

ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES

The Heart of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Future We Want for All
Global Thematic Consultation

**ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH
RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE: CASE STUDIES
FROM LOCAL ACTION TO GLOBAL POLICY**

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Introduction

Women's empowerment and gender equality are essential for sustainable development, as they are critical to all three of its dimensions: economic development, environmental protection and social equity. The centrality of gender equality and women's participation for truly sustainable solutions has been recognized in agreements adopted at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), at the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and at the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (UN CBD), among others.

This paper presents specific examples of the work of members of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA),¹ showcasing their diverse expertise and practical experience, and highlighting lessons learned in developing and implementing gender-responsive climate policy and practice at all levels. These examples are drawn from experiences involving expanding access to and control over renewable energy; mainstreaming gender in national energy programmes; capacity building on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+); advocating for gender equality in forest and land tenure issues; conveying human stories behind the statistics to policymakers; establishing a community resilience fund to integrate grassroots women in the fight against climate change; and promoting gender balance in international climate finance mechanisms.

This work contributes to empowerment of women and greater gender equality in decision-making, access to and control over resources, health conditions, education, and allocation of climate financing, complementing efforts targeting structural inequalities more broadly.

¹The GGCA was launched at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Bali in December 2007 and its members include over 60 UN agencies and civil society organizations. The primary goal of the GGCA is to ensure that climate change policies, decision-making, and initiatives at the global, regional, and national levels are gender responsive.

Practice Experience of GGCA Members

Solar Sister:

Addressing Energy Poverty through an Innovative Gender-Inclusive, Market-Based and Grassroots Approach

Solar Sister² was formed with the exclusive mission to build an Africa-wide network of women clean energy entrepreneurs. Women's engagement is critical to the successful adoption of clean energy solutions in developing countries, as they have a primary role in the use of household energy. Solar Sister offers life transforming clean energy technologies (such as portable solar lights, mobile phone chargers, and radio chargers³) marketed through a women's direct sales network. This scalable market-based innovation employs a women-driven "last mile" distribution model to bring clean energy to rural customers in places where traditional distribution channels simply do not exist. Women are integrated in both the supply and demand sides of marketing clean energy technologies, which helps promote a thriving grassroots green economy.⁴

At the same time, Solar Sister uses the "micro-consignment" innovation to reduce the start-up business risk for women. A World Bank [study](#) has shown that women have lower access to finance than men in many African countries and that they tend to rely more on informal sources of capital and personal money management than men.¹ This lack of access to finance impedes female entrepreneurship and prevents women from participating in the modern market economy. Solar Sister employs "micro-consignment" innovation to encourage women's entrepreneurship and reduce the risks of start-up businesses, offering rural women a type of "business in a bag." This pre-packaged business model makes it easier for women to enter the market. Some women go on to become clean technology "evangelists" in their communities.

Solar Sister's experience shows the advantages of investing in women to promote large-scale adoption of clean energy technologies at the grassroots level. Its women-based approach, combined with an enterprise-based model, offers a unique solution for providing sustainable livelihood opportunities and addressing energy poverty.

² Solar Sister (www.solarsister.org) is an award winning social enterprise eradicating energy poverty by empowering women with economic opportunity. Solar Sister is improving energy access in Africa by actively integrating women in the clean energy supply chain.

³ Solar Sister's product portfolio expansion plans include clean cook stoves and small solar mobile phone charging enterprises.

⁴ Solar Sister launched its high impact programme in early 2010 by training 10 women in rural Uganda. Today, it has a growing network of 171 Solar Sister entrepreneurs in Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan bringing the benefits of clean energy to over 31,000 Africans. Programme expansion efforts in other parts of East Africa (Tanzania and Kenya) and West Africa (Nigeria) are also underway.

Role of Gender in Contributing to Project Success

1.6 billion people worldwide live without the most fundamental access to energy. Seventy percent of these are women and girls directly affected by the adverse effects of energy poverty and climate change. Women's participation is absolutely vital for increased adoption of clean technology solutions at the community level. Solar Sister has found that training and educating local women as both end users and sellers of clean energy products and services has a direct impact on women's economic empowerment, as well as on the achievement of environmental goals related to building greener and healthier communities. For example, women directly benefit from improved air quality, cleaner household environments and reduced incidences of burn injuries by transitioning from use of kerosene and candles for light to use of high quality and affordable solar lighting solutions.

Solar Sister's model addresses the challenge of geographical access to clean energy by bridging the "last mile" distribution channel; and responds to cultural access to clean energy by making women a part of the solution. Solar Sister entrepreneurs are powerful role models for others in their communities and showcase a green business model that is good for the community and for themselves. Successful entrepreneurs are encouraged and supported with advanced training and access to capital that allows them to grow their businesses. A key goal is to engage women who have not been included in entrepreneurial activities before, and then support them in their growth from prospect, to micro-entrepreneur, to small business owner, creating an on-ramp for women to become meaningful participants in the clean energy ecosystem.

Lessons Learned in Addressing Gender Inequalities

- Efforts must be made to integrate women across the clean energy supply chain. This includes (1) bridging the gender-technology divide at all levels, and (2) ensuring strong training and ongoing mentoring at all levels— from science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for girls, to market-driven training programmes
- There is a need for innovative ways to reduce the start-up financial risk to encourage an increasing number of women to embrace the emerging green business opportunities. Micro-consignment is flexible and serves as a strong stepping-stone.

Solar Sister's Recommendations:

- Set-up a women's clean technology fund to identify and incubate women-run clean energy enterprises (across micro, small and medium enterprise levels). The fund (or a separate effort) should also recognize established and emerging women leaders, who are addressing gender inequities to address climate change and energy poverty, through a global platform.
- Accelerate efforts to address "last mile" distribution. While there has been much product innovation on clean energy solutions for the "base of the pyramid" markets, this gap remains the weakest link in the chain and urgently needs attention to address energy poverty and climate change challenges in a sustainable manner.
- Encourage new models of public-private partnerships to address gender inequalities in access to clean energy. For example, the Solar Sister model draws vital lessons from the experience of Avon⁵, Coca Cola and the telecommunications boom in Africa.⁶ Efforts must be made to encourage more cross-sectoral learnings and partnerships such as these across areas affected by climate change.

Project Gaia, Inc (PGI): Implementing Cookstove Projects and Working Towards Greater Equality via Household Energy

Project Gaia, Inc. (PGI) is a stove and fuel project implementer and works primarily on the gender and climate issue at the "practice" level. PGI has completed studies and currently operates projects in Africa and Latin America, including Ethiopia, Nigeria, Brazil, Haiti, Kenya, and Madagascar. Humanitarian and commercial cookstove projects in Ethiopia (Eastern Ethiopia and Addis Ababa) represent the earliest and most advanced of PGI projects. The mission of PGI is to help communities transition away from non-renewable biomass fuels and, in doing so, alleviate the labor and health burdens which are born disproportionately by women and girls.

Role of Gender in Contributing to Project Success

A gender-specific approach is critical for successful outcomes in the field of household energy (cooking and lighting) solutions because cooking and fuel collection is largely a female labor role in the developing world. PGI works to replace inefficient stoves and fuel that emit soot (black carbon) that is responsible for a significant proportion⁷ of global warming.ⁱⁱ PGI

⁵ See: [From Lipstick Evangelism to Clean Energy Evangelism](#) by Neha Misra, Chief Collaboration Officer, Solar Sister

⁶ See: [Coca Cola, Cell Phones and the African Village](#) by Neha Misra, Chief Collaboration Officer, Solar Sister

⁷ Up to 40% net warming and 10-20% gross warming, in Baron, R.E., Montgomery, W.D., & Tuladhar, S.D. (2009).

programmes address the disproportionate negative health, economic and social impacts that polluting fuels have on women and girls through programmes that prioritize the safety and time savings afforded by the adoption of a clean, modern stoves and alcohol fuel. PGI projects engage women at the design phase including surveying and analysis, as well as in monitoring and evaluation. As a result of their participation, women report greater confidence, and in some cases more respect within their household.

In the case of household energy, equality is achieved by equal access to security and equal opportunities to engage in healthy, constructive activities. In both humanitarian and commercial examples, clean burning stoves and alcohol fuels have led to general improvement of living standards and improved gender equality: from a security perspective by safeguarding women from the dangers of fuel collection and from a health perspective by reducing exposure to pollutants particularly harmful to women and children. These results were reflected in surveys and narrative accounts collected from 2005-2009. In particular, PGI has introduced alcohol stoves in refugee camps resulting in improved security for women and girls and increased time available for education by elimination of, on average, two fuel collection trips per week. In urban and peri-urban areas, the use of alcohol stoves and fuel eliminated smoke from households and provided time savings over more inefficient charcoal, which allowed some women to engage in income-earning opportunities including weaving, pottery and grain milling.

Lessons Learned in Addressing Inequalities

- Together with Practical Action Consulting, PGI conducted the World Bank study, *Ethanol as a Household Fuel in Madagascar*,ⁱⁱⁱ from 2009-2011. The results showed that out of all other stoves tested (charcoal, wood, improved wood/charcoal, kerosene) only the alcohol stove made the necessary health improvements in personal exposure levels for women and children. The study also documented that switching from charcoal to ethanol stoves saved women an average of 2.5 hours per day of cooking time. A switch to clean liquid fuels in conflict situations (such as refugee camps) is also an effective way to eliminate the risk of physical and sexual assault during the laborious task of fuel collection.
- PGI studies show that time savings is the primary concern when it comes to stove and fuel adoption across project sites including Ethiopia, Madagascar, Nigeria and others. Women who use clean-burning alcohol stoves and fuel report that they have more time to commit to their children's education and to getting involved in income-earning opportunities.
- Between 2006-2007, PGI recognized a need for greater advocacy on behalf of women's energy access issues to the Ethiopian Ministry of Energy. PGI shared lessons learned and the results of transitioning to clean liquid biofuels from nonrenewable biomass fuels. Using the results gleaned from pilot studies in rural and urban areas, PGI was able to

influence Ethiopian energy policy. When the Ministry released its Biofuels Policy, ethanol for cookstoves (largely benefiting women) received as much attention as ethanol for transportation fuel (largely benefiting men with vehicles). Demands for ethanol are competitive in Ethiopia, and PGI believes including a mandate for ethanol for household consumption will directly benefit women.

PGI's Recommendations

- Ensure a gendered perspective along with increased advocacy support to help influence government policies that can reduce the burden on women related to the collection, provision and use of energy, and promote alternatives that are clean, affordable and will help improve community health conditions.
- Prioritize a change from biomass to clean liquid fuels.
- Include the public health dimension in the framework of gender and climate equality. The reduction or elimination of pernicious cooking practices reduces women's burden due to unequal divisions of labor and their related high cost to women's health and living standards. Household energy use is a cross-cutting issue that engages aspects of public health, energy, environment and development. Clean energy projects are often by nature public health projects.

ENERGIA:

Incorporating Gender Considerations into Implementation of National Energy Programmes

The ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy is made up of experts and organizations that are active in 22 countries throughout Asia and Africa. ENERGIA has developed a series of tools for gender mainstreaming in energy policies, programmes and projects, using an approach that integrates an emphasis on social equity and women's rights with a very practical focus on energy technology - an area that has been traditionally male-dominated and gender-blind. ENERGIA has also been working with partners to identify how gender-responsive technologies and investments can provide locally-appropriate climate change mitigation and adaptation solutions.

The UNFCCC offers a number of entry points for gender mainstreaming, including the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), a market-based programme through which investments in projects in developing countries can result in emission reduction credits. The Certified Emission Reductions offered by projects implemented in developing countries are traded on carbon markets, and have become a significant source of project financing for developing countries. Besides reducing emissions, the CDM programme is also meant to promote sustainable

development in countries where the projects are located. In recent projects in Nepal and Senegal, ENERGIA focused on incorporating gender considerations into national energy programmes seeking CDM financing.

In Senegal, ENERGIA worked with the *Programme to promote rural electrification and a sustainable supply of domestic fuel* (PERACOD) to develop and adopt a Gender Plan of Action, which is already being implemented. The main components are to:

- Organize gender training sessions for field staff;
- Disaggregate energy data for gender analysis;
- Facilitate access to finance for women to develop income-generating activities; through microfinance institutions and the CDM;
- Enhance traditional marketing systems implemented at the local level by women to buy improved stoves;
- Analyse the system of decision-making and the gender profile of households regarding the purchase of improved stoves or access to electricity; and
- Integrate gender indicators into the regular monitoring system for the project.

In Nepal, ENERGIA worked with the Biogas Support Programme, which has received CDM credits for widespread production of household biogas plants, to develop a gender mainstreaming plan. The Programme now has targets for promoting women's ownership of biogas digesters, and for training women to build and manage biogas digesters. It has already shown results in terms of reduced women's fuel wood collection, improved cooking and health conditions, lowered carbon dioxide emissions, and more time for women to engage in income-generating activities.

Role of Gender in Contributing to Project Success

From an environmental perspective, greater engagement of women in using, marketing and supplying more energy efficient biomass stoves, and alternatives such as biogas digesters to supply fuel, is an important factor in reducing carbon emissions. It also decreases the adverse impacts on forests (related to collection of firewood) and on the productivity of fields (due to removal of agricultural residues and dung, which would otherwise fertilize the land).

Lessons Learned in Addressing Gender Inequalities

- Establishing specific targets and indicators is critical for ensuring women's involvement in sustainable energy programmes and projects, to guarantee that gender equality is an element addressed in plans and budgets, and measured as part of the monitoring process, based on the collection and evaluation of gender-specific data.
- It is especially important to engage women in the values chain of marketing new energy fuels and technologies, and also to promote uses that lead to income generation for the

women buying the equipment. Improved energy services can then support greater economic equality for women and improved living conditions for women and their families.

ENERGIA’s Recommendations:

- Engage women in energy decision-making processes, in national ministries and international institutions as well as in households and communities, and take advantage of their expertise relating to fuels and natural resources.
- Address women’s energy access explicitly in national energy and sustainable development plans, investments and policies.
- Use gender mainstreaming approaches to ensure that the different concerns of women and men are considered – e.g. through gender audits and needs assessments, sexdisaggregated data collection, and gender-aware budget allocations.
- Offer targeted training and innovative financing options for women to assist them in becoming clean energy entrepreneurs – including climate-related funding expressly for women’s enterprises.

***Regional Community Forestry Training Centre for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC):
Asia Pacific Grassroots REDD+ Capacity Building***

RECOFTC, also known as The Center for People and Forests, is implementing a regional project on grassroots capacity building for REDD+⁸ in four countries - Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, and Vietnam - with financial support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. Women and their formal and informal institutions are identified as an important group of stakeholders within the community of grassroots stakeholders in the project’s approach and objectives. REDD+ capacity building of women stakeholders in the project country is guided by a strategy paper developed within the scope of the project, and also keeping in mind the socio-cultural variations across the project countries.

This section shares experiences from Nepal, which has advanced in organizing training and capacity building activities for grassroots stakeholders in general and women stakeholders in particular on climate change and REDD+ in 16 districts of the country. For building the capacity of grassroots women stakeholders on climate change and REDD+, RECOFTC has partnered with Himalayan Grassroots Women's Association for Natural Resource Management (HIMAWANTI), which has delivered a series of training programmes for women stakeholders. The project

⁸REDD+ is reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation and includes activities that contribute to conservation, sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

follows a cascading approach of training and capacity building starting with a training of trainers (ToT) programme at the national and sub-national levels and on to the grassroots level.

Following this approach, HIMAWANTI organized a ToT programme for district level women members of HIMAWANTI and other NGOs, targeting to build their technical knowledge on climate change, REDD+, and facilitation skills. The trained facilitators were later engaged in organizing grassroots level awareness programmes. Through this process, RECOFTC and HIMAWANTI organized a series of 20 training and capacity building events for grassroots women stakeholders. RECOFTC and HIMAWANTI also organized a national-level knowledge sharing workshop that engaged field practitioners, members of the Constituent Assembly and senior policy makers from the Ministry of Forestry and Soil Conservation to convey the concerns and issues of grassroots stakeholders to policy makers.

Role of Gender in Contributing to Project Success

Pre and post evaluations of training programmes reported that more than 60% of the training participants are now capable of facilitating community-level awareness programmes on climate change and REDD+, along with impacts, challenges and gender-related issues connected with REDD+. Further, a space was provided for women participants to share their concerns with policy makers and discuss fundamental questions such as, “How can women benefit from REDD+?” This opportunity was received positively by women participants to further enhance their understanding on climate change and REDD+ and also strongly justified women’s active role as part of policy and decision making processes on climate change and REDD+ in the country, as expressed below by one of the participants after the training programme.

“It was encouraging to note the active participation and contribution of women in the discussion during REDD+ training. Earlier most of the women used to remain silent spectators in the group meeting, but during the training programme, we found them active and sharing their experiences of local level changes, such as disappearance of some grass species from their locality, sightings of new species of birds and appearance of invasive species of plants etc.” – Ms. Durga Pandey, District FECOFUN member and community level facilitator, Nepal.

Lessons Learned in Addressing Gender Inequalities

- Rural women of low education levels were reluctant to interact during the training programmes due to the technical and unfamiliar language of REDD+. Therefore, it is especially important during grassroots-level training programmes to simplify REDD+ language and communicate it in local languages, supported with local examples.

- Choosing suitable training times and appropriate venues that are easily accessible are important criteria to ensure active participation of women. Wherever possible, providing childcare facilities during training programmes will help engage higher numbers of women and enable their active participation in training programmes.
- Building institutional leadership and capacity of grassroots women stakeholders and their formal and informal institutions is necessary to communicate their aspirations and concerns and thus contribute actively to the REDD+ policy processes in the country and improve women's access to climate finance.

RECOFTC's Recommendations

- Organize more capacity building events to meet the large demand for information on climate change and REDD+ as these are relatively new topics for grassroots stakeholders.
- Engage men as participants in the training programmes to sensitize them about the gender inequalities and other specific issues and concerns of women stakeholders, although the training programmes will largely focus on building capacity of women stakeholders.
- Facilitate networking among women's groups and expand coverage of the project activities to convey the message of REDD+ and gender to other communities as well, particularly where women have little access to education but have to depend more on forest resources.

The African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF): Promoting Women's Rights in Africa and Advocating for Gender Equality in Relation to Land and Forest Tenure

REFACOF members carry out activities in relation to gender, climate change and agriculture. Current activities include climate change adaptation and mitigation; gender and tenure scoping; gender and climate change scoping; training; and information and sensitization activities on gender and climate change. Activities take place primarily in Cameroon, but members of the REFACOF Network also work in other African countries including Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, Rwanda, Senegal and Chad.

Lessons Learned in Addressing Gender Inequalities

- Access of women to good-quality information is essential when addressing inequalities/gender equality.

- Group advocacy in land and forest reforms is more effective at all levels (national, regional and global).
- Women contribute very positively and very substantially to climate change mitigation (for example, in nursery production and tree planting activities), although their security of land tenure is not guaranteed.
- Gender capacity building is needed for most of the actors involved, especially for women's leadership training, advocacy, gender issues, and climate change adaptation techniques and methodologies.
- Gender mainstreaming through trainings can spark attitude changes in both women and men leading to greater gender sensitivity.

REFACOF's Recommendations

- Involve men when addressing inequalities and gender equality, especially traditional rulers.
- Address tenure issues seriously in all climate change strategies.
- Urgently fund women's activities in gender and climate change.

Climate Wise Women: Building Leaders Laterally

Climate Wise Women is a global platform for the promotion of women's leadership on climate change. It builds leaders, not from the top down but laterally, each woman extending a hand to lift her sisters up as she herself rises. The Climate Wise Women, a rotating group of distinguished international community activists, share their compelling stories with those of local women leaders in an interactive format that brings home the very real connections between the developed and developing worlds. While aspiring to impact policy, Climate Wise Women has not yet achieved the critical mass necessary to influence policy-makers. Through powerful personal narratives, Climate Wise Women gives a human face and voice to an issue that sits squarely at the nexus of gender equality, environmental justice, food security, the eradication of extreme poverty and public health.

The current roster of Climate Wise Women includes women from the South Pacific (The Cook Islands and Papua New Guinea), Uganda, Nigeria, Maldives and Biloxi, Mississippi. It hopes to expand to Asia and Latin America and to continue to increase the number of women who have opportunities to relate what they know about climate change through public platforms.

Role of Gender in Contributing to Project Success

Climate Wise Women believes that women will have to take the lead on climate change in many regions because of their societal roles. In Africa, where women are responsible for the household farming, as well as the health and well-being of the family, climate change events such as droughts and floods impact them directly. They have no choice but to educate themselves about climate change and improvise solutions. Similarly, in the matrilineal societies of the South Pacific, women landowners are first responders to climate change.

One of the Climate Wise Women, Ursula Rakova, was called on by community elders to lead the 3500 residents of the Carteret Islands, Papua New Guinea, into voluntary migration to Bougainville. The Papua New Guinea government officially considers her a subversive because, rather than watch her people and their home destroyed by rising sea level as the government responds by providing rice, she has pro-actively worked to establish new communities on the mainland in which Carteret Islanders can be fully integrated community members.

Lessons Learned in Addressing Gender Inequalities

Social class and poverty are non-gender specific barriers that the Climate Wise Women experience. The women of color who are left to pick up the pieces — often the tragedies — of climate change are barely seen by decision-makers and thought leaders. The work of Climate Wise Women is to ensure that women are seen as legitimate stakeholders, with an equal voice at the decision-making table.

Climate Wise Women's Recommendations

- Ensure that the Climate Wise Women and their sisters are heard within communities and coalitions of women's groups.
- Integrate global women of varying degrees of formal education and language facility into the dialogue that educated and privileged women are having on climate change.
- 'Translate' the wording of climate policy documents into easy to understand texts and disseminate that information.

***Huairou Commission / GROOTS International:
Investing in Grassroots Women's Resilience Leadership through the Community Resilience
Fund (CRF)***

The Huairou Commission and GROOTS International created the Community Resilience Fund (CRF) as a fund that would invest in grassroots women's leadership to demonstrate collaborative, scalable solutions that respond to local priorities of communities living with natural hazards and climate change.

The CRF made a small investment in Dampa, a federation of 217 grassroots organizations in the Philippines, 50 of which are working in communities that are vulnerable to earthquakes, typhoons, floods, landslides and tsunamis. It is a people's federation, and a member of GROOTS International, Huairou Commission and GROOTS Philippines. Dampa used the CRF to convene more than 500 grassroots women in the Philippines to meet with barangay (the smallest administrative unit of the government in the Philippines) officials, schools and local disaster management officials in a mapping process to collectively identify and prioritize major vulnerabilities and risks in poor settlements. Lack of proper waste disposal, poor sanitation, poor access to potable water and water-borne diseases were identified as some of the problems faced by communities as a result of floods and typhoons.

Through the CRF, grassroots women linked to Dampa have used the knowledge from the mapping process to mobilize communities, learn new skills and collaborate with local authorities to test solutions to reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change. Disaster risk reduction and emergency response training was conducted in partnership with the local disaster management department, and quick response teams led by women were trained with the support of the Red Cross.

Role of Gender in Contributing to Project Success

As a result of women's actions, living conditions in poor settlements are improving, thus better equipping communities to face natural hazards and climate change. Grassroots women and their communities are gaining more recognition - by local governments, the national government and global policy makers - as key stakeholders, leaders and agents of disaster and climate resilience who must be part of agenda setting processes.

In the area of emergency response, grassroots women have successfully advocated with their local authorities to create two evacuation centres in BagongSilangan and Towerville. A 'local-to-local-dialogue'⁹ led by grassroots women succeeded in developing a barangay-level Disaster & Risk Reduction Management Committee, which includes grassroots women representatives.

⁹Local-to-Local Dialogues are locally designed strategies whereby grassroots women's groups initiate and engage in dialogues with local authorities to negotiate a range of development issues to influence policies, plans and programmes in ways that address women's priorities. Dialogues have advanced grassroots women's abilities to negotiate with local leaders to increase women's access to resources such as land, housing and basic services and have increased access to social services such as health care and education. Local-to-Local dialogues are an effective tool to enhance local governance and participation of grassroots women in local decision-making by stimulating dialogue with local authorities, relevant government departments, municipalities, NGOs, development partners, the private sector and the media. The Huairou Commission, its member organizations and UN Habitat have coordinated efforts to document, support and replicate this tool around the world.

Lessons Learned in Addressing Gender Inequalities

- A CRF Evaluation Report found that “if the grassroots women are empowered and have numbers, we can open a space for partnership with different sectors and government agencies.”
- Women leaders from Dampa believe that there is a need for greater investment in strengthening livelihoods and upgrading housing to withstand the onslaught of floods, typhoons, landslides, etc.
- Learning from and transferring solutions across municipalities and cities requires mechanisms and resources.

Huairou Commission / GROOTS International Recommendations

- Involve organized groups of grassroots women in the planning, designing, implementing and monitoring of initiatives at the local and national levels in order to effectively reduce the vulnerabilities of poor communities.

Policy Experience of GGCA Members
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***United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):
Mainstreaming Gender in Climate Finance Mechanisms***

UNDP collaborates with GGCA partners in efforts to mainstream gender into climate finance mechanisms such as the Adaptation Fund (AF), the Climate Investment Funds (CIFs), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD), the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). UNDP strives to ensure that women and men are equally participating in and benefiting from any climate change programme or project.

UNDP notes the following key developments in the mainstreaming of gender throughout climate finance mechanisms.

Adaptation Fund

- Revision of templates annexed to Funds’ Operational Guidelines and Policies, including:
 - Gender considerations now referenced for the first time in project and programme review criteria and templates for project / programme proposals;
 - Gender considerations referenced when consulting stakeholders;
 - Monitoring and evaluation arrangements use sex disaggregated targets and indicators.

Climate Investment Funds

- CIF Pilot countries consistently make substantive gender remarks in their investment plans.
- CIF Trust Fund Committee members continue to raise gender as a critical issue.
- Establishment of a more gender-balanced expert roster for the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR).
- Inclusion of gender experts in the joint missions to assist the preparation of a Strategic Programme for Climate Resilience (SPCR).
- CIF Trust Fund Committees requested the pilot countries and the MDBs to mainstream gender considerations with clients, projects, and at the country level, including the development of more gender-sensitive indicators.
- CIF Gender Assessment commissioned by CIF Admin Unit.

Green Climate Fund

- The Durban Outcome of the GCF's report of the Transitional Committee has integrated gender considerations in the Funds' objectives and guiding principles, operational modalities, stakeholder input and participation, and in the governance and institutional arrangements.
- Board members emphasized the importance of gender during Board meetings and highlighted the need to operationalize the commitments made.

Role of Gender in Contributing to Project Success

The design of climate finance mechanisms plays a key role in whether or not climate responses promote sustainable development, including steps toward greater gender equality and women's empowerment, or whether they exacerbate processes that disadvantage women and reinforce historical or structural inequalities. To ensure positive development results, the climate finance regime must be structured in a way that recognizes the gendered implications of its activities and actively promotes gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other related social and economic considerations. In terms of the specific examples of the work above, evidence-based results on the ground are forthcoming, as most of the approved gender-responsive investment plans, programmes and projects are either in the inception phase or just starting implementation.

Lessons Learned in Addressing Gender Inequalities

It is crucial to ensure that gender considerations are included from the beginning and reflected throughout the entire project cycle (planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) as well as in the governance structure, policies and guidelines of the fund itself. Including gender

considerations in the respective funds' operational guidelines and governing instruments from the onset has proven to be cost-efficient and enhances the overall effectiveness of climate change interventions. The GCF provides a strong example - in its objectives and guiding principles, operational modalities, stakeholder input and participation, and governance and institutional arrangements – of incorporating gender from the outset. This achievement builds on lessons learned and successes achieved with the AF and the CIFs.

Further, it is important to note that there is a great demand for additional work at the regional and national level, such as integrating gender considerations into climate finance readiness activities and ensuring that national climate funds benefit women and men equally and utilize their capacities and skills. UNDP, in collaboration with other GGCA members, is supporting development partners in integrating gender equality and women's empowerment principles into climate change policies and programmes. This includes establishing cadres of regional and national experts who 1) can provide technical support to governments to integrate social and gender considerations into proposals for funding from existing and newly emerging climate change finance mechanisms, and 2) can assist in national-level research to assess the extent to which national-level climate finance modalities are gender responsive. Such national-level climate finance studies will assist in identifying gaps, good practices, lessons learned, and will also develop of recommendations for a way forward.

Conclusion

The varied experiences of GGCA members in addressing gender inequalities through a climate perspective highlight the extensive untapped opportunities available to further strengthen our responses to climate change with a gender-responsive approach. While the policy and practical experience highlighted in this paper is drawn from all regions of the world, and from all levels of engagement, many common opportunities become apparent in the recommendations. Namely, there is interest in and need for more training of both men and women on gender and climate change. In response to the increased need for capacity building, several GGCA members pointed to the importance of engaging women early and often in the development of projects and policies. Specific calls for the establishment of a women's clean technology fund, and addressing women's access to energy in national energy plans, highlight the significant potential for impact and change through the recognition and enhancement of the women's leadership, which numerous women climate and energy champions have already demonstrated.

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