

Annex 9

Draft 1

Gender and Climate Change: a discussion paper for GCAP Climate Change Task Force

“Gender, like poverty, is a cross cutting issue in climate change and needs to be recognized as such. In fact, gender and poverty are interrelated and create mutually reinforcing barriers to social change. There is a need to be strident to overcome the uniformed view of many involved in climate change that climate change is neutral, and real life examples are needed to make the alternative case clear and convincing”¹

Gender roles refer to women and men multiple responsibilities at home, at the workplace and in the community. It is common that these roles leave women with scarce time for community and other type of participation such as decision-making and political processes leaving them with few possibilities to have a voice in actions that will impact their lives, environment and aspirations.

Men and women have different roles, responsibilities and decision-making powers. Many people, however, find it difficult to understand in what way gender might be a factor in Climate Change or how it should be addressed. It is widely acknowledged that the negative effects of Climate Change are likely to hit the poorest people in the poorest countries, making them more vulnerable to Climate Change.

Gender bias reinforces this situation: *"attitudinal barriers are deeply rooted in patriarchy-based socialization, where men are considered superior to women – a systematic disempowerment that [leaves]t women with little presence in decision-making bodies, resulting in the exclusion of their issues and concerns from the policy agenda"²*

Across history and cultures gender relations, have been changing and have determined social conditions that *"leave millions of women around the globe in substandard housing, socially marginalized, impoverished or economically insecure, overborne with care giving responsibilities, and lacking social power and political voice".³*

The lacks of attention to gender issues in climate change are results of the overall resilience of negotiators to focus their attention. But also on the fact that poor and marginalized men and women have a limited ability to cope with adaptive and mitigative activities³

¹ The Gender and Climate Change Network, 2004.

² WEDO, *WEDO primer: women and sustainable development - A local Agenda*, May 2001, www.wedo.org

³(Enarson, E., *Gender and natural disasters*, Working Paper No. 1, ILO, Geneva, Switzerland, 2000.)

Moreover, as in most societies, particularly in developing countries, women have lower incomes and fewer opportunities than men, and limited access to resources and benefits. *Thus their adaptive and mitigative capacity is lower than those of males.*

Climate policies are not automatically gender neutral.

The discussion that follows aims to flag some important issues about the gender differentiated impacts of climate change.

There is a consensus that women form a disproportionate share of the poor in developing countries and that they are highly dependent on local natural resources. In this frame, climate change is likely to affect men and women differently specially due to gender differences in access to benefits and resources, as well as in property rights, access to information and gender different social and economic roles in the family and in the community.

Mitigation and Adaptation to climate change is a growing issue on the UNFCCC agenda. Adaptation is a very significant factors tacking into consideration women's lack of actives, as well as access to resources and benefits.

Regarding natural disasters (e.g. floods, hurricanes droughts) in developing countries, especially in least-developed countries where women are disproportionately represented among the poorest of the poor, this situation is even worse in post-disaster situations. They are disproportionately affected in terms of income generation, the amounts of care work they must or are responsible to perform, and by increased violence resulting from poor security.

Gender Mitigation

Mitigation is about preventing or limiting the occurrence of climate change. Mitigation focuses on tackling the very cause of climate change

The Marrakesh Convention held in 2001 is also about mitigation. The ultimate objective is the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

The Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)⁴ activities focus also on mitigation and can provide a relatively cost-effective way of offsetting emissions, either by increasing the removals of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere (e.g. by planting trees or managing forests), or by reducing emissions (e.g. by curbing deforestation). It has been highlight by several countries, under the Kyoto Protocol, that greenhouse gas removals and emissions can also be accomplish through additional human-induced

⁴ http://unfccc.int/methods_and_science/lulucf/items/3063.php

activities, specifically, forest management, cropland management, grazing, land management and re vegetation.⁵

Forrest are home for nearly 300 million people around the world and there are many links between people and trees for food security , energy, employment , income, medicine, etc Trees also play a very important cultural role as all over the world, as they are use for religious ceremonies . But poverty is among the reasons for natural resources destruction, therefore it has been broadly recognize that women and mend socio-economic situation and needs must be a priority in any sustainable development and climate change mitigation strategies .

“We can talk a lot about the forest. All women know how important is:: thanks to the forest we can have water for the animals... only in the forest we can find animals and birds that we can hunt and eat.... But without the forest life is very sad ... the forest provide us with wood to build our houses; firewood to prepare our food; medical herbs to use them when our family is sick and also many other plants that are part our daily food This is just to say that the forest provide us with nearly everything to feed our family.”

Juana Aguirre Pardo

Campesina mixteca de Santa Cruz Itundujia, Oaxaca

Women are dependent on use and supply of traditional biomass fuel, and despite the paramount amount women that depend on this fuel , the Marrakesh Accord on LULUCF **excluded the questions of deforestation and forest management and all interventions designed to improve this traditional supply a role women and girls usually performed in developing .**

But if mitigation is to prevent the occurrence of climate change attention should be taken to enhance the use of biofuel and diesel as a alternative to biomass fuel . The “*Mitigation from a cross-sectoral perspective. In Climate Change 2007*”⁶ report states that “*Particularly relevant trade-offs have been identified for GHG mitigation strategies that enhance the use of biofuels and diesel. Biofuel from sustainably-grown biomass are considered to be carbon-neutral. They have therefore been proposed as an important element in decarbonization strategies. However, their combustion in household devices under uncontrolled conditions releases large amounts of fine particulate matter and volatile organic compounds, which cause significant negative health impacts.*”

⁵ Outstanding issues such as the definitions of LULUCF activities under Article 3.3 and Article 3.4 and the rules for accounting of these activities were resolved and agreed on as part of the Marrakesh Accord⁵ (COP 7 Marrakesh, October/November 2001)

⁶ Barker, T., I. Bashmakov, A. Alharthi, M. Amann, L. Cifuentes, J. Drexhage, M. Duan, O. Edenhofer, B. Flannery, M. Grubb, M. Hoogwijk, F. I. Ibitoye, C. J. Jepma, W.A. Pizer, K. Yamaji, 2007: Mitigation from a cross-sectoral perspective. In Climate Change 2007: Mitigation. Contribution of Working Group III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [B. Metz, O.R. Davidson, P.R. Bosch, R. Dave, L.A. Meyer (eds)], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA page” 675

The report also mention that studies estimate that the combustion of coal and biofuel in Chinese households has “*contributed to about 10–15% of the total global emissions of black carbon during the past two decades. Emissions from these sources have been identified as the major source of health effects from air pollution in developing countries, adding the highest burden of disease. In addition to the negative health impacts of traditional biomass combustion, there are concerns about the effectiveness of the combustion of biomass in stoves as a climate change mitigation measure due to the loss of efficiency compared to stoves using fossil fuels*”

Even if several and countries are promoting the production of biofuels, one of the responsible of hig food prices the study indicates that “*controlled combustion of biomass with stringent air quality measures would prevent a substantial proportion of any toxic emissions. This would sometimes be accompanied by increases in efficiency. Furthermore, ethanol and biodiesel can be produced from biomass in medium-to large industrial installations with air quality control measures that prevent negative health impacts* .

Gender, Vulnerability and Adaptation

Vulnerability and adaptation are largely social issues and therefore the issue of gender should play a more explicit role in adaptation studies, projects and policy. Gender roles in society and in the division of labor should be acknowledged in the adaptation process. Climate change as described in the IPCC scenarios will have impacts on food security, freshwater supply, rural and urban settlements and their infrastructure, even if emissions would be curbed immediately.

Therefore the need of socio economic information to asses population vulnerability and increase effectiveness of actions , programmes and projects in face of Climate Change has been highlighted recently in the *The Report on the Expert Meeting on socio-economic information*⁷ held in April 2008.

To assess population vulnerability, the demographic data should include data on governance, cultural values, indigenous knowledge, community dynamics and gender considerations. They are valuable indicators for assessing the capacity to respond to climate change. But the lack of this type of information because they are not part of the standard profiles for data collection, resulting that the voice of women and men are not always present in the socio-economic information on impact and vulnerability assessments. Development of appropriate expertise and methodologies according to the context and purposes of the assessments; difficulties in characterizing vulnerability and socio-economic conditions; integrating complex, multiple and interrelated factors; reliability of data; and scarcity of resources are among the problems that are faced when integrating socio-economic information into impact and vulnerability assessments

Lack of people centered data is coupled with lack of policy makers’ familiarity with the development of climate change policy frameworks. In fact many policymakers have a

⁷ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/2

scarce socio economic understanding of the problem; specially they are not gender sensitivity and continue to respond to climate change issues in the context of the traditional development frameworks.

It is therefore important that decision makers become aware that the socio-economic information has to be disaggregated by sex and age, to respond to climate change. This will take into consideration the specific needs of all the population and provide a understanding of gender issues in climate change.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change, IPCC, requirements for a country to assure a high adaptive capacity include: a prosperous and stable economy, a high degree of access to technology options, well designed adaptation strategies, a system in place for the dissemination of climate change and adaptation information at all levels as well as a distribution of access to resources based on equity principles.

Actions directed to increase the adaptive capacity of a region can be regarded as strategies for coping to the threat of climate change. In fact, “*the enhancement of adaptive capacity is a way of reducing vulnerabilities and promoting sustainable development*”.⁸

Equal participation in climate change planning and governance processes of representative members (men and women) to ensure that the measures developed are actually beneficial for those who are supposed to implement them, but also to ensure that all relevant knowledge, i.e. knowledge from men and women, is integrated into policy and projects.

Following the cyclone and flood of 1991 in Bangladesh the death rate was almost five times as high for women as for men. Warning information was transmitted by men to men in public spaces, but rarely communicated to the rest of the family and as many women are not allowed to leave the house without a male relative they therefore perished waiting for their relatives to return home and take them to a safe place.⁹

Moreover, as in many other Asian countries, most Bengali women have never learned to swim which significantly reduces their survival chances in the case of flooding. Another clear illustration of the different vulnerabilities women and men face is offered by the fact that more men died than women during Hurricane Mitch. It has been suggested that this was due to existing gender norms in which ideas about masculinity encouraged risky ‘heroic’ action in a disaster.¹⁰

⁸Huq, S., Rahman, A., Konate, M., Sokona, Y., Reid, H., *Mainstreaming adaptation to climate change in Least Developed Countries (LDCs)*, IIED, London, UK, April 2003, www.iied.org.)

⁹Lorena Aguilar (2004) Climate Change and Disaster Mitigation (IUCN) available on-line:
<http://www.iucn.org/congress/women/Climate.pdf>

¹⁰ Nelson, Valerie et.al. (2002) ‘Uncertain predictions, invisible impacts, and the need to mainstream gender in Climate Change adaptation’ *Gender and Development* Vol. 10

During a drought in the small islands of the Federal States of Micronesia, the knowledge of island hydrology from women as a result of their land-based work enabled them to find potable water by digging a new well that reached the freshwater lens.¹¹

Indigenous peoples and climate change

Due their dependence upon, and close relationship with the environment and its resources Indigenous peoples are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change. Political and economic marginalization, loss of land and resources, human rights violations, discrimination and unemployment are among the several problems faced by the indigenous communities, and climate change exacerbates these difficulties.

Indigenous peoples can help to enhance the resilience of ecosystems they inhabit and they should react to the impacts of climate change, drawing on their traditional knowledge to find solutions which may help society to cope with impending changes. Therefore they should play a role in the global response.

Impacts of Climate Change on gender relations

Climate Change exacerbates shortfalls in water resources and fuel wood. Women and young girls usually have to spend more time to fetch water or wood with the increase of their workloads and limiting their opportunities to be involved in non-traditional activities.

Moreover, spending more time on traditional reproductive tasks re-enforces traditional roles and magnify burdens of care resulting in a overload of work. Therefore we can conclude that the effects of Climate Change can work against a change in which women might begin to play other roles. Climate Change has impact on gender equality that lead to changes in gender relations.

When there were still trees in the Aliso Community, women from Los Gomez, Todos Santos community in Cuchumatán, Huehuetenango, (Guatemala) spoke on how in the past, one of their role was to fetch firewood . But now that no trees are left in the community, men are responsible to bring it home from far away areas. This is a example that changes in access to natural resources, can modify the division of labor in the family.

Much of the current backwardness in integration of the gender perspective in climate change mitigation and adaptation policies is because country leaders , development institutions, especially international cooperation, have concentrated support and financing on projects and neglecting policy development. In Climate change mitigation and

¹¹ Cheryl Anderson (2002) 'Gender Matters: implications for climate variability and Climate Change and for disaster management in the pacific islands' available on-line from www.gencec.interconnection.org

adaptation policies, is crucial that gender issues not be considered as an isolated component, but rather as a cross-theme concerning all policies on natural resource protection, use and management.

Another obstacle weakening the legitimating of the gender approach in Climate change activities and creating confusion in this field, is the lack of coordination among activities proposed by international cooperation agencies, and between these agencies and national entities receiving funding such as government, NGOs and peasant organizations

So far, it appears that coordination has been sporadic, short-term, highly conjunctural, and dependent on countries/agencies individual initiatives. What has predominated, rather, good intentions and discourses/ meetings / workshops, among countries from the north and international agencies As a result , still is pending more qualitative research and experiences Adoption of a multi-level strategy will help improve countries, international agencies and institutional coordination mechanisms and make it easier to achieve sustainable results.

Some Conclusions¹²

Several studies and analysis of the activities taken place and coordinate by international organizations suggest have come to a conclusion that can be summarizes as follows:

1. **ON UNFCCC:** The adaptation Policy Framework and the other tools referred to in the UNFCCC compendium for adaptation do not explicitly take gender issues into account. There are no Global or national studies on gender differentiated impacts on global climate change including focus on gender differences in how to cope with climate change adaptation and mitigation. These need to be published as case studies and made widely available.

Minu Hemmati (LIFE/genanet) outlined the five steps for a analytical framework on gender in climate change:¹³

STEP 1: Identify climate change topics, i.e. identify sector! and cross-sectoral issues that are impacting the climate and-or are impacted by climate change, and-or are resource of climate change.

STEP 2: Identify the gender aspects of the topics identified in STEP 1: known facts and open questions.

STEP 3: Identify the dimensions that are involved in looking at the gender aspects identified in STEP 2, and in which disciplines the relevant research is being done and-or should be done.

STEP 4: Identify what research exists, and where there are gaps: What do we know what needs to be integrated into climate policy making! What don't we know yet that needs to be addressed in future research!

STEP 5: Identify priority issues for future research. . Additional research should be undertaken. e.g. Who decides about the purchase of energy efficient stoves in rural households? Is the consent of men required for women to utilize the stoves? Decision-making power is gender-based and is directly linked to the UNFCCC negotiations on technology transfer. Another challenge is how to interest more men to commit themselves into applying gender mainstreaming strategies in climate change work.

2. **ON research and studies:** There are very few empirical, case-study that demonstrate (a) the gender differences in climate impacts and adaptive capacities, and (b) the effect of using gender analysis on the choice of investment in particular adaptation projects, which demonstrate the advantages of doing this. Gender should be highly relevant to the UNFCCC and research and evaluation of projects and measures is missing
3. **On Statistics disaggregated by sex and age:** Most data information is not desegregated and has been pointes as one of the problems when developing socio-economic studies on climate change. There is a urgent need to promote

¹² <http://www.gencc.interconnection.org/resources.htm> and <http://www.genanet.de>.

Most of these recommendations have been supported by the UNEP Women's Assembly, held in Nairobi in October 2004

¹³ FAO Side Event November 2007

- desegregation so to develop well informed policies and strategies that reach women and men according to their needs and capacities.
4. **On toolkits:** Existing and future toolkits related to vulnerability analysis as well as adaptation project implementation need to be reviewed by gender experts to answer (a) how gender awareness among users can be stimulated, and (b) whether gender should be integrated in the existing tools or whether new tools are needed.
 5. **On women needs:** in the case of mobility, undoubtedly an important sector for mitigation strategies include actions to support women , but their specific needs should continue be taken into consideration, with a more user-friendly and climate-friendly approach
 6. **On gender Analysis:** A comprehensive gender analysis of climate protection instruments is missing. Assessments do exist for instruments used in developing countries, mostly for examining the participation of women, and for determining how instruments have to be developed to bring benefits to women and men. Different views exist in the North and in the South on these instruments and their implications.
 7. **ON North/South** differences in women's situations and gender relations lead to different assessments and requirements in climate protection.
 8. **ON Gender sensitive Budget :** Gender analysis of all budget lines and financial instruments. Budget lines and funds should also be analyzed from a gender perspective¹⁴
 9. **ON Participation** of women in the whole process , at international, national and local level, in south and north is missing together with skills and resources .
 10. **ON Indicators** Climate change activities do not include gender sensitive indicators. Therefore they should be develop and applied in UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol mechanisms and instruments starting with instruments related to adaptation and vulnerability as this are the area in which gender differences are most crucial and most visible.
 11. **On information:** it is important that climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and activities be widely informed to al the population, but is very important to include gender dimension in all communications develop by UNFCCC. In the course of the revision of the guidelines for the National Communications under the UNFCCC, the inclusion of the gender dimension should be ensured.

There is several entry points in which GCAP Climate Change Task Force can organize activities to consider gender approach in Climate change. Activities relevant to Climate change¹⁵ in developing countries either in *mitigation or adaptation* there is a gender consideration to be taken in the different daily realities of women and men. It is important to integrate gender in all mechanisms, polices measures and tools

¹⁴ This means that all statistical social data should be disaggregated by gender, and in the reporting and evaluation of policies and measures, within both adaptation and mitigation, gender dimensions should be assessed

¹⁵ UNDP 2007

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