

# GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICA

Report produced for the African Working Group on Gender and Climate  
Change (AWGGCC)

27<sup>th</sup> April 2017

This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada.  
The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of IDRC or its Board of Governors.



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## List of Acronyms

AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on Environment
AU	African Union
AWGGCC	African Working Group on Gender and Climate Change
CAHOSCC	Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COP	Conference of the Parties
CWGPCC	CAHOSCC Women and Gender Programme on Climate Change
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organization
WEF	World Economic Forum

## Introduction

The latest legally-binding outcome under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the Paris Agreement, signed at the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC in December 2015, and due to enter into force on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016. Climate change is neither gender-neutral in its causes nor potential impacts-partly as a result of gendered differences in vulnerability and capacity to adapt. The Paris Agreement provided the opportunity for the active and explicit incorporation of gender but, despite being mentioned in the language of the preamble and articles of adaptation and capacity building, it is absent from other articles.

The report has been produced under the leadership of the African Working Group on Gender and Climate Change (AWGGCC). The AWGGCC was established in 2013 at the Third Climate Change and Development in Africa conference, with the role of coordinating and providing leadership for Africa's engagement in the regional and global gender and climate change processes. The AWGGCC has since participated in several meetings at the regional and international levels relating to gender and climate change and the formulation of Sustainable Development Goals. In furthering the work of the Working Group, the African Heads of States and Governments, at its Assembly of the Union's Twenty-third Ordinary Session in Malabo in June 2014 through the Committee of African Heads of State and Governments on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), agreed to develop a CAHOSCC Women and Gender Programme on Climate Change (CWGPCC) to engage women and gender in climate change related actions. This position was further reinforced by the decisions made at the fifteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) held in Cairo, Egypt on 2-6<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The production of a position paper on gender and climate change is one of the priorities of the CWGPCC.

The paper outlines why consideration of gender is important (including commitments to gender equality in Africa-annex 1), and how inclusion of gender issues has evolved through the UNFCCC international policy process. It then takes the major articles of the Paris Agreement and highlights "missed opportunities" for gender inclusion within the language of the text, and their implications. The purpose is to identify the opportunities for Africa and its states to implement gender-equitable solutions to climate change within the context of the Paris Agreement. These will be elaborated within an accompanying strategic framework.

## Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement was agreed at the UNFCCC COP21, held in Paris in December 2015, and was opened for signature on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016. It is a legally binding document that will start in 2020. It came into force on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016, following ratification by 55 Parties, accounting for 55% of the total global greenhouse emissions.

The aim of the Paris Agreement is to keep global temperature increase well below 2°C in the twenty first century, and pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C. It marks the first global agreement where all Parties, including developing countries, have committed to both mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

The text outlines adaptation and mitigation, as well as finance, capacity building and technology. The Paris Agreement will be reached through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) from each Party. Parties will regularly report on emissions levels and implementation efforts, whilst a global stock-take is due to take place every five years. National Adaptation Plans will support planning for adaptation.

## Why does gender matter?

Gender refers to the (often invisible) power relations between men and women. These power relations result from the social construction of roles and responsibilities – the broad norms of what it means to be a man, woman, boy or girl. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a man, woman, boy or girl, in a particular context<sup>i</sup>. Whilst linked to biological sex, gender is thus different. Sex is determined prior to birth. The socially constructed norms of gender, on the other hand, are learned from birth through socialisation processes in the home and collectively within society. Because they are socially constructed, gender roles vary from place to place, and over time. Gender-specific differences in what men and women are expected to do; the knowledge they have; what they consume; their lifestyles; their control of power and resources; and their decision-making capacity and spheres of influence typically differ between regions, cultures and religions<sup>ii</sup>.

These inherent social constructions carry specific roles, status and expectations which are manifest at a variety of levels, from the household to the community to the country. Individuals may also self-identify as neither male nor female, or both male and female; as well as members of different social groups. It is important not to assume that “women” and “men” form homogeneous groups because their gender interacts with other social identifiers to create unique circumstances. Particularly with social groups, individuals may vary their self-identity depending on the circumstances and the perceived power that belonging to particular social groups may afford them. For example, aside from being female, a woman may have multiple identities depending on her ethnicity, religion and socio-economic background. This concept is known as intersectionality<sup>iii</sup> (McCall, 2005). The term “gender” is, however, often used as recognition of the sum of these factors that contribute to differences in power relations.

Gender inequality arises when there are differences between the gender roles ascribed to men and women. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Since they are socially constructed, however, gender relations can change over time and space. Currently no country has yet achieved a perfect situation of gender equality. A recent report by the World Economic Forum predicts this outcome will not be achieved until 2095 and, in terms of progress towards gender equality, only one African country (Rwanda) is in the top ten (WEF, 2014). Gender equality does not mean that men and women are the same, but it refers to the equal enjoyment by men, women, boys and girls of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards-which are socially constructed. Gender equity is the process of being fair to both women and men. Given the patriarchal nature of most societies, being gender-equitable with the aim of achieving gender equality typically requires positive discrimination to enable empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances. More information on gender-related definitions and their use within UNFCCC decisions is in annex 2.

## Gender in the United Nations Framework on Climate Change decisions

Recognition of gender within the UNFCCC negotiations and decisions has slowly increased over time. The importance of ensuring participation of men and women within both the negotiating process and in attempts to mitigate and adapt to climate change is now recognised. A recent analysis of existing mandates and entry points for gender in the UNFCCC was prepared in advance of COP20 in Lima (figure 1). It highlights selected ways in which gender has been mentioned in decisions – referring to both process (e.g. gender-sensitive approach), inclusion (women’s participation, gender balance) and

outcome (e.g. gender equality)(see annex 2)<sup>iv</sup>. Understanding the difference between these terms is essential to ensure appropriate gender responses in implementing the Paris Agreement.

**Figure 1: Examples of gender terminology in various UNFCCC decisions (source: WEDO, n.d. Climate Change Technical Guide for COP20, Lima, Peru<sup>v</sup>)**

#### Phrasing Currently Used to Integrate Gender in Decisions

- “Adopts a goal of **gender balance** ... in order to improve **women’s participation** and inform more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of **women** and men equally;”
- “...take fully into account the consequences for vulnerable groups, in particular **women**”
- “...recognizes that **gender equality and the effective participation of women** are important for effective climate action on all aspects of climate change”
- “...should follow a **gender-sensitive** approach”
- “...strengthening **gender-related considerations**”
- “...guided by **gender-sensitive approaches**”
- “...ensure **gender sensitivity**”
- “...taking into account **gender aspects**”
- “...**promoting the use of gender-sensitive tools and approaches**”
- “...including **gender-disaggregated data**”
- “...be guided by **gender equality**”

Particular progress was made in the attempt to actively embrace gender within the UNFCCC process at COP18 in Doha in 2012. Parties adopted Decision 23/CP.8 “Promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol”. As well as encouraging Parties to be gender-equitable within their negotiating teams, this decision includes an agreement that gender and climate change will be a standing agenda item within the COP.

Explicit recognition of the need to ensure inclusion and gender-equitable participation and benefits from adaptation was enshrined in the Lima Programme of Work on Gender, decided upon at COP20 in Lima in 2014. Decision 18/CP.20 highlights the goal of Parties developing and implementing gender-responsive climate policy. Among the calls were for the Secretariat to organise two in-session workshops on the production of gender-responsive climate policy: one with a focus on mitigation action and technology development and transfer (paragraph 11); and the other with a focus on adaptation and capacity building (paragraph 12); and for production of a technical paper on guidelines or other tools on integrating gender considerations into climate change related activities under the Convention (paragraph 14)<sup>vi</sup>. It also further facilitated the implementation of decision 23/CP.18 by providing commitments to capacity development to support greater inclusion of women within the UNFCCC process under its two year programme.

Civil society is also organised around gender within the UNFCCC. The UNFCCC has constituencies, or shared platforms for accredited civil society and other non-government organisations to observe the annual negotiations conferences. These provide focal points for interaction within the UNFCCC Secretariat, as well as platforms for communication. The Women and Gender Rights Constituency is a network of NGOs and other civil society organisations that fulfils this role<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [www.womengenderclimate.org](http://www.womengenderclimate.org)

## Gender and the Paris Agreement

Despite these commitments to gender, the Paris Agreement is, outside of the preamble, largely gender blind. By not explicitly referencing gender there is the risk that Parties do not apply a gender-responsive approach in implementing the Agreement. This, in turn, may lead to the reinforcement of existing gender roles and relations, and thus perpetuating inequality between men and women. The term “gender” features only three times throughout the whole Agreement: once in the preamble; once in Article 7 (adaptation focused); and once in Article 1 (capacity building-focused). This mirrors the thematic reference to gender in decisions up to COP20 in Lima (see figure 2).

**Figure 2: Number of decisions within the UNFCCC until 2014 that address gender (source: WEDO, n.d. Climate Change Technical Guide for COP20, Lima, Peru<sup>vii</sup>)**



Tracking the evolution of the text that became the Paris Agreement highlights how gender references were progressively removed<sup>viii</sup>. Various intersessional conferences were held in preparation for COP21, during which text was developed to form the basis of negotiations. In the February 2015 intersessional meeting in Geneva, Parties called for gender language in the preamble, the Objective/General section, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building. This call was reinforced at the August session, with some groups of Parties (including the African group) as well as 12 countries arguing for gender equality to be included in the Objective/General section, and not just the decisions. By October, the general essence of the text was becoming more contentious, leading to watering down. By November, the last time for development prior to COP, the draft Agreement and the draft decision text included reference to “gender equality”, “gender-responsive” and “gender-disaggregated data”. Gender was missing from mitigation and technology transfer.

## Where gender is mentioned in the Paris Agreement

### Gender in the Preamble

The preamble highlights the importance of observing and respecting other related commitments to vulnerable groups by “Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity” (see annex 1 for a summary of selected gender-related international and regional agreements).

The emphasis on gender within the preamble is consistent with other agreements, which mentions vulnerable groups without recognising the differential vulnerabilities between and within these groups. Gendered differences in experiences of climate change were recognised in the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group 2 on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability<sup>x</sup>. There is now more nuanced understanding of the ways in which vulnerability (and impacts and adaptation) are differentiated by gender, and how climate change contributes to perpetuating existing gender inequalities<sup>x</sup>.

Gender dimensions of vulnerability result because of the differential access of men and women to the social and environmental resources that are required for adaptation. This can include financial resources, land, education, health, and ability to participate in decision-making systems. In rural areas land laws typically favour male ownership so, even if women have access to land, they rarely have control over it (i.e. they could not decide to sell it). Relatively fewer girls than boys complete secondary education. This, in combination with the gender roles that expect them to take responsibility for home-based tasks (cooking, cleaning, caring for children and the elderly), impedes their mobility relative to that of men, and thus they are typically less able to seek formal sector employment. Despite the fact that many traditional law-based systems in Africa are matrilineal, they are still patriarchal in nature, meaning that women are typically disadvantaged. The lower levels of education also serve to impede women's awareness of, and thus ability to make use of, formal legal systems. That said, the number of women parliamentarians at national level is increasing in many countries – and often comprises a higher proportion in Africa than other parts of the world. Rwanda, for example, has the highest number of women in parliament in the world at over 60%<sup>xi</sup>.

The relatively higher vulnerability of women to weather-related disasters is also well known<sup>xii</sup>. Reasons for this relate to various socially- and culturally-determined gender roles: for example women do not always learn to swim and so can be vulnerable to flooding. Concerns about their physical and psychosocial safety in emergency shelters and camps can also impede the willingness of women to leave their homes, even when at risk from hazards. However, it is not just women's gendered roles that create vulnerability: the expectation that men will be strong and lead search and rescue efforts can lead to their relatively greater exposure during high risk times after exposure to extreme events. As a result, there is often differential mortality between men and women after disasters – with one study of extreme events in 141 countries from 1981-2002 finding that women are killed at an earlier age than men<sup>xiii</sup>. Recognition of the realities of this starting point are an important prerequisite to ensuring that attempts at adaptation and mitigation are gender-responsive; and also to highlight the need for gender-equitable access to technology and climate finance, which may involve positive discrimination in favour of women.

## Gender and adaptation

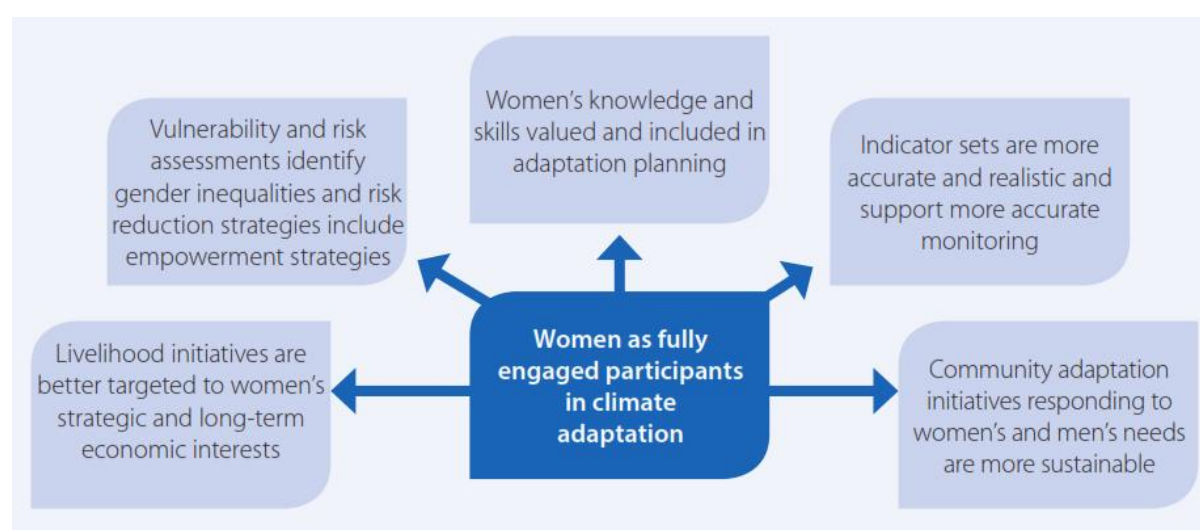
Article 7, paragraph 5 of the Paris Agreement states “Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions, where appropriate”.

Given the differential vulnerabilities between men and women, it is essential that adaptation options are gender-responsive in order to equitably address these vulnerabilities and promote adaptation that simultaneously contributes to gender equality<sup>xiv</sup>. It is thus important, and a sign of commitment, that the Paris Agreement acknowledges that adaptation action should be gender-responsive and take into



consideration vulnerable groups. Because of gender roles and relations, it is likely that supporting adaptation for men and supporting adaptation for women may require different interventions. This is because gender-blindness in adaptation runs the risk of reinforcing the existing gendered nature of vulnerability<sup>xv</sup>. Support for cash cropping or other commercially-oriented production in rural areas as a mechanism of livelihood diversification, for example, is likely to preferentially enable adaptation of men<sup>xvi</sup>. This is because they typically have access to land and the education and mobility that enables them to participate in value chains and travel to markets, whilst gender roles marginalise women from these opportunities. The result is that adaptation among men would increase, whilst women would stay at the same level of vulnerability to climate change, thereby reinforcing and worsening existing inequalities. Figure 3 outlines some of the justifications for gender-responsive adaptation.

**Figure 3: Justification for gender-responsive adaptation (source: UNDP, 2015<sup>xvii</sup>)**



## Gender and capacity building

Article 11, paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement states that “Capacity-building should be country-driven, based on and responsive to national needs, and foster country ownership of Parties, in particular, for developing country Parties, including at the national, subnational and local levels. Capacity-building should be guided by lessons learned, including those from capacity-building activities under the Convention, and should be an effective, iterative process that is participatory, cross-cutting and gender-responsive”.

Reflecting differential vulnerability of men and women to climate change, gender-responsive capacity building is essential to support adaptation that does not reinforce inequalities<sup>xviii</sup>. As noted above, different education levels between men and women impede adaptive capacity. Positive discrimination to increase access to education for women and girls is an important mechanism to build capacity to respond to climate change, but also to address broader inequalities<sup>xix</sup>. In the same vein, gender-equitable capacity building includes understanding the different needs of men and women for awareness raising and vocational training opportunities. When appropriately empowered as agents of change, women can play a key role in adaptation and mitigation activities and, at the same time, reduce their situation of inequality relative to men.

The construction of gender roles means that men and women’s typical daily activities engage different spaces over different times. Organising an agricultural extension training event in a rural community in the morning, for example, may disadvantage women. This is because it clashes with the time that



they may be travelling to fetch water and begin the process of preparing meals. Similarly the location of training events also needs to be gender-sensitive. Men are more likely to have access to transport than women, as well as greater mobility and fewer ties to the home. Some cultural and religious norms restrict women's access to public places, and thus expecting travel to a public event in a different community is likely to inhibit optimal participation of women, thereby also reinforcing existing inequalities. In such a case, being gender-responsive may require a flexible approach whereby similar trainings are provided for men and women separately; or at least an option provided for timings and location. It is also important to bear in mind that the subject of capacity building and training events can also be targeted towards men or women, bearing in mind gender roles.

Whilst gender-responsive training opportunities are important, targeted efforts to increase the education levels of women has the potential to be transformative. Many of the gender differences in vulnerability arise due to different levels of knowledge and skills, and systematically addressing this not only has the potential to enable greater levels of adaptation, but also to address persistent patterns of gender inequality with even broader implications for society. This is especially the case in Africa where, although there have been improvements in gender parity, an assessment of the Millennium Development Goals showed that there are still fewer girls than boys in both primary and secondary education, and the differences become even more pronounced at tertiary level<sup>2</sup>.

## Where gender is not mentioned in the Paris Agreement

### Gender and mitigation

Articles 4, 5, and 6 refer to mitigation in terms of commitment to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and maintenance of carbon sinks, but there is no explicit reference to gender. The NDCs are based on the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) that each Party was invited to submit prior to COP21. INDCs are transparent commitments outlining each country's national ambition to reduce greenhouse gases. After the signing of the Paris Agreement, the ratification of these commitments – from INDCs to NDCs – will be the benchmarks against which countries will report their progress. Essentially they may be viewed as strategies that go some way towards implementation of the Paris Agreement. An analysis of the 162 INDCs submitted as of April 2016 shows that 40% explicitly mention “gender” or “women” in the context of their national priorities and ambitions for reducing emissions. Three quarters of sub-Saharan African Parties reference “gender” or “women”, making the region a global leader in integrating gender equality into sustainable development priorities<sup>xx</sup>. Without the reinforcement of gender within the Paris Agreement it will be important to ensure that the gender references already made continue to inform the development and implementation of gender-responsive mitigation strategies. The Paris Agreement does not reinforce the gender-responsive nature of commitments made within the INDCs.

The mention of gender in relation to mitigation in INDCs itself represents a progressive trend. Typically mitigation has been cast as a male issue, given that gender roles mean that men are more likely to contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. This relates to the greater likelihood that they will be employed in formal sector jobs to which they may travel using motorised transport. Women, on the other hand, have typically been portrayed as the victims of climate change, for whom adaptation is the main priority. As understanding of gender evolves and recognises nuances beyond the traditional binary, this has been reflected in acknowledgement that men and women both have roles to play, albeit perhaps different roles, in mitigation and adaptation. In contrast, the importance of gender-responsive strategies is that both mitigation and adaptation are equitable for men and women.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/mdg-3-promote-gender-equality-and-empower-women/>

On a global scale, greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries are typically far lower than those from developed countries (with the notable exceptions of South Africa, India, China, Brazil and Mexico). However, they are increasing rapidly. Energy issues are typically at the forefront of mitigation discussions. Particular focus in developing countries is on how to leapfrog the fossil fuel-driven industrialisation pathway followed within the developed world through developing energy security based on renewable sources. Renewable energy has the opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions whilst also supporting increased energy access. That said, the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions in most African countries is agriculture, and emissions from this source are rising<sup>xxi</sup>. In order to determine the roles for men and women in mitigation, it is essential to understand the gender differences in resource use. This informs the relative contributions to emissions, and thus highlights how women and men can equitably engage in mitigation efforts.

Women are typically more reliant on natural resources than men. In smallholder farming systems women often provide the bulk of the labour input for crop production, including planting and weeding (although men may prepare land and harvest). However, gender roles often privilege men over women in terms of control over farming products.

Energy poverty is often greater among women than men and the effects of energy poverty can reinforce existing gender inequalities. This is because the responsibility for obtaining firewood for cooking and heating water typically rests with women<sup>xxii</sup>. Women often spend significant amounts of time on procuring the biomass they require and they need larger amounts of fuel as they burn it inefficiently. Although typically less studied, energy poverty also exists in urban areas. The absence of biomass to collect in urban areas means that cooking fuels have to be purchased, creating greater reliance on markets and fluctuations in prices. Typically, a poor urban family spends 20% of its income on fuels<sup>xxiii</sup>. When such fuels are available, it can save an urban woman's workload relative to her rural counterpart. However, since gendered roles typically mean that men control cash within the household, urban women can have less control over energy availability in these environments.

As with adaptation, understanding of these differences can ensure that mitigation interventions do not inadvertently reinforce inequality. A global mitigation practice that has been particularly promoted for developing countries is Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD). By reducing deforestation and maintaining sound land use practices, developing countries could not only reduce carbon emissions, but also receive the co-benefit of conservation (hence REDD is now referred to as REDD+). There was also hope that carbon projects could be managed in such a way as to actively improve livelihoods for local stakeholders. However, unless gender differences are taken into account benefits within communities are often unevenly distributed<sup>xxiv</sup>.

If designed appropriately, however, there are a number of mitigation activities that can simultaneously reduce emissions and create opportunities to contribute to women's empowerment. Promotion of afforestation and agroforestry interventions among women may be tied to emissions trading whilst also generating sustainable incomes. Energy poverty can be addressed through, for example, energy-efficient stoves and ovens which do not promote deforestation, are time-saving, and also have health and safety benefits.

## Gender and finance

Article 9 of the Paris Agreement makes reference to the need for increased availability of climate finance, and transparent commitments of financial support from developed to developing countries. Finance is a key component of the Agreement in order to support costs of adaptation and mitigation. Not highlighting the need for finance to be spent in a gender-equitable manner runs the risk of adaptation and mitigation activities reinforcing inequalities.

## Gender and technology

Article 10 of the Paris Agreement highlights the importance of the availability of technology. As with finance, the purpose of technology is to enable adaptation and mitigation. The technology needs of men and women differ reflecting their different gender roles and norms. Without due consideration of these gender differences, technologies may inadvertently add to women's workloads. Conservation farming, for example, which is popularly promoted as a mechanism of adaptation (particularly to drying conditions) has increased labour requirements. This is because conservation farming encourages minimum till, but the lack of ploughing can increase the growth of weeds. Since weeding is typically a woman's role, this will increase her labour burden (unless she can afford the application of herbicides).

As with capacity building, gender roles and responsibilities also mean that women and men may have different availability to learn about new technologies. By the same token, the limited role that women typically play in decision-making may impede their ability to make their voices and needs heard at national level when strategic technology decisions are being made.

## Priorities to ensure gender-equitable implementation of the Paris Agreement

Since gender is only mentioned in two articles of the Paris Agreement – adaptation and capacity building – it is only in these spheres where legal requirements exist to address it in the supporting national legislation and policy framework. However, as outlined above, there are risks of reinforcing (and, at worst, increasing) gender inequality and impeding effective climate change responses if any national activities are not gender-responsive. As a result, countries should not only address gender in adaptation and capacity building, but also in mitigation, finance and technology transfer when considering their national processes. Key steps to ensure this is done – both in process and outcome – are outlined below. There is also scope to continue lobbying through the international policy process for explicit gender commitments in the spheres of mitigation, finance, and technology transfer.

### **Broad steps to ensure gender-equitable implementation of the Paris Agreement**

1. Assess the gender differences and establish baseline situation
  - Undertake analysis of gender differences in vulnerability, as well as adaptation and mitigation (current activities and future needs).
  - Determine where sex-disaggregated data exists (e.g. through national household survey data) and make plans to sex-disaggregate relevant data in future in order to be able to monitor change in vulnerability within the context of implementation of adaptation and mitigation activities.
2. Analyse adequacy of existing policies and strategies with relation to gender issues
  - Determine the extent to which existing climate change-related policies and strategies address gender issues and gaps. Revise if necessary.
  - Ensure that development of related strategies is gender-sensitive, for example the strategies to implement the (I)NDC and National Adaptation Plans. If the National Adaptation Plan is not yet completed, critically assess the process to determine whether it is gender-equitable (for example is sufficient room made for comments and inputs from both men and women). Use assessment of gender differences to inform inclusion of activities.
  - Establish monitoring frameworks using sex-disaggregated indicators.
3. Implementation
  - Determine budget needs to effectively implement gender-responsive climate policies and strategies

- Apply gender budgeting, highlighting how public resources will be allocated such that both men and women benefit equitably. If the policies and strategies which they are planned to implement have already been made gender-responsive, gender budgeting involves ensuring that resources allocated to their implementation also equitably benefit men and women (for example if resources allocated are less than that required for full implementation).
- Monitor budgetary allocations with the support of sex-disaggregated indicators.

## Conclusion

Gender considerations are by no means comprehensively incorporated within the Paris Agreement. Other than a fleeting reference within the preamble, mention is only made within the articles on adaptation and capacity building. Gender is entirely overlooked in the articles on mitigation, finance and technology transfer. These are major omissions considering the state of our knowledge on the gendered dimensions of climate change, and also in light of ongoing international commitments to attaining gender equality.

The inclusion and exclusion of gender references within the Paris Agreement reflects gender roles and the composition of inequality. References to gender differences in adaptation and capacity building provide an implicit recognition that gender roles mean that women are typically more vulnerable than men. Adaptation and capacity building efforts thus explicitly need to include women as well as men. However, mitigation, technology and finance are spheres that are traditionally seen as male. This is because gender roles mean that men's livelihoods are often more responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, whether that is through travelling to work and/or employment in manufacturing sectors where heavy labour jobs are more prevalent. Similarly, social constructions of gender have typically meant that technology and finance are seen as the domain of, and dominated by, men.

Gender-responsive and sustainable actions to address climate change, both in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to changing conditions, are essential to reduce the likelihood of negative impacts for both men and women. To be gender-responsive requires understanding of the gendered nature of vulnerability, in order that attempts at mitigation and adaptation, and the support to enable them through capacity building, technology and finance, are gender-equitable. In reality, and to reflect the dominant patriarchal relations, this means that interventions targeted to the specific vulnerabilities of men and women are likely to be different in design. To be gender-equitable, both men and women should be included in the process of planning and designing and policies, strategies and programmes. At the same time, the nature of such interventions should explicitly recognise these gender differences and contain appropriate mechanisms to equitably include both men and women in activities, and ensure that they lead to effectively mitigation and adaptation that contributes to the broader picture of achieving gender equality.

Implementing the Paris Agreement in a gender-responsive manner is also in-keeping with other international commitments made by African countries. 2016 was declared (at the 26<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit) as "Africa Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the Rights of Women". They will also be consistent with international commitments to gender equality (box 1), but also to the Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 13 "to take urgent action to address climate change and its impacts" does mention the need to "promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing states, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalised communities" (13.b)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg13>

## **Annex 1: Commitments to gender equality in Africa**

African states have made a number of commitments to gender equality. The most recent of these is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)<sup>4</sup> of which, among the 17 goals, one explicitly addresses gender. SDG 5 aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. Its targets relate to ending harmful practices, including discrimination, violence, and other harmful practices such as child marriage and genital mutilation (5.1, 5.2 and 5.3). Other targets aim to encourage full participation of women in the economic and political spheres, including redressing imbalances in access to resources and decision-making processes, and enshrining these in appropriate legislation (5.a, 5.5, 5.c). In addition SDG 5 makes explicit reference to the need to empower women through the use of enabling technology (5.b) and ensure universal access to reproductive health (5.6), as well as recognise the value of unpaid care and domestic work (5.4).

Other international gender-related commitments to which many African states are signatories include the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Africa-wide commitments include the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003) and the Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004) undertaken by the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights. Various among the Regional Economic Communities also have commitments to gender, for example the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the COMESA Gender Policy (2005)<sup>xxv</sup>.

Particular commitment to addressing the gender dimensions of climate change was made by the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC). At its meeting in 2014, it requested the African Union Commission, in collaboration with other relevant institutions, to develop a CAHOSCC Women and Gender Programme on Climate Change (CWGPCC) to engage women and gender in climate change related actions. CWGPCC is charged with developing a strategic plan of action to place women at the frontline, including practical support in training women negotiators and sourcing funding for women’s participation in COP22 in Marrakech, as well as strategic support to ensure gender-responsive legislation and programme implementation in Africa.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

## Annex 2: Gender terminology and concepts

According to UN Women, gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality does not mean that men and women are the same, but it refers to the equal enjoyment by women, girls, boys and men of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards which are socially constructed. In essence, gender equality means that rights and opportunities are the same irrespective of whether someone is born male or female or the role they choose to fulfil in society. It is an outcome to which we strive.

Gender equity is the process of being fair to both women and men. This is important because, other than in spheres such as voting, inheritance and property rights, and education, trying to treat men and women, and boys and girls, equally may serve to reinforce inequality. This is because men and women, and boys and girls, often have different needs that should be accounted for. For example, allowing all children equal access to the same school classes may actually result in the exclusion of girls who are reluctant to attend due to the presence of male classmates or teachers. Instead, in order to achieve an outcome of gender equality, a gender equitable process may need to be applied. Given the patriarchal nature of many societies, a critical element of this is often positive discrimination to enable empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances.

Gender-blindness is when policies and programmes recognize no distinction between the sexes. By not recognising gender differences, gender-blind documents tend to reflect existing gender inequality and thus often exclude women and girls relative to men and boys.

There are various ways to address gender-blindness, and these can be viewed on a continuum in terms of their degree of progressiveness.

Gender-sensitivity enables the identification of, and differentiation between, the capacities, needs and priorities of men and women. It may pave the way for change, but being gender-sensitive primarily illuminates differences.

Gender-responsiveness builds on the identification of difference by including planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and fulfilment of women's rights. This advancement will involve changing elements of gender norms, roles and access to resources as a key component of project outcomes.

Gender-transformation builds on gender-sensitivity and gender-responsiveness and goes one step further in challenging the underlying socio-cultural structures that construct and re-construct gender roles and relations more broadly, with the ultimate aim of bring about gender equality.

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