

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS MS REJOYCE MABUDAFHASI ON MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE ON POLICY OPTIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

CSD 19: 11 MAY 2011- 15H00-18H00- CONFERENCE ROOM 4

Eradication of poverty came out sharply at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 held in South Africa. Though the inequalities were emphasized but to date there are no visible implementations done among the most vulnerable groups who are women, youth and people with disabilities especially in rural areas. We take note that even the UN agencies do not strongly address these issues.

The CSD emphasizes the active and coherent participation by the UN agencies and programs at the highest level however we still fail the majority who are women, youth and people with disabilities. How do we hope to eradicate poverty especially in the developing countries.

Waste and Chemicals

Today, we talk about waste and chemicals but what we see is this vulnerable group that is mostly negative affected. The majority of women and youth work on farms using chemicals without protective clothing and not being told about the negative health impact on them. This is one of the examples.

It is upon us that the waste and chemicals benefit them by creating jobs and also them to be entrepreneurs that they participate in the economy.

Mining

How much are we assisting the vulnerable group and encouraging them to be mining engineers, scientists, miners and owning companies in the mines or the mines themselves. The little we see, is when they sell a bit of food, fruits in dishes or drinks. That needs to change as mostly those mines are in their land but they remain poor and at times illiterate.

Transport

Transport becomes a challenge for them to participate in the development of economy especially in the rural areas. They may have big fields, have good crops, but how do they take it to the market, let alone to export. They themselves walk long distances at times to the fields and also have to carry their crops even to their homes. Roads are a dream that will never come through.

No matter how hard our vulnerable can work, as long as we do not address these challenges, the inequalities will always remain.

Women as custodians of the environment as they understand it better. What are they benefiting from it? The empowerment, skills development, technology and finance to name a few. When will they reach them? How do we expect them to fully participate in the economy? Equality will remain a pie in the sky and poverty eradication will never be achieved with us the vulnerable and developing countries.

I thank you!