

## **Kenya's Submission to the UNFCCC on Gender Balance Decision 23/CP.18**

In COP18 in Doha, one of the gender milestone decisions in the UNFCCC process was made. This was decision 23/CP.18 entitled *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*. This ushered in purposeful gender balance efforts in the UNFCCC.

Parties and observer organizations are invited to submit to the secretariat, their views on options and ways to advance the goal set out in para 2: (E)nhance decision 36/CP.7 by adopting a 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.

Kenya hereby wishes to submit its contribution to UNFCCC on the gender decision based on the format provided.

### **Practice**

#### **Actions taken to implement gender equality in national climate change policy and practice.**

Mainstreaming of gender perspective into overall national policies and practices is mandated by a number of government policies. The National Gender and Development Policy of 2000, proposed mechanisms for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies to be mainstreamed. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 embraces the gender equality framework and further provides that not more than two thirds of either gender should be represented in either elective or appointive positions. The Constitution provides for the promotion of affirmative action and gender mainstreaming as a means of realizing gender equality. This has increased consciousness among all players to the need to ensure that both women and men are included in all public committees and working groups. The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) is the principal organ of the State that monitors and ensures compliance with all treaties and conventions ratified by Kenya. The NGEC is an established state body with the mandate to promote gender equality and freedom from discrimination. The Kenya's Vision 2030 Medium Term Plan 2 (MTP2) 2013-2017 review provides a singular opportunity to incorporate climate change and gender concerns into the national development plan.

During the preparation of the National Climate Change Action Plan 2013-2017, there was up to 29% female representation in the National Task Force. At the general decision making level, Kenya has recorded good progress which can further translate to gender responsive climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. The challenge is that of sensitizing political leaders on gender responsive approaches in addressing the challenges of climate change. The increase of women leaders in parliament, senate and county assemblies provides a good opportunity for sensitization on gender and climate change need for related

policies<sup>1</sup>. Persons with disabilities are underrepresented in most decision making levels including in the climate change discourse. The lack of participation at that level that has hindered their ability to positively contribute effectively has been tackled with the creating of the National Gender and Equality Commission and its collaborative efforts with stakeholders in the disability area.

Vulnerability to climate change is differentiated by gender, age, physical disabilities, geographical location or income levels to name a few. Further in the different groups inequalities are real and adversely affect one's ability to contribute to the development agenda. It is therefore important that government policy addresses the different levels of vulnerability in developing policies to address climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Kenya has formulated a National Climate Change Response Strategy and an Action Plan to implement the strategy. The Action Plan recognises that pre-existing gender discrimination exposes women to higher rates of poverty and insecurity and has adopted gendered county-level institutional adaptive capacity indicators. A gender and climate change strategy was developed to complement the NCCRS and it is now in final stages of draft.

The Ministry of Environment through the Climate Change Secretariat collaborating with National Gender Equality Commission (NGEC) to actively engage and support and take leadership in the gender component in the climate change discourse in Kenya. Gender and Climate change is therefore a priority in setting the implementation framework by NGEC and will be important in monitoring compliance with the Gender Decision of COP 18. The Government has also established the Women Enterprise Fund and currently is in the process of releasing the "UWEZO" fund to support women and youth especially rural women to engage in the development agenda. It is hoped that the two sources of funds will ensure that women and youth access to resources to enable adaptation to the challenges of climate change. Women will further have an opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills to make positive contribution to the climate change debate particularly at the decision making table.

## **Challenges**

***Some of the challenges faced in implementing gender-sensitive climate policy and that are likely to emerge in pursuing gender balance in the UNFCCC regime include;***

Addressing climate change will require application of an integrated approach that recognises and responds to the gender needs and concerns in the national climate change discourse but also participation of both women and men in decision making thereof. Some of the challenges likely to be faced in this regard include;

- Existing cultural and religious beliefs and attitudes that impede progress towards gender equality. Traditional beliefs and attitudes are entrenched in many African countries and are likely to continue sidelining women in key decision making processes at all levels.
- Insufficient capacity in terms of skills and mechanisms for mainstreaming gender in climate change. Climate change players are mostly scientists with very limited or no gender knowledge and expertise. In addition there are very few gender experts involved in the climate change sector.

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<sup>1</sup> After March 4 2013 elections there are 67 female members of Parliament out of 347, 18 female senators out of 67 and 88 female county assembly ward representatives out of 1450. While there was no woman elected governor at the devolved level, there are 9 female deputies out of 47.

- Achieving a gender balance in climate change may also be faced by the inadequate numbers of women in the technical departments dealing with climate change. Changing the status quo may be progressive rather than immediate.

## **Needs:**

### **Tools, resources, or training would be most valuable to better support and facilitate progress towards gender-sensitive climate policy**

Budget allocation for integrating and strengthening gender mainstreaming activities in climate change that includes facilitating increased participation of women; training and capacity building of implementers to undertake gender risk analysis, decision-makers and negotiators in order for them to apply gender mainstreaming in their daily programmes of work /activities.

Green climate fund should create a window targeting most vulnerable people including women, youth, persons with disabilities and the aged noting their critical role as agents of change in climate adaptation and mitigating. Appraisal for funding proposals should be informed by the specific country community needs and priorities in which there is equal representation of women in the related decision making forums because climate adaptation and mitigation efforts are best interpreted at the grassroots where the impacts of climate change threaten existence of communities and are most felt.

Adoption and compliance with an agreed affirmative action in order to advance the goal of gender balance in the formal and informal bodies established pursuant to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. To actualize the Gender Decision, specific targets for achieving gender balance should be adopted in COP 19 and a mechanism to enhance achievement of the set targets.

Promote/strengthen research on gender and climate change geared towards generating factual evidence on differentiated impacts of climate on women and men. As well, meteorological data and information should be strengthened to include a gender perspective so as to better inform the choices of different categories of population (this would go a long way in implementing Article 6 of UNFCCC)

For climate policies to be effective as well as reflect and respond to the needs of the society, women and men must participate on climate change decision making on an equal basis. This will be an important step towards ensuring more effective climate policy that is responsive to the differing needs of men and women at all levels. Towards this end, analysis of existing climate policies from a gender perspective may be necessary so as to identify gaps and opportunities for strengthening them for gender responsiveness.

Monitoring and reporting on gender representation in the COPs, and taking measures to encourage conformity with the gender balance requirement among the parties. . The innovative generation and use of tools to monitor and evaluate progress of gender mainstreaming.