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Submission to the SBSTA: Views and information on the effectiveness of the Nairobi Work Programme.

Submitted by GenderCC - Women for Climate Justice, August 2010

During the thirty-second Subsidiary Bodies meeting that took place in Bonn from 31 May to 10 June, the SBSTA recognized the work of the NWP in advancing scientific and technical knowledge on adaptation, impacts and vulnerability; as well as in engaging stakeholders, catalyzing action, and disseminating relevant information and knowledge. It also noted the importance of continuity of these activities. The SBSTA invited Parties and organizations to submit views and information on the effectiveness of the NWP to the secretariat by 16 August 2010. GenderCC - Women for Climate Justice welcomes this opportunity to express its views on the effectiveness of the NWP.

1. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NWP

The NWP has been important since one of the key components of global action on climate change is measures to adapt to changes that are already unavoidable; and climate change is expected to have a very significant impact on the livelihoods of vulnerable communities, particularly women in many rural communities who are already being forced to adapt their way of life due to the changing environment.

NWP has been a good mechanism for catalyzing action on adaptation, and it has been useful in facilitating the exchange of experiences, knowledge and information among parties and partner organizations. There has been a lot of work undertaken by the various partners who have been involved in the programme, however, the key question is around whether this programme has involved, reached and positively impacted the lives of the many vulnerable groups including women in communities in the Least Development Countries (LDCs), the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and in developing countries?

Women in these countries have been adapting to climate variability for many years and this may ultimately enhance their resilience. It is important to understand how NWP harnessed their knowledge and experience of adaptation. Even though women have valuable knowledge about adapting to climate change, the magnitude of future hazards may exceed their adaptive capacity, especially given their current conditions of marginalization. As a result, it is important to get them involved in any strategies that will come up with adaptive measures and solutions for their communities.

2. RELEVANCE OF NWP TO THE UNFCC PROCESS

GenderCC would like to appreciate the efforts made through the NWP to improve understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation especially to the vulnerable groups like the developing countries, the SIDS and the least developed countries. Mitigation measures had been viewed as the saviour to climate change impacts but they are not enough hence the need for adaptation measures. The NWP provides a forum where interested groups can give their inputs through submissions by various groups, workshops held on some of the 9 work areas of the NWP and expert group meetings. It is through better understanding that parties will grasp the magnitude of the impacts of climate change which will lead to better strategies and policies to address the issue.

3. VIEWS ON GENDER CONSIDERATIONS ON THE NINE AREAS OF WORK OF THE NWP

a) Methods and tools

Developing and disseminating methodologies and tools for impact and vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning is very vital to increasing capacity to adapt to climate change. This ensures that there is uniform and widely accepted methodologies and tools which take into considerations different actors. GenderCC would like to see the inclusion of gender assessments, given that the impacts of climate change affect women and children differently and very often more than men.

b) Data and Observations

The Programme advocates for improved collection, management, exchange, access to use of observational data on current and historical climate variability and change. Climate vulnerability varies greatly from one place to another, and, moreover, within communities, due to gender and other socio-economic differentials. Improved collection of data will ensure that the variances in vulnerabilities are well documented and shared. We would like to encourage the collection and use of information of how men and women are affected differently and how their efforts towards adaptation can be recognised and replicated. Collection of sex / gender disaggregated data especially on different levels of vulnerability, impacts and resilience, will ensure that gender information is readily available that policies made are not gender blind. Appropriate mechanisms should also be employed to disseminate information to women and other vulnerable groups. Women can also be considered for dissemination of information especially to the young children who are always with their mothers either in the shambas (food gardens) or in the kitchen.

c) Climate Modelling scenarios and downscaling

Promoting the development of, access to and use of information and data on projected climate change is vital in understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation measures. This calls for promotion of local knowledge on adaptation to climate change and use of women in monitoring the effects of climate change. Gender sensitive training on early warning and risk systems at the community level would ensure that the communities are well prepared for adverse effects of climate change and that the vulnerability factor is reduced. For example in Africa where rural women are the main producers of food, through the use of early warning systems, they will be able to access

information on the looming drought which brings about crop failure and issues of food security hence knowing how to deal with the situation.

d) Climate related risks and extreme events

The NWP also calls for understanding of impacts and vulnerability, emphasizing on current and future climate variability and extreme events and the implications for sustainable development. Disaster risk reduction information should be applied to reduce impacts of climate change. Risk management helps in the analysis of disasters and provides ways of coping with disasters and ensures disaster preparedness. Disaster risk management may be the link between decision making, execution and control that allow women and men to analyze their surroundings and to come up with ways in which the risks can be reduced (UNDP 2009). Essential research has been done, information and tools are provided related to gender in disaster risk reduction since many years by the Gender & Disaster Network. Their experiences, existing approaches and methods must be acknowledged and taken into consideration in the implementation of the NWP (www.gdnonline.org).

e) Socio - Economic information

This calls for improving knowledge of the socio economic aspects of climate change and promoting the integration of socio economic information into impact and vulnerability assessment. Special consideration should be made on the importance of local knowledge for socio and economic development and the use of the knowledge and skills of women in adaptation measures. Considerations of women's knowledge and practices in climate change issues and collaboration with women's organizations would assist in the provision of information, knowledge, experiences and networks which are vital for building resilience and adaptation to climate change (UNDP 2009, ISDR 2008).

f) Adaptation planning and practices

Collecting, analysing and disseminating information on past and current practical adaptation action measures, including projects, short and long term strategies and local and indigenous knowledge. It's good to note that adaptation strategies for climate change will be more effective if made in a participatory manner especially with the most vulnerable groups. Women are more vulnerable because of their gender and it's important that they participate in decision making processes to adapt to climate change and also to recognize the importance of domestic chores and the associated knowledge in matters of climate change. Research has shown that gender based adaptation strategies have already been practiced in agriculture or water management, which, among others, are mainly women's duties especially in the rural areas.

g) Technologies for Adaptation

The work programme calls for development and diffusion of technologies, know-how and practices for adaptation, addressing identified adaptation and building on lessons learned from current adaptation projects and strategies. GenderCC advocates for promotion of technologies appropriate to the needs of women and capacity building on the same and involving them in decision making especially during the innovation of new technologies to ensure that their concerns are addressed at that particular time. Existing technologies

which women have used in the past and are climate change friendly should also not be ruled out but built on.

h) Research

The NWP calls for promoting research on adaptation options. There is a need for research on local knowledge on adaptation practices and the impacts / vulnerability of different groups within the society and how they are able to cope with the impacts which can act as good practices for other societies. Information should be gathered and the differentiated impact of climate change on the quality of life of women and men should also be documented. This will be useful in understanding impacts and vulnerabilities and will also help in designing of adaptation strategies. All research done should be conducted in a participatory and people-centred manner, thus, include those concerned (men and women) throughout the whole research process (from development to evaluation) in a meaningful way. Research should not be done on women and men but with women and men. This enables a change from focusing on women as vulnerable group to women as potential carriers of change. Moreover, research results should be returned to and evaluated to those concerned, and afterwards, disseminated and implemented into the communities / regions involved. (GenderCC 2010)

i) Economic Diversification

Economic diversification and capacity building for women should be looked into and also creation of non-traditional jobs. This is because traditional jobs either have impacts on climate change or are affected by climate change hence often leaving the women with no means of livelihood.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, GenderCC would like to recommend that the NWP be continued beyond COP16. However, the NWP needs to address the issue of participation of vulnerable groups, particularly women in communities that are affected by climate change, as well as making sure that gender is integrated during its implementation. It is crucial to involve both women and men within these communities in the NWP since they have adaptation experiences which have worked for them and their communities for many decades. Therefore, adequate approaches and methodologies to ensure equal participation and the design of gender sensitive programmes and projects are a requirement. Furthermore GenderCC recommends to involve gender experts in the implementation and monitoring of the NWP in order to ensure its positive effects on both, women and men, girls and boys.

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