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"How will global climate change impact women's fuel situation?" The photograph shows a woman from the rural areas in South African transporting fuelwood. (Photo: Courtesy of Elizabeth Cecelski, Germany)

## News from the Editors

### Gender and Energy Policy at CSD9

Welcome to this special issue of **ENERGIA News**, which has been prepared in the run-up to the CSD9 meeting in New York in April 2001. Under our new policy, this issue has been edited by a member of the Editorial Board, **Margaret Skutsch**, together with a guest editor, **Njeri Wamukonya**, who is working with the UNEP Collaborating Centre at Risø in **Denmark**.

The 1992 Rio UNCED conference was a milestone in getting sustainable development onto the international agenda. The process is continued with the annual CSD meetings, which focus on a different sector each year. They provide a forum at which Environment Ministers from at least 60 countries and high-level UN officials mingle with NGO activists, they therefore offer a unique opportunity for dialogue and exchange of opinion. At these meetings, national policies can be influenced as well as international ones. CSD9, which will take place in April in New York, has Energy and Transport as its sectoral issues. *ENERGIA* is of the opinion that this is a golden opportunity to highlight the gender issue in energy and to promote the idea of gender mainstreaming in the energy sector. Most of the participants in CSD9 will probably be well informed, in general terms, about gender in development and will be sympathetic to this; but the question of how

to integrate it, in concrete ways, into energy policy and planning may be one they have never stopped to think about. Not only do government officials need to consider this question, but also many of the NGOs.

In this issue it is seen that gender in energy is not only a Southern issue but also a Northern one. Poor Northern women might be facing energy problems just as Southern women are, and that they are generally worse off than their male counterparts, especially in war torn zones.

**At international meetings** on environmental matters there are many burning issues which compete for attention. For example, at the CoP6 meeting on climate change in The Hague last November, negotiations broke down mainly over the question of sinks. When conflict becomes centred on one key issue there is an unfortunate tendency to forget that environmental questions are multi-faceted. As reported in the article by Njeri Wamukonya and Margaret Skutsch, the gender question was hardly raised during the CoP6, despite the fact that it was considered a serious issue by the Chairman of the meeting. Jens Mackensen's article notes the failure of LULUCF climate policy to address the gender issue, despite the fact that the effects of its operationalisation are likely to be quite gender specific. An interesting statement from the World Youth Organisation for Climate Change points out that not only women, but also youth, have been so far ignored in the international discussion on climate change.

**If gender is** to take its place among other issues at such gatherings this cannot just be left to chance: plans need to be made, policy recommendations need to be clear, and the issue needs to have a physical visibility. Fortunately, for CSD9, there have been a number of very important inputs well in advance. *ENERGIA* has prepared a position paper on gender and energy as a basis for further discussion at the meeting. You can download this from the *ENERGIA* website ([www.energia.org](http://www.energia.org)) or from the CSD NGO site ([www.csdngo.org/csdngo](http://www.csdngo.org/csdngo), look for 'women' under 'major groups'). This paper identifies all the major commitments made by the UN and other organisations in support of gender mainstreaming and highlights what we feel to be the major issues and needs as regards gender in the energy sector.

**Minu Hemmati's paper** in this issue explains how the CSD9 is organised and how the NGO forum works, including the role of the Women's Caucus. On the topic of gender and energy, a CSD preparatory meeting in Berlin last December proposed a large number of very concrete actions, including the development of gender-related guidelines for investment policies in the energy sector, seeking the commitment of shareholders in all multilateral development banks, signalling the missing gender analyses in NGO and other campaigns on energy, and targeting all energy-related research to ensure that it includes a gender component (you can access a report on this meeting and its results at [www.earthsummit2002.org/workshop](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/workshop)).

**Other meetings, such** as that on Women and Energy held in Durban in December 2000, reported in this issue by Washington Nyabeze, and the Village Power Meeting at the World Bank, described here by Mukami Rimerberia and Johanna Gregory, have resulted in strong policy statements which can also be taken up at CSD9. These statements highlight the need to design practical frameworks to integrate gender into policy as well as the importance of partnerships between men and women in addressing gender issues.

**In this issue** it is seen that gender in energy is not only a Southern issue but also a Northern one. Joy Clancy's paper indicates that poor Northern women might be facing energy problems just as Southern woman are, and that they are generally worse off than their male counterparts, especially in war torn zones. She notes that the proportion of women workers in the energy sector in the North is quite low, and that they often feel a sense of isolation. Networking can play an important role in overcoming this.

**All these issues** are up for discussion and further development at CSD9. *ENERGIA* and ENDA Energy have opened a gender and energy CSD9 e-group, and are jointly hosting a side event to which a variety of groups have been invited to present their views and strategies as regards gender and energy, in the form of a market. This open format is meant to stimulate ideas and to attract participants from all fields present at CSD9, to show them what is being done and how ideas are developing for mainstreaming gender in energy.

**For those not** able to travel to New York, there is every opportunity to participate through the ether. Minu Hemmati's paper concludes with a goldmine of useful addresses and websites through which you can join the discussion and make your views known. You can join the CSD Women's Caucus at [www.csdngo.org/csdngo](http://www.csdngo.org/csdngo). This is the time to make your voice on gender and energy heard. ■



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