

Improving Health by Reducing Indoor Air –Pollution from Traditional Fuel Use

Good morning,

Indoor air pollution resulting from the lack of access to cleaner energy for cooking and heating has considerable health impacts, especially on women and children. Although there is increasing interest on this issue, the challenges of household energy have not been sufficiently reflected in policies, funding allocations or strong political-will at any level. In this context the Women's Major Group would like to associate itself with the position of the comments made by Germany on behalf of the EU, WHO and other distinguished delegates that have identified priorities and actions to address the gender dimensions of Indoor Air Pollution and adds to the following:

1. Clear commitments from donors and distinguished member state representatives to endorse the proposal made by the United Nations Millennium Project to halve the number of women without effective access to clean cooking and heating fuels, and make improved cooking technologies widely available by 2015.
2. Indoor air pollution is an inter-sectoral issue. An integrated approach and the involvement of all actors to address its gendered impacts and reduce the hazards involved. Countries should revisit existing sectoral policies of energy, health and education and make the necessary interventions for including Indoor Air Pollution mitigation measures.

3. To establish national standards to demonstrate the commitment to achieve World Health Organization standards in a time bound manner.
4. To establish mechanisms for regular evaluation of available data on indoor air pollution and its impacts in comparison to the benefits of improved health, education and income opportunities that increased access to cleaner energy fuels for cooking and heating bring to women.
5. For undertaking the above mentioned actions capacity building and training should be a national priority. Education to increase awareness to create a shift in the present energy use practices and behavioral changes should consider school and professional curricula, local kitchen management as well as technological options and safety issues.
6. Promotion of existing technologies in developing countries should consider the local and cultural and gender contexts to ensure acceptability and sustainable use.
7. International and regional initiatives should be geared towards accelerating the deployment and lowering the cost of cleaner energy technologies. Specifically those that directly improve access to household energy and reduce Indoor Air Pollution.
8. Link energy programs with income generating activities to improve the intra-house conditions so as to enable a move up the “energy-ladder” and address gender issues and the value of women’s labour that may

otherwise impede adoption of new energy technologies.

9. Finally, we would like to conclude that the adverse impacts of Indoor Air Pollution can be addressed. Practical and achievable solutions are already available such as the improved cook stove programmes in East Africa where technologies have been transferred and up-scaled in Kenya and Uganda. These initiatives have been supported by partnership between NGOs, women local entrepreneurs and the governments.