



## COMESA SUBMISSION ON GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

***The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) UNFCCC admitted Observer Organization makes this submission pursuant to the decision at the twentieth Conference of the Parties (COP20) held in 2014 in Lima, Peru, where Parties adopted a two-year Lima Work Programme on Gender for promoting gender balance and achieving gender-responsive climate policy (decision 18/CP.20) and invited Parties and admitted Observer Organizations to make submission pursuant to Decision 18/CP.20 paragraph 13. In that context, COMESA hereby submits her views on the matter to be addressed at the in-session workshop on gender responsive climate policy with a focus on mitigation actions and technology development and transfer***

### **A. Introduction**

Africa is committed to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 4 (I) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Gender equality refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and boys and girls. Equality is seen both as a human right, and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people centred development. This commitment is reinforced by the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA). In affirming this commitment, the African Heads of States and Governments at its Assembly of the Union's Twenty-third Ordinary Session in Malabo through the Committee of African Heads of State and Governments on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) agreed to develop a CAHOSCC Women and Gender Programme on Climate Change (CWGPCC) to engage women and gender in climate change related actions.

Although climate change is viewed as a purely scientific and technical phenomenon, it is a social issue as well with profound implication for social justice and gender equality. It is appreciated that climate change presents differential effects on women and men because of increased stress of traditions, resource access patterns and gender specific roles and responsibilities. However, recent studies show that women are being recognized for their crucial role as key agents of change in implementing strategies related to low carbon solutions. According to the fifth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR5) the poorest segments of societies are most vulnerable to climate change and that poverty determines vulnerability via several mechanisms, principally in access to resources to allow coping with extreme weather events and through marginalization from decision-making and social security. It further states that there is 'robust evidence' for an increase of gender inequalities as a result of weather events as well as for the perpetuation of differential vulnerabilities.

According to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) report of 2014, 80% of the agricultural production in Africa comes from small-scale farmers, who are mostly rural women. In addition, women comprise the largest percentage of the workforce in the agricultural sector, but do not have access and control over all land and productive resources. Nevertheless, significant gender gap in agriculture exists which translates into a costly lost opportunity to improve the quality and quantity of Africa's food productivity and supply. For example, women and girls could benefit the most from access to improved energy services. The relationship between energy and women's work and well being is evident in women's role as users of energy sources, producers of traditional biomass fuels and educators concerning the collection, management and use of fuels. In addition, women and children are the most vulnerable group in terms of energy scarcity and adverse environmental impacts associated with energy production and use. Women are the major users of traditional energy sources for household activities. Firewood remains the most common cooking fuel in Africa and women and children travel long distances to collect fuel wood. For instance, in Botswana, the average distance travelled to fuel wood collection points is 6 km and the time taken is about 3.3 hours and in Eritrea it is 10 km. As a result of travelling long distances to collect firewood, women and children in rural Africa are often left with limited time for other activities resulting in low agricultural productivity and inadequate time to pursue educational opportunities.

In addition, women continue to be disadvantaged by insecure access and property rights to forests and tree resources. Men and women often have different objectives for planting trees. Men are usually interested in trees for commercial purposes while women are more inclined to tree products for subsistence use such as firewood, soil fertility improvement, fodder and fruits. This is reflected in the tree attributes that women prefer. For example, In Benin, 90% of women are involved in collecting nuts/fruits of the shea tree while in Cameroon, women and children are also the main collectors of the leaves used as vegetables. Although women are as actively involved in agroforestry for fodder production, woodlot technology and soil fertility improvement as their male counterparts, their level of participation is low as reflected in the number of shrubs/trees they plant relative to men.

Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), at its eighteenth Conference of Parties (COP 18), Parties adopted decision 23/CP.18 on the goal of gender balance in bodies, which was further affirmed at the twentieth Conference of the Parties (COP20) held in 2014 in Lima, Peru, where Parties adopted a two-year Lima Work Programme on Gender for promoting gender balance and achieving gender-responsive climate policy (decision 18/CP.20). Further, the COP invited parties to make submission pursuant to Decision 18/CP.20 paragraph 13. In that context, the African Group hereby submits their views on the matter to be addressed at the in-session workshop on gender responsive climate policy with a focus on mitigation actions and technology development and transfer.

## **B. Matters to be addressed at the in-session Workshop:**

Africa requests the focus of the in-session workshop should be on:

- 1. Promotion and cooperation in the development, application and diffusion including transfer of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emission of GHG not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in the sectors including energy, transport, Industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management.***

*The priority sectors for Africa in respect to gender responsive climate policy are: -*

*(a) Energy*

- Provide new and innovative energy financing mechanisms that are user-friendly, accessible and affordable to women, especially rural women - entails allocating a proportion of available energy subsidies and also creating an enabling environment for women's accessibility to multilateral climate funds.
- Develop and transfer efficient and appropriate energy technologies targeting women's triple roles (reproductive, productive and community roles) in low carbon and low-cost energy efficient technologies.
- Increase availability, accessibility, and affordability of efficient and clean energy and wide scale dissemination of improved low carbon energy efficient technologies for women.
- Promote research, documentation and dissemination of the emerging gender dimension in energy issues - information generated, packaged and disseminated to women. Involve both women and men in the research, formulation, and implementation of appropriate policies that take into account the gendered differentiated interests.
- Promote platforms on exchange of good practices and case studies focused on gender-responsive energy efficient technologies – among multilateral, regional and sub-regional, government and other stakeholders.

*(b) Forestry*

- Provision of innovative technologies for domestication of important indigenous agro forestry species for women.
- Knowledge sharing for gender-responsive policy and practice - systematic documentation and dissemination of knowledge generated through gender-responsive research. Such documentation will include good practice guides, training guides, policy briefs and scientific articles spanning different aspects of gender in forest, tree and agroforestry use and management.
- Collection of sex disaggregated data and gender analysis - regular and consistent gathering of sex disaggregated data on various aspects of the forest, tree and people interface is mandated and nonnegotiable. Such data will help in identifying men's and women's differentiated perceptions, experiences, contributions and priorities.
- Partnerships and alliances to enhance gender inclusiveness in national agroforestry and reforestation initiatives - Strengthening links to advocacy networks and platforms (including media and women-focused civil organizations) is critical for raising awareness of gender-related issues and for mobilizing action toward gender inclusion in planned and implemented national agroforestry initiatives.
- Adaptive learning for gender responsive research and analysis - Researchers in Africa to develop and track indicators to capture inclusion, to improve gender equity, to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes, projects and interventions, and to improve data collection and analysis systems. These indicators will span the breadth of forestry and agroforestry concerns; including, representation in planning and decision making processes, property rights, access to technologies and services, income distribution, market access and innovation systems.

- Provision of support to increase engagement of women in REDD+ programmes and projects – REDD+ projects at national levels to engage participation of women in policy, strategy and programme development processes.

*(c) Agriculture*

- Promote and upscale sustainable agricultural, fisheries and aquaculture practices that benefit livelihoods activities of women - promoting women's participation in sustainable agriculture projects and programmes (technologies and farm inputs, e.g. terracing, use of power tillers, fertilizers).
- Provision of financial support for knowledge exchange and information sharing on gender responsive agricultural technologies - to increase awareness, knowledge and participation of women and youth in farm experimentation in order to enhance their role in scaling up sustainable agriculture and land management practices.
- Develop and transfer of innovative, low carbon and cost-effective post-harvest methods and storage facilities that are user friendly for women – to enhance the capacity of women to access facilities which are beneficial and responsive to their needs in order to enhance agricultural productivity, product quality, increased market access and increased income generation.
- Provide technical and financial support to build skills and capacities of women to manage climate related-risks and vulnerabilities - promote the provisions of incentives for women to manage risk associated to the impact of climate change in agricultural sector.
- Promote microfinance scheme for women to access credits and financial services –to build women farmer capacity to access improved farm inputs, access innovative agricultural technological and add value to agricultural produce.
- Develop tools/methodologies/guidelines for the development of gender responsive agricultural policies and strategies in Africa.

**2. *Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of Action and Support***

- Develop tools/methodologies/guidelines and indicators for the MRV of the development and implementation of gender responsive policies and strategies in Africa

**3. *Mainstreaming gender in financing mechanism***

- Enhancing gender equality as a guiding principle and a cross-cutting issue for all climate finance instruments, but particularly for the Green Climate Fund.
- Develop and Integrate gender analytical tools into all phases of programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Establish gender-based criteria in fund allocation, project selection, and other aspects of decision-making.
- Operationalization of a regular audit of the gender impacts of funding allocations to ensure gender responsive delivery.

- Improving women's access to finance from multilateral and microcredit institutions for the purpose of mitigation and technology transfer projects.

**4. *The clarification on the meaning of the term “gender-responsive climate policy” from an implementation perspective and improve the development and effective implementation of gender-responsive climate policy.***

It is Africa's view that the meaning of the term “gender-responsive climate policy should:

- Address the differential impact of climate change on women, men, boys and girls as well as the differential gaps in opportunities and access to resources in respect to women and men.
- Acknowledge and apply existing differential knowledge of both women and men on climate change.
- Strengthen the skills and capacities on climate-related events of women, men, boys and girls.
- Empower of both men and women to participate in decision-making and policy formulation in Climate Change.
- Consider gender and utilisation of gender expertise in policy formulation.
- Promote collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of gender and sex disaggregated data on climate change.