

Submission by India on 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

Government of India welcomes the opportunity to submit inputs/submission in response to the COP decision, 23/CP.18 on the goal of advancing 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 equally the needs of women and men.

This being the first submission, Government of India would like to **present the policies and practices which are in vogue in the country**, to improve women's participation in all fields of activity. In consonance with its National Policy for Empowerment of Women, the Government of India has undertaken various initiatives over the years including policy reforms, programmes and action plans at various levels for empowering women and facilitate their active participation in the social, economic and political life of the country. These interventions envisaged to address gender disparities will also help women to participate equally in the process of climate change negotiations allowing them to voice their perspectives which may result in the formulation of gender responsive climate policy. Some of major policy measures of Government of India include inter alia:

- Institutionalization of Gender budgeting ensuring incorporation of gender perspective at all stages and levels of the budgetary process. It has also led to the setting up of Gender Budget Cells under various Ministries/Departments.
- Reservation of one third to 50% of seats for women in the Local Governments for ensuring equal representation of women and to bring gender parity.
- National Environment Policy (2006) seeks inter alia, elimination of gender disparities
- National Policy on Education (1986) provides for universal access and enrolment
- National scheme of Incentives for girls in Secondary education to improve enrolment of girl in Government schools in India.
- Sakshar Bharat/National Literacy Mission with its objective of extending educational options to those adults who have no access to formal education, targets female literacy as a critical instrument for women's empowerment.
- National Mission for Empowerment of Women 2010 aims to strengthen processes that promote all-round Development of women.

As a way forward, India is of the view that that the following **steps/actions may be needed for improving the participation of women and promote gender balance** at national and international fora.

1. **Assessment of women's vulnerability in a climate change scenario:** A cross sectoral task force should be established to analyze and identify gender-specific impacts and design adaptation measures against climate change induced hazards such as floods, diseases and other environmental changes and disasters.
2. **Assessment of gender-specific natural resource use patterns:** In order to ensure that women and poor communities participate in coping with climate change impacts, there is a need for proper understanding of the gender differentiated use of natural resources and develop strategies that will enhance women's access to and control over

these resources which may in the long run help in reducing poverty & protect environmental resources.

- 3. Recognition and strengthening of specialised skills and capacities of women:** Government should recognize and strengthen the specialize skills and capacities of women in different spheres of livelihood system and natural resource management. They should also be involved in the process of developing adaptation and mitigation measures against climate change.
- 4. Creation of enabling environment for women's participation in decision-making:** Efforts should be made to create an enabling environment for women to participate in climate change related discourses through capacity building and sensitization of decision-makers.
- 5. Periodic monitoring, evaluation and reporting** on all climate-responsive programmes must be undertaken using gender responsive indicators and involving gender experts.
- 6. Review mechanism of climate change responsive programmes** should provide feedback to policy making, planning, budgeting and implementation so that lessons learnt could be used for improving further the effectiveness of the programme.
- 7. Review process** should involve all stakeholders particularly women and should allow mid-term course correction of the programme implementation.

India reserves the right to make additional submissions and present further views on the relevant issues connected with 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.