



c/o: UNFCCC Secretariat
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Subject UNDP inputs on matters relating to ways to advance the goal of gender balance (Decision 23/CP.18)

UNDP welcomes the invitation from decision 23/CP.18 to provide views to the UNFCCC Secretariat on options and ways to advance the goal of gender balance in bodies established pursuant to 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 (para. 2). A large stride in such an effort was made by Parties at the 18th Conference of the Parties (COP18) in Doha, in their adoption of decision 23/CP.18, "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".

UNDP would like to highlight the vital role both women and men play in the climate change response effort. Both of their active and meaningful involvement and participation are essential to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of climate change adaptation and mitigation activities. In fact, strong evidence has demonstrated that promoting gender equality and investing in resources to increase the opportunities for and participation of women and girls results in progress across all MDGs.¹ As such, effective gender-sensitive policies and programming provide a critical entry point and opportunity to reflect the different roles, needs and priorities of men, women, boys and girls in addressing climate change and in building their climate resiliency.

Thus, to achieve the goal set forth in decision 23/CP.18 of improving women's participation, as well as inform more "effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of women and men equally" (herein referred to as "gender sensitive climate change policy"), it is necessary to look at how gender balance has been promoted and achieved in various contexts. As such, UNDP's input on this submission is organized under three topics, which detail some of the good practices it has established in its work on gender balance and equality as well as provides information on some of the continued challenges it sees and recommendations on the way forward.

1. Practice
2. Challenges
3. Way Forward/Recommendations

¹United Nations Development Programme (2010). *The Path to Achieving the Millennium Development Goals: A Synthesis of Evidence from Around the World*. United Nations Development Programme.

Practice

Highlighted below are external and internal UNDP practices which have demonstrated effective results in promoting both gender balance and gender sensitive policies and programming.

External Practices

UNDP puts specific emphasis on utilizing a multi-pronged approach in its climate change and environment work in promoting gender balance, women's empowerment and gender sensitive policy and programming. At the global level, UNDP has worked successfully with partners in the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) to integrate gender equality principles into global climate change policy dialogue and climate finance structures, including in the Green Climate Fund, Climate Investment Funds, Adaptation Fund, and UN-REDD Programme. At the national level, UNDP supports governments to integrate gender sensitive and women's empowerment principles into decision making and policy. In addition, it also works at the local and grassroots level to help build women's capacity to effectively participate in decision making processes and climate change initiatives. Some of UNDP's proven successes in these efforts have involved:

- Supporting governments to meaningfully include women and promote their increased political participation in environmental planning, budgeting, and policy-making processes.
- Providing technical and capacity building support to governments, women and men government officials, and local organizations and practitioners in the 'how to' integrate social and gender sensitive considerations into climate change policies and programmes.
- Working with partners to strengthen women's access to resources as well as legal rights, including within the informal sector.
- Creating policy environments that enhance equal opportunities for women.
- Assisting national partners to design public services (e.g. education and health) that benefit women and men equitably.

In its work, UNDP has found that it is critical to ensure that women are equally represented, as well as have the necessary capacity and know-how to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes. Women are key agents of change whose unique knowledge is essential to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of climate change response efforts; hence their full and effective participation is essential.

Internal Practices

Institutionally, over the past five years, UNDP has also strengthened its approach to achieve better gender balance and gender sensitive results, wherein it has taken action in tracking and monitoring investments; achieving gender parity; building internal capacities; and improving knowledge production, management and outreach. Some of these steps have included²:

- Establishment of the Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (GSIC), chaired by the Associate Administrator, which ensures that bureau directors and practice leaders

² UNDP (2013). "Implementation of UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2008-2013 Background Paper for the Annual Report to the Executive Board". For more information, please see http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/executive_board/documents_for_sessions/adv2013-first.html

systematically integrate gender equality in each area of work and demonstrate leadership on gender equality.

- Development of a Gender Marker - Launched in 2009, the Gender Marker requires project managers to rate projects against a four-point scale indicating its contribution toward the achievement of gender equality. The Gender Marker findings are inputs for the GSIC and provide a mechanism for gauging progress, identifying challenges and taking corrective action.
- Implementation of Gender Parity Action Plans – In response to a 2008 report that noted challenges in promoting gender parity at middle and senior management levels, UNDP developed its first Gender Parity Action Plan in 2009. As of January 2013, UNDP's overall workforce is gender balanced, with 50 percent female staff. Women represent 42 percent of international professionals and 46 percent of national officers. At country level, women represent 46 percent of Country Directors and 36 percent of Resident Representatives/Resident Coordinators.
- Adoption of Environmental and Social Screening Procedure (ESSP), a new tool that has been incorporated into UNDP's Programme Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP) to further enhance the sustainability of UNDP projects. It looks at the potential environmental and social impacts of proposed projects, including those related to gender equality, indigenous peoples, climate change, ecosystems and biodiversity, livelihoods and health.
- Training on gender equality and mainstreaming principles for UNDP staff – This training includes providing basic training in gender equality concepts and gender mainstreaming as well as targeted training in specialized thematic areas.

Challenges

Despite progress made in achieving greater participation of women in various spheres and in promoting gender equality in recent years, patterns of gender related vulnerabilities and inequalities continue to persist in much of the world, particularly in relation to climate change policies and programming. Several underlying factors exacerbate women's and girl's vulnerabilities and limitations in this regard and include restricted access to education and basic services, as well as discriminatory social, cultural and legal practices, such as lack of equal rights, access to resources (e.g. finance, land tenure) and participation in decision-making processes. Furthermore, women, particularly those living in developing countries, face proportionally more factors that incapacitate or otherwise impact their health, mobility and morbidity (e.g. access to health care). Adverse weather events associated with climate change will continue to exacerbate many of these factors.

Coupled with these barriers, international and national climate mitigation policy and associated programming and financing have tended to be focused on large-scale technological projects oriented towards generating clean or renewable energy, and/or making the commercial, industrial, residential and transportation sectors more energy efficient. With this general focus on large scale, manufacturing and commercial activities, within formal sectors, mitigation efforts still often remain a male dominated arena of which is not often amenable to gender sensitive dynamics.

Through its work, UNDP has seen these circumstances continue to pose challenges at local, national, and international levels – both in achieving gender balance and gender sensitive climate change policy. Considerable efforts still need to be made by governments and international bodies to meaningfully incorporate the voices and perspectives of both women and men equitably as well as remove barriers (e.g. social, economic and political) for women to participate

in decision making processes. To promote such efforts, UNDP has found it valuable to demonstrate the business case – that is the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability – of taking a gender sensitive approach. However, more readily available and regionally specific case studies on this topic continue to be needed.

Way Forward/Recommendations

Based on UNDP's experiences in promoting gender equality and women's political participation at international, national and local levels, listed below are some key actionable items which can be undertaken to help operationalize the COP18 Gender Decision and advance the goal of gender balance in bodies established pursuant to the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, in order to improve women's participation and inform more effective gender sensitive climate change policy and practice.

- *Develop an action plan to promote capacity building on gender equality and women's empowerment.* A key criterion to the successful participation of women is ensuring they have the proper capacity to meaningfully participate in and inform discussions and decision making processes. Also critical in this process is addressing the larger structural barriers that often prevent women from participating in such processes, wherein some attitudes, beliefs and behaviours need to be reshaped and challenged in order to level the playing field for women. This means ensuring that both men and women have adequate competencies on gender equality as well as capacity on how to develop more effective gender sensitive climate change policy. To help in this effort, an action plan detailing how to build capacity on gender equality and women's empowerment among Parties as well as in the UNFCCC and its bodies should be created and updated biennially. It is critical that this capacity building work really focus on going beyond the broad gender rhetoric and language to provide concrete and actionable guidance, good practices and lessons learned. Initial capacity building activities in this regard could include, but should not be limited to, providing publicly available and easily accessible resources online as well as conducting capacity building workshops during UNFCCC inter-sessionals.
- *Create an accountability/reporting framework.* As has often been demonstrated across the climate change and development field, unless something is measured, it will not be completed. Thus an accountability/reporting framework should be established, with clear and explicit measures/indicators (disaggregated by sex) and timelines for measuring progress on and achievement of gender balance within bodies and on Party delegations. Such an accountability framework could also include a 'rewards' system wherein reports are published and publicly available online which showcase good practices from delegations. Such documentation should also be kept up-to-date to give it credibility and promote effectiveness.
- *Allocate adequate financial resources to operationalize the COP18 Gender Decision.* Meaningful and effective gender sensitive climate change policy and women's empowerment activities requires sufficient, dedicated funds. Lessons learned from the field have also shown that when gender sensitive activities are developed and approved, they can often fail to improve what they had originally aimed to due to a lack of financial resources for implementation. Gender sensitive budgeting strategies can help identify such financing gaps, as well as emphasize the re-prioritizing of financial resources. Such approaches assist in ensuring that gender-sensitive activities have the proper financial support to be effective.
- *Compile a roster of gender experts.* Bringing in gender equality and women's empowerment experts, as well as climate experts with gender expertise, can help inform and support the

operationalization of the COP18 Gender Decision. Such gender experts are available at national, regional and international levels and can help, for instance, Parties and the UNFCCC Secretariat in developing indicators, conducting gender and capacity assessments, implementing capacity building activities, etc. Such a roster should be made publicly available and posted online.