

Submission by Kingdom of Cambodia on the UNFCCC Decision 23/CP.18

Kingdom of Cambodia welcomes the opportunity to submit its proposal on how to enhance the goals of gender balance in line with paragraph eleven of the decision 23/CP.18 which reads that “Promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol.”

Women in Cambodia hold key roles and active agents of change on dual fronts of climate change adaptation and mitigation. Cambodia rose to the challenge of addressing gender in climate change in 2011 by establishing Gender and Climate Change Committee in the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (GCCC/MoWA). GCCC/MoWA seeks to complement the efforts by Cambodia Climate Change Alliance in the Ministry of Environment (CCCA/MOE) from a gender lens.

Cambodia is pleased to share its experiences in how to address gender and climate change with like-minded members of the United Nations and to advance forward this critical agenda as part of global community of practice. Cambodia understands that Decision 23/CP.18. embodies two closely relating thematic agendas, namely gender parity and gender issues as they relate to climate change.

Due to rapid economic growth during the past two decades, Cambodia became an emission surplus country. Understanding how gender relates to carbon emission and reduction, and introducing gender sensitivity in adaptation and mitigation are equally important to gender parity. Implementation of Decision 23/CP.18. requires consistent leadership at all levels, effective institutional architecture and sufficient resources and technology.

In what follows, this submission will discuss major milestones of GCCC/MoWA and the key interventions which are being planned as part of *Neary Rattanak IV: Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and Women’s Participation*.

1. PRACTICE: What actions have been taken to implement gender equality in our national climate change policy and practice?

Specific initiatives on the promotion of gender equality in our national climate change policy and practice catalyzed by GCCC/MoWA have to be understood

within a broader context of the promotion of gender equality in Cambodia and women's struggles and quest for equality. Specifically for gender and climate change, MoWA has formulated the Five-Year Strategic Plan on Gender and Climate Change, a summary of which is as follows:

- Implementation of Gender and Climate Change Strategic Plan;
- Promote women into decision-making on climate change adaptation and mitigation and natural disaster management at all levels and domains;
- Increase the level of awareness on gender and climate change, including natural disasters, within MoWA and its decentralized offices and stakeholders;
- Increase the level of capacity of MoWA, its decentralized offices and stakeholders on gender-integrated vulnerability and capacity assessment and planning methods for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and natural disaster management;
- Deliver targeted interventions for women with high levels of vulnerability, to strengthen their climate change adaptation and mitigation capacities and empowerment (e.g. food security, nutrition, sustainable access to clean water, urban and rural livelihoods, waste management, access to information and support group formation);
- Research and development to increase the availability of data and information on gender and climate change; and
- Elicit best practices and lessons on gender and climate change for scaling up learning and sharing.

2. *CHALLENGES: What challenges have we faced in implementing gender-sensitive climate policy and in pursuing gender balance in the UNFCCC regime?*

Despite some progress in the past, efforts in implementing gender-sensitive climate policy and pursuing gender balance in the UNFCCC regime have met the following challenges:

Despite a quota for women in civil service, the promotion of gender balance has not led to even results across the board. This is particularly true where relevance of gender and women is not yet fully understood and a pool of professionally qualified candidates is still limited. Climate change is no exception as there is still widely held perception that the field is overtly

scientific and that potential candidates might feel hesitant in pursuing it as professional career.

In addition, both female and male members of Cambodian delegation have limited knowledge and evidence on gender and climate change, and lack know-how and actual skills in persuasion and negotiation in multilateral conference diplomacy.

Beyond the level of delegation, the level of awareness and knowledge on why and how gender is relevant to climate change is still limited in all domains of society and at all levels. So, the implementation of gender sensitive climate policy must be accompanied by conscientization efforts.

Even though the institutional architecture has been developed to promote gender and climate change over the years, we must also recognize a risk of evaporation as both are cross-cutting in nature. Past experiences tell us lessons that the unit in the system to mobilize the community for catalytic changes must be located at a high and strategic location and have strong, committed and consistent leadership.

The system for the promotion of cross-cutting issues is desired to be open and participatory to allow broad-based alliance and partnership. Technical Working Groups that were established under the guidance of Council of Development for Cambodia (CDC) are envisaged to meet such purposes. However, capacities vary from one sector to another with climate change one being relatively new.

Finally, even though climate change has been a leverage for resource mobilization by government and development actors, the amount of resources mobilized for gender and climate change has not been enough.

3. NEEDS: *What tools, resources, or training would be most valuable to better support and facilitate your progress towards gender-sensitive climate policy?*

Training: Cambodia proposes to have a multi-year country-specific training course on multilateral conference and diplomacy for its delegates to UNFCCC, covering knowledge on conference design, procedures and proceedings, and

gender and climate change and techniques for the delegates to address these concerns into substantial climate change development agendas.

Tools and Resources: Cambodia proposes that gender and climate change specific budgeting procedures and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be developed in order to track down gender sensitivity and effectiveness in climate change. It will be highly beneficial if guidelines and tools are developed to facilitate the introduction of these new initiatives. In addition, high-level policy dialogue and seminars can be organized in order to sensitize those who hold elected, appointed and recruited offices.

Further, as stipulated under the Five-Year Strategic Plan of Gender and Climate Change, GCCC/MoWA in partnership with GMAG of Ministry of Environment is planning to enhance the availability of knowledge and evidence on gender and climate change in critical development agendas that were identified, for example, gender as it relates to food security and waste management to name just a few.