



GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE NETWORK – WOMEN FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE
POSITION PAPER
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Prepared by the *genderCC Network – Women for Climate Justice*,
Together with women's organisations and gender experts from around the world

There will be no climate justice without gender justice

Member States have agreed to a common system of basic values and rights that include striving for equality and justice between women and men. All United Nations processes are mandated to embody the principles of gender equality. The climate change process should be no exception.

Women urge all parties and stakeholders to build a future climate regime that is effective, sustainable and just: Design gender sensitive mitigation and adaptation policies and measures, and provide the necessary resources for this.

Calling upon governments, international agencies and all stakeholders:

TAKE 11 KEY STEPS TOWARDS GENDER & CLIMATE JUSTICE

1. Recognize the vital urgency of gender equality in the growing crisis of climate change issues and demonstrate leadership through top-level support for gender mainstreaming.
2. Ensure that women participate in all decisions related to climate change at all levels, in order to build a truly global and effective alliance for climate protection and climate justice informed by a gender perspective.
3. Ensure gender mainstreaming – from UNFCCC to IPCC to national and local institutions dealing with climate change – including installing a 'gender watch system' within UNFCCC and related processes.
4. Collect and publish gender-disaggregated data taken at every level and wherever possible.
5. Undertake gender analysis of all climate change policies, programmes, projects and budgets – from research programmes to mitigation measures and adaptation plans.
6. Agree measurable gender related targets and create practical tools that help integrate gender equality in climate protection.
7. Develop gender-sensitive indicators to use in national governments', local and international communications.
8. Design capacity building, education, and training in a gender-sensitive way and enhance women's access to them.
9. Invest in gender trainings to support processes of change towards gender equality, sensitizing both men and women about the importance of a gender analysis in the work they are doing.
10. Appropriately and sustainably support all aspects of gender mainstreaming.
11. Ensure that adaptation and mitigation strategies uphold basic human security and the right to sustainable development.

Why Gender and Climate?

We are not saying that the following applies to all women and men, as there is great diversity among them – rich and poor, young and old, and so on. Their respective behaviours indeed vary greatly. However, in general and on the average, we can state that:

- Women's activities have a different impact on the climate than men's.
- The effects of climate change affect women and men differently.
- Climate protection and adaptation instruments and measures affect women and men differently.
- Women and men differ with regard to their respective *perceptions of and reactions to climate change*.
- Women's and men's *contribution to climate change* differs, especially with regard to their respective CO2 emissions.
- Social roles and responsibilities of women and men lead to different degrees of *dependency on the natural environment*.
- The *participation of women in decision-making* regarding climate policy – mitigation and adaptation – and its implementation in instruments and measures is very low. Thus, in general it is men's perspectives that are taken into account in planning processes;
- As the male perspective dominates, climate protection and climate adaptation measures often fail to take into account the *practical and strategic needs* of women.

THE CLIMATE PROCESS

Ensure the participation of women and gender experts

The participation of women and gender experts is crucial for developing just, effective and efficient measures of climate protection. Climate protection needs women's expertise, their perspectives, their political support, and their engagement as key agents of change.

It is important to recognize the diversity of women – young and old, rich and poor, urban and rural, and so on – and the importance of gender expertise: one 'token' woman at the table won't do it.

- Climate policy makers should draw on gender expertise at the national and local levels (gender departments and experts in environment and other ministries; community experts) and the expertise of relevant international institutions, (e.g. the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM, gender experts at UNDP, FAO, UNEP, UN-Habitat, ILO, WFP, etc);
- Governments, UN agencies and other international institutions should support the participation of women and gender experts in the climate process, and ensure fair representation of women in national delegations, high level meetings and similar discussions;
- Increase the number of women, and young women scientists engaged in climate research programmes, and provide gender training, for natural and social scientists alike;
- Recognize women as a distinct constituency among the groups of observers to the UNFCCC.

Access to Information and Capacity Building

Women need information about climate change, mitigation options, risks, and adaptation measures; they need to be equally included in early warning systems; and they need resources and tools for information exchange.

- An explicit information dissemination and education strategy should be developed by relevant levels of government and related institutions to ensure that women and especially poor urban and rural women have advance and easy access to information about changes in weather conditions and/or extreme weather events.

- Improve access to information - including for rural women and women who have been denied the right to education – and especially on conditions relating to agriculture, such as suitable crops and rainwater harvesting, in order to help ensure food security and promote food sovereignty.
- Capacity building programmes should draw on priorities put forward by women and local communities and recognize that women and men use different information channels. They should include community-level exchanges so as to spread local knowledge and empower those who develop it.

CURRENT ISSUES IN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI)

Many CDM, and JI, projects depend on substantial land use change, which compounds the problems of local people, affecting women and men differently. Where there are cash awards and technology transfers, it is usually the men who enjoy access to them. Where collective lands are used, women are more negatively affected because they are dependent on the natural resources provided by those lands and often face hurdles obtaining land titles. Measures should be taken to ensure that women, particularly rural women, benefit from CDM and JI projects. CDM projects should not be viewed as a substitute for the single most important action for climate change mitigation: namely, a vast reduction in fossil fuel extraction and consumption and in deforestation. In fact, CDM enables polluters to continue and even increase their rate of greenhouse gas emissions by creating financial incentives to not reduce emissions instead of reducing fossil fuel use and preserving forests.

- A review of the impacts and benefits of flexible mechanisms to local people, in particular women, should be undertaken and the results taken into account when further developing the mechanisms.
- Sustainability criteria for CDM and JI projects should be made public, and easily accessible. They should include mechanisms for stakeholder participation, gender analysis and equitable benefits for women and men in both urban and rural areas.
- A mechanism should be created for the CDM to fund projects that make renewable energy technologies more appropriate and easily accessible for women and enable women to create and adapt technologies so they are more suitable for them.

Technology Transfer

Developing countries need to be able to follow a mitigation pathway that enables the rapid domestic deployment of climate friendly technologies, while ensuring the improvement of livelihoods and ecologically sound ways out of poverty. This requires significant changes to the way in which technology transfer is managed and governed.

- The traditional and prevailing definition and legal enshrinement of intellectual property needs to be reviewed so as to create access to clean technologies that the poor can afford.
- Ensure that technology transfer delivers to the dual purpose of climate protection and supporting women by making appropriate technologies easily available. The future users should be involved in the development of technologies, to make them user friendly, effective and sustainable.
- Technology as such is only part of the solution, as it needs to be complemented by increased institutional capacity. Building this capacity should go hand in hand with technology transfer, and both be measured by their contribution to improving the livelihoods of women.
- Public-public partnerships for technology transfers in the utilities sector should be encouraged and resourced.

Adaptation

The combination of economic disadvantage, lacking access to resources, information and infrastructure, dependency on male family members, and lack of power in decision-making contribute to women's situation as a particular vulnerable group. However, it is misleading to see women primarily as victims –

they can be key agents of adaptation to climate change: women's common responsibilities in households, communities and as stewards of natural resources position them well to develop strategies for adapting to changing environmental realities.

Adaptation measures will be needed in the areas of water, agriculture/nutrition, energy, transport, housing, forestry, fishery/coastal zone management, biodiversity, natural disasters, conflicts, and risk management. Adaptation programmes in all areas need to be cognizant of people's differential capacity to cope with climate change, both in terms of their specific needs and risks arising from the roles assigned to them by society, and in terms of their specific knowledge and experience that can contribute to more effective solutions.

Successful adaptation will have to be context-specific, and participatory. All members of affected communities must be part of a climate change planning and governance process. Often, such participation needs more investment than ensuring that all stakeholders are present – when traditional barriers prevent women from speaking up, specific women's platforms can be advisable. Without the full and equal participation of women in planning and decision-making, the quality of adaptive measures will be limited, and their successful implementation will remain uncertain.

- Integrate gender analysis into National Adaptation Plans, pegged to pursue the achievement of the MDGs, focusing on specific adaptation needs, and ensuring women's participation in developing the plans;
- Women, including poor women, should have an equal say in how resources for adaptation are allocated at the national and local levels;
- Income diversification for reducing vulnerability will be particularly important for women, as well as limiting the use of women's unpaid time in community development / adaptation projects;
- Increase development of sub-national (provincial, municipal) adaptation plans as they can be better tailored towards local realities and are more likely to include women's participation
- Collaborate with relevant international institutions and national governments to enhance women's access to land and control over natural resources for them to be able to invest in disaster mitigation and cope with climate change

Gender and Climate Issues

There is a need to invest in further research on the gender aspects of climate change and the gendered impacts of climate protection measures. However, we have sufficient data to assert the need to indeed pay attention to the gender and climate nexus.

For example, research on a range of issues has demonstrated climate-relevant differences between women and men. These include: agriculture ♦ forestry ♦ water ♦ energy ♦ transport ♦ health ♦ natural disasters ♦ migration ♦ conflict.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

Sustainable Development

The climate change debate in general, and the development of a future climate protection system needs to be set firmly within the context of Sustainable Development. Its broader approach – the environmental and social dimension, and economic welfare – and the Principles of the Rio Declaration should serve as the overall framework for developing fair and effective policies for mitigation and adaptation. The climate process should draw upon experiences, indicators, and other tools developed in international sustainable development processes as well as regional and national sustainable development strategies.

- Acknowledge the urgency to stop climate change, and commit to reduction targets that will help deliver staying well below the 2° C target of avoiding dangerous climate change.

- Set up a mechanism that ensures that all suggested commitments and mechanisms to help meet them are checked for their environmental, social and economic impacts.
- Request inputs from relevant international bodies such as the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM, gender experts in UNDP, UNEP, FAO, ILO, and others, and invite women's organisations and gender experts to comment on draft documents.

Gender justice

The lack of attention to gender issues in the climate process is partly a reflection of the lack of attention to social, behavioural and justice issues in general. Not only does this violate fundamental principles agreed upon by Members of the United Nations, it also leads to shortcomings in the efficiency and effectiveness of climate related measures and instruments. Without a gender-sensitive method of analysis, it is impossible to determine the full set of causes and potential effects of climate change, and it will be impossible to design an effective climate protection system.

The climate change process must adopt the principles of gender equity at all stages: from research, to analysis, and the design and implementation of mitigation and adaptation strategies.

- Invest in research to obtain more comprehensive data on gender aspects of climate change, both relating to mitigation and adaptation, and undertake gender analysis of climate change policies;
- Ensure gender mainstreaming in all mitigation and adaptation policies and implementation mechanisms at international, national and local levels, drawing on experiences with gender mainstreaming in environmental policy, e.g. regarding gender impacts assessment tools, gender budgeting, affirmative action policies, etc.;
- Invest in spreading knowledge and increasing awareness about gender issues at all levels of society to improve commitment to gender equality.

Climate Justice

The greatest responsibilities for climate change, due to historical and continuing greenhouse gas emissions, lie with the developed countries. They also have the greatest capacities to act both in terms of mitigation and in terms of enabling adaptation globally.

As divides between rich and poor continue to increase between, and within nations, the divide between the Global North and the Global South is becoming an even more urgent concern in the context of climate change. At the same time, the rights of developing countries to social and economic development need to be realized and the Millennium Development Goals need to be achieved.

It seems that the best ways to achieve these principles and goals have yet to be identified and agreed - e.g. concerning principles of fair burden sharing, and equal-per-capita emissions rights, coherent global economic policies to enable climate-friendly development pathways, dealing with debt burdens and reconstruction needs, technology transfer, and lifestyle changes.

- Curb all tendencies towards 'climate apartheid'. Emissions are no privilege of the rich but a limited and temporary right for everyone.
- Assign such deliberations the highest priority, so as to ensure justice, peace and security around the world.
- Develop and implement climate related policies within a human rights framework.
- Actively stimulate the participation of those who face the most serious consequences and make their concerns the priority in climate protection.

Market-based Approaches ¹

The main victims of the market-based approach to environmental protection are those who do not have the money to buy their water, fuel wood and medicines. They include women, Indigenous Peoples, landless farmers, and the monetary poor in general. These people also lack formal land titles, marketing

¹ See: Global Forest Coalition: *You Cannot Save It If You Cannot Sell It?* August 2006.

skills, investment capital and information they need if they wished to compete in environmental services markets. In addition, challenges of access to energy, which are particularly important to rural women and poor urban women and men, are not likely to be resolved through market-based mechanisms.

- Conduct a careful and unbiased analysis of the positive and negative effects of the market-based approach to all stakeholders. This cannot necessarily be done at the national level but may require context-specific analysis at the local level.
- Where 'private sector development' in the context of carbon markets is merely privatization by another name, ownership and control of utilities and energy resources are taken away from citizens and governments and placed in the hands of large corporations with no accountability to the countries or communities where they operate.
- We need to ensure that the role of the public sector in regulation and in provision of water, sanitation, waste disposal and in energy supplies is strengthened.

Poverty and Vulnerabilities

It is widely acknowledged that the negative effects of climate change are likely to hit the poorest people in the poorest countries hardest. Since women constitute the majority of the world's poor, and are often more dependent on natural resources, they are likely to be disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Even in the developed world, increasing costs for energy, transport, healthcare and nutrition are likely to affect women and single mothers more than men.

- Each country should conduct an analysis of impacts of climate change on different social groups, such as women and men, rich and poor, young and old, etc. which should be included in the National Communications.
- There is an urgent need for a gender analysis of vulnerability, and gender analysis must become a regular practice for all policy development.

More information

Providing general information, research, tools etc and facilitating the global network on gender and climate change: The **genderCC Network – Women for Climate Justice**: list serve at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gender_cc; the website www.gendercc.net will be available in the beginning of 2008 and will aim as a resource center.

Providing information about the UNFCCC and other relevant international, regional and national processes on climate change and women's activities, campaign, research, networking, tools, etc: Genanet / LIFE e.V. www.genanet.de

General information - Women in Europe for A Common Future www.wecf.org

General information - Women's Environment and Development Organization www.wedo.org

Information, research, tools etc on gender and energy: ENERGIA, International Network for Gender and Sustainable Energy: www.energia.org

Information, research, tools etc on gender and disasters: The Gender and Disaster Network www.gdnonline.org

Information, research, tools etc on gender and water: The Gender and Water Alliance www.genderandwater.org

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