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**Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and
adaptation to climate change**

Report on the meeting on available tools for the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, needs of local and indigenous communities and the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This report provides a summary of the joint meeting on available tools for the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, needs of local and indigenous communities and the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation, organized by the Adaptation Committee and under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, which was held in Bonn, Germany, from 1 to 4 April 2014. Through discussions taking place in plenary and interactive breakout sessions, participants shared good practices, opportunities and challenges with respect to the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, addressing the needs of local and indigenous communities, and the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation. The report includes a summary of recommendations identified by participants for follow-up and further consideration, including by the Adaptation Committee and under the Nairobi work programme.

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I. Introduction

A. Background and mandate

1. The Adaptation Committee, in its three-year workplan, which was approved at the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP),¹ agreed to convene a workshop on best practices and needs of local and indigenous communities with input from and the participation of relevant bodies and programmes in order to share technical adaptation-related expertise.
2. In the context of the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at its thirty-eighth session requested the secretariat, under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA and in collaboration with relevant organizations, to organize a technical expert meeting, before SBSTA 40, on the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, and the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for understanding and assessing impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, with a view to developing recommendations for practitioners on such matters.²
3. Following a recommendation from the Adaptation Committee, SBSTA 39 further requested the secretariat to organize this in conjunction with the Adaptation Committee's workshop on best practices and needs of local and indigenous communities.³
4. The meeting was informed by a technical paper on best practices and available tools for the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, and the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for understanding and assessing impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.⁴
5. In line with its workplan, the Adaptation Committee will consider the outcomes of the meeting, including the present report, at its 6th meeting to identify recommendations and guidance for consideration by the COP, as appropriate and as needed, with a view to providing technical support and guidance to Parties, in order to facilitate the enhanced implementation of adaptation actions.

B. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

6. The SBSTA may wish to consider this report at its fortieth session as part of its consideration of the outputs of activities completed under the Nairobi work programme prior to that session. It may also wish to consider the recommendations referred to in chapters III.D and IV.D that pertain to its mandate (i.e. the provision of scientific and technological advice) in the elaboration of further activities under the Nairobi work programme.

¹ Decision 11/CP.18.

² FCCC/SBSTA/2013/3, paragraph 17.

³ FCCC/SBSTA/2013/5, paragraph 13(a).

⁴ FCCC/TP/2013/11.

II. Proceedings

7. The meeting was held in Bonn, Germany, from 1 to 4 April 2014 under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, Mr. Emmanuel Dlamini, and the Co-Chair of the Adaptation Committee, Mr. Juan Pablo Hoffmaister. The Governments of Canada and Switzerland provided financial support for the organization of the meeting.

8. The meeting was attended by over 60 representatives from Parties, constituted bodies under the Convention (the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group and the Technology Executive Committee), and relevant international and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as representatives of indigenous communities that are active in the fields of climate change impact and vulnerability assessment, and adaptation planning and practices, including in those areas related to the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices and the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation.

9. Discussions at the meeting were informed by the technical paper referred to in paragraph 4 above. In addition, participants exchanged and provided information, highlighting a diverse range of experiences and good practices in applying local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in adaptation and in applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools in the adaptation process, including for understanding and assessing impacts, vulnerability and adaptation.⁵

10. Discussions on the first two days of the meeting focused on the use of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, while the last two days were devoted to the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for understanding and assessing impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.⁶ The overall number of presentations was minimized and the time spent in small groups maximized to give participants as much opportunity as possible to share their experiences and expertise, to learn from one another and to foster collaborative relationships. Participants exchanged a diverse range of experiences, lessons learned and challenges through interactive, energetic group discussions that led to the identification of concrete challenges, opportunities and recommendations.

11. Following the introductory remarks by the Chair of the SBSTA and the Co-Chair of the Adaptation Committee, the first part of the meeting, focusing on the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, began. The short plenary proceedings were followed by participants moving into small groups to share their experiences with a view to identifying the emerging patterns. During an afternoon session, participants worked in small groups to identify opportunities for and challenges in applying local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation. The second day started with three presentations and discussions on good practices and tools related to different aspects of applying local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, followed by a discussion on an enabling environment for scaling up good practices and sharing tools as well as ways of creating such an environment. Taking account of the results of the previous discussions, participants identified recommendations and guidance for different actors on how to enhance the application and integration of local, indigenous

⁵ Information provided by participants on the use of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge is available at <unfccc.int/8154> and information on the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools is available at <unfccc.int/8155>.

⁶ Relevant information on the meeting, including the agenda, scoping note and presentations, is available at <unfccc.int/8020>.

and traditional knowledge and practices in the adaptation process. The first part of the meeting concluded with a summary by the Co-Chair of the Adaptation Committee and the official closing by the Chair of the SBSTA.

12. On the third day, following the opening of the second part of the meeting by the Chair of the SBSTA, the introductory session on the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation was initiated with participants sharing their experiences and reflecting on the different stories to identify the emerging patterns. During the afternoon session, participants worked in small groups in order to identify opportunities for and challenges in applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation. On the fourth day, participants worked individually and in pairs to develop recommendations for different actors based on the key needs identified on the previous day, which were then consolidated by the group. The results of this group exercise led to the identification of a set of concrete recommendations and guidance for different actors on how to enhance the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation. The meeting concluded with a summary by the Chair of the SBSTA.

III. Analysis of key issues addressed: available tools for the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation, and needs of local and indigenous communities

A. Introduction

13. The summary for policymakers in the contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*, noted that “Indigenous, local, and traditional knowledge systems and practices, including indigenous peoples’ holistic view of community and environment, are a major resource for adapting to climate change, but these have not been used consistently in existing adaptation efforts. Integrating such forms of knowledge with existing practices increases the effectiveness of adaptation”.⁷

14. During the meeting, participants sought to identify ways of better integrating such forms of knowledge. They focused their discussions during plenary and breakout sessions on the following questions:

(a) What are the best practices, trends, needs and limitations in the use of indigenous, traditional and local knowledge and practices?

(b) How can local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices be collected, evaluated and disseminated for use by local, national and international adaptation practitioners?

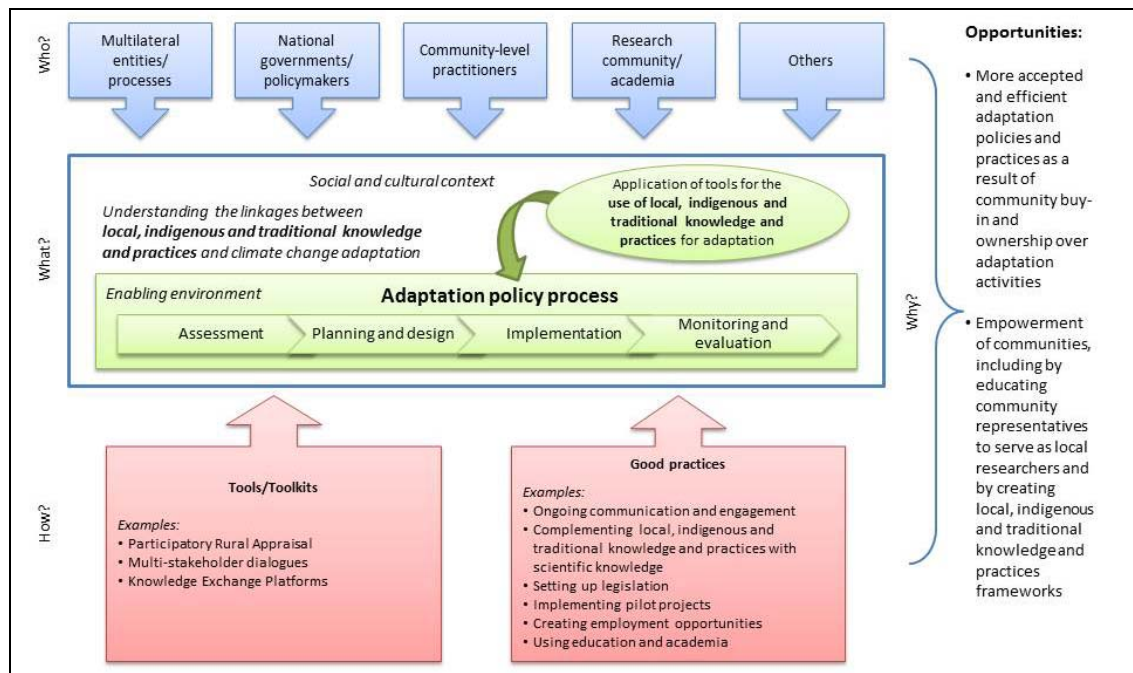
(c) How can local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices inform adaptation and how can practitioners integrate local, indigenous and traditional knowledge with scientific knowledge in adaptation planning and implementation? When is it appropriate to do so?

(d) How can holders of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices be effectively engaged in the adaptation process?

⁷ Available at <http://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/images/uploads/IPCC_WG2AR5_SPM_Approved.pdf>.

15. In discussing these questions, participants identified opportunities for and challenges in using indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices as well as the needs of local and indigenous communities and sought ways to address them through sharing of lessons learned, good practices and tools (see figure 1). Recommendations were made on how to further enhance the integration of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into ongoing adaptation planning and implementation while acknowledging the rights and addressing the needs of local and indigenous communities.

Figure 1
An overview of key issues discussed in relation to the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation



B. Opportunities for and challenges in the use of indigenous knowledge, addressing the needs of local and indigenous communities

16. Participants began by sharing their experiences, including opportunities identified and challenges encountered, in the collaboration between holders of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, local communities, scientists and researchers, and policymakers.

17. It was underlined that enhanced collaboration offers **opportunities** for both adaptation and local and indigenous communities and can lead to:

- (a) More accepted and efficient adaptation policies and practices and informed decision-making as a result of community buy-in and ownership of adaptation activities. Adaptation activities developed in close collaboration between a variety of stakeholders and on the basis of locally pertinent information, needs and priorities have a greater likelihood of success, reducing risks and vulnerability and being sustainable. This also builds on the notion that communities should inform the consideration and choice of adaptation options;

(b) The empowerment of communities, including by educating community representatives to serve as local researchers and by creating indigenous and traditional knowledge frameworks.

18. However, **challenges and needs** remain, including those relating to:

(a) The context and cultural specificity of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, which constrains their replication and scaling up in other contexts;

(b) The ability and willingness of national and local governments to engage with local and indigenous communities and to appreciate and respect the body of traditional knowledge and practices. The different roles and responsibilities of the various actors in the collaboration need to be made clear and recognized by all involved;

(c) The ability of time-bound adaptation projects and initiatives to recognize the relatively long time frame required to build relations, trust and a collaborative environment with local communities and holders of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices;

(d) The need to ensure predictable and tangible benefits for, and empowerment of, communities resulting from collaboration. Otherwise local and indigenous communities face the risk of their knowledge and practices being extracted without proper compensation, which can then lead to collaboration fatigue;

(e) Limited resources, including finance, technology and capacity. While the indigenous and local communities vulnerable to impacts of climate change have rich knowledge in managing natural resources sustainably, they have minimal access to resources to address adverse climate impacts;

(f) Changes in local and indigenous communities themselves through the adoption of modern lifestyles, which can lead to the discontinuation of intergenerational learning and abandonment of local and traditional practices.

C. **Current experience in using and collaborating on local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices: lessons learned, good practices and tools**

19. Following the identification of opportunities, challenges and needs, participants focused on ways to address them, including through sharing lessons learned, good practices and tools.

20. While experiences differed across various geographical and cultural backgrounds, a number of common **lessons learned** emerged:

(a) The importance of **taking an integrated perspective of sustaining livelihoods and culture** rather than just focusing on adaptation and climate change. Many participants highlighted the need to take a problem-solving approach, that is, to look at a particular issue in areas such as water, health or food security that is leading to increasing risk and vulnerability of a community. Thus, any adaptation activities are put into the context of local culture and decision-making;

(b) The importance of **respect and trust in collaborating and of the recognition of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices**. For example, collaboration around water resources in Chiang Mai province in Thailand led to the use of local and indigenous knowledge by upland tribal communities and their legitimate participation in managing upland forests. Eventually, local bylaws and legislation were changed and the collaboration even influenced revisions to the constitution to provide greater recognition of and protection for the rights of local communities in the management

of natural resources and the environment. Similarly, recognition of traditional resource management practices such as the *ahupua'a* resource management practice in Hawaii⁸ can lead to more integrative adaptation planning;

(c) The importance of **capacity-building and empowerment of local communities and holders of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices**. For example, the empowerment of Inuit and First Nations communities in Canada by involving them in the adaptation research and planning process led to these communities undertaking projects that address their needs and priorities in a community-led rather than a community-based framework;

(d) The **multiple benefits stemming from the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices**. Besides offering adaptation benefits, using and applying indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices can enhance social cohesion and prevent or reduce inter-community conflicts as seen, for example, in northern Thailand or in pastoralist communities along the Sahel belt;

(e) The importance of **intermediary institutions** to record, validate and share the local and indigenous knowledge and practices that lead to successful adaptation.

21. Following from the lessons learned, participants identified a number of common **good practices**:

(a) **Ensuring ongoing two-way communication and the engagement of local, indigenous and traditional communities** through transparent processes and good governance at all levels, including through appropriate central coordination mechanisms. The full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in the design, development and implementation of adaptation policies and plans enhances the effectiveness of adaptation measures, reduces conflicts during implementation and contributes to the recognition of the rights of indigenous communities. For example, the Mbororo pastoralists in Chad were engaged in a national dialogue on pastoralism and climate change that relates to issues faced by most countries along the Sahel belt and other drylands. Additionally, where the dissemination of scientific information to communities can be confusing, the integration of indigenous and traditional knowledge allows communities to better relate to more contextualized products as done, for example, in Vanuatu's Cloud Nasara toolkit,⁹ which aims to increase awareness of the science of El Niño and La Niña and their impacts;

(b) **Complementing modern scientific knowledge, practices and tools with indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices**. For example, the inclusion of indigenous and traditional observations and insights can complement modern meteorological observations and help to extend the record back in time and place. Vanuatu adopted its own national approach for using traditional knowledge for improved climate seasonal forecasting and adaptation to climate change. It involves hybridizing seasonal forecasting based on meteorological science with long-term seasonal forecasting based on traditional observations of local animal behaviour, plant flowering and fruiting, and cloud and sky indicators while ensuring that appropriate protocols for the collection and management of data are respected. In Kenya and Chad, traditional grazing techniques are enhanced by grazing plans, which are developed through modern global positioning and

⁸ The concept of *ahupua'a* (management) has been the foundation of traditional Hawaiian land and resource management for over 1,500 years. It extends from inland or mountains through the sea along ridges or other natural features (such as streams) and fully integrates geographical, cultural, human and spiritual resources.

⁹ Details of the toolkit are available at www.pacificclimatechangescience.org/animations/cloudnasara.

global information systems mapping and which are monitored by community grazing committees;

(c) **Setting up legislation and developing guidelines and protocols** for appropriate conflict resolution to protect and recognize local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices. Participants agreed to treat local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices as a resource/asset, which should be subject to the application of a rights-based approach and protected under an appropriate intellectual property rights regime. For example, the Government of Timor-Leste has strengthened the traditional law of *tara bandu*¹⁰ to protect and preserve natural resources across the country by establishing a designated department and recognizing it in the national constitution;

(d) Other good practices identified for using and maintaining local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, including:

(i) **Implementing pilot projects** for demonstrating positive interventions and impacts;

(ii) **Creating employment opportunities**, for example through eco- and cultural tourism;

(iii) **Using education and academia** by integrating local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into school and university curricula.

22. Participants also identified a number of **tools** to assist in the application of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation planning and implementation, including:

(a) **Participatory rural appraisal tools**, including participatory assessment and evaluation, participatory mapping and demarcation of protected areas and focus group meetings. For example, tribal communities in north-east India facing droughts identified and documented their traditional knowledge and practices through participatory assessment, which led to a better analysis of the situation and empowered the community to undertake adaptation measures. For Mbororo livestock herders living in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, participatory three-dimensional modelling has proved to be a successful community-based mapping method to document traditional knowledge across generations and feed it into national adaptation plans and strategies. It allows decision-makers to see where the problems, challenges and opportunities are in landscapes that are under stress;

(b) **Multi-stakeholder dialogues and supportive institutional structures at the national and local levels** to facilitate interaction among the different stakeholders. For example, in Thailand multi-stakeholder collaboration helped in reducing conflict by allowing the appreciation of different groups' needs and constraints, providing a continuous and regular platform for different stakeholders to discuss issues and plan solutions and developing commonly agreed rules and regulations;

(c) **Knowledge exchange platforms** to facilitate exchanges between communities, scientists and policymakers. As local and indigenous knowledge is dynamic and specific to a certain geographical location, providing forums to exchange knowledge and practices, it creates awareness and enhances adaptive capacities. In the Himalayas, the Adaptation Learning Highways initiative facilitates the harnessing of indigenous knowledge to improve local adaptation plans and actions. The initiative consists of three

¹⁰ *Taru bandu* is an agreement made by a local community to protect a particular area such as forests, crops, marine resources or areas for hunting or fishing for a period of time. The custom not only preserves nature but also regulates day to day social matters and is a major tool for conflict prevention and resolution at the local community level.

interlinked horizontal and vertical platforms: the community to community knowledge exchange forum, the community to scientists interface and the forum for interaction with policymakers.

D. Summary of recommendations and issues for further consideration

23. Based on the presentations and discussions, participants identified a range of activities to be undertaken by different actors in the following areas in order to advance the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation and address the needs of local communities:

- (a) Collection, sharing and scaling up of good practices and tools;
- (b) Mobilization of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation and addressing the needs of local communities;
- (c) Recognition, participation and engagement;
- (d) Consideration and integration of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in national adaptation planning processes;
- (e) Access to support.

24. In order to support the **collection, sharing and scaling up of good practices and tools** at all levels, participants recommended that:

- (a) An inventory of available data collection initiatives such as the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies¹¹ be developed under the Nairobi work programme and the SBSTA, with the work being undertaken at different levels;
- (b) Communities, intermediaries, regional organizations and regional donors create communities of practice and networks at different levels and encourage direct exchange visits¹² with a view to sharing good practices and tools at key meetings and events;
- (c) Data centres, intermediaries and funders support appropriate sharing and management of information and data while recognizing and, where needed, establishing appropriate standards, protocols and agreements to protect the rights of local communities and holders of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices.

25. In order to enhance the **mobilization of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation and addressing the needs of local communities**, participants recommended the following:

- (a) At all levels, actors should:
 - (i) Fully appreciate indigenous and traditional knowledge in a manner commensurate with modern science. Some participants called for indigenous and traditional knowledge to be recognized as an indigenous science, whereas others preferred to refer to it as a knowledge system;

¹¹ Details are available at <www.wocat.net>.

¹² For example, the Alliance of Central Asian Mountain Communities, which was established in 2003 and is financially supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, seeks to promote the interests of the mountain communities in the region, improve communication between mountain villages and exchange of successful experiences through exchange visits between member villages and annual regional conferences.

(ii) Recognize ownership of community knowledge and practices and their evolution over time and ensure that it is local and indigenous communities and authorities that determine the extent to which local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices are validated, mobilized and shared;

(iii) Invest in long-term, two-way capacity-building that would include cross-generational and community aspects and communities' recognition of the importance of climate change and the opportunities offered to address impacts through indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices;

(b) National and local governments should:

(i) Set up platforms, legislation and protocols to ensure that the rights of indigenous communities are respected;

(ii) Institutionalize the linkages between informal local, indigenous and traditional processes and formal governmental processes;

(iii) Integrate local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into the adaptation process and ensure that communities are consulted as early as at the conception stage.

26. In order to **enable the recognition, participation and engagement** of local communities and holders of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in the adaptation process, participants recommended the following actions:

(a) At the international level, mainstream local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into the national adaptation plan (NAP) process;

(b) At the national level:

(i) Take stock and assess whether and how local communities and holders of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices are involved in decision-making processes and the development of legislation, and take appropriate subsequent action;

(ii) Assess whether local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices are recognized;

(iii) Support relevant organizations in monitoring and evaluating government recognition of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices so as to ensure accountability;

(c) At the local level:

(i) Build capacity to allow for community-led rather than community-based research;

(ii) Recognize the diversity of knowledge and practices at the community level;

(iii) Ensure that research funding bodies make community engagement a key point in project design, without which funding should not be provided;

(iv) Ensure that researchers apply good practice guidelines when collaborating with local and indigenous communities.

27. In order to facilitate the **consideration and appropriate integration of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in national adaptation planning processes**, participants recommended that:

(a) At the outset of any national adaptation planning process, a national dialogue be convened involving all stakeholders, including local communities and holders of

indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, to create a common national vision on adaptation;

- (b) During the national adaptation planning process, the national government:
 - (i) Engage and involve subnational governments to enhance their understanding of the importance of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices;
 - (ii) Facilitate the involvement of intermediaries such as NGOs, community- and faith-based organizations and universities, and clearly identify their roles in the adaptation process;
 - (iii) Set up local plans and platforms to gather different stakeholders and reach upper levels of governments;
- (c) Support the integration of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into national adaptation planning processes:
 - (i) Through finance/economic instruments, including through earmarking and budget allocations by national government and donors, to ensure the incorporation of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in adaptation planning. Any budget should be flexible to comprehensively assess the true costs of integrating local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, that is, it should also account for travel costs to reach rural and isolated communities;
 - (ii) Through monitoring and evaluating the integration of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices at the local and national levels;
 - (iii) Through enhancing accountability and enforcing implementation of existing laws, rules and procedures dealing with local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices;
 - (iv) Through education, in order to develop tools and programmes to institutionalize local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in national processes and policies;
 - (v) Through enhanced two-way communication, including the development of local narratives, toolkits and appropriate information and communication technology;
 - (vi) Through research and awareness, including the documentation of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices and their dissemination through policy briefings;
 - (vii) Through advocacy/campaigning, thus ensuring the recognition of the rights of local communities and holders of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices throughout the adaptation process.

28. In order to enhance **access to support**, participants recommended:

- (a) That the UNFCCC negotiating process:
 - (i) Provide guidance to the Adaptation Fund and to the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, as operating entities of the financial mechanism, in integrating local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into procedures for monitoring, evaluation and reporting. These entities could be encouraged to consider soft targets for the allocation of funds for indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices;

- (ii) Provide organizations with stimuli and a mandate by inviting them to strengthen the consideration of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in their adaptation activities and to share their experiences;
- (iii) Mandate the Joint Liaison Group of the three Rio Conventions to produce a joint publication on indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation in all United Nations languages;
- (iv) Invite Parties to integrate local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into adaptation project proposals and national adaptation plans, to provide financial and technical support, to prepare reader-friendly summaries of adaptation work under the Convention and to support strategic stakeholder engagement;
- (v) Consider, under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA and the Adaptation Committee, the establishment of a group of experts to support the application of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in adaptation and to assess and report on the role of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in adaptation, for example through inviting submissions and preparing subsequent reports;
- (vi) Consider the provision of technical support, for example in identifying good practices in stakeholder engagement or collecting possible indicators;
 - (b) That donor entities:
 - (i) Explore ways of streamlining access to adaptation funding for local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices and reporting requirements for projects;
 - (ii) Improve consistency on issues related to local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, for example by defining indicators;
 - (c) That scientific organizations take note of the reinforced recognition of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation by, for example, the IPCC AR5, the Arctic Council and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and to formulate guidelines, procedures and approaches to bring the consideration of local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices into decision-making processes.

IV. Analysis of key issues addressed: application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation

A. Introduction

29. This chapter draws on the presentations and discussions during plenary and breakout sessions, and summarizes the key issues derived from these, focusing on the following questions:

- (a) What gender-sensitive tools and approaches exist to support the understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change? What are the good practices?
- (b) What are the greatest opportunities and challenges faced by the practitioners in the application of gender-sensitive tools and approaches for adaptation?
- (c) How can gender-sensitive approaches and tools inform adaptation and how can practitioners (at multiple levels) apply gender-sensitive approaches and tools in

understanding and assessing impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change? When is it appropriate to do so? What is needed in terms of an enabling environment?

(d) What are the recommendations and guidance for different actors, including local communities, adaptation practitioners, national adaptation planners and policymakers and researchers, to enhance the application and integration of gender-sensitive tools and approaches for adaptation?

30. Participants identified a number of factors that underline the need for gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation (see the box for a definition of gender-sensitive approaches and tools), mostly relating to the difference between men and women in terms of their social roles and cultural specificities leading to different impacts of and vulnerabilities to climate change (see figure 2). In applying any gender-sensitive approaches and tools, the following aspects are deemed important to consider:

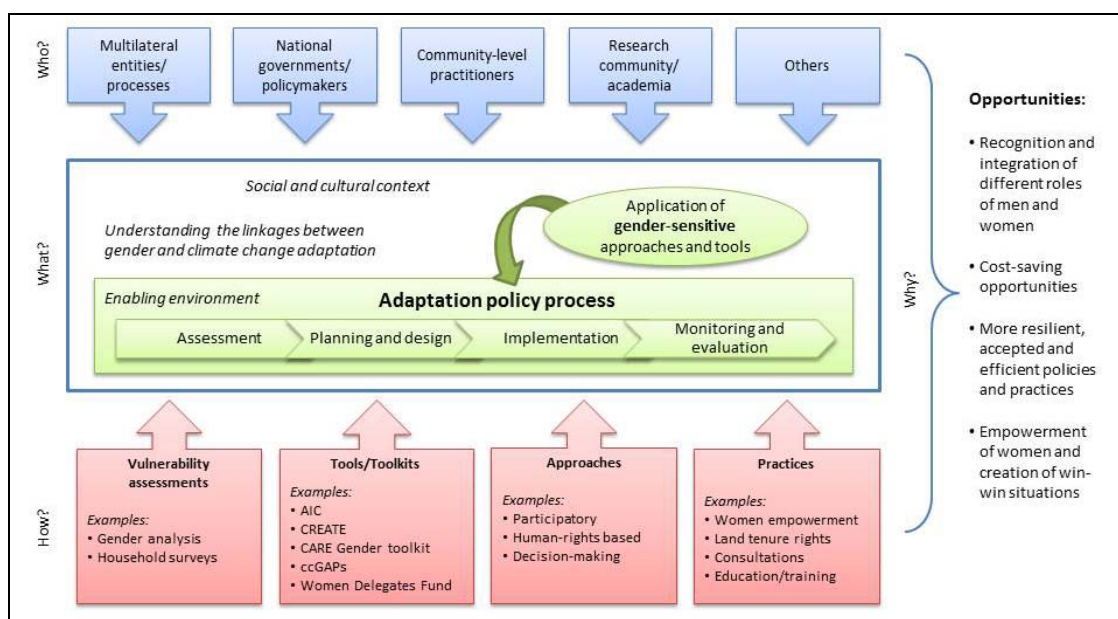
- (a) Recognition of social and cultural context;
- (b) Understanding of the different roles and priorities of men and women in different societies;
- (c) Recognition that women tend to be more knowledgeable about local resources;
- (d) Understanding of the different impacts and vulnerabilities of men and women with regard to climate change as well as the different impacts of adaptation options on men and women;
- (e) Understanding of the different methods and tools used by men and women in responding to hazards;
- (f) Understanding that cultural requirements for women and men are different in different societies (e.g. in some societies, cultural specificity and restrictions for women and greater household responsibility for women, including taking care of children and the elderly).

Definition of gender-sensitive approaches and tools

‘Gender-sensitive approaches and tools’ for understanding and assessing impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change refer to methodologies and practices applied to ensure that both men and women’s concerns, aspirations, opportunities and capacities are taken into account in all climate change adaptation activities, including assessments, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and technology development.

Source: FCCC/TP/2013/11.

Figure 2
An overview of key issues discussed in relation to the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation



Abbreviations: AIC = appreciate influence control, CREATE = Climate Resilience Evaluation for Adaptation through Empowerment, CARE = Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, ccGAPs = climate change gender action plans.

B. Opportunities and challenges for the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation

31. On **opportunities**, participants highlighted through their experiences and through case studies, that the application of gender-sensitive approaches for adaptation can lead to:

- (a) Catalysing of adaptation actions that recognize and integrate the different knowledge and roles of men and women;
- (b) Empowerment of women and creation of a win-win situation;
- (c) Cost-saving opportunities for adaptation projects and programmes;
- (d) More resilient, accepted and efficient policies and practices.

32. Application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation provides an excellent opportunity to **recognize different knowledge holders and integrate the knowledge of both men and women**. Participants identified women as holders of indigenous and traditional knowledge in many communities, mainly due to their roles in the societies. As such, they are seen as a change agent and source of innovation. A gender-sensitive approach would allow women's traditional knowledge to be used as an effective adaptation tool. For example, women in Hawaii used their knowledge of planting pandanus trees as an effective short-term adaptation option for shoreline management.

33. Adopting a gender-sensitive approach to adaptation is an opportunity to not only reduce women's vulnerability to climate change (which could be due to limited access to resources or the cultural and social context), but also to enhance their role in the community by empowering them, hence creating a **win-win situation**. However, in order to create an

enabling environment for women and vulnerable groups and to integrate their knowledge, they would need to be actively engaged in the adaptation process, starting from the planning all the way through to monitoring and evaluation.

34. Participants pointed out the **cost-efficiencies and economic advantages** of greater involvement of women in adaptation activities as distinct opportunities of applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools.

35. However, **challenges remain with the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation**, relating to:

- (a) The limitations associated with social and cultural context and specificity of existing gender-sensitive approaches;
- (b) Lack of political will for gender-sensitive adaptation policies and plans;
- (c) Limited resources, including finance, technical and institutional capacities at all levels;
- (d) Misconception about gender equality and perception that gender is a women's issue only;
- (e) Lack of comprehensive and consistent application throughout the adaptation cycle;
- (f) Lack of understanding of the benefits of gender-sensitive adaptation actions;
- (g) Lack of gender-sensitive approaches in monitoring and evaluation.

36. **Social and cultural context and specificity** were identified as key in developing and applying any gender-sensitive approaches and tools; a 'one size fits all' approach will not work. Therefore, a gender-sensitive approach and tool or a combination of several tools and approaches needs to be carefully selected and adapted to social and cultural context in order to be successful. It is also imperative to recognize the role and knowledge of women, in particular, their knowledge of natural resources, and their role in inter-generational education and dissemination of knowledge. The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) shared some lessons learned through the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change project,¹³ which at the beginning had no gender-specific goals identified. The project was subsequently adjusted following an expert evaluation of gaps when the need to consider gender perspectives was felt. Lessons learned include:

- (a) Gender should be considered in the project design, and be well linked to the adaptation goal and objectives of the project;
- (b) Mainstreaming gender in climate change adaptation needs to consider both temporal and spatial sensitivity associated with gender considerations (one size does not fit all);
- (c) A gender assessment to establish baseline information (e.g. surveys to collect data disaggregated by sex and age) needs to be carried out at the outset to align gender objectives with adaptation objectives;
- (d) There can sometimes be a bias in addressing gender alone without consideration of other vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities;
- (e) Climate change projects should, at the outset of the project, always consider the inclusion of women in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation and capacity-building activities and programmes.

¹³ <www.sprep.org/pacc>.

37. **Lack of political will** was identified as a key barrier to ensuring gender-sensitive adaptation policies and actions. In this context, the NAP process was seen as an opportunity by many participants to incorporate gender considerations in the process of formulating NAPs as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs. Lack of political will was also coupled with the lack of an **enabling environment**, where lack of institutional capacity is often a gap with regard to instilling a political will. Participants emphasized that the gender conversation has to build on the existing frameworks within governments and create enabling environments to consider climate change risks and impacts, and to avoid maladaptation. At the national level, provisions need to be included in national laws and constitutions in order to create an enabling environment for gender-sensitive adaptation policies and programmes. Both financial and technical resources are needed in applying and adapting these available approaches and tools to a specific cultural and social context. For example, it is important to make resources available to communities, including women leaders who provide intellectual resources, through the provision of education (e.g. special climate change scholarships for women to do research or scientific studies related to climate change). Empowering strong and influential women to talk to other women about gender issues or training women through focused group discussions facilitates the integration of gender considerations into the adaptation process.

38. **Misconceptions about gender equality and the perception that gender is a women's issue** often creates a barrier to mainstreaming gender considerations in adaptation actions. Therefore, there is a need for policies to promote affirmative action that underlines the principle that the concerns, aspirations, opportunities and capacities of both men and women are taken into account.

39. **Lack of understanding of the link between gender and climate change adaptation** was often noted as a barrier to applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools and ensuring gender-sensitive adaptation actions. Participants noted that more research is needed on establishing links between gender and climate change adaptation and that the relevant research outcomes should inform legislation and policies.

40. Gender considerations tend to be addressed mostly during the design phase and not so often during the implementation of adaptation actions, undermining the full integration of gender considerations into the final project/programme outcomes. In particular, participants noted a very **limited experience in assessing gender-sensitivity** of adaptation projects through their monitoring and evaluation process, leading to lack of understanding of the benefits of the application of gender-sensitive tools and approaches for adaptation.

C. Current experience in applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools, including lessons learned and good practices

41. Building on presentations of case studies, participants exchanged their experiences and good practices in applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation. These included general approaches (e.g. gender analysis, participatory approaches); general tools (e.g. vulnerability assessments, gender guidelines and toolkits); and specific practices (e.g. women's empowerment, gender strategies and plans, advocacy for policy action), which were applied within the following contexts:

- (a) Gender-sensitive assessments of climate change vulnerability and impacts and opportunities for climate change adaptation actions;
- (b) Planning and design of gender-sensitive climate change adaptation initiatives;
- (c) Implementation of gender-sensitive climate change adaptation activities;

(d) Creation of an enabling environment and leadership for gender-sensitive climate change adaptation.

42. Some of the good practices and lessons learned validated the opportunities associated with gender-sensitive adaptation actions, while also responding to the challenges that participants had identified early on with respect to the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation.

1. Recognizing social and cultural context and specificity, including the different roles, knowledge and capacities of men and women

43. Participants shared examples of **vulnerability assessments** where gender considerations have been addressed. The vulnerability assessment tool used in Swaziland in relation to food security through household surveys involved talking to the heads of families in the communities. Often, the information came from women because they were usually at home and accessible and available to share their experiences. Thus, the household survey was a useful tool to collect gender-disaggregated vulnerability data. In Botswana, gender was also taken into account in vulnerability studies. This was facilitated by the fact that the assessed population was small and hence understanding the dynamics of the culture was relatively easy.

44. Participants shared good practices with respect to the application of different gender-sensitive **guidelines and tool kits**, which helped to empower women, recognized and took into account different roles and priorities of men and women as well as the different impacts due to climate change, leading to more resilient, accepted and efficient policies and practices. The AIC (appreciate influence control) tool¹⁴ used in Thailand helped to empower people to imagine a future which is different from the circumstances faced at present (appreciate), decide the priority issues on which they want to work in order to create change (influence) and then plan the concrete steps that need to take place to bring about that change (control). AIC helps women to re-imagine their futures, taking themselves away from their present circumstances and constraints and moving towards a new and more favourable situation.

45. The CREATE (Climate Resilience Evaluation for Adaptation through Empowerment) tool provides a way to identify and analyse all of the factors, both natural and human-induced, which contribute to making a community vulnerable to climate change and future change. Both CREATE and AIC are tools which were not originally designed to work on gender issues directly, but have been adapted for assessing the vulnerability of local communities to climate change in Thailand and planning for a more secure future in a gender-sensitive way. This involves highlighting how the vulnerabilities of men and women are different, ensuring that adaptation strategies address the needs of men and women equally and ensuring that the voices of men and women carry equal weight.

46. The CARE (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere) gender toolkit¹⁵ is another example, incorporating gender and social dimensions of adaptation. The toolkit is a compilation of materials on gender analysis – particularly in relation to participatory learning and action – from both within and outside of CARE International. The toolkit builds on eight core areas of inquiry: sexual/gendered division of labour; household decision-making; control over productive assets; access to public spaces and services; claiming rights and meaningful participation in public decision-making; control over one's body; violence and restorative justice; and aspirations for oneself.

¹⁴ <www.ciaris.org/community/library/page/142?node=492>.

¹⁵ Further details of the tool are available at <<http://gendertoolkit.care.org/default.aspx>>.

2. Creating a win-win situation by reducing vulnerability and empowering women

47. **Participatory approaches** were highlighted by many participants as a practical means to recognize women as agents of change and innovation, rather than to identify women as vulnerable and victims of climate change. More importantly, these participatory approaches need to ensure effective participation of women beyond their equitable representation. One such good practice was shared by participants from the Haburas Foundation with regard to mangrove rehabilitation in Timor-Leste, where men and women have different roles in society and different knowledge of natural resources. While men were mostly engaged in fishing, women were mainly responsible for collecting resources in coral reefs and mangroves, leading to women acquiring more knowledge about mangroves. Women's involvement during participatory planning and monitoring and evaluation (e.g. to measure the height of mangroves) benefited the mangrove rehabilitation programme.

48. In addition, the participatory approach needs to address the concerns of men and women equally given their different roles, opportunities and impacts due to climate change. Participants shared their views on the shifting roles of men and women in disaster risk management as a result of education on climate change adaptation over time. As a result of building awareness and educating communities in the course of designing and implementing adaptation projects, subtle shifts in gender roles have been observed. For example, surveys for household risk reduction and roles and responsibilities for over a 10-year period in several of the Pacific Islands indicated that disaster risk reduction activities which previously used to be elders' responsibility shifted to women, who were more capable of working out evacuation plans. The surveys recognized that women have more knowledge about the village, the location and design of houses and of the most secure and fastest ways to escape when needed.

49. Participatory approaches that include decision-making roles for women also ensure the acceptance of new adaptation technologies in communities. One lesson learned is related to a case from Zimbabwe, where the government imposed the use of a new type of stove using less wood to combat increasing deforestation in communities. While the government was focused solely on the issue of wood consumption, it failed to take into account the complementary functions of a traditional stove, which also serves as a source of lighting and heating, and a place for children to sit around and for storytelling. The reaction was massive rejection of the introduction of this type of stove into households. The lesson learned from this case study is the need to engage women and obtain their acceptance of the new adaptation technologies in the communities.

50. Participatory approaches should take into consideration not only the specific roles of men and women within a community, but also social structure, hierarchy and relationships. Participants shared experiences when the participation of women in meetings, for example, could create tension within families and the community. Other members of the communities, both men and women, who are not participating, may question their capacity or simply be jealous, thus leading to potential social conflicts and violence. A lesson learned from these experiences is that the choice of representation for community meetings needs to be driven by communities, taking into consideration both the cultural and social context.

51. Participants also shared good practices that have led to a win-win situation by reducing vulnerability and creating economic benefits through gender-sensitive actions. In Fiji, a women's self-organized initiative of weaving pandanus mats has been a sustainable source of income generation for more than 10 years. Plantation of pandanus trees have been effective in the rehabilitation of coastal habitats and deterred coastline erosion.

52. Participants shared the observations that in most communities women do not have land tenure rights or often men are predominantly the ones exercising these rights,

predetermining a marginalized role of women in communities. A **gender-sensitive practice on women's empowerment** could include land tenure rights for women, recognizing their roles in communities. In Viet Nam, for example, increased extreme weather events and changing patterns of precipitation are expected to affect agricultural yields. The land tenure system was reformed in order to give women equitable ownership; sex-disaggregated data were gathered, the national women's union was involved in policy and planning meetings, and awareness was built around the role of women farmers in the economy. These gender-sensitive approaches allowed both market and non-market livelihood activities to be captured, and facilitated access to a broad array of adaptation strategies such as accessing credit.

3. Demonstrating the link between gender considerations and climate change

53. Participants shared some lessons learned that emphasized the importance of linking gender considerations and climate change. The SPREP toolkit, still in its design phase, is designed to support climate change practitioners in the Pacific Islands region in integrating gender into their programmes and projects.¹⁶ The toolkit contains definitions and explanations as to why gender is a critical consideration in climate change programmes, projects and strategies, and how to take gender into consideration, and clarifies some common misconceptions based on real-life sector-relevant case studies. It focuses on the links between gender and climate change in specific sectors (e.g. food security, water and energy) as well as disaster risk reduction, recognizing that these interventions should be factored into all climate change adaptation programmes and projects. It includes a 'how to' section throughout the different phases of a climate change programme/project cycle, identifying potential entry points for integrating gender into each phase and also includes a generic gender checklist that may be applied to programmes and projects.

54. One possible approach discussed by participants is linking gender considerations with the existing approaches, for example, through indigenous and traditional knowledge and disaster risk reduction rather than a stand-alone approach. It tends to be easier for gender consideration to gain acceptance if it is linked with approaches which are widely recognized for the planning of activities.

55. Participants recognized the role of faith-based organizations in the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation since they are often on the front lines of disaster risk reduction and hence could play an influential role in adaptation. Although gender issues are of concern to these organizations, faith-based organizations vary widely in structure and philosophy, and their religious hierarchy is predominantly male. Therefore, senior religious leaders need to be trained and exposed to gender analysis¹⁷ so that their responses to extreme weather events are gender-sensitive.

4. Creating an enabling environment and leadership for gender-sensitive climate change adaptation (including finance, technical and institutional capacities at all levels)

56. Participants shared some good practices that have helped to create an enabling environment for gender-sensitive climate change adaptation. Climate change gender action plans, developed by 13 countries so far, provide a good example of instilling political

¹⁶ The toolkit is available at www.pacificclimatechange.net/index.php/eresources/documents?task=showCategory&catid=137.

¹⁷ Gender analysis is an approach to gender-sensitive actions where the complexities of integrating gender into all future programmes and activities are recognized and barriers to gender equality are identified; this includes ensuring that ongoing activities are gender-sensitive.

leadership at the national level.¹⁸ The guiding principles of such plans are to anchor global agreements within national contexts so as to encourage a gender-responsive approach; to recognize gender both as a driver for transformational change and as a catalyst that increases the effectiveness and efficiency of climate change initiatives; and to ensure that women are seen as agents of change and not merely as a vulnerable group, in both adaptation and mitigation. Climate change gender action plans are designed to integrate gender consideration into nationally driven processes on climate change. The tool has led, for example, to the inclusion of gender in Mozambique's Strategic Program for Climate Resilience, and the inclusion of gender as a primary consideration in Jordan's third national communication to the COP. In Nepal, gender action plan components are currently being integrated into the work of seven ministries working on climate change as well as the government's three-year programme.

57. Another good practice shared by participants relates to **advocacy for policy action and education and training of women**. Since 2009, the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) has been facilitating the Women Delegates Fund (WDF).¹⁹ WDF began as a travel fund to support women from the global South to be part of their national delegations at climate change negotiations. Responding to the delegates' requests for more in-depth skills training and networking opportunities, WEDO has expanded WDF into a multi-dimensional capacity-building programme, with training components on thematic issues such as finance and adaptation, negotiating techniques, and media and communications. WDF has contributed to an increase in women's representation in the UNFCCC process and the substantive shift in the understanding and integration of gender equality issues in climate change policymaking.²⁰

D. Summary of recommendations and issues for further consideration

58. Based on the presentations and discussions at the meeting, participants identified a range of priority activities to be undertaken by different actors, including multilateral processes and entities (the secretariat, multilateral organizations and United Nations agencies), national policymakers, community-level practitioners (e.g. NGOs, faith- and community-based organizations and scientists and researchers), in order to advance the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for understanding and assessing impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

59. With regard to **the integration of gender-sensitive approaches and tools into national adaptation planning processes and policies**, participants made the following observations and recommendations:

- (a) As regards multilateral processes:
 - (i) Knowledge gaps remain. In particular, there is a need to strengthen the technical work related to the monitoring and evaluation systems for adaptation that integrate the consideration of gender. In addition, more specific guidance needs to be developed to facilitate the consideration of gender aspects in key national adaptation processes, including the national adaptation planning processes;

¹⁸ More information on climate change gender action plans is available at <www.iucn.org/news_homepage/all_news_by_theme/gender_news/?12597/Signs-of-progress-on-womens-role-in-tackling-climate-change>.

¹⁹ Further information on WDF is available at <www.wedo.org/category/themes/womens-leadership/wdf>.

²⁰ The highest that the representation of women in the UNFCCC process has been is 34 per cent.

- (ii) Expert groups could be created under the UNFCCC process to develop tools and approaches for including gender considerations in the NAP process;
- (b) As regards national governments:
 - (i) Gender considerations and analysis need to be included in all stages of national development plans, policies and projects on climate change;
 - (ii) National institutions need to attach greater priority to and provide resources for gender consideration in risk analysis and national budgeting;
 - (c) As regards community-level practitioners: gender needs to be integrated into existing approaches, for example, through the application of indigenous and traditional knowledge and disaster risk reduction initiatives rather than as a stand-alone approach;
 - (d) As regards scientists/researchers/academia: information on gender-specific climate change impacts needs to be gathered and analysed; this could then inform the NAP process, among others.

60. With respect to **leveraging expertise outside of climate change adaptation and building on existing initiatives, documenting and sharing the value and knowledge of existing approaches and tools**, participants made the following observations and recommendations:

- (a) With regard to multilateral processes:
 - (i) The secretariat, in its convening role, could facilitate learning and knowledge and the sharing of experiences, as well as capacity-building efforts, among different groups of stakeholders and different communities of practices, by creating a network of experts, in particular under the Nairobi work programme. In particular, participants suggested that follow-up activities be carried out under the Convention to build upon key discussion points from this meeting;
 - (ii) Given the notable progress that has been made in developing gender-sensitive approaches and tools by different communities of practices, there is a need to systematically document and widely share case studies that demonstrate the benefits of applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation at the global and regional levels and in different sectors, to inform the adaptation process. Suggestions made in this regard include the development of an online database of gender experts and a database of case studies on the UNFCCC website, and the development of a user-friendly guidance document for practitioners in applying gender-sensitive approaches and tools;
- (b) With regard to national governments: given the importance of leveraging expertise in the formulation and implementation of NAPs, national governments could build national-level partnerships for learning and exchanging good practices, including in the context of NAP formulation, and facilitate subnational dialogues engaging women's groups and indigenous groups;
- (c) With regard to community-level practitioners: given that community-level practitioners have an important role as intermediaries between multilateral processes, national governments and local communities, participants proposed several actions to enhance their intermediary role, such as building local capacity to document and share information by establishing local networks with multi-stakeholder participation, including indigenous groups; adapting guidance to local context and local language; channelling good practices and lessons learned from the communities to the UNFCCC process;
- (d) With regard to scientists/researchers/academia: participants recommended that these actors promote South-South collaboration, in terms of

monitoring/testing/validating the application of various gender-sensitive approaches and tools that integrate multiple social dimensions (e.g. age, wealth, ethnicity) to risk, vulnerability and capacity; monitoring and assessing benefits associated with the application of gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation across different levels; and developing curricula for different target groups on this topic.

61. With regard to **building the capacity required to apply gender-sensitive approaches and tools for adaptation and empowering participation tailored to cultural and social contexts**, participants made the following observations and recommendations:

(a) With respect to national governments:

(i) National governments need to prioritize efforts involving building the capacity of women and gender-focused organizations at the national level, including through dedicated training, with a view to facilitating gender consideration in adaptation projects and programmes;

(ii) National adaptation policies and planning processes, including NAPs, need to acknowledge national and international laws and policies in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(b) With respect to community-level practitioners:

(i) Community-level practitioners need to actively engage communities and women leaders in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation to empower the local communities, beyond equitable representation through active facilitation, training and the use of culturally and socially appropriate communication tools;

(ii) Practitioners should work closely with the local communities in developing/adapting gender-sensitive tools to reflect the specific social and cultural context.

62. With respect to **ensuring that gender-sensitive approaches are used in climate change adaptation monitoring and evaluation**, participants recommended that guidelines for gender-related monitoring and evaluation indicators for adaptation at all levels be developed and implemented, and options for consistent reporting on gender be explored.

63. In terms of **accessing resources over the long term**, participants noted that:

(a) With regard to multilateral processes: the multilateral funding mechanisms need to reflect the fact that the integration of gender aspects requires time and resources, hence the need to allocate a sufficient budget;

(b) With regard to national governments: governments need to allocate funding earmarked for integrating gender consideration into adaptation programmes.