

Intervention women major group : CSD draught theme 26 febr. 2008

We thank Canada and the Czech republic on behalf of the EU for their statements on underlying causes of draughts and the need for rights based approach including secure access to land.

The face of the natural resource manager and farmer is primarily female, more and more so in draught stricken areas where more and more men have left and leave the burden on the women.

Secure access to and control over natural resources, especially land and water are severely lacking for women. The equitable use of common pool resources such as grazing land and water resources is essential and must take into account indigenous practices. The ability to inherit and own land must be guaranteed to all women as already incorporated e.g. in CEDAW, CSW recommendations and Johannesburg plan of action.

Gender sensitizing is necessary but not enough to change the prevailing misunderstanding. We call for analyses of gender differentiated impacts of draughts; we need gender disaggregated data for monitorin

We call on the parties of the UNCCD Convention to really make the implementation process more participatory and really involve major groups as actors. We call on the CSD and the parties to create a participation mechanism and facilitate major groups to bring about active participation and input especially of women's organizations, indigenous peoples and youth. We refer to earlier policy statements of UNCCD as e.g. mentioned in the report of IFAD in cooperation with WOCAn and others from the women major group (available outside).

As women are primary managers and providers of potable water, sanitation and irrigation, national WATSAN – cultural and gender sensitive – policies and training programs must be established or improved to strengthen knowledge of water distribution and ensuring equitable access. Sanitation facilities, including use of dry sanitation must be made available.

Aadaptation and mitigation practices that attempt to address climate change and draught –must consider the impact on women and their livelihoods, as they are often the hardest hit in times of draught and other severe environmental disturbances brought on by climate change and mismanagement.

Women must be brought into the dialogue and provided with decision-making roles related to climate change issues, measures and benefits of financing mechanisms created. A specific adaptation fund for women should be created to assist women in coping with climate change, draught crises and build capacity to finding alternative resources and livelihoods.

Thank you.

Lesha Witmer,

Chair comm.. Sustainable Development, Netherlands Women's Council, on behalf women major group CSD.