

Intervention by women major group 13th May (afternoon) on review CSD13:

- We are happy that progress has been made in recognizing the right to water. We congratulate the Netherlands on their decision and hope their example will be followed.
- The right to sanitation is equally important. In order to reach MDG3 emancipation and empowerment of women – safe and separate sanitation for girls in schools will bring up the amount of girls actually going and staying in school. Better sanitation and hygiene will bring down the amount of women contracting infections during pregnancy and bring down the amount of women dying at childbirth. But still: the design of toilets and the placement is done as if there are no differences and decisions on type and location are mostly made by men only. We recommend Un Habitat for putting the involvement of local women in the design phase in their criteria for projects.
- Land rights and safe tenure have been mentioned on this floor a lot this last week in relation to agriculture; it goes without saying that this is an equal important issue when it comes to water and sanitation services and women and their families willing and able to invest in sanitation.
- There is general agreement on the importance of increasing community resilience to climate change related disasters by protecting natural resources and the conservation of ecosystems and the services they provide, through activities such as conservation and restoration of mangroves and coral reefs, and integrated water resources management, and the need to enhance and support efforts in this regard, in particular in developing countries. Women, youth and indigenous peoples should be facilitated to play their “logical”, important role in that.
- Bringing down the amount of water used is an important issue in the developed countries and in agriculture in general. Women are amazed that in this issue suddenly their role as the household manager and farmer is not recognized when it comes to developing policies and strategies to bring down water consumption. We strongly recommend governments start to work more with women’s organizations And facilitate them to do so
- Local water supply services in slumps and rural areas by local water vendors and small companies is often seen as a problem, instead of part of the solution. We urge donors to be open to new solutions and include other management systems and capacity building for local water and sanitation providers in their support schemes. Examples like the water vendors cooperation in Nigeria or the Nepal program schooling the poorest women and making their activities from close to slavery into an excreta removal business.
- Water for energy and energy for water are much more an issue than in 2005. We do need to stress however that solutions have to also be socially viable and sustainable in terms of environmental, economic and social impact especially for local communities.

Renewable energy solutions should be seriously considered when looking at energy for water.