

Gender and Climate Change Brief for the Adaptation Committee

This brief includes relevant information for constituted body members on gender integration under the UNFCCC process, including an introduction to mandates, an explanation of gender and commonly used terminology as well as the gender and climate change nexus. Finally, the brief includes a section explaining how the Adaptation Committee is addressing this issue, with an annex of relevant resources.

GENDER AND THE ROLE OF CONSTITUTED BODIES

Integrating gender considerations – understanding and taking into account differing needs, priorities, access to resources, roles, power – and engaging women and men equally at all levels of climate planning and implementation can ensure **more effective mitigation and adaptation outcomes** and ensure that women and men have **equal opportunities** to contribute to and benefit from climate action.



ALL CONSTITUTED BODIES ARE REQUESTED TO include in their regular reports information on progress towards integrating a gender perspective into their respective processes (decision 3/CP.25, para 12) and the secretariat is requested to produce a biennial synthesis report on progress in integrating a gender perspective into constituted body processes (decision 3/CP.25, para 15(b)).

How are constituted bodies **supported** in progressing in integrating a gender perspective?

- Technical paper ([FCCC/TP/2018/1](#)) provides information on entry points for integrating gender considerations into UNFCCC workstreams.
- Secretariat to provide **capacity-building** support to constituted bodies and secretariat staff in integrating a gender perspective into their respective areas of work in collaboration with relevant organizations, as appropriate (3/CP.25 LWPG para 15(c)).
- Secretariat to ensure that members of constituted bodies are introduced to gender-related mandates and to the relevance of gender in the context of their work in a consistent and systematic manner (3/CP.25 GAP activity C.1).

GENDER UNDER THE UNFCCC – GENERAL CONTEXT

The **PARIS AGREEMENT** acknowledges in its preamble “that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity”. There are also references to gender-responsive adaptation action (Art. 7) and capacity-building (Art. 11).

The **KATOWICE CLIMATE PACKAGE** includes multiple references to gender/women/social (impacts, consequences)

Topic	Decision	Decision description	Gender or social references
Mitigation	4/CMA.1	Further guidance in relation to the mitigation section of decision 1/CP.21 (para 7, annex para 4)	Gender-responsive (information on the planning of NDCs) Social consequences (of response measures)
Adaptation	10/CMA.1	Modalities and procedures for the operation and use of a public registry referred to in Article 7, paragraph 12, of the Paris Agreement	Gender-responsive (adaptation action in adaptation communications)
Climate finance	12/CMA.1	Identification of the information to be provided by Parties in accordance with Article 9, paragraph 5, of the Paris Agreement	Gender responsiveness (developed country biennial communication; information on policies and priorities)

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Technology	15/CMA.1	Technology framework under Article 10, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement	Multiple references: gender, socially sound, gender-responsiveness and gender perspective
Transparency	18/CMA.1	Modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support referred to in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement	Social consequences, social impacts, social vulnerabilities, gender perspectives, gender balance
Global Stocktake	19/CMA.1	Matters relating to Article 14 of the Paris Agreement and paragraphs 99-101 of decision 1/CP.21	Social impacts (response measures)
Committee to facilitate implementation and promote compliance	20/CMA.1	Modalities and procedures for the effective operation of the committee referred to in Article 15, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement	Gender balance (committee)

GENDER UNDER THE CONVENTION – GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE AGENDA ITEM

The principal decision for gender under the convention is the **enhanced Lima work programme on gender (LWPG) and its gender action plan (GAP)** (decision 3/CP.25), which builds on the previous LWPG (decision 18/CP.20 and 21/CP.22) and the first GAP (decision 3/CP.23).

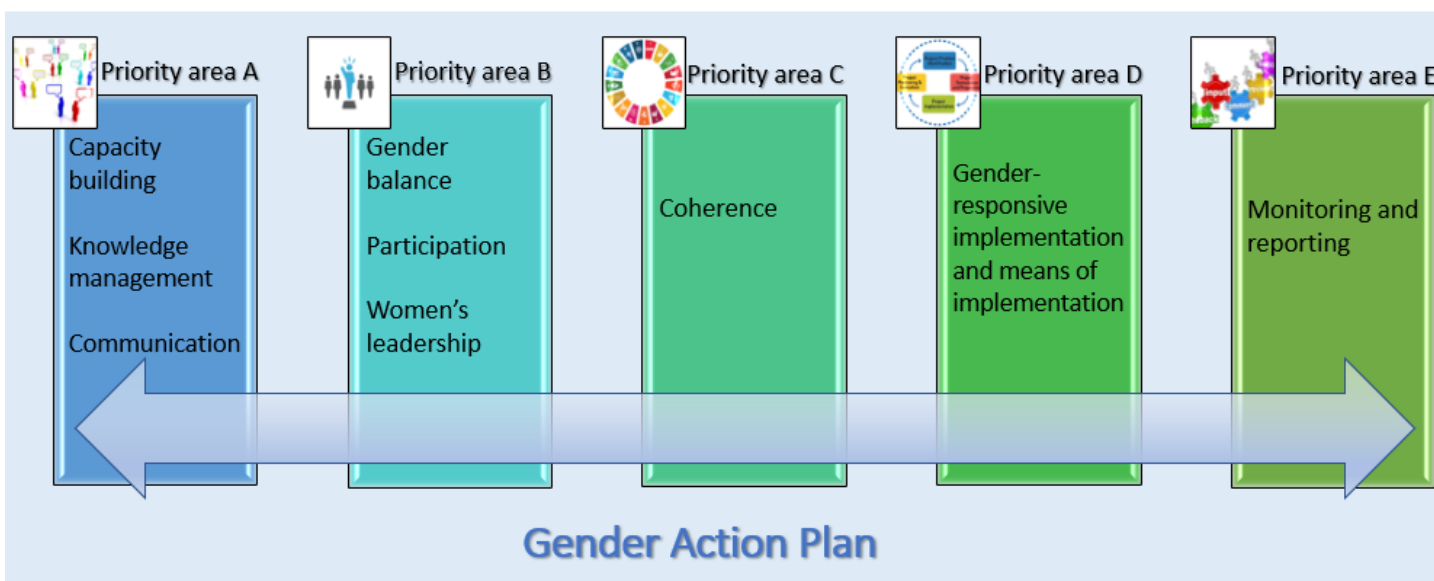
The LWPG and GAP support the achievement of gender-responsive climate policy and action at all levels and gender balance within the UNFCCC process. The LWPG and GAP further acknowledge the continuing need for gender **mainstreaming through all relevant targets and goals in activities under the Convention** as an important contribution to increasing their **effectiveness, fairness and sustainability**.

LWPG

- Long-term, open-ended action
- Secretariat regular functions
- Gender action plan as an annex
- Review of progress/further work to be undertaken in November 2024

GAP

- 5 priority areas with objectives
- 20 activities
- 35 outputs
- Intermediate review of implementation in June 2022



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GENDER UNDER THE CONVENTION – SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES UNDER THE GAP

Activity	Responsibility	Deliverables/outputs and Timeline
C.2 Facilitate the exchange of views and best practices of the Chairs of constituted bodies on how to strengthen the integration of the gender perspective into their work, taking into account the synthesis reports on progress in integrating a gender perspective into constituted body processes referred to in paragraph 15(b) of this decision	Leading: Chairs of constituted bodies Contributing: secretariat	Selection of topics for dialogue SB 56 (2022)
	Leading: secretariat Contributing: relevant organizations	Compilation of good practices for integrating gender into the work of the constituted bodies SB 56 (2022)
	Leading: Chairs of constituted bodies Contributing: secretariat	Dialogue SB 58 (2023)
	Secretariat	Dialogue report SB 59 (2023)
C.3 Strengthen coordination between the work on gender considerations of the subsidiary bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement and other relevant United Nations entities and processes, in particular the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as applicable	Leading: secretariat Contributing: Parties, constituted bodies , relevant organizations	In-session dialogue on Gender Day focused on one thematic area relevant to the Convention and the Paris Agreement to promote coherence reflecting multidimensional factors
D.3 Promote the deployment of gender-responsive technological solutions to address climate change, including strengthening, protecting and preserving local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in different sectors and for improving climate resilience, and by fostering women's and girls' full participation and leadership in science, technology, research and development	Leading: Parties, relevant organizations, constituted bodies Contributing: secretariat	Workshops, capacity-building initiatives, webinars

WHAT IS GENDER

Sex refers to the **biological** difference between women and men.

Gender refers to the **social** attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys and amongst them. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through the socialization process. Gender is a relevant point of analysis for developing and implementing climate policy and action.

Gender-responsive (climate policies, programmes, projects, action etc) are nondiscriminatory, equally benefit women, men, girls and boys and aim to address gender inequalities through design and implementation.

Gender balance refers to the ratio of women to men in any given situation.

GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change impacts often differ between women and men, including in relation to vulnerabilities, the benefits flowing from responses to climate change and who is participating in decision-making on the climate emergency.

A report prepared by the secretariat in 2019 highlighted that differences were due to existing gender inequalities caused by unequal power relations, unequal access to and control of resources and discriminatory laws and customs, rather than any inherent qualities of women and men. It recognized that differences also arise from other, intersecting inequalities, such as age, ethnicity, (dis)ability or socio-economic status.

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As gender is socially constructed, the laws, norms and customs that are associated with each gender varies between communities and contexts. It also means that these law, norms and customs can be changed to ensure that women, men, girls and boys are equally empowered to respond to and act on climate change.

Some illustrative examples:¹

- Women and girls are not inherently more vulnerable than men. Rather vulnerability to different climate events results from the social and gender norms which affect people's access to resources and information, inclusion/exclusion from participation and receiving services, agency, learned survival skills and behavioral choices. The 90% female fatalities during Hurricane Gorky resulted from societal expectations of Bangladeshi women to remain at home, which both excluded them from accessing information and made them less likely to evacuate without a male relative. Furthermore, few women in Bangladesh are taught how to swim. In other instances, men have been shown to be more likely to die during natural disaster as for example during some hurricanes and storms in the US and during fires in Australia. This disparity can be explained through higher representation of men in emergency response jobs and higher engagement in risky behavior such as driving in flood water or not evacuating to protect property. Not all women and all men are the same. After Hurricane Katrina black women were shown to be at the highest risk for psychosocial distress or depression, mental and physical impairment.
- A case example of a REDD+ programme in Viet Nam, which showed that a lack of understanding of what it meant to achieve meaningful participation (rendering it tokenistic), and gender relations and power dynamics not sufficiently being reflected and addressed, resulted in equal benefit sharing not being achieved and/or that gender and social inequalities were exacerbated.²
- Some studies have shown that women tend to be more concerned than men about the environment and effects of climate change and are therefore often early adopters and more likely to support mitigation actions. Policy

needs to take into account that behaviour is linked to people's self-conception and that specific polluting or sustainable behaviours being perceived as feminine or masculine will influence how likely people are to engage or disengage in them. Some examples include meat consumption in men, driving at high speed, transportation mode choice in general. In a world where femininity is devalued it was shown that some men actively avoid sustainable choices as environmental concern and sustainable choices were perceived as female.

- Understanding travel behaviour is central to an effective transition to low-carbon transport infrastructure and services, since such modes of transport, including public transport, cycling and walking, may not meet the complex needs and preferences of everyone. Currently women's transportation needs, which differ from men's largely due to the gender division in formal and informal work as well as security concerns and other social restrictions, are not adequately addressed. Taking gender into account is crucial to ensure the uptake of sustainable transportation modes – as well as any other technology or behaviour change – and ultimately its effectiveness for addressing the climate crises.
- Men are likely to be affected during the transition to a low-carbon economy due to their overrepresentation in relevant sectors. Specifically, those in low-paid jobs are vulnerable to these changes. A just transition would mean that pre-existing and historical inequalities on the basis of gender but also class, ethnicity, etc., would be considered. For a rapid transition to new sustainable and low-carbon systems it is essential that the required skills and human capital are available. Women are vastly underrepresented in these sectors and job profiles: the share of women in STEM jobs in renewable energy is 28%. Investing in women's and girl's education and removing barriers to their entry of the job market as well as career development are thus essential for addressing the climate crisis.

¹ References can be found in the annex.

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THE ADAPTATION COMMITTEE WORK ON GENDER

In the establishment of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, Parties [affirmed](#) that enhanced action on adaptation should follow a **gender-sensitive** approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems. The Paris Agreement subsequently refers to **gender-responsive** adaptation action.

As an activity under the first GAP, the Adaptation Committee (AC) received capacity building on gender at its 14th meeting and was informed about gender-related activities under the UNFCCC. Subsequently the AC agreed to appoint a gender focal point³ and to incorporate gender as a cross-cutting consideration into **all** its activities.⁴

As a result, during 2019, the AC has developed a:

- [Concept note](#) on Incorporating gender considerations into adaptation action and across the AC's workplan activities,
- [Concept note](#) on joint event organized by the AC and the PCCB on identifying gaps and solutions related to incorporating gender considerations into adaptation planning and implementation
- [Workplan](#) to mainstream gender perspective into the work of the AC

These documents are the basis by which the AC has begun to work collaboratively with relevant constituted bodies and partners⁵ to incorporate gender considerations into adaptation action.

During its 15th meeting, the AC elaborated the integration of gender considerations in its work in relation to:

- advancing equal representation of women,
- wider inclusion of gender considerations.

Equal Representation:

The AC has demonstrated a commitment to equal gender representation in the committee, including:

- In 2019, 56% of the AC members are women.

- Since becoming operational in late 2012, the AC has had an equal number of male and female presiding officers.
- There has been continuous encouragement for Parties to nominate experts to the AC with a diversity of experience and knowledge relevant to adaptation to climate change, while taking into account the goal of gender balance⁶.

Wider inclusion of gender considerations

- The AC meetings are inclusive and open to observers, such as the Women and Gender Constituency who actively contribute to plenary discussions and breakout groups,
- In its report to COP24, the AC urged Parties and non-Party stakeholders to mainstream gender considerations in all stages of their adaptation planning processes, including national adaptation plans and the implementation of adaptation action⁷, taking into account available guidance
- The 2018 [technical examination process](#) on adaptation (TEP-A) on 'Opportunities and options for enhancing adaptation planning in relation to vulnerable ecosystems, communities and groups' had a particular focus on women in adaptation planning, policymaking and implementation;
- A joint meeting of the AC and the Nairobi work programme held in 2014 on regional and traditional knowledge and the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation⁸. The meeting was enriched by sharing experiences and case studies by organisations such as Oxfam, the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Co-ordinating Committee, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and CARE International.

³ [Concept note](#) – para 15 e)

⁴ [Areas of Work webpage](#)

⁵ such as the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP), the Least Developed Countries Expert (LEG), the women and gender constituency (WGC), the Paris Committee for Capacity Building (PCCB) and Green Climate Fund (GCF),

⁶ Decision 4/CP.20, paragraph 5 and decision 3/CP.21, paragraph 8.

⁷

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp24_auv_adap%20cttee.pdf

⁸ <https://unfccc.int/event/itk-gender-expert-meeting>

NEXUS OF GENDER AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Gender roles and relations lead to differential vulnerability between men and women. Gender-blind adaptation responses therefore run the risk of reinforcing the existing gendered nature of vulnerability and resulting inequality.

Gender-responsive adaptation, based on an understanding of the way in which vulnerability is gendered, is better targeted to the different needs of men and women, and thus more effective and efficient. Equitable adaptation also offers the opportunity to contribute to transforming gender relations and bringing about greater equality.

A gender-responsive approach to adaptation is critical to understanding vulnerability and to effectively adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Adaptation measures that do not take into account drivers of inequality are likely to exacerbate social injustice and inequalities, which in themselves make adaptation less effective or even counterproductive.

Furthermore, women's participation in adaptation increases diversity in experiences and knowledge about environmental conditions and social constraints. Adaptation is so far the area in which the most robust gender-sensitive language has been integrated.

Some illustrative examples of gender integration in adaptation:

Gendered differentiated impact:

Although women comprise 43% of the agriculture workforce, only 12.8% of the landholders are women (UNEP, 2018). **Reducing their chances** to receive financing or extensions services to support their adaptation measures.

Gendered choices / behavior:

During crisis and times of scarcity and price escalation, **women are often the first to skip meals** or reduce consumption affecting substantially their food security and nutrition.

Globally, one in three women of reproductive age is still affected by anaemia, with significant health and development consequences for both women and their children. (FAO, 2018)

Women's potential as agents of change:

Women's communal knowledge of island hydrology in the Pacific Islands was employed in finding potable water by digging a new well that reached the

freshwater lens. Harnessing such wisdom and skill supports adaptation efforts. Perhaps more importantly, **women's contributions** can strengthen adaptive capacity of the society at large—by promoting the unique capacities of women in adaptation, it is possible to pursue the simultaneous objectives of building resilience in communities and promoting gender equality. (UNDP, 2013)

Example of adaptation measure with a gender lens:

1.500 Dimitra Clubs build resilience and contribute to rural people's empowerment in isolated rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa countries in protracted crises (Niger, Burundi and DRC).

The Dimitra Clubs are spaces for dialogue and action at community level that enable their members – women, men and boys and girls – to discuss problems and needs, share concerns and take collective action to improve their living conditions, thus becoming agents of change and development both in agriculture and in important social aspects (HIV/AIDS, early marriage, social cohesion, gender equality and women's rights to access resources). Local community radio stations broadcast programmes based on the discussions within the clubs, disseminating information on topics such as food and nutrition security, gender roles, and good practices in agriculture and health.

In DRC, a woman, member of a Dimitra Club declared: ***“Before the Clubs, the Lokelé women did not fish; now, we have our own nets and we also have become fishers. We have been waiting for this for a long time!”*** (FAO, 2016)

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ANNEX - USEFUL TOOLS AND NETWORKS: GENDER IN ADAPTATION

Platforms, portals and webpages with dedicated resources:

- [NAP Global Network](#)
- UNFCCC webpage on [Gender and adaptation](#)
- Adaptation fund – [Gender knowledge](#)
- [Adaptation Knowledge Portal](#) – Nairobi Work Programme
- Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange ([CAKE](#)) – EcoAdapt, Island Press
- Regional climate change adaptation knowledge platform for Asia ([AKP](#)) - SEI
- [Climate Change Information Centre](#) – CARE

Networks:

- [CTCN](#) gender Network
- Women Gender Constituency ([WGC](#))
- Women for Climate Justice ([GenderCC](#))
- Adaptation and Mitigation Knowledge Network ([AMKN](#)) – CGIAR
- Asian Pacific Adaptation Network ([APAN](#))- UNEP
- Climate and Development Network ([CDKN](#)) - PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC), Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano, LEAD International, LEAD Pakistan, the Overseas Development Institute, and SouthSouthNorth

Webinar:

- [Mainstreaming Gender in NDCs: Gender in Adaptation Planning](#) (UNDP NDC Support Programme, 2020)

Blog:

- [Unpacking Gender-Responsive Adaptation Finance: Key issues and the way forward](#) (IISD, 2020)

Toolkits:

- [Gender-Responsive Process to Formulate and Implement National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) (IISD, 2019)
- Training guide: [Gender in adaptation planning for the agriculture sectors](#) (FAO, 2019)
- [Water in National Adaptation Plans](#) (GWP, 2019)

- [Towards gender-responsive NAP processes: Progress and recommendations for the way forward](#) (IISD, 2018)

Infographic:

- [Addressing gender equality in climate Change adaptation](#) (IISD, 2019)

Course:

- [Free](#) online course on Gender and Climate Change