Gender Assessment

SAP074: Yemen Climate Water Information Management & Early Warning Systems (CWIMEWS)

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GREEN CLIMATE FUND

Annex 4: Gender Assessment and Action Plan

Yemen Climate Water Information Management & Early Warning Systems (CWIMEWS)

Simplified Approval Process (SAP) — Green Climate Fund

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Context

The Yemen Climate Water Information Management & Early Warning Systems (CWIMEWS) project is a GCF Simplified Approval Process (SAP) grant, with the World Bank as Accredited Entity and UNDP as Executing Entity. The project aims to rebuild Yemen's collapsed hydrometeorological and water monitoring infrastructure, establish a unified national digital Climate and Water Information Management System (CWIMS), and operationalize multi-hazard early warning systems (MH-EWS) for floods, droughts, cyclones, and heatwaves.

Yemen is one of the world's most severe humanitarian crises. Over a decade of conflict has driven a near-total breakdown of public institutions, infrastructure, and social services. Women and girls bear a disproportionate burden of this crisis: they are the primary managers of household water and food security, yet they are systematically excluded from the technical, governance, and planning structures that determine how climate information and early warnings are produced and disseminated.

This Gender Action Plan (GAP) complies with the Accredited Entity's policies and procedures relating to gender that under the AMA enable it to comply with GCF's requirements under its Gender Policy and the SAP Annex 4 template. It is grounded in the gender baseline established from the parent project (I-WISE, P505562), the CWIMEWS pre-feasibility study, and the ESCP for the I-WISE project. It follows the structure of the Maldives TRACT project Gender Action Plan as a reference example.

1.2 Yemen Gender Baseline

Yemen's gender indicators reflect extreme inequality, deepened by conflict:

- Only 1 in 15 employees in Local Water and Sanitation Corporations (LWSCs) are women, reflecting near-total exclusion of women from water-sector institutions.
- Women constitute only 8% of leadership positions in community groups, based on a 2024 UNDP study across six governorates.
- 52% of IDPs households are female-headed, making women disproportionately exposed to climate shocks.
- Women and girls spend 2–3 hours per day collecting water, reflecting a severe time-poverty burden that constrains their participation in economic and civic life.
- Approximately 70% of the population depends on agriculture, in which women provide significant labor — yet women are overwhelmingly excluded from water governance and agricultural planning.
- 80% of the population depends on humanitarian assistance; female-headed households face the sharpest deprivation.

- Yemen's Gender Inequality Index (GII) consistently ranks among the lowest globally, with women facing legal and social barriers to property rights, mobility, and public participation.

1.3 Methodology

This Gender Assessment was prepared through a review of available project documents and data, together with stakeholder consultations carried out during project preparation and documented in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). The desk review covered the parent I-WISE Gender Assessment, the CWIMEWS pre-feasibility study, the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan, relevant sector reports, and available national and local data on gender, water, climate risks, and early warning systems.

The consultations helped identify barriers affecting women and other vulnerable groups in accessing and acting on climate information and early warnings. Feedback from these consultations informed the proposed communication channels, measures to support women's participation, and community-level early warning arrangements included in the Gender Action Plan.

Given the limited availability of sex- and vulnerability-disaggregated data, further targeted consultations will be carried out during the inception phase with women, men, youth, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, older persons, female-headed households, and people living in rural and remote areas. Separate discussions with women and the use of female facilitators will be considered where appropriate. The findings will be used to confirm or refine the baseline, targeting, communication, and monitoring arrangements

1.4 Gender Barriers Specific to Climate Information and Early Warning Systems

Despite women being primary water managers at the household level, they face critical barriers to accessing and acting upon climate and water information:

- Institutional exclusion: Water governance bodies, basin committees, and meteorological agencies are male-dominated, with women rarely represented in technical or decision-making roles.
- Communication access gaps: Many warning dissemination channels (community meetings, formal radio broadcasts, official SMS alerts) are not designed to reach women, who often have lower rates of mobile phone ownership and face mobility restrictions.
- Literacy and language barriers: High female illiteracy rates in rural Yemen limit the effectiveness of text-based alerts; warnings must be communicated through accessible, multi-channel formats.
- Male-dominated community warning committees: In most governorates, community-level civil defense and warning systems rely exclusively on male-led structures, leaving women systematically out of the dissemination chain.
- Risk of reinforcing inequality: Without deliberate gender-responsive design, investments in climate services can inadvertently widen existing gaps by equipping institutions and systems that already exclude women.

1.5 Intersectional Vulnerabilities

In addition to the challenges faced by women, some groups face compounding barriers to receiving climate information and early warning messages. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are frequently located in informal settlements with high exposure to flooding and other climate-related

hazards, yet are among the least connected to formal warning networks. Persons with disabilities may face difficulties receiving warning messages and have limited mobility during emergencies. Elderly people often have restricted access to mobile phones and depend on family members or community networks for information. Female-headed households -- which account for 52% of IDP households -- face the intersection of displacement, economic vulnerability, and reduced social support. Youth, while often digitally connected, are underutilized as community outreach and warning dissemination agents. People living in rural and remote areas face geographic isolation that compounds all of the above barriers.

The project will consider the specific needs of IDPs, persons with disabilities, elderly populations, youth, female-headed households, and people living in rural and remote areas during outreach, consultation, training, and warning dissemination activities. Where vulnerability-disaggregated baseline data is not currently available -- as is the case for several of these groups given data limitations in Yemen -- the project will collect this information during implementation through stakeholder engagement, beneficiary mapping, and monitoring systems to strengthen targeting and reporting over time.[1]

2. Core Areas

The CWIMEWS Gender Action Plan is structured around four strategic core areas, reflecting both the specific gender barriers identified above and the project's three operational components:

- **Core Area 1: Institutional Capacity and Gender Expertise —** Embedding gender competence within the project management and national partner institutions.
- **Core Area 2: Governance and Policy —** Advancing gender-responsive legal frameworks, inter-agency coordination, and basin-level governance.
- **Core Area 3: Women's Leadership and Participation in Climate Services —** Ensuring women are meaningfully included in the co-design, operation, and use of CWIMS and MH-EWS.
- **Core Area 4: Community-Level Empowerment and Last-Mile Inclusion —** Reaching women and vulnerable groups in high-risk communities with accessible early warnings and preparedness tools.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Actor	Role Type	Responsibility
World Bank (Accredited Entity)	Primary	Fiduciary oversight; gender policy compliance review; supervision missions
UNDP (Executing Entity)	Primary	Overall GAP implementation, oversight, and reporting; hosting the SGS Specialist within the JPIU
MWE (Ministry of Water and Environment)	Primary	Gender-responsive design of CWIMS and basin-level governance; hosting SMU with female representation
CAMA / Yemen Meteorological Service (YMS)	Primary	Gender-responsive early warning communications and multi-channel dissemination
NWRA (National Water Resources Authority)	Primary	Gender-inclusive groundwater monitoring governance
Community leaders and women's associations	Secondary	Participatory co-design of Early Action Plans; last-mile dissemination of early warnings
Local civil society organizations	Secondary	Community outreach, gender-responsive communication, and

[1] A more detailed gender methodology, including primary data collection protocols and stakeholder engagement processes, will be developed and incorporated into the Project Operations Manual (POM) during the inception phase.

			grievance channeling
Basin-level platforms	coordination	Secondary	Gender-balanced representation in multi-stakeholder water governance

4. Provision of Gender Expertise

A dedicated Social and Gender Safeguards (SGS) Specialist will be recruited and embedded within the UNDP Joint Project Implementation Unit (JPIU) no later than 60 days after the project Effective Date, consistent with the ESCP commitment for the parent I-WISE project. The SGS Specialist will:

- Lead implementation and monitoring of this Gender Action Plan across all project components.
- Develop and deliver gender mainstreaming training for national partner agencies (MWE, YMS, NWRA).
- Review all project outputs (platform design, training curricula, communication materials, Early Action Plans) for gender responsiveness.
- Prepare annual GAP progress reports for inclusion in Project Annual Progress Reports (APRs).
- Coordinate with the SEA/SH risk management framework and Grievance Redress Mechanism.
- Facilitate gender-disaggregated data collection in the M&E system.

The SGS Specialist position will be maintained throughout the project implementation period (Years 1–5).

5. Gender-Responsive Stakeholder Engagement

CWIMEWS stakeholder engagement will follow the principles of Leave No One Behind and Do No Harm, consistent with the GCF Gender Policy and the I-WISE Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

Key principles guiding gender-responsive engagement include:

- All community consultations and co-design workshops will be conducted in formats and at times accessible to women, including separate sessions where cultural norms make joint sessions inappropriate.
- Transport costs and childcare support will be provided where necessary to enable women's attendance.
- Communication materials will be available in local dialects, in oral/audio format, and in simple visual formats to overcome literacy barriers.
- Women's associations and local female civil society actors will be engaged as active partners — not merely consultees — in the design of Early Action Plans and risk communication strategies.
- The project will apply conflict-sensitive and survivor-centered approaches in all community engagement, recognizing Yemen's active conflict context and heightened GBV risks.

- SEA/SH risks during community engagement will be proactively assessed and mitigated through the SEA/SH Action Plan, mandatory Codes of Conduct, and GBV referral protocols embedded in the Grievance Redress Mechanism.

6. Participation of Women and Vulnerable Groups

Specific structural measures to ensure women's meaningful participation across CWIMEWS:

- A minimum of 30% female participation will be targeted in all training programmes for technical staff, community committee members, and early warning operators.
- Women's associations will be included as formal co-design partners in the development of Community-Based Early Action Plans (EAPs) in all 30+ priority communities.
- Gender-balanced community warning committees will be established or reformed as a condition for community-level early warning operationalization.
- The System Management Unit (SMU) — hosted within MWE — will include at least one senior female staff member in its core team.
- Female-headed households will be explicitly included in beneficiary mapping and outreach for early warning dissemination.
- The project will engage female facilitators and community mobilizers for outreach in communities where cultural norms restrict women's interaction with male staff.
- All data collected by the CWIMS platform will be sex-disaggregated where relevant, including training records, community early warning drill participation, and beneficiary reach data.

The project will also consider the specific needs of vulnerable groups -- including IDPs, persons with disabilities, elderly populations, youth, female-headed households, and people living in rural and remote areas, during outreach, consultation, training, and warning dissemination activities. Due to data limitations in Yemen, baseline information for some of these groups is not currently available. During the first-year of implementation, the project will collect missing information through beneficiary mapping, targeted consultations, and the project monitoring system. Where feasible and appropriate, data will be disaggregated by sex within the relevant vulnerability groups, including displacement status, disability status, age group, household type, and rural or remote location. The findings will be used to confirm or refine the related indicators and targets.

7. Gender Action Plan Matrix

CORE AREA 1: Institutional Capacity and Gender Expertise

Impact Statement: National hydrometeorological and water management institutions in Yemen adopt gender-responsive practices, policies, and staffing as a durable institutional norm.

Outcome Statement: MWE, YMS/CAMA, and NWRA staff demonstrate increased knowledge and practice of gender-responsive climate information and early warning service delivery.

Output Statement: A dedicated SGS Specialist is deployed; gender mainstreaming training is delivered to national partner agencies; women’s participation in project-supported technical and