

Malawi Submission on views on options and ways to advance the goal of gender balance in bodies established under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, in order to improve women's participation and inform more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of women and men equally, pursuant to Decision 23/CP.18.

1.0 Preamble

Malawi welcomes the opportunity to submit its initial views on options and ways to advance the goal of gender balance in bodies established under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, in order to improve women's participation and inform more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of women and men equally, pursuant to Decision 23/CP.18 and also recalling decision 36/CP.7.

Climate Change impacts everyone, but has greater impact on women and children due to their social roles. Historically and culturally, the unequal relationships between women and girls on one hand and men and boys on the other hand have been exacerbated by the impact of climate change which affects them differently. Given these differential impacts, it is important that the perspectives of both women and men are equally represented in climate change decision-making. The revolution of gender equality is about giving the different gender groups equal opportunity to participate in development. Therefore, the empowerment of women is critical to increase their participation in decision making, inform more effective climate change policy and programmes in order to sustain the environment and contribute positively to the management of climate change.

In Malawi, 51% of the population is women of which over 70% is involved in smallholder farming which is dependent on rain-fed agriculture. The smallholder farmers are the hardest hit by effects of climate change which is further compounded by the fact that women have fewer rights and less power in society. Hence, women are more vulnerable to natural disasters, food insecurity, water shortages, economic shocks which results in limited access to education, increased care roles, limited participation in decision making processes in turn exacerbate gender inequality at household and community levels.

2.0 Challenges and best practices

Malawi recognizes that gender equality is critical in dealing with climate change challenges and reducing the gender gap in decision making at various levels including global, regional and local levels. In pursuant of this, Malawi has ratified several international and regional instruments, such as, The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

(CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA), among others. The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi under section 13 (a) (i) promotes "full participation of women in all spheres of Malawian society on the basis of equality with men". Efforts have also been made in the domestication of international instruments through law reform and the enactment of the Gender Equality Act (2013) and the development and implementation of the National Gender Policy, the Climate Change Policy and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) which have all been engendered to promote women empowerment and participation in decision making processes.

Furthermore, the Government created the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Management, which has considered gender issues in its decision-making processes. For example, currently, the Ministry is headed by a female Minister and Permanent Secretary since its creation in April 2012. Malawi has also made efforts to include women and youth participation in the delegation to the COP currently at 20% due to financial constraints. However, the desired target is to achieve 50-50 representation.

3.0 Needs

It is against this background, that Malawi supports the advancement of gender equality and on strengthening women's participation in the different organs of the UNFCCC and associated meetings, consequently, informing more effective climate change policies that address the needs of different gender groups, women in particular. We believe that the following pragmatic steps need to be taken to effect the decisions 23/CP. 18 and 36/CP. 7:

1. Establish a Five Year Programme of Work on Gender and Climate Change:

Since the issue of Gender and Climate Change is very critical in the socio-economic development globally and given that it will be a permanent agenda item in the future conferences of the Parties, it is imperative that a mechanism is put in place that sets out what should be done and achieved through the work of the standing Subsidiary Bodies especially the SBI. This will ensure that SBI conclusions/reports on gender and climate change will be regularly submitted to the COPs for consideration and further direction as may be deemed necessary. It is for this reason that we recommend the establishment of a Five Year Programme of Work on Gender and Climate Change. Some of the aspects that could be addressed under the said PoW include, but not limited to:

- a. In-session and inter-sessional workshops, and ministerial dialogue at future sessions of the COP to raise awareness on Gender and Climate change.
- b. **Conduct research based assessment of challenges of women participation in UNFCCC activities.** There is need to understand the gender dynamics that can be used to address gender challenges, gaps , disparities , inequalities, in order to

facilitate the design, implementation and monitoring of effective, efficient, and equitable evidence based solutions within the UNFCCC processes.

- c. **Funding for Women Participation at UNFCCC:** It is acknowledged from the current statistics that women are the disadvantaged gender in representation in the UNFCCC process. In order to address this gender disparity, there is need for resources to be made available under the Programme of Work to support the participation and representation of women from Malawi as part of national delegates at the UNFCCC meetings, such as, SBs, COPs, etc.
- d. **Increasing gender disaggregated allocation in the existing trust fund** which will ensure more women participation.
- e. **Capacity Building:** To support a comprehensive program on Capacity Building for women on UNFCCC processes including negotiation skills. Under the PoW, the capacity building program would aim at overcoming the prevalent challenge of the capacity of women to effectively participate in the UNFCCC processes.

2. Global policy architecture

Gender and climate change to be embedded in the 2015 agreement and to provide both technical and financial support for mainstreaming gender in all climate change initiatives at national level, such as, NAPAs, NAMAs, NAPs, REDD+, among others. Mainstreaming of gender in these initiatives will address the needs of all the gender groups for sustainable livelihoods.