

Decision 23/CP.18
Submission from All India Women's Conference

All India Women's Conference welcomes the opportunity to submit their views on the options and ways for implementation of the significant Decision 23/CP.18.

Several Parties, India being one, have policies in place, such as, reservation for women in elected sub-national government institutions, gender budgeting, separate mission to highlight and deliver all government programmes focusing on women etc., aimed at overall empowerment of women. It is recognized that the threats of climate change have a strong gender impact. Mitigation and adaptation strategies need to incorporate gender considerations in order to move beyond the status quo, transform the current dynamic and improve the state of gender equality. Gender balance is being recognized as a key factor in the drive to achieve climate justice.

However, several hurdles are impeding the progress towards gender balance / gender equality in climate change activities. To list a few :

- a) Lack of clearly spelt out policies or strategies with regard to women's agency towards climate change solutions within the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and the State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs).
- b) Unavailability of gender-disaggregated data across sectors related to climate change impacts, mitigation and adaptation; and on women's representation on decision-making committees and bodies set up as per international agreements.
- c) Unavailability of gender-disaggregated data on climate scientists, agricultural scientists and other scientists, technologists and researchers working on climate change issues; inadequate representation of women in scientific and technical departments dealing with climate change mitigation and adaptation areas.

All India Women's Conference proposes the following steps to counter these challenges and make progress on the path towards gender balance, eventually achieving gender equality:

- a) Ensuring Women's Participation :
 - a.i. Immediate steps need to be taken towards achieving gender balance in bodies established by the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, in order to improve women's participation and ensure more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of women and men equally.
 - a.ii. A review of the progress towards goal of gender balance is proposed in 2016 - COP22. A time-bound programme for increasing participation of women needs to be put in place. A target (perhaps starting at 30% at present and working towards 50% by 2016) must be set.

b) Ensuring resources

- a.i. Fund must be created to enable more women to attend Climate Change meetings and conferences. Concerted efforts must be directed towards improving the number of women attending COP and other summits.
- a.ii. Data must be made available about the gender composition of the personnel of the institutions connected with climate change. This can be used to improve the presence of qualified and informed women in the bodies as specified above. A data bank identifying 'women leaders at the grassroots' must be prepared and steps taken for building their capacities to enable them to sit on decision-making bodies and to represent Parties on delegations.
- a.iii. Parties must be encouraged to develop Climate Change and Gender Action Plans (ccGAPS), as has been done by several countries already.
- a.iv. Parties must be encouraged to adopt Gender Budgets and utilize tools like Budget Codes developed by Nepal to monitor gender positive spending. Adequate allocation made to address gender concerns in all aspects of Climate Change like mitigation, adaptation and scientific research.

c) Capacity building

- a.i. Climate negotiators must be imparted sustained training to build their capacities in gender mainstreaming in climate change negotiations.
- a.ii. Increased and sustained investment must be made in research on climate change and gender across sectors, including training and deployment of more women scientists. Capacity building for women in climate change studies and sciences must be undertaken on war footing.
- a.iii. Universities and training institutions must be encouraged with adequate funding and other incentives to start new courses on climate sciences. Seats must be reserved for women in these courses. Scholarships must be offered to encourage young women to take up these studies. This will have the long-term effect of creating sufficient number of qualified, well informed women to be included in delegations and other bodies.

d) Review and reporting

- a.i. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting on all climate-responsive programmes must be undertaken using gender-responsive indicators and involving gender experts.
- a.ii. Empowered by valid data, all stakeholders can then work collaboratively to make better decisions, improve processes, create more value, and, thereby implement strategies better.