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Reaction by the Gender and Water Alliance to the report of the Executive Director on Waste Management for Tenth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, Principality of Monaco, 20-22 February 2008
Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda

In general there are four major gender issues in waste management:

1. The part of waste which is domestic waste is managed by women and less so by men. Therefore training related to waste management needs to be addressed at all groups, but certainly also at women.
2. The removal of waste is often the unpaid work of women, but as soon as it is slightly mechanised, for example by the use of carts or delivery tricycles and at the same time paid for, men take over this work.
3. Interventions in waste management including sorting, recycling and reuse of waste products, often can create paid employment. It is important that poor women are given the choice to be involved.
4. Waste is often chemically and biologically contaminated. When women (and men) are trained to manage the waste, it is important that awareness about health hazards are included in the curriculum.

The Gender and Water Alliance is pleased by the thorough analysis that forms the basis of your report on Waste Management. However we would like to make the following comments and suggestions:

In the need analysis under point d(ii), a brief reference is made to vulnerable sections of society. The Gender and Water Alliance would like to suggest that under several points in the document attention is paid to the diversity of people and vulnerable groups. Different people are affected differently by the negative effects of solid waste, so we would appreciate it if in the needs analysis and also in the recommendations and solutions this would be more explicitly stated. Suggestions and examples for this are:

- 17 a (i) Greater conceptual clarity supported by practical application-strategies is required to enable synergy between resource augmentation and waste management. Awareness raising and capacity building is required in areas like waste prevention, 3R (reduce, reuse and recycle), cleaner production etc. **Awareness Raising and capacity building should be targeted at all categories of people, including women, minorities, the poor and vulnerable groups**
- 17 b (ii) Technical guidelines, case studies, demonstration and pilot projects for integrated waste management especially in developing countries are needed **describing a variety of situations and targeting different groups of people**
- 17 b (iii) Local level capacity to implement and operate waste management technologies needs to be built / strengthened, **targeting also women, minorities, the poor and vulnerable groups**
- 17 d (iii) Involvement of private sector and local communities **(including women, men, poor, rich, young and old)** in developing, building and running of waste management system needs to be strengthened and made more effective.

We would like to suggest to translate these to the chapter of tangible recommendations, mentioning explicitly the need to involve women, the poor and minorities (those who suffer mostly by pollution) in training, capacity building and awareness raising.

I hope you find our contribution and suggestions useful.

With kind regards,

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