

Constituency Member Contributions Technical Solutions

Country: International

Organization: Women in Europe for a Common Future

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Improving livelihoods in rural areas with safe and sustainable energy and sanitation – practical solutions

Description of the project: In the WECF energy and sanitation programme, decentralized solutions (solar water heaters, solar heating, solar fruit driers, biogas, insulation measures, sustainable sanitation solutions) are implemented by locally trained craftsmen and women, using local materials. By providing energy security in a sustainable way the project contributes to improved living conditions and health, reduces poverty and environmental degradation in rural areas in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Tajikistan and Uganda.

Climate Impact: The majority of the rural population in the project countries suffers from energy poverty and uses un-safe, fossil and traditional energy sources. By using fuel wood from unsustainably managed forests for heating, a rural household emits 6 -10 tons of CO₂ annually. Technologies implemented by WECF and its partners provide safe, sustainable energy services, reducing household emissions up to 50%. Communities also become more climate resilient because there is less land degradation and deforestation. The programme also works on sustainable sanitation solutions that use less or no water compared with traditional alternatives.

Gender Impact: In the target regions, women have an unpaid labor burden in and around the house and have fewer opportunities to participate in economic and public activities. Women are traditionally responsible to produce heat and hot water and are exposed to indoor air pollution caused by the burning of unsafe fuel. Insufficient availability of warm water and appropriate sanitation for hygienic purposes likewise adversely affects women's health. WECF fosters gender equality by 1. Reducing women's and men's unpaid labor burden, improving women's health and comfort by reducing indoor air pollution; 2. Ensuring that men and women participate equally in all project aspects, that women's needs are taken into account, and empowering women to become promoters of safe, sustainable energy and improved hygiene; 3. Empowering women and men economically by saving money for fuel and creating jobs.

