

Intervention during “Interlinkages session“ may 4 2006 afternoon by Lesha Witmer (NVR) on behalf of the women major group and prepared by Ulrike Roehr (WECF).

To start with a true but also very cynical remark: yes, women being 2/3 of the world’s poor are experts in dealing with disasters. Women are the victims, but also they have a lot of experience in disaster management - their experience however is rarely taken into account.

Because of women’s marginalized status and dependence on local natural resources, their domestic burdens are increased, including additional work to collect water, food and fuel. In some areas climate change generates resource shortages and unreliable job markets – as also mentioned by our colleagues from the workers major group - , which lead to increased male-out migration.

Lack of control by women over natural resources, technologies and credit add to the problem. Just as the problem of lack communication tools – something addressed by women time and again during the WSIS (world summit on the information society). Women are therefore less likely to receive timely, critical information.

Tapping women’s interest in disaster mitigation and preparedness by putting them into decision-making and expert roles has led to improved community welfare during and after disasters. Ensuing strategies, including gender-sensitive target group analysis, are crucial – Bangladesh and recently India have good examples of community based solutions involving all.

Sustainable energy sources are not available to women; because of that they are forced to use unsustainable energy sources. Thus one important challenge is to provide women and men with sustainable energy. This will not only improve women’s situations and situation of the rural poor, but also help to improve their living standards and to help to mitigate climate change.

More technology and technological solutions were mentioned by Dr. Pachauri. The challenge is to develop or adopt these technologies to be suitable, usable and affordable for SME’s, civil society and especially women, being the main future users. Government has a role in that, this can not be left to private enterprise alone.