

# Gender-Responsive Strategies on Climate Change: Recent Progress and Ways Forward for Donors

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Progress and ways forward for donors

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*Cover photograph: The future's bright – Off the grid, but on the up.* (Courtesy of Abbie Trayler-Smith/DFID.)

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**The future's bright – Bringing clean energy to rural India.** (Courtesy of Abbie Trayler-Smith/DFID.)

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## Acronyms

AAP	Africa Adaptation Programme
ACCC	Adapting to Climate Change in China
ACF	Action against Hunger (Action contre la Faim)
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
AF	Adaptation Fund
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CIDA	Canada International Development Agency
CIFs	Climate Investment Funds
CRMA	Climate Risk Management and Adaptation Strategy
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EnDev	Energising Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GEAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GGCA	Global Climate Change Alliance
GN-DR	Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction
GIZ	Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (formerly GTZ – Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit)
HEDON	Household Energy Network
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
IRADe	Integrated Research and Action for Development
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Climate Change
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LFP	Livelihood Forestry Programme
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MDG	Millennium Development Goal

MFP	Multi-stakeholder Forestry Programme
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAI	Population Action International
PRD	Policy and Research Division
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
SRP	Structural Reform Plan
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
VCI	Vulnerability and Capacity Index
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organization
WHO	World Health Organization



# Executive Summary

## Overview

Neither the impacts of climate change on people nor the ways in which people respond to climate change are gender-neutral (see Box 1). Gender inequalities and different gender roles, needs and preferences which vary over space and over time influence the different ways in which young, adult and elderly males and females experience the impacts of climate change and develop strategies to adapt to or mitigate them.

Gender equality is both a development goal in itself – reflected, for example, in the third Millennium Development Goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) – and a *condition* for the achievement of sustainable development. As such, gender equality is also a condition for successful adaptation to climate change, and the successful transition to low-carbon pathways in developing countries. This means that, if they are to be effective, climate change adaptation and low-carbon efforts need to be gender-responsive (see Box 1) – taking into account the specific needs of men and women and the gendered inequalities that may compound the impacts of climate change for poor women in particular, or prevent women from benefitting from climate change policy responses. This in turn will ensure effective, sustainable poverty reduction. Yet, climate change responses also have the potential to challenge existing gender power imbalances and, by doing so, can contribute to the realisation of greater gender equality and women’s rights.

Therefore, any development programme or policy addressing climate change should be premised on the principle that neither the impact pathways nor the responses to climate change are gender-neutral, and that a gender-responsive approach is required from the outset.

Yet, while some progress has been made over the past few years, few strategies for climate change adaptation and low-carbon development take an appropriate, comprehensive gender-responsive approach. Amongst known and new sets of stakeholders working on climate change and development-related issues – including governments, civil society and the more recently emerging role of the private sector in low-carbon initiatives – donors’ leadership on promoting a much greater focus on the social and gender dimensions of climate change is, therefore, essential.

As a contribution to the wider effort of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to promote the integration of gender into climate change adaptation and low-carbon development policies and programmes, this paper focuses on the role of donors in this process, and is mainly targeted at those departments and staff in donor agencies under whose responsibility climate change falls. It draws on secondary literature as well as primary information gathered from a broad range of donors, with a focus on DFID’s experiences.

This paper outlines a rationale for improved integration of gender into climate change and seeks to support donors in this endeavour by investigating the challenges and opportunities donors are facing, updating the wider body of work and knowledge on gender and climate change and the status of gender in global and national climate policies. Based on these findings, it proposes key principles, questions and strategies for donors – from bilateral and multilateral to non-governmental organisations with a funding role – to improve gender and climate change linkages. Finally, it also offers a menu of ideas for individual steps for donors to take.



## ***Findings***

### ***Donor experiences of integrating gender into climate change responses***

**In the climate change arenas of research, policy and practice, donors carry a key role in ensuring that gender and other human development concerns are incorporated into mapping impacts as well as adaptation and mitigation efforts.** In a climate change policy arena dominated by finance and environment departments, natural science, economics and engineering, donor organisations tend to be primarily concerned with the social development and poverty reduction aspects of climate change and, therefore, have opportunities and a responsibility to demonstrate leadership and set precedents around the comprehensive mainstreaming of gender into all aspects of their climate change-related work.

**Donors have begun to engage with or drive the gender and climate agenda, but most of them lack effective strategies for systematic integration of gender in their adaptation and mitigation work.** The research conducted with donors for this paper reveals that, with regard to donors' experiences of integrating gender in their work on climate change, some level of awareness, policy commitments and efforts or plans to scale up successful pilot projects exist, but that much work remains to be done for gender to become truly and systematically incorporated into their climate change policies and programmes.

**Donors do not generally lack gender or climate change capacities, but many lack the capacity, resources and clear mandates to connect them.** Both climate change and gender capacities usually exist within each donor organisation, backed in some cases by strong gender policies, but gender integration, particularly in climate change portfolios, is often weak. This is in part due to technical barriers and poor communication between climate change and gender experts, a lack of clear mandates and concepts in mainstreaming processes leading to 'mainstreaming fatigue', a lack of adequate human and financial resource allocation for gender mainstreaming, and a lack of strategies to identify gender entry points across climate change policy work and programme cycles.

### ***Gender in climate change impacts and response: progress and gaps in knowledge***

**Gender and climate change is no longer a largely unexplored area, but there are still wide knowledge gaps, particularly in areas where the specific impacts of climate change on women and men are not immediately obvious.** Civil society and international organisations working on gender have generated a range of new knowledge products that have discussed the gendered impacts of climate change and disasters in sectoral areas perceived as most 'directly' affected by climate change, such as food security, agriculture or water, as well as mapping some more 'indirect' impacts on social sectors such as health and education. However, the areas where gender dimensions *appear* less obvious – such as transport and infrastructure, energy access, housing, and formal or informal employment – are far less well explored.

**A lot of work on gender and climate change has emphasised women and their specific vulnerability, but there is increasing emphasis on i) the (unequal) relations between women and men, ii) the different needs and experiences of women and men, girls and boys, and iii) women's and children's capacities to address climate change.** A strong focus on women's specific vulnerabilities has favoured approaches that put women at the receiving end of adaptation responses and some small-scale low-carbon initiatives. They have for a large part *not* addressed the gender inequalities underlying these differences in

vulnerability, and have lacked consideration of the roles, preferences, needs, knowledge and capacities of men *and* women, boys and girls at all levels, particularly at the national and regional levels, and particularly in efforts to mitigate climate change.

**There is often a gender disconnect in project and programme cycles** – between relatively strong gender analysis in the conceptual basis and planning of projects on the one hand, and the much weaker integration of gender perspectives into implementation, monitoring and evaluation of environment and climate change initiatives on the other. One of the biggest challenges is the development of useful methodologies to measure gendered climate change impacts at local, national and international levels. Because so many strategies and monitoring and evaluation frameworks have typically been gender-blind (see Box 1), much-needed evidence remains unavailable to policymakers.

### *The status of gender in global and national climate change policy*

**Gender is insufficiently addressed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and in the emerging climate finance architecture.** The level of attention and support to the integration of gender equality, beyond simply including more women in decision-making processes in the negotiations and a new binding climate change agreement, has remained limited. The current global policy response to climate change – largely market- and technology-driven and focused on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions – has remained weak on securing social and gender justice. As long as women tend to have less access than men to property, information and funds, they will be unlikely to benefit from market- and technology-based solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

**Carbon markets lack gender-responsiveness.** Generally most climate change finance is intended for large-scale, technology- and market-focused climate change mitigation initiatives aimed at low-carbon growth, while much of the debate on gender and climate change has focused on adaptation. A lack of good practice of integrating gender into mitigation efforts particularly at national level, the transaction costs of small-scale initiatives that tend to have more gender co-benefits, along with gender-biased assumptions and gender-inequitable laws, regulations and customs underpinning markets, have obstructed the integration of gender and other human development concerns into climate finance to date.

**Partner governments lack policy coherence on gender and climate change.** Despite some progress in a few countries, integrating gender and climate change at the national level remains a challenge, as national governments in partner countries often face difficulties integrating a variety of cross-cutting issues into their policies due to competing priorities for scarce resources. National strategies on climate change often lack policy coherence between their national strategies and plans and international agreements on gender they have ratified, such as CEDAW, and national adaptation or low-carbon development planning.

### ***Recommended strategies for integrating gender into climate change responses***

Donors should premise their climate change policies and programmes on:

- **the following key principles:** i) neither impacts of nor responses to climate change are gender-neutral, ii) addressing gender is about addressing unequal power relationships between women and men, iii) addressing the gender dimensions of climate change and its responses entails working with men, women, boys and girls, iv) gender matters at all

levels and scales and in all sectors, and v) gender relations are context-specific, change over time and interact with other social variables such as ethnicity, caste or wealth; and

- **a thorough consideration of the following key issues:** i) gender roles, norms and unequal power relations and how they will be addressed, ii) risks and opportunities for men, women, boys and girls, iii) adequate resources for developing and implementing gender-sensitive responses, iv) men's and women's needs and preferences, v) gender-sensitive policy and programme evaluation, and vi) gender-aware and inclusive accountability mechanisms.

Donors should also:

- **take a stronger lead on gender equality in the climate change arena** by promoting gender-inclusive policy dialogue and accountability for CEDAW as well as the Beijing Platform for Action in national climate change planning processes, international climate change negotiations and the emerging climate finance architecture;
- **create enabling organisational environments for effective gender mainstreaming** by addressing 'mainstreaming fatigue', institutionalising the application of existing gender commitments to climate change portfolios, providing gender and climate change tools covering the entire project or programme cycle, and addressing institutional disconnects between gender and climate change responsibilities;
- **fill knowledge and best practice gaps in participatory ways that capture men's, women's and young people's ideas and knowledge**, particularly in areas where the gender dimensions of climate change impacts and responses are not immediately obvious, such as transport and infrastructure, energy access, housing, and formal or informal employment;
- **improve the understanding of gendered impacts of climate change and of climate change policy and programme impacts** by establishing monitoring and evaluation frameworks that disaggregate participation in policy and programme design and implementation by gender and age, and measure the impacts of climatic variations as well as adaptation and low-carbon development strategies on gender relations and inequalities – particularly for strategies at the national and regional levels – and for low-carbon development;
- **promote gender-responsive international climate negotiations** by facilitating multi-stakeholder processes that are inclusive in a horizontal and vertical sense, promoting the inclusion of marginalised voices and making gender a core issue as opposed to a 'side event';
- **address the gender disconnect in project and programme cycles** by ensuring that thorough gender analyses of the gender inequalities and women and men's, girls' and boys' different roles, preferences, needs and capacities underlying each context are better entrenched in implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- **promote equal access to decision-making processes and new opportunities created by responses to climate change** by promoting the reduction of legal, infrastructural and other barriers to women's participation in decision-making, markets and particularly processes related to new technologies, by making climate change decisions and funding processes transparent and accessible, and by training women's organisations to take part in and lead such processes;
- **promote gender-responsiveness in emerging funds and policies for adaptation and low-carbon development** by integrating gender into results frameworks and

disbursement processes, supporting the development of best practice for gender-responsiveness in clean technology and transport choices and processes, and by bundling and thereby reducing the transaction costs of small-scale initiatives that tend to have more gender co-benefits; and

- **support partner country governments to integrate gender into climate change planning** by promoting coherence of adaptation and low-carbon development plans with national and global development and gender policies and by providing technical assistance on gender auditing and budgeting to policymakers in climate-relevant sectors.



**The future's bright – Sharing skills and knowledge.** (Courtesy of Abbie Trayler-Smith/DFID.)

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Context

Neither the impacts of climate change on people nor the ways in which people respond to climate change are gender-neutral (see Box 1). Gender inequalities and different socially ascribed gender roles, needs and preferences which vary over space and over time influence the specific ways in which climate change affects males and females of all ages and the ways in which they develop strategies to adapt to or mitigate climate change.

Gender equality is recognised globally as a high-priority development goal, a fact that is reinforced by the third Millennium Development Goal on gender equality and women's empowerment, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). At the same time, it is recognised as a *condition* for the achievement of sustainable development. As such, gender equality is both a goal and condition for successful climate change adaptation and transitions to low-carbon pathways in developing countries.

Yet, gender-blindness (Box 1) is a widely persistent phenomenon in climate change policy and programming. While some progress has been made over the past few years, the social – and particularly the gender dimensions of climate change and its responses – are insufficiently addressed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in the emerging climate finance architecture and in developing countries' strategies for climate change adaptation and low-carbon development. The spheres of policymaking and programming on climate change, both at the national and the international levels, remain dominated by technical and natural science perspectives and solutions, whether they are implemented at the household, community, national or global level. Amongst known and new sets of stakeholders working on around climate change and development-related issues – including governments and civil society as well as the more recently established private-sector low-carbon initiatives – donors' leadership on promoting a much greater focus on the social and gender dimensions of climate change is, therefore, essential. However, despite the rapid development of new knowledge and policy products on gender and climate change, there has been hardly any consideration of how donors as a particular set of actors in climate change and development could achieve this.

### Box 1: Gender terms

**Gender equality** refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, and girls and boys. Equality between men and women is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable, people-centred development (UNDP 2009a).

It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female (IUCN et al. 2009).

**Gender-responsive policies and programmes**, as opposed to 'gender-blind' ones (see above), take into account the different socially determined roles, responsibilities and capabilities of men and women. They also take into account cultural settings and power relations based on information derived from both men's and women's activities and respond to the different needs and interests of men and women.

**Gender-blindness**, as opposed to gender-responsiveness, means ignoring the different roles, responsibilities and capabilities of men, women, boys and girls, and the social processes that determine these. Gender-blind policies and programmes are based on male-centric experiences as the 'norm' and on the assumption that everyone affected by them has the same needs and preferences (Kabeer 2003, 243).

**Gender-neutral** policies are 'assumed to affect both sexes equally', but in fact they are often gender-blind (Kabeer 2003, 244).

This paper, therefore, seeks to support donors in this endeavour by investigating challenges and opportunities for integrating gender into their climate change work, by updating the wider body of work and knowledge on gender and climate change, by chronicling the extent to which global and national climate policies take gender into account, and by proposing a set of principles and ways forward for donors.

## **1.2. Background**

In 2008, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and BRIDGE,<sup>1</sup> as part of the UK Gender and Development Network, organised a roundtable on gender and climate change at the Institute of Development Studies (BRIDGE 2008). DFID commissioned a scoping study to explore the gender dimensions of climate change and its responses (Brody et al. 2008). Following on from those first steps, the part DFID-funded BRIDGE *Cutting Edge Programme on Gender and Climate Change*, which is expected to make a significant contribution to a growing body of knowledge products and which brings together experts from all over the world who are working on these issues, was launched in early 2010.

In its Policy and Research Division's past Gender Equality Action Plan of February 2010 (DFID 2010a) DFID committed to promoting the integration of gender into national and international climate change policies and programmes. At present, DFID's Business Plan 2011–2015 (DFID 2010b) places both climate change and the empowerment of women and girls at the forefront of its priorities. This paper contributes to this commitment and complements the aforementioned initiatives by focusing on the role of donors in this process of strengthening the incorporation of gender into climate change policy and programming. As such, it is mainly targeted at those departments and staff in donor agencies under whose responsibility climate change falls.

## **1.3. Methodology and overview**

The paper is based on a qualitative stock-taking and evidence-gathering process which consisted of two main elements. Firstly, it included a desk-based review of academic and grey literature that has become available since the 2008 scoping paper. The second element is an inquiry into donor agencies' experiences of including gender into climate change policy and programming, with a specific focus on getting an overview of initiatives where climate and gender work was explicitly linked by donors, and on assessing what has hindered or enabled such integration processes from the donor perspective. A wide understanding of 'donor' was used to include the work of bilateral agencies such as DFID and of key multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB), as well as the United Nations (UN) agencies United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), who have been key partners of governments in providing resources to improve policy and programmes in this area. The process sought to include some of the largest donor agencies, on the one hand, as well as those with a particular reputation for strong gender or gender and climate approaches on the other.

The inquiry entailed conversations and correspondence with various climate change, environment, gender, social development and – where possible – gender *and* climate change experts at DFID, other bilateral and multilateral agencies, in academia and civil society. The author worked with DFID headquarters for around six months during the preparation of the paper and as such was able to gather in-depth case study information on DFID's particular

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<sup>1</sup> BRIDGE, based at the Institute of Development Studies, is a gender and development information programme designed to bridge the gap between cutting edge research, policy and practice.

approach to climate change and gender from an internal, day-to-day perspective. Information from other donors was gathered through interviews and e-mail correspondence framed by a questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> This approach and the insights contributed by respondents enabled the author to see how the ‘theory’ of gender and climate change translates into real ongoing challenges for gender integration into donors’ climate change responses, as well as revealing deep insights into the current needs and opportunities arising from the latest developments in the rapidly evolving climate change arena.

The next chapter will, in a first step, focus on making the case for improved gender integration into climate change responses by donors and, drawing from the donor inquiry, outline the challenges donors have faced so far. Chapters 3 and 4 update the knowledge base available to donors in their policy and programming work – by mapping case studies, technical guidance and other knowledge products on gender and climate change that have become available over the past few years, and Chapter 5 outlines progress on incorporating gender into climate change policy and mechanisms at international and national levels. Throughout these sections, boxes highlight key concepts as well as achievements and promising approaches in donors’ and other organisations’ efforts to address gender in a climate change context.

The last chapter will then provide conclusions and suggest principles, a checklist of key questions, and recommended strategies for donors to improve gender and climate change linkages. Finally, a ‘gender and climate change dashboard’ offers a range of ideas for individual steps for better-informed gender concerns entrenched in four spheres of donor action, i.e. the organisational sphere, the sphere of global policy dialogue and multilateral cooperation, donor engagement at the national level in partner countries, and donors’ role in generating knowledge for development policies and programming.

It is important to note that this paper does not intend to function as a technical guideline for the integration of a gender-responsive approach in adaptation and low-carbon development, but rather provides strategic ways forward and some specific suggestions, based on a map of existing knowledge and practice, of gaps and of potential solutions to some key questions.

Further, as climate change is a threat to human development that needs to be taken into consideration across all areas of development work, it is, like gender, a ‘mainstreaming item’. Thus, climate change also needs to be mainstreamed in work on gender, but this aspect is beyond the purview of this paper.

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<sup>2</sup> See Annex.



## 2. The case for strengthening donor engagement on gender and climate change

### 2.1. Why gender and climate change?

Climate change is ‘rapidly creating new conditions for development in poor countries’, primarily by inflicting increasing variability and uncertainty on the lives and livelihoods of their rural and urban populations, and by increasing the frequency and intensity of natural hazards (Cannon and Mueller-Mahn 2010). Without adequate mitigation of and adaptation to climate change its direct and indirect impacts will cause ‘substantial damage to human well-being and prosperity’ (UNDP 2008: 3). There is thus an emerging consensus that ‘any effective development planning process’ needs to take climate change into consideration (McGray et al. 2007: 1).

With an increasing understanding of climate change as a development issue not only requiring scientific but also social, political, economic and behavioural solutions, the need to ensure these solutions are gender-responsive should be self-evident. As a scientifically proven, global phenomenon (IPCC 2007), the impacts and perceptions of climate change vary at the local level, and they also vary between women and men, girls and boys. Including both men and women in decision-making on climate change adaptation and mitigation, and understanding the reasons for and implications of their different roles, responsibilities and capabilities is, therefore, clearly essential for poverty reduction and gender equality as well as successful climate-resilient and low-carbon development. Moreover, when addressing global poverty, not taking both women and men, and girls and boys into account would mean neglecting a large part of the people whose well-being we seek to improve (Brody et al. 2008).

Premised on the understanding that gender equality is a *condition* for good development *and* a development goal in itself, and that neither climate change nor its responses are gender-neutral, the rationale for integrating gender in climate change policy and programmes has three pillars:

- promoting gender equality and women’s rights as an end in itself;
- gender equality as a condition for poverty reduction; and
- gender equality as a condition for successful adaptation and mitigation.

Yet, ‘gender-blind<sup>3</sup> perspectives on communities and poor people as actors in relation to ecological and global political-economic processes seem to be more prominent than ever’ (Leach 2007: 82).

This gender blindness exists largely because climate change policies, funding mechanisms and programmes are often misunderstood as gender-neutral - taking into account both men and women, whereas in fact they are often based on a male-biased perspective. This means that gender risks and opportunities that are implicit in *every* policy or programme on climate change are often ignored.

**Gender risks** refer to the potential of gender-blindness and the exclusion of women and their knowledge from decision-making on responses to climate change to i) exacerbate gender inequality, ii) exacerbate poverty and iii) undermine the success of the response to climate

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<sup>3</sup> A gender-blind approach to climate change responses – as explained in Box 1 – by default tends to take as its starting point a male-centric world.

change. **Gender opportunities**, on the other hand, refer to the potential of a response to climate change that takes into account the roles, views, ideas, needs and capabilities of men *and* women to i) promote gender equality, ii) reduce poverty and iii) contribute to successful climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.

These risks and opportunities become visible through the World Health Organization's (WHO) framework of climate change impacts and responses (WHO 2009)<sup>4</sup>:

1. **Gender dimensions of climate change impacts:** understanding the context, i.e. understanding how gender relations shape climate change impacts.<sup>5</sup>

For example, women's greater likelihood to be illiterate often inhibits their access to life-saving disaster early warning information; cultural expectations in male risk behaviour can put men and boys at greater risk of death or injury *during* a climate-related disaster; due to women's unequal legal and economic status in many developing countries, disasters kill more women at a younger age than men; lack of women's property and inheritance rights puts them at greater risk of livelihood and food insecurity when climatic shifts lead to displacement or seasonal/long-term migration (UNDP 2009a; UNFPA and WEDO 2009).

2. **Gender-aware responses to climate change:** analysing and addressing the gender risks and opportunities in the context of the planned responses to climate change.

For example, low-carbon energy or transport interventions may generate new income for men or women *or* inflict additional costs on them and even widen gender inequalities; they may decrease or increase women's and children's time poverty; they may improve or decrease equal access to health and education; forestry initiatives may improve men's *and* women's livelihoods or make them more insecure; changes in agricultural techniques may lead to unexpected nutrient deficiencies which generally hit pregnant and lactating women hardest, or improve food security and nutrition, with greatest benefits for women and children (WHO 2009; IUCN et al. 2009).

### *Gender matters for vulnerability and adaptation to climate change*

Increases in the concentration of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are leading to increases in global average air and sea temperatures, with different consequences at regional and local levels including melting of snow and ice, sea-level rise, increases in ocean salinity, changing wind and rainfall patterns, as well as an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events (IPCC 2007). Neither the impacts of these changes on people nor people's responses to these changes are gender-neutral. There are important gender differences in the implications of climate change for the lives of females and males of all ages (UNDP 2009a), as the multiple environmental, physical, social and economic processes associated with climate change have differentiated impacts on them. Women and girls often experience the most severe impacts of climate change and have less decision-making power and less access to and control over resources to face them.

To understand and address the differential impacts of climate change and disasters, it is, therefore, important to understand how gender inequality shapes vulnerability (World Bank et al. 2009: 438ff). For example, 'natural' disasters, on average, kill more women at a younger age than men (Neumayer and Plümper 2007). The 1991 Bangladesh cyclone (Box 2) is a particularly brutal example of women's disproportionately higher disaster mortality. This is largely because of socially engrained gender inequalities that mean women often have limited

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<sup>4</sup> See Annex.

<sup>5</sup> See Annex for more examples.

choices and less access to land, information, social networks, technology and other assets that would help them off-set or avoid these impacts. In the event of a disaster, women may have lower literacy or reduced access to information, meaning, for example, they cannot read or do not receive early warning messages channelled through public spaces. In some countries, it is culturally inappropriate for girls to swim or climb trees – which deprives them of key skills for surviving a flood (UNDP 2009a).

### Box 2: Gender inequalities shape vulnerability

**Nature does not dictate** that poor people, or women, should be the first to die. Cyclones do not hand-pick their victims. Yet, history consistently shows that vulnerable groups end up suffering from such events disproportionately [...]. In the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone, for example, at least four times more women died than men.

(Oxfam 2008: 1)

Also, gender inequalities and gender roles play a key role in determining the choice of adaptation strategies (Box 3). Legal ownership, for example, is a key issue in this respect. A woman living in a rural area might have been allowed to farm surplus land and use or sell its produce, even though she did not have legal ownership. In cases where land becomes scarce because of climate change-induced drought or flood, she may lose these unofficial rights, however, because customary or statutory law does not permit her to own land. Losing land not only means a loss of income and food insecurity, but also a loss of autonomy and a feeling of disempowerment.

### Box 3: Adaptation strategies are gender differentiated

**Gender components determine adaptation strategies** in terms of how men and women can contribute. For example, as a result of gender-differentiated roles in agro-biodiversity management, women often have greater knowledge of plant varieties with important nutritional and medicinal values. However, because men have more secure access to land or land tenure, they have more incentive to contribute to natural resources management, use, and contributions necessary for adaptation.

(World Bank et al. 2009: 440)

Inequalities are not only heightened by climate change impacts, however: in some cases they are, or are in danger of being, negatively affected by gender-blind policy and programming *responses* to climate change. Gender relations often determine ‘who receives inputs for adaptation strategies. Frequently new agricultural technologies bypass women farmers, despite women’s knowledge’ and their important role in agriculture (World Bank et al. 2009: 440). Furthermore, there is a risk that meeting the costs of responding to climate change may be off-set by reducing budgets for education and health services and infrastructure, as studies of the impacts of economic pressures on developing country government budgets have shown. Such budgetary shifts tend to widen gender inequalities and discriminate against women and girls (UNFPA and WEDO 2009: 32).

## Gender matters for low-carbon development

Unlike most experiences of integrating gender into climate change to date may suggest, gender-blindness is not only a problem for vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, but also for low-carbon development, i.e. for efforts to mitigate climate change in developing countries by improving energy efficiency and introducing low- or zero-carbon technologies as well as storing and capturing carbon in forests or soil (DFID 2009: 58). At present, the majority of funds that have been designed to address climate change in developing countries are dedicated to low-carbon development.<sup>6</sup> In this area, a natural science-based approach to low-carbon technologies and carbon market-oriented approaches have by and large neglected social and political issues, particularly gender equality (Terry 2009; Masika 2002). Most

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.climatefundsupdate.org>

energy- and transport-related policies, legislative frameworks and institutions are inadvertently tailored to men's needs and preferences (Johnsson-Latham 2007; Aguilar 2010) and may in fact *create* unequal roles that were not there previously (Box 4).

At the community and household levels, 'rural and poor women and men generally lack access to energy-efficient services that do not degrade the ecosystem or contribute to environmental change' (World Bank et al. 2009: 440). When initiatives for low-carbon technology transformation, involving, for example, energy-efficient cooking stoves, solar cookers, micro-hydro technologies or wind mills fail to take into account a variety of factors of technology choice, such as gender, income and maintenance cost, they often fail (Tsephel et al. 2010). It is not only important to ensure access of both men *and* women to new technologies, but to understand gender risks and opportunities attached to them.

**Box 4: The need to make climate change technologies gender responsive**

The introduction of new technologies always goes hand in hand with changing governance structures. New committees are set up to manage the technology; new sets of rules and roles are defined to resolve conflicts over payment and ownership. Technological interventions, therefore, are more than technical issues. They re-engineer social relationships, and create new patterns of authority. All these changes have far-reaching implications for gender relations.

(Wong 2009: 96)

## ***2.2. An opportunity for donor action and leadership on integrating gender into climate change responses***

### ***Gender as a late-comer on the climate change agenda***

While the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) provide the core international frameworks on gender equality, the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action 2008, as well as the relevant Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) guidelines, are also key policies framing global donor action in this respect. The Accra Agenda acknowledges that there is room for improvement on gender equality, rights and on the environment:

Gender equality, respect for human rights and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impacts on the lives and potential of poor women, men and children. It is vital that all our policies address these issues in a more systematic and coherent way.

(OECD 2008: 15)

Despite these international agreements the recognition of climate change as a development issue has only just begun to take root as a key donor priority, and the need to mainstream gender into climate change responses has only very recently been recognised in the international development field. For the large part commitments on gender and climate change are formalised through donor policy and engagement with partner governments or in national and global policy dialogue on adaptation and low-carbon development. However, although some donors have begun to champion gender and women's empowerment in climate change, various portfolio reviews conclude that, compared to other areas, gender mainstreaming into climate change programming has been particularly weak (GEF 2008; World Bank 2010). That gender equality and related donor commitments are not consistently reflected in the programmes donors fund is largely due to a lack of systematic procedures and mandatory requirements for procurement and funding or loan agreements to ensure that their

and their partners' work is gender-responsive. As a result most of the projects identified in the inquiry preceding this paper were still at a pilot stage. As one respondent from a bilateral agency put it, it is too early to call these experiences 'best practice'.

Strengths and weaknesses of the existing wider work and knowledge on gender and climate change will be outlined in the next chapter. Most of the donors interviewed for this paper who were taking a gender-responsive approach to climate change were focusing primarily on climate change impacts and women's specific vulnerabilities. This had mostly resulted in the collection of disaggregated indicators, vulnerability assessments and the implementation of interventions targeting women or including a minimum quota of female beneficiaries. A smaller number of agencies have begun to endorse or fund more recent trends such as the integration of gender at various different stages of an adaptation or low-carbon development programme, a shift beyond impacts and vulnerability to a focus on agency and capacities in the context of climate change *responses* and low-carbon development in particular, and a broader understanding of gender as concerning women *and* men and the relations between them, at all levels from the household to the global.

### *Gender mainstreaming*

Most donors have committed to mainstreaming gender across their work, in light of the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 on women's empowerment. Gender mainstreaming 'commonly includes identifying gaps in gender equality' by using sex-disaggregated data and consulting men and women, developing skills and strategies to address these gaps, monitoring the results, and holding individuals and institutions accountable for gender equality outcomes. It also means 'being deliberate in giving visibility and support to both women's and men's contributions individually, rather than assuming that both groups will benefit equally from gender-neutral development interventions' (GEF 2008: 7f).

Gender mainstreaming is about more than simply adding a gender dimension to existing policy and practice; rather, it should be about ensuring all thinking, planning, implementation and evaluations across all sectors are informed by a gender-responsive approach. Moreover, it should provide a lens for examining relationships and processes *within* donor institutions at all levels. As various respondents expressed, it is vital that integrating gender dimensions into climate change responses is not simply perceived as 'another task on the list' or a superficial 'tick-box' exercise and, instead, becomes an integral part of policy dialogue, and of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, from the outset of any initiative.

The reality is that this deep level of gender mainstreaming often does not happen – and is replaced by a 'tick-box' exercise to satisfy the 'gender requirements'. Another risk of gender mainstreaming is that, where there is an expectation that organisations or sectoral offices will mainstream gender into their work, a more specific focus on gender equality issues and on women's rights often falls off the agenda. For this reason a 'twin track' approach that both mainstreams gender into broad sectoral processes and treats gender equality as a separate but linked issue are often the most effective ways of tackling both the causes of inequality and the solutions in terms of more gender-responsive policy and practice.

### *Rights-based and instrumental arguments for gender integration*

While incentives donors have used to trigger gender-responsiveness across their work differ, the underlying rationale largely consists of two arguments. Some have taken an 'efficiency' or 'instrumental' approach, highlighting the impact of gender equality on growth or poverty reduction outcomes. Most donors' policies combine this approach with a rights-based

viewpoint premised on their governments' commitment to international human rights law, in particular the 1979 CEDAW and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action on gender equality, highlighting the need for governments to ensure that men and women should enjoy the same rights and opportunities or combine the two (OECD 2007: 18). In practice, however, governments are often less proficient in ensuring their commitments go beyond paper agreements.

The examples below illustrate the differences in the implications of an instrumental (Box 5) and a rights-based (Box 6) rationale for gender equality in development policy.

**Box 5: An instrumental approach at the World Bank: gender equality as 'smart economics'**

**Rationale:** Gains in women's economic opportunities lag behind those in women's capabilities. This is inefficient, since women's increased labor [sic] force participation and earnings are associated with reduced poverty and faster growth. [...] In sum, the business case for expanding women's economic opportunities is becoming increasingly evident; this is nothing more than smart economics.

**Objective:** to advance women's economic empowerment

(World Bank 2006: 1f)

**Box 6: A rights-based approach at Irish Aid: gender equality as a human right**

**Rationale:**

Addressing gender inequality is about implementing the fundamental human right to equality. It is also essential to achieve poverty reduction. [...] A range of international commitments underpin Ireland's commitment to gender equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Platform of Action agreed at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

(Government of Ireland 2006: 62)

**Objectives:**

- to advance equal rights for women and men
- to eliminate gender inequalities in access to, control of and benefit from resources and services
- to support women's equal participation with men in political and economic decision-making

Development Cooperation Ireland 2004: 7)

### *The importance of donor leadership*

Multiple respondents in multilateral organisations, civil society and donor agencies stated that a limited understanding of multi-stakeholder processes as horizontally *and* vertically inclusive,<sup>7</sup> as well as a lack of donor pressure, have hindered the integration of gender into climate change policy and particularly the emerging climate funding architecture. However, in a policy arena dominated by finance and environment departments, natural science, economics and engineering, donors often stand out as a group of actors primarily concerned with social development and poverty reduction. As such, they play an important role and have the opportunity to take the lead on ensuring that gender-responsiveness becomes entrenched in policies and programmes to tackle climate change in developing countries. With large proportions of climate funding to be fed into the institutional environment described above, much of which is likely to be procured by private-sector stakeholders who are becoming the key actors in the low-carbon economy but who may lack vision and priorities for social development, this is a particularly pressing need.

<sup>7</sup> i.e. of various different sectors, levels and social groups

### **2.3. Strengthening organisational environments for gender and climate change: challenges to overcome**

In order to understand donors' early experiences of integrating gender into climate change adaptation and low-carbon development programmes and to put them in a wider context, it is important to understand their organisational contexts, i.e. the underlying processes that have motivated them. Donor agencies and their institutional set-ups, policies and programmes have provided challenging or enabling environments for such processes of integration.

#### ***Strong gender policies – lack of systematic implementation***

Most bilateral and multilateral agencies have gender mainstreaming policies in place that should lead to a gender-responsive approach across all their work. Given that gender has been taken up as a cross-cutting issue by many donors, existing gender strategies would ideally have been endorsed when climate change emerged on the development agenda (Box 7). In practice, however, most of these policies have not been fully applied in the context of climate change policy and programmes – often due to a lack of leadership and of a translation of these messages into clear, systematic action steps.

#### **Box 7: Danida: including gender was 'natural'**

It is not possible to identify a specific point at which gender perspectives were integrated into Danida's climate change work. Since confronting gender inequalities has been an important gender issue in development cooperation for many years, it was natural to include these concerns and perspectives in the more recent efforts to focus on mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

(Danida)

Evidence gathered through indicators demonstrated that often there is an implicit assumption that gender mainstreaming is taking place, without any attempt to monitor this in practice. The Global Environmental Facility (GEF), for example, which is in principle committed to a gender mainstreamed approach, has 'no specific GEF social consideration or criteria, under the assumption that all GEF agencies have their own social and gender policies and strategies and rigorous internal screening and review processes to ensure their adequate application to GEF projects' (GEF 2008: 16). Various donors have a variety of general or issue-specific safeguard policies, screening processes, guidelines and checklists for gender in place, but according to interviewees across donors and UN organisations, these tend to be inefficient when their application is optional, when the importance of gender mainstreaming is not clearly communicated by the donor, and when, particularly in areas such as climate change, partners struggle to find entry points for these in their work. Assessments of the implementation of gender policies in many of the GEF's multilateral agencies concluded that, despite some improvements, the 'application of gender-related strategies remains weak, with mixed track records, particularly in the environment and energy sectors' (GEF 2008: 16).

#### ***Mainstreaming fatigue and language barriers***

As both climate change and gender are key concerns in many donor agencies, the capacity in both fields usually exists within them, but connections between the two are often not being made. One obstacle is that often staff working on climate change responses are more likely to have a background in natural science, technological or economic approaches to climate change and development and may be less aware of the social dimensions. A respondent from a multilateral development bank highlighted that challenges also remain in 'major growth sectors that have not traditionally lent themselves as easily to gender mainstreaming', such as infrastructure and energy. As Box 8 illustrates, technical experts working on such



programmes often do not see how gender is relevant to their work. Gender specialists in turn often find it difficult to access the highly complex language, scientific debates and institutional structures and processes that have framed much of the national and international debate and processes linked to climate change until now.

It is, therefore, important to make key concepts accessible, and avoid gender concepts that are too grounded in jargon or academic language, which can lead to a lack of understanding and clarity around gender and development issues. This in turn has often led to ‘mainstreaming fatigue’ with busy programme staff who are not aware of the precise expectations to them, and who need pragmatic solutions rather than complicated frameworks to support them (Danida 2008: 45).

#### **Box 8: Sri Lanka: gender entry points at a second glance**

When building a bridge in Sri Lanka, ‘gender equality’ had been put on the agenda of pre-operation briefings. The operation officer didn’t think that was necessary. ‘Our task is to build a bridge, we don’t need to worry about gender issues,’ he said. However, after the instructor underlined that the bridge would also be used by women and children – and not only by men driving cars – it was agreed that a pedestrian zone would be constructed on the bridge.

(Margot Wallstroem in her keynote speech at the Monrovia Colloquium, n.n. 2009)

### *A gender disconnect in the programme cycle*

In many cases there is a disconnect between relatively strong gender analysis, on the one hand, and much weaker integration of gender issues in implementing, monitoring and evaluating environment and climate change initiatives, on the other, across different organisations (Rodenberg 2009). The World Bank (2010: 11), for example, found that, among those projects in its Environment and National Resource Management portfolio which included some level of gender mainstreaming, three-quarters had only used one or two of the four main opportunities for gender integration into the project cycle: gender-inclusive consultation, gender analysis, gender-responsive design, and gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation. Often the only concession to a gender analysis was the inclusion of a few sex-disaggregated indicators.

### *Staff capacity, resources and strategies for mainstreaming gender*

In discussing the main needs for improved gender capacity among climate change and other staff, various respondents stated that a lack of adequate financial and human resources dedicated to the issue is a substantive barrier for gender mainstreaming in climate change, and development work more widely. Some organisations also lack understanding of the relevance of gender beyond the realms of the rural, traditional, small-scale and domestic, and an iconic image of the Woman in a Changing Climate as the vulnerable victim of environmental degradation, if in a more entrepreneurial role than in previous women and environment discourses (Leach 2007), dominates the stock of existing donor pilots on gender and climate change.

At a conference a few years ago, a participant raised a critical voice about donors perpetuating myths about gender and women:

Donors are part of the problem. I am involved in a project that is about strengthening women’s political participation. We keep insisting that this is NOT about village women but capacity-building for women to be ministers. But donors want village women sitting under a tree. Why is it convenient to focus on the village woman?

(Everjoyce Win in Jolly 2004)

To build gender capacity across their organisation, some agencies have allocated gender advisers to each department and/or country office. As a more informal, less costly option, others have established teams or networks of gender ‘focal points’ or ‘champions’. But when these lack clear mandates, an adequate amount of time allocated to activities in their gender capacity, and awareness among other staff of their role and capacity, their work cannot efficiently contribute to building gender capacity of those who do not already have it. At the same time, policies that make gender everyone’s responsibility have not proved effective.

## **2.4. Conclusion**

To conclude, the overall picture is that some level of awareness, pilot projects, policy commitments and efforts or plans to scale up do exist, but much work remains to be done for gender to become truly incorporated into donor policy and programmes on climate change. Internationally agreed commitments such as the Beijing Platform for Action as well as individual donor commitments on gender are not yet adequately reflected in climate change policy and programming for developing countries. Greater accountability with regard to these international agreements and frameworks needs to become a systematic part of donors’ bilateral and multilateral cooperation to ensure that gender-responsive work goes beyond being simply an ad hoc programme-by-programme or policy-by-policy initiative.

Following an update on the status of gender in global responses to climate change from a wider knowledge and a national and international policy perspective, the principles and recommendations in the final section of this paper will outline what can be done to ensure better-informed strategies for gender to be entrenched in global policy dialogue, particularly around the funding architecture, country programming and organisational environments for climate change (Box 9).

### **Box 9: DFID: improving knowledge on gender and climate change**

In 2008, DFID and BRIDGE at the Institute of Development Studies, as part of the UK Gender and Development Network, ran a Roundtable on Gender and Climate Change (BRIDGE 2008) which brought together experts on gender, on the one hand, and climate change, on the other, from DFID, civil society and academia. Following on from those first steps, the DFID-, GIZ- and SDC-funded **BRIDGE Cutting Edge Programme** on Gender and Climate Change, which is expected to make a significant contribution to providing clear, evidence-based pathways and recommendations for action and thinking on the issues, bringing together experts and intensifying the dialogue on this issue, was launched in 2010.

Further, DFID is funding various other programmes which aim to deliver new knowledge and experiences of integrating a gender perspective in climate change adaptation, such as the CARE Adaptation Learning Programme, the Adapting to Climate Change in China (ACCC) programme as well as the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA) Programme, in collaboration with Danida, SDC and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

### 3. Knowledge on climate and gender: an update

#### 3.1. *Rapid progress, yet many gaps in knowledge*

In 2008, DFID commissioned BRIDGE at the Institute of Development Studies to conduct a study (Brody et al. 2008) that mapped key linkages between gender and climate change as well as gaps in the existing body of work.<sup>8</sup> The study found that, while there was a wealth of resources on linkages between gender and the environment, energy, water, conflict and disasters to tap into, little had been done to explicitly analyse linkages between gender and climate change.

Two years on from the 2008 scoping study, gender and climate change is no longer a largely unexplored area. The body of work has rapidly expanded and a range of key knowledge products and platforms<sup>9</sup> are now available to facilitate an improved understanding of the gender–climate nexus. Nonetheless, a lot remains to be done to satisfy a growing demand for evidence in the realms of policy and practice.

#### 3.2. *Understanding gendered climate change impacts*

In both the disasters and climate change communities of research and practice, it has been widely acknowledged that vulnerability and resilience to disaster and climate change are not merely biophysical states but the combined products of social, environmental, economic and political conditions (Cannon and Mueller-Mahn 2010; Blaikie et al. 1994; Brooks 2003). Profoundly shaping these conditions, gender inequalities ‘intersect with risk and vulnerability’ to climate change (UNDP 2009a: 55) in that they exacerbate its impacts and are in turn reinforced and perpetuated by these (UNDP 2007: 86).

In the past two years, civil society and international organisations working on gender, particularly those who have joined forces under the umbrella of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA),<sup>10</sup> have produced a range of new case studies, policy papers and fact sheets that have, for a large part, discussed the gendered impacts of disasters and environmental change on the ‘directly’ climate-sensitive sectors of food security and agriculture, forestry, and water, on the one hand, and on social sectors such as health and education on the other. A variety of research programmes that include a focus on gendered vulnerabilities, such as Adaptation to Climate Change in Africa (ACCA) and Adapting to Climate Change in China (ACCC; Box 10), are currently underway. There is still a wide knowledge gap concerning gendered impacts of climate change in areas where these *appear* less obvious – for example, transport and infrastructure, energy access, housing, and formal and informal employment.

#### **Box 10: DFID and SDC: researching gendered vulnerability to climate change in China**

The recently launched research programme Adapting to Climate Change in China (ACCC) programme, a partnership between DFID, SDC and the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission, will include gendered vulnerability assessments that identify women’s and men’s differential vulnerabilities to climate change impacts.

<sup>8</sup> Please refer to this study for summaries of existing knowledge on i) gender impacts of climate change (in the context of health, agriculture, water, wage labour, disasters, migration and conflict), ii) gender and climate change adaptation, and iii) gender and climate change mitigation. It is available at [http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/Climate\\_Change\\_DFID.pdf](http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/Climate_Change_DFID.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, <http://www.gender-climate.org>, <http://www.gendercc.net> and <http://www.genderandenvironment.org>.

<sup>10</sup> A list of GGCA member organisations is available at <http://www.gender-climate.org/whoweare.html>.

### *Viewing gendered climate change impacts through an MDG lens*

Viewing gendered climate change impacts through an MDG lens, for example, has emphasised how, due to gender inequalities, climate change disproportionately affects women and girls in each of the MDGs' areas (Rodenberg 2009; UNDP 2009a; IUCN et al. 2009). Under MDG1, 'eradication of extreme poverty and hunger', for example, climate change can further inhibit women's access to productive assets and food, and cause women's and girls' nutritional status to deteriorate more than that of men and boys, because the 'tradeoffs between consumption and survival' which climate change and other pressures such as rising food prices inflict on people 'can exacerbate gender bias in nutrition' (UNDP 2008: 86). Nutrition is both affected by (UNSCN 2010) and key for resilience to climate variability (Cannon 2002). It is also a crucial issue in the nexus between climate change and health – particularly maternal and neonatal health and water and food security, which to date has received insufficient attention in the context of climate change (UNSCN 2010).

Apart from hunger and under-nutrition there are various other health impacts of climate change that are 'gendered in their effects', such as increases in injuries and death in disasters, epidemic outbreaks, deteriorating mental health or increases in violence, but there has been 'little research or case studies analysing and highlighting them' (WHO 2009: 3). At a macro-economic level, UNFPA and WEDO (2010) expect that climate change has similar impacts on maternal and reproductive health as other phenomena such as financial crises and recessions. With spending cuts that usually hit gender, family planning and health service budgets first, 'maternal and neonatal health complications rise, childhood nutrition declines and HIV/AIDS infections may increase' (ibid.: 31).

### *Gendered disaster impacts*

The extent and complexity of gendered impacts of climate change are particularly visible in the context of disasters. In the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh, for example, evidence indicates that at least four times more women died than men (Begum 1993). Contrary to common assumptions that gender differences in vulnerability to disaster are related to physical strength, they are primarily due to important social, cultural and psychological factors which can affect men, boys, women and girls differently (Anderson 1994), as illustrated in Box 11. A recent study of 'the Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters' by the London School of Economics (Neumayer and Plümper 2007) reconfirms that 'biological and physiological differences between the sexes are unlikely to explain large-scale gender differences in mortality rates' (ibid.: 551). The much higher disaster mortality of females found in the sample of 141 countries, between 1981 and 2002, is directly linked to gender inequalities in economic and social status.

#### **Box 11: Hurricane Mitch and South Asian Tsunami: what cultural expectations of masculine and feminine risk behaviour mean for survival**

Cultural expectations of gender-'appropriate' behaviour in risky situations have different implications for the survival of men, boys, women and girls during and after disaster. There were, for example, more *immediate* deaths among men in Central America during Hurricane Mitch, because they took fewer safety precautions than women as the hurricane passed through. In Sri Lanka, on the other hand, women had fewer chances to survive the Tsunami in 2004, not because they were physically weaker but because they had not been taught key survival skills such as swimming and climbing trees. In the aftermath of disaster, women and girls may be more vulnerable because their exposure to gender-based violence can increase if they are displaced and forced to live in temporary camps.

(UNDP 2009a: 57)

### *Impacts on children and elderly people*

New research has shown that children, especially girls, are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – for example, to diseases such as diarrhoea and malaria that affect children disproportionately, child under-nutrition, or through impacts on access to education (Back et al. 2008; Baker 2009; Bartlett 2008; Hall 2010; Veneman 2007). Still, age-disaggregated evidence on the impacts of climate change on children and elderly people is even scarcer than sex-disaggregated data and, to date, more emphasis has been put on the specific needs and capacities of youth and children than on elderly people. Elderly people have sometimes been mentioned as a group at particular risk during heat waves, as shown in the 2003 heat wave in Europe (Nerlander 2009), but they are largely absent in research, policy and programmes on climate change and development. The newly emerging debate on ‘Adaptive Social Protection’ i.e. the integration of climate change adaptation and social protection mechanisms (Davies et al. 2008; Jones et al. 2010) is yet to engage with gender issues and the question of how social protection could prevent impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable segments of society in developing countries.

### **3.3. Responses to climate change – understanding gender in adaptation and mitigation**

#### *Beyond a focus on vulnerability*

In environment and development-related work, the ‘woman carrying firewood on her head across a barren landscape’ (Leach 2007: 67) has become iconic. Such images portraying women as the stewards of nature and primary victims of environmental degradation, often viewed in isolation from the multiple processes that put them in this place, runs through both adaptation and low-carbon responses to climate change. They perpetuate a very narrow view of gender-responsiveness, limited to the role of vulnerable women in adaptive or low-carbon natural resource management on a small scale, at community level, in the informal economy, or in activities for subsistence.

Most discussion of gender in the context of climate change has focused on exploring and highlighting the particular vulnerabilities of women to climate change impacts (Terry 2009: 3). In responses to climate change, this emphasis on vulnerability has led to a focus on women (as victims) at the receiving end of adaptation and – in domains perceived as most relevant for women such as household energy – of low-carbon development initiatives. Often, this has translated into ensuring that a certain percentage of beneficiaries of programmes, projects and policy targets are female, or into analyses of women’s specific needs in assessments preceding policy, programme and project design. However, while recognising women’s specific needs is *one* key element of gender-responsive policy and programmes, neither of these approaches has necessarily meant that specific needs *and* capacities, as well as unequal power relationships would be thoroughly addressed.

There are, however, a number of new frameworks to assist thinking about gendered vulnerabilities *and* capacities from the outset of a design process at community level (Daze et al. 2009; Ahmed and Fajber 2009: 53) and various sources showcasing women’s capacities as well as changes in gender relations through climate change adaptation, low-carbon development or disaster risk management initiatives. They include, for example, women spearheading movements for natural resource management, receiving training for and managing renewable energy projects, or reducing disaster risk through micro-insurance and livelihood diversification (HEDON 2009; IUCN et al. 2009; UNDP 2009a; UNDP 2010; Terry 2009a; Terry 2009b).

### *Beyond a focus on women*

Both the broader body of knowledge on gender and the environment and most of the more recent research on specific climate–gender impacts have been more or less limited to a focus on women. However, the more recent body of work demonstrates increasing awareness that taking a gender-responsive approach is about understanding ‘socially constructed roles and opportunities associated with being a man *or* a woman and the interactions and often unequal social relations between men and women’ (UNDP 2009a: 24). As noted in the Introduction, it is about challenging these inequalities, both as a *means* to reducing negative impacts of climate change and creating more effective responses, and as an *end* in itself.

It is also about highlighting the contributions women can make and are already making as agents in adapting to and mitigating climate change. While women *are* more likely than men to be in poor and disadvantaged positions in terms of access to resources (IUCN et al. 2009), this is not the case everywhere, and when it is true, it does not necessarily mean that women are more or less able than men to adapt to or mitigate climate change. In fact, case studies by the Heinrich Böll Foundation and FAO have found that men may be in more vulnerable positions than women in some cases (Angula 2010) and that men’s and women’s capacities and strategies to address climate change are often complementary (Lambrou and Nelson 2010).<sup>11</sup>

### *Children as agents for change*

Organisations with a focus on children such as UNICEF, Save the Children, Plan International, or the Earth Child Institute, as well as the Institute of Development Studies, have recognised that children and young people not only have specific needs in the face of climate change, but that they can also play particular and valuable roles in initiatives to address climate change from the local to the international level. Under the umbrella of ‘Children in a Changing Climate’ some of them have carried out research on the roles of young people in this contest. Children act, for example, as agents for change by taking environmental action, campaigning or communicating risks (Mitchell et al. 2009) and can make meaningful contributions to global policy debates (Walden et al. 2009). To some extent, this research has already started looking at the specific needs and capacities of girls and adolescent women in this context (ibid.; UNICEF and Alliance of Youth CEOs 2010).

A recent study by the World Bank asserts that the impacts of investments in girls’ education, besides being ‘one of the major determinants [...] of sustainable development’, on vulnerability to climate-related disasters are of a similar magnitude as income and weather (Blankespoor et al. 2010). Another recent paper projects that investing in a combination of girls’ education and family planning can also mitigate climate change by reducing population growth in developing countries and thus limiting their future carbon emissions (Wheeler and Hammer 2010). However, this approach needs to be further scrutinised, as it raises questions relating to both the complex dynamics between population growth, economic growth and carbon emissions<sup>12</sup> and to ethical implications of framing reproductive behaviours by the

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<sup>11</sup> FAO’s study develops a methodology for studying gender and climate variability for application in the context of climate change. It evaluates how men’s and women’s responses to climate change differ in six villages in two drought-prone districts of Andhra Pradesh, India. The findings ‘confirm that there is a strong gender dimension to the way in which climate variability is experienced’ and responded to (Lambrou and Nelson 2010: 7) and that men and women pursue ‘complementary but different’ (ibid.: 32) strategies because, due to gender roles and power relationships, they have different knowledge and capacities for different responses.

<sup>12</sup> While most processes of environmental degradation, including climate change, tend to be exacerbated by population growth, and population size is an ‘unquestionably relevant’ issue with a view to climate change scenarios, ‘the impacts of population size and growth are not direct or linear, since distinct population groups impinge on the environment in different ways’. Those countries where rapid population growth rates prevail along with poverty, in fact, ‘contribute relatively little to greenhouse gases and other irreversible global ecological threats. By contrast, they are likely to be among the most affected by environmental change.’ At the same time, those countries representing only 20 per cent of the global population account for the bulk of global environmental change (UNFPA 2008: 1f).

populations of, for example, African countries with their comparatively negligible per capita emissions, as *the* problem to be addressed in the context of low-carbon development.

### *Some progress on gender and low-carbon development*

The focus on vulnerability of women to climate change impacts, which makes gender entry points for adaptation more obvious than those for mitigation, along with perception of low-carbon development as an essentially technical and scientific field, myths about women being less able to deal with science, technology and markets, as well as women's poor representation in planning and decision-making (IUCN et al. 2009: 153) may all have contributed to the lack of information on gender risks and opportunities in low-carbon technology, transport and energy. This has had implications for private-sector initiatives in this area, which is significant given the increasing implementing role of the private sector in this context, identified by all donors interviewed.

The main exception is the introduction of modern fuel and technology options for energy at the household and community levels, such as improved cooking stoves or solar cookers, biomass digesters, micro-hydro or wind and water mills. There are examples of how these technologies have or have not worked for women and men when their needs and preferences have or have not been included in technology choice and project design (HEDON 2010; GTZ and NL Agency 2010; UNDP 2004). Furthermore, as the case study example from Ethiopia shows (see Box 12), it is vital to understand the context in which the stoves will be used in order to ensure they will be useful.

A common point made by most case study reports is that time is a key issue in the low carbon–gender nexus. Fuel-efficiency and clean energy sources save time spent gathering biomass fuel supplies and preparing food and thus increase time for children and women to spend on education, income-generation or recreation. Electrification and lighting have similar impacts, enabling study and work outside daylight hours and, in addition, increasing safety. Research in Bolivia also suggests that ‘migration is a social phenomenon that affects the functioning of the family and community structures decreases with access to energy’ (Rojas Portillo 2010). Finally the case studies highlight the positive health co-benefits of reduced indoor air pollution— a major cause of respiratory disease in developing countries – and the socially and economically empowering effects of not only the time and money saved but of women's new roles as producers, managers and promoters of modern energy (Aguilar 2010; UNDP 2004: 16; GTZ and NL Agency 2010), provided a range of factors are adequately taken into account for project design and technology choice (Box 12).

#### **Box 12: Ethiopia: no ‘silver bullets’ among improved cooking stove options**

While the potential of improved cooking stoves (ICS) to reduce multiple problems such as deforestation, women's and children's time poverty and respiratory diseases resulting from indoor air pollution is significant (Aguilar 2010), ICS interventions merely touch upon gender equality issues underlying excessive logging, time poverty or females' higher exposure to indoor air pollution. Also, the choice and usage of new technologies are culturally sensitive, and no type of stove, however perfect, will be applicable across all communities. In order to design and scale up clean technology alternatives, the determinants of technology choice must be understood at the household level, as a study by the Stockholm Environment Institute (Tsephel et al. 2010) in Ethiopia shows. In addition to socio-economic factors such as gender, education, and income levels, product-specific factors such as stove price, usage cost and safety must be considered. In this case, lower-income households were found to prefer lower stove prices to lower usage costs, which has important implications for effective project design.



## Energy policy and programmes

Energy-related services and institutions tend to be dominated by men and cater for their needs, and most policy and legislative frameworks on energy are gender-blind (Aguilar 2010). A few gender-responsive examples exist nonetheless. ENERGIA has conducted gender audits (Box 13) of energy policies and programmes in Botswana, Kenya, Senegal and India – the latter being focused on renewable energy – which provide examples of how gender analysis can help to achieve energy targets (IRADe and ENERGIA 2009; Mbuthi et al. 2007; Practical Action East Africa 2007; Wright et al. 2006). The German and Dutch partnership programme ‘Energising Development’, while not putting a focus on gender in the first instance, provides some analysis of programme impacts on women and men (GTZ and NL Agency 2010).

### Box 13: Gender audit in India: how to consider gender in the renewable energy sector

Including gender in national low-carbon development policy could, for example, build on some countries’ experiences of gender-auditing their energy policies. Gender audits are detailed gender analyses of policies and/or programmes, to establish who is positively or negatively affected by them, and how improvements can be made. In India, a gender audit of national energy policy, supported by the gender and energy network ENERGIA, identified and assessed the ‘mismatch’ between gender commitments in energy policy and their implementation, and worked with stakeholders to identify strategies for addressing these gaps. It recommended, among other things:

- the use of **gender-disaggregated data** and gender indicators
- the articulation of **clear gender goals** in energy programmes
- **gender budgeting**, i.e. the allocation of specific resources for gender equality measures and for women from the beginning
- the development of a **working relationship between different ministries** with the priority of developing gender-responsive programmes.

(Parikh and Sangeeta 2008: 19f)

## Carbon sinks<sup>13</sup>

Recent studies have shown that ‘within the complexity of the services that forests provide for climate change mitigation’ it is important to understand the different productive and reproductive roles that men and women have in these processes (IUCN et al. 2009) – men are, for example, ‘more likely to be involved in extracting timber and non-timber forest products’, while women ‘typically gather forest products for fuel, fencing, food for the family, fodder for livestock and raw material to produce natural medicines’ (ibid.). Yet these roles are context-specific. Understanding gender differences in the knowledge and utilisation of forest products is important for successful solutions in forestry and agro-forestry as a nexus between adaptation and low-carbon development.

## Transportation and communication

As with energy, decisions and processes to establish transportation systems and new communication technologies, for example, are not gender-neutral, and women’s and girls access to these processes and their benefits tend to be inadequate for their needs, constrained by social and cultural bias, lack of literacy and disposable income, and may, therefore, exacerbate gender inequalities and poverty (IUCN et al. 2009: 180). Johnsson-Latham’s study of gendered carbon footprints asserts that improved access to transport for women and girls benefits, for example, school enrolment and reduces child mortality. The bicycle, for example, has been identified as a ‘vehicle to health’ (Johnsson-Latham 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Carbon sinks are natural (or artificial) carbon reservoirs, e.g. soil and forests. Climate change mitigation includes strategies to remove carbon from the atmosphere (carbon capture, carbon sequestration) and fix it in these reservoirs (carbon fixing and storage). Many developing countries have large forests, mangroves or other ecosystems that function as carbon sinks.

## *Moving beyond the small-scale level*

As already noted, much of the existing work to integrate gender into climate change adaptation and mitigation responses continues to limit gender to the small-scale community and household levels and gives very limited insights into the gender risks and opportunities of climate change strategies and policies at the national and global levels. Possible negative impacts of large-scale adaptation and low-carbon energy strategies include, for example, adaptation- or mitigation-motivated changes in land use and infrastructure inhibiting or providing unequal access to pivotal productive resources such as land, credit and training, or changing market prices of key commodities, resulting in exacerbated vulnerability and inequality (UNDP 2009a: 68f). Effective strategies for gender-responsive policies and programmes at the national level include gender audits and gender budgeting (Box 14). In the realms of climate change initiatives there have, for example, been a few gender audits of national energy policy and, in the case of India, of *renewable* energy policy (see Box 13).

### **Box 14: Gender-responsive budgeting**

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is government planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfilment of women's rights. It entails identifying and reflecting needed interventions to address gender gaps in sector and local government policies, plans and budgets. GRB also aims to analyze [sic] the gender-differentiated impact of revenue-raising policies and the allocation of domestic resources and Official Development Assistance.

(UNIFEM; [www.gender-budgets.org](http://www.gender-budgets.org))

## *Monitoring and evaluation*

One of the biggest challenges is the development of useful methodologies for gender monitoring at national level and above, i.e. for measuring the participation of women and men in the implementation of a policy or programme at all levels, as well as its impacts on gender relations and inequalities. As climate change is not happening in isolation from other processes inequitably affecting women and men, boys and girls, and as these dynamic interactions are context-specific, greater emphasis is needed on mapping direct and indirect effects on, for example, food security, nutrition, education, health etc. Gender-blind climate change monitoring and evaluation frameworks at national, regional and global levels mean a lack of the compelling evidence that is often demanded by policymakers to justify the need for incorporating gender into monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

## **3.4. Conclusion**

Over the past few years, civil society and international organisations have generated a range of new knowledge products discussing the relationship between gender and climate change. For a large part, these resources have highlighted the gendered impacts of climate change and disasters in areas that are perceived as 'directly' affected by the climate, such as food security, agriculture, or water. Only a few of them have also mapped more 'indirect' impacts on social sectors such as health and education. Those areas where gender dimensions *appear* less obvious are even less well explored. They include transport and infrastructure, energy access, housing, and formal or informal employment. Also the strong emphasis of much of this work on women's specific vulnerabilities as the key problem has favoured approaches that put women at the receiving end of climate change initiatives – in most cases, adaptation. Most of these initiatives fail to address the gender inequalities underlying differences in vulnerability, and lack consideration of the roles, preferences, needs and capacities of women and men, girls and boys at all levels, particularly at the national and regional levels, and particularly in efforts to mitigate climate change.

Nonetheless, new trends are emerging, and increasing attention is being paid to unequal relations between men and women, to the different needs and experiences of women, men, girls and boys and to women's and children's specific capacities to address climate change.



**Surviving against the odds – A very big bath.** (Courtesy of Rafiqur Rahman Raqu/DFID.)

## 4. The status of gender in global and national policy responses to climate change

### 4.1. *The global climate change policy environment for gender: slow progress*

#### UNFCCC

The official texts of the overarching institutional and political framework for global action on climate change, the 1992 UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, which sets targets for reducing carbon emissions, do not refer to gender issues (Roehr 2006: 8). According to Skutsch (2002: 31), this could be attributed to a ‘perceived need to focus on universal issues and not divert attention towards gender aspects, given the limited human resources for negotiation, and the crisis in which the whole debate on the Kyoto Protocol found itself at that time’.

However, the issue of gender in the context of climate change gained some initial official recognition at the seventh Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC in Marrakech in 2001, when decision FCCC/CP/2001/13/aad.4 called for increased participation of women in UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol bodies and tasked the UNFCCC Secretariat with determining a quota and disclosing data on women’s participation at each COP. Since then, participation of women and organisations representing women in the negotiations has been increasing (Roehr 2006: 8) – but female participation in negotiations is only *one* small part of a much broader, more comprehensive approach to gender and climate change that is urgently needed in international climate change policy.

The level of attention and support for the integration of gender equality, beyond simply adding more female delegates in the negotiations and a new binding climate change agreement, has remained limited. The current global policy response to climate change – largely market- and technology-driven and focused on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions – has remained weak on securing social and gender justice. As long as women tend to have less access than men to property, information and funds, they will be unlikely to benefit from market- and technology-based solutions for climate change mitigation (GenderCC 2009) and for adaptation. The Nairobi Work Programme which ‘has been a good mechanism for catalyzing [sic] action on adaptation’ under the UNFCCC has not included gender issues in its work on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation (GenderCC 2010) (Box 15).

#### **Box 15 GenderCC and the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA): working to include gender in climate change policy**

Acknowledging that gender is a major gap in the negotiations around the UNFCCC and climate policy more broadly, GenderCC – women for climate justice – and the GGCA work to raise awareness and provide information and guidance on gender and climate change, and to make the global climate regime more gender-responsive. While the GGCA is an alliance of various non-governmental and multilateral organisations founded by UNDP, IUCN and WEDO, GenderCC is a network of women’s organisations, gender activists and experts from all world regions, working at the local, national and international levels.

Why is it so important to integrate gender into the climate change negotiations? Women and men contribute differently to the causes of climate change, are differently affected by climate change, react differently to its impacts and, given the choice, favour different solutions to mitigate and options for dealing with the consequences of climate change. These differences are based on gendered roles and responsibilities in most societies, and on gendered access to resources and political influence.

(GenderCC 2009; **Gender CC** – [www.gendercc.net](http://www.gendercc.net); **GGCA** – [www.gender-climate.org](http://www.gender-climate.org))

At the time of writing this paper (late 2010), there were two declarations at the global level that could underpin a global policy response on gender and climate change:

- **The 2008 Manila Declaration for Global Action on Gender, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction**, as the outcome of the Third Global Congress of Women in Politics and Governance, on Gender in Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Philippines on 19–22 October 2008, makes demands to parties to the UNFCCC and to international financial institutions to formulate and implement strategies for the integration of gender into the UNFCCC Secretariat's work and into climate change negotiations, funding mechanisms and national policies on climate change and disasters.
- Convened by the President of Liberia and the President of Finland (Box 16), the participants of a 'Colloquium on women's empowerment, leadership, development, international peace and security' in Liberia on 7–8 March 2009 issued the **2009 Monrovia Call for Action on Gender and Climate Change**, a call upon national governments and international and non-governmental organisations to consider, in a new binding agreement on climate change, the gender dimensions of information, awareness-raising and knowledge on climate change, of capacity-building, consumption, employment generation, climate change impacts, climate funding, cooperation with the UN system and youth participation.

#### **Box 16: Finland: strengthening gender and women's voices in the UNFCCC**

Finland, with its President chairing the Global Council of World Women Leaders, has been an avid promoter of women's participation in international climate policymaking, and, since 2008, has actively cooperated with the UNFCCC and the GGCA as well as like-minded national governments on these issues. The Finnish government has appointed a Special Representative on Gender and Climate Change, financed the participation of female representatives from Least Developed Countries in the negotiations by establishing a Women Delegates Fund, raised awareness of women's issues in regional and international dialogue and advocated for a gender perspective to be included in NAPAs, as well as the work programmes and a new climate change agreement under the UNFCCC. In March 2009, Finland, together with Liberia, co-hosted the women leaders' meeting on climate change in Monrovia from which the **Monrovia Call for Action on Gender and Climate Change** emerged.

## ***4.2. Developing country policies on climate change: a need for capacity-building and bottom-up processes***

At the national level, some developing countries have made progress, but the integration of gender into climate change at this level remains a major challenge for many, as the issues compete with other pressing concerns such as meeting basic needs. National strategies on climate change often lack policy coherence between international agreements on gender they have committed to and national adaptation or low-carbon development planning (IUCN et al. 2009: 62). Disaster risk reduction policy tends to be more advanced on gender than climate change policy, as the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction 'has taken steps to include gender' in the national Disaster Risk Reduction Plans of Action countries formulate under the Hyogo Framework for Action (ibid.: 132).<sup>14</sup> In some countries, such as Liberia – where the 2009 women leaders' meeting on gender and climate change took place – or Ghana and Senegal (see Boxes 18 and 19 below), gender is promoted at a high policy level, mainly driven by and for women. In other cases donor countries are funding regional initiatives – for example, Japan is currently funding a regional climate change adaptation programme in

<sup>14</sup> The Hyogo Framework is the outcome of a 2005 conference in Kobe, Japan, which brought together governments with the aim to reduce disaster impacts by improving disaster risk reduction policy and mechanisms at the national level by providing a framework against which the countries can measure their progress.

Africa which, among other goals, aims to build national-level capacity on gender and adaptation (Box 17).

**Box 17: JICA and UNDP in Africa: building national and regional capacity to address gender and climate change**

In the recently launched Africa Adaptation Programme (AAP) funded by JICA and implemented by UNDP in 20 African countries, gender was considered a core element from the beginning of the design. A social and gender inclusion framework underpins the entire programme, and country- and regional-level technical experts on gender and climate change are appointed to support national governments and build their capacity on the issue. So far, seven countries – Congo, Ghana, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria and Senegal – have resorted to this technical support and have integrated gender in their adaptation strategies under the programme.

*Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs)*

According to the Copenhagen Accord, the non-committal outcome of COP15 in 2009, NAMAs will be defined by developing-country parties to the UNFCCC and ‘will be recorded in a registry along with relevant technology, finance and capacity-building support’. NAMA procedures and requirements are still under negotiation (TWN 2010). So far, the need for gender-responsive mitigation strategies has remained unaddressed in this context.

*National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs)*

The outcome of COP7 in Marrakech included an agreement that Least Developed Countries would develop National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs). In this context, gendered impact pathways were emphasised and women’s participation in a mandatory process of consultations and decision-making around the NAPAs became a requirement (Rodenberg 2009: 26). However, while many NAPAs, so far, have provided a ‘comprehensive picture of the emerging risks that climate change poses for vulnerable groups’ (ibid.: 29), if gender is mentioned at all, it is with regard to women as beneficiaries, but not to gender inequality as an issue. Few NAPAs mention the political, economic and social reasons for gender inequalities in climate change impact pathways, nor do they address gender equality in climate change responses (Box 18) (WEDO and UNFPA 2009: 27). As of late 2009, some of the priority projects addressed gender – for example, in the areas of health, food security or water resources. None of them did so in the areas of energy, infrastructure or insurance (Rodenberg 2009: 51).

**Box 18: Ghana: high-level policy support for gender and climate change**

Ghana’s strong women’s organisations are mobilising around climate change issues, and they have support from Ghana’s Delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations. Chief Negotiator William K. Agyermang-Bonsu recently stated, ‘[The] benefits of mainstreaming gender in climate change [include] increased awareness, improved capacity, sensitivity to traditional knowledge and risk reduction.’

(WEDO and UNFPA 2009: 19)

Yet there are some examples, such as Bangladesh and Malawi, where gender equality is one of the criteria for priority setting, and women have participated in the consultations. Malawi's NAPA will also include women's empowerment, and three out of its five prioritised activities will disaggregate beneficiaries by age and sex. Furthermore, the NAPAs of Eritrea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone also included women's groups in their consultation processes and/or specifically mention women as their beneficiaries (Box 19) (WEDO and UNFPA 2009: 28).

#### **Box 19: Senegal: women's leadership on gender and climate change**

A National Committee on Climate Change (COMNAC) was set up by the Direction de l'Environnement (Direction of Environment) and employs women in leadership positions. It plays an important role in helping to mainstream gender into national climate change policy, providing a positive example of a women-led team that can promote the empowerment, inclusion and capacity-building of women across the country to adapt to climate change. In preparing the country's NAPA, women participated in public consultations organised in every region in order to collect information on adaptation solutions at the local level because indigenous knowledge is important to the search for sustainable results.

(WEDO and UNFPA 2009: 21)

### ***4.3. Climate financing mechanisms: at a crossroads between gender opportunities and risks***

#### ***Difficult access to climate finance***

As the UNFCCC recognises that climate change places an unjust burden on most developing countries, which they have less capacity to address than developed countries, the latter are expected to financially contribute to adaptation and mitigation in developing countries, shifting money to the global South through bilateral or multilateral channels. In recent years there has been a shift from the UNFCCC and the GEF as the institutional protagonists of climate financing to the World Bank. In parallel, several new, different structures have been emerging (UNDP et al. 2008: 2). At present, there are at least 22 different funds, administered by either a national government or a multilateral institution. At least 16 of them were set up in 2008 or later, and they are interconnected in various ways.<sup>15</sup> It has been very difficult for developing countries – and particularly marginalised groups who live in them, including women and indigenous peoples – to access financing for climate change initiatives, due to lack of awareness of funding, lengthy and complicated application processes and inflexible arrangements which do not suit the needs of highly vulnerable groups (UNFPA and WEDO 2009: 33).

'The dynamics surrounding [many of] these new entrants in the international financial architecture have been limited to interactions among donor countries and to Northern stakeholders since they are not negotiated within the framework of the UNFCCC' (Porter et al. 2008: 10). As such they have given very limited attention to voices other than governments, multilateral institutions and well-financed Northern NGOs. As a result of unequal gender relations in the decision-making processes on funding, women's voices 'are largely absent' (UNFPA and WEDO 2009: 32).

#### ***Lack of gender requirements***

The 'lack of an overarching structure or understanding of what these mechanisms and funds should be achieving often leads to inefficiencies' and lack of coordination (UNDP et al.

<sup>15</sup> According to <http://www.climatefundsupdate.org> there are 22; other resources such as UNFPA and WEDO (2009: 33) claim that there are at least 60.



2008: 2), making it difficult to ensure that the gender policies of those organisations which pledge money to and control these funds are reflected in disbursement procedures – for example, in allocation criteria, programming guidelines or checklists (as illustrated in Box 20).

#### **Box 20: African Development Bank: a checklist for mainstreaming gender and climate change in projects**

AfDB developed this checklist with the objective to 'provide project managers with a tool for effective mainstreaming of gender in programmes and projects related to climate change' to:

- identify gender climate change issues;
- identify entry points for gender in climate change projects; and
- consider gender and climate change throughout the project cycle, i.e. from project identification to evaluation.

However, it is up to individual programme managers to decide whether or not to make use of this tool. There is no overarching policy commitment which makes its application mandatory. Hence it has not been entrenched in AfDB's work to fund climate change programmes.

### *Lack of gender-responsiveness in a technology-focused and market-oriented environment*

Another reason why gender, along with other social and pro-poor development concerns, has to date been poorly integrated into climate finance is that most climate change finance is intended for large-scale, technology-focused and market-based climate change mitigation initiatives aimed at low-carbon growth. The large-scale low-carbon investment-focused Hatoyama Initiative and the Clean Technology Fund (one of the two Climate Investment Funds), for example, together constitute over 70 per cent of all pledges to climate change funds made so far.<sup>16</sup> As discussed above, much of the debate, knowledge and experience on gender and climate change has focused on adaptation, to which, at present, just over 8 per cent of global funding for climate change is dedicated. For mitigation-oriented and market-based climate change responses, on the other hand, there has been a lack of good practice of integrating gender. In developing countries, gender-inequitable laws, regulations and customs tend to impair women's participation in markets by limiting their access to credit, productive assets and information as well as their mobility, and thus restrict their ability to contribute to private- and public-sector development efforts. Women's entrepreneurship, therefore, is an important untapped resource (Simavi et al. 2010: 3).

### *The Climate Investment Funds (CIFs)*

Established by the World Bank and regional multilateral development banks, the CIFs consist of two main funds – the Clean Technology Fund (CTF) and the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF) – and are designed to 'offer interim finding to support developing countries' mitigation and adaptation efforts' (UNDP 2009c) in the absence of a binding climate agreement beyond 2012. So far the CIFs have mainly been detailing their goals and institutional design, and selecting a number of pilot countries.

Much of the climate change funding architecture under construction is gender-blind, and the CIFs in particular have been heavily criticised for 'doubling the damage' of climate change on both the environment and on women (Rooke 2009: 3f). Historical experience shows that government investments in gender equality, health and infrastructure are the first to suffer from pressures on government budgets (UNFPA and WEDO 2009: 31). The CIFs have also

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.climatefundsupdate.org>

been criticised for limited transparency and lack of in-country stakeholder consultation, attributed to 'tension between rolling out the funds quickly and developing maximum country ownership of plans and engaging stakeholders extensively', leading to 'concerns about the transformational change towards which the CIFs are intended to lead and the extent to which they are doing so' (Radner 2010).

The current versions of the CIFs' results frameworks lack a definition of stakeholder consultations, and targets to address gender risks or opportunities in their goals statement, their logic model or both. However, a strategic environmental, social and gender assessment (SESA) of the CIFs is currently being conducted, the results frameworks disaggregate some indicators by sex and, in the CTF, by poverty levels, and the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR) under the SCF includes gendered vulnerability assessments. DFID provided time and generated momentum for this process. Furthermore, 'vulnerability' and 'comprehensive resilience' to climate change remain undefined (World Bank Group 2010a, 2010b and 2010c). To ensure that these are inclusive of social and gender issues, a rigorous definition needs to make clear that these are not limited to 'hardware', i.e. biophysical vulnerability and resilience.

### *The Global Environment Facility*

The GEF, which is the core financial mechanism for global environmental protection under the four UN environmental covenants including the UNFCCC, works with ten multilateral organisations across the UN system and multilateral development banks, providing mostly grants and to some extent concessional funding to recipient countries' projects and programmes under six environment focal areas including climate change (mitigation and adaptation) (Porter et al. 2008: 12). While it is 'one of the few international financial institutions to develop early-on an independent public participation policy, including provisions on gender issues' (GEF 2008: 15), a 2008 review of its work found that only 11 per cent of its climate change portfolio included gender mainstreaming components. With the exception of the GEF Small Grants Programme (Box 21), gender integration is not mandatory. In all its design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes, the GEF has been working on the assumption that all the involved agencies have their own social and gender policies and strategies against which all processes are rigorously assessed, unless gender was specifically included in the project results framework. Based on the recognition that the track records of gender mainstreaming in the GEF's agencies were 'mixed' and generally 'weak', this approach needs to be reconsidered (GEF 2008: 16).

#### **Box 21: Gender mainstreaming and a focus on women in the GEF Small Grants Programme**

Many projects under the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) have been recognised for their success in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Gender is one of the mandatory, cross-cutting requirements in the SGP grant-making criteria [...]. About 17% of the SGP projects supported world-wide have focused specifically on the involvement of women.

- The GEF SGP promotes gender mainstreaming from the beginning of the project cycle, giving both men and women opportunities to participate
- Needs assessments define the roles of both men and women early in the project
- SGP country programmes encourage the documentation of women's knowledge contributing to project activities
- SGP National Steering Committees use gender mainstreaming checklists and criteria
- Using a 'demand-driven approach', the SGP trains marginalised groups with lower levels of education in proposal development and accepts proposals in local languages.

(GEF 2008: 28)

## *The Adaptation Fund*

The Adaptation Fund (AF), which was set up in 2007 to finance adaptation in particularly vulnerable countries, ‘has a number of unique features in the areas of ownership, access, funding, revenue generation, governance and legal structure’ (UNDP 2009b). For example, it is a sub-mechanism of the mitigation-focused Kyoto Protocol, as such only governed by parties to the protocol and financed by a 2 percent levy on finance generated through another Kyoto mechanism, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM, see below). Through a ‘Direct Access’ policy, non-governmental organisations can apply to become ‘National Implementing Entities’ and directly receive funding from the AF. The AF is yet to determine its rules and

### **Box 22: German Development Institute (DIE): criteria grid for gender-screening of climate change adaptation policy instruments**

- Are climate change problem sets defined in relation to gender? (water, food, resource scarcity, land, sea-level rise, environmental disaster, other)
  - What gender approach underlies the policy? Are women’s (human) rights referred to?
    - women/men as target group
    - practical and strategic interests of women/men (responsibility, affectedness, vulnerability, agency)
    - will you take a women’s empowerment, gender mainstreaming or ‘twin-track’ approach?
    - availability of information on gender or only rhetorical reference to gender?
  - What concrete measures/instruments of gender mainstreaming and/or women’s empowerment are proposed?
    - participation of women and men?
    - at which stages and at what level (micro, meso, macro)?
- (Rodenberg 2009)

procedures – for example, its priority funding criteria for allocation of funds. It is still uncertain if these will include social and gender criteria (such as, for example, the criteria proposed by the German Development Institute, Box 22), and if funds will be allocated not only according to physical but also social and economic vulnerability to climate change impacts. According to UNDP (2009b), it will be ‘the scale of adaptation projects and programmes supported by the Adaptation Fund [which] will determine who benefits the most. If the Board primarily supports large-scale infrastructure projects, then men are likely to receive most of the benefits.’ Small-scale or community-based projects, on the other hand, are more likely to benefit women directly.

## *The Clean Development Mechanism*

While offering ‘an important new opportunity to market new technology to women on a large scale’ (Lambrou and Piana 2005), the CDM has so far missed out on improving its accessibility and on ensuring its projects’ sustainable development criteria include gender as a pivotal component. The CDM does not provide a generally applicable, mandatory approach for its projects; rather, defining ‘sustainable development’ falls under the responsibility of recipient governments (Holm Olsen 2005).

Ideally, projects under the CDM would pursue ‘win-win’ solutions, i.e. promoting both a reduction in emissions and gender in the context of sustainable development, but, while the actual reduction of emissions through this mechanism has been called into question (Schneider 2007), it is also unlikely to yield gender co-benefits. These could be delivered by small-scale, off-grid micro-hydro, biomass energy and forestry projects, but their higher relative transaction cost per unit of carbon emission reduction render them unviable in the context of CDM (Lambrou and Piana 2005). As such initiatives only constitute a minimal fraction of current CDM projects, ‘carbon markets fail to address social development factors like poverty reduction and gender equality’ (GenderCC 2009). To make such projects viable under the CDM, however, aggregator models to bundle small projects, as illustrated in Box 23, have been proposed.

**Box 23: Bangladesh: Grameen Shakti and the aggregator model**

In Bangladesh, where only 32 per cent of the population had access to an electricity grid (as of early 2009), the Grameen Shakti Programme brings the CDM to local communities. The aggregator model bundles small projects into one large project submitted under the CDM and will provide almost 970,000 solar home systems by 2015. Funding through the CDM keeps the costs of solar home systems low. The project trains women to set up and operate these systems.

(Liane Schatalek at Monrovia Colloquium, n.n. 2009: 38)

***Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)<sup>17</sup>***

The REDD Regime, another mechanism emerging from the UNFCCC, seeks to increase the amount of carbon stored in trees rather than the atmosphere by providing developing countries with financial incentives for reduced deforestation. This mechanism, which is currently being re-shaped into its newer version ‘REDD+’ (adding, broadly speaking, afforestation and reforestation as well), has been criticised for not delivering sustainable benefits and for ignoring the importance of women’s roles and needs in the management of forests (IUCN et al. 2009: 157). ‘Undoubtedly, forests play an important role in the climate system. However, trees are not just carbon stores. Forests are home to over 300 million people who are entirely or partly dependent on forests for their livelihood’, and women and men are dependent in different ways. Women often not only depend on forests for meeting their household energy needs, but also for non-timber forest products which serve nutritional, health, and cultural purposes for their households and communities (Box 24) (GenderCC 2009).

**Box 24: Norway and CARE: women’s and men’s access to forest resources and carbon finance in Zanzibar**

In Zanzibar, the Royal Norwegian Embassy is funding CARE’s gender-sensitive REDD project HIMA (Hifadhi ya Musitu ya Asili – Conservation of Natural Forests), where women are put at the forefront of a pilot approach to using carbon finance to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation while at the same time providing both men and women with sustainable resource access and direct, equitable incentives for forest conservation.

([www.careclimatechange.org](http://www.careclimatechange.org))

<sup>17</sup> REDD is “reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries”; REDD+ added to this “including sustainable management of forests, carbon stock enhancement, and conservation”.



**Cyclone Nargis: One year on in Burma – Continuing our support.** (Courtesy of Piers Benatar/DFID.)

## **5. Conclusions and recommendations: ways forward for donors to improve action on gender and climate change**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The previous sections gave insights into donor experiences of integrating gender in their work on climate change as well as an overview of progress and gaps in knowledge on the gender dimensions of climate change impacts and responses and the current status of gender in global and national climate strategies. They also presented a range of innovative examples of donor and other actors' efforts, which form part of a small body of emerging best practice and provided a basis for a set of general principles for the integration of gender into climate change responses. After summarising the findings, this section will suggest ways forward by providing such a set of general principles as well as recommendations for donors. Finally, a 'gender and climate change dashboard' offers a range of ideas for individual steps to take for better-informed gender concerns entrenched in four spheres of donor action:

- the donor organisation itself, i.e. ideas for improved organisational strategies for gender integration into climate change work
- multilateral cooperation and global policy dialogue particularly around the funding architecture;
- partner country policy dialogue and programming; and
- donors' potential roles in knowledge generation, i.e. filling the knowledge gaps on gender and climate change that still exist.

### **5.2. Summary: the status of gender in global responses to climate change**

#### *Donor experiences of integrating gender into climate change responses*

In the climate change policy arena dominated by finance and environment departments, natural science, economics and engineering, donors often stand out as the groups of actors primarily concerned with equitable development and poverty reduction and, as such, play a key role in ensuring that gender and other human development concerns are incorporated into adaptation and mitigation efforts. While they have begun to engage with or drive the gender and climate agenda, however, most of them lack effective strategies for systematic integration of gender in their adaptation and mitigation work. Usually, gender capacities exist within each donor organisation, and they are often backed by strong gender policies, but their application to climate change portfolios in particular is often weak. Much work remains for their climate change policies and programmes to fully integrate a gender-responsive approach.

Civil society and international organisations working on gender have generated a range of new projects and knowledge products, but a strong focus on women and on vulnerability in this work has led to approaches that put women at the receiving end of adaptation responses and some small-scale low-carbon initiatives. These have largely failed to address gender inequalities underlying these vulnerabilities, and only a few have started looking beyond vulnerability – at the specific knowledge and capacities men *and* women contribute to climate change adaptation and low-carbon development processes. Also there are still wide knowledge gaps, particularly in areas where gendered impact pathways are not immediately obvious, such as transport and infrastructure, energy access, housing, and formal or informal

employment. In environmental and particularly climate change project and programme cycles, there is often a disconnect between relatively strong gender analysis at the beginning of the cycle, at the design and appraisal stages, and a weaker integration of gender at the implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. The development of useful methodologies to measure gendered climate change impacts at national level and above is, therefore, needed. Gender-blind strategies and monitoring and evaluation frameworks mean that much-needed evidence also remains unavailable to policymakers.

While much of the debate on gender and climate change has focused on adaptation, most climate change finance is intended for large-scale, technology- and market-focused climate change mitigation initiatives aimed at low-carbon growth. As such, global and national responses to climate change have mostly remained weak on integrating social and gender justice. There is a lack of good practice of integrating gender into mitigation efforts, particularly at national level. For national governments in developing countries, integrating gender into a demanding and relatively new climate change agenda, among other competing priorities, remains a challenge. Even when governments have committed to international agreements on gender equality such as CEDAW, these are often insufficiently reflected in national adaptation or low-carbon development planning, as well as in national development plans.

### ***5.3. Principles and recommendations for integrating gender into climate change responses***

*Any development policy or programme addressing climate change should be premised on the following principles*

- Neither the impact pathways of nor responses to climate change are gender-neutral. The integration of gender into climate change responses is required for three main reasons:
  1. gender equality and human rights, particularly women's rights and climate justice;
  2. effective poverty reduction; and
  3. effective climate change adaptation and low-carbon development efforts.
- Addressing gender inequality is not just about women but about addressing the unequal power relationships that put women and girls – and sometimes men and boys – in more vulnerable positions and/or inhibit their active engagement in adaptation and low-carbon development.
- Addressing gender inequality involves working with men *and* women, and boys and girls.
- People matter – both men and women of all ages at *all levels and scales* – beyond the realms of the rural, traditional, small-scale and domestic, and in *all sectors*. While there are global trends in gender relations, they are context-specific and change over time. There are no one-size-fits-all approaches. Neither women nor men are a homogenous group, and their relationships in any given context interact with social variables such as age, economic income or ethnicity.

*Any development policy or programme addressing climate change should consider the following key questions from the beginning*

- How do gender roles, norms and relations affect the problems we are addressing, and how will the policy or programme address them?

- What risks and opportunities does the policy or programme entail for men, women, boys and girls?
- What strategies will it use to close gender gaps, avoid negative impacts and enhance gender opportunities?
- How will we ensure that adequate resources are available to implement these strategies?
- How will we ensure that men's and women's needs and preferences are reflected both in the policy or programme design and its implementation?
- Who and what will define the policy or programme's success, and how will it be measured?
- Who will be held accountable for the policy or programme's gender impacts and how?

### *Recommended strategies for improved donor engagement on gender and climate change*

Donors should:

- **demonstrate good practice on gender equality in the climate change arena** by promoting gender-inclusive policy dialogue and accountability for CEDAW as well as the Beijing Platform for Action in national climate change planning processes, international climate change negotiations and the emerging climate finance architecture;
- **create enabling organisational environments for gender** by addressing 'mainstreaming fatigue', institutionalising the application of existing gender commitments to climate change portfolios, providing gender and climate change tools covering the entire project or programme cycle, and addressing institutional disconnects between gender and climate change responsibilities;
- **address knowledge and best practice gaps in participatory ways that capture men's, women's and young people's ideas and knowledge**, particularly in areas where the gender dimensions of climate change impacts and responses are not immediately obvious, such as transport and infrastructure, energy access, housing, and formal or informal employment;
- **improve the understanding of gendered impacts of climate change and of climate change policy and programme impacts** by establishing monitoring and evaluation frameworks that disaggregate participation in policy and programme design and implementation by gender and age, and measure the impacts of climatic variations as well as adaptation and low-carbon development strategies on gender relations and inequalities – particularly for strategies at national and regional levels – and for low-carbon development;
- **promote gender-responsive international climate negotiations** by facilitating multi-stakeholder processes that are inclusive in a horizontal and vertical sense, promoting the inclusion of marginalised voices and making gender a core issue as opposed to a 'side event';
- **address the gender disconnect in project and programme cycles** by ensuring that thorough gender analyses of the gender inequalities and women and men's, girl's and boys' different roles, preferences, needs and capacities underlying each context are better entrenched in implementation, monitoring and evaluation;



- **promote equal access to decision-making processes and new opportunities created by responses to climate change** by promoting the reduction of legal, infrastructural and other barriers to women's participation in decision-making, markets and particularly processes related to new technologies, by making climate change decisions and funding processes transparent and accessible, and by training women's organisations to take part in and lead such processes;
- **promote gender-responsiveness in emerging funds and policies for adaptation and low-carbon development** by integrating gender into results frameworks and disbursement processes, supporting the development of best practice for gender-responsiveness in clean technology and transport choices and processes, and by bundling and thereby reducing the transaction costs of small-scale initiatives that tend to have more gender co-benefits; and
- **support partner country governments to integrate gender into climate change planning** by promoting coherence of adaptation and low-carbon development plans with national and global development and gender policies and by providing technical assistance on gender auditing and budgeting to policymakers in climate-relevant sectors.

#### ***5.4. A gender and climate change dashboard: ideas for four spheres of donor action***

##### *Donor agencies as enabling environments for gender mainstreaming*

Address 'mainstreaming fatigue' by:

- clarifying gender concepts and, similarly, improving the accessibility of climate change 'language';
- creating spaces and allowing time for regular interaction and mutual learning, reflection and visioning between gender and climate change experts;
- encouraging staff to identify and challenge gender myths underpinning their and their partners' work; and
- providing adequate financial and human resources for these activities; including budgeted time for integrating gender into day-to-day activities and performance reviews, and making gender training a part of programmes and organisational strategies.

Improve the application of existing gender commitments to climate change responses by:

- identifying existing institutional policies and action plans on gender and assessing progress of the climate change portfolio against them to identify strengths and weaknesses;
- screening other departments' work on relevant issues such as food security, agriculture, water, health and nutrition, the private sector, or governance for best practice and success strategies to avoid reinventing the wheel;
- translating these policies and mapping exercises into an adequate budget for gender mainstreaming and targeted gender and climate change activities as well as a corresponding action plan that clearly defines roles and responsibilities of individuals, teams and departments;
- holding senior management accountable for delivering on gender; and thereby
- institutionalising leadership on gender and climate change.

Building on an existing, mandatory screening process, provide staff with a checklist and corresponding guidance to:

- identify gendered climate change impact pathways;
- identify gender dimensions and entry points in and mitigation responses to climate change; and
- consider gender at all stages of policymaking and throughout the entire project or programme cycle, i.e. from identification to design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

Address institutional gender–climate change disconnects by:

- appointing gender experts to each department;
- regularly providing gender departments and experts with accessible information on ongoing climate change adaptation and low-carbon development initiatives;
- institutionalising cross-departmental and cross-disciplinary information-sharing – for example, by appointing gender focal points or champions in each sub-unit who have a clearly outlined and adequately resourced mandate; and
- closely involving regional and country offices in the process.

### *Donor actions for gender-responsive policy dialogue and multilateral cooperation on climate change*

In a field of multilateral cooperation dominated by finance and environment departments, science, economics and engineering, take the lead on gender equality by:

- holding multilateral institutions and national members accountable for their international and organisational commitments on gender;
- clearly articulating their own gender commitments;
- promoting the 2008 Manila Declaration for Global Action on Gender, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2009 Monrovia Call for Action on Gender and Climate Change;
- demanding that all climate change policies and programmes they contribute to take gender risks and opportunities into account;
- investing in and communicating learning on gender-responsive market-based and technology solutions; and
- promoting understanding of the social dimensions of vulnerability and resilience to climate change.

Promote gender-inclusive climate policy dialogues by:

- creating time and space for multi-stakeholder dialogue in a horizontal sense (i.e. across governments and different departments, civil society, and the private sector) and in a vertical sense (i.e. including men's and women's voices from all levels);
- opening spaces for voices other than governments, multilateral institutions and well-financed Northern NGOs; and
- investing in capacity-building for gender and women's networks to effectively engage with climate change policymakers and private-sector stakeholders.

Promote a gender-responsive new climate deal by:

- equipping delegations with mandates and human resources to negotiate gender language to be included in a new climate change agreement under the UNFCCC;
- insisting that gender is not just a ‘side event’ but a core issue to be addressed at negotiations; and
- supporting the advocacy efforts of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance and GenderCC as well as smaller gender networks.

Promote a gender-responsive climate change funding architecture by:

- creating a coordinating entity or structure which clarifies to what transformational changes the funds should lead and what they should be achieving in terms of environmental, social and gender standards, and which monitors these achievements;
- ensuring that funding for climate change rather is not redirected from ODA targets such as health and education, as this is likely to affect women and girls disproportionately;
- standardising combined biophysical and social definitions of key terms such as ‘sustainable development’, ‘vulnerability’ or ‘comprehensive resilience’;
- ensuring that the gender commitments of those organisations which pledge money to and those which control these funds are institutionalised in fund disbursement procedures and budget allocations;
- including gender into the mechanisms’ goals, logic models, funding criteria and results frameworks, against which all processes are rigorously assessed;
- ensuring that forests, mangroves and other ecosystems are not just understood as carbon sinks but as the livelihoods of people, whereby women and men tend to depend on them in different ways, and ensuring poor men’s and women’s access to revenues generated by, for example, the CDM and REDD+;
- funding a larger share of small-scale off-grid micro-hydro, biomass energy and forestry projects under low-carbon development funds – for example, by using an aggregator model to keep costs down while yielding gender co-benefits; and
- simplifying application procedures for such projects, shortening the duration of application processes and providing more flexible arrangements to suit the pressing needs of marginalised groups such as women and indigenous people.

### *Donor actions for gender-responsive climate change policy and programmes in partner countries*

Support governments to integrate gender into climate change planning by:

- ensuring that NAPAs, NAMAs and other forms of national adaptation and low-carbon development planning are aligned with national development and poverty reduction strategies as well as gender commitments such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action;
- learning from disaster risk reduction strategies under the Hyogo Framework for Action, which tend to be more advanced on gender;
- including gender-responsive social protection mechanisms in adaptation planning to protect the most vulnerable men, women and children from climate change impacts;

- ensuring that gender equality is one of the criteria for activity selection and that both women and men participated in the consultations;
- collaborating with GGCA organisations such as UNDP, UNIFEM or IUCN to build national and regional capacity on gender and climate change;
- institutionalising and providing technical assistance for gender budgeting and gender audits of climate change and related strategies such as energy and transport – for example, by collaborating with UNIFEM, UNDP or ENERGIA;
- building capacities of statistics bureaux and other relevant entities to collect gender-disaggregated information;
- learning lessons from and expanding or replicating approaches from initiatives such as the UNDP/JICA Africa Adaptation Programme, which appoints regional gender and climate change advisers to provide governments with technical support;
- supporting the development of a working relationship between different ministries, including the social sector (e.g. education, health), for adaptation and low-carbon development planning in coherence with other policies; and
- promoting an understanding of multi-stakeholder processes as horizontally and vertically inclusive of various different sectors, levels and social groups.

Promote equal access to new opportunities created by responses to climate change by:

- promoting the reduction of legal and other barriers to women's equal access to property, information and credit, so both men and women can benefit from markets, technologies and asset inputs for climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- promoting the reduction of economic, infrastructural and safety barriers to women's equal access to transport;
- working with private-sector stakeholders who emerge as key actors in the low-carbon economy to develop their vision and priorities for social development and gender;
- working with ENERGIA to increase private-sector capacity to consider gender risks and opportunities in low-carbon technology innovation and to be more inclusive of women;
- supporting vocational training programmes for women and girls and ensuring demand for their labour in energy- and transport-related services and institutions, at all levels;
- supporting transparent, accessible and responsive climate funding procedures and proposal-writing workshops for community-level organisations and particularly those representing women; and
- catering for women's and men's technology choices when designing and scaling up low-carbon development initiatives, considering both socio-economic factors (gender, education, income) and product specific factors (e.g. price, usage cost, safety).

Protect and invest in women's rights and girls' education to increase resilience to climate change by:

- shielding developing countries' health and education budgets from pressures due to climate and budget allocations to low-carbon development, to prevent negative impacts on, for example, maternal and reproductive health;
- improving women's legal status as a key prerequisite for reducing gender gaps in disaster mortality;

- investing in girls' education as a key strategy for reducing overall vulnerability to death, injuries and losses from climate-related disasters; and
- investing in women's and girls' access to transport, which in turn improves their access to markets, education and health services.

### *Donor actions for an improved evidence-base on gender and climate change*

Support and explore innovative approaches to gender and climate change by:

- supporting further research to explore the potential of investments in girls' education to increase climate resilience and avoid increasing carbon emissions;
- supporting further research to explore the impacts of climate change on elderly men and women to inform policymakers;
- supporting pilot experiences that explore the roles of youth and particularly girls and young women as agents of change low-carbon development;
- ensuring that new and emerging approaches such as Adaptive Social Protection are informed by a gender perspective from the beginning, and informed by both men's and women's knowledge and capacities;
- developing and piloting gender-responsive approaches to technological innovation in collaboration with private-sector stakeholders; and
- exploring and scaling up approaches for equitable, community-level access to carbon finance.

Build on existing knowledge and best practice in related areas by:

- reviewing climate change portfolios for relevant experience and communicating the findings;
- systematically screening related programme portfolios and policies, particularly in the areas of energy, transport, investment and private-sector engagement, for best practice examples to inform gender-responsive climate change policies and programming; and
- commissioning systematic reviews of literature in related areas such as food security and agriculture, water, health, forestry or energy to identify relevant evidence on climate–gender linkages.

Fill knowledge gaps on gender and climate change by:

- improving the availability of data by systematically building sex- and age-disaggregated indicators into climate change monitoring and evaluation frameworks;
- improving the quality of monitoring and evaluation frameworks to document the impact of low-carbon development and adaptation initiatives on gender equality – for example, documenting whether they narrow or widen gender gaps in human development indicators, access to assets and decision-making;
- improving the quality of monitoring and evaluation frameworks to document the gender co-benefits or negative impacts of the social, economic, political and environmental transformations associated with climate change adaptation and low-carbon development on education and health, including nutrition and maternal health, particularly at national level; and

- commissioning research and improving the availability of data on the gendered climate change impact pathways in transport and infrastructure, energy access, housing, and formal and informal employment.

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# Annexes

## ***Annex 1: Questionnaire***

Stock-take of donor and other organisations' practice on gender and/or climate change  
August/September 2010

1. Please state the name of your organisation
2. Please indicate your name and role within the organisation
3. Is your organisation specialised/focused on any of the following areas: gender, women, women's empowerment children/youth, elderly people, other gender-relevant area
4. Is your organisation specialised/focused on any of the following areas: climate change, disaster risk reduction, environment, other related areas
5. Please describe what 'gender' means to your organisation. What does gender mean/encompass/imply?
6. For how long has gender been part of your organisation's work? Why did your organisation decide to work on gender?
7. What approach to gender do you apply? For example, do you have a separate stream that focuses on gender? Are there any mainstreaming processes in place?
8. Please describe any successful strategies, lessons learned, or best practice around gender in your organisation's work? Can you share any evidence of these successes?
9. What are the main barriers to/challenges for gender equity in your organisation's work? Are there any examples you would like to share?
10. When you work with partners, how do you ensure that gender is appropriately addressed by them? Have there been any particular successes or difficulties? (Please state what type of partners you refer to, e.g. partner governments, donors, private-sector partners, civil society, ...)
11. Are there any mainstreaming processes other than gender from which we could learn?
12. If applicable, please state what your work on climate change/the environment entails. What are your key priorities for tackling climate change?
13. Does any of organisation's work address gender *and* climate change?
14. If so, at what point and why did you decide to integrate a gender perspective into climate change work?
15. How is that realised in practice? Can you share any best practice or lessons learned?
16. Is there anything else you would like to share?

## ***Annex 2: A gendered perspective of climate change impact pathways and responses***

<b>Impact pathways</b>		<b>Current responses</b>	
<b>Meteorological conditions exposure</b>	<b>Human/social consequences of climate change</b>	<b>Mitigation actions</b>	<b>Adaptation actions</b>
<i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warming</li> <li>• Humidity</li> <li>• Rainfall/drying</li> <li>• Winds</li> <li>• Extreme events</li> </ul>	<i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displacement</li> <li>• Shift in farming and land use</li> </ul>	<i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative energy</li> <li>• Accessible clean water</li> </ul>	<i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing water shortage</li> <li>• Crop substitution</li> <li>• community education on early warning systems and hazard management</li> </ul>
<b>Examples of impact outcomes and responses that are gendered in their effects:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury/death</li> <li>• Hunger</li> <li>• Epidemic outbreaks</li> <li>• Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emigration</li> <li>• Exacerbation of malnutrition</li> <li>• Increased violence against women and girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hydropower – leading to more snail hosts for schistosomiasis</li> <li>• Cleaner air – less cardio-respiratory diseases (gendered profiles)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexpected nutrient deficiencies</li> <li>• Impacts of water quality</li> <li>• Less deaths in extreme events</li> </ul>

Source: WHO 2009, adapted from: McMichael, A and Bertollini, R. Effects of climate change on human health, in Synthesis report from climate change: global risks, callanges and decisions. Copenhagen, University of Copenhagen, 2009.