



Submission on the Lima Work Programme on Gender

Submitted by GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice e.V. & LIFE e.V.

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Introduction / State of the Art

The Lima Work Programme on Gender marks an important step in the climate change debates. Now that this step has been taken, how can we follow up on the progress on women and gender issues in the UNFCCC and ensure that the resulting two-year work programme results in more than just ‘gender balance’? How can we ensure that gender equality is implemented as a cross-cutting principle in all climate-related policies and practices?

These and other gender-related terms such as gender-sensitive or gender-responsive are often used without providing clarity on exactly what is meant, or how they are to be implemented. Furthermore, gender dimensions continue to be neglected in the areas of mitigation and technology development and transfer, both in developing countries and particularly in developed countries. To address these gaps, Parties and policy-makers at all levels need to build upon existing findings and modest examples of best practices to make more substantial progress on climate policy and gender equality.

What needs to be done?

I. Terms and approaches

First and foremost, we have to **discuss and agree on a definition of gender sensitivity and gender responsiveness** in order to use the terms in a more meaningful way.

Usually, gender sensitivity refers to the knowledge of (and sensitivity towards) gender differences in the impacts of mitigation and adaptation policies, and the impacts of climate change in general. Gender responsiveness means reacting to these differences, which are based on pervasive gender inequalities in all parts of life and in all parts of the world. In addressing gender responsiveness and gender sensitivity, these differences are taken into account in order to bring more justice into climate change policy and its implementation.

Secondly, and in order to move towards a just climate regime, we have to **go beyond gender sensitivity and gender responsiveness by addressing the root causes of inequality**. Therefore, it is necessary to fundamentally question gender roles and reveal androcentrism¹ in the structures and debates on climate change.

In other words, we need to consider how inequality (which has its roots in social, cultural and political structures based on gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity and nationality, age and place and other factors and determinants) are intertwined with and reinforced by other structures of domination.

Thirdly, it is essential to avoid simplification, e.g. by merely addressing binary gender relations (man/woman) or assuming that gender balance and improving the participation of women will automatically result in more gender-responsiveness. This also means avoiding assigning women the role of caretakers with a special connection to nature. Instead, we need to take into account that differences are socially constructed and context specific, and thus may shift according to the realities of climate change (see Anna Kaijser and Annica Kronsell 2013²).

Finally, because research shows clearly that more equal societies almost always perform better in all aspects of sustainability, our main goal in addressing both climate change and gender equality must be a fundamental transformation (Wilkinson & Pickett 2009³).

Climate change policy and practice can help to alter gender roles and responsibilities and result in greater equality, yet it also runs the risk of reinforcing them and entrenching current inequalities. A transformation therefore requires a multi-dimensional approach (rather than a one-dimensional focus on GHG emissions) to help us move towards more just, equitable, inclusive, low-carbon, low-risk, resilient societies and economies. Moreover, “care” - both for other humans and natural resources – must be a guiding principle for the negotiations and future climate policy at all levels.⁴

II. Gender in climate change mitigation and technology development⁵

As for **mitigation and low carbon development**, awareness of the gender dimensions is still lacking, although substantial work has been done to reveal, and address, gender issues in energy and transport policy. This is particularly the case for developing countries, but more research is needed to confirm initial findings on developed countries.

¹ The term “androcentrism” is understood to embrace certain patterns of thought, observation and action in regard to political, economic, scientific and societal issues. These patterns place men and maleness at the center or deem them to be the yardstick and standard while seeing women and femaleness as a “peculiarity”, as a deviation from the standard (genanet/AG Frauen 2008).

² Kaijser, Anna; Kronsell, Annica (2013) Climate Change Through The Lens of Intersectionality. In: Environmental Politics 23:3, 417-433

³ Wilkinson, Richard; Pickett, Kate (2009); The Spirit Level. Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better. Penguin Books, London

⁴ We see care as a principle for a sustainable climate change policy, which places the everyday reality of life and human needs in the centre of debates. Additionally, care as a transformative principle allows for the ethical level of (care) work and its quality to be considered

⁵ The following section is recapitulating the submissions by LIFE e.V. and GenderCC in the follow up of the Doha Gender Decision (submitted August/September 2013)

In addition to the well documented lack of gender balance in decision making on climate change policy, evidence suggests that gender dimensions include:

Gendered impacts of climate change: gender-differentiated roles and responsibilities, as well as gender-segregated labour markets and income gaps, play a major role in how climate change affect women and men in most countries of the world.

Gendered emission levels and capabilities to mitigate climate change at an individual level: gendered roles and identities are drivers for greenhouse gas emissions, thus are significant for analysing the causes of climate change. Moreover, the portfolio of options women and men have to convert their lifestyles to low-carbon ones, or to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy, is shaped by education and income – which are both highly gendered.

Perceptions and attitudes towards climate change in general are also highly gendered, as documented by polls in several countries. Preferences for climate change mitigation and adaptation policy differ between women and men due to education and income gaps, and gendered risk awareness.

Impacts of policies and measures might reinforce traditional gender roles and thereby increase discrimination and current gender gaps. The existing climate policy in most countries has been largely gender-blind, reducing the effectiveness and efficiency of low-carbon, climate resilient development⁶.

Regarding **technological solutions and technological development**, it is well documented that perceptions of and preferences for technological solutions are highly gendered. In addition, the technological developments often don't meet the needs of those dealing with survival on a daily basis. Again, this is due to gendered roles, to socialization of girls and boys, to gendered identities, and pictures of masculinity and femininity. Therefore, we need to consider which identities and roles served as a ground for specific technological developments, and which identities and roles become invisible? Whose needs are served?

To address this, we would like to reiterate the following recommendations, which have not yet been adequately implemented:

- Existing experience in the sectors relevant for mitigation and technology development needs to be compiled and made available, and methodologies such as Gender Impact Assessments should be further developed and widely applied.
- Capacity-building on gender approaches, methods and tools must be provided and gender experts involved at all policy and planning levels.

⁶ See European Gender Institute (2012): Review of the Implementation in the EU of area K of the Beijing Platform for Action: Women and the Environment. Gender Equality and Climate Change. Report provided by LIFE e.V. and Milieu Ltd. <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Gender-Equality-and-Climate-Change-Report.pdf>

For case studies, see GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice (2014): Gender and climate change: Working towards gender-sensitive national policy. http://www.gendercc.net/fileadmin/inhalte/Dokumente/GenderCC_Publications/gendercc-gender-national-2014.pdf

- It is crucial to ensure that research about gender dimensions of climate change mitigation and technology development is undertaken. Additionally, it is important to make available research operational, and to overcome current unwillingness to acknowledge and apply findings.
- Finally, we are renewing our call for a Special IPCC Report on gender and climate policy, in order to compile and review the large but fragmented body of existing information and knowledge on the gender dimensions of mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity-building and their effects, gender sensitive strategies and tools, and monitoring approaches.

III. Recommendations for the in-session workshop on gender-responsive climate policy planned for SB 42

For the programme of the workshop, we recommend the following elements:

Clarification of terms related to gender:

Introduction of (socially constructed) gender roles as they pertain to climate change, with a clarification of terms such as gender aware, gender sensitive, gender responsive, and gender transformative.

Presentation of case studies:

Climate policy at national levels, for example, Kenya's commitment to gender mainstreaming in energy policy and Sweden's commitment to gender sensitive transport policy.

Climate policy at regional and local levels, such as the gender sensitive policy in Kampala, Uganda; the gender and transport study in Semarang City, Indonesia; and transport policy which includes gender sensitive elements in Bogotá, Columbia.

Methodologies:

Presentation of an exemplary Gender Scan and Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) for climate policies and measures, which could be drawn from a review of the gender aspects of national climate policies in Europe, commissioned by the European Institute for Gender Equality⁷.

⁷ See European Gender Institute (2011): Gender analysis of the policy initiatives of the Member States in relation to climate change in the sectors of transport and energy. Unpublished analysis paper provided by LIFE e.V. and Milieu Ltd.