

WOMEN GENDER CONSTITUENCY

Submission by the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) responding to Decision 3/CP.23

Background

This submission is a contribution to Activity E.1 on Monitoring and Reporting of the Gender Action Plan as a response to the call for inputs for a synthesis report by the Secretariat and the review of the Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan, which is to be initiated at SBI 50 (June 2019).

Title: Submissions from Parties and observers on the following, including sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis, where applicable:

(a) Information on the differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men, with special attention paid to local communities and indigenous peoples

The world is increasingly experiencing the impacts of climate change and the information available regarding the differentiated impacts on women and men as well as the different capacities to cope with those impacts, varies across regions and sectors. In the information already available in peer-reviewed and grey literature is clear that women are disproportionately affected, vulnerable and exposed to the many negative impacts of climate change as they are mainly the ones who cook, collect water, fuel and first responder to any adverse climate situation like disasters (See concrete examples and information in Annex I). Our conclusion is that more information and data (both qualitative and quantitative) is still needed it for instance, on these differentiated impacts among women and men in local communities and indigenous peoples' groups. This information is key to, among other things, formulate climate policies that are gender responsive.

Moreover, while it is important to include information and indicators that incorporate sex, gender and age -disaggregated data to document the differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men, there are also social, legal, political and economic factors that contribute to the intensification of (differentiated) impacts of climate change and hence, is also necessary to consider and incorporate gender analyses and the gender dynamics that relate to climate change.

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Women in general are underrepresented in decision making - also in local communities - which also has an influence being major stakeholders. Bottom-up, participatory planning processes, involving both men and women in assessment and planning, is a methodology that show good results in this respect. Breaking the gender gap has only positive impacts. When marginalized women, who are the experts of their own lives, are empowered (i.e. being aware of climate change consequences for their own and their children's' life and being aware of the opportunities to combat these impacts and to improve livelihoods), they can become an agent of positive change through both leadership and implementation.

The Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) is one of the nine stakeholder groups of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and consists of women's and environmental civil society organizations and networks with vast experience working on gender and climate change related issues at all governance levels. We include in Annex I of this document information and experiences of some of the WGC's organizations working with indigenous peoples, local communities and women groups, including different sectors and regions. Many experiences, key findings and recommendations in Annex I go beyond information on differentiated impacts, providing also answers to question b) on how gender considerations can be integrated into adaptation, mitigation, capacity-building, Action for Climate Empowerment, technology and finance policies, plans and actions.

(b) Integration of gender considerations into adaptation, mitigation, capacity-building, Action for Climate Empowerment, technology and finance policies, plans and actions

Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on women's human rights, including the CEDAW General Recommendation 37 on Gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change and the rights to health, the rights of women, indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, in addition to a holistic approach to gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.

Developed countries must recognize their *historical responsibilities* and fulfil their obligation to support both adaptation and mitigation measures for developing countries, including through finance, technology transfer, capacity building and the removal of patent and intellectual property restrictions. It is also key to recognize the link between the level of adaptation needed (and associated financial and technical support) and the level of mitigation efforts and the fact that developing countries mitigation obligations and actions are conditioned to the provision of support by developed countries.

On climate adaptation, a global goal that aims to increase *climate resilience and adaptation capacity of communities* and peoples, especially the ones at the forefront of climate change and women should be adopted, ensuring that all adaptation actions are gender-responsive. It is necessary to recognize the urgent adaptation needs of developing countries, particularly of least developed countries (LDC) and small island developing states (SIDS) as well as prioritized support (e.g. micro grants) for indigenous peoples and local community's adaptation needs, including gender specific targets and indicators.

Countries have to ensure support towards *small-scale, locally owned and developed ecological responses* ensuring food sovereignty, in particular, promote agroecology practices and reject climate smart agriculture. As part of this support, is key to retain and promote traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous and rural women.

Along with this support, *strong social and environmental safeguards to ensure that funds are not directed towards any fossil fuel or any other harmful energy projects* or programmes have to be developed and effectively implemented. Strong social safeguards should ensure that all human rights, including women's and indigenous' rights, are not undermined by any projects funded by climate finance, including their livelihoods. Moreover, local communities and indigenous peoples, in particular grassroots women's groups, have to be included in the design, implementation and monitoring of any funding proposal presented and approved by the GCF and any other international/national climate funding mechanisms.

Pilot programmes to apply *energy democracy for all*, including women, have to be developed. Promoting energy democracy and community/ decentralized renewable and clean energy that is accessible and affordable is also key, as well as recognizing the right of access to clean, safe and environmentally, socially and economically sound energy, in particular for the poorest and marginalized people.

Parties should ensure that local authorities, include community participatory planning methodology, where both men *and women* participate. Presently, decisions are often made without listening to the community and in most cases without women's involvement. As women are major stakeholders, the planned solutions chosen will be better if women are also involved. Women have also the tendency of preferring sustainable solutions as thinking about securing their children's health and wellbeing is a priority.

Parties have to develop the concept of *'just and equitable transitions'* to ensure a transition to just, sustainable and equitable economies that promote decent work for women and redistribute job opportunities and the gendered division of labor, including the burden of unpaid care work. Just and equitable transitions have to be done by building resilience and adaptive capacity of the poor, including through providing living wages, regular jobs, more viable livelihood and social services.

Parties have to establish a *global moratorium* on the pursuit of existing and creating of new fossil fuel extractive sites/new dirty harmful energy projects, including large scale agrofuels, mega dams and hydro projects and nuclear energy as well as any mechanism that are commercializing climate and nature and have proven their inefficiency, including carbon-trading, offsetting, and REDD+, among others.

(c) Policies and plans for and progress made in enhancing gender balance in national climate delegations

We acknowledge that there has been progress during the past years regarding gender balance in the climate national delegations, but this progress is not sufficient yet and is fundamental to continue enhancing the participation of women. However, is also key to make sure that national delegations

move from “sitting at the table” and tokenism towards a real transformational change. Women have to be empowered and hold leadership roles within their delegations, enhancing gender equality and ensuring that their views are valued and reflected. To further progress, national climate delegation should consider the implementation/continuation of the following plans and activities:

- Elaborate guidelines to choose the people for the national climate delegations and have a quota of women holding junior, senior and leadership positions
- Elaborate tracking tools to assess the gender composition of the national climate delegation and progress made over time in the quota of women holding junior, senior and leadership positions
- Provide capacity-building for women to effectively participate, including building on leadership and technical skills on different negotiation topics.
- Provide training and capacity-building for the members of the climate national delegation to mainstream gender as a cross-cutting issue
- Include a (roster of) gender expert in the national climate delegation
- All such national initiatives should also filter down to regional and local level governance to ensure gender integration in multilevel climate action plans.
- Secure financial support for women to be able to participate in trainings and national delegations including grassroots and indigenous women.
- Elaborate evaluation tools to assess how the selection guidelines, tracking tools, financial support, capacity-building and training have contributed to achieve gender balance and equality, including lessons learned, steps and timelines for future improvements.
- Include women’s organizations and gender experts in developing gender assessment tools as well as monitoring and review exercise.

ANNEX I. Key Findings: Information on the differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men, with special attention paid to local communities and indigenous peoples

1. Global Forest Coalition: Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) Key findings and recommendations from gender analysis

The Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) documented and reviewed the findings of bottom-up, participatory assessments in 22 countries of the resilience of community conservation initiatives and the support that should be provided to strengthen these initiatives. The assessments were carried out considering the different groups in the communities, including women and youth, and they identified the main external and internal threats to their livelihoods and initiatives. The communities also designed plans and projects to overcome those threats, including those related to gender, in this case with focus on forests, biodiversity, access to land and overall, natural resources management and access. The key findings from the gender analysis that came out of this initiative are:

- i) Despite playing a major role in biodiversity conservation and forest management, such as through intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge, energy generation, collection of food and medicine, and sustainable livelihoods, women are found to be excluded from participation in local and national executive committees, managerial positions, decision-making bodies, and from controlling land and resources. In some communities, there is limited participation by women in community processes and activities in general. This can be attributed to patriarchal and discriminatory structures and national policies (e.g. patrimonial land inheritance). Limited awareness on women's legal rights and available policy provisions in biodiversity policy and management at the local and national level also plays a role.
- ii) Benefits of biodiversity resources are not always equally distributed between wealthy and poor community members and between men and women; women are often not participating in benefit sharing, with limited access to forests for collecting fuel wood and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Women need their rights and security ensured while accessing forests.
- iii) Respecting and recognizing the community tenure rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including women land rights is integral to the survival of communities and their environments, benefitting men and women.
- iv) Women are facing limited access to, and scarcity of, NTFPs in forests, which affects them and the wellbeing of their families; women themselves are developing new ways of addressing this, such as to inter plant NTFPs with food crop farms.
- v) Women and men from communities need national governments to recognize their practices as contributing to biodiversity conservation and to support them through recognition of their roles in policy and through financial means. National funds and

schemes are better channeled through village governing councils including women grassroots organizations made up of all the adult members of the village rather than “heads of households”.

- vi) The CCRI outcomes emphasized the need to strengthen the role of women in conservation through creating women’s networks for biodiversity conservation advocacy at the local and county levels, linked to national-level advocacy networks. The CCRI outcomes also demonstrated women’s growing interest in taking part as legitimate stakeholders in local and national biodiversity policy planning and decision-making, and the need for national and global support for initiatives like this.
- vii) Revival of traditional customary uses and practices in community land is very important, including reviving and strengthening traditional livelihood opportunities as this provides additional economic opportunities in the local community for women. Women emphasized the need for long-term sustainable livelihood activities to respond to pressing needs of families.
- viii) Women are also demanding further capacity building on sustainable biodiversity use, for example through agro-ecology training especially for women farmers.
- ix) Women’s participation in community conservation efforts increased in the communities where the CCRI was conducted. Facilitating effective participation of women is still a challenge, and it was sometimes required to have separate meetings with men and women, and then joint meetings to enable women’s active participation and voices to be heard.
- x) Community members and leaders have increased understanding of the benefits of considering gender differentiated roles and impacts and women’s aspirations in local biodiversity planning and decision-making.

2. Key findings by ARROW’s Partners in Asia

Climate change adds to the existing work burden; reproductive, productive and community roles of women and girls. Due to their gender ascribed the responsibility to fetch water for household use and consumption, taking care of the sick, the elderly and the very young, as well as sourcing, processing, preparing and serving food falls on women and girls. Due to this added burden, they would suffer from exhaustion and bone injuries, having to walk far distances to fetch heavy pots of water as well as lack of sleep because the first water fetching task of the day normally happens before dawn. This is also one major reason why girls drop out of school during extreme weather events; so that they could help out in the household. They would also face gender-based violence (e.g., sexual harassment, sexual violence, and rape) while fetching water, firewood and food. Even the water they fetch may be contaminated as the sources are from streams and ponds. The girls would then suffer from waterborne diseases such as cholera and diarrhea.

Specifically, survey amongst women in selected rural communities in **Bangladesh** highlighted the problems related to access of clean water and food security. Flooding results in the shortage of clean

water both for consumption and usage. Women and girls are more susceptible to illnesses and diseases arising from the consumption and use of polluted and unclean water. For those in reproductive age, especially those who are pregnant, the consumption of polluted water or high salinity water, negatively affects their sexual and reproductive health.

In **Nepal**, during climate related disasters and environmental stress, women and girls have to take care of the sick in their household. The increase in the workload encroaches upon their time to pay attention to their personal hygiene, including menstrual hygiene practice which subsequently affect their health. Also, when clean water supply is scarce women are inclined to save water for household needs and usage rather than use it for their own personal needs and menstrual hygiene.

Climate change may exacerbate the phenomenon of early marriage for girls. Aggravated by poverty, early marriages occur during weather extreme events as a coping strategy adopted by poor families. Our partners in **Bangladesh and Nepal** found in their studies that families are practicing child marriage among their young daughters as a mean to escape poverty brought about by climate change. If they are married off early and find themselves pregnant, at the same time undernourished, they are at risk of suffering from anemia, pregnancy and delivery complications, as well as delivering low birth weight babies or experience perinatal mortality.

In **Lao PDR**, in a remote valley in the southern province, drought and irregular rain destroyed the crops planted by the villagers. This caused them to experience rice shortage for six months annually. Rice is their staple food. The villagers received 20kg rice support per household from the World Food Programme, but this is insufficient. Also, one woman who was part of the study reported that she has to walk at least two km to get water every day during dry season. She also has to go into the forest to collect fuel and look for food every day while her husband is working in the rice field.

3. Findings from Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development's (APFWLD)

The Feminist Participatory Action Research was carried out by 20 partners in climate change vulnerable countries to document their experiences, responses and needs to ensure that those most affected by climate change are able to shape policies at the local, national and international level. These unique experiences are reflected across the Asia-Pacific region, and CJ-FPAR builds a platform to unite them. Our objectives in CJ-FPAR were to change systems and structures to improve the lives of the marginalized women of the Global South. We wanted to facilitate a democratic, mutual learning space as part of the bigger, overarching struggle for social transformation. The participants of CJ-FPAR are not passive subjects on whom research is conducted, but rather they are the authors and drivers of the inquiry. Women of FPAR set their own agendas. They participated in the data collection and analysis. They controlled the use of the outcomes, including deciding what future actions and directions to take.

FPAR not only hopes for a better system, it embodies it. By accepting that all knowledge is gendered, and that all data and expertise is gendered, FPAR challenges history that creates some knowledge as authoritative and empowers marginalized women as the experts of their own lives. FPAR acknowledges that structural change is necessary to break systems of oppression, including patriarchy, fundamentalism and militarism, and so ensures participants are not only objects of

research but true authors and owners of it. It is this ownership, which gives the communities in question a very real platform to advocate for change. And from this platform, the women themselves have the chance to meaningfully engage in evidence-based policy discussions.

While there remains an urgent emphasis on mitigation and adaptation measures within the climate change discourse, particularly from the state and private sectors, it is becoming harder to ignore the losses and devastations that has become the daily reality for communities in the Global South. This calls for a just and equitable transition and the phasing out of emissions whose damage is heightened in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, causing political and socio-economic instability in those societies, threatening their environments and peace in the regions, and globally. This then put to fore the urgency of bringing the L&D discourse to the centre of the climate agenda. Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR), provides evidence to the gendered impact of losses and damages wrought by climate disasters, particularly the marginalized women from rural and indigenous communities.

As a case study, in Hai Duong commune, **Vietnam**, climate change has made the lives of the subsistence-based farmers more difficult, with the worst impacts affecting women. According to Mrs. Tran Vu Kim Hoa, a woman farmer living in Hai Duong Commune: “Land here is becoming so infertile that each year (we can grow) only one crop of wet rice salt tolerant varieties will grow, while the other crop is abandoned.” Because of salinization of the land and water shortages, farmers can no longer grow their usual two varieties of wet rice in the summer season. Forced to adapt, they now utilize the salinized land which was previously used for wet rice cultivation and the coastal sandy areas to plant watermelons. “Other farmers in Vietnam have enough water resources to grow two crops of rice, but in Hai Duong farmers can only grow one. An adaptive farming measure is to use sandy soil on the edge of the coast for planting watermelons, as they require less watering. We are now able to grow two crops each year. Previously, watermelon only yielded from 300-400 kg per square meter. However, since we have been trained through the SRD project, the yield has grown to 1 ton of watermelons per 500 square meters.” Mrs. Phan Thi Thanh Thuy, Hai Duong Commune The adaptive cultivation of watermelon in the sandy soil has yielded an annual profit of 20-25 million Vietnamese Dong (equivalent to USD 900-1130) in place of their usual income from the rice cultivation.

During the course of working with grass root level women, All India Women’s Conference has found that while disproportionate impact is being felt by women, there is a need for knowledge sharing and capacity building in context to the precipitating factors relating to climate change. Further, women from the global south have imbibed traditional knowledge to mitigate climate change impacts as well as protect biodiversity. They also have immense resilient capacity which needs to be recognized and scaled up.

4. Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) findings

WECF and its local partners work on numerous projects that combine action against climate change with inclusive and gender just solutions. Integrating gender considerations into climate strategies in order to develop fairer and more inclusive climate policies is a key element for sustainable, replicable and feasible climate plans. The following examples shall highlight how gender responsive programs can contribute to more efficient climate action policies.

In **Georgia**, together with local partners, WECF developed a training module on construction, use, monitoring and maintenance of solar water heaters in rural regions of Georgia with the goal to expand these clean energy solutions to rural communities through the training of women energy ambassadors. For now, thirty women have been trained to construct, sell, install and maintain these solar heaters, contributing in the long term to a reduction of CO2 emissions, and a facilitated access to renewable energy. Being a project held by beneficiaries for beneficiaries, the ambassadors enjoy a high credibility what leads to a broad acceptance and spread of their presented energy solutions. This example shows that women who are formed to understand and explain clean energy technologies helps to contribute to mitigation and capacity building strategies. Through women empowerment, a democratic energy transition is initiated from the bottom up, helping women ambassadors to become agents of change.

In Bhungroo, **India**, a locally developed rainwater management technology saves farmers' crops from waterlogging during monsoons and ensures adequate irrigation during dry seasons. The project relies on trained Women Climate Leaders (WCLs), who promote the technology and deliver free-based agriculture expert advice. The co-ownership model has facilitated access to irrigation and farming facilities to smallholders, with each one ensuring food security to 30-100 rural poor and generating income of approximately USD \$5700+ per year. This example shows that women who are formed to construct, install and maintain Bhungroos, while providing these services to other farmers, are actively participating in adaptation to climate change by being able to collect, store and distribute water when needed. Becoming nutritionally and financially self-sufficient, the system improves women farmers' social status and helps them participate in village governance. Through expansion and up-scaling, the beneficiaries pass on their technical knowledge and understanding of climate adaptation.

In **DRC**, the Coalition des Femmes Leaders pour environment et le Développement Durable (CFLEDD) strives for the recognition of women's land and rights in the provinces of Equateur and Maitindombé of the RDC. An advocacy tool has been built and is used in dialogues between local and indigenous women, customary chiefs and provincial authorities. Recommendations resulting from these dialogues have led to the adoption of 2 provincial edicts that guarantee land and forest rights for women. This transforms the country's patriarchal framework, while strengthening the role and decision-making power of women in DRC's forest management policies for climate action. This example shows that integrating women's active participation in forest governance is an essential element of halting deforestation, thus crucial for the fight against climate change. Local and indigenous women are empowered through legal texts and become actors of transmission and sustainability, contributing actively to climate mitigation.

5. Findings from Centre for 21st Century Issues (C21st)

The centre for 21st Century Issues in the last three years under the Women 2030 project has conducted trainings on Gender and the SDGs, carried out a gender and SDGs Assessment as well as raise awareness about the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan at the local levels. These activities are basically focused on climate action and energy access with local women organizations and policy makers. These activities have revealed that gender differentiated impacts of climate change continues to take different dynamics

In Ibeju- Lekki community, Lagos, **Nigeria**, flooding is inhibiting livelihoods activities such as trading and the performance of family care duties. In the wake of the flood men are reported to avoid coming home until the flood subsides thus causing family disintegration in some cases.

Forest cover in communities are been removed at a fast rate due to construction work and this is making it more difficult for women to get firewood for cooking as they have limited access to clean cooking solutions. Limited access to information and lack of transparency in governance pose impediments to the efforts of local women to promote gender sensitive climate actions on the ground. The general marginalization of women in climate and environmental decision-making processes/forums as well as politics at the national, state and local government levels contributes to the limited implementation of then UNFCCC Gender Action Plans.

In another study conducted on Climate Adaptation finance in Agriculture with focus on women small scale farmers in Nigeria by Oxfam and West African Network for Peace-building in which C21st also participated, it was found that international climate aid to adaptation in agriculture as well as national budgets are not directed to target gender based barriers that restrict women's access to key reproductive resources that will enable them adapt and build resilience to the multiple impacts of climate change in agriculture. In Nigeria, policy implementation and planning does not prioritize improved sex- disaggregated data that captures outcomes of policy implementation and budgetary allocations in the lives of women small scale farmers.

C21st as the Focal Point for the Women in peace-building network program of WANEP in south western Nigeria also noted the impacts of agro-pastoralists conflicts on women and children. The impacts of these conflicts are well documented in the publication by WANEP Nigeria title: "The Untold Stories: The Dilemma of Women in The Agro-Pastoralist Conflict in Benue state." The impacts of climate-imposed droughts desertification and drying up of water sources across the Northern parts of Nigeria forcing large numbers of herders to migrate to south in search grassland and water for their herds has continued to trigger agro-pastoralists conflicts. Women and children continue to bear the brunt of the violence being the most vulnerable group in conflict and are often subjected to all forms of abuses, deprivations and sexual violence, especially rape. These violent conflicts have spurred the calls to situate gender responsive peace-building actions in climate change adaptation responses.

6. Findings from INFORSE - International Network for Sustainable Energy - South Asia

In **Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh**, NGOs cooperated to develop and test a low-carbon, pro-poor Participatory Village Planning concept with focus on community, both women and men, participation. The planning process included assessment, mapping of resources, needs and potentials. The basket of low-carbon, low-cost local solutions aimed to climate mitigation and adaptation, reducing indoor pollution, increasing water-, and food security, and reducing poverty through income generation and improved livelihoods. The socio-technological manual made available in national languages also to reach out to people also on community, district level, especially women, who do not speak or read in English.

Examples of the solutions:

- i) Improved cook stoves with chimney/chimney hood, biogas for cooking led to less fuelwood used (climate mitigation); reduction of used of wood from the forest (decrease deforestation); smokeless kitchen (clean energy and healthier environment in the kitchen), women using less time collecting firewood; and less money used to buy firewood.
- ii) Composting, greenhouse, organic gardening, fishpond, solar fruit drying, mushroom growing led to secure food in dry periods, and reducing poverty by selling the products in the market.
- iii) The harvested rainwater in the rainy periods used in the agriculture, and gardening in the dry periods, which led to higher productivity and women used less time for collecting water.
- iv) Using local material like bamboo decreased the costs. Women could contribute using their skills in weaving bamboo structures for solar dryer, compost basket, rainwater harvest tank, and greenhouse. Women could increase their income with their work and helped financing through self-help groups.

The plans also identified the community needs in off-grid areas like solar-powered water pumps and street lights, solar home systems for lighting, water mills for grinding and electricity. All of this benefits the entire community, but experience shows that some solutions benefit more women and girls than men. e.g. the solar powered street lights made women and girls more secure in the evening, and women got engaged, got higher self-esteem and “agent of change” role through the participatory planning process and organizing self-help groups.

7. Findings by the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh

Although women constitute about half of the **Bangladesh** population, their social status especially in rural areas remains very low (Ferdaush & Rahman, 2011). Rural women belong to the most deprived section of the society facing adverse conditions in terms of social oppression and economic inequality, a visible majority of them being extremely poor. The nature and extent of rural women’s empowerment and factors influencing it (Chowdhury, 2007). Evidence (Shiree, 2014) (Chowdhury, 2007) (Quisumbing & Maluccio, 1999) show that the positive attribution of cash or asset supports help women in enhancing their decision-making power within household and family.

According to the UN Gender Development Index, Bangladesh is ranked 121st out of 146 countries worldwide. Out of the total population, 48.9% is women and nearly 86% live in rural areas, and only 16% women are literate compared to a 30% rate of literate men (Salma, 1998). In 1995-1996, about 53% of the population belonged to the active age group and 14% were children (BBS 2009). The way a woman is addressed and recognized in the family reflects the various roles a woman occupies throughout her life cycle and her dependency on her male counterpart. Differential treatment of female begins at birth, such that a daughter receives only the “whisper of Quranic prayer” while a son is welcomed with a loud audible prayer of “God is Great” in the presence of members.

Not only do women suffer more from disasters, they also play a vital role in protecting, managing and restoring their households during and post disasters. Women have the knowledge and capacity to

contribute towards adapting to the changing nature of disasters. A range of studies has highlighted the essential functions adopted by Bangladeshi women in disaster management and recovery including: forecasting climatic hazards, preserving food and animal fodder, ensuring household safety, educating children on safety, protecting physical and livelihood assets, supporting recovery of livelihoods and, drawing upon social networks to manage a wide range of shocks (Dankleman, 2010). Over the years there has been a gradual shift in the typical perception of the role of women, and communities are generally more ready to accept women leading their disaster risk reduction efforts. This shift has been reinforced by GoB policy and it is now an established provision that at least 10% women have to be involved in local disaster management committees (DMC) formed within the local government system. However, in practice, women voices are less raised and prioritized in the decision-making process of DMCs. In addition, livelihood initiatives for women, with gender transformative components, can also increase gender equality overall by reducing risks to violence from men and improving sexual and reproductive health (Fulu et al, 2015).

The key areas to address gender considerations:

i) Food security and agriculture:

Women play a crucially important role in food production in Bangladesh. In recent years, poverty, women empowerment and male migration have led to the systematic “feminization” of the agricultural labor force in Bangladesh, and by 2012 national data survey indicated that 66% of all women participated in agricultural activities and women constituted 45.6% of the total farming population overall. In the absence of their male counterparts, woman’s role changed from that of an unpaid family worker to farm managers, resulting in women maintaining a dual responsibility for both the farm, as well as the household production.

- Women’s capacity building with empowerment approach is important in agriculture sector with equal wage distribution and land ownership.
- Creating an enabling environment for women to access financial instruments easily i.e. loan/credits.
- Capacity development and involvement of women on alternative technologies for example bio-fertilizer; climate resilient cropping, saline resistant vegetables, etc.; fisheries culture & management (i.e. coastal area); homestead gardening, technology for micro-nutrient rich food, where appropriate.
- Develop knowledge and skills of agricultural extension workers both female and male on climate change resistant cropping practices

ii) Livestock, forestry and fishery

Poultry-rearing is traditionally a women’s domain in Bangladesh and is an important means of generating much needed cash income for rural families and the women involved in it, in particular, as there are few if any other job opportunities for the landless, disadvantaged women in these areas. As they are familiar with the rearing of poultry, an estimated 70% of the rural, landless women are either directly or indirectly involved in it as a result. Other activities performed by women include the feeding of livestock, cleaning their sheds, securing these properly for the night,

the collection of farmyard manure and general healthcare for the animals. Owing to this crucial role in livestock care, women are also generally consulted when buying and selling livestock.

iii) Water Resources Management:

- Gender friendly technology and ensure proper access to water and sanitation particularly covering all phases of climate change adaptation and disaster management.
- Make alliance of women's association to create movement for keeping the water bodies (rivers, canals, lakes and wetlands) usable.
- Capacity development of women to fully engage in water resource management committees. Extension services on alternative irrigation technology (e.g. water purification, rain water harvesting, water waste collection, water conservation).
- Introduction and capacity development on low water consuming crop technology.

iv) Nutrition:

Ironically, despite the fact that women are actively involved in agriculture, evidence indicate that they suffer from higher levels of mortality and morbidity than their male counterparts, mainly due to the fact that women suffer from higher levels of malnourishment. A recent study indicates that malnutrition levels in Bangladesh are among the highest in the world. More than half of the pregnant women in the country are anemic, about 30% of women suffer from chronic energy deficit, 39% of non-pregnant women, and 40% of adolescent girls, suffer from anemia because of depleted iron stores during pregnancy and lactation, a consequence of insufficient intake of foods rich in iron and folic acid. Proper awareness raising and capacity building is required in this area.

8. Findings from Fiji Women Defending the Commons network, via DIVA for Equality, Fiji

Women climate change activists from urban poor, rural and remote marginalized communities from Yasawa, Taveuni, Qamea, Vunidogoloa, Savusavu, Macuata, Bua, Labasa, Koro, Gau, Kadavu, Ovalau, Tavua, Rakiraki, Ra, Sigatoka, Lautoka, Nadi, Tailevu, Naitasiri and Suva in **Fiji** are working together now on gender, climate change and disaster risk and response, and are together raising the following issues as priorities in gender, human rights and climate change work in Fiji.

DIVA for Equality are accompanying and supporting work to ensure that the Fiji Government, including the Gender Ministry, Climate Change Unit, Ministry for Finance, Ministry for Planning, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Rural Development, Ministry for Youth and Sports, Prime Ministers' Office, UN agencies, regional development institutions, Indigenous leadership, INGOS and others are made aware of the following priority areas. We are moving these issues through various institutions and processes, and connecting them through to national, regional and global human rights and development commitments, and the Gender Action Plan as we are able.

These areas of work include, and are not limited to the following:

- i) Climate Change impact – addressing the rising frequency and intensity of floods, cyclones and droughts and other climate change related events, that are resulting in

- increased damage to crops and oceans warming, and leading to a decrease in fish population affecting food security and sovereignty even as distance water fisheries in the region are taking far too much of our fish, for use in rich countries.
- ii) Challenges of adequate information and access to the full range of social services, social protection, infrastructure and resources for women and girls living in Fiji's urban poor and informal settlements, rural settlements and villages, and maritime zones.
 - iii) Lack of genuine engagement of women, young people and children in generally caring for the environment and on addressing loss and damage from climate change means that the strategies are less effective, efficient and unsustainable. When disasters hit, there is less readiness by communities overall, as the knowledge, skills and experience of women has not been recognized, affirmed, resourced and utilized.
 - iv) Challenges in particular on accessing information on, specifically the following:
 - Gendered and targeted climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies suited to specific kinds of ecosystems, i.e. for coastal villages and oceanic and riverine inundation, for rural highlands villages and constant landslides and soil erosion, for cane field systems facing extreme drought, etc.
 - Information on short, medium and long-term strategies to deal with permanent loss, and severe ecosystem and built environment damage - including psycho-social responses as much as physical loss and damage
 - Disaster Risk Management and Response that is fully gender just, responsive and transformative, where women in the communities are present, able to make decisions quickly and with authority, and be listened to by Government and non-government representatives present during disasters
 - Underlying and ongoing education by women-led groups and feminists on human rights, and specifically on Women's human rights and empowerment
 - Underlying and ongoing education on sexual and gender-based violence, and access to social services including legal services to end intimate partner violence, and community gender-based discrimination and stigma
 - Socio-economic and wider development opportunities for women and girls in urban poor, rural and remote areas, as climate change adaptation strategies, and as a human rights imperative
 - Build more grassroots expertise on issues of 'Free, Prior and Informed Consent' (FPIC), and Governments and NGOs to help local communities in Fiji to be equipped to fight against unfair and dangerous corporate activity under the disguise of economic development.
 - Governments, lawyers and women's NGOs to provide community women leaders with education and information on the Fiji law and international law including GAP - including on Fiji Gender Action Plan, Fiji Climate Change Policies (Multiple on specific areas), Environmental Management Act (EMA), Environment Impact Assessments (EIA) and how they all fit together, so that women can keep their communities safe and informed, and able to respond to wrongful activities

- Information on climate change financing opportunities must be made available at the level of local grassroots women led groups, as this is where the work is being done to repair damage after disasters, to house and educate children and young people in times of climate change. Not only the usual national, regional NGOs and INGOs who do not necessarily prioritize direct action and movement work of grassroots women's movements.
- v) There is widening income inequality between rich and poor women and girls in Fiji, and therefore a need to directly take account of power, class and privilege in climate justice and development justice work. There is an overall widening gap in economic and development opportunities for those in urban areas over rural areas
 - vi) Need for access to decent work conditions and employment for women of all diversities, including ensuring that any urgent just transition from fossil fuel-based economies to renewable energy-based economies includes women and girls and LGBTQI people, and makes room for new, safe and innovative ways for women to be engaged in energy democracy
 - vii) Weak and gender unjust and insensitive governance structures at the village level, provincial, municipal and national levels that lead to delays in addressing issues raised by rural, urban poor and maritime women
 - viii) Fiji Government is not releasing ethnicity-based census results and will not discuss ethnic differences and diversity in relation to development needs, instead of being open and honest on differences. Instead of helping, this leads to inadequate policy, assumptions and incorrect policy options instead of evidence-based policy options
 - ix) Land and Sea Pollution from careless rubbish/waste disposal are affecting biodiversity and ecosystems but there is no people-led and resourced national campaign yet to transform the way we conceive of cycles of resource usage, waste, and renewal. This is an urgent need.
 - x) LGBTQI women (and with specific violations against LBTI women and girls and gender non binary people) face multiple forms of violence and exclusion from social, economic and environmental services. They are excluded from and/or stigmatised in decision making spaces before, during and after disasters, and so often will stay in unsafe, informal shelter rather than go to nationally accredited shelters
 - xi) Need for genuine recognition in legislation, policy and processes of diverse urban poor and rural women of Fiji as key agents of climate justice and development and ensuring the well-being of urban poor, rural women and women from maritime communities
 - xii) Need for interlinked and intersectional approach to all climate just, ecologically sound sustainable development and human rights framed in all areas
 - xiii) Inclusion of all genders in Climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction policies

- xiv) All national policies and initiatives on gender, human rights and climate change translated to vernacular so that communities and women in rural, urban poor and maritime zones are able to understand them, and provide free, prior and informed consent to all development and service options from Government.

9. Inputs from WEDO

WEDO shares the following three papers that speak to the differentiated impacts of climate change for this submission, as well as some other key inputs from recent field research:

(2016) [Gender and climate change: A closer look at existing evidence](#)

Perceiving a gap in the resources available to individuals and organizations concerned about the gendered experiences of climate change, GGCA commissioned this literature review in early 2016 in order to provide the most up-to date assessment of the current evidence base illustrating how vulnerability to climate change and climate adaptation decisions vary by gender. Evidence of gendered impacts of climate change includes:

- Agricultural vulnerability to climate change depends on cropping practices and access to land, as well as the use of farming inputs and tools. Individuals who have access to land, water, fertilizer, and other inputs, as well as who adopt sustainable agricultural practices are more likely to adapt to the impacts of climate change, yet access to and knowledge of these tools and practices is gendered. In many settings, women are less likely to possess the knowledge and financial capital needed to improve their farm. Moreover, new technologies that are intended to improve adaptive capacity may not have gender-equalizing outcomes (109). This section addresses the relationships between gender, climate change, and agriculture, examining aspects of vulnerability and adaptation separately.
- Forest ecosystems serve as a key livelihood source for women and men around the world, through the harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products, as well as through the role that forests play in regulating climate and cycling nutrients. Throughout the developing world, men tend to be more involved in forest governance, influencing the relative vulnerability of women and men to climate shocks. Women and men also rely on forests in different ways, which shapes their adaptation responses to climate change. Efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change and improve forest livelihoods, most notably a carbon credit scheme known as Reducing Emissions for Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), are largely failing to incorporate women as full partners in forest management.
- Climate change is reducing the quantity and quality of safe water available around the world, forcing primarily women and girls to walk longer distances to access water, and in turn limiting the time available for other activities, including education and income generation.
- The global transition of energy systems to more sustainable forms of production as a means of mitigating the effects of climate change has gendered implications.

- One of the most comprehensive and widely cited articles exploring the gendered impacts of natural disasters suggests that females are more likely to be killed by natural disasters and/or are systematically killed at younger ages than males. The gender gap in mortality grows as the magnitude of the disaster increases, implying that as climate change breeds stronger droughts and storms, women and girls will be disproportionately affected. This disparity is reduced, however, when women have improved social status. Other recent cross-national evidence from developing countries suggests that women are more likely to be affected by disasters in countries where their economic status is poorer. The status of women is an important determinant of the gendered effects of disasters, yet other factors matter as well. Gendered social, economic, political, and cultural practices shape vulnerability to health impacts from disasters, and in some contexts, particularly in the developed world, men and boys are more vulnerable to health impacts from climate change-related disasters than women and girls.

(2018) [Climate change and gender in Canada: A review](#)

In 2018, WEDO completed a similar literature review to the broader GGCA global review, with a focus on Canada. Some key learnings included:

- **Food Security:** Climate is affecting food security, already a big issue in the Northern territories of Canada. These impacts are gendered. Inuit women are seeing reduced income opportunities from berry picking and men face difficulties in hunting.
- **Transport:** Despite driving more, national data also show that men are more likely than women to ride bicycles. According to the 2013/2014 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), 47% of men, compared to only 34% of women, had ridden a bicycle within the past 12 months. However, men and women appear to use bicycles for different purposes. Based on an earlier edition of the CCHS, women are half as likely as men to cycle for commuting or running errands.
- **Consumption:** In Canada, meat consumption is heavily gendered. According to the 2015 CCHS, men consumed roughly 70% more fresh red meat per capita, and nearly twice as much processed red meat (such as bacon or ham), and processed poultry as women.
- **Employment / Just Transition:** In Canada, available evidence suggests at present, many resource management institutions are largely controlled by men, while a majority of the jobs in renewable energy and other environmental services belong to men. At the same time, males are disproportionately more vulnerable to policy changes designed to improve sustainability, as men hold a majority of jobs in extractive industries. According to this survey, 25% of Canadian environmental professionals are women, though this varies considerably between sectors. Within construction, only 13% of environmental professionals are women, while in education, fully half (50%) of environmental professionals are women. Underrepresented in environmental training programs.
- **Heat:** Because of outdoor jobs, research examining hospital records and lost time claims from Ontario found that from 2004-2010, men were substantially more likely than women to be admitted to the emergency department or submit a lost time claim because of a heat-related injury (even after accounting for differences in hours worked between men and women). One

of the few Canadian studies to examine gendered mental health impacts and disasters notes that after 2013 floods in southern Alberta, a sharp rise in anti-anxiety and sleep aid prescriptions was reported among women in the affected region. Moreover, a sharp rise in sexual assaults was also reported during the same period.

(2018) [Policies for Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development](#)

More than two years after countries adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the New Urban Agenda, people expect their city governments to respond to and address major issues such as poverty, climate change, and access. This paper series opens a dialogue on how transport affects everyone differently, especially communities that at times are discriminated against or lack access to services. Some key messages include:

- Transportation systems generally reproduce existing power structures in gendered societies. For example, public transit schedules are planned around the formal work economy and prioritize a pendular flow of trips made between peripheral areas and the center. The majority of trips made do not follow the traditional male commute, such as in the United States, where just 16 percent of all trips are for commuting.² Additionally, transportation plans often prioritize the movement of cars over other modes, even though that may not be the main way people get around a city. In most cities around the world, the majority of people travel via nonmotorized and public transit over private vehicles. Furthermore, males represent the majority of single-occupancy vehicle ownership and ridership.
- **Example:** The Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications in Santiago discovered that women only comprised 10 percent of cyclists in Santiago.¹¹ From 2007 to 2012, the ministry created a cycling master plan that quadrupled the number of cycle tracks but failed to attract female riders. Macleta (Women on Bikes), a local NGO in Santiago, discovered that few women knew how to ride or were afraid to use bicycles in the city. To encourage women to bike, Macleta offered two levels of classes: a ‘Learn to pedal’ course for beginners and a ‘Get off the sidewalk’ for women who knew how to ride a bicycle, but were uncomfortable with riding around the city. Women and girls now constitute 37 percent of all cyclists in the city.

Migration, Displacement, Climate and Gender

Disasters can happen at any scale. And although it is the large-scale, sudden-onset disaster that receives the greatest attention in media and from development and humanitarian action, the small-scale, slow-onset disaster is often months or years in the making—the confluence of multiple events, hazards and human activities. The slow-onset events should be easier to address through interventions and prevent through bold changes in policy and practice. Doing so requires an understanding of the inequitable distribution of power and resources and a willingness to begin to redistribute those resources.

In addition to collection and analysis of baseline and quantitative data in affected areas, analysing the multiple factors causing slow-onset disasters like drought is critical to be able to address them.

It requires direct consultation with women and girls on the ground. The connection between work happening at the grassroots and global levels is critical. People who are most affected by environmental degradation know much better the impacts and potential solutions.

WEDO's recent work in the Dry Corridor of Central America illustrated the complexities of slow-onset disasters like drought, in an area where the El Niño phenomenon together with years of low or unpredictable rainfall has eroded water and food security, devastating basic food supplies and driving many people to migrate for work (often temporarily, sometimes internally and sometimes internationally—a risky undertaking for many). Many interviewees reported they had too few resources to even attempt to migrate. Recognising the bleak future of community farming, a young couple chose to send their child to the city for an education unavailable in their village, while they remain in the community themselves and lack resources to visit. At the same time, environmental degradation, land concessions and poor governance has exacerbated the climate impacts the region is experiencing.