

# GENDER AND THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND

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**Women are on the frontline of coping with and adapting to the effects of climate change. Both climate change impacts and mitigation and adaptation responses affect women and men differently. Yet current climate finance institutions almost entirely ignore gender issues. The Green Climate Fund cannot afford to make the same mistake. Many agree the new fund must be innovative, building on the lessons of climate finance and of other funds to date. To be an effective and legitimate tool in the fight against climate change, the Green Climate Fund must have the concerns of women at its heart.**

## WOMEN ON THE FRONTLINE

Gender inequalities, combined with social, economic and political factors, make women more vulnerable to climate change. Meeting the needs of women must therefore be at the heart of any response. But not only are women most vulnerable – as principal food producers and stewards of natural and household resources – they are also often the first and best line of defence in their communities.

Consider agriculture. Women produce much of the food in many poor countries, despite typically having restricted access to markets, land and credit, and less decision-making power at household and community level.<sup>1</sup> This lack of access means women face a twin challenge: they are more dependent on the natural resources most threatened by climate change, but they face limits to their capacity to cope. Without help, climate change will impact them disproportionately.

To be effective, climate finance must take account of the power imbalances that leave women more vulnerable. Adaptation and mitigation policies that fail to consider gender equity will at best be inefficient, and at worse exacerbate poverty and food insecurity.

## GENDER ISSUES IGNORED

Although several multilateral declarations have underscored the importance of gender integration in climate finance,<sup>2</sup> climate funds have continually

neglected gender issues and failed to incorporate a gendered perspective into programmes and projects.<sup>3</sup>

The climate sector often presents women as passive victims of climate change, rather than effective agents of change, ignoring women's extensive knowledge and expertise with regard to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.<sup>4</sup>

Table 1<sup>5</sup> shows that existing climate funds are doing little more than paying 'lip-service' to the importance of gender.

If climate funds are to be used equitably and effectively to support the different needs of men, women, boys and girls, they must incorporate gender analysis throughout project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Climate funds must also recognise that women are well positioned to be agents of change through mitigation and adaptation activities in their households, workplaces, communities and governments. Global efforts to address the challenges of climate change cannot afford to ignore them.<sup>6</sup>

## GENDER AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Oxfam has looked at how current flows of adaptation finance are being managed in a number of countries. In all the countries studied,<sup>7</sup> the impacts of climate change were found to fall -

Fund	Gender Equity in Governance	Gender Policy	Gender-sensitive Consultation and Participation	Gender-sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund (AF)</b>	AF Board: 12 men and 4 women.	No explicit gender policy yet.	Consult with "necessary stakeholders."	Evaluation Framework gives definition of "vulnerable" groups only.
<b>Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF/managed by Global Environment Facility)</b>	GEF Council: 20 men and 12 women.	GEF approved a gender mainstreaming policy on May 26, 2011.	Non-mandatory guidelines for preparation of NAPAs states: 'particular attention should be given to...voices of the poor during consultations'	8 of 47 LDCF/ SCCF indicators disaggregate data by sex.
<b>Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF/managed by Global Environment Facility)</b>	GEF Council: 20 men and 12 women.	Gender equality is not a guiding principle for approval of SCCF projects. GEF approved a gender mainstreaming policy on May 26, 2011.	Non-mandatory guidelines for preparation of NAPAs states: 'particular attention should be given to...voices of the poor during consultations.'	8 of 47 LDCF/ SCCF indicators disaggregate data by sex.
<b>Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF/managed by the World Bank)</b>	Participants Committee; names/genders not publicly available	The World Bank does not have a gender safeguard policy.	Operational policies subsume consultation with local stakeholders without a gender breakdown.	Evaluation Framework fails to mention gender.
<b>Forest Investment Programme (FIP/ managed by the World Bank)</b>	FIP Sub-Committee members: 9 men and 2 women.	No explicit gender policy. Gender rights addressed in Operational Guidelines in relation to 'co-benefits, which entails 'the promotion of gender equality.'	Project review criteria includes, 'Inclusive processes and participation of all important stakeholders'; Operational Guidelines mention consulting 'women's groups.'	No explicit mention of need for gender analysis. Results Framework calls for differentiation by gender 'when appropriate', specifically calls for sex disaggregated data in 'income change and employment'.
<b>Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR/managed by World Bank)</b>	PPCR Sub-Committee: 9 men and 6 women.	The World Bank does not have a gender safeguard policy.	Consultation with 'key stakeholders,' not specifically women.	Suggests including 'gender-sensitive' vulnerability studies.

disproportionately on women and girls.

In responding to this, some governments have identified women as a vulnerable group, while others have gone further by recognising the important leadership role played by women.

However, this initial recognition has not yet translated into concrete gains for women.

For example:

- Ethiopia's National Adaptation Programme of Action notes that a gender approach needs to be integrated into all development activities, but there are no specific recommendations in the plan.<sup>8</sup>
- Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan specifies that women and

children are the most vulnerable group in terms of food security, social protection, and health. But the plan fails to address the root causes of these challenges through gender-responsive measures.<sup>9</sup>

Gender-specific objectives, indicators, and data can be used to measure and ensure the equitable delivery of finance to women and men, but they are so far largely missing from national climate change strategies.

Ministries that handle women's or gender affairs are too often sidelined from the climate change decision-making process, either because of a failure to invite them, their limited operational scope and capacity, or a mandate that does not incorporate climate change.

## LEARNING FROM NON-CLIMATE FUNDS

**The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria** offers valuable lessons and strategies that can be applied to gender integration in climate finance. In 2009, the Global Fund Secretariat approved a four year 'Plan of Action' on the implementation of the Fund's Gender Equality Strategy. The Plan of Action seeks to ensure that Global Fund policies, procedures and structures, and partnerships support programmes that address gender inequalities, reduce women's and girls' vulnerabilities and enhance the involvement of men and boys.<sup>10</sup>

The Fund's commitment to gender is embedded at the country level, in a model which provides key lessons for climate adaptation finance. The Fund's Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs), while not yet perfect, show how country-led coordination can be assured with the meaningful participation of civil society and affected communities. Participation by people living with these diseases has been historically weak, though it has now reached eight per cent of representatives. A third of participants in CCMs are women,<sup>11</sup> though women make up only 22 per cent of CCM chairs. The Global Fund and the CCMs have attempted to address some of these shortcomings including by setting guidelines for equal gender representation in CCMs.<sup>12</sup>

**The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI)** offers a further example of how gender can be championed within a global funding institution. GAVI established a 13-member 'Gender Working Group', including one member from each secretariat team. Strong commitment from the top was vital to securing institutional 'buy-in' for the prioritisation of gender across GAVI's activities.<sup>13</sup>

## CHARTING A NEW PATH

A comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming is required. Women's and men's concerns and experiences should be integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres to ensure that inequality is not perpetuated.<sup>14</sup> This means that the implications for women and men of any planned climate action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels, must be assessed.

Whether the Green Climate Fund meets this standard in the governance of climate finance at global and national levels, is a litmus test of its effectiveness and legitimacy.

## RECOMENDATIONS FOR THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND

To reach those who need it most, the GCF must integrate gender considerations from top to bottom. It should:

### **Put gender balance at the heart of the governance structures of the fund:**

The governance structures of the GCF should reflect principles of gender equity through the ambition of equal gender representation in all decision-making bodies of the fund, from the board down, and all governance structures, including the board and secretariat, should include expertise in gender issues.

### **Specify gender equality as a guiding principle of the fund's work:**

The full integration of gender considerations must be identified as a core objective of the fund, and gender-sensitive funding guidelines and criteria – both for allocation and evaluation, including the collection of sex-disaggregated data – should be developed for each of the thematic funding areas (for example, adaptation, mitigation and forestry).

### **Ensure gender equality and women's leadership are central to the development and implementation of national strategies:**

Gender-specific objectives and indicators should be core components of national climate change strategies, which should be developed on the basis of the full and meaningful participation of civil society, especially that of affected and marginalised communities, including women's organisations. Any national level co-ordinating entities should have the objective of equal gender representation.

Where they exist, women's ministries and gender units within all ministries need to play a more central role in climate finance, and should establish climate change action as a core element of their mandate. A systematic capacity-building process, including the necessary funds, should be available to these departments and units, as well as to national women's organizations and gender experts.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In many societies women supply most of the labour needed to produce food crops. World Bank (2009) Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> The Manila Declaration for Global Action on Gender in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction 2008; the Nordic Summit on Climate, Gender and Equality (2009); the International Colloquium on Women's empowerment, Leadership and Development, International Peace and Security (2009); and the Joint ACP African, Caribbean and Pacific-European Union Declaration on Climate Change (2009)

<sup>3</sup> L. Schalatek (2009) 'Gender and Climate Finance: Double Mainstreaming for Sustainable Development', Heinrich Boll Stiftung North America.

<sup>4</sup> UN, 2009 'Women and Climate Change Fact Sheet'. [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/climate\\_change/downloads/women\\_and\\_climate\\_change\\_Factsheet.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/climate_change/downloads/women_and_climate_change_Factsheet.pdf); UNDP, 2011 'Gender and Climate Change' <http://www.undp.org/climatechange/gender.shtml>

<sup>5</sup> S. Lowman, and E. Arend, Gender Action paper for the Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO), 'Governing Climate Funds: What Will Work For Women?' (June, 2011)

<sup>6</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 2007, 'Gender Aspects of Climate Change' [http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/climate\\_change\\_gender.pdf](http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/climate_change_gender.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See 'Owning adaptation: Country-level governance of climate adaptation finance, Oxfam Briefing Paper, June 2011

<sup>8</sup> A.M. Klymeyer (2011b) 'Ethiopia Country Brief', internal research report

<sup>9</sup> Oxfam (2010) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Aid: Recognising Success and Tackling Failure, Briefing Paper 137

<sup>10</sup> Lowman and Arend, op. cit.

<sup>11</sup> The Global Fund (2010) 'CCM Gender Balance for QTR 2, 2010 - Global and Regional Perspectives', <http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/ccm/CCMgraphs/CCM%202010%20QTR%20%20Gender%20Balance%20Global%20and%20Regional.pdf> (last accessed 20 April 2011).

<sup>12</sup> The Global Fund (2008) 'The Global Fund's Strategy for Ensuring Gender Equality in the Response to HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (The Gender Equality Strategy)'.  
<sup>13</sup> Lowman and Arend, op.cit.

<sup>14</sup> Definition of gender mainstreaming, UN Economic and Social Council, 1997.

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