

Ethiopia's Submission on Gender and Climate Change

Noting to the invitation dated August 14, 2019, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia wants to make submission on Gender and Climate Change.

1. Introduction

Article 35 of the Constitution of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia clearly articulates that women shall have equal rights with men in the enjoyment of the rights and protections guaranteed to all Ethiopians.

In affirming this commitment, all Executive Organs are required to ensure integration of gender issues in policies, strategies, programs, projects and actions. Gender equality and gender integration is considered in all the relevant environmental and climate change policies, strategies and laws, including the Ethiopian Environment Policy, Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy, Nationally Determined Contributions and the National Adaptation Plan of Ethiopia (NAP-ETH). The government, in its Second Growth and Transformation Plan, set out participation and equitable benefit sharing of women as one of the nine Pillars of the mid-term plan.

With regard to climate change, Ethiopia is one of the most affected countries by its impacts. The major adverse impacts of climate change in Ethiopia are food insecurity, caused by droughts and floods, outbreak of diseases such as malaria, water and air borne diseases, land degradation, damage to infrastructure, specifically by floods and loss of biodiversity.

Men and women experience climate change and its impacts differently and have different priorities concerning response measures. This is primarily due to their economic situation; which is based on because of their circumstances they directly or indirectly depend on environmental resources for livelihood; including depending their livelihood on rainfed agriculture, which is very sensitive to climatic conditions. In this case, they are one of the major groups that are affected by climate change.

They also are key players in adaptation actions and as providers of food for the family and in adaptation actions. However, their contribution in climate actions is not well recognized in most cases and their issues are sidelined. They do not have decision making power in issues that affect their lives most. Hence, to ensure the effectiveness of adaptation and mitigation actions, consideration of gender issues is critical at national and global levels. Climate programs, initiatives and actions should contribute to the empowerment and engagement of women as key actors, beneficiaries and leaders.

2. The Gender Action Plan (GAP)

A Gender Action Plan was established at COP 23 and Parties, members of constituted bodies, United Nations organizations, observers and other stakeholders were invited to participate and

engage in implementing the gender action plan, with a view to advancing towards the goal of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all elements of climate action.

The GAP sets out, five priority areas, which are:

- A. Capacity-building, knowledge sharing and communication
- B. Gender balance, participation and women's leadership
- C. Coherence
- D. Gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation
- E. Monitoring and reporting

As a next step, Parties are invited for submissions from COP 24 on the implementation of the gender action plan, identifying areas of progress, areas for improvement and further work to be undertaken in subsequent action plans so as to inform the synthesis report on this topic to be prepared by the secretariat for consideration at SBI 51.

Recognizing the fact that the GAP is a party driven-process, Ethiopia has taken steps to translate activities under the Gender Action Plan to national level.

3. Areas of Progress

Generally, Ethiopia recognizes the gender action plan helped in enhancing gender actions at national level and motivated the relevant stakeholders to consider gender issues in their interventions.

3.1. Capacity-building, knowledge sharing and communication

Ethiopia seeks to promote gender-responsiveness in undertaking climate actions, including mitigation, adaptation and technology development and transfer and also capacity building.

To this end, Gender and Climate related capacity building trainings and awareness raising activities have been undertaken by different actors in the country; such as the Environment, Forest and Climate change Commission itself, and nongovernmental organizations and other key stakeholders.

Based on the gaps identified through the assessment in mainstreaming gender issues in policies, programs, projects and actions (see 3.2 below), trainings were provided to middle level managers and practitioners from regions and federal sector institutions on the following topics:

1. Gender Concepts
2. Gender and the Environment (Climate Change)
3. Gender integration/Mainstreaming in to the environment and climate change development plans
4. Gender Analysis and Gender mainstreaming guideline

Besides, articles, which focus on gender and Climate Change issues, were produced and published.

A Television Program on how women and men benefit from the adaptation actions and the challenges they encounter, is produced and disseminated through the National Television, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.

Over the two years period of the GAP, the Commission, worked towards ensuring gender integration at federal and regional levels within the environment and climate change sector. The actions include the following:

3.2. Gender Assessment/Analysis and Gender Mainstreaming Guideline

Gender Assessment has been conducted within the Commission (the former Ministry), the Ethiopian Environment and Forest Research Institute and Regional Environmental agencies to identify gaps in addressing gender issues in policies, programs and projects implemented in environment and climate change sector.

Based on the findings of the assessment, the Commission (the former Ministry) has developed and put in place a Gender Mainstreaming Guideline to support decision makers, practitioners and researchers to more effectively integrate gender considerations in Environment and Climate actions. The guidelines and checklists provide assistance on how to integrate gender issues in programs, projects and actions, including climate related interventions.

Since recently, Gender analysis has been a common practice for most of the Adaptation projects implemented under the Commission and supported by donors and governments. The National Adaptation Plan of Ethiopia is one to mention, in this regard. To ensure gender integration Ethiopia, in collaboration with NAP Global Network and IISD conducted a gender analysis and produced a document; *“Integrating gender considerations in Ethiopia’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Analysis and recommendations”*. The report is designed for stakeholders in Ethiopia who will be involved in implementation of adaptation actions, as well as for actors in other countries who are interested in gender issues as they relate to NAP processes.

The Commission is mandated to coordinate implementation of the CRGE strategy nationwide and has established CRGE Mainstreaming Guideline, with checklists and indicators to make sure that all development interventions undertaken by sector institutions take into account climate considerations. The CRGE mainstreaming Guideline and Checklists included the gender dimension and require the relevant Sector institutions to consider the impacts and benefits of their initiatives both for men and women.

In general, the trainings and awareness raising activities have helped in raising awareness about the importance of addressing gender in all environmental programs and projects, and specifically in climate change adaptation and mitigation actions, to ensure that the most vulnerable groups, especially women benefit from the actions.

3.3. Gender balance, participation and women’s leadership

The government of Ethiopia made an exemplary push in empowering and ensuring gender equality in leadership, by nominating women to half of the key Cabinet positions and many women leaders at the deputy ministerial and commissioner positions, for the first time in the country’s long history.

A female deputy Commissioner is also appointed for the first time for the Environment, Forest and Climate Change sector. The number of women occupying middle level leadership positions has significantly increased as a result of the government's dedicated action.

Regarding gender balance in the UNFCCC process, the government of Ethiopia has consciously endeavored to include women in Ethiopian delegation to the COP.

However, gender imbalance and inconsistency in the representation of women in the delegations existed due to several reasons. Lack of/ or limited funds available to external travel and attendance at the COP is one of the major challenges and women's participation depends on the availability of donor funds.

3.4. Gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation

Gender disaggregation is used as planning and reporting as well as decision making tool. Most of the development plans and activities are trying to be gender-responsive in all phases of the planning and implementation. It is observed in all cases that all programs and projects guided to make them gender-responsive by recognizing gender and climate change actions are empirical to all development activities.

Besides to the national public actions as mentioned above, the government of Ethiopia is trying to approach international development partners to scale up the efforts that the Government is making. It's also recognized that there are many CSOs who are focusable working on environment and climate change with a focus on gender and climate change.

4. Areas for Improvement

It is believed that gender issues are deep rooted in the social and cultural norms of the society and organizations in particular. In this regard, continuity in capacity building and awareness raising is critical to change attitudes of people. Sufficient resource in terms of finance and expertise is required to build the capacity of leaders and practitioners in climate change for this to happen.

Research on gender and climate change

Understanding the real situation of women and men in relation to climate change and its impacts through research would enable to make informed decisions.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All government Institutions are required to disaggregate any information; including their plans and reports, on the basis of gender. However, monitoring and evaluation formats at different levels require further refinement for disaggregation of female from male to track progress.

Ethiopia strongly supports the inclusion of targets and indicators in the next phase of Gender Action Plan, so that it would be possible to evaluate progress made and identify areas for improvement.