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## Global Environment Facility

### Speech

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Global Environment Facility

Women in Agriculture and Resource Management  
Co-sponsored by the Women's Council on Energy and the  
Environment, and Women's Aquatic Network.

1717 H Street NW  
Washington DC

January 21, 2009  
5-7 pm

Thank you for this invitation; this is a subject I care deeply about. I do not mean just as a CEO, but as a wife and mother of three children—two boys and a girl. Some of you may know that at the GEF we recently launched a book that we hope will spark some serious debate on gender and the role it plays in meeting global environmental challenges. We brought copies with us to share so please take a copy. With so many smart beautiful women (and even a few men!) here representing agriculture, water, energy and the environment maybe we should think about taking this show on the road. .

First, let me give you a little background on who we are. The GEF is an international financial institution that has a long history of investing in local actions to deliver global environmental benefits—

No matter what the environmental goal, mainstreaming gender in projects presents opportunities for boosting project value as well as advancing gender equality.

(Show Christmas card to audience). let me give you just one example: One way some families in Bangladesh are adapting and even thriving in the face of changing climate is by expanding the role of women in nontraditional jobs, particularly in the fishing industry. While women make up 50% of the country's population, only 18% have been economically involved in the labor force.

This is changing now, slowly---yes, but it is: the GEF funds adaptive measures so that both men and women have more opportunities to boost local income.

It's one way how the GEF recognizes that gender mainstreaming is good for projects, good for gender equality, and good for achieving GEF goals. To that end, we have adopted, since the early days of GEF, a public participation policy that has provisions to ensure both women's and men's involvement in GEF projects. The GEF Agencies have also developed their own gender policies and strategies, which are applied to our projects.

Through a project portfolio review, we found that about 40 percent of our projects included some kind of gender mainstreaming action, such as gender analysis, project component, and a gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation system.

Some of these results are encouraging, but let me be very direct: we have clearly not done enough and a lot more must be done to raise the profile of this issue. I need your help to do this. I would like to think this publication was an important step forward to recognize not just our successes but also our challenges so we can strengthen our gender mainstreaming approach in the future. But it is only one book and we need multiple voices to be heard, especially in these times of financial crisis.

Moving forward, the GEF plans to undertake a series of actions to facilitate a more effective and systematic approach for gender mainstreaming, including:

Articulate a vision and put forward a plan of action;  
Identify and work on specific thematic issues with strong gender dimensions, including some climate change mitigation and adaptation programs, and also incorporate gender in the focal area strategies and strategic programs as appropriate;

Pay increased attention to socio-economic aspects of GEF projects, including gender elements as important drivers and incentives for achieving global environmental benefits.

I have also recently appointed a gender focal point at my office to facilitate the process (introduce Yoko to audience).

We have come a long way from when I first started in the development aid arena. I felt gender biases then first hand and had to fight very hard, sometimes twice as hard as my male colleagues to move forward in what was and still often IS a “man’s” world. But as you can see I have gotten my way if not all of the time, at least some of the time.

And as I look around the room I suspect I may have a few twins or at least kindred spirits here. You know as well as I that the job is not finished. Help me take this message to those who can be a force for change—we have a new U.S. president who says Yes We Can and I know we will.

Thank you.