



Maryknoll Sisters

Making God's love visible

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UNFCCC Submissions

Title: Adaptation committee seeking views on how to mainstream into adaptation planning and implementation

Question: How to mainstream gender considerations into national adaptation planning and implementation?

Introduction

On 20 December, 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 73/232 entitled, Protection of global climate for the present and future generations of humankind ([/A/RES/73/232](#)). Paragraph two recalls the Paris Agreement, which was adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and which calls nations to address adaptation to adverse impacts of climate change. The Resolution acknowledges that action on adaptation is an urgent priority, particularly in developing countries, especially those which are most vulnerable. The Resolution further recognizes that mitigation can reduce the need for more adaptation efforts. It calls for scaling up financial resources and balancing their allocation and use to address adaptation and mitigation.

Particularly, the Resolution took note of the Green Climate Fund and reiterated **a gender-sensitive approach** in its allocation and use of resources ([A/Res/73/232, p.3](#)). It urged Member States, to “take into account that women and girls are often disproportionately affected by climate change owing to gender inequalities and the dependence of many women on natural resources for their livelihoods, to promote the integration of a gender perspective into environment and climate change policies and to strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources towards achieving the full and equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, and stresses the need to address the challenges posed by climate change that affect women and girls in particular, including through the implementation of the *first gender action plan* adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-third session, with a view to advancing towards the goal of mainstreaming a gender perspective into climate action” ([A/Res/73/232, p. 6.](#))

Similarly, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, at its forty-seventh session, recommended a draft decision for the establishment of a gender action plan for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-third session.

The Gender Action Plan is to support the implementation of gender-related decisions and mandates in the UNFCCC process. It further states that gender-responsive policy requires further strengthening in all activities concerning adaptation, mitigation and related means of implementation, such as finance, technology development and transfer and capacity building.

Gender, Vulnerability and Climate Change

Women disproportionately face social constraints, receive less education and are excluded in various levels of political and household decision making affecting their lives. Gender inequality and multidimensional poverty increase women's vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change. Vulnerability based on gender is compounded in the case of women living in rural areas, including indigenous peoples, particularly women and girls.

There is a direct relationship between gender equality, women's empowerment and climate change ([UNDP, 2012](http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-MPI)). The 2018 Human Development Report noted that the Multidimensional Poverty Index in 105 countries reached 77 percent of the global population, mostly living in Africa and Asia. The study identified three important dimensions: health, education and standard of living in determining the poorest and most left behind (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-MPI>). The World Bank in May, 2018 reported that globally, women account for only 38 percent of human capital wealth versus 62 percent for men. (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/publication/unrealized-potential-the-high-cost-of-gender-inequality-in-earnings>).

What are good examples of lessons learned and best practices in prioritizing/incorporating gender in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans in your country or constituency?

1. Reviewing existing commitments, policies and guidance on gender equality and mainstreaming and understanding how they can be applied in the context of climate change adaptation.
2. Recognizing the gender difference in both negative and positive aspects in consideration of climate adaptation processes.
3. Addressing the gender mainstreaming capacity of stakeholders.

How gender can be best incorporated into gender action?

1. Recognize the gender differences in adaptation needs, opportunities and capacities.
2. Ensure equal participation and roles of women and men in the adaptation decision-making processes, e.g. see Box 1.
3. Ensure equal access to financial resources and other benefits from adaptation funds and investments, e.g. see Box 1.
4. The best way it will be incorporated is when authorities/public offices work from inside the relevant groups/villages/communities outwards to their policy office.
5. Evaluate health risks of women in the event of sea-level rise and natural disasters and the availability of medicines and health care in such situations. Plan accordingly.
6. Not all people are forced to move because of a disaster. Capacity building, such as job skills training and income production in such case are helpful. (Example, soap-making during the long dry season in Burkina Faso).
7. Examine the effects upon women of prolonged time periods for receipt of disaster aid relief, both financial and in terms of needed resources. (How, for example, do such delays affect women who may be trying to cook without power or much search for resources)?
8. Some islanders participate in seasonal work schemes to support families. It would be helpful to evaluate the needs of women, from a local perspective, in the event of sea-level rise or natural disaster, who are left at home to care for the elderly and children. Needs such as safety, food, and shelter.
9. Faith-based organizations often are of great help in the event of natural disasters. Promote consultations among their members regarding the effects of climate change and disasters upon women and best practices in addressing those effects.
10. Provide “hard” resources, such as funding for needed infrastructure in remote locations. In example, wharf and airstrip climate-proofing, see Box 2.

Box 1. Women Leadership in the Climate Adaptation Process in the Philippines

In Antipolo, Rizal, east of Manila, women participated extensively in the reforestation and afforestation programs implementation and management, as part of community-based watershed conservation program in an area known as the Marikina Watershed Protected Landscape. This is a sub-national level initiative benefiting directly the community and communities east of Manila. This program is a multi-stakeholder participation (in this case– it involved faith-based, local women, people’s organization and advocacy network.) Under the umbrella of the National Greening Program and locally with Marikina River rehabilitation, both a mitigation and adaptation strategy. It aimed to address rural and indigenous livelihood, water security, disaster risk reduction as well as nature-based resilience. Women in the community have taken leadership in its implementation process: from seeds/wildlings collections, setting up seedling nurseries, participation to government meetings and capacity building workshops, selling the seedlings to the government, planting and monitoring. As a result, the women and men in the community organized themselves, formed small-scale coop stores that sell basic necessities such as rice, oil, sugar and vegetables from their common garden. During meetings, men and women share how their lives have been impacted and changed, not to cut trees to make livelihood and turn to protecting the trees and forest. The women let the community know what they need, so others in the community help when they can, for example, a couple will join planting to earn but they have children, other women/families in the community offer to take care of the children until they return from tree planting from the mountain. The community becomes one and helping each other which increase resilience. Women and men in the community become the agents of climate adaptation. Programs like this have been replicated in other areas

Seedling production



Fruits seedlings



Family seedling production



In your experience, what are the remaining gaps related to incorporating gender considerations into adaptation planning and implementation?

1. The gender knowledge gap is the largest barrier to actions. It is important to recognize the level of education and capacity of women and men in the communities and their understanding of gender differences in adaptation needs. This could be done through local assessments and subsequent integration into plans.
2. Breaking through cultural and religious understandings and perceptions of gender inequalities and addressing them in the formulation and implementation of national action plans.

3. The prescription for “soft adaptation” in international, regional, national and sub-national policies focus mainly on the vulnerability of women, instead of focusing on women as agents of climate adaptation. This must be analyzed and adjusted.
4. The focus on capacity-building is helpful, but it cannot overshadow the need for actual infrastructure (and relevant funding for it) which provides tangible protection and maintains lifelines, particularly in remote areas.

Box 2 Cook Islands Experience

Six years ago, a UN Field Mission asked the Pa Enua (Cook Islands outer island community) what they wanted for climate change adaptation. The people asked that wharfs and airstrips be repaired and climate-proofed. The Mission went away, wrote its report, and listed the peoples’ request, but, unfortunately, these important concerns were not able to be funded as the UN funding was for soft, capacity-building adaptation projects; not hard, infrastructure projects. As a result, six years on, these infrastructures which provide the lifeline in goods and traffic to the islands are getting worse as the onslaught of climate change crumbles them.

Relevant Sources:

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2. UN Climate Change
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=31&v=hP0TZQWQkx0
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<http://www.fao.org/3/I8906EN/i8906en.pdf>
4. UN Women, 2014. Gender and climate change under the Gender Action Plan (GAP) Submission by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)

5. Adaptation Fund, 2016. Lessons Learned and Successful Approaches Captured from Portfolio Monitoring Missions

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