

GENDER AND CLIMATE INNOVATION: BREAKTHROUGH CHANGES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

“We can use any desk that we sit at to move this agenda forward – change is difficult, but we can’t give up.” - Christiana Figueres, UNFCCC Executive Secretary

COP18 began on a high note for gender advocates, with the establishment of the an official UNFCCC ‘Gender Day’; a full day devoted to raising awareness of gender and climate change issues and celebrating women and the role they play in addressing climate change. As part of this effort, WEDO, in partnership with the [GGCA](#), [LIFE e.V.](#), [Gender CC](#), and members of the UNFCCC Women and Gender Constituency, hosted an event on innovative breakthroughs in climate change and gender. The event brought together experts and advocates to discuss how to capitalize on the substantial progress made in recent years. WEDO’s Executive Director Cate Owren moderated a high-level panel discussion between Christiana Figueres ([UNFCCC](#) Executive Secretary), Mary Robinson (Former President of Ireland, President, [MRFCJ](#)), and Minister Alcinda Albreu (Minister of Environment, Mozambique).

Cate Owren kicked off the panel by recognizing that thanks to the hard work of delegates and civil society advocates, gender references are now incorporated into every pillar of the Bali Action Plan. This great achievement has helped to define what gender-responsive climate policy should look like. Now, she said, the challenge is to turn that language into real action.

Owren then asked the panelists to discuss the most important changes necessary for us to build on previous progress. Min. Alcinda Albreu said that a shift in mindset was critical: a recognition of the invaluable contribution of women in natural resource management, and a reconsideration of the division of labor and women’s role in society. All interventions, she said, should be capitalized in favor of women, and that gender must be a cross-cutting issue in climate negotiations.

When Owren then asked if COP18 would be considered “*the* gender COP,” Christiana Figueres responded that she hoped not: instead, she said, every COP from now on should be a gender COP. Those involved in gender advocacy should change the narrative about gender and climate change from one that emphasizes the burden of climate change on women to one that underscores women as agents of change. Mary Robinson emphasized this point: we must make an effort to make climate change more people-centered, and this can best be achieved by focusing on women.



Expert Dialogue and Open Discussion

Gotelind Alber (Focal Point, UNFCCC Women and Gender Constituency) moderated a second panel with Yvette Abrahams ([GenderCC South Africa](#)), Kahealani Hekau ([Pacific Gender Climate Coalition](#)), Farah Kabir ([Action Aid](#)), Agnes Otzelberger ([CARE International](#)), Liane Schalatek ([Heinrich Böll Foundation](#)), and Farhana Yamin ([University College London](#)). These panelists brought an on-the-ground perspective to the discussion of gender-sensitive climate policy.

Panelists Yvette Abrahams, GenderCC Southern Africa, Kahealani Hekau, Pacific Gender and Climate Coalition, Farah Kabir, Action Aid Bangladesh, Liane Schalatek, Heinrich Boell Foundation, Agnes Otzelberger, CARE International, Farhana Yamin, University College London and moderator Gotelind Alber, GenderCC, were guided by two main questions:

- What breakthrough changes are needed to ensure greater gender equality in climate policies and practice?
- How can we build on existing innovation and leadership to bring about a new chapter of climate policy and practice that meaningfully mainstreams gender?

Agnes Otzelberger (CARE) spoke about the power of language used to communicate the gender message in climate policy, highlighting how it can transform - or fail to transform - gender inequalities. "If we categorize women as either vulnerable victims, or altruistic leaders in protecting the climate, we miss the point." She advised against simplifying the debate on gender and climate, urging consideration of diversity, taking into account multiple identities, power relations and discrimination.

Kahealani Hekau (Pacific and Gender Climate Coalition), based on her experience in the Pacific islands, stressed that we must respond to existing value systems and apply a participatory approach for the development of gender policies. From her point of view it is fundamental that the principle of gender and equality is appropriately valued. Moreover, we need greater awareness and understanding of the cultural norms and protocols that could potentially be impacted by gender equality in climate change policies. With regards to the participation of women, it takes time to be effective, to build meaningful relationships with the communities, and to ultimately generate ownership and accountability.



Farah Kabir (Action Aid) emphasized the role of action at national levels, recognizing the inherent challenges of gender inequalities. She noted that there are powerful women's stories of adaptation, but in a patriarchal system without promotion of women's human rights, their burden will only be increased with carbon-friendly technologies. Cook stoves are such an example. While new stoves may benefit women's health through improved household air quality, the time saved by not collecting wood will be allocated to additional tasks for women. Therefore, discriminatory national policies need to be changed. In particular, land and property rights, and citizenship policies must be made equitable. Farah underlined that we need to "ensure women remain central to the conversation on loss and damage."

Yvette Abrahams (Gender CC) also spoke about the interrelation between national and international policy levels, pointing out that a governance system that fails to deliver on mitigation and adaptation will also fail to deliver on gender equality. "Gender equality cannot be achieved in a vacuum". She suggested the broader application of the Gender CC methodology to empower women to speak for themselves, and rely on building women's capacity to hold decision makers accountable. She noted that for this, the process is as important as the goal.

Liane Schalatek (HBF) elaborated on gender and climate finance, in particular how to respond to grassroots women's need for finance, stressing that women are not only to be seen as victims, but need to be involved in the whole cycle of climate finance, making finance is more equitable and effective. "Climate finance is not a technical issue in a normative vacuum. It is a political and a human rights issue." She called for rules ensuring gender as a cross-cutting issue for the Green Climate Fund, and for improved access to climate financing instruments for women.

Farhana Yamin (University College London) explained the proposed decision on gender equality¹ under discussion in SBI which focuses on gender representation in the UNFCCC, and, adds the issue of gender and climate change as a standing agenda item at COPs. "We need to stop having gender parity, and also gender sensitivity as only a footnote". Finally she put gender in the broader context, asking if we want to be equal on a sinking ship and calling for more structural and progressive change.

Pointing to the complex relationship between gender balance and gender responsive policies and highlighting the need for far-reaching transformations, moderator Gotelind Alber (Gender CC) opened the floor for questions. A number of contributions focused on the implementation of the implementation of the decision on gender balance adopted at COP7 in Marrakech and the need for inclusiveness and diversity in the UNFCCC negotiations. The role of women in the host country region, particularly in clean energy, was raised, as well as the gender dimensions in all fields of climate policy, including women's engagement in mitigation. Finally, participants discussed how to better engage men in debates and action on gender and climate change.

Please find the statements of some of the panellists further below.

¹ The proposal was revised at COP18. The final, adopted gender decision is available at [link to UNFCCC http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/doha_nov_2012/decisions/application/pdf/cop18_gender.pdf]

Innovation hubs

The market place was organized in five thematic hubs:

- **Mitigation** - Gender responsive low carbon development in a resource constrained world: strategies for High, Middle and Low Income Countries (Suzette Mitchell, UN WOMEN / Kalyana Raj, All India Women's Conference)
- **Adaptation**—Gender equality and adaptation within a development paradigm: addressing food and nutrition security through rights and access to health, water, land and agricultural inputs (Co-facilitators: Sharmind Neelormi, GenderCC / Agnes Otzelberger, CARE International)
- **Climate finance**—Financing for what and for whom: ensuring rights, access to and control over climate finances for women stakeholders in the context of a food, fuel and financial crisis (Co-facilitators: Lorena Aguilar, IUCN / Simone Lovera, Global Forest Coalition / Liane Schalatek, Heinrich Böll Foundation)
- **Technology** - Which technologies are needed and acceptable from a women and gender perspective, and what expectations do we have for the transfer and sharing of technologies (Co-facilitators: Sabine Bock, WECF / Gail Karlsson, ENERGIA / Amie Florette Tchikankou, Vital Actions for Sustainable Development)
- **Capacity building** - What kind of capacity building is needed not only to push for progress in negotiations but to ensure implementation of gender-responsive programs and policies at national level? What are the most significant capacity gaps? (Co-facilitators: Emily Fraser, UNITAR / Pam Puntenney, UN CSD Education Caucus / Elena Villalobos, WHO)

Each of the hubs discussed 1. the main challenges in integrating gender into the issue and the main obstacles / resistances we are facing; 2. How these challenges can be met, how to confront obstacles and to overcome resistance; and 3. which key steps should be undertaken.

The report focuses on three challenges and three recommendations for key steps; thus provides only a selection of recommendations given by the hubs.



General recommendations (mentioned by various hubs)

- Educate women, but also men and in particular decision makers (politicians) in gender
- Promote/collect gender disaggregated data
- Gender being formally included in the COP agenda

Mitigation hub

Main challenges for implementing gender in policy and practice:

- Why does it matter for rural women to mitigate
- Issues are addressed too broadly, specification is lacking
- Lack of acknowledgement for gender aspects of mitigation in high emitting countries

Key steps to overcome the challenges:

1. Map co-benefits of integrating gender
2. Move away from vulnerability discourse
3. Discuss and answer the question: Why does it matter for rural women to mitigate?

Adaptation hub

Main challenges for implementing gender in policy and practice:

- Gender stereotypes and prejudices
- Ignorance and gaps in understanding from Global North about Global South
- Lack of commitment from policy people to mainstream gender

Key steps to overcome the challenges:

1. Before financing any adaptation programme, a gender analysis must be undertaken
2. Enhance meaningful participatory approach
3. Need to develop gender sensitive checklist/tools

Finance hub

Main challenges for implementing gender in policy and practice:

- How to avoid being funded through mechanisms that undermine the climate regime
- Too much bias on climate effectiveness, too little on social aspects
- Professional challenge: They do not understand our discourse, they just want technical discourse.

Key steps to overcome the challenges:

1. Analysis of institutional dimensions: how many countries/IFIs have gender and climate change experts, etc.
2. Address institutional dimensions –
 - a. change the incentive structures in IFIs,
 - b. connect between gender and finance departments, i
 - c. connect international and national levels,
 - d. build bridges between different discourses without losing sight of the need for real and sustainable solutions, equity dimensions. Do not lose sight of normative framing

3. Also ensure continuity in engagement in alliances working on gender and climate finance and ensure enough increase southern voices

Technology hub

Main challenges for implementing gender in policy and practice:

- Attention and awareness on gender difference
- Lack of decision-making power
- Access to information (and finance) about/for technology

Key steps to overcome the challenges:

1. Techniques to fill the gap between research and implementation must be developed
2. Gender balance in boards and in advisory groups
3. Build up a research pool / research consortium on gender and technology (needs, transfer, share...)

Capacity building

Main challenges for implementing gender in policy and practice:

- Traditional gender stereotypes
- Lack of evidence-based approaches
- Lack of recognition that women are part of the solution

Key steps to overcome the challenges:

1. UN WOMEN to promote gender within climate change policies and programmes
2. Set up a gender consultation forum with stakeholder
3. Involve grassroots women in policy making / policy programmes

Time was very short for the market place. However, discussions were lively and committed. The key steps identified should be further developed and followed up in order to bring them closer to implementation.



Statements

Kahealani Hekau, Pacific Gender Climate Coalition

In the islands, we teach a lot of our lessons through hands on experiences, stories and anecdotes.

On my island of Niue, many families plant and grow taro and other crops to put food on the table. Customarily, Saturday is a day spent in the bush garden and or cleaning and attending to household chores.

So one hot Saturday afternoon, a father and a few of his adult children started out early to their bush garden. They weeded and tended to the bush garden throughout the hot morning sun and until it was just past the lunch hour. Thirsty, hot and extremely tired, the father picked a healthy sized watermelon from the watermelon patch. He invited everyone to sit and share it with him.

So to begin with, he cut the watermelon at the centre with his knife. One half he continued to slice piece by piece. Leaving the knife aside, he proceeded to break and separate the other half of the watermelon into smaller pieces with his bare hands. When all was done, he invited his children to eat and share the watermelon with him.

In doing so, everyone went for the cleanly sliced pieces of watermelon. No one touched the other half of the watermelon that was broken up to pieces with the father's bare hands. At the end of the feasting, the father said to his children, there is an important lesson to learn here. He asked them, why didn't any of you eat the other half of the watermelon that was handled?

What does this have to do with climate change policies? To those of us involved in the development of gender equality in climate change policies, how we handle gender equality will determine how well our communities will accept and partake of its goodness.

The experience of the islands is this... when gender policies are developed, what value systems and principles is this set against?

The first consideration is: Is the principle of gender and equality valued?

Process: Are we sufficiently aware and understanding of the cultural norms and protocols that could potentially be modified by gender equality in climate change policies?

Timing: Do we engage with our communities and policy makers long enough to see positive change? Building relationships take time and good things also take time.

Participation and ownership: To whom the policies apply to – were they invited to participate and be involved in the development processes of those policies? Would they feel a sense of ownership of these rules once they are brought into effect?

Accountability: Is there a mindset of accountability in the development of these rules? Will there be increased trust and confidence in what we have to share to others?



Liane Schalatek, Heinrich Böll Foundation USA / Germany

The focus in this input is on climate finance and climate-relevant overseas development assistance (ODA). Since climate impacts are not gender-neutral, but affect men and women differently, climate financing actions and programs also cannot be gender-neutral. This has to acknowledge women's input and effective participation in already dealing with climate change impacts and avoiding mitigation as key actors with the agency to affect change. Thus, gender-responsive climate finance investments and instruments are needed, for two key reasons:

Since public resources for climate action are scarce, taking gender into account is necessary for more equitable and effective climate action (here the experience of development finance is instructive)

Climate financing does not happen in a normative vacuum but should be guided by a large body of existing international environmental and human rights treaties and conventions, which acknowledge women's rights as basic human rights and their rights to participation in environmental decision-making (Rio Principles 10 and 20)

In order to make climate-relevant financing (via dedicated climate financing instrument and climate-relevant ODA) more gender-responsive, improvements are needed to the way climate financing flows are sourced, are governed and delivered. These flows need to be guided by core democratic principles such as accountability, transparency and public participation in decision-making.

Sourcing:

Climate financing needs to be new and additional, predictable, adequate and should be delivered as grants. These are prerequisites as defined under the UNFCCC applying the equity principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities" in an approach of climate justice; flows need to honor a balanced allocation between mitigation and adaptation and acknowledge that there are key tasks for public finance, which cannot be realized with leveraged public financing. Tantamount here are investments with besides the climate focus take into account environmental, developmental, social

and gender benefits such as biodiversity, cultural heritage or women's rights that are intrinsic values and cannot be captured with profit-maximizing or pricing approach. This is particularly important to ensure financing benefits for local women and communities as beneficiaries in recipient countries.

Governance and decision-making:

Key for gender-responsive climate financing is the involvement of women as stakeholders in climate finance decision-making throughout the financing and project cycle; participation and consultation of women as important stakeholders cannot be a one-off activity. Equally important is gender-balance of decision-making bodies (such as Boards or fund committees and even more crucial is to ensure that the Secretariats and staff of climate funds have gender-expertise, meaning they include gender-expertise to evaluate program and project proposal according to their gender-impacts and gender-responsiveness and are able to evaluate and monitor progress toward those financing goals. Overall, the best single action is to anchor gender-responsiveness as a cross-cutting issue in a climate fund's mission. While this has not been the case with most of the existing climate financing instruments, which integrated gender considerations only retroactively, the new Green Climate Fund provides an opportunity. Its governing instrument recognizes a "gender-sensitive approach" as an objective of its funding and demands gender-balance of Board and Secretariat as well as the involvement of women as key stakeholders. Throughout 2013 it will be crucial to ensure that those gender provisions are fully operationalized in the GCF and that gender-responsiveness will be integrated throughout the GCF's 2013 workplan. Lastly, having a fully funded gender-responsive GCF will be an important hold for equity and climate justice in the climate process.

Delivery:

One key instrument to improve upon will be the direct access modality, which was pioneered by the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund (AF). The GCF will allow for direct access as well. Crucially important will be to define direct access beyond country-level access on a sub-national level to allow women's and community groups to access funding without having to go through national authorities or multilateral implementing agencies. Here the GCF could be on some of the existing experience, for example with the GEF/UNDP Small Grants Program to implement a gender-responsive Small Grants Facility with less strict fiduciary standards and reporting requirements that is funding full costs of projects (not just incremental costs), has secured funding in form of quotas or financial set-asides on the GCF level and allows and encourage non-profit organizations to act as intermediaries, if needed, for local women's groups. Accountability here is crucial with regular gender audits of money spent to show if and how it benefits women. This has to be accompanied by robust generation of gender-differentiated data pre-project (for example by establishing a gendered baseline) and during and post-implementation.

At the moment, the necessity for gender-responsive climate financing is mostly acknowledged for adaptation to deal with the vulnerabilities of groups considered particularly vulnerable. However, gender-responsive mitigation financing is equally important and needed. To overcome the current bias toward large-scale, high-tech, cost-intensive mitigation projects (which, if at all have at best a "trickle down" benefit for local groups and women), we will need a redefinition of what is effective mitigation finance. Currently, it is mostly defined in direct correlation to the amount of CO₂ emissions reduced ("mitigation bang for the buck"). Effectiveness needs to be redefined to allow for the integration and consideration of differential development, social and economic benefits of men and women and for

local communities beyond emissions reduction. Such a redefinition of effectiveness would increase for example funding for scaling-up and replicating renewable energy projects with a local focus with proven technologies.

Lastly, since a large percentage of climate-relevant funding is still delivered via traditional multilateral and bilateral development agencies (many of which have formal gender mainstreaming policies on the book), it will be important to improve upon development policies in these organizations. For example, in these agencies, gender mainstreaming efforts need to be expanded to sectors and policies of climate relevance beyond the traditional focus on health and education to include energy, transportation, infrastructure, agriculture and macroeconomic (trade, investment and fiscal) policies.

Farah Kabir, Action Aid, Bangladesh

And ... There is gender, women and climate change. So is it an "Add on"?

In the course of development, where the world stands today, women have contributed just as much as men have, may be even more. But where is the recognition? It is about the perspective of 50% of the population and it is about the impact on their lives yet not organically integrated.

Women were initially not involved in climate policy, neither at international negotiations nor at policy formulations level. It is equally true at national levels. I am not raising this as a matter of representation of women only. It is a much deeper and fundamental issue - it is about the conceptualization and understanding that women are impacted differently and they suffer the impacts of climate change disproportionately. Thus, it is important to get their perspective on board to propose or make any change that may be put forward as part of adaptation or mitigation measures.

I therefore would like to ask a question: "Do we bring in their knowledge and wisdom on board or leave it, as we often have in endless global processes and policies before?" We have to catalyze the structural change within climate change negotiations to create an opportunity.

For me, it flows from the principles of accountability, transparency and democracy. There is the need to ensure deliverables which are critical for a rights based governance and equitable society. It becomes imperative to challenge the existing power dynamics and relationships. It calls for the change in mindset of both men and women.

National policies must facilitate the process of equitable development opportunities. At the ground level, this translates to increased broad-based economic development by promoting female education, employment and economic and political empowerment. It is most likely to prove as one of the most promising strategies for climate change adaptation, with women as key agents. A broad-based development approach requires gender-sensitive growth strategies that invest in women and empower them to more effectively contribute to economic development. All regions will require greater recognition that women need to be supported in their dual roles as care-givers and active economic agents. This will involve lightening their care burden through access to improved household technologies, extended public social protection systems, and through strategies that increase women's bargaining power. The success of a post-MDG development framework depends on formulating policies

and translating existing policy promises on gender equality and women's empowerment into concrete actions.

Other issues such as migration and its impact on women must also be central to thinking on any policy or programmatic intervention that we may propose. There is a need for ensuring the environment for gender analysis and women's participation in policy formulation and decision making without any further loss of time.

I ended with saying that those who are asking for gender analysis and inclusion in the formal agenda of the negotiations are not demanding with the force required. Women need to think of themselves as 'power up group' and more men have to actually join in and believe in moving from the support role to an active role for inclusion. Otherwise an equitable and just society call will be no more than rhetoric!

Recommendations:

- Bring more women voices into policy formulation processes, bodies and structures.
- Encourage women into research and the field of science
- Gear up the campaigns on removing gender discriminatory laws at national level to achieve gender equity, especially in relation to Climate justice.
- Work to promote compensation along the lines of differentiated impact of climate change on gender
- Support Women's groups to work as watch dog in respect to achievement of targets set for gender parity.



Yvette Abrahams, GenderCC South Africa

Gender equality is important and I would certainly welcome more resolutions to that effect here at COP. To me it is a human rights issue, no matter what happens, when it comes right down to it, women have as great a right to be idiots as men are. That said, it is important that we ask ourselves: gender equality

for what? I will give you an example from my home country: At home our national energy policy for the next 20 years, the Integrated Resource Plan II is going to exceed our mitigation targets as set out in our National Climate Change Response policy. This is despite the fact that the NCCRP explicitly states that all other policies in the country are subject to it, including the IRP II. You would think that the Department of Environmental Affairs and the Department of Energy would have talked to each other. Yet the Minister and Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs, and the Minister and Deputy Minister of Energy are all women. So the issues of who represents us, what their carbon politics are and how we hold them accountable are very important. There is no point in having gender equality on a sinking ship.

At home we are part of climate finance network, a consortium of NGO's, who are already acting as watchdogs to ensure that when climate finance comes into the country it is properly spent. Through our grassroots women's workshops, we educate them on what climate finance is, but we also get very useful feedback on how they need these funds to be constructed in order for the money to reach them. For instance, we have cases where the funds are dominated by hard scientists with little knowledge in the human and social sciences, much less gender expertise, but climate change is a problem of human behaviour. If you do not understand human behaviour you have little chance to change it.

So far we have been able to feedback to both our National Implementing Entity and GEF the voices from our workshops to ensure that they are able to respond correctly. The kind of things women need are to have access to application forms even if they don't have access to the Internet; to be able to access funds in their own language rather than only in English, and they have even asked that funders come to their communities and workshop them since not everybody can read and write. We should take these issues seriously since if we fail to respond it is an admission that climate finance is meant only for the educated middle class.