



## The Green Climate Fund: A Guide to Advocacy from a Women's Rights Perspective

## About WEDO

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The Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), founded in 1991, is a global women’s advocacy organization working for a just world that promotes and protects human rights, gender equality, and the integrity of the environment. To contribute toward its vision for the world, WEDO’s mission is to ensure that women’s rights; social, economic and environmental justice; and sustainable development principles—as well as the linkages between them—are at the heart of global and national policies, programs and practices. Visit us at [www.wedo.org](http://www.wedo.org).



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## About This Initiative

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In August 2017, with the support of the Wallace Global Fund, WEDO and Both ENDS, as a member of the Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA), launched a new joint initiative, “Women Demand ‘Gender-Just’ Climate Finance,” to build capacity and knowledge to track, monitor and, most importantly, influence the projects and financial flows of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). By funding the direct participation of feminist and women’s

rights activists in the work of the GCF, supporting regional feedback channels, working with women’s funds on strategies for direct access, and hosting a webinar series to take a deep dive into important aspects of the climate financing architecture, the initiative aims to ensure this money reaches local women’s groups, that projects are designed to respond to the needs of communities, and that the work of the GCF respects human rights.

# Part I: The Value of the GCF



The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is a valuable space for those seeking to advocate for more gender-responsive climate finance. Indeed, if you care about women’s rights, climate change, or financing institutions, this space is an important one to both watch and engage in.

This toolkit pulls together basic information to guide your advocacy with the GCF. It is not a primer on the GCF—there are better sources to explain the workings of the GCF, which are highlighted later in this publication. This document is a first-hand look at what it really means to engage based on

the experiences of activists who have engaged as part of WEDO and BothEND’s “Women Demand Gender-Just Climate Finance” initiative. They have learned about the GCF, attended multiple Board meetings, and coordinated regionally to share what they have learned, get others involved, and connect with their local GCF processes. This toolkit captures their insights and recommendations so that you can benefit, engaging more quickly and more effectively with the GCF because you have learned from those who have experience!



So, first: why should you engage?

1. LARGE FUND

The GCF is the biggest fund dedicated to climate change, and many people hope that it will grow. The first round of pledges totaled \$10.3 billion, and the second round of pledges has totaled almost \$10 billion thus far, with additional contributions expected during the coming years.

2. LARGE IMPACT

Most GCF projects include co-financing from development institutions and banks, so influencing the GCF affects the way these additional dollars are spent. Also, the GCF’s accreditation requirements—the standards entities have to meet to submit a project to the GCF—mean that standards for good practice are put in place throughout the organization implementing the GCF project. Moreover, the re-accreditation process, to which these entities have to submit every five years, looks for a shift across the entity’s entire portfolio—projects funded by GCF as well as the many that are not—toward the GCF goal of “low emission and climate-resilient development.”

3. LARGE MANDATE

The GCF is designed to serve all developing countries and allocate 50% of its funding to adaptation. It also has a capacity-building component—its readiness program—to help countries become ready to secure and manage climate finance.

4. LARGE OPPORTUNITY FOR INFLUENCE

The GCF has many civil society groups following it, and their collective input has weight with decision-makers and implementers. Two active observers, elected by civil society to represent developing and developed countries, are able to speak at Board meetings. Furthermore, the national-level machinery for the GCF should consult with and engage civil society, though experiences show that this engagement currently varies widely by country.

The GCF is an institution developing and rapidly shaping itself for the upcoming years and decades. This dynamic work is happening now: policies are being proposed and first implemented, ideas are being shared, new project approaches are being developed, and more stakeholders and observers are engaging.

Local, regional, and global expertise and perspectives should contribute to a system where no one is left behind, where this vehicle for climate change funding is utilized for climate justice.



For me personally, engaging with GCF has been a very empowering experience and a starting point for engaging on environment and climate change issues from a gender perspective. Partnering with WEDO and Both ENDS on this project has been key for XOESE in determining an angle to focus its work on; and we have decided to start by supporting advocacy work related to gender mainstreaming in climate finance.

— MASSAN D’ALMEIDA, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR AFRICA, 2018



Women can be agents of change and solution-creators in climate change issues. In order to make them part of the conversations, it is important to reach out to women's groups in different parts of the world with two main goals: let them know about the GCF as an opportunity to get funding for their projects and bring to the table their knowledge, their views and experiences in dealing with climate change. Funding proposals need to consider gender in their approach, as to ensure women will both be part of the project and will benefit in the solutions implemented.

— MARIA JULIA TRAMUTOLA, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR LATIN AMERICA, 2018-2019

Getting to know more about GCF projects and gradually being engaged with their activities have had profound impacts in my work and the legacy is continuing. While working with grass-root women's organisations, I have seen their struggles in striving to have formal access to credit, micro-finance, and market mechanisms at local and national levels. Hence, knowing GCF gives me the perfect scope to share appropriate information to the women's groups I work with where women's organizations can advocate for their inclusion, engage with the National Designated Authority and highlight their direct access to the groups mentioned in the GCF's Operational Modalities.

— SHAILA SHAHID, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR ASIA-PACIFIC, 2019



Climate impacts are already being felt by women in our community: both rapid onsets like floods and storms; and slow onsets like rising temperature, and land and forest degradation. They are struggling to find and practise different solutions and innovations to cope with these impacts. Further supports are needed to ensure these innovations are scaled up in a swift manner to cope with increasing climate risks. Engaging women in the GCF will empower them to influence the NDA and the country programme to respond to women's needs and ensure women directly benefit from GCF project implementation.

— WANUN PERMPIBUL, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR ASIA-PACIFIC, 2018-2019



# Why Women’s Organizations Should Engage in Climate Finance

BY MARIA JULIA TRAMUTOLA

Climate finance provides an answer to address climate change through funds and institutions alongside with conventional financing (Casas Varez, 2017). In the last year, collaboration initiatives and exchanges between specialists among the climate funds have increased in order to develop gender-sensitive proposals (Schalatek, 2018).

As agents of change in climate change issues, women should be part of the discussions and processes referring to climate finance. Mainstreaming gender is key to ensuring women will both be part of the decisions and will benefit from the solutions implemented.



PHOTO CREDIT: EILEEN MAIRENA

Access to finance is one of the barriers for women, impeding their ability to obtain resources to address climate-related losses and to train and use adaptation technologies. Due to a wide range of factors that range from cultural and social barriers to legal restrictions on access to capital, markets and land ownership (GGCA et UNDP, 2017), they are disproportionately exposed to climate change, diminishing their potential to cope with adverse impacts and perpetuating existing gender inequalities (Schalatek, 2018).

Economic resources are a key path to implement solutions, thus, women need to have access to them to get involved in the processes. The GCF, adopting a “gender-sensitive approach” in its constitutive charter, was the first multilateral climate fund to include gender in its founding instrument. The Gender Policy requests the submission of a gender and social assessment, as well as a specific gender action plan for the project with each funding proposal. Without gender equality and the empowerment of women, the coveted impact is hard to achieve.

Both mitigation and adaptation actions required to respond to climate change rely on financing from the international community as well as the alignment of policies and measures that effectively and efficiently drive the flows toward long-term solutions.

Globally, there are more than 50 international public climate funds, 45 carbon markets and 6,000 private equity funds. At COP 15 (Fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)) developed countries pledged \$30 billion in “quick start” financing from 2010 to 2012, with a commitment to increase funding to \$100 billion per year by 2020 (GGCA and UNDP, 2017).

Mobilizing these resources implies rethinking policies, creating new solutions, shaking the established criteria and generating initiatives that solve both environmental and social inequity issues at the same time. Gender mainstreaming must be a part of this process at all stages, ensuring women can make their contributions within an accessible structure, where climate solutions are generated alongside steps forward in gender equality.

The moment is to act is now.

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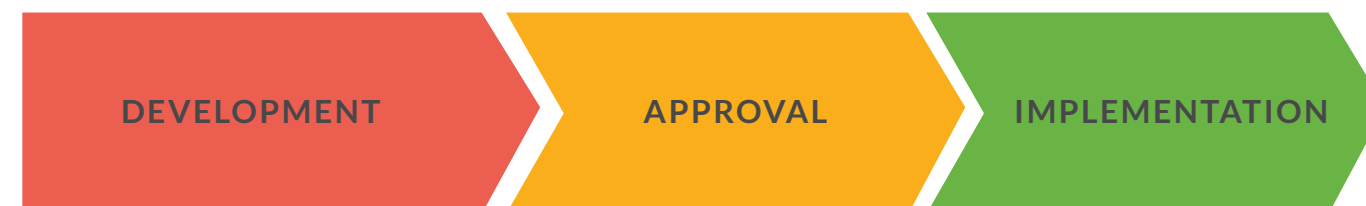
# Part II: GCF Funding Proposals

## 1. Engagement Throughout the Pipeline

Ideally, women's rights advocates within civil society should be engaged throughout the entire lifecycle of a funding proposal, from design to implementation

to evaluation and monitoring. While we continue to work toward this goal, here are the entry points we know for engagement.

### PROPOSAL PIPELINE



### Throughout Readiness

The [GCF Readiness Programme](#) is a program of funding support to countries to help them develop their capacity to engage with the GCF. Nearly every country eligible for GCF funding has a readiness programme, and a key part of the readiness process is “Engaging stakeholders in consultative processes.” Funding for readiness can and should support stakeholders, such as women's rights activists, in collaborating on identifying country priorities and the development of a cohesive country programme.

We need to engage in the country programme to ensure it provides aspirational directions — rather than copying and pasting of different government plans and policies in this country programme — and responds to the needs of women and local communities in coping with climate change.

— WANUN PERMPIBUL, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR ASIA-PACIFIC, 2018-2019



### Country Programmes:

Not all countries have country programmes yet: check [here](#) to see if yours does already, and if not, certainly try to engage! For countries with country programmes, meaningful stakeholder engagement should continue — see below for other ways to continue engaging!

During Proposal Development

Women’s rights activists and civil society organizations are increasingly getting information about proposals while they are being developed, and often this information is dependent on relationship-building with relevant organizations. The ultimate goal is to move beyond receiving information and being occasionally consulted to becoming a collaborator in identifying and developing opportunities to meet the needs of affected communities. Engaging with the National Designated Authority of your country (see your country profile [here](#)) should give you insight into what proposals are being developed. Ask what proposals are in the pipeline.

Engaging with the accredited entities that make be working in your region should provide the same insight. Start with the Direct Access Entities (see [here](#)), as they are likely more accessible, and you know that they will be working in your country.

Check out the concept notes listed for your country (see again the country profiles listed [here](#)), but do not presume that a concept note is actively being worked on to become a full proposal. Also, not all proposals submit concept notes first. Concept notes are simply one place to start to get more information.

Example of Engagement at the Country Level

In May 2019, the organization I lead, Climate Watch Thailand, and Thailand Climate Network came together in a CSO Dialogue with the Thai National Designated Authority, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a CSO engagement mechanism so that we civil society organizations could be involved in GCF project preparation and monitoring. We wanted a defined mechanism to be institutionalized so that the NDA would have to engage with us before signing the “no-objection” letter required for any proposal to go before the GCF Board.

The outcome of the dialogue was that the government agreed to look into their policy framework. If creating this mechanism is possible under the current framework, they will. If not, they will share what kind of engagement can be possible, such as a national committee where civil society members are included.

What excites me about engaging with the GCF is how to work so civil society in a country can bring their voices and concerns to the GCF. I hope others can take the activities/case of Thailand—where we work across grassroot communities and civil society organizations, developed a mechanism at the national level we want to see instituted, and have directly brought our concerns to the NDA — to model their own activism.

— WANUN PERMPIBUL, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR ASIA-PACIFIC, 2018-2019



Example of Engagement at the Regional Level

The Green Climate Fund [Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme](#) is a bottom up approach. Countries apply for and receive support from the GCF to prioritize and implement their country driven strategies to respond to climate change. At the country level, the readiness support programme is driven by National Designated Authorities, Focal Points, and Direct Access Entities (if the country has any). If well designed and operationalized, though, this programme could be a vehicle through which local women and those at the frontlines of climate change can secure critical support, resources and information they require to engage and become ready to access climate finance.

I participated in the launching of the African GCF National Designated Authorities (NDA) Network during the UNFCCC intersessional meeting in June 2019. I had the opportunity to engage with 13 NDAs from Africa present at the meeting. I emphasized the importance of gender mainstreaming in GCF processes and why the NDA Network should work with the African GCF Gender Monitors to ensure the Readiness programmes in their countries are implemented in a gender-responsive way. Indeed, the [GCF independent evaluation of the Readiness Program](#) found that Africa may be lagging behind with respect to mainstreaming gender in her Readiness processes compared to Latin America, Asia and the Pacific.

I will continue to promote the operationalization of gender-responsive Readiness across African countries through engagement with NDAs and encouraging in-country contacts to discuss Readiness with their NDAs.

— TITI AKOSA, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR ANGLOPHONE AFRICA, 2018-2019







During Proposal Approval:

Reviewing the proposals that are submitted to the Board for approval is the most structured form of engagement currently available to many women’s rights activists. Here’s the process as it currently works:

- Prior to each Board meeting, the funding proposals are released to the public.
- The GCF-CSO network asks for anyone on that mailing list to sign up and review any of the proposals. *A crucial piece of this process is members of the networking identifying if they can reach out to groups or networks who might not be in the GCF-CSO listserv and might not follow GCF, but are in the geographical location of the funding proposal, and then asking for their comments and whether they*

*had been engaged. The strength of the GCF-CSO Network is in its connections, and a broader network increases the opportunity for meaningful review and perspectives on the projects.*

- At the in-person CSO prep meeting prior to the Board meeting, a small group is created from people who have read the proposal and want to provide input, including anyone not present who has signed up online and provided written comments.
- The small group leader drafts questions and comments based on the conversation at the prep meeting and any written comments, then shares with the rest of the group for additions and edits.

Questions	Comments
The questions are shared by the two Active Observers with the accredited entities at a meeting the day before the Board meeting officially begins.	Each small group’s comments are shared with the entire GCF-CSO listserv for any further edits before finalization.
The Active Observers record the answers to the questions that they are able to ask, as well as other information about the proposal the Accredited Entities share.	The written comments are shared with all the Board members, while shorter versions may be read aloud by one of the Active Observers during the Board meeting. The comments chosen to be read are the ones about projects where there are the most questions and concerns.
This information then informs the final written comments.	

After the question session, the Accredited Entities may offer to meet with the small group reviewing their proposal, providing an opportunity for further clarification on specific aspects of the proposal, as well as giving civil society a chance

to influence aspects of the proposal. Accredited Entities have stated they will integrate ideas into their implementation, but due to the incredible lag between approval and implementation, these statements have been difficult to follow up on.



## Example of Engagement with an Accredited Entity

In October 2018, in preparing for the 21st Board meeting (B.21) in Bahrain and as is practice prior to the last few Board meetings, the funding proposals for Latin America were shared with the Regional Gender Group in order to collect input and relevant comments. We held a Skype call with different members of the group to share ideas and discuss the gender action plans of the proposals in the region (FP087, FP089 and FP097) which were coming up at B.21. The final conclusions were pulled together and finally shared with the CSO group in Bahrain during the preparatory meetings of the CSO group.



PHOTO CREDIT: EILEEN MAIRENA

During the meeting in Bahrain, I had the chance to have a discussion with the person leading the Gender Action Plan of one of the projects, in which I shared the comments provided by the group. The gender expert was very glad to receive this input, which she considered extremely valuable and relevant for improving the gender component in the project.

— **MARIA JULIA TRAMUTOLA**, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR LATIN AMERICA, 2018-2019

## During Project Implementation:

Compared to other aspects of the proposal lifecycle, civil society has had the least engagement with the proposal once it has been approved and started to be implemented. In part, this is because it has taken time for the projects to begin. Engaging also requires relationships with the Accredited Entities leading the projects, who would share information or work with groups as technical advisors.

Additionally, CSOs currently do not have access to a key document that would provide insight on implementation: the Annual Performance Report (APR). The approximately 40 projects under implementation submitted APRs to the GCF for 2018, but they have not yet been made public.



## 2. How to Review a Funding Proposal

With WEDO and Both ENDS, the GCF Gender Monitors have developed a basic template to help guide the review of a proposal. See the template below with specific notes on how you can use it to help go through proposals.

NOTE: Proposals are very long. You can start with the executive summary to get a general idea about the project and its approach. You can scroll through

to look for headings and bolded information, or diagrams of the project activities, especially as you are first looking at proposals. Plus, the very first summary page lists both the accredited entity and the executing entity, which is key information to know who is going to be delivering this project (1.2).





### 3. Looking at Gender Assessments and Gender Action Plans

Every proposal now submitted to the Board (and the majority of ones submitted in the past) includes a gender assessment and gender action plan. You can see the full list of gender assessments and gender action plans [here](#). The specific project assessment and action plan is included with any approved projects on your [country profile page](#).

Despite GCF's guidance regarding gender analysis and mainstreaming through their [template](#) and [toolkit](#), we need more engagement with proposal developers. Civil society has identified key concerns and themes as it has reviewed gender assessments and gender action plans:

Gender action plans are often short, simple documents that do not show deep consideration of

how proposal activities could contribute to or harm gender equality. They seem largely disconnected from the gender assessments, which are supposed to inform them.

While gender assessments are often long, quantity should not be mistaken for quality. Lengthy descriptions of secondary data sets, covering all the information about gender in the country, will not be helpful if there is no focus on the opportunities and challenges for the proposal — on actually finding the entry points to reduce inequality and promote gender justice within the proposal's approach and activities.

The following problems are commonly found within the GAPs:

#### A Check-Box Approach to Indicators and Targets:

We often see indicators without targets; these plans are therefore not plans designed to do anything beyond capture data. The assumption that data is enough implies that the target is either irrelevant or, as seen in many plans, straightforward gender balance. Many targets are “50% women” in some configuration — 50% of beneficiaries or participants or trainees are women — for an entire plan.

Both indicators without targets and standard, unvaried “50%” targets reveal a lack of consideration put into these plans, from gathering baseline data, to planning progressive and multi-faceted targets that these multi-year program activities can and should achieve, to considering qualitative data and measures of gender-responsiveness in the program.

Women's needs, aspirations, and capabilities extend beyond being beneficiaries or being trained — often they have information to share that can contribute to the project design and theory of change. GAPs focused on this 50% check-box miss opportunities to create time and space for knowledge-sharing both among communities and with the program.

#### No Planning for Improvement:

It's a hubristic premise that a proposal will be perfectly implemented throughout its lifecycle, which is why timelines for measuring targets that take place at the end of multi-year projects show the short shrift given to considerations of gender. Without building in any scope for monitoring and thus any adaptive management, a program that does not meet its targets will remain just that: an underperforming project.

What happens when the project ends, and the GAP indicators are off target (or off an assumed target, as so many lack targets)? Regardless of whether there will be consequences for the entities implementing the proposal (another question altogether), there certainly will have been

consequences for the people affected by the project. Alternatively, what happens when the program ends, and someone realizes the right data was not being captured, or it was being captured inconsistently? Some measures need to be captured in an ongoing manner as part of a larger monitoring and evaluation effort; otherwise, there is no real commitment to seeing any of these targets achieved.



#### Women as an Undifferentiated Group:

The GAPs tend to discuss two groups: women and men. Often, men are not even mentioned; the only indicators concern counting the number of women, with the presumption everyone else is a man. There is a general lack of considering women's or men's intersecting identities beyond a standard carve-out



Project Gender Action Plan Review Template

1. PROJECT IN GENERAL:

1.1 Overall Impression:

What is your general idea about the project?

Is it in line with the priorities of your country/region and respond to the needs of the target group?

Is this project transformational/does it propose a paradigm shift?

Do you understand the project— is it clear what the activities are and who will be doing them? Sometimes projects use a lot of financial terminology in their descriptions, which can make it difficult to figure out where the money is going and what it will be doing/enabling.

Is this the best project given the needs?

1.2 Implementers:

Do you have information on the organizations / companies / institutions involved?

What is their reputation / track record in relation to climate change programs?

Who are these institutions? You can see in the first summary page of the proposal, the accredited entity and executing entities.

This is information that may be listed in the proposal, but the ideal would be to have insight based on the experiences of those who have knowledge of their other projects.

1.3 Local context:

Do you know any of the areas or actors related to the project?

Does it seem that local groups have participated in the development of the project?

Does the project align with local needs and realities?

The “stakeholder engagement plan”— or simply “stakeholder”—is good to search for to see what groups may have been engaged or consulted.

2. ANALYSIS AND GENDER ACTION PLAN:

2.1 Gender Assessment

What is your opinion of the gender assessment?

Does it contain information and insights relevant to this particular project?

Is it up-to-date? Is it clear? Does it have any data from stakeholder engagement for this proposal, or is it citing only other data?

Does it have the right information for this project and its sector? Does it identify key entry points that you hope to see reflected in the Gender Action Plan?

2.2 Gender Action Plan

Is there significant, specific information regarding indicators, baselines, and targets?

Does it guarantee real long-term impact?

Is there a description of the budget allocated?

The **GCF template** includes activities, indicators and targets, timelines, responsibilities, and costs. Many Gender Action Plans will resemble this template, though evaluating the gender action plan should not focus on comparing it to the template design as much as analyzing what elements it has and lacks and whether it is comprehensive and robust in the context of the specific proposal.

2.3 Local Context

Do you know other organizations or women's groups who have a presence in the area or interest in this particular project?

Do you think the plan should involve other local actors to be more effective?

Other observations?

Should the Board approve this project?

Don’t be limited by this template of questions: every project proposal is different, and problematic or exceptional elements of the proposal may not have been captured by these questions.

The answer to this question informs the priority to be placed on developing the intervention and having the CSO active observers deliver it in the Board room. See “**During Proposal Approval**” on page 16.



or mention of female-headed households. Women of different ages, abilities, classes and castes, ethnicities, sexual orientation, gender expression, geographic location, marital status, literacy levels, etc. are generally lumped into a single target: 50% of beneficiaries (regardless of activity) will be women, with no attention to how the diversity of that group may be captured, planned for, encouraged, etc. This approach to gender is dated, inappropriate, and will ultimately fail for any project striving to be gender-responsive, as all projects within the GCF should be.

### Lack of Budget:

Ensuring the budget is in place to complete the GAP activities is essential to making the GAPs a real plan and not just pieces of paper. Often GAPs have no specific budget at all, which is not in line with the [GCF template](#), or have non-specific costs that suggest the true cost has not been planned for. Failure to budget undermines the GAP and reduces the chance it will be implemented, much less effective.

Although there are many places to learn more about the overall function of the GCF (see [What's Next!](#)), it is important to note here that proposals are not the only entry point to directly commenting on and engaging with the GCF. They are simply where it can make sense to engage as someone working on a local level — find the project proposed for your area, and learn about it; and follow the projects already being implemented.



Accreditations are also another entry point for advocacy at a local level, especially when regional and national entities are being considered to become Accredited Entities, the entities that can bring proposals to the Board. If these entities do not have a good history in your area, those experiences should be shared!

At each Board meeting, projects, accreditations, policies and procedures, and the ongoing activities of the GCF are all reviewed. All the documents for a Board meeting are posted on the GCF [documents page](#) prior to the meeting, and the Active Observers will use the GCF CSO listserv to alert recipients when new documents are posted.



# Part III: Climate Finance Advocacy



Reviewing individual proposals and policies is one approach to strengthening the Fund, but there are some larger principles we want to ensure we keep at the forefront of our advocacy. These ideas are not new, but this work has reaffirmed the importance of these guiding posts for our conversations and asks.

## Gender is not an Add-on

We have seen that the significance of gender mainstreaming seems to be recognized in certain materials and policies, but in practice, considerations of gender often feel like an add-on to the projects we review. We have to find new and better ways to show that gender mainstreaming is ultimately more effective and sustainable, not an extra hoop to jump through at the end of putting together a proposal. [The Mainstreaming Gender in Green Climate Fund Projects](#) toolkit states that “Gender equality is central to the GCF.” That means time and attention to integrating gender throughout a project and ensuring gender equality is advanced through project activities and approaches.

How can we advocate for gender as a critical consideration in all proposals? Let’s use our

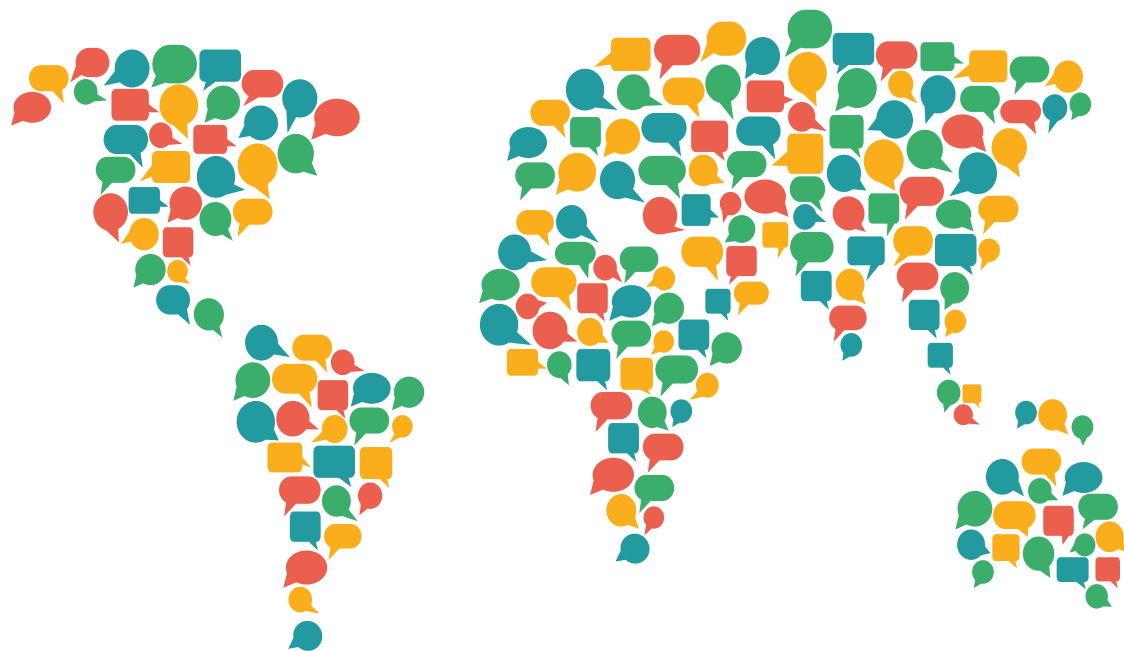
experiences and knowledge, as well as the GCF’s own premises and policies, to ensure gender is integral, not secondary.

## Engagement, not Consultation

Civil society engagement, which includes the engagement of women, indigenous peoples, affected communities, rightsholders, and the groups and networks through which they self-organize, is imperative if the best climate solutions are going to be designed and delivered. But engagement is a process, not a single meeting. Consultation is not the same as the engagement we seek, where the perspectives, data, ideas, and resources of these individuals and groups should be respected, considered, and integrated. True engagement as partners and collaborators is necessary for gender-responsive climate finance; consultation is often just another check-the-box approach to gender.

So what are you asking for? Ask for a first meeting, but use that time and opportunity to push for so much more.





One of the key lessons from the work on the “Women Demand Gender-Just Climate Finance” project is the importance of making materials available in accessible languages. While the GCF Executive Director has committed to making more materials available in French and Spanish, the current reality is that the lingua franca of the GCF is English. Few documents are available in other languages, and the ones that are are not usually introductory materials.

Anglophone and Francophone regional groups emerged in Africa so that conversations could happen more effectively, though the groups continue to coordinate with each other. Global and now regional webinars were held in different languages and recorded so that capacity-building can happen, while we push for project concept notes and proposals to be shared in the languages most likely to be spoken in that region.

## Appropriate Financing

Climate finance should be about funding solutions, not creating more problems or inequity. That’s why advocating for grant financing to developing countries is necessary to ensure that countries do not become further indebted and reduce their capacity to provide the public goods their residents depend on. Loans should be reserved for private sector actors who are making money from their involvement.

Figuring out the appropriate financing for each project means considering who is benefitting. Who are the beneficiaries of the grants or loans? Who benefits from the good interest rates (better than the market offers) on concessional loans?

## Adaptation Matters

While 50% of GCF funding is supposed to go toward adaptation, we see that funds for adaptation are greater than mitigation only when the calculations factor in that more mitigation funding is in the form of loans. Many loans are long-term, and we need the capacity for adaptation now.

Consider the described needs within current adaptation projects and use those needs to inform conversations with stakeholders — from NDAs to AEs — about why more adaptation responses that serve communities should be prioritized.

## Sustainable Development is Not Optional

While the GCF was founded to fund climate action “in the context of sustainable development,” some statements, proposed policy language, and actions over the years have interpreted climate action narrowly. We must fight for the development and implementation of projects that comprehensively address the full needs of communities, and do not step back from measures that address livelihoods and inequalities because they cannot be directly

tied to a temperature change. If projects are not promoting sustainable development, gains in climate resilience can be reversed as development challenges continue.



PHOTO CREDIT: EILEEN MAIRENA

When making the case that sustainable development is the only effective way forward, consider the opportunities that projects may be overlooking. What are the needs of communities that affect their resilience and capacity to adapt, or what measures should be taken to ensure all groups and identities have access to resources and decision-making power? Are the activities the best approach to climate action in the context of sustainable development?

Markets are Not a Paradigm Shift

With the emphasis on a paradigm shift embedded in the GCF, activities focused on improving markets are often touted as creating this shift. While markets that support renewable energy, for example, can be important, creating or influencing markets within a capitalist system is not the same as enabling a fundamental shift in how we do business and operate within our world. Creating landscapes with full support for sustainable development at every level, from government accountability to private sector investment, and prioritizing approaches that eradicate inequality while generating long-lasting solutions would be true paradigm shifts.

Find ways to assess and describe the limitations of market approaches so that markets are not

synonymous with achieving a paradigm shift. Consider how the market intervention works and who benefits most (consumers, producers, intermediaries, etc.)

More Funding!

We are not only advocating for current funding to be substantially more accessible to gender-related groups and responsive to gender considerations; we know that more funding is essential to creating a climate-just, gender-just world. We can't leave the advocacy for more funding to others.

What funding is needed to enact climate action in your area of work? How can you look at what funding is currently available and understand the depth of the ongoing need?



Women and gender-focused groups on the ground must be proactive in making their interest and presence in GCF known by linking up with their National Designated Authorities, National Implementing Entities and other entities operating in country. This is necessary to get information about the status of GCF access and readiness for a robust engagement with the processes and beyond.

— TITI AKOSA, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR ANGLOPHONE AFRICA, 2019

Tips for Climate Advocacy

START LOCAL!

Engaging with the GCF, for example, can start with the project in your area or region or your country's National Designated Authority. Attending Board meetings is only one way to engage, but so much of the work that is needed must happen at the local and country levels.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO DIVE IN!

Finance sounds complicated, but ultimately, it's the funding that should make real climate action possible. If you care about climate action, then you have a right to learn and say something about its funding, regardless of whether you have engaged with finance before.

RELY ON THE AVAILABLE NETWORKS!

Organizations and individuals around the world are engaging: ask questions and find ways to share the workload! For example, you can draft sign-on letters together. Also, don't forget that climate activists, development activists, and women's rights activists are all interested, so reach out beyond your networks to other potential supporters and sources of knowledge.

LEARN!

Learn about one specific issue in-depth and focus on advocacy in just that area at first. Because so much connects, you will learn more about intersecting issues before you know it!

ALWAYS REMEMBER THE BIG PICTURE!

Climate finance is supposed to support climate solutions. If something doesn't seem like a solution, say something! Share how this activity or approach undermines climate justice, or show an alternate approach that is more just and sustainable.

THINK ABOUT PROCESSES!

If you have a great meeting—with your National Designated Authority, an entity involved with a project, or even another stakeholder — ask how often you can schedule that same meeting. Engaging in climate finance advocacy means thinking about the long-term, when entities are proposing projects that last for many years, and entities may have many projects over time. As the funds grow, we want to ensure our voices are vital to whatever conversations and decisions are happening.

# Part IV: Regional Insights



**MARIA JULIA  
TRAMUTOLA**  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I work at FARN (Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales) based in Argentina. I had a very good experience engaging with GCF in Civil Society Observers' group through the "GCF monitor program" representing Latin America.

The truth is that climate finance architecture can be quite complex and overwhelming at first glance when you are not familiar with it, which was my situation one year ago. Yet the support of colleagues and working in groups is key in understanding how GCF works. The engagement of women in the reviewing of proposals and policies is a big opportunity for groups who advocate for gender and climate justice to raise their voice and add value to the participation of civil society in this process. In this line, we have created different regional groups and look forward to reaching out to more organizations.

The Latin America Gender group gathers almost 40 persons from 15 different countries in the region. One of our barriers is the language: since most information by and about the GCF is in English, we share information and webinars in Spanish. Input regarding proposals is collected in Spanish too, and then translated to English to share it widely in the CSO group during the preparatory meetings before Board meetings.

Most of the lessons learned are described fully in other sections of this guidebook, by all GCF monitors. Even the three regions show differences in the effects of climate change on women in cultural, geographic, political and economic arenas. We recognize that women all around the South are now raising their voices to fight climate change and bring solutions to the tables where decisions are taken, and that is why it is key that climate finance addresses them to design projects that are gender transformative.



I work with International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) as a Senior Advisor of Climate Change, DRR and Gender. I have long been engaged in different aspects of gender and climate change at local, national, and regional levels and got the opportunity to work with WEDO on climate finance as part of conducting various studies and events. My entry in the GCF arena started with following their regular updates in the Women and Gender Constituency advocacy listserv and through the training I received from WEDO under the Women Delegates Fund Night School in Bonn, Germany. Since then I have contributed my field level experience in different forums on climate finance and the GCF, particularly looking at how women's organisations can have access to GCF led projects at the national level as a meaningful partner.

One of my direct engagements with the GCF project approval process was through the CSO observers' network in 2016. I provided detailed review to one of the proposals from Bangladesh, entitled Enhancing Women and Girls Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Bangladesh. This was the first ever dedicated project only targeting women's and girls' adaptation to climate change by any global climate fund. The review discovered some critical issues in terms of establishing ownership of people in the communities, particularly women's organisations to manage communal water resources and have better access to water as well as to establish a cash-transfer mechanism to support grass-root women's leadership on climate change adaptation. Based on the review, UNDP Bangladesh organised further consultation and included necessary action points to integrate gender mainstreaming

aspects in the project proposal, which gave me further confidence to continue the work with GCF initiatives that has the potential to bring desired outcomes at the local level.

The lessons learned from my experience and engagement with regional level network suggests that the creation of new platforms — platforms for women's organizations specifically within and across the funds — can be helpful for the capacity development of women's organisations. It is equally important to encourage women's leadership and their inclusion explicitly within fund structures, ensuring their collaboration with each other as well as with the Fund itself. This option could function as an opportunity for learning and collaboration across funds as well, coherently developing regional and national databases of networks and organizations on GCF priorities. We have recently started working on strengthening the regional level platform on women's engagement in climate finance in order for the funds to work positively for women's empowerment and gender equality outcomes. We must raise strong voices and promote actions to reduce and eliminate gender-based barriers to women's access to climate finance.



**SHAILA SHAHID**  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

The engagement in CSOs' different channels of communications and meetings has increased my knowledge and understanding of the GCF. Each time I attend the CSO preparatory meetings, prior to GCF Board meeting, I have filled in my knowledge gaps with regard to funding proposals and GCF policies. The CSOs prep meeting is not a classroom or a training style, but it is where one has to put in effort and work. I started with my contribution to reviewing and providing comments on funding proposals of other countries, not my own country, trying to familiarise myself with different policies and how they influence the proposals. Through this process, my knowledge and understanding has increased. I also have to link these proposals and policies to the actual work on the ground and ensure they reflect the reality, concerns and needs of farmers and women in my country with whom I have been working.

There is also a Southern CSO communication channel as well as meeting where we get together to discuss and plan our strategies and activities, reiterating our key values of climate justice and equity. This has been a great forum in exchanging and learning from each developing country on how CSOs in each country have engaged with their national designated authority (NDA), how the country programme has been prepared, what the national framework in each country looks like, and how and whether CSOs are engaged in the preparation for a funding proposal. In many countries, CSO engagement has been limited despite attempts to engage with the NDA, which is the same as our experience in Thailand.

Even though Thailand has not submitted any proposals to the GCF, I think it significantly matters how projects are

implemented, because climate change has no boundary, and actions to tackle climate change, both mitigation and adaptation, go beyond national boundaries. I have also communicated about the GCF with different groups in Asia to get their input on GCF policies and proposals, and engage them in monitoring GCF implementation.

Much work needs to be done at the national level. I work with different grassroots communities and women on the ground, and we have already felt climate impacts and the need of support, especially financial resources, to scale up local initiatives. I have communicated with them about the GCF. It is not easy as GCF is quite complex. Localising the GCF or getting communities to engage with the NDA and GCF is not a one-time event. We have to continue engaging meaningfully in our country and in monitoring the fund. We need to make sure the fund is filled according to the financial obligations of the developed countries; it effectively and really benefits communities and women who are vulnerable to impacts of climate change and who have the least adaptive capacities to deal with climate impacts; and the fund significantly contributes to the long term adaptation process.



PHOTO CREDIT: EILEEN MAIRENA

**WANUN  
PERMPIBUL**  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I have been engaged for several years with the network of CSOs of the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund, working with ENDA Energie. I followed the GCF-CSO Listserv as well as the GCF South-South Listserv. So I inquired about what was going on from time to time, but my real commitment started right after my interview by WEDO and Both Ends to recruit the Africa Monitor as part of their project, "Participation is Power: Women Demand Gender-Just Climate Finance."

Even though I did not become the Africa Monitor at first, I then followed the Women's Rights and Climate Finance webinars and participated in Skype meetings for Africa. As soon as I was appointed Country Monitor for Burkina Faso by the then-Africa Monitor, I went to introduce the project to the NDA. I shared the activities of the NGO that I lead, the Women's Environmental Programme--Burkina Faso, including telling about our current projects. The NDA focal point had known me for several years on the front of the fight for climate justice but also on issues of gender.

Since this official presentation, he consulted me on several topics, including asking for contacts and leaders of certain networks and civil society organizations in Burkina, and lists of women's organizations, including those with whom we are working on the project "Women 2030." And when Burkina Faso began receiving readiness funding from the GCF to start its activities, he invited me to the ceremony, and I had the honor of representing Burkinabe civil society.

I presented my workshop project to train gender observers to the delivery partner in charge of the readiness program who appreciated the ideas, and even amended the Terms of Reference to include this work. Recently, I was filmed discussing the relevance of gender for Burkina for a video the GCF Secretariat is compiling. Meanwhile, WEP BF has been

contacted by the NDA to propose projects: with my staff, we have developed and submitted a scaling up project on the Green Economy with the NDA and UNDP as an accredited entity. This proposal idea will be added to the projects to be prioritized as part of the GCF country programming.

I have also taken on the role of Francophone Gender Monitor and have been connecting more regionally, as well as attending board meetings. The GCF process is very complex: it's a great school for me as I always learn with enthusiasm. I have learned about some of the mechanisms through which women's organizations or civil society in general could benefit from the GCF. My regional coordination and Board meeting participation also allowed me to meet exceptional women committed to advancing women's rights. I have hosted regional Skype and webinar meetings, and am now trying to organize regional in-person meetings to leverage our enthusiasm and dedication even further.



**ZENABOU  
SEGDA**  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



As a GCF gender monitor for Nigeria and Anglophone Africa, I proactively reached out to my NDA/ Focal Point to impress upon him women’s interest in following the GCF process in Nigeria and why it is important to engage us in the process. I introduced the GCF gender monitors project to him and sought his support in ensuring free flow of information with regards to Nigeria’s GCF access and related processes. This proactive step availed me the opportunity to interview him and gain useful insight into the efforts Nigeria is making towards GCF readiness and direct access.

As of now, I have a cordial relationship with the Nigeria’s NDA/ focal point to the extent that I get regular updates from him and the Nigeria Climate Change Department about Nigeria’s efforts on GCF readiness access. The information obtained from the NDA is in turn shared with women’s groups and the broader civil society across the country. I equally, provide the NDA/Focal Point with relevant updates on my activities at the GCF board level.



PHOTO CREDIT: EILEEN MAIRENA

**TITI AKOSA**  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



**Latin America and the Caribbean\***

**TOTAL GCF FUNDING:\*\***  
\$1.2 BILLION

**COUNTRIES WITH APPROVED PROJECTS\*\***

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname.



**Africa**

**TOTAL GCF FUNDING\*\***  
\$2.2 BILLION

**COUNTRIES WITH APPROVED PROJECTS\*\***

Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

\*While the regional focus of the “Women Demand Gender-Just Climate Finance” project was Latin America, GCF tracks Latin American information with the Caribbean, and the project revealed a need to consider how to serve the interest from advocates in the Caribbean.



**Asia-Pacific**

**TOTAL GCF FUNDING\*\***  
\$1.6 BILLION

**COUNTRIES WITH APPROVED PROJECTS\*\***

Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Nauru, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Viet Nam

\*\*Does not include projects approved at the Nov 2019 board meeting.

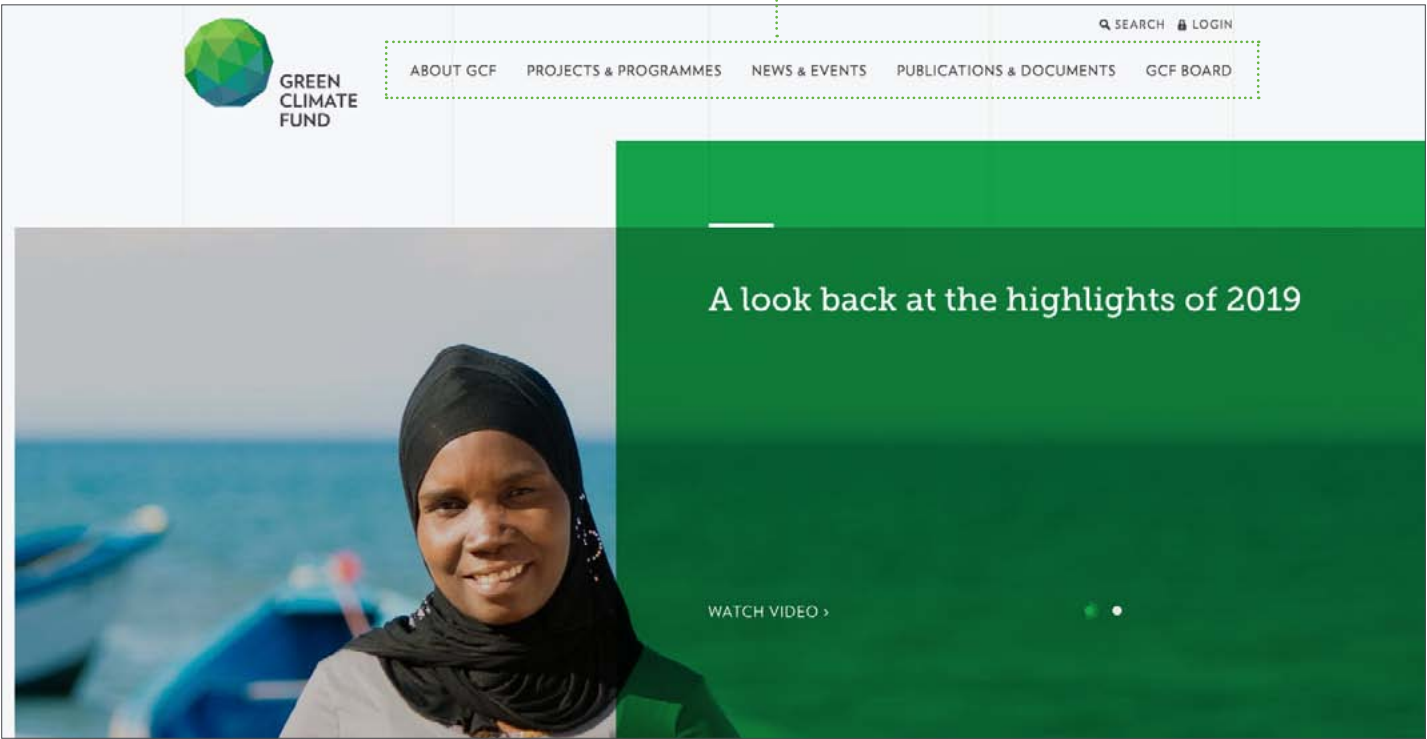
## Part V: What Next?

By reviewing this advocacy guidebook, you have started the process of engaging with the Green Climate Fund.

Now is a great time to engage because there are both incredible resources and incredible people and networks to support you.



The GCF website has five menu headings that can be used to link to key materials.



Here are some of our favorite links on the website!

ABOUT GCF

PROJECTS & PROGRAMMES

NEWS & EVENTS

PUBLICATIONS & DOCUMENTS

GCF BOARD

About GCF

Secretariat

Structure

Management

Headquarters

Careers

Procurement

Governance

GCF Board

Policies & strategies

Partners

National Designated Authorities

Accredited Entities

Observers

Resource mobilisation

Initial Resource Mobilisation

GCF-1

Accountability

Evaluation

Integrity

Redress mechanism

Information disclosure

ACCOUNTABILITY:

Links to all the independent units' websites, as well as information on information disclosure

OBSERVERS:

Links to a list of all organizations registered as observers so that you can find what organizations in your network and region are following the GCF

PROJECTS & PROGRAMMES

NEWS & EVENTS

PUBLICATIONS & DOCUMENTS

GCF BOARD

Areas of work

Countries

Themes

Financing

Result areas

Project portfolio

List of projects

Portfolio dashboard

COUNTRIES:

Links to the country profile pages, which have NDA contact info and documents pertaining to readiness, approved projects, and concept notes for each country

LIST OF PROJECTS:

Links to a list of all projects able to be filtered by theme, public/private, access modality, size, region, and date

Country & entity engagement

Country commitments & ambitions

Readiness support

Entity accreditation

Project preparation

Process & documents

Requests for Proposals

Simplified Approval Process

Project preparation support

Project review & appraisal

Investment criteria

Safeguards

Approval & implementation

Board approval

Legal arrangements

SAFEGUARDS:

Links to the Indigenous Peoples' policy and operational guidelines; the gender policy, mainstreaming gender toolkit and the GAPs and gender assessments for approved projects; and the environmental and social safeguard policy and reports for all approved projects

PUBLICATIONS & DOCUMENTS

GCF BOARD

Publications

Operational documents

Board documents

PUBLICATIONS:

Links to all GCF publications, including factsheets on regions as well as handbooks and longer publications

GCF BOARD

Overview

Board meetings

Documents

Decisions

B.24

BOARD MEETINGS:

Linking to an individual board meeting leads to its documents, agenda, decisions, videos, and approved projects—the last three only available once the board meeting has been held

DOCUMENTS:

Links to the document search for any document from any board meeting, including all decisions



# Resources

## REPORTS/DOCUMENTS

(~1 HR OR MORE TO READ FULLY;  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES AND SHORTER  
VERSIONS OFTEN AVAILABLE)

**Women’s Organizations and Climate Finance: Engaging in Processes and Accessing Resources** (2019) A great resource for learning more about the four primary climate funds, their histories with gender considerations, and specific entry points for engaging with them. A webinar on this report is also available [here](#).

**The Green Climate Fund: a CSO guide for engagement and local access with a specific focus on the Indonesian context** (2016) A step-by-step exploration of the GCF to enable your engagement, this report is a natural next read for anyone who wants to know more about the GCF after reviewing this toolkit.

**Local actors ready to act: Six proposals to improve their access to the Green Climate Fund** (2018) This document explores key advocacy positions for improving the GCF that activists can continue elevating to ensure the GCF is serving the needs of local communities.

**Engaging with the Green Climate Fund, a Toolkit for Civil Society** (2019) A consortium of partners including Germanwatch, CARE, PACJA (Kenya), Enda Energie (Senegal), CISONCEC (Malawi), AESVT (Morocco), and Kasa Initiative (Ghana) published this primer to learn in-depth about the workings of the GCF.

**Our Voices, Our Environment: The State of Funding for Women’s Environmental Activism** (2018) Prospera and Greengrants conducted the seminal report mapping the lack of funding for women’s environmental activism.

## SHORT VIDEOS (3-5 MIN EACH)

There is a relatively new video on gender-responsive climate finance created by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, and the three videos in this series, though narrated in English, are subtitled as follows:

**What is Climate Finance** (English, French, Spanish)

**Gender Responsive Climate Finance** ( English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Bangla and Portuguese)

**Green Climate Fund (GCF)** (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Bangla and Portuguese)

## WEBINARS (60-90 MIN EACH)

The 2017-2018 webinar series on Women’s Rights and Climate Finance, hosted by WEDO and BothENDS as a member of the Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA), is a great starting point. The entire playlist is available [here](#), but the individual webinars are as follows. All webinars have slides available for download in English, Spanish, and French, and Webinars 3-5 can be watched in all three languages:

Webinar 1: **Intro to Climate Finance**

Webinar 2: **Gender in Climate Finance**

Webinar 3: **Getting the Money to the People: GCF Accreditation and Enhanced Direct Action**

Webinar 4: **Strategies for Organizing to Influence, Monitor, and Track Climate Finance (from Global to Local)**

Webinar 5: **Experiences and Perspectives of Women Engaging in Climate Finance**

In 2019, additional webinars were held at a regional level, and are available on a [second playlist](#).

## CONTACTS FOR REGIONAL GENDER GROUPS

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Women can be agents of change and solution-creators in climate change issues. In order to make them part of the conversations, it is important to reach out to women's groups in different parts of the world with two main goals: let them know about the GCF as an opportunity to get funding for their projects and bring to the table their knowledge, their views and experiences in dealing with climate change. Funding proposals need to consider gender in their approach, as to ensure women will both be part of the project and will benefit in the solutions implemented.

— MARIA JULIA TRAMUTOLA, GCF GENDER MONITOR FOR LATIN AMERICA, 2018-2019

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