

Submission to Adaptation Committee (of the UN Climate Change Secretariat) on:

How to mainstream gender considerations in the national adaptation planning process.

From: Canadian Foodgrains Bank

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Who are we? The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of 15 Canadian churches and church-based agencies working to end global hunger. Our work is funded by donations from the public and grants from the Canadian government and foundations.

What is our expertise on climate change adaptation? The Foodgrains Bank has 36 years' experience in reducing hunger through program work with over 100 partner organizations in about 40 countries in food assistance, nutrition, and agriculture and livelihoods. A large share of our program work has focused on responding to climate-related food crises and enabling climate adaptation for food producers. We recognize that the impact of climate events differs by gender and have developed an organizational gender policy to ensure adequate incorporation of gender considerations in our programming.

Lessons learned in incorporating gender in adaptation planning

- 1. Understand gender roles through conducting gender analysis** - Gender roles and gender impacts differ in each context. Planning for adaptation should be based on gender analysis of the context, with design, implementation and evaluation of the activities based on the outcomes of the gender analysis. Social and environmental systems are dynamic and therefore adaptation planning should involve continual evaluation and modification.
 - Where possible, previously collected data and analysis should be used to inform new analysis to avoid over-surveying target populations. Likewise, local ecological knowledge and adaptation actions already being implemented by the community and other stakeholders (civil society organizations, government, etc.) should be factored into adaptation planning and strengthened where appropriate through resources and capacity building. Changing climate conditions can also bring opportunities for communities which should be identified.
 - Analysis should recognize the gender dimensions of interconnecting environmental, economic, political, and social factors that may influence or be impacted by adaptation actions. This includes consideration of future trends that may influence the impact of climate conditions and the effectiveness of adaptation actions chosen.
 - Recognizing that male-dominated herding in Uganda was as integral to food security as agriculture was critical to ensuring effective adaptation actions to food systems were taken which enabled both men and women to benefit without conflict.

- Partners in eastern Africa recognized that inconsistent rainfall was a particular threat to food security due to years of soil degradation and increasing population pressures
 - Changing gender and cultural norms is a long-term process. Goals and actions for short-term interventions should recognize this and may be more limited than goals and actions for long-term interventions.
 - In each context, gender analysis should engage community leaders, including faith leaders and other authority figures. Gender-sensitive interventions should involve men and boys as well as women and girls, to increase mutual understanding and support for goals and interventions. Local ownership and community buy-in is critical for effective adaptation planning.
 - A partner in Uganda is promoting conservation agriculture for improved food security and climate adaptation. The project has made a conscious effort to engage trusted community leaders who have influence on policy interventions and to address gender issues with community gender champions, who work to increase community awareness about matters related to decision-making and gender roles and responsibilities. These gender champions have normalized gender role changes, shifts in household tasks and responsibilities and joint decision-making, both within their own homes and in the larger community.
 - Partners in several countries have experienced success in working with men and boys to advance gender equality. Positive male role models worked alongside women in communities to promote positive masculinities and model new gender dynamics for their fellow community members. Including men and boys in training sessions reduced male resistance and suspicion of the new practices.
2. **Women as leaders** - Planning for adaptation should promote women's leadership, decision-making and collective action, especially through support for environmental organizations and farmer's organizations. These organizations are directly affected by climate conditions and can be effective in reaching people at the grassroots for training, action, and shifting of community norms, but they often struggle without access to sufficient resources, networks, and information.
 3. **Women as beneficiaries** - Adaptation should focus on the needs of women and girls, recognizing that they are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
 - Women and girls in most societies have less access to resources than men and boys and less agency, making them more susceptible to shocks, including climate shocks.
 - Adaptation planning should consider the labour burden placed on women who often have productive, reproductive, and community roles. Engaging women in adaptation should not add to their workloads.
 4. **Enabling environment** – Enabling environments on micro to macro scales are crucial for effective climate adaptation.
 - Pre-planning analysis should consider relevant local and national policies as well as how these are actually being implemented (which may look quite different).
 - Those involved in adaptation planning and implementation should undergo continuous gender trainings.
 - Organizations and institutions should be supported to develop policies, processes and frameworks that prioritize gender equality. This could start with a gender audit of the organization's human

resources policies, organizational structure and culture to identify barriers to achieving gender equality, then follow through to actions to address barriers, and monitoring to assess progress. Resources for these processes should be considered a necessary part of adaptation planning and implementation.

- Foodgrains Bank partners in several countries have found that holding continuous, repeated gender trainings for staff enabled onboarding of new staff, identified and addressed resistance amongst existing staff, and led to a better understanding of people's biases around what women versus men can do and how it might affect their ability to recruit and retain staff.
- Partners in Uganda and Bangladesh have prioritized cultural diversity and gender balance among their staff. This diversity allows team members to better understand the different gendered practices amongst their beneficiary group. It also ensures that beneficiaries have people on staff of their own sex/culture they may access if needed. Likewise, partners in several countries include questions about values and attitudes towards gender equality as part of their hiring process during interviews and through job tests. How people answer these questions is weighted heavily in hiring decisions.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank values the opportunity to contribute to UNFCCC processes and encourages the Adaptation Committee to continue to welcome CSO participation.