

Gender-responsive climate policy with a focus on adaptation and capacity-building, and training for delegates on gender issues

Submission by the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) in collaboration with the Gender and Water Programme Bangladesh (GWAPB) of the Gender and Water Alliance; and SLYCAN Trust with the Nagenahiru Development Society (Sri Lanka)

At COP20, Parties adopted the [Lima Work Programme on Gender](#), which aims to advance implementation of existing gender mandates across all areas of the climate negotiations. Parties are encouraged to actively engage in the development of the two year work programme on gender, including, submitting views on the matters to be addressed at an in-session workshop on gender-responsive climate policy related to adaptation and capacity-building, and training for delegates on gender issues. The workshop is scheduled during the forty-fourth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (May 2016).

The Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) in collaboration with the Gender and Water Programme Bangladesh (GWAPB) of the Gender and Water Alliance; and SLYCAN Trust with the Nagenahiru Development Society (Sri Lanka) welcome the invitation to relevant UNFCCC observer organizations to submit views and information under the Lima Work Programme on Gender, as stated in paragraph 13 of the decision: *“Invites Parties and admitted observer organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 4 February 2016, their views on the matters to be addressed at the in-session workshop referred to in paragraph 11;”*. In this submission the collaborators share views on the scope, potential outcomes and information to be covered during the in-session workshop at SB44, with a particular focus on recommendations for enhancing means of implementation.

Overall Views on the Structure / Aim of the Workshop

In order to bring about a paradigm shift towards climate resilient development pathways, globally and in individual countries, all climate change mitigation and adaptation actions need to also pursue broader environmental, social, economic, and development benefits in a gender-responsive way. Assessing and addressing the implications that any planned actions (policies, programs and projects) have on women and men so that they can benefit equally and existing inequality is not perpetuated is an important strategy to make adaptation and mitigation projects and programs – irrespective of scale – more effective and to create multi-win scenarios within and across sectors. This applies of course to climate areas and sectors traditionally considered more gender-relevant (such as adaptation interventions focusing on food security, health, or disaster risk reduction) as well as building capacity in mitigation-focused interventions for example in sectors such as energy, infrastructure or transportation and with respect to the gender-equal access to and deployment of safe, appropriate, environmentally, economically and socially sound technology.

The SBI44 workshop should be understood and structured as a learning experience, combining in an informal and open environment knowledge sharing and policy recommendations based on lessons learned from existing institutions, policies and structures as well as best-practice experiences and case studies.

The three-hour workshop would benefit from being organized around key inputs and recommendations that would result in a series of outputs, in particular tools or regional/national capacity building efforts to ensure these results frame the implementation of the new climate agreement, which explicitly states that adaptation and capacity building should be done in a gender-responsive manner.

From the key themes and lessons learned we have outlined below, a few critical themes should be addressed in the workshop:

- The role of local women's groups and collectives in building community resilience & informing political decision-making;
- Challenges to women's ownership and control over natural resources, in particular land and water, as it relates to both climate adaptation and capacity building;
- Effective financing for gender-responsive adaptation measures.

Workshop Inputs

Institutional

A series of broad thematic connections, see for example [WEDO's 2014 submission](#) to the Nairobi Work Programme, could act as background guidance for the workshop without necessitating a series of overview presentations, instead focusing directly on some impacts, experiences, challenges and solutions,. In addition, as highlighted in a [2013 submission](#), some key recommendations which support work broadly on gender-responsive climate policy and could be set out from the onset could include:

- the collection of sex-disaggregated data and production of a comprehensive methodology to address gaps in gender-responsive action on adaptation and mitigation;
- the development of a capacity building program and learning platform to support policymakers and civil society in the design and implementation of gender-responsive policies and actions (*capacity building mechanisms under the UNFCCC should ensure outreach to and participation of women and women's organizations, and gender experts in, for example, Nairobi Work Programme (NWP) partnership dialogues, to ensure in particular, gender-responsive approaches and tools are incorporated into scientific and technological advice*)
- review of the guidelines on national communications to increase support and capacity for countries to collect sex-disaggregated data and include gender considerations when reporting on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

Case Study

By Vositha Wijenayake, Sri Lanka

SLYCAN Trust has initiated a project which focuses on women's empowerment to adapt to climate change through economic diversification which is focused on agriculture. This falls in line with the adaptation initiatives, and the farmers are selected from low income families in the Trincomalee district through membership of the **Nagenahiru Development Society**.

The region of Trincomalee is impacted by change in weather patterns, and the farmers are impacted by crop damage, lack of water for agriculture, as well as lack of knowledge for crop diversification. The initiative by SLYCAN Trust focuses on training female farmers on how they could introduce crop diversification as a step towards climate change adaptation, and economic diversification and livelihood development.

The farmers were selected from amongst those who have been working with the Development Society, and committed to building their capacity. Workshops are organised to build their capacity on crop diversified farming, water management, understanding climate change impacts, financial management as well as

participatory decision making. A community group is set up to facilitate the running of the project and the female farmers facilitate to form their decision making process in a manner that would highlight inclusivity and participatory decision making.

The project aims also to develop livelihoods of females in the region, as the area was impacted by the civil war in Sri Lanka for over 30 years, and the community is of males who were part of the military, or the volunteer military personnel. The women were not traditionally involved in professional activities other than mainly contributing to the paddy cultivation as a family contribution to the income source. In the transition from the war time to development in the region, this project is aimed at empowering women to develop income sources through climate adaptive, and positive agriculture methods, which enhances their capacity to contribute to the economic development of their families.

National Level Input

By Shaila Shahid, Bangladesh

Bangladesh is often cited as one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change. It ranked first on German Watch's Global Climate Risk Index of 2011 and 6th most climate affected country in the period of last 20 years as per the German Watch Climate Index 2015. Based on Bangladesh experience of gender and climate change the following areas are critically important for capacity building in relation to adaptation and risk reduction:

1. Food security and agriculture:

Women play a crucially important role in food production in Bangladesh. In recent years, poverty, women's empowerment and male migration have led to the systematic "feminization" of the agricultural labor force in Bangladesh. By 2012, national data survey indicated that 66% of all women participated in agricultural activities and women constituted 45.6% of the total farming population overall. In the absence of their male counterparts, the woman's role changed from that of an unpaid family worker to farm managers, resulting in women maintaining a dual responsibility for both the farm, as well as the household production. **Key aspects to consider in this sector:**

- Women's capacity building and empowerment is important in agriculture sector for equal wage distribution and land ownership;
- Policy-makers must create enabling environments for women to access financial instruments easily i.e. loan/credits;
- Capacity development and involvement of women on alternative technologies for example bio-fertilizer; climate resilient cropping, saline resistant vegetables, etc; fisheries culture & management (e.g. coastal area); homestead gardening, technology for micro-nutrient rich food, where appropriate, is critical;
- Knowledge and skills development of agricultural extension workers, both female and male, on climate change resistant cropping practices, is needed.

2. Livestock, forestry and fishery

Poultry-rearing is traditionally a women's domain in Bangladesh and is an important means of generating much needed cash income for rural families and the women involved in it, in particular as there are few if any other job opportunities for the landless, disadvantaged women in these areas. As they are familiar with the rearing of poultry, an estimated 70% of the rural, landless women are either directly or indirectly involved in it as a result. Other activities performed by women include the feeding of livestock, cleaning their sheds, securing these properly for the night, the collection of farmyard manure and general healthcare for the animals. Owing to this crucial role in livestock care, women are also generally consulted when buying and selling livestock.

3. Water Resources Management

Our experiences with management of water resources include recommendations for:

- The need for gender-friendly technology and proper access to water and sanitation; particularly covering all phases of climate change adaptation and disaster management;
- Critical role of alliances of women's associations to create movement for keeping the water bodies (rivers, canals, lakes and wet lands) usable;
- Capacity development of women to fully engage in water resource management committees;
- Extension services on alternative irrigation technology (e.g. water purification, rain water harvesting, waste water collection, water conservation);
- Introduction and capacity development on low water consuming crop technology.

4. Nutrition

Ironically, despite the fact that women are actively involved in agriculture, evidence indicates that they suffer from higher levels of mortality and morbidity than their male counterparts, mainly due to the fact that women suffer from higher levels of malnourishment. A recent study indicates that malnutrition levels in Bangladesh are among the highest in the world. More than half of the pregnant women in the country are anemic, about 30 percent of women suffer from chronic energy deficit, 39% of non-pregnant women, and 40% of adolescent girls, suffer from anemia because of depleted iron stores during pregnancy and lactation, a consequence of insufficient intake of foods rich in iron and folic acid. Proper awareness raising and capacity building is required in this area.

Institutionally, the position of women in policy framework of Bangladesh is mixed. Equal rights for men and women are enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh. In the context of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the CEDAW (1979), and the Beijing Platform of Action (1995), Bangladesh developed number of policies and sectoral strategies to ensure gender equality, which include; The National Policy for Women's Advancement (NPWA) within the framework of CEDAW and a follow up of Beijing Conference on Women; The National Action Plan (NAP) as a follow-up to the Beijing Platform of Action.

Being the primary victim of climate change impacts, women can play a central role in adaptation to climate change. Women also could play a key role in mitigating climate change by optimizing energy efficiency, using low-footprint energy sources and' techniques, and influencing a household's and community's consumption patterns. Therefore, when it comes to decision-making and implementation towards building resilient communities in the face of climate change, the full and meaningful participation of women becomes essential.

The government of Bangladesh considered gender perspectives in its strategies and action plan on climate change. The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) has incorporated gender in a more comprehensive manner throughout the document, while BCCSAP (Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009) emphasizes addressing the needs of the poor and vulnerable, including women and children, in all the activities under the Action Plan.

In line with the country's intention to empower and respond to the needs of the often invisible 'other half' of the population in the context of climate change, the national Climate Change and Gender Action Plan for Bangladesh (ccGAP: Bangladesh) has been prepared with an aim to ensure gender equality into climate change related policies, strategies and interventions. The underlying principle of the ccGAPs is the transformative nature of gender interventions. ccGAPs also have the potential to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of climate change and socioeconomic development responses.

In Bangladesh context, to mainstream the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), the poverty and gender nexus has already been incorporated in the Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF) process, and also under the Budget Call Circular 1 guidelines. To ensure that BCCSAP priorities affect sector policy and resource allocation, following the Climate Public Expenditures and Institutional Reviews (CPEIRs) recommendation, to embed climate change issues in the Development Project Proforma/Technical Project Proforma (DPP/TPP) format, where gender and poverty dimensions already included but the practical ramifications are yet to be achieved. There should have a comprehensive and consistent identification of resource allocation with proper budget heading that can help Bangladesh achieve better equity and social justice in the context of its adaptive social protection sector.

In relation to training for delegates, there has been very little attention and scope for comprehensive capacity building of the government climate delegation on gender. The Gender and Water Programme of Bangladesh (GWAPB) successfully organized a workshop (5 days) on Gender and Water for the Focal Points of WID and Climate Change of the Bangladesh Government from Different Ministries jointly with the National Academy for Planning and Development (NAPD) in May 2015. This activity falls within GWAPB first and second component – Collaboration, Networking, Coordination and Capacity Building. This activity also complies with the EKN broader objectives of strengthening relationship with government and institutional capacity building on the areas of gender, water and climate change like engagement with the government training and academic institutes. The objective of the workshop was to increase understanding of why mainstreaming gender and diversity issues in water management keeping climate change in focus will lead to broaden the impact of program interventions. The contents of the workshop were designed keeping in view the responsibilities of the WID Focal Points mainly who are responsible to integrate gender in policies, programs and projects. It was an effort to bring synergy between climate-gender and gender-climate dimensions of programme interventions.

We recommend therefore that the workshop include the following areas to highlight:

- Best practices on the resilience pattern of vulnerable groups, including women and children, through development of community-level adaptation, livelihood diversification;
- Innovative approaches on community-based shared biodiversity and fisheries and livestock management to enhance local and national food security;
- Best practices on gender-friendly drinking water and sanitation programs in areas at risk from climate change (e.g. coastal areas, flood- and drought-prone areas);
- Training on a proper understanding of the gender and climate change nexus by the government representatives and particularly how to link gender and climate change with good, transparent, accountable and equitable governance that can be pursued with respect to social protection programmes;
- Training on identifying and developing gender-sensitive monitoring indicators both quantitative and qualitative to measure the progress and challenges and how effectively those can be addressed;
- Training and capacity building to address gender concerns in relation to climate resilient technology development and access to information technology.

Additionally, these outcomes should further shape the Lima Work Programme on Gender, by ensuring:

- An understanding that women's resilience building demands women's empowerment in all aspects of life: physical and mental, social, economic, political, and cultural. The State must assume responsibility to remove common and known barriers towards empowering women;
- The role of social safety net (SSN) towards helping communities in any geophysical contexts of vulnerability is becoming increasingly important. Efforts must be made to enhance allocation to

- maintain a healthy social safety net. However, new modalities will have to be sought and developed so that vulnerable women can directly receive the benefits from SSN practices;
- To complement State-run programmes, the donor and NGO communities must devise matching plans and programmes, taking special care to the above-mentioned issues and facilitate inter-agency coordination and monitoring, including a continually nurtured and engaged gender caucus.;
 - Proper gender sensitive monitoring tools need to be developed;
 - Proper monitoring of gender budget and climate finance is critical.

Some of the key challenges we have highlighted in effective implementation of gender-responsive policies include:

- Inefficient institutional mechanisms to support implementation;
- The mind-set and approach of bureaucracy under the government institution;
- Lack of adequate resource allocation and a gender analysis of government resource allocation
- Often gender becomes ornamental in policies and programme and only donates to the “Lip Service”. We need to get out of this lip service approach and require an actor oriented approach at all level of implementation.

Some recommendations to address this include:

- Review the existing policies and national documents concerning the agricultural sector to integrate gender and climate change concerns;
- Influence policy makers to acknowledge women’s contribution in agriculture to GDP;
- Develop a government-wide balanced score card on agriculture and gender. Develop and ensure take up of crop insurance and/or other safety nets for female farmers;
- Take measures for relevant knowledge increase, documentation and dissemination at national and local levels, through campaign, training, exposure visit and research;
- Gender-sensitive indicators from the very beginning of project design and implementation.

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