

## Empowering Women in National Climate Institutions and Policies

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### Setting the Stage: Facts and Figures

Some facts can help us contextualize how gender is framed within climate change initiatives and policies:

- More than 50 decisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) support the recognition and integration of gender considerations. Far most the Paris Agreement in its preamble recognizes gender equality as a guiding principle.
- The Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG)<sup>i</sup> requested the UNFCCC Secretariat to prepare an action plan for the development of the two-year work programme on gender, including organizing technical meetings and providing capacity building support to Parties. The latest Gender Decision<sup>ii</sup>, extended the LWPG for a period of three years and expanded its mandate, requesting the UNFCCC Secretariat to produce a technical paper identifying entry points for integrating a gender perspective in the work stream of UNFCCC processes, requesting the Financial Mechanism to report on integration of a gender perspective in its operating entities and the further development of a gender action plan to support the implementation of gender-related decisions and mandates under the UNFCCC process.
- Of the 162<sup>iii</sup> submitted INDCs, 40% mention “gender” and/or “women” in the context of their national priorities and ambitions for reducing emissions<sup>iv</sup>. The total emissions of the 65 Parties that mention gender or women in their 2015/2016 INDC divided by the global statistic reveals that these Parties account for only 19% of greenhouse gas emissions as per the 2012 baseline.<sup>v</sup>
- All the major financing mechanisms associated with climate change have gender polices/mandates.
- Up to 70% of the resources within financing mechanisms associated with climate change are directed toward mitigation efforts<sup>vi</sup>, yet mitigation projects are the ones that tend to have the poorest performance when it comes to mainstreaming gender considerations. Examples of such are the projects under the Clean Development Mechanism and the Climate Technology Fund (CTF) under the CIF.
- Mitigation actions are increasingly addressing gender considerations. A 2012 assessment of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects concluded that only five of the 3,864 projects (0.13%) assessed at the time included gender consideration within project documentation.<sup>vii</sup> In contrast, a 2016 assessment of Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and Low-Emission Development Strategies (LEDS) showed a higher recognition of gender considerations by these actions. For example, of 162 NAMAs registered in the Ecofys Database in 2015, at least 7 [of the 8 analyzed] addressed gender or women’s considerations in their text. Meanwhile, of the 86 LEDS registered in the MRV database in 2015 at least 12 [of the 27 analyzed] reference women or gender.<sup>viii</sup>
- Energy production and consumption account for an estimated two-thirds of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, making the use of low-carbon energy sources critical to achieving climate mitigation goals. The use of renewable energy technologies (RETs) and energy efficiency, in tandem, can help meet socio-economic goals by increasing access to necessary energy services and—if designed well—can reduce gender gaps thereby allowing women and men to benefit more fully from investments and job creation opportunities.
- A 2016 assessment of 192 energy frameworks from 137 countries concluded that 61 of these documents include gender considerations to some extent; 57 of which come from developing countries. The assessment shows that 38 energy frameworks portray women prominently as key stakeholders in the energy sector, emphasizing their role as decision makers or targeting them as a group to engage with in decision making processes. Additionally, women are portrayed as beneficiaries (17 energy frameworks), as vulnerable (10 energy frameworks) or as agents of change (2 frameworks).<sup>ix</sup>
- The International Renewable Energy Agency’s (IRENA) most recent survey among private energy companies showed that women represent an average of 35% of the workforce of those surveyed. The survey also shed light on the roles women fulfill in the

sector, representing 46% of the administrative workforce, 28% of the technical workforce and 32% of management roles.<sup>x</sup>

The past years have witnessed important advancements in the incorporation of gender considerations in the adaptation sector; yet on the contrary, gender-responsive mitigation efforts remain nascent. One can argue that the main reason is that although we are confronting new type of initiatives (NDCs, NAMAS, LEDs), these are still somehow shaped by the old climate change paradigm in which mitigation activities are considered from a purely technocratic perspective, without recognizing the social components –including benefits- of their implementation and where the incorporation of a gender perspective is perceived as not relevant.

While we recognize that there is a need to better identify entry points and the “know how”, especially for big renewable projects, the mitigation sector also makes us re-address the way that women have been typically portrayed within climate change.

The portrayal of “the poor, vulnerable, pregnant, barefoot women” is one that does not necessarily resonate. In its nature the mitigation sector, it is about change, transformation, innovation, therefore it needs to see women beyond “victims” and acknowledge them as agents of change, as important actors in the combat of climate change, capable of leading transformation, and as part of the solution. It also challenges us to move beyond small scale, micro, household center initiatives and think of what are gender-responsive actions.

#### **National Climate Institutions and Policies**

Acknowledging this context, globally no less than 21 countries and regions have taken important steps to take innovative operational efforts to integrate gender into their national climate institutions and policies through the development of Climate Change Gender Action plans (ccGAPs). The ccGAPs are national strategies to ensure that climate change actions and programmes are gender-responsive.

The ccGAPs focus on identified key sectors including, but not limited to water, agriculture, health, mitigation (including energy and forests), disaster risk reduction (DRR), infrastructure, tourism and coastal management. In this way, the process is uniquely multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral, often representing the first time when technical staff of different Ministries or departments have a chance to build mutual capacity on key issues related to gender and climate change. The engagement of donors and a wide range of stakeholders is also key, especially women’s organizations and networks both versed in and new to ‘climate change’, as they contribute experience and expertise of on-the-ground realities and context to policymaking, as well as innovative ideas for action, which often build on current projects, to increase their knowledge on these issues.

The underlying principle of ccGAPs is the transformative nature of gender interventions. It is based on six principles, which IUCN recognises as the ‘I’s’ necessary for, and enhancing, successful ccGAP implementation. These ‘I’s’ are:

**INCLUSIVE** by ensuring the participation and voice of all groups, irrespective of caste, ethnicity, religion, gender, region, age, or class,

**INNOVATIVE** in their purpose and process for reaching beyond ordinary/traditional solutions and finding new and inspiring tools and techniques, while expanding capabilities for a stronger more comprehensive approach to climate change,

Set to **IMPROVE** the quality of life for women and men in regards to both their basic (e.g., water) and strategic (e.g., land tenure or political participation) needs, but also by recognising gender-differentiated priorities, roles, and knowledge useful in responding to climate change,

Creating an **IMPACT** on the overall goal of climate change response by reducing anthropogenic emissions and providing adaptive resilience opportunities for both women and men to engage at local, regional, and national levels,

Championing strategies to **INCREASE** sustainable development and climate change outcomes by ensuring nature-based solutions are within the limitations of the planet, and more importantly do not exceed local and regional natural resources,

**INCITING** transformational change, by rearranging how climate change needs to be approached. Providing equal opportunities for women and men to champion the solutions, but also providing the necessary means to build the capacity and capability to secure lives and livelihoods that are equitable for all,

**INSPIRING** actors at all levels to push beyond 'business as usual,' demonstrating that implementing gender and climate change commitments are possible.

Around the world, ccGAPs are beginning to reveal the transformative potential of gender equality. In Mozambique, the ccGAP was the catalyst for the inclusion of gender equality measures in the development of the country's Strategic Program for Climate Resilience under the Climate Investment Funds. In Jordan, the ccGAP inspired the government to declare gender equality as a national priority in the country's response to climate change; three countries—Liberia, Peru and Jordan—reference their ccGAPs in their INDC communications

### **Moving forward**

As countries move forward with the implementation of a wide range of strategies, including developing policies, programming, and projects, there will be increasing demonstrations of gender as a catalyst for success, as gender considerations are effectively and cohesively integrated more and more into climate-resilient and low-emission development planning. To ensure that gender-responsive climate policy, planning, and measures continue to be developed and implemented for optimal results, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Continue to build the capacity of stakeholders on the interlinkages of gender and climate change, across all levels. Recognizing the need for an international framework on climate change to be articulated at the national level, capacity building is essential across all sectors, to build bridges across sectors, and to specifically recognize and address women's rights and gender equality concerns.
- Engage a wide range of partners working on gender equality and women's empowerment to better understand the root causes of gender inequality, drawing lessons from their experiences and consolidating partnerships among the national and international climate change adaptation and mitigation practitioners.
- Ensure the inclusion of women's machinery and mechanisms in implementation, and particularly focus on benefit sharing with—but also investment in—women and women's organizations to empower and enable them to access and engage beyond the socio-cultural barriers, which continue to marginalize their participation in rural and urban development.
- Create space for and guarantee opportunities for women's participation in national decision making processes on climate change.
- Mobilize, or increase, access to finance mechanisms to propel implementation of gender-responsive climate change strategies and action plans.
- Reflect on national processes which have mainstreamed gender into climate change processes or other relevant sectors –i.e. energy, transport, water- to identify priority areas, activities, indicators and timelines for the development of a gender action plan under the UNFCCC.
- Scale-up attention to gender in climate strategies at national levels through continued political advocacy at international and national levels, encouraging a more integrated approach for mainstreaming gender and climate change into national development policies and agendas, which move away from fragmented sectoral and institutional measures to achieve greater synergistic outcomes.
- Acknowledge and learn from sector-specific experiences mainstreaming gender in their policies, programmes, projects and budgets. Lessons from energy, forestry and water sector can and should be incorporated into the development of new mitigation and adaptation policies and actions at national level.
- Recognize the role the energy sector has in terms of its contribution to global GHG emissions and the transformative role renewable energy technologies can play in

achieving sustainable development, particularly in the generation of co-benefits –i.e. local job creation, improved health, and access to water and education to mention a few and acknowledge that having gender equality as a guiding principle of [renewable] energy policies and actions allows women and men to benefit fully from these energy interventions and their co-benefits, acting as a multiplier effect towards achieving sustainable development.

- In the meantime and in tandem: champion women and gender equality concerns throughout climate-related sector-specific programmes, activities, and investments and focus on implementing activities already identified and included in gender action plans. These activities and plans should be supported by gender responsive budgeting, as well as gender-responsive technology.
- Identify and invest in monitoring and accountability. For the past decade, governments have established international and national commitments to ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment are central to climate change. This strong policy framework has suggested great strides, and yet, without a mechanism to monitor and measure implementation of these commitments and drive further action, a void has remained in being able to identify real progress—not to mention persisting challenges, areas of comparative gains or gaps, or effective strategies for improvement.
- Recognize and celebrate that the doubts surrounding gender and climate change have been put to rest: knowledge, communications, methodologies, and tools have been developed demonstrating the means to an end, illustrating gender equality and climate solutions as co-benefits. Armed with examples, lessons learned, challenges and momentum, a gender-responsive approach can move forward through financing, implementation, and scaling-up.
- Support Parties, -through capacity building and development of guidelines, to include information on how gender considerations are integrated in climate change policies when reporting under UNFCCC processes.
- Submit to the UNFCCC Secretariat requests for technical and procedural assistance, as a means to shape the themes of the in-session workshops on gender and climate change.

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<sup>i</sup> UNFCCC (2014). Lima Work Programme on Gender. Decision 18/CP.20. Available at:

[https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/lima\\_dec\\_2014/decisions/application/pdf/auv\\_cop20\\_gender.pdf](https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/lima_dec_2014/decisions/application/pdf/auv_cop20_gender.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> UNFCCC (2016) Gender and Climate Change. Decision -/CP.22. Available at:

[http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/marrakech\\_nov\\_2016/application/pdf/auv\\_cop22\\_115\\_gender\\_and\\_climate\\_change\\_rev.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/marrakech_nov_2016/application/pdf/auv_cop22_115_gender_and_climate_change_rev.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> The 162 INDCs represent 189 Parties, as the European Union’s INDC includes 28 country commitments.

<sup>iv</sup> IUCN & USAID. (2016). *Gender in mitigation actions*. EGI brief. April 2016 Edition. Available at:

[https://portals.iucn.org/union/sites/union/files/doc/gender\\_in\\_mitigation\\_actions4.pdf](https://portals.iucn.org/union/sites/union/files/doc/gender_in_mitigation_actions4.pdf).

<sup>v</sup> The World Resources Institute CAIT Climate Data Explorer Tool provides country and global data of GHG emissions, as recently as 2012.

<sup>vi</sup> Aguilar, L., Rogers, F., Pearl-Martinez, R., Castaneda, I., Athanas, A., & Siles, J. IUCN Global Gender Office. (2012). *Gender review of the CIF: Full report*. Retrieved from [http://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/cif/sites/climateinvestmentfunds.org/files/CTF\\_SCF\\_Inf.5\\_CIF\\_Gender\\_Review\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](http://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/cif/sites/climateinvestmentfunds.org/files/CTF_SCF_Inf.5_CIF_Gender_Review_Full_Report.pdf)

<sup>vii</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). (2012). Benefits of the Clean Development Mechanism. Bonn. Available at: [https://cdm.unfccc.int/about/dev\\_ben/ABC\\_2012.pdf](https://cdm.unfccc.int/about/dev_ben/ABC_2012.pdf)

<sup>viii</sup> IUCN & USAID. (2016). *Gender in mitigation actions*. EGI brief. April 2016 Edition. Available at:

[https://portals.iucn.org/union/sites/union/files/doc/gender\\_in\\_mitigation\\_actions4.pdf](https://portals.iucn.org/union/sites/union/files/doc/gender_in_mitigation_actions4.pdf).

<sup>ix</sup> IUCN, ENERGIA & USAID (forthcoming). Energizing Equality: The importance of integrating gender equality principles in national energy policies and frameworks.

<sup>x</sup> IRENA. (2016). *Renewable energy and jobs*. Annual Review 2016. Available at:

[http://www.irena.org/DocumentDownloads/Publications/IRENA\\_RE\\_Jobs\\_Annual\\_Review\\_2016.pdf](http://www.irena.org/DocumentDownloads/Publications/IRENA_RE_Jobs_Annual_Review_2016.pdf)