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Item 15 of the agenda

Gender and climate change

Options and ways to advance the gender balance goal

Submissions from Parties and observer organizations

Addendum

1. In addition to the submissions contained in document FCCC/CP/2013/MISC.2, five further submissions have been received from Parties.
2. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, the submissions are attached and reproduced* in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.¹

* The submissions have been electronically imported in order to make them available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.

¹ Also available at <http://unfccc.int/documentation/submissions_from_parties/items/5916.php>.

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Paper no. 1: Bolivia (Plurinational State of)

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.

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-commodification 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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Submission by Kingdom of Cambodia on the UNFCCC Decision 23/CP.18

Kingdom of Cambodia welcomes the opportunity to submit its proposal on how to enhance the goals of gender balance in line with paragraph eleven of the decision 23/CP.18 which reads that “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.”

Women in Cambodia hold key roles and active agents of change on dual fronts of climate change adaptation and mitigation. Cambodia rose to the challenge of addressing gender in climate change in 2011 by establishing Gender and Climate Change Committee in the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (GCCC/MoWA). GCCC/MoWA seeks to complement the efforts by Cambodia Climate Change Alliance in the Ministry of Environment (CCCA/MOE) from a gender lens.

Cambodia is pleased to share its experiences in how to address gender and climate change with like-minded members of the United Nations and to advance forward this critical agenda as part of global community of practice. Cambodia understands that Decision 23/CP.18. embodies two closely relating thematic agendas, namely gender parity and gender issues as they relate to climate change.

Due to rapid economic growth during the past two decades, Cambodia became an emission surplus country. Understanding how gender relates to carbon emission and reduction, and introducing gender sensitivity in adaptation and mitigation are equally important to gender parity. Implementation of Decision 23/CP.18. requires consistent leadership at all levels, effective institutional architecture and sufficient resources and technology.

In what follows, this submission will discuss major milestones of GCCC/MoWA and the key interventions which are being planned as part of *Neary Rattanak IV: Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and Women’s Participation*.

1. PRACTICE: What actions have been taken to implement gender equality in our national climate change policy and practice?

Specific initiatives on the promotion of gender equality in our national climate change policy and practice catalyzed by GCCC/MoWA have to be understood within a broader context of the promotion of gender equality in Cambodia and women’s struggles and quest for equality. Specifically for gender and climate change, MoWA has formulated the Five-Year Strategic Plan on Gender and Climate Change, a summary of which is as follows:

- Implementation of Gender and Climate Change Strategic Plan;
- Promote women into decision-making on climate change adaptation and mitigation and natural disaster management at all levels and domains;
- Increase the level of awareness on gender and climate change, including natural disasters, within MoWA and its decentralized offices and stakeholders;
- Increase the level of capacity of MoWA, its decentralized offices and stakeholders on gender-integrated vulnerability and capacity assessment and planning methods for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and natural disaster management;
- Deliver targeted interventions for women with high levels of vulnerability, to strengthen their climate change adaptation and mitigation capacities and empowerment (e.g. food security, nutrition, sustainable access to clean water, urban and rural livelihoods, waste management, access to information and support group formation);
- Research and development to increase the availability of data and information on gender and climate change; and
- Elicit best practices and lessons on gender and climate change for scaling up learning and sharing.

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

Despite some progress in the past, efforts in implementing gender-sensitive climate policy and pursuing gender balance in the UNFCCC regime have met the following challenges:

Despite a quota for women in civil service, the promotion of gender balance has not led to even results across the board. This is particularly true where relevance of gender and women is not yet fully understood and a pool of professionally qualified candidates is still limited. Climate change is no exception as there is still widely held perception that the field is overtly scientific and that potential candidates might feel hesitant in pursuing it as professional career.

In addition, both female and male members of Cambodian delegation have limited knowledge and evidence on gender and climate change, and lack know-how and actual skills in persuasion and negotiation in multilateral conference diplomacy.

Beyond the level of delegation, the level of awareness and knowledge on why and how gender is relevant to climate change is still limited in all domains of society and at all levels. So, the implementation of gender sensitive climate policy must be accompanied by conscientization efforts.

Even though the institutional architecture has been developed to promote gender and climate change over the years, we must also recognize a risk of evaporation as both are cross-cutting in nature. Past experiences tell us lessons that the unit in the system to mobilize the community for catalytic changes must be located at a high and strategic location and have strong, committed and consistent leadership.

The system for the promotion of cross-cutting issues is desired to be open and participatory to allow broad-based alliance and partnership. Technical Working Groups that were established under the guidance of Council of Development for Cambodia (CDC) are envisaged to meet such purposes. However, capacities vary from one sector to another with climate change one being relatively new.

Finally, even though climate change has been a leverage for resource mobilization by government and development actors, the amount of resources mobilized for gender and climate change has not been enough.

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

Training: Cambodia proposes to have a multi-year country-specific training course on multilateral conference and diplomacy for its delegates to UNFCCC, covering knowledge on conference design, procedures and proceedings, and gender and climate change and techniques for the delegates to address these concerns into substantial climate change development agendas.

Tools and Resources: Cambodia proposes that gender and climate change specific budgeting procedures and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be developed in order to track down gender sensitivity and effectiveness in climate change. It will be highly beneficial if guidelines and tools are developed to facilitate the introduction of these new initiatives. In addition, high-level policy dialogue and seminars can be organized in order to sensitize those who hold elected, appointed and recruited offices.

Further, as stipulated under the Five-Year Strategic Plan of Gender and Climate Change, GCCC/MoWA in partnership with GMAG of Ministry of Environment is planning to enhance the availability of knowledge and evidence on gender and climate change in critical development agendas that were identified, for example, gender as it relates to food security and waste management to name just a few.

Gender and Climate Change

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.

Submission by Mexico

Mexico is pleased to submit its views 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 in accordance with Decision 23/CP.18.

1. Practice.

The National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) is in charge of directing the domestic policies towards the achievement of equal opportunities among women and men, by promoting a cross-sectorial approach of the gender perspective.

In 2008 a *Resource Guide on Gender and Climate Change* was published by the United Nations Program for Development (UNDP) with the support of the Government of Mexico. The Guide analyzes the links between mitigation and adaptation policies, gender equality and women's empowerment strategies, with the overall objective of providing guidelines for governmental and non-governmental actors alike.

In 2010, as part of COP 16 activities, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), the Civil Protection Unit of the Ministry of the Interior (SEGOB), INMUJERES, UNDP, Heinrich Böll Stiftung and the Network for Gender and Environment, established a Local Work Agenda as a follow up of the *Mexican Declaration on Gender and Climate Change*.

In 2012 the General Law on Climate Change entered into force. Article 71 provides that gender issues should be taken into account in the development of local climate change programs. This concept has been reinforced by the National Strategy on Climate Change published in 2013 (Section 5.2 "Policy Pillars and Lines of Actions" under 1.7 and 4.7, as well as in Section 6.2 "Strategic Focus and Lines of Action" under A1.11).

The *Program Towards Gender Equality and Environmental Sustainability* (the acronym in Spanish is PROIGESAM), incorporates guidelines aimed at granting subsidies to groups of women working on green technologies, sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and climate change adaptation and mitigation actions.

The *Program for Integrated Disaster Risk Management from a Gender Perspective* promotes policies, strategies and gender sensitive actions in the areas of risk management and climate change. This Program has carried out workshops and conferences on disaster risk management, civil protection and gender, including specific training for rural women leaders.

The *National Development Plan 2013-2018* incorporates the gender perspective as a cross-sectorial strategy. In doing so, the Plan provides for the inclusion of gender considerations in all governmental actions, taking into account the

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and related international instruments.

In addition, within the framework of the United Nations, Mexico has stressed the need to ensure the effective participation of women in environmental decision-making at all levels. In this regard, Mexico supported the resolution *E/CN.6/2011/L.1 Mainstreaming gender equality and empowerment of women in climate change policies and strategies* of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and was the main sponsor of *resolution 62/136 Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas* adopted by the UN General Assembly and the resolution *E/CN.6/2012/L.6 Indigenous women: key actors in poverty and hunger eradication* adopted by the CSW.

2. Challenges and needs.

Climate change issues are increasingly adopting gender considerations that recognize the importance of equitable representation and full participation of all segments of society.

In this regard, mainstreaming gender sensitive policies demands a wide range of actions, among them:

- Incorporation of gender issues at all decision-making levels, especially in areas related to policy planning.
- Allocation of resources to ensure a cross-sectorial approach, for instance by establishing Gender Units at all governmental agencies, as well as indicators to measure their impact.
- Fostering of mechanisms that evaluate and monitor public policies, strategies and actions on gender and climate change.
- Improvement of capacity and awareness building on gender issues, including full-fledged training courses and mass media campaigns.
- Provision of adequate financial incentives to projects led by women or projects that take into account gender balance aspects.
- Strengthening of childcare policies, including nurseries and full time schools, that allow working women to keep balance between professional and family responsibilities.
- Support for vulnerable sectors disproportionately affected by climate change, particularly by conditions of gender, age, disabilities, economic status, etc.
- Fostering of international cooperation aimed at sharing experiences, good practices and synergies on gender and climate change.

Submission by Nepal on behalf of the Least Developed Countries Group on options and ways to advance the goal of gender balance and gender equality under the Convention

The Least Developed Countries Group (LDC Group) welcomes the Decision 23/CP.18 and the invitation by the Secretariat to provide information and views on options and ways to advance gender balance and gender equality under the UNFCCC. This submission presents (i) general facts and selected examples on gender and climate change in LDCs, (ii) challenges faced and needs identified by LDCs in implementing previous decisions to promote gender equality in addressing climate change, and (iii) some suggestions for consideration by Parties based on LDC experience.

1. General gender and climate change facts related to LDC

In most of the LDCs women represent a large percentage of the poor, experience gender inequality and are faced with increasing vulnerabilities to climate change. Gender inequality related to land ownership, decision-making, control over other resources, and losses of assets and livelihoods due to climate change are likely to impact women more than men. This is also because rural women of LDCs are more responsible for managing basic needs in families such as farming, collection of firewood, drinking water and other household chores. As floods and droughts are predicted to increase, women will have to invest more time and energy for such activities resulting in less time for income generation activities.

However, women being vulnerable to climate change can act as agents of change in tackling climate change as they inherit indigenous knowledge and skills, are socially well connected and can be a medium of effective communication for positive change in the society and for next generation.

2. Challenges and needs in implementing previous decisions

In 2001 in Marrakesh, the first decision (Decision 36/CP.7) to recognize gender equality was adopted by the Conference of Parties, particularly noting the importance of women's participation in achieving progress on mitigating and adapting to climate change at all levels. This submission outlines challenges for LDCs both on gender in the UNFCCC processes and in formulating and implementing national policies.

UNFCCC process

Women continue to be under-represented in the delegations of many countries, particularly in high-level positions, as well as in the delegations of LDCs. A study by WEDO shows that five-year average (2008-2012) of women in national delegations in UNFCCC was 32 % women. Similarly, the five-year average of women as heads of national delegations in UNFCCC was 19 %.

Many LDCs do not have enough resources to finance sizable delegations, and designation of a small delegation generally affects efficiency and effective participation. The same study shows that the five-year average of women's participation in the LDC negotiating group was 20 %.

Gender and climate in national policies

At the national level, some LDCs have made progress, but the integration of gender into climate change issues remains a major challenge for many, as the issues compete with other pressing concerns such as meeting basic needs.

National strategies on climate change often lack policy coherence between international agreements on gender they have committed to and national adaptation or low carbon development planning.

Disaster risk reduction policy tends to be more advanced on gender than climate change policy, as the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has taken steps to include gender in the national Disaster Risk Reduction Plans of Action formulated under the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Many NAPAs have included women only as beneficiaries, but they have not addressed gender inequality as an issue. Among them few NAPAs have mention the political, economic and social reasons for gender inequalities in climate change impact pathways. Very few demonstrate commitment to gender equality through their projects.

Gender (along with other social and pro-poor development concerns), has to date been poorly integrated into climate finance because most climate change finance is intended for large scale, technology focused and market based climate change mitigation initiatives.

Sharing best practices in LDCs

Gender equality is considered as one of the criteria for NAPA's priority setting in Bangladesh, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Nepal, Niger, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Zambia. Several countries—among them Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Mali, Samoa, Senegal and Tanzania—have consulted women's groups including indigenous women, in preparing their NAPAs and some of them included women among the beneficiary group.

Similarly, National Committee on Climate Change (COMNAC) was set up in Senegal and employs women in leadership positions, a gender and climate change strategy has been developed in Liberia and gender is considered a core element on Africa Adaptation Programme (AAP).

3. Suggestions for further actions

As a way forward, the LDC Group is of the view that that the following actions may be needed for improving the participation of women and promote gender balance:

Inclusion in UNFCCC negotiation process

There is a clear need for further advancing gender equality in the UNFCCC process for LDCs. Among others, need for education, training, as well as logistics support such as support for travel is seen as key requirements for ensuring increased qualitative and quantitative participation by LDCs women in the UNFCCC negotiations. Most LDCs gender experts see the Women Delegate Fund by the Government of Finland as an excellent example for such enhanced support to the LDC Group.

Awareness and Capacity building

There is a need for capacity building efforts such as targeted training and general awareness raising on issues surrounding gender equality. Capacity building action should also be expanded to UNFCCC related negotiation skills and its associated bodies.

Participation and enabling environment for women in decision making

Ensure that women who take their place at the decision-making table as a result of special measures are able to contribute their full potential (and/or are not constrained to 'deputy' positions which provide limited decision-making power). Efforts to increase representation must be made alongside efforts like continued gender equality education, and effective gender mainstreaming in all policies, programmes, processes and actions.

Project planning and implementation

The Least Developed Countries Expert Group has advised the LDCs to consider regular updating and re-structuring of NAPAs as per their requirements in order to better align them with national budgeting processes. Gender concerns could be included, refined or improved during this updating process. Similarly, there is a need to expand the nascent gender initiatives within LDCF projects and integrate gender considerations into projects that lack gendered components.

The LDC Group is in a view that the UNFCCC should ensure that any programme funded within its structure should ensure gender inclusion – e.g. Adaptation Fund, LDC Fund, Special Climate Change Fund and Green Climate Fund

(GCF). Implementing agencies should also develop measurable and verifiable quantitative and qualitative targets that demonstrate how projects address gender considerations and women's as well as men's needs and capabilities.

Request for development and implementation of gender and climate change strategy

Considering the women as the most vulnerable group within society in LDCs, developed countries are encouraged to provide full financial and technical support to develop and implement "Gender and Climate Change Strategy" in order to address gender related concerns associated with climate change.

**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.
Submission of the United Arab Emirates**

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) welcomes the Decision 23/CP.18, which the UAE strongly supported at the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP18). Women's empowerment is a key priority for the UAE policy, and an area in which the country has had important successes. The UAE is pleased to share its initiatives in the recent years and some ideas in realizing greater gender balance and empowering women within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process.

Background

The UAE is taking various measures to empower women, with particular emphasis on education and capacity building. The Government has adopted numerous policies to ensure the advancement of women and enable women to exercise their constitutional and legal rights and participate in decision-making and in representing the country in the international arena (e.g., the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in the United Arab Emirates). Between 2008 and 2012, the UAE has increased women's participation in the society which is demonstrated in a few key figures:

- The number of Cabinets seats held by women was raised two to four in February 2008, the highest proportion in the Arab world;
- In the 2011 parliamentary elections, women national gained 7 seats out of the 40 in the Federal National Council, representing 17 per cent of members. This is also the highest level of women's representation in a legislative body;
- Women hold 66 per cent of public sector posts and 30 per cent of senior decision-making positions in the sector; and
- 95 percent of girls who complete their secondary education enroll in higher education. Women account for 70 per cent of university graduates in the UAE, one of the highest proportions worldwide.

In 2013, the Cabinet of Federal Minister's Resolution No.319 was passed which requires at least one woman to be on every board of directors of companies and government entities.

In addition:

- Many of governmental organizations in the Emirate of Dubai have taken relevant initiatives such as the formation of women's committees to advance education for women and actively promote their roles within the workplace, society and the preservation of the environment. One example is the "Dubai Women Establishment" which has developed certain programs dealing with issues related to sustainability and women for sustainable growth including the "Women Leadership Exchange Program" (UAE – Sweden). Other ongoing development programs address issues such as organizational structure, gender and diversity issues, and workplace group dynamics in order to build leadership skills.
- "Sustainable Labour Practices", a program of the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Group (comprised of over 40 leading government, private and non-profit organizations in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi) includes identifying and addressing barriers (cultural, vocational etc.) that prevent a greater uptake of Emirati women in the workplace.

Initiatives to Date

The UAE has been an active voice in the UNFCCC process to promote gender equality, particularly in the run-up to, during and following COP18. It has contributed to a number of initiatives both internationally and domestically to address women's education and empowerment in the context of clean energy and climate change. The UAE has:

- Sponsored an online discussion platform on **women in diplomacy and the climate change negotiations** (Autumn 2012), in cooperation with Global Gender and Climate Alliance, UN Institute for Training and

Research, UN Women and Women's Environment & Development Organization. Over 100 participants from 43 countries participated in the online discussion platform on enhancing awareness of women's role in diplomacy, particularly in relation to energy and climate change issues.

- Hosted an event, “**Women's Majlis: Arab Women Leading the Way in Energy and Climate Change**” (November 2012), organized by the Directorate of Energy and Climate Change (DECC, in the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs) along with the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice (MRFJ), and Masdar. Over 100 participants from the UAE attended the event. It was intended to bring COP18 to the attention of high-ranking women from diverse range of sectors across the Gulf Cooperation Countries to share priorities and perspectives on how to enhance women's engagement in the negotiations, as well as what gender-climate outcomes from COP18 they would like to see. The event helped initiating a transparent and open dialogue on the importance of women's role in the climate change negotiations, and helped to set the stage for important deliberations at COP18.
- Held an event, “**Ministerial Breakfast Meeting: Promoting Gender Equality in the UNFCCC**” during COP18 (December 2012), organized by the DECC in collaboration with MRFJ and Masdar. Attended by about a dozen Ministers, it was held to gain ministerial level support for a new decision to promote gender equality within the UNFCCC, which was subsequently adopted during COP18.
- Organized a panel session, “**The Role of Women in Future Energy: Breaking Down the Barriers**” during the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week (January 2013), in cooperation with Masdar and Masdar Institute of Science and Technology. In addition to women leaders from a range of academic and professional backgrounds who highlighted challenges and success factors in the field of clean energy and sustainability, a few Emirati students shared their personal experiences. The event was well received as an inspiring outreach event for young professionals and students.

During COP18, as at other recent COPs, the UAE delegation had balanced gender representation.

There are many UAE women engaged in various national and local climate change related work at both management and technical levels, including on the national communications, clean development mechanisms and international negotiations (e.g., participation in Executive Committee on National Communication).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a pilot program in 2013 which assigns attachés at UAE Embassies in selected countries on energy and climate change. One of their tasks is to increase the UAE's capacity in international climate change negotiations. Two of the three attachés currently posted are women.

Ideas for the Way Forward

The UAE reiterates its keen interests in further exploring how women's full and active participation can be encouraged and supported in the UNFCCC process, and how women delegates might cooperate to ensure the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities that climate change presents for women globally are adequately reflected in the negotiations. The UAE calls on Parties under the UNFCCC process to address this important issue.

The UAE welcomes the planned workshop on gender, to be held during the upcoming nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP19) in November 2013 as well as the UNFCCC's initiative to convene a COP19 Gender Day on 19 November 2013. Based on the outcomes of these events, further in-session workshops and events may be useful.

Further work is needed to fully understand the challenges that limit women's participation in the UNFCCC in some cases. The UAE suggests that the UNFCCC Secretariat conduct **an in-session survey** targeted at women delegates to better understand these challenges and elicit suggestions on ways to address them.

Furthermore, the UAE calls on the UNFCCC Secretariat to explore **a series of training opportunities** to empower women in the climate change negotiations as well as on awareness raising, with a special focus on engaging those from non-Annex I Parties. This should include online training and other remote tools, as these may allow participation by those who do not regularly attend UNFCCC sessions.