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GM: the impasse

The trends in discussions around the GM present two main options: the proposals three and four.

The opening statements sang the same refrain about the difficulties between the Global Mechanism and the UNCCD Secretariat, namely that the status quo is no longer possible!

The willpower expressed initially by countries gave the hope of reaching a final solution to this institutional problem, so as to be able to turn to what is essential; helping affected populations to improve their way of life. But the ongoing discussions in the COP appear to be in an impasse.

Proposition 3 is for the revision of the Memorandum of Understanding and the assimilation of staff and accounts without moving the GM, while

Proposition 4 suggests the termination of the MOU and full integration with the MM move to Bonn. Some countries such as parts of Africa have stated their preferred option, while others highlight the principles. For civil society the status quo remains and it appears that the COP 10 is not ready to resolve this disagreement. The situation is unacceptable, because it prevents essential actions from being implemented.

Deserting Gender Equality in the UNCCD is Not an Option

All over the world we are seeing the negative impacts that desertification and land degradation have on the well being of communities and biodiversity.

In my own country of Colombia, which is the second most bio-diverse country on earth, high rates of deforestation are causing land degradation and the extinction of many plants and animals. Along with biodiversity loss, the social and economic livelihoods of forest dependant people, often indigenous peoples, are being rapidly destroyed. If deforestation continues as it is, Colombia's woodlands could be completely depleted in a matter of 40 years. Indigenous women have been particularly impacted in Colombia losing the very land on which they survive. –WEDO Board Member Marcela Tovar-Restrepo (Colombia)

The same is true for women around the world living in areas affected by desertification and land degradation and drought. While there have been massive migrations in many areas because of desertification, it is often found that women are left behind in

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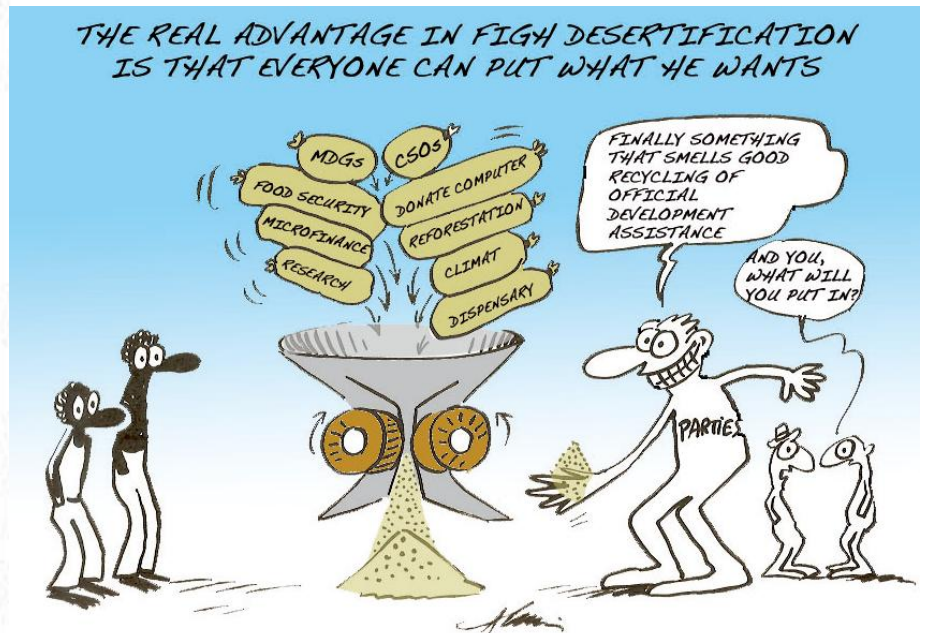
these resource barren areas caring for children, sick and elderly, while men migrate to other areas for a better life. This has been documented in Mali, where over the past 20 years almost half of the male population has migrated to neighboring countries. In areas affected by desertification women are spending four hours collecting necessities including water, fuelwood and fodder, instead of what should take, at the most, one hour. Some studies have shown that in areas affected by desertification women's working hours exceed that of men by 30 hours per week.

From its inception the UNCCD has recognized the importance of women's particular needs and roles in combating desertification, and in involving both women and men in all levels of decision-making. Now, with rapid loss of biodiversity, significant decreases in freshwater resources and increases in food insecurity, it is ever more critical to put the words of the Convention into action.

Under the guidance of the decisions of UNCCD COP-9, and in line with the UNCCD's 10-year strategy, the Secretariat with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and support from Finland and Switzerland, has drafted a policy framework on gender. This framework demonstrates the benefits of mainstreaming gender in desertification and sustainable land management actions at national and local levels.

Implementation of this framework will, in fact, increase effectiveness of the work of the UNCCD Secretariat and its Parties to deliver the objectives of the 10-year strategy.

At UNCCD COP-10 Parties have the opportunity to adopt a framework that can simultaneously increase the effectiveness of combating desertification and achieve goals towards gender equality and women's empowerment. This is a first step in allowing the UNCCD Secretariat to fully support Parties in gender



20 years after Rio, the scope of desertification and precisely how best to combat desertification is still the subject of a debate that has not been scientifically settled between proponents of environment and development. This lack of clarity creates conditions for inactivity. For this reason ODA directed at combating desertification has been ineffective. For many years ODA for rural development and agriculture has been dangerously weak, and has failed to address the causes famine, which all too frequently results in riots and disorder.

mainstreaming the 10-year strategy. WEDO, along with several other civil society organizations and women and men around the world urge Parties at UNCCD COP-10 to not desert women or men and adopt the policy framework on gender that can greatly assist Parties in achieving needed goals toward gender equality and sustainable development

Business Forum for the first time in COP

Sustainable Land Management Business Forum is being held for the first time in COP. The forum is designed to provide businesses with an opportunity to take part in sustainable land management. UNCCD plans to hold it regularly.

Don-ku Lee, chair of COP10 said, "The participation of businesses is crucial in solving desertification. Business forum is not only a platform for further discussion but also an opportunity to deliver the voice of private sector." About 80 businesses

including Yuhan-Kimberly, SK Forest, CNES and Elion Resource Group are participating in the forum, which is chaired by Mr. Kuk-hyun Moon, president of New Paradigm Institute.



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Civil Society Organization
Network to Combat
Desertification