

25 April 2008

Resp. Mrs. Padmaramachandran, Mr. Radhakrishnan, Mr. Unnithan, Friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Finally we have come to the last leg of this five day Women in Energy activity. I am sure all of you are in a hurry to get back to your homes after being away from your home countries for more than a week. At the same time, it is very difficult to say goodbye to the exotic Kerala "God's Own Country". And as Mr. Unnithan said, all good things come to an end.

Before we conclude the program, I would like to capture on some of the key actions which needs to be followed up as soon as possible. Over this week we had learnt a lot of new lessons on Efficient Energy Management and Renewable Energy specially in the household sector. We had intensive discussions and brainstorming about how to sustain this momentum of Women in Energy Activity, which already hit the ground.

The participants from all countries unanimously came out with the idea of establishing a "Network" of women. Now that we have officially launched the first ever USAID/SARI/Energy 'Women in Energy, we should find effective ways to maintain sustainability of this program. This workshop is not an end in itself, or to be forgotten after a while. It is just the beginning. Through this workshop we have virtually formed a network of women and this team will serve as the founder members of 'Women in Energy Networking' group.

So here are some key follow up actions:

- 1) The participants threw the idea of forming a “Portal” with different working groups representing each country. USAID SARI/E will review this idea, and start working towards this direction.
- 2) SARI/Energy will include all you participants, in the ListServe for sharing the SARI/Energy Daily News Round Up, and we will look at ways where this medium can be used as a mode of communicating on Women in Energy.
- 3) SARI/Energy will form an online group email system where the women network can communicate each other on regional issues on women in energy.
- 4) SARI/Energy will work closely with ENERGINIA to see ways of collaboration on Women in Energy issues.
- 5) The ‘lessons learnt’ and best practices from this workshop, specially the EMC Energy Clinics and the Kerala Govt “Kudumbashree” activities, can be replicated to other South Asian countries. SARI/Energy will look at options of extending support and leveraging such activities.
- 6) SARI/Energy will look at options of supporting selected subjects which is mentioned in the Kerala Declaration on Women in Energy Workshop.
- 7) SARI/Energy website www.sari-enegey.org is the best medium for program updates and important SARI/Energy events. .. All the presentation and proceedings from this workshop will be uploaded to the website early next week. Pl visit this site on a regular basis.

We would like to hear from you, the progress on WIE once you start working on the action plans for your country. Pl get back to Padu or me directly, or thru our SARI/E Country Coordinators in your respective countries. Our contact details are given on the last page of the SARI/E program brochure which is in your folder.

As Reba mentioned, we are glad that the Bangladesh Govt has offered to host the next follow up workshop of Women in Energy, in Dhaka during the month of November. Thank you Reba for taking the initiative and interest. We look forward to working closely with you on this. One requirement for participating in the follow up workshop is that each country will be requested to present a paper on 2-3 accomplishments you have achieved, in Women in Energy sector in your respective countries, as a result of your participation in this workshop in Trivandrum. We will put together a draft agenda for the Dhaka workshop with inputs from each of you.

Finally, on behalf of USAID/SARI/E, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Govt. of Kerala, and EMC for hosting this event here in Trivandrum. We once again thank the Kerala Governor Shri. R.L. Bhatiaji, The Powr Minister Shri. A.K. Balan for coming to the inaugural function and sharing their ideas about the Kerala energy sector in general and women in Energy in particular. Our thanks to Minister Balan for visiting us again this week.

We are overwhelmed by the consistent support, guidance, contributions and feedback offered by the Kerala Power Secretary, Mr. L. Radhakrishnan, and for being with us throughout these five days. His professional enthusiasm combined with his social interactions with the participants kept their morale at its heights. Thank you for shuffling your busy schedules, to be with us this week like an

extended family. On behalf of USAID, Beth Hogan, Padu and the entire delegation from the SARI/E countries, I express our gratitude to you Mr. Radhakrishnan.

I would like to thank Mrs Padmaramachandran, former Chief Secretary of Kerala for accepting our invitation and be present at the inaugural session, and also doing a vibrant valedictory speech today. Thank you Mam for sharing your vision and ideas about Women in Energy and men in energy. We will remember your 3 key words “LLL” Life Long Learning.

Special word of thanks to our superb faculties, moderators, and presenters, Mr. Dharesan Unnithan, Dr. Veena Joshi, Ms. Lalitha Balakrishnam , Ms. Swati Bhogle, Ms. Soma Dutta, Mr. Ramesh Nepal, Dr. Merle Kindred, Mr. R. Hari Kumar, Dr. R.V.G. Menon, Mr. Kesavan Nair, Mr. A.M. Narayanan, Dr. Edgard Dezuari, Ms. Hosay Rahimi, Mr. Krishna Chaitanya Rao, Power Secretary Mr. L. Radhakrishnan, Dr. C. R. Soman, Mr. Niranjana Khatri, Ms. Kumar Deepa, and each country teams who did the presentations for their country.

I would like to convey our special thanks to each and every participant from the eight SARI/E countries - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka for representing their countries, and for your valuable contributions and feedback for making this program a great success. We are happy to have a participant from the U.S. also. I also thank the participants who attended this program from within Kerala, COSTFORD, KSEB, AIWC, ANERT, and the M.G. College.

As you know, EMC is our Knowledge Partner for conducting this workshop. We have no words to thank and praise Mr. Dharesan Unnithan, Director of EMC, and

his team of experts for their outstanding contributions and tireless efforts during the past few months, in coping with the USAID demands of getting this program organized. The workshop itself and the off-site demonstrations arranged by EMC were eye openers for all of us. Mr. Unnithan led us as a leader, moderator, faculty, off site trainer, and of course a friend for all of us with his soft humors.

We salute EMC, Mr Unnithan and his powerful team, Sathi, Deepa, Beena, Anil, Suvil, Narayanan, Padmakumar, Dinesh, Johnson, Arun, Sindhu, Latha, Sheela, Leji, Sivan Nair, Lovely, SreeKumari, Bindhu, Yamuna and Thankam for their superlative dedication to make this event achieve the desired results.

Let's give them a very big round of applause.

PA Consulting, the Institutional Contractor for SARI/E, under the leadership of Michael Ellis, as always, left no stone unturned for making this program achieve its results, thru intensive coordination with USAID and EMC on the training modules, identifying the resource persons, and managing each and every minute details of the logistics so carefully and seriously. We extend our hearty congratulations and thanks to Michael, Vinita, Sachin and Sabyasachi for a job well done.

I thank the Press/media once again for having covered the Women in Energy Program thru the Press Conference and also at the Inaugural Session.

We are happy that we chose Muthoot Plaza for holding this event. The quality of services provided by Muthoot deserves special mention, in taking special care of SARI/E team starting from the arrival of the delegates with the traditional Kerala Welcome till the time we leave Kerala. We thank Mr. Ghulam Samdhani and his

courteous, and smart team for making our stay, an unforgettable experience in Kerala.

Last but not the least, I thank Beth Hogan, Deputy Director of USAID/India and S.Padmanaban, Director of SARI/Energy program for their intelligent guidance and support without which this event would not have been possible.

Each and every person associated with this event is important for us. If I forgot to thanks anyone, I apologize for that.

I wish you all safe journey back home and keep “net-working”.

And with this the workshop is closed. Thank You.