

## **Speech Note deliberated to the Rio +20 of ‘Women Leaders’ Forum on The Future Women Want’**

Your Excellency

Distinguished Guests

Ladies And Gentlemen,

Firstly i would heartily like to thank the Seed Initiative and UN Women panel for recognizing and appreciating WEPCO's efforts and rewarding us with SEED Gender Equality Award,2011.We are really grateful to Seed Initiative and UN Women for all their support and encouragement.

Thank you for granting me the opportunity to share our experiences and views in this wonderful platform. It’s heartening environmental to see so many international experts here to exchange views and share ideas on inter-linkages of gender equality and women's empowerment with the three aspects of sustainable development- social, economic and Environment.

Women Environment Preservation Committee (WEPCO) is an NGO working in the field of the urban environment management. We started to manage solid waste in a small scale under CEPRAD.Based Organization (CBO).WEPCO mainly aims to generate income for women through the environment that includes considering waste as a resource.

Deeply concerned about urban sanitation, and feeling the need of proper institution, 16 women members formally established a non-profit organization called Women Environment Preservation Committee (WEPCO). At present, there are 25 members and **all** the WEPCO's members work voluntarily.

The strategy of WEPCO is to act as a catalyst for environment conservation by partnering with different stakeholders like government organization, communities, private institutions, schools, and donors.

A side from partnering with different donors for conservation initiatives, WEPCO has adapted business model to ensure continuity of the conservation efforts. As per the polluters pay principal, WEPCO charges nominal fees for waste collection. Likewise, WEPCO also collects fees from members of Green Circle, eco club and WEPCO library. WEPCO also offers its services on various training such as composting, vermin-composting, biogas production from solid waste.

At the grassroots, WEPCO have integrated three folds to address environment conservation - first implementation on conservation initiatives on solid waste, second awareness generation and third capacity development.

WEPCO has developed 51 eco-clubs, working under the environment education program and 1,400 leaders produced. There are 30 women oriented organizations, working on various environment related programs and 1,500 women environment leaders produced so far. WEPCO has rendered a platform for women to work and earn providing employment generation for many women. Thus, contributing in women empowerment. We have also focused on research of eco-friendly technologies and their extensions. In the due course, we have replicated 40 biogas plants in different parts of the country. WEPCO has been advocating, lobbying and influencing government for making environmental policies effective.

Government subsidy in biogas after WEPCO's continuous effort is one of the examples of WEPCO'S achievements.

WEPCO has also been conducting awareness rising programs to over 5000 visitors.

WEPCO is now recognized as a solid waste management emblem. Starting from a few housewives, CBOs working on SW collection, it has been extended widely from collection, recycling to research at present scenario. It is now recognized as not only as an organization working on SWM but also as research centre and demonstration site for educational purposes.

In the future, WEPCO intends to expand its area all over the country. WEPCO intend to develop the Eco Friendly Technology in perspective of Solid Waste Management. In the coming days, WEPCO intend to increase the No. of Women Groups and Eco Clubs along with their Capacity development and Participation in the Environment Conservation and Income generation Program. For this work we can not work without your support so I humbly request you all that you would fully support for our aim.

We highly regard you and panel of judge experts for this considerate decision. This has boosted our morale immensely. We reckon that this is only the beginning. Through our works, we have won tiny battle-the real war is yet to be fought. I would like to promise on this Rio +20 gathering that we will play a crucial role in waging a pro- active war against degraded environment, associated hunger, deprivation and destitution –so heavily existing in the lesser fortunate part of the globe.

I believe ,Seed Initiative and UN Women Will continue to support local initiatives with the noblest of objective to keep the world free of hunger in intergenerational terms.

Thanks and regards from within the heart.

Bishnu Thakali

President

WEPCO