

Background and Rationale:

1. Women comprise more than half of our population but are the most neglected segment of our society. Under the approved program activities of SAARC Energy Centre FY 2012, a three day Workshop was organized by SAARC Energy Centre with the cooperation of the SAARC Coastal Zone Management Centre and the Ministry of Environment and Energy of the Republic of Maldives at Bandos Island, Maldives was to provide opportunity to reflect and highlight important areas of energy and issues faced by women in SAARC region which have greater bearing on social equity and extension of benefits to man and women alike. Also to address the issues and challenges faced by women in the use of energy and mainstreaming gender in the development of energy sector in the SAARC Member States.

Delegations:

2. The following 17 delegates from seven member states and SAARC Energy Centre participated in this workshop: -

#	Name	Designation / Institute	Country
(a)	Ms. Salma Akhter Jahan	Dy. Secretary, Energy and Mineral Resources Division, Dhaka	Bangladesh
(b)	Ms. Syeda Nowara Jahan	Sr. Asst. Secretary / Energy and Mineral Resources Division, Dhaka	Bangladesh
(c)	Ms. Deki Yangzom	Manager (Project), Bhutan Power Co-operation Limited, Bhutan	Bhutan
(d)	Mr. Dechen Wangmo	Asst. Engineer-1, Bhutan Power Co-operation Limited, Bhutan	Bhutan
(e)	Mrs. Sangeeta Kaushik	Deputy General Manager, NTPC, India	India
(f)	Mr. Manik Mandal	Under Secretary (IC), Ministry of Power, India	India
(g)	Mrs. Prema Mohan	Under Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, New Delhi	India
(h)	Ms. Fathimath Rukhshana	Sr. Accounts Officer, Maldives Energy Authority, Maldives	Maldives
(j)	Mr. Abdul Rasheed	Asst. Electrician, Ministry of Environment & Energy	Maldives

(k)	Mrs. Rita Khadka	Hydrologist Engineer, Ministry of Energy, Kathmandu	Nepal
(l)	Mr. Mukunda Prasad Acharya	Private Assistant, Ministry of Energy, Kathmandu	Nepal
(m)	Mr. Shiraz Anwar Khan	Dy Director (Data Mngmnt), Alternative Energy Dev. Board,	Pakistan
(n)	Miss. Sobia Sabir	Coordinator, Alternative Energy Development Board, Pakistan	Pakistan
(o)	Mrs. R.K.P.S. Gunatilake	Chief Engineer (Commercial), Ceylon Electricity Board	Sri Lanka
(p)	Mrs. B.B.I. Anuradhi	Assistant Director(Planning), Ministry of Power and Energy	Sri Lanka
(q)	Mr. Hilal A. Raza	Director SAARC Energy Centre, Islamabad	
(r)	Mr. Shahzada Khalid	Deputy Director SAARC Energy Centre, Islamabad.	

Resource Persons:

3. The names of five selected Resource persons alongwith Thematics of their presentation are given below: -

(a)	Ms. Soma Dutta	India	Integrating Gender in Energy Sector Practice
(b)	Dr. Indira Shakya	Nepal	Gender Equality and Energy Services
(c)	Dr. Anoja Wickramasinghe	Sri Lanka	Maximizing Development Effectiveness through Gender Equality and Participation
(d)	Mr. D. N. Raina	India	Correlation between Energy and Poverty and their Impact on Women
(e)	Ms. Joulleyn Murphy	USA	International Perspective on Women and Energy.

4. Delegates of all seven member states presented their country presentation in line with the guide lines provided to them which are attached as annex VI to XII.

The first Business Session:

5. The first business session of the workshop was inaugurated by HE Dr. Muhammad Ali, Controller of Immigration and Emigration and Minister Republic of Maldives inaugurated the session which was also attended by a sizeable VIP's & dignitaries from Govt of Maldives. This attracted a lot of publicity in the print and the electronic media of Maldives. A detailed program of the workshop is attached as annex XIII.

Welcome Dinner:

6. Welcome dinner was hosted on the first day of the workshop by Director SEC. All the delegates, High Commissioners of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan in Male in addition to officials of Ministry of Environment and Energy, SAARC Coastal Zone Management Centre and eminent members of civil society of Male attended the dinner which provided an excellent opportunity for informal discussion on Women and Energy.

One day Field visit:

7. Three islands namely Himmafushi, Hulhumale, and one island resort in Maldives giving a clear impact of energy in the field of production and conservation was under taken which proved to be very interesting for the participants who got an insight to the energy aspect of Maldives.

The Valedictory Session:

8. The valedictory session of the workshop was graced by Uza Fathmath Dhiyana Saeed, Minister of Gender, Family and Human Rights of Republic of Maldives and Ex-Secretary General SAARC in addition to several State and Deputy Minister of Republic of Maldives Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Ms. Dunyya Mamoon also attended. Mr. Hilal A Raza Director SEC apprise the session with the recommendations and way forward prepared by the participants of the Workshop. The honorable minister while acknowledging the importance of

women in energy emphasized in increasing the efforts to overcome energy crises in the SAARC Region for the poverty alleviation.

Conclusion:

9. The workshop identified the following critical issues and challenges related to women in the energy sector that require attention:

- (a) The energy sector still remains a male domain that limits the entrepreneurship and business opportunities for women. Thus economic benefits from the energy sector are usually for men while the role of women is reduced to being end users only;
- (b) Despite being the principal users, women have minimal decision making power in the energy sector and are seldom part of the choice and development of technology or management of the sector;
- (c) It was acknowledged that SAARC member States are working towards provision of modern energy services to all thus improving energy applications specifically related to women;
- (d) However, much remains to be done and by and large women are damaged to their mental and physical health and wellbeing;
- (e) The drudgery inflicted on women due to lack of access to modern energy sources and efficient, affordable and clean energy services also results in the neglect of child care which impacts the future of the society;

10. **Recommendations:**

The workshop has made the following recommendations for the consideration and implementation through the SAARC Inter-Governmental mechanism: -

- (a) SAARC Member States should include gender elements in all energy sector policies and programs;
- (b) A regional study may be conducted to document gender disaggregated impact of modern energy projects in order to identify good practices and lessons learnt in integrating gender into energy access projects and programs;

- (c) Household energy efficiency and conservation should be promoted through women participation in SAARC Member States and the SAARC Energy Centre should develop a program for this purpose;
- (d) SAARC Chullahas (Improved Cook Stoves) developed by the SAARC Energy Centre should be promoted in the rural areas of SAARC Member States;
- (e) Women's access to micro-financing for energy related programs should be promoted in the SAARC Member States;
- (f) Women should be given special preference and scholarships for capacity building and training programs in energy policy development, advocacy and vocational training at the institutions offering such courses, in particular through the SAARC University;
- (g) Each Member State should nominate a focal point for coordination of energy-gender related programs with the SAARC Energy Centre.