

STATEMENT | 2015



Ensuring a gender-sensitive approach in climate finance

Remarks

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Given on the occasion of the
High-Level Event on
Empowering Women in Climate Action
at United Nations Headquarters

On 29 September 2015



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Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate you on organizing this high-level event focused on empowering women in climate action.

It is a privilege to be able to address this forum, even though I would have liked to participate in person.

My name is Héra Cheikhrouhou. I am the Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund.

The Fund, or GCF, was created to respond to the climate finance needs of developing countries.

It is the only multilateral financing institution whose sole mission is to serve the Convention's climate objective.

As a woman, heading this organization, I am all too aware of the insufficient attention paid to women in the climate change debate.

At times, this manifests itself through a simple indicator: the fact that, often, I am the only woman sitting at a negotiating table or speaking at a climate change meeting.

Fortunately, that is not the case today, with several distinguished women speakers today.

Having worked on the issue of climate change for a decade, the inclusion of the gender equality dimensions in climate action remains unsatisfactory.

Clearly, climate change is much more than an environmental issue—it is a development issue, a human rights issue, an inequality issue, and, as discussed today, a gender issue.

We know that women are disproportionately vulnerable to and affected by climate change—for example, as evidenced in higher fatality rates of women in climate-related disasters.

This is why the Green Climate Fund has placed gender as a key element of our work. We do this in the following ways:

Gender is an essential decision-making element for the allocation of GCF resources.

The Fund is implementing a gender-sensitive approach in its operations—in order to contribute to gender equality and to achieve greater and more sustainable climate change results.

Last but not least, the GCF team leads by example through gender balance amongst staff.

2015 is a key year for all of us, regardless of which issues we work on.

The Sustainable Development Agenda and its 17 goals provide a new roadmap for improving our planet and the lives of billions, and the Paris Climate Change Summit in December is the conference where a new climate deal must emerge if we are to keep global warming below 2 degrees centigrade.

The Green Climate Fund will play its part in supporting the SDGs, not only the goal on climate change but also the 13 other goals that are directly impacted by the effects of climate change—including goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

This ambitious agenda must be accompanied by equally ambitious financing to bring its aspirations into reality.

As we countdown to Paris, we must ensure the role of women in climate change is elevated in the final negotiations, to ensure that the Climate Agreement includes gender-specific language to hold countries accountable.

I know I will continue to bring it forward in the coming months.

And I call on you to do the same.

Thank you.