

Annex XIII: Gender policy for the Green Climate Fund

I. Background

1. The Governing Instrument gives the Fund a clear mandate to enhance a gender sensitive approach in its processes and operations. It recognizes the importance of gender considerations in terms of impact and access to climate funding:

“3. ... The Fund will strive to maximize the impact of its funding for adaptation and mitigation, and seek a balance between the two, while promoting environmental, social, economic and development co-benefits and taking a gender-sensitive approach”.

“31. The Fund will provide simplified and improved access to funding, including direct access, basing its activities on a country-driven approach and will encourage the involvement of relevant stakeholders, including vulnerable groups and addressing gender aspects”.

2. Paragraph 71 lists women explicitly amongst the Fund’s stakeholders. Finally, the Governing Instrument calls for gender balance among members of the Board (paragraph 11) and staff of the Secretariat (paragraph 21).

3. The Fund’s gender policy is guided by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which refers in its Article 2 to “anthropogenic interference” – interference of both men and women – within the climate system. (Parties to the UNFCCC have adopted a number of resolutions on gender since 2001).¹ The Fund’s gender policy is congruent with international agreements, in particular with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,² the Millennium Development Goals³ and follows up on the sustainable development goals,⁴ and the International Labour Organization’s core conventions,⁵ in that it recognizes the equal rights of women and men to access the Fund’s services in order to adapt to and mitigate against the impact of climate change.

4. Key gender definitions are listed below:

- (a) **Gender:** Refers to how societies and specific cultures assign roles and ascribe characteristics to men and women on the basis of their sex;
- (b) **Gender equality:** As enshrined in international agreements and national constitutions, refers to equal rights, power, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, as well as equal consideration of the interests, needs and priorities of women and men; gender equality therefore entails that society values men and women and the roles they play equally;
- (c) **Gender equity:** Refers to the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure equity, measures often need to be taken to compensate for (or reduce) disparity for historical

¹ Women’s Environment & Development Organization and the Global Gender and Climate Alliance, “Gender equality and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: A compilation of decision text”. Available from <<http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/united-nations-web.pdf>>.

² See <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>>.

³ See <<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml>>; and United Nations Economic and Social Council, “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls (E/CN.6/2014/L.7).”

⁴ See <<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1300>>.

⁵ See <<http://ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm>>.

and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on an equitable basis. Equity, therefore, leads to equality; and

- (d) **Gender sensitivity:** Refers to the understanding of the ways in which people think about gender and the sociocultural factors underlying gender inequality, and how they might be addressed. Gender sensitivity implies a consideration of the potential contribution of women and men to societal changes as well as the methods and tools used to: promote gender equity, reduce gender disparities, and measure the impact of climate change and other development activities on men and women.

II. Rationale

5. There are three compelling reasons for the Fund's mandate on gender sensitivity:
- (a) Women, as well as men significantly contribute to combating climate change. Shifting the paradigm towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways, which is the Fund's mandate, requires a large number of individual and collective decisions by women and men. A gender-sensitive approach is therefore part of a paradigm shift;
- (b) Climate change impacts women and men differently, to the detriment of women, and existing gender inequalities are likely to be exacerbated by climate change;⁶ and
- (c) Gender inequality, exacerbated by climate change, is linked, as are other development areas, to vulnerability and risks.⁷ The greater vulnerability of women to climate change stems from gender norms and discrimination that result in the imbalanced division of labour, lower income, and lesser livelihood opportunities; less access and control over land and other productive assets; fewer legal rights; lesser mobility and lesser political and professional representation.⁸

III. Objectives

6. The Fund's gender policy has four main objectives:
- (a) To ensure that by adopting a gender-sensitive approach, the Fund will achieve greater, more effective, sustainable, and equitable climate change results, outcomes and impacts, in an efficient and comprehensive manner in both its internal and external procedures and activities;
- (b) To build equally women and men's resilience to, and ability to address climate change, and to ensure that women and men will equally contribute to, and benefit from activities supported by the Fund;
- (c) To address and mitigate against assessed potential project/programme risks for women and men associated with adaptation and mitigation activities financed by the Fund; and,

⁶ GCF/B.06/13.

⁷ These risks include gender violence during climate-related extreme events stemming from complex social behaviours between women and men. See Emma Fulu and others, *Why Do Some Men Use Violence against Women and How Can We Prevent It? Quantitative Findings from the United Nations Multi-country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific* (Bangkok, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and United Nations Volunteers, 2013). Available from <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbap/docs/Research%20&%20Publications/womens_empowerment/RBAP-Gender-2013-P4P-VAW-Report.pdf>.

⁸ GCF/B.06/13.

- (d) To contribute to reducing the gender gap of climate change-exacerbated social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities.

IV. Principles

7. The Fund's gender policy consists of the following six elements:

4.1 Commitment

8. By adopting a gender-sensitive approach in its mandate on climate change, the Fund commits to contributing to gender equality, as enshrined in international agreements and national constitutions, and other human rights agreements.⁹

9. The Fund thereby also commits to:

- (a) Understand the sociocultural factors underlying climate change-exacerbated gender inequality, and the potential contribution of women and men to societal changes in order to build resilience to, and the ability to address, climate change;
- (b) Adopt methods and tools to promote gender equality and reduce gender disparities in its climate funding; and
- (c) Measure the outcomes and impacts of its activities on women and men's resilience to climate change.¹⁰

4.2 Comprehensiveness, in scope and coverage

10. The Fund applies its gender policy to all its climate mitigation and adaptation activities, whether implemented by international, regional, national or subnational, public or private entities that are accredited to the Fund.

4.3 Accountability

11. The Fund accounts to its Board for gender and climate change results and outcomes, and reports annually in a transparent manner. Qualitative and quantitative gender monitoring, impact, and outcome indicators are included in the results management and performance measurement frameworks (GCF/B.08/07).

12. Through the accreditation process and taking into account the fit-for-purpose accreditation approach,¹¹ entities will be required to meet the Fund's gender policy. They will also be required to have policies, procedures and competencies in place with which to implement the Fund's gender policy. After accreditation, and at the project/programme level, the Accredited Entity will be responsible for implementing the gender policy as it relates to the

⁹ This approach takes into account equal rights, power, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, as well as equal consideration of the interests, needs and priorities of women and men.

¹⁰ "Resilience to climate change to be understood as (1) the capacity to absorb stresses and maintain function in the face of external stresses imposed upon it by climate change, and (2) adapt, reorganize and evolve into more sustainable socioeconomic behaviors, leading people to be better prepared for future climate change impacts". (See C. Folke, "Resilience: The emergence of a perspective for social-ecological systems analyses", *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 16 (2006) pp. 253–267; and Donald R. Nelson, W. Neil Adger and Katrina Brown, "Adaptation to environmental change: contributions of a resilience framework", *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* Vol. 32 (2007) pp. 395–419.)

¹¹ Decision B.08/02.

Fund-approved project/programme through in-country project identification and implementation, as well as for results reporting. The application of the Fund's guidelines on the initial socioeconomic and gender assessments and the Fund's environmental and social safeguards (ESS) as it relates to the project/programme¹² is mandatory.

13. Gender-related complaints and grievances that may occur in projects and programmes are processed through the Fund's redress mechanism.

14. The Fund's management and staff are accountable for gender results. This is reflected in the Fund's administrative policies and procedures, including human resource management and the procurement of contractors.

4.4 Country ownership

15. The Fund informs national designated authorities (NDAs) and focal points (FPs) that proposed projects or programmes submitted to the Fund are required to be aligned with national policies and priorities on gender¹³ and with the Fund's gender policy.

16. The Fund requires that women and men be provided with equitable opportunity to be included in stakeholder consultations and decision-making during project and programme preparation, implementation¹⁴ and evaluation.¹⁵

4.5 Competencies¹⁶

17. The Fund strives to reach gender balance in key advisory and decision-making bodies, including in the appointments of its members of the Board and Secretariat management and staff. The Secretariat also will appoint a senior staff member(s) with competencies in gender and social development in order to lead the implementation of the policy; the senior staff members(s) will report to the head of accreditation within the Secretariat. In addition, the Secretariat strives for the relevant gender and climate change competencies to be included in the Accreditation Panel,¹⁷ the Investment Committee, the Risk Management Committee and the Private Sector Advisory Group,¹⁸ as well as amongst technical advisers.¹⁹

18. The Fund's accreditation process²⁰ and fit-for-purpose approach²¹ recognize that there is a wide range of types of organizations and institutional capacities. In the accreditation process, entities will be required to have policies, procedures and competencies in place in order to implement the Fund's gender policy.

19. NDAs/FPs and entities may request readiness and preparatory support from the Fund²² so as to enhance their capacity to implement the gender policy.

¹² GCF/B.07/03, paragraph 20.

¹³ Many countries have national and sector gender policies (e.g. for energy, water, forestry and climate change), but relatively few have gender and climate change policies.

¹⁴ GCF/B.07/03.

¹⁵ GCF/B.06/06.

¹⁶ Competencies are defined as a set of skills, knowledge, and behaviours acquired from training and experience, that allow individuals and organizations to perform a specific role or task.

¹⁷ Annex V to decision B.07/02, Annex V, where gender is listed as an aspect within the Fund's ESS.

¹⁸ GCF/B.05/13 and GCF/B.06/18, Annex I, paragraph II.

¹⁹ GCF/B.07/11, Annex I, paragraphs 54-56.

²⁰ Decision B.07/02.

²¹ Decision B.08/02.

²² Decision B.05/14 para (b): "(iii) Enable implementing entities and intermediaries to meet the Fund's fiduciary principles and standards, and environmental and social safeguards, in order to directly access the Fund", and document GCF/B.06/14.

20. The Fund commits to knowledge generation as experience is gained on gender and climate change. It also commits to capitalize on knowledge and expertise gained from other organizations. Such knowledge is to be used to strengthen the competencies of all stakeholders.

4.6 Resource allocation

21. The Fund's resource allocation for adaptation and mitigation projects and programmes contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment. The Fund seeks to ensure that its projects and programmes support initiatives addressing the inequity of climate change impacts and to provide gender-sensitive solutions to climate change mitigation, adaptation or readiness. When it is necessary to correct for climate change-exacerbated gender inequality which affects women, the Fund will target funds to support women's climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

V. Implementation framework

22. The Fund adopts a gender action plan in order to implement its gender policy. The plan includes six priority areas as follows:

- (a) Governance and institutional structure;
- (b) Operational guidelines;
- (c) Capacity building;
- (d) Outputs, outcomes, impacts and paradigm-shift objectives used for monitoring, reporting and evaluation;
- (e) Resource allocation and budgeting; and
- (f) Knowledge generation and communications.

23. The proposed duration of the gender action plan is three years, in order to allow the Fund to get activities off the ground and then assess the implementation after this three-year period. Subsequently, the duration of the gender action plan is expected to align with the Fund's business cycle.

VI. Review and revisions

24. The Fund is a nascent, growing and learning institution. As experience is gained and lessons are learned in the implementation of the gender policy in the Fund's activities and operational modalities – including activities with the private sector – the Fund will be able to adjust its policies, processes, procedures, and project and programme design. In the light of this, the Fund will review its gender policy after three years of being operational.