

Statement by Women Major Group at the CSD-14 session (2 May 2006)

1. Issue: Energy Accessibility

We thank the members of our governments and NGOs who contributed to the discussions during the Africa Regional Implementation meeting which UN-ECA has explained to us this morning. We suggest that it should be considered that accessibility to modern energy is always linked to poverty alleviation efforts and should take into account the needs of women and children who suffer more due to the roles they undertake to sustain the household energy related tasks. Solutions to accessibility to modern energy should therefore involve a combination of gender and poverty alleviation efforts that focus on energy for productive end-use.

2. Issue: Cross-Cutting: Assessment of energy initiatives and capacity building

i) We recommend for inclusion of women technologists, engineers, social scientists and other skills, in the assessment reviews. Effort should be made to involve skills provided by women in the different sectors which link with energy, such as water, transport, health, sanitation and others.

ii) Although several actions have been implemented within the energy accessibility agenda, those strengthening the capacity of energy planners and developers have dealt with gender mainstreaming in a limited way. Yet, the case studies written by ENERGIA in Africa (especially examples from Uganda, Ghana, Botswana and Senegal), show that where gender mainstreaming is undertaken, there is a positive move towards reduction in cases where women are excluded in energy access related projects. We therefore recommend that:

- Capacity building on how to consider different roles, relationships, needs and decision making are for women and men, in policy and project planning, implementation and monitoring, should be promoted by different practitioners, donors, governments and research institutions, because it enables realisation of increased participation and benefits for both women and men and no longer, men only.

- Case studies on gender responsive projects with good practices (such as those in GEF big and Small Grant programme, UNEP funded projects, World Bank, European Union, UNDP and others), should be documented in ways that can highlight possible replications to contribute to energy accessibility, elimination of in-door air pollution and cases of energy for industrial development.

iii) If greater attention is paid on energy needs and concerns of women, there can be progress made in accessing energy and ensuring social economic development for now and future generations. As such, we recommend that:

- women must be involved in the selection, promotion and use of alternative energy resources that are more energy efficient and environmentally friendly

- energy and other sectors that have component of energy (water, health, transport), should increase women's participation in various levels of decision making and provide systems and capacity building that enable such women to contribute to decisions for energy access that takes

into consideration the needs of women, men and children in ways that support the household and entrepreneurial settings.

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