

Submission by the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice

---

## **Views on matters to be addressed at the in-session workshop on elements of the gender action plan**

### **Decision 21/CP.22**

27. Requests the Subsidiary Body for Implementation to develop a gender action plan in order to support the implementation of gender-related decisions and mandates under the UNFCCC process, which may include priority areas, key activities and indicators, timelines for implementation, the responsible and key actors and indicative resource requirements for each activity, and further elaborate its process of review and monitoring;

29. Requests the secretariat to convene, in cooperation with Parties and interested observers and other stakeholders, an in-session workshop during the forty-sixth sessions of the subsidiary bodies to develop possible elements of the gender action plan referred to in paragraph 27 above for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its forty seventh session (November 2017);

30. Invites submissions from Parties, observers and other stakeholders, by 25 January 2017, on their views on the matters to be addressed at the in-session workshop referred to in paragraph 29 above;

### **1. Introduction**

The Paris Agreement calls on Parties to respect and promote gender equality and women's empowerment when taking climate action. Subsequently, COP 22 in Marrakech delivered a new decision on gender and climate change which includes provisions to extend and enhance the Lima Work Programme (adopted in Decision 18/CP.20) and requests the

Subsidiary Body for Implementation to develop a Gender Action Plan (GAP) to support the implementation of gender-related decisions and mandates under the UNFCCC process.

The GAP provides an opportunity to enhance the operationalisation of existing gender mandates and further the mainstream of gender equality and women's empowerment under the UNFCCC.

The Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice proposes that the inter-sessional workshop to be held during SB 46 should discuss and start to develop the guiding principles and elements or action areas to be included in the GAP. Indicators, timelines, roles and responsibilities, resource considerations and provisions for monitoring and review should also be considered.

Drawing on its work on climate justice, the Foundation proposes that the workshop considers, inter alia, the following thematic issues for inclusion in the GAP:

- The development of measures to overcome the barriers to gender balance under the UNFCCC, building on the commitment to gender balance affirmed by Parties in decisions 36/CP.7, 23/CP.18, 18/CP.20 and 21/CP.22
- The creation of avenues for the participation of grassroots women so that Parties can avail of local and traditional knowledge and expertise in the formulation of climate action.

The development of the GAP should be informed by learning from the implementation of similar gender action plans, both in international processes and at a national level<sup>1</sup>.

The annex to this submission contains a framework of proposed principles and elements for the GAP, first proposed in the Foundation's submission on the review of the Lima Work Programme, dated 29 August 2016<sup>2</sup>. This may provide a useful structure for consideration during the workshop.

---

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the workshop could consider the 2015-2020 Gender Action Plan adopted by the Convention on Biodiversity in 2014. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-12/cop-12-dec-07-en.pdf> [Accessed: 24 January 2017]

## **2. Context**

In order to bring about a paradigm shift towards low carbon, climate resilient development pathways, globally and in individual countries, all climate change mitigation and adaptation actions need to also pursue broader environmental, social, economic and development benefits in a gender-responsive way. Gender-responsive planning is an important strategy to make adaptation and mitigation projects and programs – irrespective of scale – more effective and to create multiple benefits within and across sectors.

There are now over 50 gender mandates under the UNFCCC arising from decisions taken over the course of the past 15 years, including the specific gender and climate change decisions 36/CP.7, 23/CP.18, 18/CP.20 and 21/CP.22, the Marrakech decision. A compendium of these mandates was produced by the secretariat in May 2015 in document GCC/DRC/2015/1. This document should be updated and included as a primary input into the workshop. Using these existing mandates as a starting point, the SB 46 workshop can identify action areas to deliver on the objectives of the mandates.

Decision 21/CP.22 recognises that “gender-responsive climate policy still requires further strengthening in all activities concerning adaptation, mitigation and related means of implementation (finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building) as well as decision making on the implementation of climate policies”. In order to realise the ambition of the Paris Agreement – to respect and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in climate action – Parties must progress the implementation of Decision 21/CP.22 and prior gender decisions in a streamlined and consolidated fashion.

## **3. Matters to be addressed in the workshop**

Implementation of Decision 21/CP.22 and prior gender decisions could be achieved through the GAP by developing thematic areas of work (or action areas) to mainstream gender considerations across all relevant UNFCCC processes. In their submission to the UNFCCC in August 2016, the Women and Gender Constituency discussed six action areas which could be established under the GAP: Capacity building; monitoring and tracking coherence; Data, research and tools; Gender balance; Means of implementation; and Stakeholder engagement. The Foundation supports this approach and in this submission draws on its

works to highlight aspects of gender balance and stakeholder engagement that it believes should be discussed at the workshop and included in the GAP.

### 3.1 Gender balance

Decisions 23/CP.18 adopted in Doha and Decision 18/CP.20 adopted in Lima and Decision 23/CP.18 invited Parties to strive for gender balance in their delegations and established the goal of gender balance in bodies pursuant to the Convention. These decisions were taken in order to improve women’s participation in decision-making processes under the UNFCCC and inform more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of men and women equally. Decision 18/CP.20 established the Lima Work Programme on Gender which addresses gender balance in the context of a broader agenda to achieve gender-responsive climate policy.

Since the adoption of Decision 23/CP.18 progress towards the goal of gender balance under the UNFCCC has been negligible. Some progress has been made in terms of increasing the number of women sitting on boards and bodies established by the Convention but they remain predominantly imbalanced. Party delegations made progress towards the goal of gender balance following the decision in Doha but this trend was reversed at COP 21 in Paris.



Figure 1: Participation of women delegates at COP since the adoption of Decision 20/CP.18

(Source: UNFCCC Secretariat Gender Composition Reports – 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)

The GAP provides an opportunity to ensure that progress towards gender balance is accelerated and Parties are provided with the tools they require to achieve this. Decision 21/CP.22 requests the secretariat to undertake research and analysis on challenges to the full and equal participation of women in climate-related processes and activities and to prepare a technical paper on achieving the goal of gender balance as mandated. By including an action area on enhancing gender balance, the GAP can ensure that the findings brought forward by the Secretariat's technical paper, and any subsequent recommendations, inform enhanced action towards gender balance.

Research produced by the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice and UN Women in 2016 identified concrete steps that Parties and the UNFCCC Secretariat could undertake to accelerate progress towards the goal of gender balance in delegations and constituted bodies. ***The Full View: Ensuring a comprehensive approach to achieve the goal of gender balance in the UNFCCC process***<sup>3</sup> can help to inform discussions on gender balance at the SB 46 workshop, as well as the development of the Secretariat's technical report. Drawing on a comprehensive analysis of learnings from initiatives in other international, national and community settings, the report recommends, inter alia, setting incremental time bound targets; demarcating dedicated resources to fund travel costs and capacity building for female delegates; and the formulation of a dedicated gender equality networking platform.

### **3.2 Stakeholder engagement – valuing local knowledge and promoting the participation of grassroots women**

Decision 21/CP.22 calls on Parties to integrate local and traditional knowledge in the formulation of climate policy and to recognise the value of the participation of grassroots women in gender-responsive climate policy at all levels.

The Principles of Climate Justice<sup>4</sup> emphasise that decisions on climate change must be participatory and that the voices of the most vulnerable to climate change must be heard

---

<sup>3</sup> Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice and UN Women (2016). *The Full View: Ensuring a comprehensive approach to achieve the goal of gender balance in the UNFCCC process*. Available online at: <http://www.mrfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/MRFJ-Full-View-Second-Edition.pdf> [Accessed: 24 January 2017]

<sup>4</sup> The Principles of Climate Justice can be found on the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice website here: <http://www.mrfcj.org/principles-of-climate-justice/> [Accessed: 24 January 2017]

and acted upon. The work of the GAP should be guided by the right to participation<sup>5</sup>, facilitating the creation of appropriate spaces for a broad range of actors to directly engage with the development of gender-responsive climate policy. This will facilitate greater recognition of the value of the local knowledge and expertise that the meaningful participation of grassroots communities, and grassroots women in particular, can bring to climate action at all levels.

To facilitate this, the GAP should identify avenues for the participation of grassroots women in discussions under the Convention to allow them to share experiences and inform the development of gender-sensitive climate policy.

The Foundation emphasises that capacity building is needed for both negotiators and grassroots women / community leaders to incorporate local and traditional knowledge into climate action. By building negotiator capacity to understand how the inclusion of local and traditional knowledge can benefit their decision making on climate change, the GAP can ensure the participation of grassroots women is meaningful and effective. Likewise, building the capacity of grassroots women and community leaders to share their knowledge and experience in national and international fora, can help to ensure that local knowledge informs climate policy and action.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The Foundation looks forward to engaging with Parties and observer organisations at the workshop in May to start to develop a Gender Action Plan that ensures that gender equality and women's empowerment inform all aspects of climate action. The themes highlighted in this Submission are informed by the work of Foundation on climate justice. As a result the submission does not address in detail all of the action areas or modalities of the GAP (e.g. timelines, resources, M&E) to be discussed in the workshop, although the Foundation believes these to be critical elements of the GAP.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides, in Article 21, that "[e]veryone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives." <sup>5</sup> The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights proclaims: "[e]very citizen shall have the right and the opportunity ...without unreasonable restrictions: [ ] (a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives."

## Annex 1: Principles and Action Areas

What follows are suggestions on the shape and content of the GAP which may help the process of developing the plan consultation between interested Parties and civil society at the SB 46 workshop. This framework was first proposed in the Foundation's submission in August 2016 for the review of the Lima Work Programme<sup>6</sup>.

### Guiding Principles

In keeping with the Principles of Climate Justice<sup>7</sup> the Gender and Climate Change Action Plan should strive to ensure:

- The respect for and promotion of human rights and gender equality
- Gender balance, and the full and equal participation of women in climate policy-making
- Institutional coherence to bring together gender-mainstreaming efforts across all Boards and Bodies of the UNFCCC, all issue areas and with other UN entities
- Transparency and open access to information
- Recognition of the value of local and traditional knowledge of grassroots women's groups, and indigenous women and ensure their effective participation in enhancing gender-responsive climate policy.
- Dedicated resources for the effective implementation of actions under the Gender and Climate Change Action Plan
- Access to high-quality, gender-disaggregated data and analysis

### Action Areas

**The Gender Action Plan would provide the opportunity to explore how Parties could:**

- a. Mainstream gender into all climate strategies and plans:**

---

<sup>6</sup> Full submission is available at:

[http://unfccc.int/files/parties\\_observers/submissions\\_from\\_observers/application/pdf/672.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/parties_observers/submissions_from_observers/application/pdf/672.pdf) [Accessed: 24 January 2017]

<sup>7</sup> The Principles of Climate Justice are rooted in the frameworks of international and regional human rights law and do not require the breaking of any new ground on the part of those who ought, in the name of climate justice, to be willing to take them on – the Principles are available here: <http://www.mrfcj.org/principles-of-climate-justice/> [Accessed: 24 January 2017]

- i. Examine how gender equality could be integrated into NDCs, NAPS, National Communications, climate funds, long term GHG emissions reductions strategies etc.
  - This includes activities such as collecting gender disaggregated data, linking gender policies and climate change policies at national level, integrating learning from local and grassroots climate actions that mainstream gender.

**b. Build capacity for gender-responsive climate policy making**

- i. Develop and implement training modules for decision makers and negotiators to build their capacity to plan, design and implement gender-responsive climate policy;

This could include documenting and sharing case studies; “listening and learning workshops” to enable decision makers to better value local and indigenous knowledge; developing tool-kits to mainstream gender in climate action.

- ii. Establish a formal platform for women delegates to the UNFCCC to meet, network, mentor and enhance collective capacity in order to further gender equality within the process.

**c. Enable the full and effective participation of women at all levels of climate decision making**

- i. Monitor and report through National Communications on the participation of men and women in climate decision making at local and national level
- ii. Build capacity to enable the full and effective participation of women in decision making at local and national level, including grassroots women
- iii. Ensure the participation of women in climate related fora / decision making is adequately funded.



**Under the Convention, the Gender Action Plan could:**

- d. Mainstream gender equality in all aspects of the Convention's work (technology, finance, sustainable development mechanism, adaptation etc.)**
  - i. Facilitate workshops to build capacity and awareness; including on how to enable the meaningful participation of grassroots women, in order to share examples of best practice and case studies in gender mainstreaming at the local and national level
  - ii. Facilitate training for decision makers in developing gender-responsive climate policy
  - iii. Facilitate the participation of civil society, indigenous people, local communities and grassroots women in discussion fora under the Convention to allow them to share their experiences in gender mainstreaming.
  
- e. Progressively realise the goal of gender balance in delegations and bodies under the Convention**
  - i. Propose measures to accelerate progress towards the goal of gender balance
  
- f. Establish a full time focal point in the secretariat to support gender mainstreaming and enable multi-stakeholder engagement**
  - i. Build partnerships between relevant organisations, institutions and national focal points to enable effective gender-responsive policy development