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EDITORIAL

Gender, Environment, Conflict

The linkages between gender, environment and conflict have so far not been studied in detail. Environmental changes and conflicts impact men and women differently in the light of their gender roles and socio-cultural situation. More often than not, environmental degradation and the consequences of climate change or natural disasters reinforce existing gender discrepancies. Gender aspects therefore need to be systematically mainstreamed to achieve effective conflict prevention. This special issue of the newsletter entitled "Civilian Crisis Prevention – Environment and Natural Resources" (ECC) has been issued in this context and contains articles that explore the links between gender, environment and conflict or peace. We hope this overview will stimulate further discussion and network building.

In the first article Nora Holzmann outlines gender relations against the backdrop of growing resource scarcity and differential gender-related access to these resources in conflict and post conflict situations. Ulrike Röhr, in the second article, goes on to establish how natural disasters and resource scarcity induced by climate change are related to negative gender inequalities. The key conclusions of both articles are examined in greater detail in the subsequent case studies on the Cauvery river water dispute in India and the aftermath of the earthquake in northern Pakistan. In both articles Susanne Fleischli and Cordula Reimann highlight how rigid traditional gender roles cause women to be most severely affected in conflict and post conflict situations as well as in the aftermath of natural disasters. At the same time, women are systematically by-passed in decision-making during the post conflict or conflict prevention phase.

The authors thus provide initial insights into the linkages between gender, environment and conflict. The newsletter also contains information on various initiatives and publications to facilitate more in-depth study and involvement in these areas. We hope this overview will inspire more work on the subject and succeed in generating a debate – and perhaps also provoke controversy. We therefore welcome any comments and suggestions you might have and would like to ask you to direct them to our editing team.

For further information on gender, environment and conflict please visit <http://www.ecc-platform.org>

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ARTICLES

Women Carry Water, Men Take the Decisions – Gender, Conflicts and Natural Resources

by Nora Holzmann, Suedwind-Agentur

Women and men experience conflicts differently. Their experiences, needs, rights and the options available to them differ according to socio-culturally defined gender roles.

A distinction also needs to be made in the way both genders relate to and deal with natural resources. In many societies women have the prime responsibility for the wellbeing and welfare of the family. They fetch water, gather firewood and additionally

carry out a lot of farming work. And yet it is men who generally control the access to, use and ownership of natural resources.

Environmental degradation and the lack or absence of access to resources, such as land, water or forests, can act as a cause of conflicts. But they can also occur in conjunction with or as a consequence of violent conflicts.

When resources such as arable land or water for irrigation become scarce, men find it difficult to fulfil the role of breadwinner attributed to them in many cultures. The resulting frustration can culminate in increased domestic violence against women. At the same time, men become more susceptible to military propaganda and employment in "markets of violence" that are motivated by economic gain. With the men away, women generally take on what used to be "manly" tasks. They assume responsibility for farming and subsistence livelihood and providing for food in general. In times of crisis, access to and the control over natural resources has an even greater role in determining the financial and physical security of women and their families, and ultimately even their survival.

Although there tends to be a dramatic increase in the number of female-headed households during conflicts, women are often denied the right to land ownership and access to natural resources. In many societies, traditional legal systems and customary rights prevent widowed or single women from having formal access to or control over land, water or other resources. Without ownership or usufructuary rights, which are usually held by male relatives, women are systematically excluded from decision-making. They have no voice and their needs are not taken into account.

Once a conflict has ended, the discriminatory access to land and resources becomes an obstacle to peace-building and the economic recovery of the conflict region. It prevents women from occupying key positions and hinders overall economic productivity.

However, conciliation processes and the development of new structures of governance afford opportunities for changing laws and societal attitudes. Gender inclusiveness in the access to, usage and ownership of natural resources can lead to greater equality in other areas as well. Ultimately, stable peace can only be achieved when women and men have equal rights over the resources that are necessary for survival.

Nora Holzmann is head of the regional office of the Suedwind-Agentur in Vienna and is responsible for public relations and the promotion of global sustainable development.

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Gender Aspects of Climate-Induced Conflicts

by Ulrike Röhr, genanet

It is an indisputable fact that climate change will lead to more and more conflicts caused either by growing competition for access to and distribution of resources, such as water and arable land, or by the rising number of natural disasters. But in addition to these impacts, some of the instruments for climate change mitigation may themselves create conflicts. Emissions certificates tend to marginalize those who have no access to the market and are therefore unable to influence decisions on how emissions should be reduced or how they can be compensated through other mechanisms. This creates new, exclusionary forms of usage and ownership rights for a global public good, namely air. Large CDM projects in the South can have negative social as well as environmental impacts since every country is free to define the project criteria for sustainability. The affected communities are rarely consulted. Social and environmental criteria seldom

receive the highest priority during project development, which is evident from the fact that out of 650 registered CDM projects only a handful are certified according to the more stringent requirements of the Gold Standard. The substitution of oil with biofuels impacts biodiversity, ignores the customary rights of indigenous peoples and can result in a conflict of interest between agricultural production for food and for mobility. And these are just a few examples. Each of these activities has an impact on local communities and consequently influences men and women differently given their gender-specific roles and the socio-cultural environment. If these aspects are not factored in during the planning stage the resulting impacts can be negative. A key question therefore is who takes decisions regarding such activities and on what experiences are these decisions based? In other words, are men and women equally involved in developing measures for climate protection and climate change and are their interests and living conditions taken into account?

Women are affected differently by conflicts than men. They are the ones who bear the responsibility for the survival of the family during and after conflicts. Their workload increases in crisis situations while their income opportunities simultaneously decrease. Family responsibilities tie women to a particular geographical region and limit their opportunities to migrate. Across the world, women make up a majority of the poor and are consequently least able to adapt to changing conditions or rebuild their livelihoods after destruction. Above all, they are the ones most vulnerable to sexual abuse and sexual violence during wars and natural disasters.

Such gender-specific impacts are generally perceived to occur mostly in the poorest countries of the South, where they are indeed far more dramatic and visible than in the industrialized countries of the North. However, as the after-effects of hurricane Katrina in New Orleans showed, women in industrialized nations face situations similar to the ones we have seen in developing countries.

The aftermath of natural disasters and conflicts reveals not just the specific requirements and risks as well as the knowledge and experience of individuals in their social roles – all of which are prerequisites for effective crisis management. They can, in fact, trigger a shift in gender equations with women taking on non-traditional roles. This however requires awareness of gender roles and active support for women from donor organizations.

UN Resolution 1325 on peace-building calls for greater women's participation in such processes. Although implementation still leaves much to be desired, a resolution ensuring the participation of women in all processes for preventing climate change, adapting to changing environments and dealing with increased natural disasters will go a long way towards an effective and socially just climate policy and the prevention of related conflicts.

Ulrike Röhr is a member of genanet and works on gender, environment and sustainability with a special focus on energy and climate protection.

For more information on the gender aspects of climate protection see www.genanet.de/klimaschutz.html and www.genanet.de/unfccc.html

Further information on CDM projects in developing countries is available at www.carbonradewatch.org/

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"Women Protesters Carrying Empty Pots" – the Role of Gender in Environmental Conflict

by *Susanne Fleischli, Aux Etangs*

On February 5 this year a judgement was delivered in the century-old dispute over the waters of the Cauvery River in southern India. The Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal laid down the amount of water that each of the riparian states is allowed to withdraw from the river every year. Water scarcity is a recurring phenomenon in the region caused by increasing demand from agriculture, a growing population, urbanization and industrialization, coupled with reduced and irregular rainfall. The upper riparian state of Karnataka and the downstream state of Tamil Nadu have therefore been squabbling over the allocation and use of the Cauvery waters for years. An interim order of the Tribunal in 1991 resulted in violent clashes between Tamils and Kannadigas in which over 50 people lost their lives.

The Cauvery dispute is illustrative of how gender plays a significant role in the way people are affected by an environmental conflict and how they are involved in conflict management. The gendered division of labour determines who carries out tasks relating to the disputed resource. The Cauvery river dispute affects both genders more or less equally in terms of agricultural activities. In the household, however, women are the ones who carry out the majority of tasks that require water. They are therefore more affected by water scarcity than men. The conflict also has a gender-specific impact due to the religious and cultural connotations of water as a natural resource. The Cauvery River is revered as a mother and goddess. For women, therefore, it holds a special function by providing them with identity, succour and protection. The dispute consequently prevents women more than men from living their cultural and religious traditions.

As in other conflicts, here too gender has influenced the type of violence characterizing the dispute. During the clashes rape was employed as a tool to destroy the dignity of women and shame the men. The prevailing perception of femininity, where the dignity and purity of the woman is paramount, is a key factor.

Conflict management during the Cauvery dispute has involved mainly men, with just a few women representatives. These few women occupy hardly any important positions and seldom participate in the debate. The passivity that is ascribed to women is used as an excuse for not involving them, which further reinforces their under-representation.

The award of the Tribunal has not put an end to the Cauvery dispute. The government of Karnataka plans to appeal against the judgement and protests are taking place practically on a daily basis. Cinema owners in Karnataka are no longer showing Tamil films and women demonstrate on the streets with empty water containers on their heads. However, it is doubtful that gender will be accorded greater importance in conflict management in the future. The Cauvery case illustrates that only a comprehensive conflict analysis – one which takes gender into account – can result in equitable and sustainable conflict management. Gender-sensitive management strategies can help ensure a greater involvement of all stakeholders.

Susanne Fleischli has been working with swisspeace on gender issues in environmental conflict and is currently working at Aux Etangs in Freiburg, Switzerland. For more information, please contact Susanne.fleischli@gmx.ch

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Gender-Specific Dimensions and Effects of the Pakistani Earthquake in 2005: Opportunity for Women's Empowerment?

by Cordula Reimann, KOFF/swisspeace

The Northern Pakistani earthquake of October 2005 led to 75.000 dead, 3.5 million displaced and more than a million people jobless. It hit a society characterized by high levels of domestic violence, restrictions on women's mobility, a strong purdah system – which means the Muslim system of sex segregation, practiced especially by keeping women in seclusion - poor education for girls and women, and limited employment opportunities and access to resources for women.

During and after the earthquake

The available information on the most affected areas Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) stresses that most of those affected in terms of psycho-social stress, restoration of livelihoods and their legal and protection rights were poor men and women, and more particularly single parents, widows, female heads of household, women and men with disabilities, as well as pregnant women and lactating mothers.

The little available sex-disaggregated data clearly indicates that the number of women and children killed was disproportionately high. The reason being that due to cultural-religious practices like purdah - which demands from women to be accompanied by men in public - women and their dependents did not leave the home. As many men lost their wives and children, child marriages and polygamy with the aim of keeping the land in the family are on the increase.

Forced relocation led to restricted women's access to and control over food and incomes and a further increase in their vulnerability. There are numerous reports on high rates of rape and violence against women and girls, such as the 2006 UNDP report on "Gender Mainstreaming in Recovery Phase-Post Earthquake Pakistan". Further the lack of physical and nutritional care for pregnant and lactating mothers, for example, has resulted in increasing maternal and infant mortality. There are also alarming, while not officially confirmed, cases of trafficking in women and girls as reported by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in "Hearing their Voices: The Women and Children in the Earthquake Affected Areas of Pakistan" in 2006.

While men had greater access to information on government policies and reconstruction programmes, most men were left behind jobless. There is little information about their coping mechanisms and the impact of the earthquake on their mental health and psychological needs.

Gender awareness of humanitarian aid?

The main addressee of aid was the male head of household making women even more dependent and vulnerable. At the same time, in cases of male members' death, women were denied the right to land or houses as legal rights going back to brothers and other male close relatives.

According to the World Disasters Report of 2006, gender-awareness was higher, while still insufficient and isolated, among local civil society groups, UN and international agencies than among Pakistani government organizations. In general, too little attention was paid to the needs of men in terms of their psycho-social health and to women,

especially to female-headed households, in terms of their personal hygiene, privacy, psycho-social health and sanitation.

Due to cultural traditions and customs, international organizations like OXFAM found it difficult to access women in the consultation and to hire them in for example their "cash for work" projects that is initiated by National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) in collaboration with the ILO and addresses livelihood needs and restoration of normality by removing garbage and debris. As a result, women were approached as "helpless victims" but not as "potential resources". Humanitarian aid tended to underutilize the skills and resources of women and neglected to draw on social networks to find the missing or carrying out evacuation plans.

Post-earthquake: Window of opportunity for women's empowerment?

There is some promising information pointing to the extreme resilience of women as breadwinners, caregivers and caretakers of livestock and land – and to the fact that they are making their voices heard. With the predominant stereotype of "women as helpless victims", women's organizations in conservative Pakistan are still a long way off being fully recognized as powerful force in reconstruction ensuring joint ownership of women and men.

New job opportunities in the education and health sector for women are promising signs. How far deep-rooted gender-stereotypes and cultural practices will be flexible enough to incorporate the gender-specific effects of the earthquake remains to be seen.

Dr. Cordula Reimann is peace and conflict researcher and works with swisspeace Berne at KOFF Center for Peacebuilding. She is mainly working on questions about gender dimensions in internal violent conflicts and civil conflict management. For more information, please contact Cordula.reimann@swisspeace.ch

See also:

International Federation off Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) (2006): World Disasters Report. Available at <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2006/summaries.asp>

The World Conservation Union (2006): Hearing their Voices: The Women and Children in the Earthquake Affected Areas of Pakistan. Available at http://www.iucn.org/places/pakistan/pdf/wcrep_iucn_kk.pdf

UNDP (2006): Gender Mainstreaming in Recovery Phase-Post Earthquake Pakistan, <http://www.undp.org.pk/publication/Gender%20Mainstreaming%20in%20Recovery%20Phase-Post%20Earthquake%20Pakistan.pdf>

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INITIATIVES

BRIDGE/Siyanda

Siyanda is an online database of gender and development materials from around the world. It is hosted by BRIDGE - the gender and development research and information service located at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in the United Kingdom. Siyanda is also an interactive space where gender practitioners can share ideas, experiences and resources. Siyanda aims to be an ever growing resource to support

practitioners in implementing gender programmes and in mainstreaming gender equality concerns, whether they are gender specialists or not.

The main objectives are:

- Presenting short summaries of on-line work to save busy practitioners time in searching for relevant information.
- Enabling users to download full-length materials quickly and easily, free of charge.
- Facilitating a culture of sharing information and materials on gender and development among people working in this field.
- Working with partner organizations across the world to build an online space that reflects their interests and needs and that connects them with like-minded colleagues.

For further information please follow this link <http://www.siyanda.org/>

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ENERGIA

ENERGIA is an international network on gender and sustainable energy that links individuals and groups concerned with energy, sustainable development, and gender. Founded in 1995, ENERGIA is now active in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania, as well as in Europe, North America and Australia. ENERGIA mainly focuses on capacity development to integrate gender and energy in policy, programmes and projects for sustainable development, and the consolidation of the network. ENERGIA's goal is to contribute to the empowerment of rural and urban poor women through a specific focus on energy issues. Direct beneficiaries, also involved in programme activities are:

1. Policymakers, planners, and project implementers of government institutions, NGOs, networks, multi- and bilateral donors, and private companies; and
2. Network members as partners actively taking part in programme activities, and receiving support for the enhancement of their capabilities, institution building of sub-networks, and for gender mainstreaming in their own organizations.

For further information about ENERGIA please follow this link <http://www.energia.org/>

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Women's Security Council

To strengthen the competence of women in shaping peace and security, the central concern of the German Women's Security Council is the rapid implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The resolution passed on October 31, 2003, calls for the equal participation of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and in peace-building. The WSC aims to build-up a European-wide Women's Security Council. The basic aims of the WSC are:

- Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325
- Integrating a gender perspective into foreign and security policy
- Developing the "human security" concept from a gender perspective
- Strengthening the UN, and international humanitarian and human rights law
- Reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

- Analyzing the threat of terrorism and anti-terror measures from a gender perspective
- Establishing a pool of experts
- Building-up a European Women's Security Council

The German Women's Security Council (WSC) was founded in March 2003 in Bonn, Germany. It represents over 50 women from research institutes; women's, human rights, and development organizations; peace initiatives and political foundations.

More information on the Women's Security Council is available at <http://www.frauensicherheitsrat.de>

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LIFE/genanet

'genanet' is one important project of the LIFE Berlin. As a gender justice and sustainability focal point, 'genanet' will put structures in place to allow effective lobbying of (environment) policy decisions from a gender perspective. It aims to give mainstream policy new impetus. 'genanet' supports networking between practitioners, developing new ideas, concepts and strategies, and initiating joint projects by promoting its main topics: Gender & Biodiversity, Gender & Energy, Gender & Climate Change, Gender, Agriculture & Nutrition, and Gender & Sustainability. In cooperation with and funded by FAO (The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), 'genanet' is carrying out a study that aims to review, analyse and assess existing research relating to gender and climate change.

For further information about the LIFE/genanet, please see http://www.genanet.de/home_news.html?&L=1&tt_news=29

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WEDO

WEDO is an international organization that advocates for women's equality in global policy since 1990. The Sustainable Development Program fosters development that is ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially just. It seeks to strengthen international networking between women's and environmental groups; mobilize women's involvement in environmental and sustainable development decision-making; and advocate for gender mainstreaming in international forums. The Sustainable Development Program advocates for the inclusion of a gender perspective, women's empowerment, and a rights-based approach in environmental and sustainable development decision-making. Current and upcoming program areas include:

- National-level advocacy on gender and climate change in select developing countries.
- Public awareness campaign on US re-engagement in global climate change negotiations.
- Implementation of UNEP's (United Nations Environment Program) Global Gender Plan of Action.
- Advocacy on strengthened environment and sustainable development governance in the context of United Nations reform.

- Integration of a gender perspective in global environment and sustainable development policy bodies, including Multilateral Environmental Agreements, the UNEP Governing Council, and the Commission on Sustainable Development.

For further information please follow this link <http://www.wedo.org/>.

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LITERATURE

Civil War, Crop Failure, and Child Stunting in Rwanda

Economic shocks at birth have lasting effects on children's health several years after the shock. The authors calculate height for age z-scores for children under age five using data from a Rwanda's national representative household survey conducted in 1992. They exploit district and time variation in crop failure and civil conflict to measure the impact of exogenous shocks that children experience at birth on their height several years later. They find that boys and girls born after the shock in regions experiencing civil conflict are both negatively affected. Conversely, only girls are negatively affected by crop failure, and the impact is worse for girls in poor households. Results are robust by using sibling difference estimators, household level production, and rainfall shocks as alternative measures of crop failure.

Akresh, Richard, Philip Verwimp and Tom Bundervoet 2007: Civil War, Crop Failure, and Child Stunting in Rwanda. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 4208. Available at http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2007/04/13/000016406_20070413151312/Rendered/PDF/wps4208.pdf

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Where Energy is Women's Business

By presenting the national papers and regional reports included in this volume, ENERGIA is providing specific country-level analyses and policy recommendations on energy and gender. In many developing countries, especially in the poorest areas, most energy currently comes from traditional biomass fuels such as wood, charcoal and agricultural wastes – and collecting and managing these fuels is strictly 'women's business'. Lack of recognition of women's roles in the energy sector therefore leads to 'gender-blind' energy policies that fail to address some of the most pressing factors affecting countries' hopes for economic development. One of the most important ways of reducing poverty and promoting national development is by involving women in productive economic activity rather than wasting so much of their time and effort securing basic fuels for survival.

Karlsson, Gail (Ed.) 2007: Where Energy is Women's Business. National and Regional Reports from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific. ENERGIA. Available at http://www.energia.org/pubs/papers/karlsson_csdbook_lores.pdf

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GENDER & WATER. Mainstreaming gender equality in water, hygiene and sanitation interventions

This document aims to support SDC project staff and partners such as national programme officers and water organizations to mainstream gender equality into SDC water, hygiene and sanitation interventions. It will illustrate how to «put gender on the agenda» in terms of gender strategies and gender-sensitive water policies and ensure that people are engaged and remain committed.

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) 2005: GENDER & WATER Mainstreaming gender equality in water, hygiene and sanitation interventions. Bern. Available at <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/docs/gender%20&%20water.pdf>

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Gender Based Violence in Sri Lanka in the after-math of the 2004 Tsunami Crisis

With reference to the 2004 tsunami crisis in Sri Lanka, this dissertation examines the role that international organizations and international non-governmental organizations can play in preventing and responding to gender-based violence in natural disaster situations. Whilst women are commonly acknowledged to be more vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters, their particular vulnerability to gender-based violence in a natural disaster context is less recognized and remains neglected by both disaster management and to the discussion on gender-based violence.

Fischer, Sarah 2005: Gender Based Violence in Sri Lanka in the after-math of the 2004 Tsunami Crisis: The Role of International Organisations and International NGOs in Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence. University of Leeds Institute of Politics and International Studies. Dissertation.

Available at http://www.swisspeace.ch/typo3/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/KOFF/IOs_and_Posttsunami_GBV.pdf

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Publisher:

Alexander Carius
Adelphi Research gGmbH

Caspar-Theyss-Strasse 14a
D - 14193 Berlin

Phone +49-30-89 000 68 0
Fax +49-30-89 000 68 10
www.adelphi-research.de

Editorial team:

Contact: editor@ecc-platform.org

Judith Winterstein, Moira Feil, Christiane Roettger, Annika Kramer, Alexander Carius,
Dennis Taenzler, Achim Maas

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