

Operationalizing a Gender-Sensitive Approach in the Green Climate Fund

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Climate change is not gender-neutral. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has highlighted the variations in the extent to which people are affected by climate change, and are able to adapt, depending on a number of factors, including gender. In most countries there are differences in the economic activities, access to resources and decision-making power of men and women. These gender differences affect the ways people are impacted by, and respond to, climate change.

Recognizing the importance of taking these gender differences into account, the Governing Instrument for the Green Climate Fund (GCF) specifically calls for taking a “gender-sensitive approach”, making this the first fund to mandate the integration of gender-based perspectives from the outset of its operations. Reinforcing the importance of this approach, COP 18 in Doha adopted a decision on promoting gender balance and improving the participation and representation of women.

Climate financing approaches will be more effective and provide broader benefits if they address rather than reinforce gender inequalities that increase the vulnerability of women to climate change and adversely affect their ability to contribute to mitigation and adaptation efforts. Women still face unequal access to political power, economic resources, legal rights, land ownership, bank credit, and technical training. The GCF can promote gender equality by establishing structures and operating procedures that are careful to include women as well as men in decision-making roles, respond to the particular needs of women for climate-related financing, and enable women’s enterprises to benefit from new low-carbon technologies and economic opportunities.

The World Bank and other development finance actors have recognized the goal of actively promoting gender equality as “smart economics,” and have warned that not taking full advantage of women’s skills, knowledge and experience comes at a high economic cost. In the context of climate change these findings suggest that empowerment of women is an important ingredient in building climate resilience, and that low-emission development pathways will be more effective and equitable where they are designed using a gender-informed approach.

Many women are already engaged in economic sectors related to climate adaptation and mitigation efforts – including agriculture, renewable energy, and forest management. Supporting women’s activities through climate financing will lead to better results from initiatives in these sectors. For example, women make up the majority of small-scale farmers in developing countries and often have specific knowledge relevant to climate change adaptation (including information about traditional land management techniques, soil enrichment and drought-resistant seeds) but lack access to agricultural extension services, fertilizers, irrigation and mechanized equipment. The UN Food and Agriculture organization estimates that improving women’s access to these inputs would increase their agricultural yields significantly.

In the energy sector, women are already primary managers of traditional resources in many developing countries. Investments in modern, low-carbon energy systems particularly promote women’s economic contributions when they reduce the time and labour women spend on wood fuel collection, provide efficiency and productivity gains in existing businesses, and create new entrepreneurial opportunities and markets for small and medium-sized enterprises, the majority of which are owned by women. Gender-responsiveness can also improve the efficiency of large-scale energy infrastructure projects, for example by maximizing the number of electrical grid connections through targeted financing options, expanding the labour pool for construction and maintenance operations to include women as well as men, taking advantage of their differentiated capabilities and skills, and increasing the social acceptance of potentially disruptive projects within affected communities through compensation and shared benefit plans.

A systematic gender-sensitive approach in the GCF will ensure that both women and men benefit from interventions funded by the GCF – by increasing participation, identifying potential implementation

bottlenecks, and enhancing the outreach of the initiatives. However, many institutions are unsure about exactly how to achieve gender balance in their operations. Gender guidelines and checklists for many climate-relevant sectors already exist, put together by multilateral development banks, international agencies and non-government organizations, and these tools can assist the GCF Board as well as governments and other institutions involved with the fund.

Some key recommendations

The gender-sensitive approach should be added to the list of priority issues in the Board's work plan, addressed in the discussion papers prepared, and integrated into all GCF components, including:

Structure and Organization of the Fund

- Request the Interim Secretariat to develop a gender mainstreaming policy, strategy and/or gender action plan for the GCF, together with a score card and funding-related tracking system.
- Ensure that professionals with gender, social and development expertise are represented within the Secretariat and the staff, and that the Executive Director is committed to gender equality.

Private Sector Facility

- Work with commercial banks and/or micro-lending institutions to increase their access to climate-related funds available to provide financial services for women-owned businesses.
- Consider special pilot funding programs focused on women's economic activities in key climate-related sectors.
- Ensure that large-scale private sector investments include a gender assessment and – if needed – an action plan addressing gender concerns.

Results Management Framework

- Include gender-sensitivity in planning and reporting on GCF funding outputs, outcomes, and impacts, and mandate the inclusion of qualitative and quantitative gender indicators and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation for all activities from the outset of fund activities.

Funding Approval Criteria and Funding Cycle

- Include gender needs assessments and gender-sensitive planning and implementation among the criteria required for proposal development, and include gender-sensitivity as a standard element of funding approval criteria (based on guidance developed by the Secretariat).

Audits

- Develop a gender audit tool to track GCF resources with respect to funding allocations and disbursements.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

At its 16th session in Cancun in 2010, the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) decided to establish the Green Climate Fund (GCF) under Article 11 of the Convention, as an operating entity of the Convention's financial mechanism "to support projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing country Parties".¹ In Durban in 2011, COP 17 in Decision 3/CP.17 approved the Governing Instrument (GI) of the GCF and requested the new Board to operationalize the GCF "in an expedited manner."²

The Governing Instrument (GI) recognizes the importance of mainstreaming gender into GCF financing, setting a first step towards operationalizing the social safeguards of Decision 3/CP.17³. The GI contains five key references to gender,⁴ anchoring gender as a cross-cutting issue in the GCF. Most importantly, the GI's section on Objectives and Guiding Principles states that the GCF will maximize the impact of its funding for adaptation and mitigation while *taking a gender-sensitive approach*.⁵ This makes the GCF the first climate fund to mandate the integration of gender perspectives from the very outset of its operations.⁶

This background paper is offered by the Danish/Dutch board seat of the GCF for consideration by the members of the GCF Board. It makes good on the offer that the Danish/Dutch representative made at the first GCF Board Meeting in August 2012 in Geneva to submit a paper on how a gender-sensitive approach in the GCF can be operationalized. The paper advocates for the explicit inclusion of gender considerations in the GCF Board's work plan for 2013. The GCF is expected to support a fundamental paradigm shift in addressing climate change by establishing new best practices, including in its approach to gender. While there is broad support and commitment among Board members to get the gender approach right from the beginning, there is a knowledge gap about how to integrate gender considerations in the GCF structure and operations. This paper addresses this knowledge gap and provides concrete tools and recommendations, particularly in the context of Board discussions on the business model framework (BMF) for the Fund.

2. Goal and Methodology

This paper is intended to support the process of mainstreaming gender into the processes and financing of the GCF. To that end, the paper first looks at "why gender matters" in the context of climate change, and the ways in which gender interacts with climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. 'Gender' is used here to refer to the socially prescribed roles of men and women, which lead to differences in their access to resources and decision-making. As much as possible, the paper presents examples of "good practice" in mainstreaming gender considerations into climate change financing. Second, the paper reviews the ways in which gender considerations are integrated into the processes and funding of other global funds—both those that focus on climate change and those that focus on other issues such as education and health. Third, drawing on the lessons learned from these two reviews, the paper presents a series of recommendations for effectively integrating gender into the GCF.

The paper is based on a review of the available literature on gender and climate change and a limited number of formal interviews and informal background conversations with experts in international organizations, think tanks, civil society organizations and networks. Where possible, case and sector studies are referenced in this paper. Where illustrative study examples are not available, the paper presents insights from expert climate change analysis that demonstrates the adverse effects of *not* integrating gender considerations into climate change interventions, or suggests ways in which gender integration could effectively strengthen adaptation and mitigation strategies.

II. THE RATIONALE FOR A GENDER-SENSITIVE APPROACH

The UNFCCC COP, to which the GCF is accountable as part of the convention's financing mechanism, has highlighted the relevance of gender considerations for climate change efforts. It is within this context that the GCF Governing Instrument calls for taking a "gender-sensitive approach" to climate financing.

During the last three COPs new formal mandates on gender and climate change have emerged, which have greatly expanded the 2001 decision 36/CP.7 on increasing women's participation in the UNFCCC and its bodies.⁷ Particularly noteworthy is the Cancun decision 1/CP.16 (article 7), which recognizes that gender equality and the effective participation of women are important for effective action on all aspects of climate change.⁸ At COP 18 in Doha, Parties further adopted a consensus decision on promoting gender balance and improving the participation and representation of women representing Parties in all UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol bodies (including the GCF) "so that gender-responsive climate policy responds to the differing needs of men and women in national and local contexts."⁹ The issue of gender and climate change was also added as a standing item on the agenda of the COP.¹⁰

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has also highlighted the impact of gender on the extent to which people are affected by, and are able to adapt to, climate change, along with various other factors, such as locality, age, class, health, and social status.¹¹

In order to bring about a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate resilient development pathways, the Governing Instrument also calls for the GCF to pursue broader environmental, social, economic, and development co-benefits from climate change mitigation and adaptation actions. Vulnerability to climate change is heightened by existing poverty and inequality, while climate change slows and often reverses progress toward poverty eradication and economic development.

Poverty and lack of economic opportunities are closely linked to gender inequality – about 70 percent of the people who live on less than \$1 per day are women¹². In many parts of the world, women face unequal access to political power and decision-making, legal rights, land ownership, bank credit, education, economic resources, education, health care and information. Persistent gender inequalities not only undermine women's own well-being, but also limit their ability to improve the conditions of their families, households and communities. Addressing these inequalities and increasing women's economic power has proven to yield positive results, with calculations suggesting increased employment of women in developed countries has contributed more to global growth than China.¹³

Climate change adds to women's daily challenges in developing countries: droughts, flooding and weather changes affecting crop cycles undermine women's performance of their care responsibilities (which include provision of food, water and fuel, as well as caring for children and the elderly), and further limit their time and opportunities to earn income and move their families out of poverty. Constraints affecting women's incomes, resources and power due to gender inequality exacerbate the effects of climate change and hamper the effectiveness of their responses to climate change.¹⁴ As a result, women are more vulnerable to climate change¹⁵, and the impacts of gender inequalities affect the larger community's potential to address climate change effectively.¹⁶

In the context of climate financing, the investments in mitigation and adaptation activities under the GCF will be more effective and provide broader benefits if they relieve rather than reinforce the existing gender inequalities that increase the vulnerability of women to climate change and adversely affect their ability to contribute to economic and social development. Climate-related initiatives that unintentionally increase gender inequality can further exacerbate the negative effects of poverty, and climate change.

Nevertheless, women should not be viewed primarily in terms of their vulnerability. In many cases, women are already engaged in strategies to cope with and adapt to climate change, for example by switching to drought-resistant seeds, employing low impact or organic soil management techniques, or leading community-based reforestation and restoration efforts. Through their roles as community leaders, farmers,

entrepreneurs, producers, and household managers, women are powerful agents of change in addressing climate change, and important stakeholders in implementing the low-carbon pathways for developing countries that the GCF seeks to promote. However, they require additional financing, resources, training and support.

To be effective in bringing about transformational change, it is crucial for the GCF to recognize the roles women play in national economies, as well as the constraints they face in undertaking adaptation and mitigation initiatives, and the larger contributions they could make if they had greater access to necessary resources and opportunities.

Women represent the majority of small-scale farmers in developing countries, but generally have less access to agricultural extension services, fertilizers, irrigation, and mechanized equipment than male farmers, which limits their ability to increase crop yields and respond to climate variability. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that closing the gender gap in agriculture by giving women farmers the same access to resources as men would raise national agricultural production by 2.5 percent to 4 percent; and reduce the number of malnourished people globally by 12 to 17 percent (or up to 150 million people).¹⁷

In a number of developing countries, women's enterprises represent a large proportion of the country's business activity, despite the fact that women have limited access to land, collateral and bank financing. In Uganda, for example, women own over 38 percent of registered small businesses (but account for only 9 percent of available bank credit); in Rwanda, women own 60 percent of small businesses, and in Lao PDR, 68 percent.¹⁸ Additionally, women informal traders contribute significantly to national GDP, accounting for 64 percent of value added in trade in Benin, 46 percent in Mali and 41 percent in Chad.¹⁹ The majority of women entrepreneurs are engaged in micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), which are often home-based and service-oriented, providing benefits to their communities; they use larger percentages of their earnings than men do to provide benefits to their families and children.²⁰

Women are also often the primary decision-makers concerning household consumption, due to their family roles, and tend to make more sustainable consumption choices than men.²¹ The OECD and others have documented women's increasing spending power worldwide and the huge influence of gender on sustainable consumption.²² For example, women in developing countries represent close to half of the buyers of solar lighting systems.²³

The World Bank and other development finance actors have recognized gender equality both as a core development objective in its own right, as well as "smart economics," and warn that not taking full advantage of women's skills, knowledge and experience comes at a high economic cost.²⁴ The World Bank's evaluation unit, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), found that the Bank's weakness in implementing its own gender-mainstreaming strategy reduced the effectiveness of its interventions.²⁵

In the context of climate change these findings suggest that empowerment of women is an important ingredient in building climate resilience, and that low-emissions development pathways will be more effective and equitable where they are designed using a gender-informed approach.²⁶

Given women's roles in managing traditional biomass energy resources, engaging women is an important factor in the success of programs designed to expand the use of low-carbon energy alternatives. For example, the Biogas Support Programme in Nepal, which is facilitating private sector dissemination of biogas plants to reduce dependence on biomass fuels, has invested in training women to build and manage biogas digesters, promote their use, and maintain the systems; an independent survey has demonstrated that 98 percent of the biogas plants are fully operational even after 8 years.²⁷ In Sri Lanka, women's involvement in micro-hydro projects has increased the efficiency of the plants, as women's knowledge of the river flows has supported the identification of the best and most accessible sites for the projects. Additionally, women have been trained in the use and maintenance of the micro-hydro plants, strengthening their long-term sustainability.²⁸

Gender-responsiveness can also improve the efficiency of large-scale energy infrastructure projects, for example by maximizing the number of electrical grid connections through targeted financing options,

expanding the labour pool for construction and maintenance operations to include women as well as men, taking advantage of their differentiated capabilities and skills, and increasing the social acceptance of potentially disruptive projects within affected communities through compensation and shared benefit plans.

Similarly, in the water sector, women's participation can have a positive impact on the effective financial management of projects. In a rural water project in Nepal, nearly three quarters of the treasurers for the water users groups were women, and in Peru, women safeguarded money collected to cover the water system operating costs and managed the water users association.²⁹

Increased participation of women in decision-making also affects climate-related policy choices, making institutions more representative of a diversity of voices, viewpoints, knowledge and experiences. For example, a study of 25 developed and 65 developing countries found that countries with higher female parliamentary representation were more likely to set aside protected land areas.³⁰ Experience from reforestation efforts in India and Nepal showed that giving women a bigger say in managing forests has improved forest conservation outcomes.³¹ However, another study indicated that a critical mass of one-quarter to one-third of women in decision-making bodies was needed so that their presence would make a difference for outcomes.³²

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER-SENSITIVE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION IN AND ACROSS CLIMATE-RELEVANT SECTORS

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications that any planned actions (policies, programs and projects) have on women and men so that they can benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.³³ It is an important strategy to make adaptation and mitigation projects and programs – irrespective of scale – more effective and to create multi-win scenarios³⁴ within and across sectors. This applies 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 mitigation-focused energy, infrastructure or transportation interventions.

A systematic gender-sensitive approach in the GCF would ensure that both women and men benefit equally from interventions funded by the GCF, and remove barriers to participating in such activities. Gender guidelines and checklists for many climate-relevant sectors already exist, developed by national and multinational development banks and international agencies as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs).³⁵ These can inform the gender-sensitive financing approach for the GCF. By consistently evaluating the constraints, objectives and capabilities of women and men,³⁶ it is possible to identify implementation bottlenecks, and increase meaningful participation in and understanding of the project – possibly reducing opposition to GCF financed activities and enhancing the outreach of initiatives.³⁷

This section synthesizes experiences from a number of sector and case studies and illustrates both sector-specific as well as more general, cross-sectoral gender equality considerations for GCF adaptation and mitigation financing. The discussion in this section is by necessity more indicative than comprehensive.

Both men and women experience vulnerabilities to climate change that decrease their capacity to adapt to its negative impacts and also adversely affect their ability to contribute to mitigation. However, women frequently are exposed to additional gender-specific vulnerabilities and barriers that consistently render them more vulnerable than men to the impacts of climate change and disasters³⁸ and prevent them from utilizing their specific skills and knowledge (such as in resource management and conservation) that can improve mitigation and adaptation outcomes. These vulnerabilities include:

- **Reproductive and unpaid workloads:** The care duties performed to maintain the household and its members, such as cooking, washing, bearing and caring for children, and building and maintaining

the home, is generally unpaid work and, because it is not part of the monetized economy, generally undervalued. Women perform a disproportionate proportion of unpaid labour, much of which is directly impacted by climate change. This includes care for family and community members, who may experience increased negative health effects due to climate change. It includes labour performed in the cultivation and preparation of food and water, which is rendered more challenging by drought and other changes in weather patterns. With women needing to go farther and spending more time, it includes collection and use of water and fuel for washing, cleaning, cooking and sterilization. All of these responsibilities are increased by the adverse impact of climate change.

- **Wage and income gaps:** Women work two-thirds of the world's working hours, yet receive only 10 percent of the world's income.³⁹ Persistent wage gaps for identical work done by men and women, as well as gender segregation in jobs and lower remuneration for women's work, are hard to overcome. In addition, women comprise the majority of those working in the informal employment sector, which is often worst hit by climate change-related disasters and other shocks.⁴⁰
- **Access to finance:** Women often experience greater barriers to accessing finance than men, because they do not have the necessary collateral.⁴¹ This creates structural under-investment in women's enterprises that can undermine the long-term effectiveness of climate change responses. In Kenya, 48 percent of business owners are women, but they hold only 7 percent of credit and 1 percent of land; in Nigeria, women own 25 to 30 percent of registered businesses, but receive only 10 to 15 percent of bank credit; and in Uganda, women account for 39 percent of businesses with registered premises, but receive only 9 percent of commercial bank credit.⁴²
- **Lack of property rights:** The OECD reports that, worldwide, women own 1 percent of all property, although they perform 66 percent of all work.⁴³ In India, Nepal and Thailand, less than 10 percent of women farmers own land.⁴⁴ In Africa, on average, 15 percent of landholders are women; the range is from below 5 percent (Mali) to above 30 percent (Botswana, Cape Verde and Malawi).⁴⁵ Women's access to land ownership is often limited by laws that prohibit or preclude female ownership. In many countries that are experiencing climate change, women do not have the right to own or inherit property.⁴⁶ Even when the law allows female property ownership, as in Kenya for example, in practice, women still face numerous difficulties in acquiring land.⁴⁷
- **Access to information:** Of the 876 million illiterate people in the world, two-thirds are women, and three-fifths of the 115 million children that do not go to school are girls.⁴⁸ Cultural norms that de-emphasize education for girls, as well as women's and girls' responsibilities for caring for children and other family members and for domestic work, limit women's access to education as well as to vital information about mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- **Health and physical needs:** Climate change tends to aggravate women's health more than that of men: in times of food scarcity, the gap between male and female caloric intake tends to widen, as men receive an increasingly bigger portion of the nutritional pie.⁴⁹ Women are more likely than men to suffer from malnutrition because they have specific nutritional needs when they are pregnant or breast-feeding, and because some cultures have food hierarchies. In South and South-East Asia, for example, 45–60 percent of women of reproductive age are below their normal weight and 80 percent of pregnant women have iron deficiencies. Regions most affected by rising temperatures and precipitation patterns will have to contend with a growing incidence and severity of tropical diseases, particularly malaria,⁵⁰ which also have a gender-specific impact on women. Each year, approximately 50 million women living in malaria-endemic countries become pregnant; an estimated 10,000 of these women and 200,000 of their infants die as a result of malaria infection during pregnancy.⁵¹ Inefficient traditional stoves and open fires produce indoor pollutants that both impact women and children's health and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Two million people—mainly women and children—die annually as a result of indoor air pollution due to the burning of biomass indoors.⁵²

Recognizing, understanding and addressing these special circumstances that affect women in all climate-relevant sectors will increase the effectiveness of GCF-funded interventions in both adaptation and

mitigation. Additionally, sector-specific gender impacts must be acknowledged and can be successfully integrated in climate actions, as the case studies and best practice examples below illustrate.

1. Agriculture Sector

The FAO and other international organizations employ the term “climate-smart agriculture” to describe multi-win solutions in agricultural investment that could improve resilience and remove or reduce GHG emissions, while sustainably increasing productivity, enhancing national food security and achieving development targets.⁵³ Employing these multi-win solutions requires that gender considerations are placed at the center of GCF interventions in agriculture.

Agriculture tops the list of economic activities for women in developing countries: more than three quarters—79 percent—of women in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) who are economically active, report agriculture as their primary economic activity.⁵⁴ Women make up the majority of small-scale farmers, accounting for between 50 and 80 percent of people engaged in food production globally. However, women’s food production is more often limited to marginal soils in rain-fed agricultural systems, which are more susceptible to climate change impacts.⁵⁵

Worldwide, women receive only 5 percent of agricultural extension services. Studies in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia show that women are much less likely to use purchased inputs such as fertilizers and improved seeds or to make use of mechanical tools and equipment that could help them adapt to climate change.⁵⁶ The FAO estimates that improving women’s access to such inputs would increase women’s agricultural yields by 20 to 30 percent.⁵⁷ Additionally, it may be noted that women-headed households are increasing in rural areas, as rural men migrate seeking income generation opportunities: studies show 31 percent women-headed rural households in Sub-Saharan Africa; 17 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean; and 14 percent in Asia;⁵⁸ which strengthens the case for investing in women in agriculture initiatives.

Tapping into rural women’s knowledge of seed varieties and drought-resistant species and their experience with local seed banks also makes for climate-smart agriculture by increasing crop productivity and resilience.⁵⁹ In the Philippines, women, who make up 70 percent of the agricultural workforce engaged in rice and corn production, have changed the variety of rice that they grow in the province of Rizal, resulting in lower GHG emissions, less fertilizer use and crops better adapted to the shifts in weather pattern.⁶⁰ In Rwanda, women produce more than 600 varieties of beans, allowing them to adapt their crops to different biophysical parameters, including soil quality, temperature, exposure and disease tolerance.⁶¹ In the Kabale district in Uganda, improving the land tenure of women led to the adoption by women farmers of agricultural technologies that reduce water-run off on slopes and thus improve productivity; the planting of fruit trees led to more diversified incomes.⁶² Many of the low-cost farming and land management practices that have been identified for mitigation benefits, such as enhancing soil sequestration, are techniques women farmers often traditionally employ; examples include the use of compost, agroforestry, rotational grazing or small-scale conservation tillage.⁶³

2. REDD+/Forest Sector

Forest loss is estimated to contribute approximately 17 percent to total global carbon emissions. Globally, 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihoods, subsistence and income, the most vulnerable among them are women and indigenous peoples.

Women are often key players in efforts to reduce emission from deforestation and forest degradation plus forest conservation (REDD+). The globally active Green Belt Movement, started 1977 in Kenya by Nobel Peace Prize Winner Wangari Maathai, relies on women to lead local reforestation efforts by planting tens of millions of trees that provide fuel, food, shelter and income to rural communities while capturing carbon dioxide and restoring eroded soils.⁶⁴ Since 2001, women in Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico have planted more than 800,000 maya nut trees which sequester carbon; the project also teaches

women about the uses, processing, food value and commercialization of the maya nut by supporting women's producer groups, thereby increasing incomes and food supplies for the communities.⁶⁵

Protected areas established under REDD+ investments are more effective at reducing deforestation when they are designed and managed by the people that live in and around them, and when women and other groups retain customary access rights to traditional and sustainable use of forest resources, for example to collect wood for household use or non-timber forest products.⁶⁶ A study of forest conservation outcomes in 675 village level forest protection committees in Madhya Pradesh in India showed that women's engagement was associated with a 28 percent decrease in illicit felling and increased regeneration of allotted forest by approximately 28 percent.⁶⁷ Women as a group can benefit from market-based REDD+ financing schemes when questions of gender, property rights, land and resource tenure are addressed centrally⁶⁸ and benefits of such schemes reach women and poorer community members.⁶⁹ A gender-sensitive REDD pilot project in Tanzania provides forest-dependent communities with secure property rights, equitable payments for ecosystem services (PES) and livelihood benefits and involves women's existing village savings and loan groups in the management of local REDD revenues.⁷⁰

3. Disaster Risk Management and Reduction

People-centered early warning systems and information management are key to disaster risk management and reduction (DRM and DRR) efforts to reduce the vulnerability of countries, communities and individuals to extreme weather events. Disaster mortality rates are generally higher for women than for men due to cultural gender norms and roles which, for example, forbid women to leave the house or attend community preparedness meetings without a male guardian or prevent them from learning how to swim or climb trees.⁷¹ Following the 2004 Asian tsunami, in many villages in Aceh, Indonesia and in parts of India over 70 percent of the dead were women and girls.⁷² In Bangladesh, where the system of *purdah*⁷³ culturally restricts the mobility of many women,⁷⁴ a cyclone and flood in 1991 resulted in female deaths outnumbering male deaths by a ratio of 14:1. By 2007, the gender mortality gap was reduced to a gender difference in mortality rates of 5:1 by improved community preparedness measures which specifically addressed cultural gender practices.⁷⁵ In Honduras,⁷⁶ El Salvador⁷⁷ and Tajikistan,⁷⁸ gender-sensitive disaster preparedness training which specifically involved women in monitoring warning systems led to more effective early warning information for whole communities and prevented deaths.

Gender-responsive early warning and evacuation systems must address any gender-specific cultural constraints on mobility and information access, for example by engaging women's organizations and women leaders in their design and planning at the national and community level. Targeting warning messages in content and distribution to both men and women, taking into account their literacy levels, is essential⁷⁹, as the Bangladeshi case illustrates, where in 1991 warning information was transmitted by men to men in public spaces, but rarely communicated to other members of families at home.⁸⁰ In Bangladesh, allowing for women's and girls' privacy and providing safety by creating women-only spaces in cyclone shelters⁸¹ also reduced instances of gender-based violence, which often increases in post-disaster situations.⁸²

4. Water Sector

As part of their traditional care burden, up to 86 percent of rural women in low income countries have to fetch freshwater for their families.⁸³ Stress on freshwater resources from climate change results in women having to travel longer distances for longer periods of time to fetch water, increasing their exposure to gender-based violence, and limiting their ability to engage in educational or income-earning activities or participate in community meetings or decision-making.⁸⁴

Adaptation projects focusing on water resource management to protect water quality, or improve irrigation and drainage, are more effective when they apply a gender-informed participatory approach that looks at the different agricultural and reproductive responsibilities and resulting water needs of men and women in the communities involved and implements gender-sensitive strategies. For example, a local water management

project in Iran arranged community meetings around men's and women's different schedules to involve both men and women in project planning, implementation and monitoring, thereby ensuring that their differentiated needs would be met.⁸⁵ An erosion control project in Senegal encouraged women's active participation in anti-erosion committees that built barriers and undertook reforestation projects that captured rainwater, recharged ground-water and stabilized soils with more diversified surface vegetation.⁸⁶ Another project in Morocco focused on providing local water sources and, as a development co-benefit, succeeded in increasing girls' school attendance by 20 percent over four years, in part by reducing the traditional burden on them to fetch water.⁸⁷

In the cases of water infrastructure, as was seen with a water treatment plant in the greater Beirut area, the collection and analysis of gender data helps to ensure that women are equal beneficiaries and that their access to water and sanitation as a basic resource is safeguarded. For example, if water infrastructure construction or restoration results in the introduction of a new water levy, without a social subsidization or compensation scheme, poorer women-lead households could be hit especially hard.⁸⁸

5. Energy Sector

Women and men have different energy roles, needs and priorities. Men's energy needs tend to involve commercial and large-scale industrial development whereas women's needs generally prioritize energy access for cooking, family or community needs or home-based small and often informal enterprises.⁸⁹ Low-emission energy investments that are gender-responsive contribute to increasing men and women's access to modern and clean forms of energy for lighting, cooking, heating and cooling, pumping, transportation, communication and other productive uses. They increase economic efficiency and productivity gains with less time and physical exertion spent on basic subsistence activities such as wood fuel collection. They also create entrepreneurial opportunities and new markets for private investors, particularly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises owned by women.

Research in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia, suggests that women entrepreneurs face greater impediments and delays than men in obtaining electrical connections and are more likely than men to be expected to pay bribes for these services.⁹⁰ In order to address gender-related challenges, the Kenya Power utility company undertook a gender assessment and implemented a gender action plan with commitments to: ensure that women and small businesses are able to obtain electrical connections; include women on all decision-making panels; provide gender training for all staff; make progress towards a target of 30 percent women for senior management positions; and hire an independent gender expert to support implementation of the gender mainstreaming plan.⁹¹

Addressing cooking energy needs is crucial because for nearly 3 billion people each day cooking is done by inefficiently burning coal or solid biomass such as wood. In Ethiopia, DR Congo and Tanzania, biomass accounts for as much as 93 to 95 percent of the total energy consumed.⁹² In Uganda, biomass—mostly collected by women—accounts for almost 90 percent of the total energy consumed in the country, and in Zambia wood fuel for use by households represents over 80 percent of the total energy supply.⁹³ The resulting pollutants damage the health of women and children, contribute to millions of premature deaths each year, and deplete forests. Black carbon from these fires is a short-lived climate forcer estimated to contribute the equivalent of up to 50 percent of CO₂ warming globally.⁹⁴ The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, a public private partnership, has targeted 100 million homes to adopt clean and efficient stoves and cooking fuels by 2020.

In the aggregate, cleaner cookstoves – when designed and disseminated appropriately, i.e. with the input of women as users, customers, innovators and producers such as in the Upesi Cook Stoves Project in Kenya⁹⁵ – have a significant emissions reductions impact. So do other community or household based clean energy projects such as biogas digesters, solar systems or small hydro-generators that can provide electricity and motorized power for equipment to ease women's drudgery (for example water pumps and grain mills), and which can be bundled for emissions reduction credits under the Kyoto Protocol Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).⁹⁶ The Nepal Biogas Support Programme which has developed a gender mainstreaming

plan to target women's ownership of biogas digesters and trains women to build and manage these digesters, is one successful example.⁹⁷ Another is the experience of Grameen Shakti in Bangladesh which trains female engineers to build, install and maintain solar home systems, with a plan to install close to one million systems by 2015 in off-grid rural areas.⁹⁸

Gender sensitivities are not restricted to household level mitigation initiatives however. Large infrastructure projects may also have specific impacts and benefits for women and men. Large infrastructure projects need to comply with environmental and social safeguards to reduce adverse impacts, and gender mainstreaming is one of the tools which can ensure that projects reach out to key stakeholders to identify the social implications. Potential adverse social impacts can include displacement and resettlement of local populations, which may involve loss of livelihoods, and potentially unequal allocation of remuneration and benefits between women and men who are affected. In large construction projects, an influx of migrant workers can stimulate the local economy through increased demand for temporary housing and meals – but may also result in sexual exploitation of local women and increased exposure to infectious diseases. Understanding the differentiated gender implications of such programs should positively influence the design of resettlement plans and compensation systems, and limit the negative health impacts, therefore reducing potential tensions among the women and men involved.⁹⁹

Benefit sharing from large scale projects can also have important and positive impacts on women and men. These may include work opportunities for women in non-traditional roles. For example, mining companies in Chile, Ghana and Papua New Guinea have found that women tend to operate heavy machinery more efficiently than men.¹⁰⁰ In South Africa, mining companies have seen improvements in safety and a decrease in absenteeism after hiring women to join their workforce.¹⁰¹ Women have also shown that they can function well as treasurers: in Peru women are regarded as more honest and reliable than men with regard to record keeping and negotiating payments related to rural roads. This reliability also applies to communal tariff collection activities.

With regard to extension of electrical grids, the inability of rural households to afford connections can be a source of social conflicts. Targeted financing mechanisms to allow poorer households to pay the connection fees, as seen in the Kenya Power case, not only provide benefits that particularly assist women-headed households, but also improve profits by increasing the overall connection rate.¹⁰²

These best practice examples show that mitigation projects focusing on clean technology and renewable energy, when designed in a pro-poor and gender-sensitive way, can create multiple-win solutions with economic, developmental, and gender equality co-benefits while significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

6. Transportation Sector

More than 90 percent of the top 200 fastest growing cities are located in developing countries. Walking and mass transport are the means of transport for most people in developing cities.¹⁰³ A sound business and social case can be made for addressing gender in urban transportation projects, for example through investments in systems such as bus-rapid transit (BRT). Analyzing the different needs of men and women for mass transit with respect to affordability, schedule flexibility, trip length and frequency, geographical coverage and density of the transit network and addressing these in designing urban transport will result in multiple wins: increasing ridership, which is the prerequisite for real GHG emissions reductions, as well as the profitability of mass transport systems; lowering transaction costs by optimizing the system for all users; and increasing access of women (who are more dependent on mass transport options) to employment, education and services that strengthen households' productivity and resilience.¹⁰⁴

In an urban re-development project in Bogota, Colombia, aimed at reducing the city's carbon footprint, planners paid attention to creating well-lit public transport stations which resulted in fewer incidences of gender-based and common violence and increased the acceptance and usage of public transport by women.¹⁰⁵ A gender impact assessment conducted before the beginning of a regional transport project around Jakarta, Indonesia shifted an initial focus on individual transportation to urban light rail connecting

peripheral housing and housework locations with the city center, thereby making it easier for both men and women in Greater Jakarta to increase their mobility.¹⁰⁶

In rural transport projects, gender-responsive transport investment measures must address the reliance of women and children on feeder roads, tracks, path and foot bridges that are their main travel routes (not major roads or highways) to reach fields, markets, schools or community and health centers. Women usually use intermediate means of transport such as walking, draft animals, bikes or motorbikes, while men have more access to cars and trucks.¹⁰⁷

IV. OPERATIONALIZING A GENDER-SENSITIVE APPROACH IN THE GCF – GOOD PRACTICE EXPERIENCES FROM OTHER FUNDS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOARD ACTION

The Governing Instrument constitutes the key framework for the further design of the GCF. Paragraphs 1-3 of the GI (the section on “objectives and guiding principles”) lay out some of the fundamental normative parameters describing the vision for the Fund. The gender-sensitive approach (para. 3) is part of this broader vision of GCF goals and aspirations set in the context of sustainable development. The business model framework (BMF) will determine some of the key operational components necessary to realize the fund’s vision, complemented by other policies listed as indicative priorities in the Board’s work plan (GCF/B.02-12/03). A gender-sensitive approach has to be mainstreamed throughout the fund by integrating gender-responsiveness into each of the operational components – most of which are elaborated in more detail below. Such an approach is part and parcel of the paradigm shift toward low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways for developing countries, which the GCF aims to support.

A gender-sensitive approach for the GCF is not an “add-on” or a one-off activity, but has to be understood as an ongoing process of rethinking the way the GCF will do its climate business. As such, a gender-sensitive approach in the GCF will have to evolve and grow with the GCF as it achieves greater sophistication and innovation by moving forward as a “continuously learning institution guided by processes of monitoring and evaluation” (GI, para. 3). This will add considerable value to the GCF in terms of effectiveness (climate impacts), efficiency (cost consciousness and sustainability of interventions) and equity (benefitting those most in need) over and above existing climate funds.

In determining key actions that the GCF Board should take, the experience of other global funds and international financial institutions such as the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) is instructive. Many good practice examples of how existing funds and financing mechanisms have integrated gender aspects into some of their operations exist from which the GCF can draw. This section details some of them even if it cannot be comprehensive.

While most of these funding instruments did not start out with a gender-sensitive approach, they have increasingly noted, as part of their efforts to improve their operations via continuous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and results measurement, that achieving their core goals in sustainable development, poverty reduction and environmental protection requires attention to gender inequities and that efforts to mainstream gender equality considerations into their operations increase the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of their funding. Cases in point are the World Bank’s Climate Investment Funds (CIFs), which started out in 2008 without a gender focus, but have made significant strides in increasing the gender-sensitivity of their operations following their *2010 Strategic Environmental, Social and Gender Assessment*, with further improvements planned as a result of a recent comprehensive 2012 CIF Gender Review.¹⁰⁸

The GCF can build on other funding mechanisms’ good practice examples and set new international best practices by integrating gender consideration comprehensively into GCF operational policies and guidelines from the outset. A cautionary note is necessary, however, as gender sensitive policies on their own may not

be able to deliver the expected results if they are not converted into clear actions that are monitored by using smart indicators, as was concluded by the IEG's evaluation of the World Bank.¹⁰⁹

The GCF Co-Chairs and GCF Board members are urged to

- Add the “gender-sensitive approach” to the list of the indicative priority issues to be addressed in the Board’s 2013 work plan as a cross-cutting issue;
- Commit to consider and address gender considerations in each of the operational components of the 2013 work plan with an early focus on those components that are part of the business model framework discourse; gender considerations should be included in preparatory papers developed for discussion and decision by the Board.

1. Structure and Organization of the Fund

Global funds and MDBs have effectively incorporated a gender perspective into their institutional structures in three key ways: 1) by developing gender policies, operational strategies and plans; 2) by appointing gender focal points or establishing a gender team or department; and 3) by providing gender training for key staff across sections or departments.

Gender policies, strategies and plans are now ubiquitous in global funds and international lending institutions, and form the institutional foundation for gender mainstreaming. The UNDP developed a Gender Action Plan in 2006-7 in response to a gender assessment of its programs, and integrated gender issues into its corporate planning cycle for 2008-11. The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) in 2011 launched its new *Operational Policy on Gender Equality in Development*, accompanied by a Gender Action Plan. In 2012, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved a *GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* which calls on the GEF and its Partner Agencies to mainstream gender into GEF operations, including efforts to analyze and address in GEF projects the specific needs and role of both women and men, as appropriate for each intervention. The World Bank has had an Operational Policy on Gender and Development (OP and BP 4.20) since 2003 which includes provisions for incorporating gender into the World Bank’s work; it has also relied on several gender action plans, including the 2007-2010 work plan on *Gender Equality as Smart Economics*. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has a Gender Plan of Action (2008-2013) and the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) has a Gender Equality Strategy (2008) as well as a Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities Strategy (2009), although both have yet to be fully operationalized.

The position of a gender focal point is a widespread and effective institutional mechanism that supports the operationalization and implementation of gender policies and plans. Most global funds and MDBs have at least one gender focal point, and several have a gender team. The GEF, for example, relies on a gender focal point to bring a gender perspective into its programming. The Global Fund has a senior-level gender advisor who is responsible for developing a detailed implementation plan for the Gender Equality Strategy. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)—which has a gender focal point and gender staff—has worked to increase gender-sensitive programming by appointing senior women to represent the bank’s interests on the boards of the companies in which it invests.¹¹⁰ Gender training across the institutional structures of global funds and international financial institutions has been perhaps the weakest component of mainstreaming gender, however a number of institutions have noted its importance. An external evaluation of the Global Fund’s Gender Equality Strategy and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities Strategy in 2011 pointed out that rather than relying on individual staff members, the implementation of gender-mainstreaming has to be understood as a Secretariat-wide priority.

For the GCF, these examples illustrate that in order to successfully mainstream gender-sensitivity and gender-responsiveness within a funding institution multiple “anchors” are needed. A formalized gender

mainstreaming policy or gender strategy, with a corresponding gender action plan in the GCF, would be an important starting point to create public and internal gender awareness and accountability. Moreover, a GCF gender action plan would provide clarity as to the main goals, activities and impact indicators guiding the GCF funding priorities, and simplify monitoring and evaluation of projects, by providing a framework for project developers to follow from the outset of the fund. Equally important is top management commitment, starting with the new Executive Director of the GCF to make gender “everyone’s business” by creating an enabling environment for the GCF Secretariat staff. Such an enabling environment will create staff incentive structures within the Fund that support gender-responsiveness, provide ongoing staff training on gender for technical experts, and make gender expertise an important criterion in staff recruitment and promotion.¹¹¹ The GCF Secretariat staff should be balanced according to gender and geography to allow for a diversity of perspectives and experiences (as stipulated in para. 21 of the GI).

In order to anchor a gender-sensitive approach in the structure and organization of the Fund, the GCF Board is urged to task the GCF Interim Secretariat to

- Develop a gender mainstreaming policy, gender strategy and corresponding gender action plan for the GCF, in order to anchor gender as a cross-cutting issue for the GCF; the Independent Secretariat should then devise a gender score card and a funding-related gender marker to track how the GCF fulfils the mandate;
- Add professionals with gender, social and development expertise to the staff recruited in the next months, for example a senior gender advisor; ensure that such expertise is sufficiently represented in the Independent Secretariat in addition to technical expertise on climate change and financial instruments.

The GCF Board is requested to ensure that

- The new Executive Director of the GCF is gender-aware and committed to gender equality as a cross-cutting issue for the Fund including in public messaging and is ready to address it as a management issue within the Secretariat, for example by including gender expertise in the Secretariat (with a view to forming a gender department or team), by providing regular training for GCF staff on gender and climate change and by striving for gender I balance of its staff.

2. Private Sector Facility

The Governing Instrument’s mandate to establish a Private Sector Facility (PSF) as elaborated in paras. 41-44 recognizes the powerful role the private sector can play in achieving the paradigm shift the GCF envisions.

To be effective, the PSF must be designed in accordance with the specific requirements of the private sector, and can profit from lessons learned by the MDBs engaged with the private sector. As indicated by the CIF 2011 report, in order to efficiently engage with the private sector, the fund needs to, at least: 1) explicitly allocate resources to private sector interventions; 2) acknowledge the fast-changing market circumstances under which private sector decisions are made, therefore putting into place approval processes and criteria that are efficient, clear and aligned with private sector operations; and 3) be clear on the objectives and results measurement indicators of the fund, which need to be established from the outset of the fund design.¹¹² These lessons seem to be informing the CIF proposal for its Global Private Sector Program (GPSP), which calls for GPSP internal procedures to be designed to address the short timeframes in which private investment decisions are generally made. The GPSP is also considering segmenting the allocation of its funds

into different programs, providing clarity as to the different private sector interventions, goals and corresponding result indicators that could be supported under this funding mechanism.¹¹³

A growing number of institutional investors have made the case that investing in companies that empower women, both within the corporate structure and even more importantly as clients and customers, is a smart investment strategy, and have concluded that gender inequality is inefficient and bad economics.¹¹⁴ A 2010 survey among companies engaging women in developing countries as employees or customers found that 34 percent of respondents reported increased profits, with another 38 percent saying they expected to see increased profits as a direct result of these efforts.¹¹⁵ This indicates that establishing a gender-sensitive PSF could make good financial sense. In order to be successful, according to the lessons learned by the CIF, a gender-sensitive PSF would clearly present the objectives and corresponding results indicators for the overall fund and any segregated sub-funds accessed by the private sector. These should be accompanied by a clear set of gender-disaggregated results indicators based on easily collected information that would fit into the reporting framework (i.e. creation of new job opportunities for women and men, and other such applicable indicators).

Experiences such as those of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, illustrate that the PSF will be most effective when it focuses on the roles of women as business leaders, entrepreneurs, employees, consumers, and economic stakeholders by working with corporations, financial institutions, government departments, and regulators, as well as other industry players, such as business associations or research groups. At the IFC, a targeted Women in Business (WIN) program strives to maximize the impact of IFC investment projects through better working conditions for female employees, women-targeted market segmentation, and the inclusion of both women and men in supply chains and community relationships. Of critical importance in the IFC context is the focus on gender as a priority across the IFC's investment and advisory services, which is supported by the employment of a principal operations officer in the IFC's own Gender Secretariat.¹¹⁶ In a 2008 post-disaster project in China, the IFC through its advisory services worked with a local bank to enhance its loan officers' capacity to lend to MSMEs and enable the bank to support women-owned MSMEs in an earthquake-affected area.¹¹⁷

A gender-sensitive PSF program would focus on enabling and supporting MSMEs in developing countries, with special attention to empowering and supporting women-owned MSMEs in climate-relevant sectors. This is in line with para. 43 of the GI which calls for engagement of local private sector actors in developing countries, "including small and medium-sized enterprises and local financial intermediaries." It should also help to create linkages between local micro-finance institutions, which overwhelmingly serve women, and national financing institutions¹¹⁸, for example through the provision of climate credit lines to commercial banks in developing countries focused on climate investments to lend on or to directly increase their capabilities of addressing the needs of women-owned MSMEs.

As the GCF Board contemplates the possibility of a separate governance structure for the PSF, it needs to ensure that PSF investments are consistent with environmental, social and gender safeguards and information disclosure standards to be developed for the GCF. Minimum gender standards, if not a specific gender policy for the PSF, would help to better leverage the untapped potential of women in developing countries. Large-scale PSF investments should be accompanied by a gender assessment and – if needed – an action plan to ensure for example that women and men benefit equally from investment-related local jobs and procurement opportunities.

For the Private Sector Facility (PSF) to be gender-sensitive, the GCF Board should design the PSF so that it will

- Adhere to environmental, social and gender safeguards coherent with the overall GCF funding approach;
- Include clearly defined gender objectives and gender disaggregated results indicators from the outset of the PSF, ensuring the latter would be simple to collect and report on by private sector partners.
- Consider a special PSF (pilot) programs focused on women as business leaders, entrepreneurs, employees, consumers and economic stakeholders in key climate-related sectors;
- Respond to the needs and concerns of women and men-owned MSMEs in developing countries by working with national or local financial intermediaries such as commercial banks or micro-lending institutions to increase their access to financial services for climate-related investments;
- Focus its advisory services with corporations, financial institutions, government departments, and regulators, as well as other industry players, such as business associations or cooperatives, on reducing formal and informal barriers faced by women and men as economic actors; contribute with own research to reducing existing knowledge gaps in that area;
- Ensure that large-scale PSF-investments are accompanied by a gender assessment and – if needed – an action plan addressing gender concerns.

3. Financial Instruments

Grants and concessional lending are the two main financial instruments identified by the GI, but the Board can decide to approve “other modalities, instruments or facilities” (para.54). Existing global funds and funding mechanisms have successfully deployed a variety of financial instruments to support gender-sensitive programming, such as direct funding for gender-related activities, small grants for gender-specific projects, and innovative gender-sensitive methodologies for delivering loan funding to women.

Gender-sensitive financial instruments include providing direct funding for gender-related activities, such as institutional strengthening.. Small grants for gender-specific projects have also yielded strong results, including in the area of climate change. The GEF’s Small Grants Programme (SGP), for instance, has successfully directed funding to projects that maximize the impact of mitigation projects by educating and empowering women.¹¹⁹ Some MDBs have also developed innovative gender-sensitive methodologies for delivering loan funding to women. The EBRD’s Group for Small Businesses (GSB) has facilitated women’s access to finance, with 30 to 40 percent of its €1.2 billion investments channelled through partner institutions being contracted by women. Loans are offered following standard cash flow assessment procedures rather than based on collateral to avoid the risk of discriminating against women. In an EBRD project in Bulgaria, women’s access to credit is facilitated by a local bank in which the EBRD is a shareholder and which has set up a small van staffed by loan officers to serve remote rural areas. This innovative service is likely to reach rural women more effectively than traditional urban banking.¹²⁰

Learning from these examples, the GCF Board should discuss a possible role for the GCF in providing finance in form of credit lines or concessional financing to financial intermediaries in recipient countries which would allow for on-lending to community-based micro-financing schemes or small-scale investments to finance energy efficiency measures for households and MSMEs and paying particular attention to the needs of female-headed households and women entrepreneurs. In addition to financial instruments tailored to increase women’s access, the development of financial instruments to reduce climate investment risks at household and community-levels are key, such as for example micro-insurance schemes,¹²¹ which already cover 500 million people worldwide and could double the number of vulnerable people insured by 2020.¹²²

In addition, the availability and streamlined approval and delivery of small grants, particularly those that can be accessed directly by community and women’s groups (see also section on access modalities) is essential to respond to the investment and support needs of some of the most vulnerable men and women in recipient countries. The Board should prioritize the establishment of a gender-responsive small grants facility in the GCF to address those needs, learning from and expanding on the experience of the GEF’s SGP and its gender-mainstreaming approach.¹²³ This would be in line with para. 53 of the GI which urges Board development of “simplified processes for the approval of proposals for certain activities, in particular small-scale activities.”

In order to ensure that GCF financial instruments are gender-sensitive, the GCF Board is urged to

- Provide finance in form of credit lines or concessional financing to financial intermediaries in recipient countries, which allow for on-lending to community-based micro-insurance schemes, micro-financing or small-scale investments in energy efficiency measures for households and SMEs and which pay particular attention to the needs of female-headed households and women entrepreneurs, for example by ensuring that collateral requirements do not effectively exclude women. Provide small grants for women-specific projects with a fit for purpose approval procedure to support mitigation and adaptation interventions at the community level.

4. Access Modalities

The GI foresees direct and indirect access to GCF funding, with the Board asked to develop and manage an accreditation process for GCF implementing entities (paras. 45 – 49). These will be sub-national, national and regional in the case of direct access and international (UN agencies, International Finance Institutions or regional institutions) in the case of indirect access. On the national level, funding requests to the GCF will be coordinated through a National Designated Authority (NDA), including through country-led consultation processes (para. 46). Such consultation processes should be fully participatory and allow for the early, ongoing and meaningful engagement of women’s cooperatives and groups and other vulnerable and marginalized groups to determine country-led priorities for GCF finance implementation.

The GCF should consider the practice of the Global Fund for direct access as a good example to follow. Under the Global Fund framework, Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs)—the functional equivalent of NDAs—are responsible for developing funding proposals, selecting primary and sub-recipients—implementing entities—through an open competitive process, and overseeing grant implementation. The Global Fund encourages the inclusion of women’s groups and civil society networks as CCM members,¹²⁴ and directs countries to “strive to achieve sex parity among their membership and leadership.”¹²⁵ CCMs are required to declare their capacity in gender as part of the application process and are eligible to receive an allocation to support strengthening their capacity in this area. The Global Fund provides tools to support this process, including terms of reference for gender experts as CCM members.

Gender experts and representatives of a country’s national gender machinery,¹²⁶ for example gender focal points of relevant sector ministries, should be included in NDAs and their country-wide coordination efforts. For gender-sensitive access modalities, it is paramount that implementing entities have the willingness and capacity to address gender considerations of GCF funded mitigation and implementation actions. Especially for the multinational implementing entities (MIEs), experience and a proven track record with gender-responsive project implementation (with institutional gender expertise) should be a requirement for MIE accreditation. Implementing entities for direct access on the sub-national, national or regional level should receive capacity building and technical support on gender-sensitive GCF implementation by the GCF Secretariat (for example via a roster of gender and climate experts for in-country support) to support them where needed.

To ensure that women benefit equally with men from GCF project and program implementation, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in recipient countries, including women’s and gender rights’ advocacy groups, should have the opportunity to propose gender-responsive climate projects and programs – either through the NDAs or directly to the GCF.. The Global Fund also allows for “non-CCM” applications, in cases in which governmental organizations are unwilling or unable to apply for funding. While the non-CCM application process does not specifically focus on gender issues, it does allow for applications from non-governmental organizations, which can include women organizations.

Lastly, the Board will have to decide on whether to consider enhanced direct access modalities (para. 47) in which oversight and management, implementation and execution of funded activities would be delegated from the GCF to the national level, with all funding decisions to be made there.¹²⁷ The responsibility to ensure gender-sensitivity of a country’s GCF allocation would then rest solely at the national level.

In order to ensure that GCF access modalities are gender-sensitive, the Board is requested to

- Actively encourage the meaningful and balanced participation of women and other vulnerable and marginalized groups in National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and ensure that NDAs include gender experts and representatives from women’s groups and national women’s machineries;
- Actively encourage guidelines for National (NIEs) and Multilateral Implementing Entities (MIEs) that make experience with and a commitment to gender-responsive funding implementation an access criterion to the Fund and allocate funding to support NIEs in their capacity to do so;
- Consider giving non-governmental groups, including women’s and gender rights groups, the opportunity to directly apply for GCF financing and support and strengthen their capacity to act as sub-national implementing entities, particularly for community-focused and gender-sensitive projects and programs.;
- Request further studies on enhanced direct access, including its ability to implement a gender-sensitive funding approach at the national level.

5. Results Management Framework

The GI gives the Board the task to approve a results measurement framework (RMF) “with guidelines and appropriate performance indicators” (para.57). Planning and reporting instruments are key components of such a framework; it has at its goal to improve management effectiveness and accountability by moving from a project approval to a results-oriented planning and oversight culture. Experiences such as the GEF’s and the Goba Fund’s are instructive. Just as in the GCF, these institutions rely on implementation partners, but do not implement themselves.

In order to ensure a gender-sensitive approach to an RMF for the GCF, the contribution of the fund’s action to improved gender equality in recipient countries has to be defined as part of its envisioned long-term goals (expected impacts). Gender-sensitivity must also be included in concrete project or program products and services (outputs) to achieve intended gender-sensitive medium-term effects (outcomes). In such a framework, performance indicators should apply to the institutional level (how well does the GCF fulfill its strategic goals and what overall impact does its funding have?), to specific focal areas or funding windows and at the individual project or program level.

The inclusion of core gender indicators at all levels is crucial. The CIF gender review just recently confirmed their effectiveness in ensuring that gender is appropriately addressed.¹²⁸ Such gender indicators have to be appropriate and smart in order to be effective for monitoring and evaluation of outputs, outcomes and impacts. Including gender indicators does not have to mean adding indicators, but often can be achieved by making existing gender-blind indicators “smarter” by adding the gender perspective. One example would be for an indicator to not just look at the household level, but disaggregate the household further into its individual members as beneficiaries or look specifically at female-headed households,¹²⁹ or to change “poor

farmers” to “poor women farmers” and “poor men farmers”.¹³⁰ The Global Fund recommends specific indicators, including output indicators, that can be disaggregated to assess equity issues, and encourages countries to select appropriate indicators on the basis of an “equity assessment.” It allows for reporting on milestones, such as legal or policy reforms in cases where data cannot be measured using indicators.¹³¹ Gender indicators will have to be qualitative (for example determining changes in the access, use and control of energy resources for men and women and the impacts on the power relationship between men and women), as well as quantitative (based exclusively on sex-disaggregated data). A number of funding organizations require or encourage countries or loan recipients to report sex-disaggregated impact, outcome and output data, including the Global Fund, Education for All, and the MDBs (for some projects)¹³².

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) likewise has to be pursued at the institutional, focal area/funding window and individual project/program level. On an institutional level, periodic monitoring reviews by management, coupled with periodic independent performance evaluations pursued by a GCF independent evaluation unit, provide a good basis. The World Bank performs periodic assessments of the gender dimensions of development in the countries and sectors in which it has an active assistance program. The GEF has performed a gender assessment of its funded projects, reported in *Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF*, 2013. The Global Fund conducted an internal gender review of grants funded under Rounds 8 and 9,¹³³ contracted an external review of its Gender Equity and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities Strategies in 2011,¹³⁴ and organizations external to the Global Fund have also conducted their own gender assessments.¹³⁵ The CIFs just recently completed an external independent gender review of its funding operations with specific recommendations on how the integration of gender consideration, particularly in mitigation-related spending can be improved.¹³⁶ The GEF’s Small Grants Programme has successfully used gender checklists and criteria on the National Steering Committee level to projects’ success in mainstreaming gender.¹³⁷

The GCF’s institutional performance in implementing a gender-sensitive approach could be addressed in annual monitoring reviews, which are submitted to the COP for its consideration and in order for the COP to give guidance to the Fund (GI, para. 6c). On the project or program level, a gender-sensitive M&E plan will need to be prepared before project start to include gender-smart indicators for project implementation and results as well as a project baseline with sex-disaggregated data. Ideally, such a plan would also describe the organizational set-up and budget for M&E.¹³⁸ Additionally, participatory monitoring efforts including women as key stakeholders should be pursued (as encouraged under para. 57 of the GI) during implementation to provide feedback for possible course correction in mid-project,¹³⁹ which for example the GEF Small Grants Programme has used successfully.

The Board will have to decide on the use of results-based financing (RBF) approaches, which the GI allows for as an option (para. 55), particularly for verified mitigation results. A World Bank study on the impacts of results-based financing on cookstove projects in China cautioned that the up-front financing requirement, if not accompanied by advance finance disbursements, could be disadvantaging SMEs, particularly women entrepreneurs, who often lack access to adequate finance. Also related certification requirements for measuring, reporting and verifying (MRV) mitigation results are often costly and technically complex. RBF approaches do therefore not alleviate the needs for upfront GCF funding support for technical assistance, capacity building or awareness raising among participants in GCF mitigation programs and projects.¹⁴⁰

For a GCF results management framework that is effective and gender-sensitive, the Board is urged to

- Include gender-sensitivity in planning and reporting on GCF funding outputs, outcomes, and impacts with the GCF Secretariat developing guidance for recipient countries on gender-sensitive and gender-specific reporting, including by elaborating on gender-sensitive and specific indicators along with instructions on how to gather, analyze and report on gender-sensitive and specific data;
- Mandate the inclusion of qualitative and quantitative gender indicators and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation at every level (institutional, focal area/funding window, project/program);
- Encourage participatory monitoring involving women as key stakeholders for continuous feedback during project/program implementation;
- Carefully weigh and address the possible gender-impacts of results-based financing approaches.

6. Readiness and Preparatory Support

Recognizing that capacity-building within recipient countries, for example to meet fiduciary standards or social, gender and environmental safeguards, is indispensable to get recipient countries “ready” for GCF investments, the GI stipulates that the Fund will provide resources for such preparatory activities (para. 40). In-country institutional strengthening and the preparation of low-emission development plans are also to be supported.

REDD+ schemes provide some early experiences with readiness support, including with respect to gender. They highlight the need to engage women as important stakeholders early, comprehensively and meaningfully in the development or elaboration of national strategies and investment plans. In the CIF Forest Investment Program (FIP) this is for example financially supported via a “Dedicated Grant Mechanism” (DGM), which provides grants to women from indigenous peoples’ groups and local communities to engage meaningfully in such efforts.¹⁴¹ The Global Fund has developed a number of innovative approaches to supporting institutional strengthening for example by funding operational research to allow countries to develop strategies for reaching vulnerable groups.¹⁴² The GCF Board could similarly consider devoting a certain percentage of GCF readiness funding for preparatory activities to support the engagement by grassroots men and women.

Additionally, for a gender-sensitive approach to GCF financing, the availability of analysis and data on the status of gender and social inequality in recipient countries is important to establish a country-specific “gender and inequality baseline” as a prerequisite to measure gender-related results of GCF financing later. GCF readiness funding should also prioritize support for national statistical systems in recipient countries to strengthen their ability to collect and analyze climate-relevant data, including sex-disaggregated data and information related to the promotion of gender equality.

In order to provide effective and gender-sensitive readiness and preparatory support to recipient countries, the GCF Board is asked to

- Support the ability of women as important stakeholders to engage early, comprehensively and meaningfully in the development or elaboration of national climate-related development strategies and investment plans;
- Encourage partnerships in recipient countries with organizations, such as members of the UN family or established NGOs, to ensure that existing NAPAs, NAMAs or NAPs are gender-sensitive and aligned with the gender components of countries' proposed projects;
- Encourage national statistical systems to strengthen their ability to collect and analyze relevant data to measure and report on impacts and effectiveness of GCF funding, including the generation of sex-disaggregated data and information related to the promotion of gender equality.

7. Allocation

All developing country Parties to the UNFCCC are eligible to receive GCF resources (GI, para. 35), and the Board is asked to balance the allocation between mitigation and adaptation activities under the Fund (GI, para. 50). Gender-sensitivity in the allocation system encourages a minimum allocation for every developing country, recognizing that gender-differentiated impacts of climate change are a fact for all developing countries. This is what the GEF's System for a Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) applied to the fifth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-5) does. It guarantees each recipient country a minimum allocation of \$ 4 million, distributed across the GEF's three focal programming areas which include climate change, and sets a maximum allocation of \$ 300 million per country.¹⁴³

LDCs, SIDS and African States and the most vulnerable and disenfranchised population groups within these countries, often women, are affected worst by climate change. Yet, these countries and population groups have been critically underserved by the funds in the existing climate finance architecture. Enhancing the GCF's complementarity with existing funds (as the GI, para. 34 asks for) would therefore encourage prioritization of adaptation funding for these underserved country and population groups in line with a gender-sensitive approach. The GCF should ensure that sufficient funding for adaptation is delivered in the form of grants and focusses on new delivery formats to ensure that such funding reaches local beneficiaries directly.

For a gender-sensitive approach to the GCF allocation system, the Board is requested to

- Ensure sufficient GCF funding for adaptation in grant form with priority funding for the most vulnerable countries (LDC, SIDS, African States) and population groups within those countries, including women.

8. Funding Approval Criteria and Funding Cycle

The GCF Secretariat will receive project and program proposals for GCF funding and will provide analysis of and recommendations on the merits of these proposals to the GCF Board, which will make the ultimate funding decision. To ensure GCF funding is taking a gender-sensitive approach as stipulated in GI para. 3, the GCF Secretariat staff will have to make an assessment of how gender-sensitive the funding proposals it

receives are. Its staff thus needs to include gender expertise as a critical skill as well as support gender training and capacity-building for non gender-technical experts in the Secretariat.

The GCF Secretariat staff could use a checklist approach to determine that a funding proposal fulfills the requirements and documentation needs stipulated by Board decisions and codified in comprehensive GCF funding policy guidelines. The GEF's Small Grants Programme has successfully used gender checklists to assess project gender-sensitivity. The SGP National Steering Committees use gender checklists and criteria to assess projects' success in mainstreaming gender; projects that have been identified through this process as particularly successful at both integrating gender considerations and reaching environmental targets, receive higher ratings and are more likely to be approved for funding.¹⁴⁴

Gender sensitivity of project and program proposals has to be made a compulsory component of such a checklist and thus a key criterion for the consideration and approval of funding proposals, irrespective of scale of funding provided. At the Global Fund, for example, country proposals require applicants to articulate the ways in which their program will benefit women and girls as well as men and boys, and countries are asked to include a gender analysis in their proposals, based on age- and sex-disaggregated data. If countries are unable to provide a gender analysis, their proposals must include plans for system strengthening to enable applicants to conduct a proper gender analysis early in their program. In a similar vein, the three educational granting mechanisms through Education for All's (EFA) Global Partnership for Education—namely Education Plan Development Grants, Program Development Grants, and Program Implementation Grants—explicitly include “achieving gender parity and gender equality” as one of the six EFA goals to be addressed by applicants. At the Adaptation Fund, countries are required to consider in their project applications gender implications of the economic, social and environmental benefits they claim the funded project will provide.¹⁴⁵

Funding mechanisms that do not yet require gender analysis in the application process are increasingly recognizing the value of this exercise early in the program process: The review of program gender sensitivity reported in the GEF's newly revised *Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF 2013* finds that: “Experience with best practice cases across GEF focal areas highlights the importance of including a gender analysis, as part of social assessment or as a stand-alone exercise, at the onset of a project.”¹⁴⁶

In order to effectively assess the gender components of proposals, some funding mechanisms are working on including social and gender experts on project missions and proposal review panels. The Global Fund, for example, put out a call in 2007 for “cross-cutting” gender experts to apply for a seat on the Technical Review Panel (TRP)—the external group of experts that reviews applications and makes funding recommendations to the board. The TRP now includes a number of gender “cross-cutters.” The inclusion of gender experts in all missions and in project operations is one of the recommendations of the CIF Gender Review, in line with demands of the CIF Trusts Funds.¹⁴⁷

The GCF Board should mandate the Secretariat to develop concrete gender guidance on requirements necessary to fulfill the gender-sensitivity mandate for a GCF funding proposal. Such guidance should include a mandatory, up-front gender analysis to establish relevant baselines; demand gender-sensitive stakeholder consultation and participation and the involvement of gender experts in project design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation; mandate the generation and use of sex-disaggregated data as well as the inclusion of verifiable gender indicators; ask for gender-responsive project or program budgeting; and request that program or project evaluation and auditing procedures address gender equality impacts explicitly.

The funding cycle of projects and programs will depend on the scale of funding provided, with comprehensive sector or country-wide multi-project programmatic approaches necessitating a different due diligence process than one-off project activities. The Board will have to decide its categorization of programs and projects by funding size. Conceivably, large projects (for example over \$10 million) which involve a mix of financial instruments and co-financing structures will have a much lengthier and complex funding cycle than small grants funding (maybe up to \$ 100,000.00).¹⁴⁸ In order to ensure that especially smaller-scale grant activities focused on gender equality, local beneficiaries and community-based approaches are not bogged down by overly complex funding procedures and held up by the insufficient frequency of Board meetings, the Board should streamline and simplify their approval process, for example by giving the Secretariat the

mandate to approve funding up to a specified amount per proposal or for specific project categories (such as initial project planning preparatory costs, capacity building or technical assistance) in between Board meetings.

For GCF funding approval criteria and the GCF funding cycle to be gender-sensitive, the GCF Board is urged to

- Make gender-sensitivity of project and program proposals a standard part of funding approval criteria (for example via inclusion in a checklist approach); the Board should include gender needs assessments and gender-sensitive planning and implementation among the criteria required for proposal development;
- Instruct the Secretariat to develop gender guidance on the requirements necessary to fulfill the gender components for a GCF funding proposal;
- Ensure that gender experts participate in proposal development (for example in country missions) and during the proposal review process;
- Strive to tailor the necessary approval processes for smaller-scale grant funding proposals focused on gender equality, local beneficiaries and gender-sensitive community-based approaches.

9. Social, Gender and Environmental Standards and Safeguards

A comparison of 22 existing funding mechanisms done by the Transitional Committee in 2011 suggests that all funds surveyed had either environmental and/or social safeguard policies or – as in the case of the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund – relied on the policies of a linked institution, for example an implementing entity.¹⁴⁹

While stand-alone gender standards and safeguards have not been widely developed, a number of multilateral funding institutions have incorporated gender considerations into their social and environmental standards and safeguards. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), for example, has specifically incorporated gender into its Environmental and Social Policy (2008), noting that gender equality should be included when assessing the environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development and that environmental and social considerations should be mainstreamed into all funded projects. At the IFC, gender is addressed as a cross-cutting issue across multiple distinctly elaborated Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability.¹⁵⁰ The GEF in 2011 adopted a GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards and a GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming as “two related policies” and requires its partner agencies to have policies and systems that comply with both in order to be accredited.¹⁵¹ The World Bank likewise has a set of safeguards and an operational policy on gender side-by-side, but is currently discussing the possibility of an explicit gender safeguard under the ongoing safeguards review process.

Lessons learned from those funds’ experiences, where gender implications were subsumed in the wider context of social inequality issues and thus often not elaborated clearly enough, suggest that for a gender-sensitive approach to GCF financing it would be preferable to elaborate a set of explicit gender equality standards and safeguards within a broader context of social and environmental safeguards. Such separately articulated gender standards and safeguards raise the attention to gender issues within the organization when analyzing project and program proposals; their existence also puts the implementing partners of the GCF – multilateral organizations, sub-national, national and regional developing country organizations and the private sector – on notice that the GCF takes the gender mandate of its programming serious and will act (for example with non-approval of funding, revision of investment proposals, or through the requirement of further analysis of impact assessments to ensure gender-equitable benefits) if the implementation partner doesn’t.

Given that the GCF will not implement itself but via implementing partners (countries, sub-national entities, multinational organizations and private sector actors), it will be important for the Board to develop guidance on how to ensure that the GCF safeguards apply fully to the partners' implementation on the ground and that information on potentially harmful gender, social and environmental impacts during implementation are fed back to the GCF. A recent evaluation by the IFC's own internal evaluation unit (the Office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman, CAO) of IFC investments implemented through financial intermediaries (FI) warned that the IFC was not aware of the environmental and social impacts of almost half of its portfolio.¹⁵² The Board, learning from such experience, will have to decide if it allows for the acceptance of implementing partners' own standards or safeguards or gender policies as "substantially equivalent," as the IFC does. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) uses such a "Common Approach" with its implementing partners.¹⁵³ The GEF likewise uses a "principles-based approach" in setting broadly defined minimum standards to assess the equivalency and acceptability of partner systems for both its policies on safeguards and gender mainstreaming. This does devolve¹⁵⁴ the responsibility of compliance with either policy on a project-by-project basis to GEF Partner Agencies.

For a gender-sensitive social and environmental standards and safeguards in the GCF, the Board is urged to

- Request the elaboration of a set of separately articulated gender equality standards and safeguards; gender consideration should also be integrated into the GCF's social and environmental safeguards;
- Ensure that implementation of GCF projects and programs through a variety of implementing partners (public and private) will not restrict the full application of GCF gender, social and environmental standards and safeguards.

10. Stakeholder Input and Participation

The GI in para. 71 recognizes the importance of the "input and participation of stakeholders, including ... women ... in the design, development and implementation of the strategies and activities to be financed by the Fund." Most of the 22 existing funding mechanisms surveyed by the Transitional Committee in 2011 reported some form of stakeholder involvement in the program cycle, with the CIFs, the Global Fund and the African Water Facility seeming to involve stakeholders throughout a project cycle in the most comprehensive way.¹⁵⁵

The key for the gender-sensitivity of such mechanisms is to require the early and comprehensive involvement of women in recipient countries through all stages of a project or program cycle from conceptualization, to design to implementation and to ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E).¹⁵⁶ Such involvement might have to take the form of targeted active outreach and engagement, for example to overcome cultural and gender barriers or address the constraints caused by women's care responsibilities. Culturally appropriate gender-segregated consultations or employing of women surveyors or interviewers might be other ways to engage women even in culturally restrictive societies or regions. Dedicated financial resources to allow for such outreach and targeted engagement of women is key; a similar practice exists in the FIP which employs dedicated funding for outreach and inclusion of communities and indigenous peoples in national forest program planning.¹⁵⁷ Adequate resources are also necessary to ensure that such participation and engagement is more than just ticking off a check-box. In order to be meaningful, women's needs and views have to be solicited, valued and recorded, and appropriately incorporated and reflected in design and implementation of GCF investment programs and projects in adaptation and mitigation.

The Strategic Program for Climate Resilience (SPCR) \$50 million investment plan for Yemen under the CIF Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) provides a good example for such comprehensive efforts to

engage women as stakeholders throughout the program cycle. It actively sought out the advice and input of Yemeni women's groups throughout the investment plan preparation process and assigned women's groups a role in the plan's management structure by asking the gender unit of the Yemeni Environment Protection Authority with support of local women's NGOs to monitor and evaluate on a regular basis the inclusion of gender concerns across all investments; lastly, the inclusion of female specialist in project management units is mandated, as is targeted training aimed at female staff. Gender is included as a cross-cutting issue in all investments under this SPCR.¹⁵⁸

Given the importance of national planning processes and documents to define recipient countries' priorities for GCF funding in a country-driven approach, the full participation and input by women in such plans and processes (including NAPAs, NAPs, NAMAs, but also development and poverty strategies and efforts to revisited or revise them) needs to be ensured. This is particularly relevant for any GCF-funded related country needs assessments that might be conducted and paid for under GCF readiness and preparatory support. The GCF mandate on involving women as key stakeholders in strategies and activities to be funded by the GCF (para. 71) extends also to the national designated authority (NDA) in recipient countries, which will recommend funding proposals to the Board (GI, para. 46). Such a mandate should be codified in any NDA guidance prepared by the GCF Secretariat. NDAs should have gender expertise, and include and involve the country's existing national women's machinery¹⁵⁹ as well as local women's and gender groups in in-country processes to define GCF funding proposals. Best practice example is the Global Fund, which encourages the inclusion of women's groups and civil society networks as members of its Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs)¹⁶⁰ and asks them to "strive to achieve sex parity among their membership and leadership."¹⁶¹ The CCMs must show their gender capacity as part of the application process and are eligible to receive capacity building funding for that purpose. The Global Fund provides tools to support this process, including terms of reference for gender experts as CCM members.

In order to ensure gender-sensitive stakeholder input and participation in the GCF, the Board is requested to

- Require the early and comprehensive involvement of women in recipient countries through all stages of a project or program cycle from conceptualization, to design, to implementation and to ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E);
- Provide resources to allow for target outreach and engagement of women as key stakeholders;
- Give guidance to National Designated Authorities (NDAs) in recipient countries to include women and their needs and concerns (through NDA gender expertise, involvement of national women's machineries and of women and gender groups) in the processes to define in-country funding priorities for proposals to the GCF.

11. Audits

The GI does not explicitly talk about audits, but it refers to the evaluation of Fund performance, including through an independent evaluation unit to be established in the Fund as well as allows for the possibility of independent assessments to be commissioned by the COP (paras. 59 – 62). In a 2011 TC survey, all the development agencies as well as the GEF and the Global Fund reported having in place some independent evaluation department or office with varying practices as to whether the process is carried out by internal or external staff. The CIF Trust Funds rely on the MDB's evaluation processes; the Adaption Fund and the GAVI Alliance rely on other implementing organizations.¹⁶²

With respect to gender-sensitivity, really two aspects of audits should be addressed. First, the financial component of audits (i.e. money well accounted for), detailing the resources the Fund receives and disburses

as part of tracking the overall budget with different budget lines; this function will be largely served by the GCF Trustee together with the GCF Secretariat. Second, the programming component (“money well spent”) which is looking at the overall performance of the Fund and its funded activities in terms of how effective it has been in generating the desired impacts in a cost-effective way. This aspect, in addition to being part of ongoing monitoring and evaluation efforts in the context of specific project/program cycle will be addressed in the aggregate by the GCF’s future independent evaluation mechanism and possibly additional independent assessments initiated by the COP.

For gender-sensitive GCF operations and to be able to assess their effectiveness and efficiency, gender accounting of GCF resources is needed by detailing how much money the GCF Board allocates to gender-specific activities, how many activities in adaptation, mitigation, technical assistance and capacity building are listed as being gender-sensitive (to be tracked by a gender marker or a flag) and the distribution of that funding. For example, the OECD tracks, accounts and reports on gender-relevant development aid via a gender equality marker. The World Bank tracks its “gender-informed” lending and reports that between FY10 and FY12, the total share of lending that was gender-informed rose from 54 to 83 percent.¹⁶³

A regular evaluation of the progress in implementing a gender-sensitive approach in the GCF should also be part of both internal and external GCF performance evaluation efforts. The CIF just completed an outside performance evaluation in 2012. The Global Fund also completed an external evaluation of its Gender Equality Strategy and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities Strategy in 2011,¹⁶⁴ as did the GAVI Alliance for its gender policy in 2012.¹⁶⁵ The World Bank provides regular internal management updates on the implementation of its gender equality agenda.¹⁶⁶ Technical reviews and evaluations, for example focusing on sectors, facilities, geographical areas, the implementation of specific policies and guidelines or financial instruments, must include as part of their terms-of-reference (TOR) a review of gender considerations and provide suggestion on how to improve gender-sensitivity in the particular aspect of GCF performance evaluated and reviewed.

As a prerequisite for auditing progress in implementing a gender-sensitive approach in the GCF, the Board is requested to

- Include gender in the audit tool to track GCF resources with respect to funding allocations and disbursements for gender-specific (empowerment) and gender-sensitive (mainstreamed) activities, projects and programs;
- Regularly evaluate GCF progress in implementing a gender-sensitive approach (via a score card, bi-annual implementation reports, or reviews by the GCF independent evaluation mechanism or outside experts) and include gender considerations in regular auditing processes, particularly technical reviews.

12. Accountability Mechanisms

The GI gives guidance (paras. 67 – 69) on what accountability mechanisms the GCF must develop. Such mechanisms, which according to the GI should include an information disclosure policy and an independent redress mechanism, are very relevant for a gender-sensitive approach in the GCF.

The Board’s decision on a GCF information disclosure policy (para.67) will determine the information that men and women affected by climate change in developing countries receive about the Fund’s priorities, its decisions and spending. Art. 6 of the UNFCCC has elaborated on the Parties’ commitment to improve public access to information on and public participation in addressing climate change.¹⁶⁷ The GCF should therefore establish an information disclosure policy with a “presumption to disclose” as is good practice for the World Bank, other climate funds such as the CIFs or the Adaptation Fund. Taking into account that men and women

in developing countries often have different education and literacy levels or unequal access to modern information technology (computers, internet, mobile phones), core information about the Fund's activities should be disseminated via different media and communication approaches and in several languages other than English, including local languages if and when appropriate.

All MDBs have an independent-panel like recourse mechanism reporting directly to the Board; the GCF has a Conflict Resolution Commissioner to resolve any disputes. The Global Fund has an Independent Appeals Panel for applicants not approved for funding.¹⁶⁸ Many of these mechanisms have made it relatively easy for affected people to file a complaint. For example, in the case of the World Bank's Inspection Panel a letter submitted in the local language of the requesting group showing that they live in the area affected adversely by World Bank project activities is sufficient.¹⁶⁹ Likewise, an independent redress mechanism (para.69) to be established by the Board should take into account the challenges some of the men and women who could be negatively affected by some future GCF projects and programs might face in bringing their complaint forward (such as language barriers, safety concerns or fear of intimidation, or remoteness and inaccessibility of sites) and try to accommodate those as well as gender differences in literacy or community involvement and leadership when accepting or investigating complaints. Such a mechanism should also be invoked in cases of a blatant violation or purposeful disregard of the mandate for a gender-sensitive approach in GCF financing for adaptation and mitigation.

For gender-sensitive accountability mechanisms in the GCF, the Board is urged to

- Endorse an information disclosure policy with a "presumption to disclose" that takes into account gender differences in access to information and information technology, literacy and language ability and targets information outreach to groups, including women, underserved by the most common information disclosure methods;
- Establish an independent redress mechanism with easy procedures to file a complaint by affected men and women, taking into account gender differences in their ability to do so, and allow for the violation of the mandate for a gender-sensitive approach to GCF financing to be considered as a grievance case.

V. OUTLOOK AND NEXT STEPS

The GCF has an important opportunity to make history in more than one way. It will be a true testament to its ambition for transformational change if the GCF will start its funding operations in 2014 or 2015 as the first international climate fund to have fully mainstreamed gender into its policies, projects and programs. This would truly make it the most important international fund to support developing countries' move to low-emission and climate resilient development pathways in a way that addresses persistent gender inequalities as obstacles to effective climate action.

The GCF Board should focus in the next few months on efforts to close the apparent knowledge gap on how to operationalize a gender-sensitive approach in the GCF. More research and technical input is clearly needed. And timing is crucial: the elements and merits of such an approach have to be discussed and decided in conjunction with Board discussions and decisions on other operational building blocks of the GCF and its business model framework. Just as in other policy areas, which are crucial for the success of the GCF, gender champion and gender technical experts are available – from civil society, the private sector, international organizations and governments – to help bring critical knowledge on the gender dimension of

climate finance to the GCF Board members for their consideration and subsequent decisions. The GCF Board should listen to them.

ENDNOTES

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- ² Decision 3/CP.17, articles 2 and 6; contained in document FCCP/CP/2011/9/Add.1. Available at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a01.pdf#page=55>.
- ³ Article 65 of Decision 3/CP.17.
- ⁴ In paras. 3, 11, 21, 31 and 71 of the Green Climate Fund Governing Instrument. Available at: http://gcfund.net/fileadmin/00_customer/documents/pdf/GCF-governing_instrument-120521-block-LY.pdf.
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Acronyms

BMF	Business Model Framework
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CAO	Office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman (of the International Finance Corporation)
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism (of the Global Fund)
CDM	Kyoto Protocol Clean Development Mechanism
CIF	Climate Investment Funds (administered by the World Bank)
COP	Conference of Parties
CTF	Clean Technology Fund
COP	Conference of Parties
CTF	Clean Technology Fund (part of the Climate Investment Funds)
DGM	Dedicated Grant Mechanism (at the Forest Investment Program)
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EFA	Education for All
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Program (part of the Climate Investment Funds)
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF-5	Fifth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund
GHG	Greenhouse gas(es)
GI	Governing Instrument
Global Fund	Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GPSP	Global Private Sector Program of the Climate Investment Funds
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group (of the World Bank)
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMT	Intermediate means of transportation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LDC	Least Developed Country
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MIE	Multilateral Implementing Entity
MSME	Micro, small, and medium (-sized) enterprises
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NDA	National Designated Authority
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIE	National Implementing Entity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PPCR	Pilot Program for Climate Resilience
PSF	Private Sector Facility

RBF	Results-based Financing
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of conservations, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
RMF	Results Measurement Framework
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SME	Small and medium enterprises
SGP	UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme
SPCR	Strategic Program for Climate Resilience (investment plan under the CIF PPCR)
STAR	System for a Transparent Allocation of Resources (at the Global Environment Facility)
TC	Transitional Committee (for the design of the Green Climate Fund)
TRP	Technical Review Panel (at the Global Fund)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries

Annex 1: List of Recommendations

1. Overall recommendations

The GCF Co-Chairs and GCF Board members are urged to

- Add the “gender-sensitive approach” to the list of the indicative priority issues to be addressed in the Board’s 2013 work plan as a cross-cutting issue;
- Commit to consider and address gender considerations in each of the operational components of the 2013 work plan with an early focus on those components that are part of the business model framework discourse; gender considerations should be included in preparatory papers developed for discussion and decision by the Board.

2. Structure and Organization of the Fund

In order to anchor a gender-sensitive approach in the structure and organization of the Fund, the GCF Board is urged to task the GCF Interim Secretariat to

- Develop a gender mainstreaming policy, gender strategy and corresponding gender action plan for the GCF, in order to anchor gender as a cross-cutting issue for the GCF; the Independent Secretariat should then devise a gender score card and a funding-related gender marker to track how the GCF fulfills the mandate;
- Add professionals with gender, social and development expertise to the staff recruited in the next months, for example a senior gender advisor; ensure that such expertise is sufficiently represented in the Independent Secretariat in addition to technical expertise on climate change and financial instruments.

The GCF Board is requested to ensure that

- The new Executive Director of the GCF is gender-aware and committed to gender equality as a cross-cutting issue for the Fund including in public messaging and is ready to address it as a management issue within the Secretariat, for example by including gender expertise in the Secretariat (with a view to forming a gender department or team), by providing regular training for GCF staff on gender and climate change and by striving for gender balance of its staff.

3. Private Sector Facility

For the Private Sector Facility (PSF) to be gender-sensitive, the GCF Board should design the PSF so that it will

- Adhere to environmental, social and gender safeguards coherent with the overall GCF funding approach;
- Include clearly defined gender objectives and gender disaggregated results indicators from the outset of the PSF, ensuring the latter would be simple to collect and report on by private sector partners.
- Consider a special PSF (pilot) program focused on women as business leaders, entrepreneurs, employees, consumers and economic stakeholders in key climate-related sectors;

- Respond to the needs and concerns of women and men-owned MSMEs in developing countries by working with national or local financial intermediaries such as commercial banks or micro-lending institutions to increase their access to financial services for climate-related investments;
- Focus its advisory services with corporations, financial institutions, government departments, and regulators, as well as other industry players, such as business associations or cooperatives, on reducing formal and informal barriers faced by women and men as economic actors; contribute with own research to reducing existing knowledge gaps in that area;
- Ensure that large-scale PSF-investments are accompanied by a gender assessment and – if needed – an action plan addressing gender concerns.

4. Financial Instruments

In order to ensure that GCF financial instruments are gender-sensitive, the GCF Board is urged to

- Provide finance in form of credit lines or concessional financing to financial intermediaries in recipient countries, which allow for on-lending to community-based micro-insurance schemes, micro-financing or small-scale investments in energy efficiency measures for households and SMEs and which pay particular attention to the needs of female-headed households and women entrepreneurs, for example by ensuring that collateral requirements do not effectively exclude women. Provide small grants for women-specific projects with a fit for purpose approval procedure to support mitigation and adaptation interventions at the community level.

5. Access Modalities

In order to ensure that GCF access modalities are gender-sensitive, the Board is requested to

- Actively encourage the meaningful and balanced participation of women and other vulnerable and marginalized groups in National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and ensure that NDAs include gender experts and representatives from women's groups and national women's machineries;
- Actively encourage guidelines for National (NIEs) and Multilateral Implementing Entities (MIEs) that make experience with and a commitment to gender-responsive funding implementation an access criterion to the Fund and allocate funding to support NIEs in their capacity to do so;
- Consider giving non-governmental groups, including women's and gender rights groups, the opportunity to directly apply for GCF financing and support and strengthen their capacity to act as sub-national implementing entities, particularly for community-focused and gender-sensitive projects and programs.;

Request further studies on enhanced direct access, including its ability to implement a gender-sensitive funding approach at the national level.

6. Results Management Framework

For a GCF results management framework that is effective and gender-sensitive, the Board is urged to

- Include gender-sensitivity in planning and reporting on GCF funding outputs, outcomes, and impacts with the GCF Secretariat developing guidance for recipient countries on gender-sensitive and gender-specific reporting, including by elaborating on gender-sensitive and specific indicators along with instructions on how to gather, analyze and report on gender-sensitive and specific data;

- Mandate the inclusion of qualitative and quantitative gender indicators and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation at every level (institutional, focal area/funding window, project/program);
- Encourage participatory monitoring involving women as key stakeholders for continuous feedback during project/program implementation;
- Carefully weigh and address the possible gender-impacts of results-based financing approaches.

7. Readiness and Preparatory Support

In order to provide effective and gender-sensitive readiness and preparatory support to recipient countries, the GCF Board is asked to

- Support the ability of women as important stakeholders to engage early, comprehensively and meaningfully in the development or elaboration of national climate-related development strategies and investment plans;
- Encourage partnerships in recipient countries with organizations, such as members of the UN family or established NGOs, to ensure that existing NAPAs, NAMAs or NAPs are gender-sensitive and aligned with the gender components of countries' proposed projects;

Encourage national statistical systems to strengthen their ability to collect and analyze relevant data to measure and report on impacts and effectiveness of GCF funding, including the generation of sex-disaggregated data and information related to the promotion of gender equality.

8. Allocation

For a gender-sensitive approach to the GCF allocation system, the Board is requested to

- Ensure sufficient GCF funding for adaptation in grant form with priority funding for the most vulnerable countries (LDC, SIDS, African States) and population groups within those countries, including women.

9. Funding Approval Criteria and Funding Cycle

For GCF funding approval criteria and the GCF funding cycle to be gender-sensitive, the GCF Board is urged to

- Make gender-sensitivity of project and program proposals a standard part of funding approval criteria (for example via inclusion in a checklist approach); the Board should include gender needs assessments and gender-sensitive planning and implementation among the criteria required for proposal development;
- Instruct the Secretariat to develop gender guidance on the requirements necessary to fulfill the gender components for a GCF funding proposal;
- Ensure that gender experts participate in proposal development (for example in country missions) and during the proposal review process;
- Strive to tailor the necessary approval processes for smaller-scale grant funding proposals focused on gender equality, local beneficiaries and gender-sensitive community-based approaches.

10. Social, Gender and Environmental Standards and Safeguards

For a gender-sensitive social and environmental standards and safeguards in the GCF, the Board is urged to

- Request the elaboration of a set of separately articulated gender equality standards and safeguards; gender consideration should also be integrated into the GCF's social and environmental safeguards;
- Ensure that implementation of GCF projects and programs through a variety of implementing partners (public and private) will not restrict the full application of GCF gender, social and environmental standards and safeguards.

11. Stakeholder Input and Participation

In order to ensure gender-sensitive stakeholder input and participation in the GCF, the Board is requested to

- Require the early and comprehensive involvement of women in recipient countries through all stages of a project or program cycle from conceptualization, to design, to implementation and to ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E);
- Provide resources to allow for target outreach and engagement of women as key stakeholders;
- Give guidance to National Designated Authorities (NDAs) in recipient countries to include women and their needs and concerns (through NDA gender expertise, involvement of national women's machineries and of women and gender groups) in the processes to define in-country funding priorities for proposals to the GCF.

12. Audits

As a prerequisite for auditing progress in implementing a gender-sensitive approach in the GCF, the Board is requested to

- Include gender in the audit tool to track GCF resources with respect to funding allocations and disbursements for gender-specific (empowerment) and gender-sensitive (mainstreamed) activities, projects and programs;
- Regularly evaluate GCF progress in implementing a gender-sensitive approach (via a score card, bi-annual implementation reports, or reviews by the GCF independent evaluation mechanism or outside experts) and include gender considerations in regular auditing processes, particularly technical reviews.

13. Accountability Mechanisms

For gender-sensitive accountability mechanisms in the GCF, the Board is urged to

- Endorse an information disclosure policy with a "presumption to disclose" that takes into account gender differences in access to information and information technology, literacy and language ability and targets information outreach to groups, including women, underserved by the most common information disclosure methods;
- Establish an independent redress mechanism with easy procedures to file a complaint by affected men and women, taking into account gender differences in their ability to do so, and allow for the violation of the mandate for a gender-sensitive approach to GCF financing to be considered as a grievance case.

Annex 2: List of Resource Persons

Due to time constraints only a limited number of telephone conversations based on the use of a formal questionnaire could be conducted to gather background information on gender and climate finance and learn about best practice experiences at other international funding organizations. This list includes the names, organizational title and organization of those people formally approached. Additional informal in-person, telephone, Skype and email exchanges with colleagues from international organizations, governments and international civil society also contributed greatly in providing crucial information and perspective.

The authors are grateful to all conversation partners for their generosity in sharing their expertise and insights.

#	NAME	TITLE/FUNCTION	ORGANIZATION
1	Margaret Arnold	Senior Social Development Specialist, Social Dimensions of Climate Change	World Bank
2	Cristina Colon	Climate Change, Environment and Energy Group (specialist on direct access and preparatory support)	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
3	Nathalie Eddy	Coordinator	Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA)
4	Elizabeth Eggerts	Programme Specialist, Gender and Environment, Gender Team	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
5	Malcolm Ehrenpreis	Gender Specialist, Gender Unit	World Bank
6	Jenny Hedman	Gender Specialist, DAC Network on Gender Equality	OECD
7	Gail Karlsson	Energy and Gender Specialist	ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy
8	Nato Kurshitashvili	Gender Adviser	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
9	Patti O'Neill	Coordinator, DAC Network on Gender Equality	OECD
10	Funke Oyewole	Deputy Program Manager	Climate Investment Funds Administrative Unit (CIF—AU)
11	Christine Roehrer	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	Climate Investment Funds Administrative Unit (CIF – AU)
12	Tracy Raczek	External Relations Specialist/Climate and Environment	UN WOMEN
13	Motoko Seko	Specialist, Gender and Human Rights	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund)
14	Lucy Wanjiru	Programme Specialist, Gender and Environment, Gender Team	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)