

Short Report: Participation in UNFCCC COP-14, Poznan (Poland), 4-10 December 2008, Irene Dankelman.

Thursday 6 December: departure from Netherlands.

Friday 5 December:

On behalf of WECF participation in the Gender Conference, organized by LIFE/gendercc-network, entitled: Gender Justice in Times of a Changing Climate.

The programme of the day consisted of a wide range of presentations (by women and men), around themes such as:

- feminist perspectives on climate justice (Michael Dorsey, Nicola Bullard, Titi Sountero)
- market mechanisms and gender justice (Simone Lovera, Axel Michaela, Koin Etuati)
- strategies for gender mainstreaming (in UNFCCC).

The setting/metodology was interesting: the ca. 90 participants were seated in circles of about 12 persons (no tables), and received after each short panel, there was ample room for discussion around specific questions, that were reported later on again.

I participated in the discussions and facilitated and reported one of those circles.

There was a good, open way of sharing, and especially the cases that participants shared in their circles, based on their own situations, showed how women and men were diversily effected by CC, but also how women have coped, adapted and organized themselves. This resulted in recognition and a sense of communality/community. However, when the day progressed and became more focused on the UNFCCC process or gender mainstreaming in CC in general, there was quite a lot of pessimism around, and participants felt a bit of despair, that after so many years we have to continue wokring on these issues with so limited policy results. Especially the gap between local realities and global policies seems to be worrysome. No clear solutions were formulated, although some (incl. id) tried to come up with some visions on how to bridge the gap, and how to promote our own alternative strategies to tackle CC.

Saturday 6 December:

Morning:

Chairing/facilitating the WEDO/GCCA session at the IIED 2days symposium on Climate Change and Adaptation: Gender and Climate Change.

Although i chaired the sesssion on behalf of WEDO, i also introduced myself as a WECF representative. During the session 4 panellists shared their experiences around gendemainstreaming and climate change (Lorena Aguilar), climate change in daily lives of women and the COP (Rachel Mapinga, Uganda; and Kamarunga Banda, South Africa?) and a study on financial mechanisms and gender was presented by Athena.... (Philippines). The discussion was lively and underlined the need to dig deeper into the issues at stake, document and share more local experiences – but more importantly learn lessons from those, and bring a feminist analysis and women’s voices to the CC podia.

Afternoon/evening:

Preparations for the INFORSE/WECF side event. During this side event, that was co-facilitated by Sabine Bock, i gave the final presentation on Mobilizing Women as Changemakers in CC, and WECF's role in these. See annexes for text and PP.

The side event was a clear reflection of WECF's work on sustainable energy on the ground, through its partners. It was interesting that the WECF presentations were strong and given by both men and women, and that also the men referred to gender-aspects of their work (incl. insulation, energy saving stoves, solar energy). The three presentations from the EECCA region were well prepared and received. The presentation of Ruth Bond about the work of the Women's Institute in the UK, showed clearly how a well-established and broad women's organization, can play an important role in mobilizing women in many creative ways (e.g. speed dates with parliamentarians!) on climate change. The Women's Institute is certainly an interesting partner for cooperation in the (near) future. In my presentation i reflected more particularly on how women have played keyroles in mobilizing around environmental issues, and how WECF strategizes its work and tries to bring a gender-approach into it.

The partnership with INFORSE was very pleasant and their experience (and that of participants) around practical sustainable energy-poverty elevation, aligned very well with WECF's experiences.

Late evening with most members in our delegation we visited the NGO party in the city. Although a nice setting, a bit too noisy for older people....

Sunday 7 December:

With Ruth Bond and Emily Boost of WI, I visited the (very well attended) IIED Adaptation Days again, and we attended the first session on lessons from CC adaptation, as well as a film session on humor and CC: a very inspiring setting in which a broad diversity of films, videos and clips (e.g. from Oxfam-UK, and from a film collective in Chile/German students) showed that the message can also be brought forward in a very lively way. To mobilize people, we do not (always) need the [scary] scenarios that we are facing.

Monday 8 December:

Morning:

- attended (with WECF delegates) the GERES pressconference, in which their best practices guidebook 'Climate-Energy-Development' was presented
- participated in the Women Demonstration: Gender Justice is Climate Justice (through the corridors of UNFCCC) and attended their pressconference.
- participated (on behalf of WECF) the Women's Caucus, with women from the gendercc network (Ulrike Roehr and many women from global South) and Cate Owren (WEDO) and Hanny Meesters (UNDP/GCCA). Sharing of state of the art of the COP and gender in it, some reflections on lobbypoints (will be shared by all) and some strategizing; more of that will follow on Wednesday or Thursday. There seemed to be a willingness from the participants of different networks to at least inform each other, and try to coordinate future work; pleasant atmosphere.

- Attended the Greenpeace side event on Nuclear Power (too little, too late, too expensive), at which apart from Jan Vande Putte and Thomas Breuer (GP) also Claire Greensfelder (International Forum on Globalization and WECF) gave a very inspiring and

Afternoon:

- looked after the booth
- attended the briefing for the demonstration on Tuesday 9 December.

Tuesday 9 December:

With Sabine, Timur, Evgenie, Aznazi and Vera (?), assembled at the railwaystation of Poznan at 6:15 am to get the train (3 hours one way!) with other demonstrators to the demonstration in Warsaw. Sharing a compartment with the six of us, I also got to know the other participants far more better: enjoyed their (life)stories (and jokes).

The demonstration had a good turn-out, most younger people, but also some of my age-group. Most participants came from the COP in Poznan, and were Europeans, but also a delegation from other continents. The main message was that the GOs of Poland and particularly Germany (Merkel) should not block the European Climate package (pressurized by the coal/energy and the transport sector). Very well organized by Avaaz, Greenpeace, WWF and Oxfam. Certainly partners for future cooperation (esp. in the light of the European and German elections in 2009).

Walking back to our apartment in the evening some discussions with Sabine on follow-up, gender in WECF work in general and in energy/CC in particular. As the WI also would like to develop a basis-document on gender-CC/energy, and some common lobbypoints can be derived from that, we could cooperate. I have some days left (about 6) from my contract with WECF this year, so maybe I can use these for gender-CC/energy paper/factsheet: to be discussed with Sascha.

Wednesday 10 December:

Travelling back to Netherlands by (day)train: reporting, finishing documents, incl. gender policy etc. An experience richer, and ready to help WECF strategize for Copenhagen and beyond.

Irene Dankelman, 10 December 2008