



UNCCD Submission in response to Decision 21/CP.22 Gender and climate change

Introduction

By Decision 21/CP.22 Parties agreed to continue and enhance the Lima work programme on gender for a period of three years and to undertake a review of the work programme during the 25th session (November 2019). Parties also decided to hold annual in-session workshops in conjunction with the 2018 and 2019 SBs and requested the secretariat to convene, in cooperation with Parties and interested observers, an in-session workshop during the 46th session of the SBs (May 2017) to develop possible elements of a gender action plan for consideration by SBI at its 47th session (November 2017).

Parties invited UN organizations and observers to provide inputs to the formulation of the UNfCCC gender action plan¹ for supporting the implementation of the gender-related decisions and mandates under the UNfCCC process. They also invited UN organizations and observers to submit their views on the matters to be address at the 46th in-session workshop.

This paper contains UNCCD's submission in response to the two requests. The objective of the submission is to share with UNfCCC stakeholders the lessons learned by UNCCD in its 20 years of work on gender and identify key issues for consideration by UNfCCC in developing the gender plan of action.

Promoting Gender Equity in the Convention to Combat Desertification

The Convention underlines the importance of women in the implementation of the Convention and calls for their participation in the policy process and capacity building to fulfil their roles (Articles 5, 10 and 19). Thus, COP actions date back to COP2, with three distinct phases: 1998-2007; 2008-2018; 2018-2030. The first phase preceded the adoption of the 10-Year Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention. The last phase marks the future direction of the Convention, with the expected adoption in Fall 2017 of a revised strategic framework for 2018-2030. The framework strategy is designed to coincide with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Reporting on gender began in 1999. Parties to the Convention have expressed interest and shown commitment to address gender in the Convention. They submit reports on a voluntary basis. Implementation is inconsistent across regions and at country level. Africa has been the most consistent in reporting. The percentage of countries reporting fell from a high of 62% and 73% in 1999 and 2004 respectively, to below 20% in 2010, 2012 and 2014. Very few developed countries reported on their gender activities during any of the reporting periods.²

Early on, parties focused mostly on improving gender equity on the Roster of experts. This call was re-issued as recently as COP12 in 2015. As early as 1999, Parties also stressed the need for concerted action at the grassroots level. In 2003, Parties invited the use of quantifiable and verifiable indicators and benchmarks, including on women's participation. They underlined the need to build women's capacities, particularly at grassroots level,

¹ The gender action plan may include priority areas, key activities and indicators, timelines for implementation, the responsible and key actors and indicative resource requirements for each activity and further elaborate its process of review and monitoring.

² 1999, 2002, 2004, 2010, 2012 and 2014



especially with regard to awareness raising, education, training, income-generating activities and access to credit and with regard to participation in decision-making. Parties also agreed on the need to mainstream gender in their activities to take actions at the implementation level to empower women, and indicators to measure progress. Ministerial and parliamentary declarations have reiterated the need to focus on women in the implementation of the Convention.

Most reports show a strong focus on ensuring women's participation. Parties worked with individual women, women's projects or women's groups. Some reports include gender-disaggregated data on women's participation. The interventions vary from country to country, making it difficult to determine the overall impact of the Convention on gender equality and equity. However, some reports provide evidence of transformational change when significant numbers of women participated in local projects and activities. It motivated their participation in local politics. Laws were enacted to enable women to own customary land. New models of land ownership have emerged. Increasing women's productivity reduces women's labour. In light of the impact of change, some Parties have imposed a mandatory 50% participation of women in government-financed projects related to UNCCD implementation.

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals has generated new momentum and interest in a stronger and structured approach to gender equity, particularly at the implementation level on initiatives to rehabilitate and restore degraded land and to avoid degrading new land. The Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) released this year recommends an integration of gender consideration in the planning and implementation of LDN. The Science Policy Interface argues that environmental indicators may seem independent of gender but they are not neutral tools. In negotiations to elaborate the 2018-2030 strategy, there is interest to include gender monitoring in the implementation framework.

Collaboration with the Biodiversity and Climate Change Conventions

UNCCD Article 8 encourages coordination of activities and programmes with other relevant international agreements, particularly the Rio sister Conventions (Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification). The gender focal points of the Conventions work together under the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the Executive Secretaries established under this framework. Working together with IUCN, the gender focal points organized awareness raising events in the margins of the 2012 UN General Assembly in New York and gender training for UNCCD stakeholders at COP10, and worked with UNCCD parties to develop a gender advocacy policy framework. The partners are collaborating with Global Environment Facility: in the development of its gender policy, including a reporting, monitoring and evaluation; the development of an e-course on GEF-mandated Conventions; identifying potential areas for joint capacity-building under the GEF; and advising the GEF-implementing agencies on new developments in each of the Conventions.

Key issues for consideration in the development of a gender action plan

1. Implemented effectively, the Paris Agreement would lead to social transformation at country level and on a global scale. Given the impact of climate change particularly on the role poor and women play at household level, it would be a historic mistake if the current momentum for transformation fails to empower women.
2. To be effective, the UNfCCC may consider an approach that takes into account the following:



- a. it clarifies in advance and in specific, quantifiable and verifiable terms what “success would look like” after the action is taken
 - b. while participation in the policy process is important, taking action in parallel to address the differentiated and immediate needs of vulnerable men and women is equally critical
 - c. the priority gender gaps that need to be closed are clearly identified. Variation within regions and among groups may be needed, with key milestones set for specific periods
 - d. For biennial programmes to deliver broad-based change, they are best anchored in a broader, longer-term plan, for instance, one that complements the Paris Agreement.
 - e. Gender mainstreaming comes at a cost, but evidence from India, Morocco and Uganda show that the pay-off later on is high. For gender mainstreaming to be effective, incentives at country-level and in the secretariat are indispensable.
 - f. Reporting will most likely be limited to what the Parties articulate in the decisions and to the types of data that are mentioned. It is efficient and easier for parties to commit to use relevant data that is being gathered under other platforms than developing new measures.
3. Collaboration with other actors is vital particularly in capacity-building aimed at implementation. It is rational given limited capacities in the secretariats, to enhance efficiency and leverage resources. It is vital because local populations address their challenges from a holistic, not a sectoral, perspective and to avoid over-burdening the beneficiaries with dispersed activity. Financing for joint capacity-building under initiatives such as the GEF also means it needs to be party-driven and mandated. Joint action can be promoted from different dimensions, for instance, the countries targeted, the issues addressed, the level of intervention or in the leading the actions. The GEF approach of providing additional funding for jointly implemented projects is a good model to follow to encourage participation and gender mainstreaming. UNCCD parties are elaborating a revised strategic framework for the period 2018-2030 for adoption at COP13 (Fall 2017) that is expected to contain gender provisions. In 2018, CBD will review 2015-2020 gender action plan. By signalling their interest and potential areas for future collaboration, UNCCD and CBD Parties may create opportunities that pave the way for future collaboration.
 4. Secretariats of the Conventions do not implement projects. Nevertheless, it benefits the Parties when the secretariats have a mandate, through voluntary initiatives, to provide limited support to demonstration and pilot projects that innovate on key ideas or principles of the Convention and provide evidence for effective decision and policy making.