



Nairobi Work Program on recent work in the area of ecosystems and interrelated areas such as water resources, adaptation and mitigation

The Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) welcomes the invitation of the SBSTA to relevant UNFCCC observer organizations to submit views and information under the Nairobi Work Program (NWP) as mentioned in FCCC/SBSTA/2016/2, para. 15(c) (i) and (ii).¹

In this submission WEDO shares information in relation to adaptation planning processes that address ecosystems and interrelated areas such as water resources; lessons learned and good practices in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation; and tools for assessing the benefits of mitigation and adaptation to enhancing resilience and emission reductions that ecosystem-based adaptation provides.

Article 7 of Decision 1/CP.21 of the Paris Agreement affirmed that “adaptation action should follow a country-driven, **gender-responsive**, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, **knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems**, with a view to **integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions**, where appropriate.”

WEDO believes that in order to bring forth a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate resilient development pathways, globally and in individual countries, all climate change mitigation and adaptation actions need to be designed using a gender-responsive approach.

A) Information in relation to adaptation planning processes that address ecosystems and interrelated areas such as water resources:

- Women's livelihoods often incorporate and depend on ecosystems and natural resources such as water. Due to this integration and dependency on the ecosystem, women are likely to remain in their ecosystem regardless of negative environmental changes. Thus, women are uniquely positioned in determining how the change in climate will affect their surrounding ecosystems as well as possible solutions to adapt and mitigate to existing climate change impacts.
- This reality reinforces the need for women's participation and leadership as a critical aspect in the planning, implementation, and assessment process of any Ecosystem Based Adaptation (EBA) initiative.
- The knowledge that women and the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples have about the ecosystems that they live in and work closely with is indispensable to the implementation of new technologies for adaptation to climate change.
- Women and girls are the primary collectors of water and must be integrated as major stakeholders in every stage of the EBA processes concerning water resources including assessing the health and safety impacts of water collection, the use of new technologies, as well as natural resource management and women's rights in relation to land access, ownership, and credit.

¹ Contact WEDO Co-Director, Bridget Burns, bridget@wedo.org, for more information.

- In addition to the above in regards to water resources, during implementation countries should undertake extensive environmental needs assessment and impacts assessment with a gender lens before approving any transboundary or inter-country water management projects, including hydro-power projects.

B) Lessons learned and good practices in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation:

- Gender equality should be reflected as a guiding principle and cross-cutting element in the structure of all EBA processes. A lesson learned through the evaluation of different processes like the PPCR² is that there is need for a systematic interpretation of what ‘gender sensitive tools and approaches’ means so that parties have clearer and more concrete guidance on how they can meaningfully address gender equality issues in their EBA processes.
- Parties should identify how environmental changes specifically affect women and their scale of vulnerability in order to address them in the EBA processes. This has mainly been done through women’s participation in the adaptation programmes and activities, particularly in economic empowerment and diversification activities.
- Gender strategies and action plans need to be developed in consultation with relevant ministries and NGOs/CSOs focused on gender, women’s rights and human rights; and undertake gender-targeted evaluations and discussions.
- Acknowledge the different vulnerabilities, knowledge and roles of men and women have on environment. There is need for a clear understanding of gender roles, norms and unequal power relations and how they can be addressed at all phases of EBA processes.

Below are successful examples of EBA projects that are gender-responsive and take into account human rights and local knowledge systems. The examples are submission from the [2016 Gender Just Climate Solutions](#) facilitated by the Women Gender Constituency.

- **Project Seeds of Hope³:** The project structured between the associations SOL and Navdanya, aims to improve resilience to climate change, food sovereignty and economic autonomy of farming communities in Northern India. It builds on preserving the biodiversity of the area and trains in priority women on agro-ecological techniques, seed conservation and reproduction. Direct beneficiaries are 686 farmers.
- **Transformation of dew and fog into potable water in the Ait Baamrane community:** The village Ait Baamrane, bordering the Sahara Dessert could no longer rely on well-water as it was depleted by overuse, poor management and increasing droughts. This fog water harvesting project based on technology inspired by ancestral knowledge on dew and fog collecting provides potable water for 400 people. It reduces water collection time for women, and therefore Girl’s time for school has improved.⁴
- **Union of Women Cooperatives for Argan Oil (UFCA) and Foundation Mohammed VI:** These two institutions have been working together since 2013 to install and disseminate solar

² Climate Investments Funds Pilot Program for Climate Resilience.

³ Women Gender Constituency, “Building women’s capacities on seed conservation and agro-ecology to adapt to climate change”, *Gender Just Climate Solutions*, 2016.

⁴ Women Gender Constituency, “Drinking from the clouds: women and men transform dew and fog into potable water”, *Gender Just Climate Solutions*, 2016.

cookers amongst population of southern Morocco, as a means of preventing deforestation of Argan trees, reducing CO2 emissions and avoiding toxic wood fire fumes.⁵

- **Rural Agency for Social and technological Advancement (RASTA):** In 2016 RASTA implemented a solar home lighting system promoted by indigenous young women in Wayanad- India. The project trains indigenous women on installing and operating photovoltaic lamps. The major beneficiaries are school children and women, as the illuminated homes allow time for homework and keeps wild animals away.⁶

C) Tools for assessing the benefits of mitigation and adaptation to enhancing resilience and emission reductions that ecosystem-based adaptation provides: New tools need to be developed in order to assess the benefits of mitigation and adaptation to enhancing resilience and emission reductions that EBA provides, especially from a gender perspective – whether it is a community-based pilot project, a policy development initiative, collection of sex-disaggregated data or a research project. The tools should be adapted to the particular context of the project and changed to suit the particular needs of the community. Below is a brief suggested framework with potential questions to integrate into all stages of EBA project implementation.

- **Stage 1 - Needs Assessment (Monitoring & Evaluation):** Consult local communities including women and indigenous peoples on the needs of the community, possible strategies and solutions, as well as the implications of an EBA project. Questions to address may include: Were all implications of the problems considered, such as the different roles of males and females? Has there been equal involvement of women and men in the needs assessment?
- **Stage 2 - Project Design:** Ensure that the project objectives, priority gaps and problems relate to the needs assessment. Questions to address may include: Are the women and men involved in project design experienced and aware of gender issues? Were the results, activities and indicators formulated with consideration of gender where relevant?
- **Stage 3 - Project Implementation:** Before the project starts, a system of ensuring that feedback is being provided throughout the implementation of the project should be established. Questions to address may include: Are there equal opportunities for men and women to participate in the project management system? Has project management been provided with human resources, financial resources, awareness and expertise or skills necessary to manage the gender dimension of the project?
- **Stage 4 - Impacts Assessment (Monitoring & Evaluation):** Develop a method for assessing the impacts of the project with indicators that will explicitly measure the effects of the project and analyze the impacts of the project on the community and on the women and men in the community. Questions to address may include: Does the project monitoring and evaluation system explicitly measure the project's effect on both women and men? Are the indicators designed to measure equality and inequality in access and control of resources for both women and men?

⁵ Women Gender Constituency, "women and school children install and use solar cookers to preserve the Argan forest", *Gender Just Climate Solutions*, 2016.

⁶ Women Gender Constituency, "Solar home lighting systems promoted by indigenous young women in their tribal communities", *Gender Just Climate Solutions*, 2016.