REPORT OF THE WOMEN MAJOR GROUP ON THE AFRICA REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING (RIM) FOR THE EIGTHTEENTH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-18), ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 27TH – 30TH OCTOBER, 2009

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THEME: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND POVERTY REDUCTION

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1Background to RIM CSD-18

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was established in April 1996. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 58/218 mandated the Regional Commissions in collaboration with the Secretariat of CSD, regional institutions as well as United Nations organizations to organize multi-stakeholder Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs) to provide regional input to the work of the CSD.

The Sixth Session of the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD-6) aimed at building on the achievements of the previous Committees, held its meeting on October 27th to 30th, 2009. The Meeting sought to engender the participation of high-level experts and policy makers from a cross-section of sustainable development actors, including governments, the private sector and civil society organizations in the ECA member States, as well as from African regional and sub-regional organizations. The theme of the meeting was "Sustainable Consumption and Production for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction", which is a running thread in the thematic cluster of issues to be considered at the RIM, for which it will provide a platform. These are; Transport, Chemicals, Waste Management, Mining, and A Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP).

1.2 Objectives and Agenda of the African RIM

The Africa RIM was held under the auspices of the Sixth Session of the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD-6). The goal of the RIM was to review progress achieved in the thematic cluster of issues to be discussed at CSD-18 based on commitments, goals and targets agreed in the Agenda 21 (A21), the Programme of Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (PFIA21), and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) of the Outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The main objectives of the Session were twofold. The first is to review the implementation of the 2008/2009 work programme of FSSDD and to provide guidance on further work during the 2010/2011 biennium in the context of the proposed programme budget of the ECA strategic framework for 2010/2011. The second is to provide a platform for the Africa RIM to discuss the reviewed progress in the implementation commitments relative to Transport, Chemicals, Waste Management, Mining, and A Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), as well as to prepare the Africa RIM Statement to CSD-18.

1.3 Role of VAM as a Facilitator of the Women Major Group of the CSD

VAM had three delegates participating in the meeting one from Ghana and two from New York. In total six delegates represented the WMG. Below is a summary of the outcomes and challenges of the role and responsibilities of VAM as member of the major group in the CSD RIM meeting. The major groups for the CSD are Women, Youth,

Farmers, Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, Local authorities, Science and technology, Trade Unions and the Private sector.

1.3.1 Summary of Outcomes at the African RIM
- the establishment of linkages between the representatives of the major groups and the secretariat on the role of the women major group at the RIM
- the establishment of useful linkages between women major group and government representatives from participating African countries.
- Organized in collaboration with other representatives of the women major group the side event for the NGO representatives
- the development of the programme for the side event by the major groups
- Sensitized and created awareness on the key role of representatives of Major groups and the importance of their involvement in the CSD / RIM
- Lobbied and ensured that critical issues on women, children and the youth are included in the discussions at the meeting. The WMG acknowledges the support of some countries for the course of wowen.
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1.4 The Report

This report is WMG's obligation to report events of the meeting and to present some of the critical women, gender and children's issues that were relevant to the presentations made in particular; but also to the implementation of actions agreed on the way forward. The report is organized into activities and events of the various meeting days. Apart from summarizing the issues discussed for each day, including the presentations, the report also presents some critical issues on women, children, the youth, and NGOs that is relevant for consideration. Some useful outcomes outlined above are some of the achievements of VAM's participation in the African RIM meeting.

2.0 DAY ONE - Sustainable Consumption and Production for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction

2.1 Opening session

The Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) for the CSD-18 commenced on October 27, 2009 with a formal opening session. The session included introduction of various representatives and the exchange of pleasantries between the secretariat and representatives of the various African government officials, agency representatives and all other participants including representatives of the major groups and civil society. The Chairperson of the outgoing Bureau i.e the Fifth Session of the Africa Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD-5) made his opening remarks followed by welcome remarks from the representative of the Executive Secretary of ECA. There were also statements from the Africa Vice-Chairperson of CSD-18 and a representative of the African Union Commission. The representative of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia delivered the opening address and declared the meeting officially opened. All the statements called on fruitful deliberations among participating governments and for critical recommendations to be put forth regarding the various programmes to be reviewed.

2.2 Election of the New Executives

  Individual engagements were made during the break period. The next session was the election by the Heads of Delegation. The five officers elected comprised of the following:

- Chair   -   South Africa
- Vice Chair   -   Democratic Republic of Congo
- 2nd Vice Chair   -   Morocco
- 3rd Vice Chair   -   Gambia
- Rapporteur   -   Mauritius

The election was followed by official acceptances of positions and an appreciation from the outgoing Chairperson of the support accorded him during his tenure of office.   The new executives were asked to take their positions at the high table for deliberations to commence. The newly elected Chairperson made a short statement thanking the delegates and calling for greater participation and support during his tenure of office for the objectives of the CSD to be achieved. He congratulated other elected members and hoped they will work closely together.

2.3 Adoption of the Agenda and the Programme of Work

The newly elected Chairperson of CFSSD-6 invited the Committee to adopt the draft agenda and programme of work. Issues were raised on the agenda relating to lack of specific dates and times for particular sessions. Namibia and Malawi delegates supported the adoption of the agenda and program of work for meeting deliberations to commence.

The ECA representative announced the formation of an open-ended drafting group, which will work in parallel with the plenary sessions to prepare the draft Africa RIM Statement. All members interested in the drafting of the report were asked to submit their interest in participation and join the group to be chaired by one of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Bureau the next morning.

2.4. Introduction and Objectives of the Meeting

A short presentation of the meeting objectives was done by the secretariat that presented an overview of the format, expected outcomes and outputs of the meeting. The intention of the presentation was to reach a common understanding on the work to be done at the meeting and also to help guide the Committee and participants in the deliberations. The format presented included presentation on the theme – sustainable consumption and production for sustainable growth and poverty reduction. There was also a review of status of implementation of the key actions with key constraints and challenges identified within each of the thematic focus areas which are: Transport, Chemicals, Waste Management, Mining and Sustainable Consumption and Production. Among the key expected outcomes were the need for clear articulation of measures, guidance on what needs to be done and recommendations on the way forward. It was further highlighted by the secretariat that there should be clear actions that demonstrate commitment with practical and action-oriented recommendations, which would also aid documentation of best practices.

2.5. Presentation on the Theme of the Meeting: Sustainable Consumption and Production for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction

The first official presentation was given by the secretariat on the theme: *Sustainable Consumption and Production for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction*. The presentation highlighted the links between SCP and sustainable growth and poverty reduction. Some of the emerging issues and trends, progress, challenges and measures necessary to achieve SCP within the context of sustainable growth and poverty reduction. The session was expected to lead to a clear articulation of measures to promote sustainable consumption and production in Africa, clear understanding of the constraints and challenges and guidance on the way forward to ensure that it contributes to sustainable growth and poverty reduction. The presenter said the five review reports commissioned by the ECA, UNEP, UNIDO and the ARSCP were on transport, chemicals, waste management and the SCP including the ten year framework of programmes on SCP. The committee acknowledged some of the progress made but also echoed challenges relating to fragmentation of approaches in the implementation of the thematic areas. The fragmentation, it was clearly noted, related to the lack of harmonization and proper coordination in the implementation of the different approaches.

2.5.1 Critical Issue
Of critical concern to the major group is the need to ensure harmonization in the programmes ensuring that coordination activities acknowledges the key role of NGOs ,WMG and civil society as key partners

2.6. Presentation on Progress of Implementation of Activities of the Sub-programme "Food Security and Sustainable Development" During the 2008 – 2009 Biennium

The presentation outlined activities that have been completed and those that are yet to be finalized. It was highlighted that all members of the AU states of the ECA have advocated for Value Chain approach to agricultural development and transformation for Africa. Members have also adopted a common position for negotiations toward the post 2012 global agreement. The lessons learnt and the ways forward were also presented. Key among these was the linkages between climate change and the development of the sub-programme. The need for strong and effective monitoring of the implementation of the programme, coupled with strong political commitment at the highest level at national levels was particularly noted as key lessons for the success of the sub-programme.

2.6.1 Critical Issues
This report notes the importance of gender mainstreaming strategies and women's empowerment in the adoption of the value chain to agriculture and calls for particular attention to be given to analysis of women's role in the agricultural value chain.

2.7. Presentation on the Progress Report on the Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)

The Secretariat made a presentation on progress made toward the implementation of CAADP. The presentation highlighted the background to CAADP which is that given the crucial importance of agriculture in most African economies, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union in July 2001 opted to include it as the only productive sector among the five sectoral priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) that CAADP was adopted at the African Union (AU) Summit in Maputo in 2003.

The presentation further elaborated that CAADP provides a framework for consensual policies and priorities for African Governments, regional organizations, farmers, private agribusinesses and development partners. It was stated that CAADP is now in its fifth year of implementation, which is an appropriate juncture to take stock of the progress being made towards achieving the expected outcomes of the Programme, and to identify its future direction. According to the presentation ECA, in its 2008-2009-work programme, mandated the Food Security and Sustainable Development (FSSD) Division to prepare a parliamentary document to report to the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD) on the status of implementation of CAAPD.

The presentation clearly articulated the main goal of CAADP is to help African countries reach a higher level of economic growth through agricultural development that would help eliminate hunger, reduce poverty and food insecurity as well as boost exports. CAADP is a programme of the African Union that emanates from and is fully owned and led by African Governments. It explained that although continental in scope, it is an

integral part of national efforts to promote growth in the agricultural sector and economic development. CAADP it was stressed "… *is not a set of supranational programmes to be implemented by individual countries. Rather, it is a common framework reflected in a set of key principles and targets established by the Heads of State and Government to*:
> (i) guide country strategies and investment programmes;
> (ii) allow for regional peer learning and review; and
> (iii) facilitate the alignment and harmonization of development efforts.

The above in our opinion has critical importance to the involvement of women and NGOs and also on issues on equity, vulnerability and inclusion and especially in relation to gender, women and children's issues.

The presentation was followed by general discussions with key issues including the achievement of the CAADP objectives and implementation strategy and the outlined challenges and the way forward. The presentation and discussions were very useful and highly enlightening. It clearly articulated the current level of achievement and some of the constraints in the implementation of CAADP. This included clear understanding of the constraints and challenges as well as the measures needed to advance implementation.

2.7.1 Critical / Relevant Issues
There are some key considerations that in VAM's opinion the implementation of the CAADP must consider with regards to women, children and the vulnerable. These may include specific issues relating to the various pillars of the CAADP:

- *Pillar 1: Land and water management*

Women remain the most marginalized in terms of access to land resources and this the implementation of the CAADP must be mindful of and support.

- *Pillar 2: Rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for improved market access*

The inadequacies of rural infrastructure and its undeveloped road network indeed has serious constraints for particularly rural women, who due to socio-cultural roles, are responsible for marketing of agricultural wares and produce at the local markets and are more likely to be affected by inadequate physical infrastructure and unstable market opportunities. One of the major constraints facing women in agriculture and trade is the lack of current market information and trading skills coupled with uncertain market policy environments, and rapidly changing trade regulations.

- *Pillar 3: Increasing food supply and reducing hunger*

This goal has direct implications on women and children who are the most affected in times of hunger and food insecurity and hence are likely to benefit most in any real investment to help improve the livelihood and food security.

- *Pillar 4: Agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption*

Efforts to avert food insecurity and reduce poverty by African leaders will have to involve women in Africa who are directly involved in agriculture and research. Technology and adoption must necessarily target female farmers as much as men.

It must be stated that based on the above, it is important that all actions to be considered in the implementation of the CAADP effectively considers gender mainstreaming as a key strategy and the inclusion of women and children's peculiar needs and concerns at all levels of implementation as critical.

2.8 Facilitation of Networking and Preparatory Meeting of Major Groups

In relation to its responsibilities as a facilitator of the major groups initial introductions were done among the participants representing major groups. These participants discussed the importance of their participation in general and also the relevance of their input into a position paper. Major group participants also discussed the format for their side event to be held on 28th October 2009 where some presentations were to be done on their positions regarding the thematic areas and the implementation of the CSD. The Women Major Group represented at the meeting included representatives from VAM, the Bahai and SSDI. There had been some preparatory work on a position paper from NGOs and it was agreed by all representatives to support the ongoing review and allowing for members to submit some inputs.

2.10 Presentation on Report on the Status of Food Security in Africa

A presentation was made on the status and trends in the development and growth of the agricultural sector in Africa by the secretariat. Critical to the presentation was the clear presentation of the current trends and food insecure hotspots in the African sub-region. The presentation rightly noted that more at risk are the vast majority of the poor urban and rural households (especially landless and female-headed households) and therefore it becomes necessary to focus on this group in all interventions to be developed.
The presentation was followed by general discussion. Among key issues raised were the seriousness of food insecurity and the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor in Africa in relation to food security.

The discussions particularly highlighted the importance of women's role in food production and the need to focus on their role in food security. Delegates were particularly passionate during discussions on these topics and were consistent in their call for a more revolutionary approach to addressing food insecurity in the sub-region since it is becoming a serious challenge regardless of the different efforts being undertaken. The effects of indiscriminating importation of various foods into countries is also affecting local markets and supporting unfair and increasing competition among African producers. The presentation was very clear on the issue of food securing in Africa and provided an opportunity for some in-depth discussion on the issue. Africa's food security situation, it was clear, required a concerted effort among countries taking effective and

targeted measures which goes beyond projects and programmes to an assessment of local social conditions.

2.6.1 Critical Issues
Indeed it is important to agree with some of the key recommendations provided in the presentation, which are the need to strengthen the links between nutrition and agricultural development since it indeed holds the key to addressing malnourishment among children. Anemia among pregnant women is currently a serious problem relating to infant mortality and maternal mortality

3.0 DAY TWO

3.1 Presentation on Climate for Development in Africa (Climdev-Africa) Programme and its African Climate Policy Centre

The secretariat gave a presentation highlighting that the establishment of the programme was in response to the highest calling within the AU for an institutional development and implementation of a major plan on climate change in Africa. The various actions to be undertaken under ClimDev-Africa were discussed. These actions were to be at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

3.2 Regional Implementation Review on Transport

According to the presentation on the sub-theme of transport, progress in integration of transport sector strategies into poverty reduction goals through the PRTSR) is ongoing in most African countries. The presentation stated that the AUC/NEPAD-AfDB Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) was developed to ensure integrated development of Africa's infrastructure and avoid duplication of efforts. Among the major declaration adopted were to accelerate liberalization of air transport; revitalizing rail transport and urgent need to improve road safety; integrate road safety in cooperation programs. Also inter-state conventions and protocols adopted; many being implemented – CA, EA, SA and WA. Impressively by 2008, leaded gasoline has been phased out in all Africa countries except two whilst road agencies and road funds are being established and/or restructured

However there are implementation challenges and constraints which includes the lack of appropriate and well formulated policies and strategies with slow implementation of sub-regional and regional agreements including many border restrictions among and within countries. Inadequate human and institutional capacity coupled with negative impact of transport on the environment and high transport costs (Transport costs in Africa are among the highest in the world) presents many challenges to its users. Transport services remain unaffordable to many African citizens especially women and children who daily need to commute to various destinations in poor rural communities. Poor transport safety and security, poor state of road safety, accidents and the resulting loss of life and destruction of property are among some of the great challenges facing the sector.

3.2.1 Critical Issues

The report wish to state that women and children have peculiar transport needs and agrees with the call on governments to develop and promote an integrated approach to transport policy-making in Africa and to adopt and promote measures to mitigate the negative impact of transport on human health and the environment. The report particularly notes that poor accessibility means isolation and isolation induces poverty. Isolation sustains poverty because services do not reach those that are isolated and this isolation indeed breeds vulnerability. Accordingly, transport is the major vehicle for carrying people away from poverty towards economic growth and well-being.

Improvement of both transport and non-transport infrastructure (socio-economic) is a vital issue that would help reduce poverty. The development of road infrastructure must be done considering the social dimensions of its usage. It is important for rural transport to include development of access improvements such as (foot) bridges, footpaths, and improved tracks at rural levels using participatory prioritization and planning methodologies.

3.3 Regional Implementation Review on Chemicals

The presentation clearly stated that the use of chemicals is widespread and increasing in Africa and this has implication on critical sectors including agriculture, industry, control of vector borne diseases, household products, water quality and sanitation services. Some of the specific concerns raised in the presentation were the importation of hazardous and obsolete chemicals and products containing such toxic chemicals and limited and/or non-availability of scientific and technological capacities to safely handle chemicals.

The presentation noted that the lack and/or limited harmonization of policies and regulations at sub-regional and regional levels affects effective management of harmful chemicals in the sub-region and that the continent has chemical management challenges due to rising population, urbanization (sanitation), disease prevalence (and changes therein), modernization of agriculture and (industrial) development, safe and quality water needs. One key issue which has direct implications on women and children relates to agriculture and its dependence on harmful fertilizers and insecticides mainly due to inappropriate agricultural practices, lack of modern technology and techniques, disastrous climatic conditions, lack of awareness on the use of harmful products and also lack of adequate laws and monitoring schemes on chemicals. The development of National **Capacity through the establishment of** National Cleaner Production Centres is considered to be important.

3.3.1 Critical and Relevant Issues
VAM shares such critical opinion relating to the management of chemicals but also identifies the following issue, which also relates to chemicals and the need to include them in future discussions:
- The importation and use of harmful bleaching agents and cosmetics by women on the continent as a major issue relating to this thematic area;
- The subscription and medication of sometimes unsafe medicines without strict adherence to pharmaceutical code of ethics;
- The problem of children and the youth from especially urban slums scavenging through disposed waste for scrap and being exposed to all forms of toxic and harmful chemicals from waste.
- Advocacy programmes on chemical management must involve particularly grassroots' organizations targeting women, the youth and also children on harmful chemical management on the continent and expiration of drugs and foods shipped to Africa as aid.

3.4 Presentation on the Regional Implementation Review on Waste Management

The presentation highlighted actions being taken to prevent and minimize waste and maximize reuse, recycling and use of environmentally friendly alternative materials. It was stressed that the sub-region needs to develop waste management systems and extend waste service coverage.

There are key actions taken and some progress made under the RIM. These include the enactment of Policies, strategies and legislation formulated by many countries in the region to minimise generation and ensure sound management of waste. Although recycling and reuse of waste - energy production from agricultural waste are not as notable as expected there are efforts at Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) approach promoted thru NCPC (National Clean Production Centres) in some countries aimed at sound treatment of hazardous waste by establishing appropriate facilities such as incinerators for hospitals and secure landfills. Most African countries have ratified or acceded to the relevant international instruments for hazardous waste Basel Convention however only 23 countries had ratified the Bamako convention by 2007

3.4.1 Critical Issues
Implementation challenges and constraints include the creation of sufficient capacity for environmentally sound management and this of course include building the capacity of women and the youth to contribute to environmental management. Importation of second-hand consumer goods and production and/or import of substandard products majority of which are used by women and children as heavy users of consumables need to be particularly noted. Challenges in implementation and enforcement of waste regulations and conventions require some transparency and also direct target of vulnerable including children, the youth and rural and peri-urban women.

3.5 Presentation on the Regional Implementation Review on Mining

The presentation highlighted some challenges relating to maintaining efficient management of mining regimes on the continent and the growing and continuous disconnect between mining companies and communities coupled with weak government policies and contracts with mining companies. The need for enhanced contribution of mining towards Sustainable Development (SD) in Africa was highlighted as a key objective together with the need to foster sustainable mining practices. The presentation stated that most African countries - have rewritten their mining codes in the last 20 years. The Africa Mining Vision (AMV) has been formulated which advocates for "transparent, equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources to underpin broad-based sustainable growth and socio-economic development".

It was noted that there is general improvement in the participation by communities in mining projects and in benefits accruing to communities. Some significant progress has been noted to include environmental and social requirements in African mineral regimes

with some progress in addressing health and its social impacts relative to mineworkers and mining communities. The support for value addition to artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) mineral products, mostly gold and gemstones were also identified. It was generally noted that there are slow improvements together with increased technical assistance by development partners to support mining reform in many African countries.

3.5.1 Critical and Relevant Issues
However there was also mention of various implementation challenges and constraints such as inadequate capacity to monitor compliance with legislative requirements, especially the technical and business reporting requirements, and in environmental and social management plans. Some inconsistency in the existence and/or application of instruments and systems to ensure the effective participation of impacted communities and other stakeholders including women and the youth in mining operations is of concern to WMG. The inadequacies of implementation of provisions for both social and environmental rehabilitation funds embedded in legislation are also likely to affect community development and rural poverty. It should be noted again that the mechanisms to identify and settle mineral-related conflicts and disputes, including addressing social, economic and religious concerns, which have been identified as lacking must be seriously considered in future actions. This report agrees with the position of presentation for further and continuous assistance to small-scale mining ventures to promote sustainable and commercially vibrant mining practices and communities. A better integration of women into the mining operation and the surrounding environment could lead to more prosperous and viable communities which can continue with economic activity after the end of the mine's life. Some specific considerations with regards to women may include:

- Supporting women's economic activity through revenue from mining can break the cycle of poverty and increase the level of education and skills in the community.
- Ensuring increase in productivity, efficiency, profitability and reliability for the mining operations through equitable distribution of resources can help sustain community development.
- Increase stakeholder buy-in and community participation mean a true social license to mining operations.

3.6 Presentation on the Regional Implementation Review on Sustainable Consumption and Production

The presentation on the review on Sustainable Consumption and Production was a very insightful presentation, which touched on some of the critical issues including what SCP is, and some of the major trends and emerging issues on SCP. The presentation sought to evaluate the progress and achievements in the implementation process as well as challenges and constraints; lessons learned, the way forward and some conclusions. The presentation outlined some of the actions taken and progress made. These actions include the African Ten-Year Framework Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10-YFP) has been produced and launched. Also the Africa Roundtable on Sustainable Consummation and Production (ARSCP) has been established. There are

projects under way within the framework of the 10-YFP in line with the Marrakech process and also other activities in the broader area of SCP.

3.6.1 Critical Issues
This report notes that the critical implementation challenges and constraints identified have critical implications on gender and women's issues such as:
- Fragmented initiatives may affect the critical targets to be focused upon;
- Poor education and lack of awareness on SCP benefits may not get the populace including women to show interest;
- Inadequate SCP legislation, poor enforcement where they exist could affect the implementation of national initiatives;
- Under-pricing of natural resources would inevitably support the destructive behaviour of humans both men and women in the management of natural resources;
- Lack of financial incentives and appropriate financing mechanisms for SCP at national and local levels would not support sustainable management practices.

3.7 Side Event of the Major Groups

The major groups successfully organized a side event participated by some key members of the delegation. The session was held on the second day of the RIM and the key issues focused on the following questions: How can we make sense out of the CSD and understand how to use the knowledge and opportunities found within the CSD process that presents itself to us over the next two years?
Two presentations were given. The first highlighted the key role of major groups representing all level and manner of stakeholders is very important. The second presentation pointed on that critical issues on the agenda of CSD18 are very much interrelated and all mirror the huge problem of our unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. The ever increasing and irresponsible consumption and production is putting a catastrophic strain on our world, by causing pollution and climate change, destroying the ecosystem and undermining sustainable lifestyles. In general these has been extremely serious and environmental impacts worldwide which calls for concerted efforts.

It was reiterated that commitment at engendering discussions by the committee would ensure participation at all levels. The Major Women Group, it was noted by the representative of the secretariat, has important role to play in discussions on sustainable development discussions. UNECA is very happy to support the work of the major groups and all NGOs involved in the process.

3.7.1 Key Issues Discussed
- The Major Groups side event will become part of the official presentations to be represented by all participants
- The Major Groups will continue to be directly involved in all aspects of the CSD RIM and ensure the achievement of intended goals of all projects

- The major groups together share in the believe that governments and the business sector everywhere need to commit to implementing policies that will guide towards a sustainable course.

- It was emphasized that it is essential that citizens everywhere are empowered to act in relation to sustainable production and consumption, and can assume their rights and responsibilities in this respect.
- The major groups presentation highlighted the importance of the CSD's two-year review and policy cycle to be used to deepen and operationalize the evolving understanding and objectives of sustainable consumption and production including deciding progress towards the objectives of sustainable production and consumption, poverty eradication, social and ecological justice and natural resource protection.
- A serious review of "implementation" requires a system approach, clearly defined, concrete and measurable targets, timetables and monitoring.
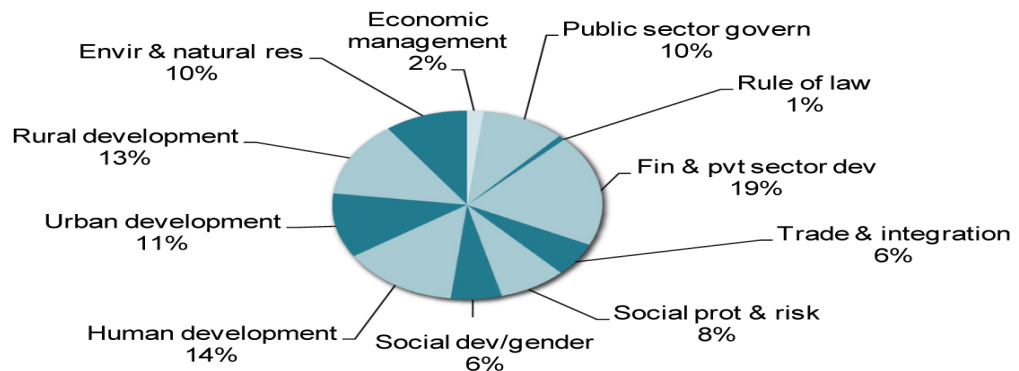
4.0 DAY THREE

4.1 Side Event: World Bank Presentation on the Development of a new Environmental Strategy

The WB made a representation on the development of its new Environment Strategy to be drafted. It was obvious that the Bank over the years is increasingly considering the mainstreaming of environmental and natural resource management (ENRM) as 10% whilst social and gender issues is currently at 6% of the banks total portfolio (See the diagram below). The presentation indicated the close link between environmental sanitation and the MDGs.

It clearly established that hunger and child malnutrition are linked to poor sanitation and hygiene; That disease due to environmental factors is 15 times higher in developing countries; 40% of burden falls on children under 5; that the financial crisis holding is holding 53 million people in extreme poverty and that the food crisis has left 63 million more people hungry of course including linkages between the gender equality goal with food crisis and maternal mortality.

During formal and informal discussions with representatives of the bank, it was indicated that the WB is indeed emphasizing on gender mainstreaming and so aspects of almost all its portfolio is supposed to ensure that critical social and gender issues including women's issues are mainstreamed within all its thematic distributions (Refer to the diagram below). Representatives of VAM continued with the discussions with the WB team with some informal engagements. The key issues discussed were on the possibilities of representatives and members of the major groups to make some input into the drafting. They also made enquiries of some of the WB ongoing country programmes and the current levels of involvement of women, children and youth groups. VAM emphasized the need for the WB to directly and indirectly support the redress of specific issues involving women and children in Africa. The VAM representative was part of the syndicate group discussions for the West Africa Group and made some inputs into the overall discussion

Total World Bank Project Portfolio by Thematic Distribution

Economic management 2%
Public sector govern 10%
Envir & natural res 10%
Rule of law 1%
Rural development 13%
Fin & pvt sector dev 19%
Urban development 11%
Trade & integration 6%
Human development 14%
Social dev/gender 6%
Social prot & risk 8%

Source: WB Presentation

Critical / Relevant Issues:

The WB needs to ensure the following:
- Women's role in environmental management is captured in the action plan;
- Gender / women's issues in environmental management is highlighted in the action plan
- WB ensures that countries who sign for support do commit to ensuring that women, gender and children's issues are to be addressed as part of urgent measures supported
- NGOs and Civil Societies are included as critical partners in the development of the environment action plan and efforts are made to ensure their involvement at all stages of the development of the action plan

4.2 Networking at the UNECA Gender / Women's Centre

VAM as representative of the women major group took advantage of their presence at UNECA to update their information on current and new trends in women's issues on the continent. An official visit was made to the UNECA women's centre for an update on key publications and also to network. The centre was receptive of the representatives and made available various documentations on women and gender issues.

5.0 DAY FOUR

The preparation of the draft report took place in the morning of the fourth day by the drafting team, which was open to all though it was mostly by representatives of the secretariat and government delegates. VAM took advantage of the review of the draft report and meeting statement to make some more contacts with delegates and also to lobby for inclusion of critical issues with gender and women's issues implications. The actual review took in the afternoon of 30th of October 2009. The session was facilitated by the secretariat led by ECA and the Participants were given the chance to comment on the reports.

5.1 Comments on the Draft Report and Statements

The issue was raised on the need for UNECA to ensure delegates from francophone countries get some support in timely translation of all documents and especially draft reports. The translation of documents into Arabic was also raised as essential for Arabic speakers to facilitate their role in discussions. The delays in the drafting of the report was raised as a challenge to effective review and amendments since most delegates may not be able to comment without a thorough perusal of the draft; A call for early preparation of the draft was greatly encouraged as well as the development of the meeting statement. The meeting statement was agreed to be a major outcome for input into the eighteenth session of the CSD. Delegates gave comments on content, phrasing and texts of the outcome documents. Some of the issues raised during the discussions on the report and meeting statement were as following:
- It was suggested that the discussions concentrated on the validity of the conclusions reached and adoption of the way forward;
- Questions relating to the general nature of the report was supported by the explanation that the principle of all such reports to stay general taking into account the fact that broad general statement on some agreements are to be made more specific at the country levels;
- It was also agreed that the report and statement should not include mention and should not be made of specific partners and donors since all donor partners are playing key roles;
- Member countries participated in the drafting of the document and so if there are any key issues left out during the drafting then it is time to discuss it now and briefly. Those which are left out must be indicated and then proposals made for its inclusion in the final documents;
- On the section on Chemicals, many African countries were considered to be needing great assistance in the measuring of toxicity and use of practices of acceptable international status and must be carefully articulated;
- Issues on editing and the need to be sure that points are placed under their specific sections must be noted;
- It was suggested that the use of terminologies in the report is to be carefully looked at to make the right meanings for example the use of terms "equitable and sustainable" in relation to particularly mining regimes. "Equitable" as a term in mining refers to the relationship between the mining companies and the

communities in relation to communities and the maximization of the benefits of mining to the communities. Long term creation of wealth for poverty reduction rather than short term seeking of money through taxes.

- The need for governments of participating countries to consistently exchange ideas on the implementation of plans, actions and programmes is to be included in both the statements and the draft reports since it is important and critical to the goal of the RIM meetings;
- The title of the report was to be changed to "**an outcome**" document of the Africa RIM and an **input** into the 18th Session of the Commission of Sustainable Development and this was accepted by all;
- Attention was drawn to omission of some critical information on representatives of the participating major groups and NGOs which included the wrong capturing of the name of VAM.

The session then accepted the draft report and statement subject to the proposed amendments. It was further agreed that draft report would be circulated among representatives for finalization. All inputs and comments made on the report were to be sent to the secretariat for inclusion in the report and statement. It must be stressed that, all discussions and deliberations were held in a rather cordial manner and the facilitation of the various sessions was done in a really participatory manner.

5.2 Closing Session

The final session of the meeting was closing remarks from various key representatives including the chairperson of the participating government delegations, UN DESA, UNEP, UNIDO and UNECA Secretariat. Each presented their satisfaction on a very fruitful meeting and appreciation to delegates and participants for collaborating in ensuring a rather intense deliberation on issues relating to actions being undertaken. The key implementers of the RIM were unanimous of the objectives of the meeting having been achieved. This is a statement shared by VAM and indeed representatives of the major groups who hoped that commitments made with regards to our involvement will be kept and the role of the major groups would be further enhanced in future deliberations.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

1. The presence of VAM and other representatives of the major groups was indeed useful in opening up avenues for networking with government representatives;
2. The organization of the side event provided an opportunity for participants to be reminded of the critical role that the representatives of the major groups play and the relevant of such role to the CSD processes;
3. The presence of representatives of the various major groups is always an important opportunity created between representatives of civil society especially representatives of the nine major groups with government officials to discuss the implementation of the CSD focus and thematic areas in representative countries to support and to monitor and contribute towards sustainable progress.
4. More at risk and greatly affected by food insecurity are the vast majority of the poor urban and rural households (especially landless and female-headed households).
5. Food insecurity has linkages with malnutrition among children and anemia among pregnant women and those are major problems with implications on infant and child mortality.
6. With regards to mining the inadequacies of implementation of provisions for both social and environmental rehabilitation funds embedded in legislation are likely to affect community development and rural poverty with particular implications on rural poor, majority of whom are women and children.

6.2 Recommendations

1. Increasing support for representatives of Major Groups at the RIM continues to be relevant and critical;
2. There is the need to ensure that critical and relevant issues identified by the Major Groups are carefully reflected and integrated into the implementation of all the agreed commitments and actions of the RIM;
3. The major groups and especially civil society organizations continue to be the critical linkages between the implementation of actions and local and grassroots' people and where possible they must be directly involved in all activities.
4. Any project on rural agricultural, research, technology dissemination and adoption must necessarily consider critical issues relating to particularly women and children.
5. It becomes necessary for implementation of programmes on food security to focus on this group in all interventions to be developed.
6. There is the need to strengthen the links between nutrition and agricultural development at all levels at all times in national efforts to address malnutrition among children and also anemia among pregnant women.