



PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA

Submission under the Decision 23/CP.18

We applaud Parties for taking the significant step in Doha towards strengthened gender equality in the UNFCCC regime by adopting the COP18 decision 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” ([Decision 23/CP.18](#)). In advance of the September 2, 2013 deadline for submissions, we would respectfully like to take this opportunity to share three key questions for your consideration when preparing your submissions on gender equality in the UNFCCC regime in the next few weeks. Broadly, it would be extremely valuable to share **(1) your experiences thus far (including best practices), (2) challenges encountered, and (3) needs identified in promoting gender equality and pursuing gender-sensitive climate policy**. These questions are further elaborated below, offering examples and more specific questions for your consideration.

We hope you will support us in elaborating on the three suggested questions below as you prepare your submissions due on September 2, 2013

1. PRACTICE - What actions have you taken to implement gender equality in your national climate change policy and practice?

The Plurinational State of Bolivia in the last years has made great efforts to integrate equality as part of the actual “process of change” implemented by the actual Government, despite this efforts women are still a vulnerable group due to the lack of education, poor access to health services, domestic violence and other social and economical issues result of past policies that have kept a part of the population under poverty conditions, increasing women’s struggles to achieve cultural changes that can give the necessary conditions to develop in other aspects of life far beyond their reproductive role to which has being confined for the past centuries.

After almost 20 years of implementation of policies for gender equality in the country, we have seen that the role of the State and public policies are crucial for changing gender relationships; this has led to develop a gender agenda in order to mainstream it along the different bodies of

the public system, as a result today there is a significant participation of women, although the 50 -50 has not yet reached it is important to point out the participation is highly growing, specially at local levels (Municipalities) this is leading to a greater number of laws and public measures focus on women, like health issues as well as against women's and domestic violence for example.

Since 2004, the National Public Policy for the Full Exercise of the Rights of Women, 2004-2007, has been and continues to be the basic document for the promotion of public policies in gender equity. It comprises three dimensions:

- Economic dimension: Women, economy and land.
- Social dimension: Violence against women, women and health, training and education of women.
- Governance and institutional dimensions: political and civic participation of women, legal reforms and gender justice, institutions, communication and culture.

The Bolivian Government is aware of that this issues cannot be solve in the short term, therefore in the actual development plan called the *Patriotic Agenda toward 2025* has identify long term goals that consider the 13 pillars of *Bolivia with Dignity and Sovereignty*, where it has being established that women are a key issue on extreme poverty eradication and it is important to have objectives that help improve women's development as long term policies, in this sense Bolivia has settle goals that will help achieve this aim. Therefore considers the following:

Therefore the goal for 2025 is:

- *In Bolivia spiritual combat poverty through combating commercialism and consumerism, racism, fascism, sexism, authoritarianism, selfishness and greed of people, strengthening the role of women, youth, girls and boys, and the wisdom of our grandfathers and grandmothers to promote the Living Well.*

(Patriotic Agenda 2025)

In the case of environment, development and climate change the actual legal framework is based on the Living - well in harmony and balance with Mother Earth based on the recognition of Pachamama as the planet itself, in this sense Bolivia has enacted the Law No. 300 of "Mother Earth and Integral Development for Living-well" (October, 2012), the Mother Earth Law acknowledges the construction of a society with justice, equity and solidarity in order to achieve the living – well.

For example the vision of the Mother Earth Economy is based on a participatory approach where the voices of everybody, equally women and men as well as younger generations, have to count including the voices of nature under the community form of management that values the ancestral knowledge of the diverse elements included in the each different life-systems. *"In the center of the vision of the economy of Mother Earth is the non-commoditization of the*

environmental functions, in order to preserve the sacred character of Mother Earth and ensure that those will remain as community-goods” (Pacheco, 2012).

It is also important to point out that the 14th point of the declaration of the World People’s Conference on Climate Change and Mother Earth’s Rights that took place on April 2010 in Tiquipaya, already makes a call to the international organizations to take into account the most vulnerable sectors like indigenous people and women in order to achieve equitable results, indicating:

14. We urge States and international organizations making decisions about climate change, particularly the UNFCCC, establish formal structures and mechanisms that include the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and vulnerable groups including women, without discrimination as the key to obtain a fair and equitable outcome of the negotiations on climate change.”

(WPCCC declaration, April, 2010)

2. CHALLENGES - What challenges have you faced in implementing gender-sensitive climate policy and in pursuing gender balance in the UNFCCC regime?

The Bolivian delegation have often promoted women’s participation under the “chacha-warmy” principle, especially among small farmers and indigenous representatives, therefore some efforts have taken place to train women in order to have a good representation at international scenarios, this has being done with the help of organizations and institutions working along with the government, nevertheless there is a need to prepare more women so they can understand the problem and take position on the complex issues that are in the different negotiation and development agendas.

We also see as a great challenge to analyze the youth situation and participation especially of girls and young women, as they will in the future have to deal with the growing climate change problems, in this sense is important to empower them and more spaces should be open in order to incorporate the voices of the future generations within policy making and taking to guarantee their future living in harmony with nature and respecting Mother Earth.

It is important to recognize that in the academic field there are a number of women that are doing research on climate in different topics that can help understand the effects on the ecosystems, in the population as well as in the productive systems that are being manage in the whole country, the challenge relies in that this knowledge could be taken into account for future decision to address climate change at local as well as national level.

In the Government, for example, the women's participation has increase, nevertheless the evidence shows that there is not enough, in these sense it’s important to create more and open opportunities where the women can be part of the decision making process. It is equally important to address capacity issues in relation to building new strategies to confront the

climate change challenge, as well as, to engage in participatory approaches toward water management strategies, productive systems, disaster and risk management, natural resources benefits, access to land, among other problems that have being identify in order to develop policies and projects that will help eliminate the gap between gender inequalities.

3. NEEDS - What tools, resources, or training would be most valuable to better support and facilitate your progress towards gender-sensitive climate policy?

One of the great boundaries that women face on international scenarios is the language barrier, most of the issues are discussed in English and the participation of women is limited to the assistance of a translator not being able to develop farther ideas, this is a major issue in the case of small farmers and indigenous people where their mother tongue is their native language and have Spanish as a second language, meaning that they would have to deal this issues in a third language.

It is also important to keep having effort to increase capacity and skills on climate change in general and specifically on women in order to have a wider part of the population that understands the problem and promoting strong women leadership in the proposal and management of solutions, realizes the impacts and can propose solution based on a change on the actual system to a more environmental friendly kind of development that will allowed us to adapt and mitigate based on the good knowledge and good practices that will ensure the diversity within the country at a long term, despite the harsh impacts climate change is already having in the whole country.

In this sense we believe that capacity building should take into account the differentiated knowledge that small farmers and indigenous women have, for example, and based on that, identify complementary needs respecting the traditional ways that that include the community structure has develop in each scenario, therefore is important to identify specific needs and budget should be provided to attend this specific needs in order to generate more resilient communities and that are ready to deal with any manifestation of extreme weather events, especially long term preparation.

We see an urgent need for the UNFCCC to implement the issue for Gender in the Climate Change Agenda, to ensure the full participation of women in order to concrete the inclusion of women in all spheres, this entity should be in charge of monitoring that the goals of the Gender Balance Decision are achieve and should guarantee at long term the incorporation of gender focus to guarantee gender equality and equity as well as to ensure the rights of future generations among the different decisions and bodies of UNFCCC.

We also propose that UNFCCC carries out a conference or a workshop intended for women with the main aim to see and identify the different context where women have being dealing with climate change hazards as well as the progress done in adaptation measures that are directed to reduce women's vulnerability especially those identify as the minorities and more

sensitive parts of the population as well as to promote strong women's leadership among all levels.

Another identify need is climatic justice acknowledging that climate change is gender sensitive and in this sense women have to deal with a greater part of the impacts, and are the ones that have a less carbon footprint, therefore contributing less to the problem, especially the ones that live in small communities in rural areas and are food producers that have to deal with the fact that their food security as well as their livelihoods are being affected, we demand climatic justice for this part of the population that most of the time goes unheard and forgotten when we talk about the big policy issues and we forget that they are the ones already suffering the negative effects of the actual development based on an indiscriminate use of fossil fuels as well as unsustainable patterns of consumption.

Other needs that should be acknowledge, are the huge necessity of resources to face climate change at all levels taking into account the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities, expecting that the countries that have cause the major damage should contribute with resources in order to ensure that the impacts of this historic debt in order to cover the main necessities to prepare the population to respond to the drastic effects that climate change being aware that women are of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, usually the poorest, will have to face.

In conclusion the Plurinational State of Bolivia has made efforts to integrate gender equity and equality with in the climate change policies under the Mother Earth Law, nevertheless is aware that women's struggles go beyond only the climate change sphere and it's important to empower women at all level under an integral approach in order to really have a strong participation and a major role in the hard task to tackle climate change as part of an integral policy that not only takes into account sectorial approaches but the whole integrated living systems, in this sense UNFCCC can make contributions in order to reduce the high vulnerability women in the whole planet has to climate change, allowing and promoting a strong participation of women and their empowerment to have the needed tools to face the climatic crisis.

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