

## **Gender and Climate Change Submission of the United States**

The United States is pleased to support the implementation of the Lima Work Programme on Gender (18/CP.20), including the in-session workshop on gender-responsive climate policy with a focus on adaptation and on capacity-building that will take place during the forty-fourth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI-44). The United States welcomes the opportunity to submit information on the topics covered by this workshop.

### **A Commitment to Gender Integration**

The United States recognizes that addressing climate change and achieving gender equality and women's empowerment are cornerstones of effective long-term development and effective implementation of the Framework Convention and the Paris Agreement. Women are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of climate change. At the same time, they possess skills and experiences that are needed to address climate change, such as knowledge of local ecosystems, agriculture, and natural resources management. The United States considers it important to move beyond a "women as victims" approach toward an approach that promotes gender equality and women's empowerment as tools for more effective long term development. Actions to address climate change are more effective when women and men are both engaged.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are highlighted in the Paris Agreement that the world adopted in December 2015. This historic Agreement, the world's first commitment to ambitious action on climate change, urges us to "respect, promote and consider ... gender equality, [and] empowerment of women." Additional references to gender equality are featured in the adaptation and capacity-building articles, urging countries to acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a gender-responsive approach and that capacity-building activities should be cross-cutting and gender responsive. These references ensure that the implementation of the Paris Agreement will take into consideration gender integration and gender-responsive action.

A central component of the United States' efforts to integrate gender into its climate action is grounded in Secretary of State John Kerry's policy guidance on combating climate change, including through better integrating climate solutions into cross-cutting challenges, such as women's empowerment, and on ["Promoting Gender Equality and Advancing the Status of Women and Girls"](#), which identify women as vital actors on the front lines of climate solutions and call upon offices across the U.S. Department of State to promote women's participation in climate change and energy programs. Another central component is the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) 2012 [Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#), which guided integration of gender into other policy documents, including USAID's 2012-2016 [Global Climate Change and Development Strategy](#). To that end, all USAID development programming must analyze and address gender-related concerns and opportunities, from the initial stages of project development through the monitoring and evaluation process.

## **Advancing Women through Capacity Building Efforts**

USAID has sought to build capacity and advance technical knowledge on gender integration and funding unique research. This research addresses strategic information gaps and incorporates findings into USAID programming.

Gender is integrated into all USAID Global Climate Change work. USAID projects in Guinea, Honduras, India, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Zambia, East Africa, and Southeast Asia are using a variety of capacity building and other techniques that highlight opportunities to address gender in a variety of contexts. For example:

### Gender Equality for Climate Change Opportunities (GECCO) Initiative

Under [Gender Equality for Climate Change Opportunities](#) (GECCO), an initiative between USAID and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN):

- Launch of the [Gender and Renewable Energy Platform](#) (G-REEN). G-REEN supports capacity building with an electronic discussion forum, a resource center (on gender, energy, and mitigation), and a resource map.
- G-REEN has sought to build capacity through four [webinars](#) conducted since October 2015 (including one in Spanish) on gender issues in energy, infrastructure, and climate change negotiations with more than 200 participants. A Gender and Finance for Renewable Energy webinar is planned for February 2016.
- Support to [Climate Change Gender Action Plans](#) (ccGAPs) in Peru and Zambia. ccGAPs are nationally recognized strategies with a unique methodology for training and building the capacity of women and women's organizations on the linkages between gender and climate change. They address both climate change adaptation and mitigation issues at multiple scales and help push countries towards concrete actions on both gender and climate change. The final [Peru ccGAP](#) was published in December 2015.

## **Integrating Women into Energy Sector Activities**

The United States is working on increasing access to energy for women, and also on ensuring that women are an integral part of its energy sector activities. Capacity building is one of the key parts of the U.S. efforts in this area. These efforts include:

- USAID's Engendering Utilities (EU) Program is working with seven utilities to better understand how electricity utilities can increase the labor market participation of women in the energy sector. The EU Program is designed to improve labor market opportunities for women in the energy sector and better understand how improved gender outcomes can contribute to better business

practices and improved operations in distribution utilities. The EU Program includes a variety of training focuses such as developing mentoring programs, Behavior-Based Interviewing and Hiring Assessment Processes, change management and leadership development. In January 2016, EU issued a report entitled [Engendering Utilities: Improving Gender Diversity in Power Sector Utilities](#) which improves understanding of the role of women within electric power distribution companies and the gender disparities in this segment of the energy sector based on data from 14 utilities in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

- In Kenya, female graduates of the USAID-funded [Vocational Training and Education for Clean Energy \(VOCTEC\)](#) program formed a local group designed to empower and encourage women to work in the renewable energy sector. Group leaders then joined with VOCTEC staff to jointly deliver solar photovoltaic technician training to other women interested in working in the solar energy industry.
- In Kenya, USAID's [Developing a Sustainable Cookstove Sector](#) program implemented a Master Trainer Certification Program for capacity building of trainers so that they could become certified in delivering the Empowered Entrepreneur Training Handbook curriculum. This handbook addresses the specific needs of female entrepreneurs and sales agents with regard to business, empowerment and leadership skills. The goal of the training is to equip entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in the clean cooking sector.

### Power Africa

Power Africa recently launched [Women in African Power](#) (WIAP), a network aimed at elevating the presence of women, including building their capacity, within the energy sector in Africa. WIAP is made up of a diverse group of women leaders - and emerging leaders - across the African continent and the world representing government, private sector, civil society, and academia. WIAP has 111 active members are based in approximately 20 countries. The network provides a regional platform for networking, information exchange, mentorship, and exposure to new business opportunities; and enables collective action and advocacy around advancing the consideration of gender issues within the energy sector.

Background on Power Africa: The main implementing mechanism - the Power Africa Transactions and Reforms Program (PATRP) - provides for environmental and social impact screening of qualifying African power sector transactions, including screening of impacts relating to gender equity and female empowerment. All qualifying transactions not screened by a USG Power Africa Agency or a Power Africa partnered international financial institution are screened via the PATRP Environmental and Social Review Methodology Checklist. This Checklist has helped Power Africa understand and take actions to avoid or mitigate adverse gender-based (and other) impacts of transactions.

## wPOWER

Launched by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2013, the [Partnership on Women's Entrepreneurship in Renewables](#), (wPOWER) is the U.S. Department of State's flagship initiative addressing the cross-cutting challenges of climate change, access to clean energy and economic opportunities and capacity building for women and girls. The success of wPOWER entrepreneurs confirms that women are a part of the solution and play a critical role in helping reduce the causes and effects of climate change. The U.S. Department of State currently invests about \$10 million dollars in wPOWER activities, including expansion of the wPOWER Hub led by Wanjira Maathai (Wangari Maathai Institute/Green Belt Movement).

## GBV Toolkit for USAID Energy & Infrastructure Projects

In August 2015, USAID released a toolkit entitled [Building a Safer World: Toolkit for Integrating GBV Prevention and Response into USAID Energy and Infrastructure Projects](#) that supports implementation of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (GBV). The toolkit helps to build the capacity of USAID staff and partners through providing guidance and other resources to help them to know how to integrate GBV prevention and response into energy and infrastructure projects, including renewable energy investments.

## **USAID's Development Innovation Ventures**

USAID's [Development Innovation Ventures](#) (DIV) is an open competition supporting breakthrough solutions to the world's most intractable development challenges—interventions that could change millions of lives at a fraction of the usual cost. DIV is providing grants to scale up innovative technologies and approaches that address gender, climate change, and energy access issues. Some examples of projects include:

- *Kopernik, "Boosting Women's Income, Expanding Energy Access"* (Indonesia) (\$100,000): Kopernik's Wonder Women Eastern Indonesia initiative is expanding access to simple, life-changing technology in some of Indonesia's poorest provinces, by providing capacity building to women to become clean energy micro-social-entrepreneurs. The twin goals of the program are to equip women with the tools they need to boost their income and grow their businesses, and to develop sustainable supply chains connecting simple technology with last mile communities. A DIV grant is helping to strengthen the program in East Nusa Tenggara province, expanding the selection of technologies available, strengthening the business training components of the program, and improving the monitoring and reporting of technology sales.
- *Solar Sister* (Uganda, Tanzania) (\$1,000,000): Through DIV funding Solar Sister entrepreneurs, recruited and trained in Uganda and Tanzania worked on the Women's Network to Improve Clean Energy project. A total of 1,448 Solar Sister Entrepreneurs provided benefits of solar power to 193,805 East Africans. 90% of these entrepreneurs are women. Their total CO2 mitigation is 58,142 tonnes cumulative, over lifetime of product sold during period of USAID grant,

calculated based on 1.5 tonnes of CO2 mitigated per lamp over 10 year life of product.

## **Advancing Adaptation and Gender Efforts**

The United States is committed to helping vulnerable nations prepare for, and build resilience to, the impacts of climate change. In Paris in December 2015, [Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the United States will double its grant-based, public climate finance for adaptation by 2020](#). In September 2014, President Obama issued Executive Order 13677 mandating all U.S. federal agencies with international development programs and investments to factor climate resilience into the design of their programs and investments. This is an important step to help vulnerable populations around the world strengthen their climate resilience and adapt to climate change. And going forward, this scaled-up adaptation effort will also reflect the U.S. commitment to integrate gender into climate change action, as discussed above. A case study exemplifying how this commitment to integrate gender into adaptation activities is highlighted below:

### **Adaptation Efforts in Dominica**

In coastal community of Mero in Dominica, USAID used an effective and transparent gender approach to optimize the design and construction of cost effective infrastructure for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Dominica is facing higher ambient temperatures and prolonged draught that have decreased the ability of vegetation to maintain the stability of slopes on the island's mountainous terrain. In consultation with male and female community leaders, a system to trap debris and avert clogging of the drainage system was upgraded to address rainfall characteristics and road safety issues. Community participation included an effective and transparent gender approach, in which local women leaders and engineers played key roles in planning, construction, and maintenance. During Tropical Storm Erika in June 2015, this infrastructure demonstrated its resilience in the face of heavy rains with Mero avoiding the losses of life and property experienced in other parts of Dominica.

## **Conclusions**

The United States recognizes the value of the Lima Work Programme on Gender, which serves to promote gender equality and gender responsive climate change policy and activities. Women are threatened by the impact of climate change, and at the same time their full and active engagement serves to improve the effectiveness of efforts to address climate change.

The United States is integrating gender considerations into its climate change actions. The U.S. experience has shown the importance of considering gender in all parts of the project cycle: scoping, assessment, procurement, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Assessments alone are not enough to make a project gender sensitive or gender responsive. A project can be improved by moving beyond data collection and to use the outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation processes and analysis to design better

programs. Accordingly, it may be useful at the next in-session workshop at SBI-44 (2016) to include, alongside our discussions of adaptation and capacity-building, a conversation about the issue of best practices in monitoring and evaluating programs and how to effectively incorporate results from efforts to monitor and evaluate gender into future programs.

The United States looks forward to working with others to promote gender equality and gender responsive climate policies in connection with addressing climate change.