

RECOMMENDATIONS OF CENTRAL ASIAN PARTNERS OF EWA PROGRAM

On 2 and 3 July, 2014 partners of the International Program “Empower Women – Benefit for All “ from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as well as representatives of other CSOs working on related issues in Kazakhstan came together in Bishkek to discuss project results and to present and exchange experiences on the work on a sustainable development. The joint work resulted in the following major recommendations:

A) General recommendations:

- 1) Support for rural women is of high demand in the region of Central Asia. There is a strong lack of projects for rural women’s concerns, and EWA is one of the few projects in the region that specifically addresses rural women’s economical empowerment and leadership development.
- 2) Discrimination of women is on-going. Even though laws of most Central Asian countries guarantee equal right for women and men, however, implementation is slow. Therefore, we call for the realization of gender laws and policies.
- 3) More women are needed on all levels of decision-making processes; quotas are needed and specific policies should be developed to address this deficit.
- 4) Best practices of leading women NGOs have to be implemented: e.g. legal advice centres; women in water users’ unions are empowered and elected to local parliaments; women farmers gain and use knowledge about ecological agriculture, processing fruits and vegetables, marketing and selling them; the use or “not use” of modern technologies .

B) Specific Thematic Recommendations:

1) Gender and Rural Development

- (i) Women need access to productive resources, such as land, credits, water, seeds etc.;
- (ii) Girls and women should be economically independent: therefore, they need good education (including training in business planning and fundraising), vocational training and possibilities to generate income (e.g. part of income from home agricultural activities, etc.);
- (iii) Women need training and benefits for the organization of income-generating activities (such as the production and processing of agricultural products, the establishment and maintenance of a guest house, the craft business (sewing services, repairs, services, etc.);
- (iv) Chains from the agricultural production to processing the product and marketing need to be established; for women in CA it is important to have the production closer to consumption;
- (v) Women need support from local authorities, e.g. by the establishment of partnerships with them in order to raise awareness of their needs;
- (vi) Women are in need of legal and psychological counseling, not only to obtain access to productive resources after e.g. a divorce, but in general to being able to fight for their rights.

2) Gender, Water and Sanitation

- (i) Self governance structures are needed to determine in a participatory way the needs and concerns of water users (including the involvement of NGOs, health centres, rural health committees, state

medical points, self help groups and in particular of marginalized and vulnerable groups, e.g. women and girls); ensure the participation of women in planning, M & E and in decision-making on water use and sanitation at the local level;

- (ii) Local budgets should include expenses for education of the population on the efficient use of water and sanitation; CDWUUs should provide funds for these activities from other sources;
- (iii) Special health requirements for educational institutions have to be developed; in particular it is necessary to develop and implement gender sanitation norms for school toilets;
- (iv) The competence of local staff, in particular regarding monitoring of water and sanitation issues etc., should be strengthened;
- (v) Stronger cross-sectoral cooperation of water and sanitation issues as well as closer cooperation between local governments and water users' unions (CDWUUs) are needed;
- (vi) Educational and civil society institutes should include sustainable sanitation issues into the educational programs of schools;
- (vii) Strengthen the capacity of local governances CDWUUs in M & E of environmental safety for the protection of water resources;
- (viii) Develop gender sensitive standards for municipal services to provide the population with water and sanitation. To conduct a gender analysis of draft provisions of service standards.

3) Gender and Climate Change

- (i) Develop gender sensitive strategies for climate change policies (adaptation and mitigation);
- (ii) Women have to be part of climate related decision-making processes internationally and nationally;
- (iii) Strengthen rural women in small agricultural farms to resolve the energy crisis - work with rural women to solve their energy needs, e.g. heat saving, improving the energy efficiency of furnaces etc.;
- (iv) Raise the awareness of women about energy efficiency and climate change, and related links to health, water, food and access to productive resources;
- (v) Insure priorities for gender issues within climate change adaptation in national and local development plans and budgets.

Bishkek

July 3, 2014