate change
- (iii) financing climate activities by women
- (iv) support and cooperation by the UN agencies for gender specific climate issues.

The main recommendations for more efficient participation by women in combating climate change included the following:

Information, awareness rising, and knowledge

- Sufficient, understandable information on the impacts of climate change on the daily lives of women and possibilities of women to act on climate change should be provided by governments, NGOs and local communities.
- Awareness raising on the climate change at the local and national level as the prerequisite for women and men to participate at all levels in mitigation and adaptation to the climate change should be supported.
- Traditional knowledge of women that depend on natural resources for their livelihood, adaptation (drought tolerant crops, seeds, plants, water storage etc) and mitigation measures and should be better utilised.
- Information, knowledge and weather forecasts and early warning systems should be made available at the local, national and regional levels for both women and men to develop the relevant adaptation activities including risk management and prevention in real time.

Capacity building and women's networks

- Gender specific capacity building for mitigation and adaptation should be developed. Capacity building actions should include, among others, the above mentioned awareness raising, information, knowledge, education, training and forecasting systems.
- Existing women's networks and organisations such as the Network of the Women Ministers and Leaders on Environment and Global Gender and Climate Change Alliance should be strengthened. Women organisations at all levels from the local level to the international level should be supported.

Environmentally sound consumers

- The role of women as environmentally sound consumers should be supported by relevant consumer information, labelling of products and price policies.

Mitigation and adaptation related job opportunities for women

- Sustainable mitigation and adaptation action, such as renewable household energy systems (solar, biogas, biomass, energy saving devices (solar cookers, stoves), maintaining tree nurseries and planting trees, ecological regenerative agriculture should be developed and supported and in so doing create job opportunities that women would also get decent jobs and improve the income of their families.

Mitigation of impacts of major climate related social and natural developments and catastrophes

- Gender specific programmes of urbanisation (housing, waste management, water supply, food security) should be developed.
- Gender specific programmes should be developed to address the social, economic and environmental problems of migration, conflicts and natural catastrophes caused by climate change.

Funding of mitigation, adaptation and capacity building

- Gender considerations should be included in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all funding of climate activities by financial institutions, including the regional funds and those managed by the GEF, in particular and the Adaptation Fund. The REDD and

Carbon trading should be developed so that also women would have access to these cooperative arrangements.

Cooperation within the UN system for support of participation of the women in influencing climate change

- The Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other Rio Conventions as well as the UN System should strengthen their synergies and cooperation to deliver as one and support the participation of women in the adaptation and mitigation to the climate change through capacity building, training, information sharing and technology.

Participation of youth in climate activities

- Role of women in informing and raising the awareness of youth should be supported while providing training, education and increasing the participation of youth and funding for their relevant climate activities. In this regard, governments should give particular attention to youth priorities, e.g. on cleaner energy sources.

Summary of Discussions; Session one: Gender related impacts of climate change - What women can do?

H.E. Astrid Thors, Minister of Migration and European Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Finland opened the session by posing questions: what climate change might mean for Liberia and other developing countries, how to increase information as decision-makers and consumers, how to ensure that a gender perspective is included in this crucial year of climate change negotiations, and how to handle issues of capacity development, finance, and sustainable development.

Lorena Aguilar, Senior Gender Advisor, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), provided an overview on gender and climate change. Women and men face different vulnerabilities. For every one man that falls victim to disasters, four women also perish. However, we must be careful not to be simplistic and only see women as victims. Worldwide, compared to men, women tend to have more limited access to resources that would enhance their capacity to adapt to climate change—including land, credit, agricultural inputs, decision-making bodies, technology and training services. Women are powerful agents of change and their leadership is critical. Women have always been leaders in community revitalization and natural resource management, although women are substantially less represented in climate change decision-making bodies. Women's empowerment should be one of the priorities in adaptation and risk reduction strategies/initiatives. Strategies going forward include international policy action on this issue, encourage gender-sensitive climate change finance mechanisms, and conduct a systematic process to promote gender mainstreaming with the UNFCCC.

The ensuing discussion included the human rights perspective, including the right to water; women have a role to play in reducing emissions through REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) programs and land ownership is critical for this to happen at national level; gender should be included in Copenhagen outcome document; people living in extreme conditions (desertification as an example) are seeing the effects of climate change already and should not be forgotten in the increased attention on forests, etc.

H.E. Dr. Eugene H. Shannon, Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy, Liberia indicated that Africa is expected to face more disasters and drought as a result of climate change, which will have impacts on water, food security, education, health, and housing. Up to 16% or 230 million of Africa's population will face water scarcity by 2025, and 32% or 460 million people will be living in water-stressed countries by that time. Liberia intends to develop a rural energy program that is dependent on renewable energies, including hydropower, solar energy, and biomass fuels.

H.E. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland, shared her personal experiences in this area and indicated that climate change is one of Finland's main priorities and that the linkages with gender are important. The Greenbelt Movement is a good example of women's leadership in reducing the threat of climate change. What can be done together here in the African region? Women need to be central to the Copenhagen agreement. North- South and East-West cooperation has started and should continue.

Margot Wallström, Vice-President, Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy, European Commission indicated that the people most likely to suffer from climate change are those least responsible, for example in Africa. In the Asian Tsunami, women were seen going towards the sea instead of running away in attempt to save their families – this is descriptive of women's overall role and responses. Predictable food sources and production are threatened by climate change, and women have the primary role in household food production. Europe has recognized gender equality as a key theme for development and a cross cutting issue.

H.E. Catherine Namugala, Minister of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources, Zambia indicated that it is critical to raise awareness at all levels and to create political will. In developing countries, including Zambia, women are traditionally responsible for regenerative ecological agriculture, which can provide a good mitigation tool. Empowerment of women in planning and decision-making as well as in implementing measures to adapt and mitigate climate change will make our common efforts more effective especially at the local level. In energy, forestry and water resources management, women, who are primary users of these resources, can promote good practices that prevent or reduce climate change. It is essential that women are provided with equal access to the knowledge, resources and technology which are necessary to influence climate change

Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, noted that adaptation is going to be a household word. There is a tremendous challenge at the intersection of urbanization and climate change, which needs a paradigm shift. About 1.2 billion slum dwellers are already in crisis, and their situation will deteriorate in the face of climate change. Local government actors are at the forefront.

H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Minister for Environment and Tourism, Namibia indicated that her country is arid, dry, and very vulnerable to climate change – 80% of the north of Namibia is now under water due to floods. Climate change affects social and cultural settings – schools are closed. Climate change is a security issue – communities are fighting over grazing land. There is an increase in diseases through climate change, including malaria and cholera. Women need to be involved starting from the planning stages of mitigation and adaptation initiatives. Linkages need to be made between different conventions, such as Biodiversity and Desertification, that do address gender in order to strengthen mainstreaming of gender in the climate change convention.

H.E. Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland noted that we must link with the broader movement on climate justice and remember that climate change is not a natural phenomenon.

The ensuing discussion included the need to mobilize communities; use sustainable forms of energy; tensions between development and reducing emissions; the vulnerabilities of women with disabilities; leveraging the other conventions in order to further the gender debate in the climate change convention; engaging parliamentarian networks; questioning gender patterns in existing divisions of labor (why do women have to fetch the water?); climate change causes increases of violence against women; disaggregated information needed to make informed decisions; youth are particularly affected by climate change and should be represented on delegations; Angie Brooks Center should take an inventory of what is being done on gender and climate change; UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol are conspicuously silent on gender and it should not just be a subtext; men should not be forgotten as we are talking about gender equality; emphasizing women as agents of change; change of weather patterns due to climate change confuse rural farmers; apart from gender, we need to give specific attention to women since gender balance currently does not exist; gender and women's participation need to be incorporated in follow-up to Kyoto Protocol; brown and green agenda are interlinked.

Session two: Financing and cooperation within the UN system of Women's climate activities

Monique Barbut, CEO, Global Environment Facility reviewed GEF's gender mainstreaming efforts to date. A portfolio review revealed that 40% of GEF projects included gender mainstreaming, but that those gender-related activities happened by chance. A woodstove project had positive impacts on women, and an HIV/AIDS project promoted women's empowerment and health through better farming methods and training for women. GEF has a public participation policy. A gender focal point has been assigned to conduct gender mainstreaming practices and strengthen the capacity of GEF staff on gender. We hope to bring gender explicitly into the upcoming replenishment of the GEF and we have articulated GEF support for the Angie Brooks Center in Liberia.

Liane Schalatek, Associate Director, Heinrich Böll Foundation North America provided an overview on gender and climate change finance. Climate change funds have not served poor populations and women. About \$68 billion per year is required for adaptation and \$380 billion per year in 2030 for mitigation. At the same time, \$3.5 trillion is being spent on financial crisis. Adequate, predictable, additional funds – beyond development assistance – should be mandatory and not be categorized as aid. Climate finance could be something as simple as debt relief –

countries don't have to pay back debt, those funds could be used for adaptation purposes. Gender equity is smart climate finance. Of more than 1400 CDM (Clean Development Mechanism) projects, only a handful have been funded for projects in least developed countries – India has hundreds of projects and all of Africa has about twenty. The procedure for registering CDM projects is cumbersome and costly. It is a market based instrument that favors large scale projects and large countries. Strategies to address this situation: include the poor and women, focus on small scale off-grid projects, follow example of Grameen Shakti in Bangladesh which links small scale solar with women's empowerment. Donor countries that are gender champions should push for gender to be included in climate change finance mechanisms.

June Budhooram, UNFCCC Secretariat delivered the statement of Mr. Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, in which he highlighted that the climate change conference in Poznan last year fully endorsed intensive negotiations in 2009 and that there was a major success in operationalizing the Adaptation Fund with direct access by eligible developing countries. He explained that there are four interrelated political prerequisites for the Copenhagen agreement: 1) Clarity on ambitious targets for developed countries (Obama goals are good first step, EU is implementing policy goals, Japan will announce mid-term target); 2) Clarity on nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) by developing countries – main concerns of developing countries are poverty reduction and economic growth; 3) Clarity on financial and technological support; and 4) Clarity on institutional framework

June Budhooram also mentioned that gender and climate change is addressed through the link with sustainable development. In this regard, work on gender is done using the National Adaptation Programs of Action (NAPA) and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) Fund with a view to identifying projects that target improving water resource management for women, as well as projects where women play an important role in agricultural productivity. The secretariat also works with country NAPA teams in LDCs given that the NAPA guidelines include a consultation with communities which include women and other affected groups. The secretariat is also conducting a CDM pilot study to determine how to give women better access through bundling of projects in rural areas small initiatives. In adaptation, a study is underway for assessing gender-specific vulnerability to climate change and mainstreaming gender-specific vulnerability in the implementation of adaptation action on the ground.

Janet Macharia, Senior Gender Advisor, UNEP highlighted the Secretary General's initiative on climate change and the united approach needed by all UN agencies. UNEP has a new focus on the green economy as the "new big deal." We can leverage Paragraph 248 of the Beijing Platform, which notes women's role in environmental management.

Marie Aminata Khan, Gender Focal Point, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity highlighted that it is important to mainstream gender into the guidance geared toward the national level. Women need to be part of that planning process and with IUCN we are working with guidelines. Gender is on the agenda for the next meeting of the Joint Liaison Group for the three conventions. We need to support local NGOs, feeding them information so they can be more effective and empowering local communities so that their voices can be heard.

Sergio A. Zelaya-Bonilla, Gender Focal Point, Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification noted that drylands make up 33-41% of earth's surface and are home to more than 2 billion people, who are the hardest hit by climate change. Is it possible for awareness to be built in aligning the UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAPs) and the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs)? Could REDD be an opportunity for women? Can we table the issue of soils in the Copenhagen agreement? Key issues are the empowerment of women, women's rights, and local development by local people. It is interesting that the convention that has Africa in the title (UNCCD) is the most undernourished.

Thanh Xuan Nguyen, Executive Director, Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) noted that although women are half of the world's population, they have not had equal opportunity to participate in decision-making on strategies related to climate change. In 2007, WEDO, along with UNDP, IUCN, and UNEP, co-founded the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA), a group of over 25 UN agencies and civil society organizations working together to ensure that climate change policies, initiatives and finance mechanisms at all levels are gender responsive. A gender approach must be included in this important year of climate negotiations - to provide full participation of women at all stages, from research and analysis to design and implementation of mitigation and adaptation strategies. Government and civil society representatives alike can ensure that national positions papers on climate change reference gender equality and women's leadership, and can ask serve as the gender representative on UNFCCC delegations. We invite the institutions here to join the GGCA, participate in GGCA trainings, and connect with the GGCA advocacy team at the climate change negotiations.

Isatou Gaye, UN Economic Commission for Africa, outlined UNECA's coordination of climate change activities with UNEP, African Union, NEPAD, and the African ministerial environment meeting. Activities include mainstreaming climate change issues, working with the African Development Bank's climate change fund, and collaborating with the EU-Africa partnership on climate change.

A Youth Forum organized prior to the Colloquium discussed climate change and environmental sustainability, and sent a delegation to the climate change session. The youth delegates noted that half of the world's population is under the age of 24 and the most vulnerable groups are women and youth. Their recommendations were to increase youth participation in climate change initiatives by bringing climate change information into schools, to ensure that Liberia and other governments adopt cleaner energy and environmental practices, and that foundations and donors consider youth involvement.

Concluding session

Minister Astrid Thors presented a brief summary of the discussions and recommendations based on it. She also presented a draft Call for Action on Climate Change which was adopted with some amendments to be presented to the plenum of the Colloquium.

The Call for Action will be then presented by the Presidents of Finland and Liberia to the UN Secretary General, the President of the General Assembly of the UN, the Executive Secretary of UNFCCC and the President of the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC.

**Participant List - Climate Change session
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and Security
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High Level Participants:

H.E. Tarja Halonen
President of Finland

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