



Strengthening the Lima Work Programme on Gender

Perspectives from Malawi and the CBD

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Increasing evidence of the differential impacts of climate change on women and girls in recent decades has led to significant progress in addressing the interlinkages between gender and climate change under the UNFCCC. The two-year Lima Work Programme on Gender launched at COP20 aimed to advance gender equality mandates across all areas of the climate negotiations. It is due to be reviewed at COP22 in Marrakech in November 2016, presenting an opportunity for parties and observers to further strengthen and advance gender equality under the UNFCCC. Women and girls in the countries represented by the Least Developed Countries (LDC) Group are disproportionately dependent on climate-sensitive resources for their livelihoods and have unequal access to land, water and other resources and productive assets. This is further compounded by their limited mobility and decision-making power. Efforts to advance gender equality and gender considerations throughout all climate actions would bring the benefit of women's knowledge and expertise to climate actions, increasing their effectiveness. This paper explores how the UNFCCC could learn from another multilateral environment agreement – the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) – and its Gender Plan of Action. We begin with a brief overview of UNFCCC COP decisions on gender and the Lima Work Programme and go on to examine Malawi's experience in implementing gender-responsive climate policy and the CBD's Gender Plan of Action. We close with some recommendations for LDC and UNFCCC parties to consider in Marrakech.

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Executive summary

Women's expertise and knowledge can play a critical and often unrecognised role in climate responses, as evidenced by their leadership in natural resource management, the way they spearhead sustainable practices at household, community, national and global levels, and their response to climate-related crises such as droughts. Women and girls living in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) such as Malawi are disproportionately dependent on climate-sensitive resources for their livelihoods. On top of this, their unequal access to resources, information and technology translates into greater vulnerabilities in the face of climate impacts while compromising their responses and actions. Efforts to advance gender equality and gender considerations throughout all climate actions would increase the effectiveness of such actions by using women's knowledge and expertise while reversing the harmful perception that climate change impacts and responses are gender neutral.

There has been slow but steady progress in addressing the interlinkages between gender and climate change under the multilateral environmental agreements emerging from the 1992 Rio Summit. The UNFCCC has evolved from being gender blind at its inception to passing a decision to launch the Lima Work Programme on Gender at COP20. This established a two-year work programme to promote gender balance and achieve gender-responsive climate policy by encouraging parties and relevant organisations to support training and awareness-raising for all delegates on issues related to gender and climate change, and building the skills and capacity of female delegates to enhance their participation in negotiations. The work programme has made significant strides to advance gender equality mandates across all areas of the climate negotiations. It is due for review at COP22 in Marrakech in November 2016: this presents an opportunity for parties and observers to further strengthen and advance gender equality under the UNFCCC.

A potential tool for parties and observers to consider in moving efforts forward is the Gender Plan of Action set up by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Updated for 2015–2020 to reflect the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi biodiversity targets, the plan of action sets out concrete steps for parties and the CBD secretariat to take in advancing gender equality in the design and implementation of biodiversity policies and programmes.

Our recommendations are informed by Malawi's experiences in implementing both the UNFCCC and CBD mandates on advancing gender equality. The country saw a small but notable increase in women's participation in its UNFCCC delegations as a result of implementing the Lima Work Programme and other UNFCCC mandates on gender-responsive climate policy. It also took the needs and abilities of women into account when elaborating its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) and its national biodiversity strategic plan of action. These efforts were underpinned by the results of a study conducted in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda that showed the economic benefits of closing the gender gap.

Despite these positive steps, it remains clear that much work remains to be done, with many women and girls still unable to exercise their right to be agents and beneficiaries of climate action and responses or to participate fully in the shaping of such action and responses. Extending and strengthening the Lima Work Programme on Gender and considering a Gender Plan of Action under the UNFCCC would be concrete steps towards systematically addressing the gender gap as one of the most effective mechanisms for building climate resilience and reducing emissions.

COP decisions on gender

1

While the number of Conference of the Parties (COP) decisions reflecting gender perspectives has increased considerably since 2010, the UNFCCC was conspicuously gender blind for a long time. Of the three multilateral environmental agreements that emerged from the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, it was the only one with no gender-sensitive language in its text. The first reference to gender equality in a COP decision and the first standalone decision that contributed to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment appeared almost a decade later at COP7, in 2001. Despite these initial steps, gender considerations did not emerge again for another nine years, until the Cancun Agreements were adopted at COP16 in 2010. It was only at COP18 in 2012 that parties added 'gender and climate' as a standing agenda item for COP sessions, agreeing that gender-related issues should no longer be considered on an ad hoc basis under 'any other business'.

Despite a slow start, the UNFCCC strengthened its consideration of gender equality-related issues, building on the momentum generated in Cancun and Doha. Initially, gender considerations focused on increasing women's participation in the UNFCCC. In fact, many criticised the Doha decision for focusing primarily on promoting gender balance rather than on issuing a stronger call for gender equality. Nevertheless, the decision represented a significant step forward in the UNFCCC's consideration of gender, as it crosscuts with all other aspects of the global response to

climate change. As reflected in the preamble, parties recognised that increasing women's participation and having a balanced representation of women and men from developing and developed countries in the negotiations can help ensure climate policy is sensitive and responsive to the differing needs of women and men in all contexts. In other words, there is an understanding that allowing women's voices to be heard on an equal basis with men's can bring a greater variety of views and more representative perspectives of society to the negotiating table. This, in turn, can facilitate the adoption of climate policy that addresses the needs and interests of populations more comprehensively. But perhaps most importantly, the Doha decision institutionalised gender and climate by ensuring it became a standing item for all subsequent COP sessions. This constituted a strong entry point for future discussion on gender issues and further elaboration of the gender equality and climate change agenda in the UNFCCC.

At COP20 in Lima, parties adopted a third and much stronger standalone gender decision: the Lima Work Programme on Gender (18/CP.20). Malawi tabled the draft decision on behalf of the Least Developed Countries Group. The final outcome established a two-year work programme for promoting gender balance and achieving gender-responsive climate policy, which would guide the effective participation of women in the bodies set up under the convention.

BOX 1. LIMA WORK PROGRAMME ON GENDER (DECISION 18/CP.20)

The Lima decision enhances previous UNFCCC efforts on gender (which had mainly focused on increasing women's participation in the negotiations), by inviting parties to "advance gender balance, promote gender sensitivity in developing and implementing climate policy, and achieve gender-responsive climate policy in all relevant activities under the Convention" (UNFCCC, 2015).

It set up a two-year work programme to guide the effective participation of women in the UNFCCC and its negotiations, encouraging parties and relevant organisations to support delegate training and awareness-raising on gender and climate change issues, and build the skills and capacity of female delegates.

To clarify the meaning of gender-responsive climate policy from an implementation perspective and improve the development and effective implementation of such policy, parties called for two in-session workshops on gender-responsive climate policy with a focus on:

- mitigation action and technology development and transfer (June 2015); and
- adaptation, capacity building and training delegates on gender issues (May 2016).

At COP22, parties will review all the information related to the Lima Work Programme –including technical reports by the secretariat and submissions by parties and observers – with a view to taking any necessary action to strengthen progress towards the goals of achieving gender balance and gender-responsive climate policy.

1.1 Gender considerations in the Paris Agreement

The adoption of the Paris Agreement at COP21 made new normative gains for advancing gender equality. Box 2 examined the gender-specific language used in the preamble, Articles 7 and 11 and Decision 1.

BOX 2. LANGUAGE REFLECTING GENDER EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND DECISION 1/CP.21

Preamble: “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.”

Article 7 (paragraph 5): “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.”

Article 11 (paragraph 2): “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**.”

Decision 1/CP.21 (paragraph 102): “Decides that the committee [to facilitate implementation of and promote compliance with the provisions of the Paris Agreement] referred to in Article 15, paragraph 2, of the Agreement shall consist of 12 members with recognized competence in relevant scientific, technical, socioeconomic or legal fields, to be elected by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement on the basis of equitable geographical representation, with two members each from the five regional groups of the United Nations and one member each from the small island developing States and the least developed countries, while taking into account **the goal of gender balance**.”

Implementing commitments on gender under the UNFCCC



In this section, we consider how far parties have come to implement the COP decisions on gender, including the Lima Work Programme. We also share Malawi's experience to shed light on some of the challenges an LDC party to the UNFCCC has faced in this regard.

2.1 In-session workshops

As mandated by the decision adopting the Lima Work Programme on Gender, the UNFCCC held two in-session workshops to clarify the concept of gender-responsive climate policy. The first, in June 2015 (during the 42nd session of the subsidiary bodies) focused on mitigation action and technology development and transfer;¹ the second, in May 2016 (during the 44th session of the subsidiary bodies), focused on adaptation and capacity building.²

Both workshops featured presentations from constituted bodies under the UNFCCC, such as the Climate Technology Centre and Network, the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group. They also included case studies from countries and institutions outside of the UNFCCC on how they are integrating gender considerations into climate change actions, including through women's leadership.

The first workshop initiated discussions on terms and concepts related to gender equality and the rationale for incorporating gender perspectives and considerations in climate policy. The second further touched upon training for delegates on gender issues, as part of efforts to promote the gender balance goal.

A number of recurring themes emerged from the discussions at both workshops. Participants often highlighted the need to raise awareness about gender equality issues in the context of climate change and to clarify definitions and usage of terminology and concepts. Many said that lack of awareness about the importance of gender issues remains one of the main barriers to gender-responsive climate action, and that gender is often misinterpreted as women's issues.

Workshop participants shared examples and experiences of how women face diverse challenges in responding to and coping with climate change impacts as a result of gender inequalities – for example, because they have had to shoulder the burden of unpaid care work, lack access to productive resources or have no voice in decision making.

They also agreed that promoting an understanding of gender equality as a human right could lead to more meaningful actions to address these issues. Too often, people think it is solely down to women to raise and address gender considerations. Or else, they address them superficially, as an exercise to tick the gender box in a COP decision or by increasing the number of women in party delegations. This said, members of constituted bodies also noted that their ability to take specific actions to integrate gender considerations into their work depends greatly on COP decisions containing gender references.

Suggestions for practical measures to advance gender-responsive climate policy through the UNFCCC included:

- Creating a repository of technical guidelines, tools and best practices to integrate gender considerations into climate actions
- Creating monitoring and evaluation methodologies to track progress
- Parties agreeing to include gender considerations in their reports and national communications
- Training for delegates to raise awareness about the importance of addressing gender equality to ensure the issue is well integrated across thematic discussions and cannot be sidelined in the negotiations; and
- Parties making efforts that go beyond counting women to increase the engagement of women delegates by providing participation support and capacity building on UNFCCC issues.

In both workshops, participants (representatives from parties and observers) welcomed the opportunity to discuss the issue of the gender-climate nexus in the UNFCCC, and to share views and experiences of how the issues have intersected at national and local levels, in various contexts. The discussions also informed the conclusions agreed by the subsidiary body on implementation (SBI), at its 43rd and 44th sessions.³

2.2 Progress on women's participation and representation in the UNFCCC

As mandated by Decision 23/CP.18, the UNFCCC secretariat issues annual reports on gender composition before COP sessions, to track progress in advancing the goal of gender balance in UNFCCC bodies and party delegations. The secretariat continues to remind parties of their commitment to advance gender balance whenever there is a vacancy for any elective post on any of the convention bodies, including the COP bureau. But despite these efforts, reports show that progress on gender balance remains slow.

The 2016 report shows an increase by the end of August in women's representation in 4 out of 12 constituted bodies set up under the convention and its Kyoto Protocol, from the previous year.⁴ But women's representation remained unchanged in five bodies and decreased in three. Women delegates make up 30 per cent or more of the membership for seven of the bodies, but their representation remains as low as 10 per cent for the Compliance Committee enforcement branch and 15 per cent for the LDC Expert Group. The report further notes that six women were elected as chair or co-chair of a constituted body, and three as vice-chair.

Parties collectively welcomed the election of three women in May 2016 to oversee the new Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement. But gender balance in the bureaus of the COP, the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), SBI and the Subsidiary Body for Technological and Scientific Advice (SBSTA) was worse than 2015: women represent only 2 out of 11 members of the current COP/CMP bureau, and all six members of the SBI/SBSTA bureau are men. All members of the bureaus will be newly elected at COP22, however, offering a chance to remedy this situation.⁵

Finally, the report finds that women have consistently made up about 40 per cent of party delegations at negotiating sessions, except for COP21, where they represented 32 per cent. But only about 30 per cent or less of heads of these party delegations are women. These numbers are similar to the data gathered in 2014.

2.3 Progress on women's participation and representation by Malawi's delegation

The government of Malawi has endeavoured to achieve gender balance in the Malawi delegation to the UNFCCC COP. Although it continues to be dominated by men, women's participation in the Malawi delegation has steadily increased from 12 to 34 per cent since COP16 (see Table 1).

Several reasons could account for Malawi's continued imbalance of male-to-female delegates. Most departments do not have funds allocated to external travel, so attendance at the COP depends on the availability of donor funds available for sponsorship. Ministry and department heads usually get priority, and few of those working on climate change programmes are headed by women. The exceptions to date are the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources Department and Environmental Affairs Department which have a number of women in leadership positions.

According to the Malawi Country Report (2014) on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the representation of women at policy and management levels in public service is 24 per cent. In Malawi, the desired ratio is 60:40 men to women or 40:60 men to women, (Ministry of Gender 2015). Fewer women join science-based ministries and departments as technical officers, further compounding the imbalance of male-to-female participation.

Table 1: Malawi COP delegation breakdown by gender

YEAR	SESSION	COP DELEGATES	MALAWI DELEGATES		
			MALE	FEMALE	% FEMALE
2011	COP17	14,570	36	12	25
2012	COP 18	9,004	19	7	26.92
2013	COP 19	8,375	19	8	29.63
2014	COP 20	11,185	17	8	32
2015	COP 21	36,276	25	13	34.21

Source: Government of Malawi COP reports (2011-2015) 6

BOX 4. SUPPORTING TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Capacity building efforts are essential to advance gender balance and ensure women delegates can engage substantively in the negotiations process; it is not enough to simply increase women's numerical representation in meetings and Convention bodies.

Accordingly, decision 18/CP.20 encourages parties, observers and the secretariat to support training and awareness-raising for delegates on issues related to gender balance and climate change, and building the skills and capacity of women delegates to effectively participate in the UNFCCC process. This is especially encouraged for delegates from Parties particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, including the least developed countries, small island developing states and countries in Africa. Some examples of capacity building initiatives led by observer organisations and supported by Parties include the Women Delegates Fund (WDF) and the European Capacity Building Initiative (ECBI).

The WDF⁷ (administered by the Women's Environment and Development Organisation

(WEDO) through the Global Gender and Climate Alliance) provides travel support and capacity building and networking opportunities to women from developing country parties (including by coordinating a 'night school' before the start of a negotiation session). It also engages in outreach and advocacy to highlight the importance of women's leadership in decision making at both international and national levels. Current and past funders of the WDF have included the Governments of Finland, Iceland and the Netherlands. WEDO also collaborates with the UNFCCC secretariat on its night school.

The ECBI⁸ is a network of institutions led by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Oxford Climate Policy and the Legal Response Initiative. Its work includes running a Training and Support Programme (currently funded by the Government of Germany) for junior climate negotiators from developing countries (three regional workshops and one pre-COP workshop). It also provides bursaries to junior women delegates from LDCs to participate in the negotiation sessions.

Promoting gender-responsive climate policy in Malawi

3

In this section, we explore Malawi's experiences promoting gender-responsive climate policy in relation to mitigation, adaptation, technology development and transfer and capacity building. Malawi seeks to align itself with the LDC Group's position under the UNFCCC, which is guided by two overarching commitments:

1. Promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in representation of parties in bodies set up under to the convention, and
2. Ensuring that all climate action is gender responsive.

As party to the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, the government of Malawi has made efforts to implement its COP commitments on gender, including by increasing women's participation. It has also made efforts to go beyond its COP commitments to be gender responsive in other areas of climate action, including in the preparation of its initial national and second national communications, its National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA), its Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) and its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) under the Paris Agreement.

Malawi has also implemented several measures to address the adverse effects and impacts of climate change – including mitigation actions – as evident by:

- Establishing climate change governance and financing structures
- Including climate change within key priority areas of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II), and
- Developing national guidelines for mainstreaming climate change and the environment into sectoral plans and programmes.

3.1 NAPA

Since setting up the LDC Work Programme in 2001, the UNFCCC has attached great importance to including gender considerations in the provision of support to LDCs – for example, the guiding elements for NAPAs include gender equality (Decision 28/CP.7, paragraph 7e); and one of the key principles for addressing adaptation in the Cancun Adaptation Framework is a gender-sensitive approach. As an LDC, Malawi

produced a NAPA in 2006 through a consultative process to address its urgent and immediate adaptation needs. The NAPA documents national circumstances, vulnerabilities and expected impacts from climate change in Malawi. It also identifies and prioritises climate adaptation interventions that will contribute to response actions.

Gender is one of the cross-cutting issues that has been mainstreamed as a component of Malawi's NAPA. It is listed as one of the key sectors to be addressed, alongside agriculture, water, human health, energy, fisheries, wildlife and forestry. So gender is among the short list of priority adaptation options that require urgent attention.

Section 2.8 of Malawi's NAPA recognises that women and girls are disproportionately vulnerable to climate change, as food production decreases and natural resources such as water and firewood become scarce. It states that women and girls bear the majority of the burden activities that are most affected by climate change, including crop production, ensuring daily access to food, collecting water and fetching firewood. The NAPA also states that changing demographics due to HIV and AIDS have given women greater responsibilities as sole household heads.

The NAPA aims to empower women to reduce these burdens and improve their livelihoods through interventions to increase energy security through accelerated tree planting and rural electrification, and increase water security through boreholes and access to microfinance. The NAPA log frame also makes provision for gender-disaggregated data collection and gender monitoring.

3.2 NAMA

In 2013, Malawi made a NAMA submission to the UNFCCC pursuant to Decision 2/CP.17, the outcome of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action. The NAMA aims to contribute to global mitigation efforts by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Malawi's NAMA outlines the country's intention to invest in agriculture, waste management, energy, sustainable forestry and land use practices as well as industrial processes that depend on financial, technological and capacity building support from developed parties. The Malawi NAMA is completely

gender blind, possibly because Decisions 1/CP.13 and 1/CP.16, which outline the guidance for elaborating NAMAs, were also gender blind, so parties were not mandated to integrate gender considerations when developing them.

3.3 INDC

Each party submitted an INDC to outline their intended post-2020 climate actions in anticipation of the finalisation of the Paris Agreement at COP21. Thus far, INDC decisions make no provision for gender integration, but the adaptation interventions identified in the Malawi INDC are meant to enhance gender inclusiveness.

Recognising that gender is a cross-cutting issue, the Malawi INDC promoted gender mainstreaming through identified adaptation actions. Its INDC recognises the role of women in climate action and the challenges they encounter as they implement their triple roles (reproductive, productive and community work). But the INDC also noted that women have limited authority to decide on alternative and climate-resilient solutions for their households. Malawi did not integrate gender in its INDC mitigation options, possibly because of a lack of mandate from UNFCCC decisions calling for gender responsiveness in mitigation actions.

Strengthening the Lima Work Programme in light of LDC experiences

4

The Lima Work Programme has provided a channel for enhanced understanding of the linkages between gender and climate change through the two in-session workshops on gender-responsive climate policy. Over the years, the UNFCCC has enabled the integration of gender considerations in adaptation, finance and capacity building activities. But mitigation and technology transfer and development have yet to embrace gender responsiveness under both the convention and the Paris Agreement.

Another mandate from the Lima Work Programme was to promote the participation of women in UNFCCC bodies. Its reports on gender composition show that progress towards achieving gender balance has been slow (see Table 2).

The record achievement was in 2013, when women constituted 52 per cent of the Consultative Group of Experts in National Communications. The Joint Implementation and Compliance Committees have the highest percentage of women in 2016, at 40 per cent. The CTCN Board has the fewest female members, at 6 per cent.

The LDC Group believes that achieving gender balance and gender responsive climate policies, is possible with additional work by parties, UNFCCC secretariat,

observer organisations, civil society and other UNFCCC stakeholders¹⁰. Extending the Lima work programme could help harness current achievements and build on the work that has already started. There needs to be continuous engagement with parties and groups of parties to encourage them to nominate women to these bodies. There is also a need to focus on leadership capacity building programmes for women, particularly those from LDCs.

The LDC Group also believes that, to achieve notable progress in gender balance and gender-responsive climate policies, there must be an action plan that identifies and prioritises measurable and achievable objectives with monitoring targets and adequate resource allocation. Decision 18/CP.20 “requests the Executive Secretary to appoint a senior gender focal point, who is an expert in this subject matter, to develop and ensure the implementation of, within existing resources, an action plan for the two-year work programme on gender and climate change...” This mandate is yet to be achieved. The LDC Group believes that the next phase of the Lima Work Programme on Gender should focus on developing a gender action plan that builds on lessons learned from the CBD Gender Plan of Action.

Table 2: Percentage of women in UNFCCC bodies

BODY	JUNE 2013	OCTOBER 2014	SEPTEMBER 2015	OCTOBER 2016
Clean Development Mechanism Board	20	20	10	10
Joint Implementation	40	40	40	40
Compliance Committee (facilitative)	11	40	40	40
Compliance Committee (enforcement)	20	10	10	10
Least Developed Countries Expert Group	15	15	15	15
Consultative Group of Experts for National Communications	52	43	33	52
Adaptation Fund Board	31	31	28	25
Adaptation Committee	20	25	25	40
Technology Executive Committee	11	15	25	35
Standing Committee on Finance	25	35	35	32
Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) Board	13	13	6	25
Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage		30	35	30
COP/CMP Bureau	36	27	27	
Subsidiary bodies	33	33	33	

Source: UNFCCC gender composition reports (2013–2016)⁹

CBD Gender Plan of Action

5

Of the three multilateral environmental agreements that resulted from the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the CBD was the first to develop a gender action plan. This plan aimed to promote gender equality in the context of its focus on “the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from commercial and other utilization of genetic resources.”

The CBD secretariat developed the first iteration of its Gender Plan of Action in 2008 (Decision IX/24) in response to increasing global acknowledgement that gender equality is integral to the conservation of biological diversity and UN mandates calling for the advancement of gender equality. The preamble to the CBD text and its general principles for the programme of work on the implementation of article 8(j) both recognise the pivotal role of women.

The Gender Plan of Action has since been updated in a decision that extended its timeline to cover 2015–2020, taking into account the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The updated Gender Plan of Action proposes a number of actions for both parties and the CBD secretariat to achieve the following objectives:

- Mainstream a gender perspective into the implementation of the convention and associated work of parties and the secretariat
- Promote gender equality in achieving the convention’s objectives, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
- Show the benefits of gender mainstreaming relative to the convention’s objectives, and
- Increase the effectiveness of the work under the convention¹¹.

Recommended activities for parties are divided into four spheres, encompassing policy, organisation, delivery and constituency. Outlined activities aim to:

- Increase collaboration and partnerships between national gender machineries and sectors involved in designing and implementing national biodiversity strategies and plans
- Increase political will for mainstreaming gender throughout all biodiversity-related sectoral ministries
- Expand the knowledge base on gender issues including through staff training and awareness raising on the links between gender and biodiversity, including through the dissemination of lessons learned and good practice examples, and
- Increase sectoral collaboration with women’s organisations and women as stakeholders.

These will ensure an exchange of information that accounts for women’s needs and abilities, and that gender machineries consider biodiversity when creating national gender policies/action plans. It will also enable the full and effective participation of women on an equal basis with men in the implementation of the CBD and its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

The CBD Gender Plan of Action can be considered best practice because of the depth and breadth of activities outlined that call for the consideration of women’s needs, constraints and abilities throughout all stages of the design and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and plans. By laying out these objectives, it also ensures extra budgetary resources for them. Carried out effectively, these activities could also overcome the well-documented challenges to gender mainstreaming, including a lack of available data, a lack of staff capacity, limited financial resources and challenges in engaging women.

The Gender Plan of Action also presents an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between the three Rio conventions by raising awareness of gender in the context of sustainability. This highlights the untold value a similar action plan would have for the UNFCCC in bringing women’s needs and abilities to bear in all climate activities under the convention, as well as achieving a level of coherence and breadth of perspective and experience across the three conventions that would make strategies, plans and activities more effective, as countless case studies and best practices showcasing the effectiveness of including women’s knowledge and efforts have proven.

5.1 Malawi’s experience implementing the CBD Gender Action Plan

Finally, we consider Malawi’s experience in implementing the CBD Gender Plan of Action and the potential benefits of a similar action plan under the UNFCCC. Malawi completed the development of its National Biodiversity Strategic Plan of Action in January 2016. Target 15 aims to ensure that awareness and implementation of biodiversity policy and programmes includes a gender perspective: “by 2025, the supply of important ecosystem services is safeguarded and restored, taking into account gender roles and responsibilities of the youth, the poor and the vulnerable.”

In addition to policy-level engagement for gender-responsive policies, parties need to bring action at national and grassroots levels. A study in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda highlights that closing the gender gap is smart economics.¹²

In Malawi, as in most LDCs, women constitute a higher proportion of the agricultural labour force (70 per cent) and perform 50–70 per cent of all agricultural tasks. But despite this integral role in the agricultural sector, women continue to produce significantly less than men due to their limited access to land, labour, knowledge, fertiliser and improved seeds.

The report provides a unique quantification of the costs in terms of growth opportunities and an estimate of what societies, economies and communities could gain if

gender gaps in agriculture were addressed. The gender gap costs Malawi US\$100 million a year. Closing the gender gap in agricultural productivity through measures such as designing national-level policies that directly reduce inequalities in access to labour-saving technologies could increase crop yields by 7.3 per cent a year and GDP by 1.8 per cent, reducing poverty, improving nutrition and boosting the national economy.

The Malawi National Gender Policy, which aims to empower women and attain gender equality, provides for the enhancement of gender mainstreaming in agriculture structures, systems and programmes, natural resource management and environmental and climate change management. This must now be translated through to programme implementation.

BOX 5. MAINSTREAMING GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN THE MALAWI FOREST SECTOR: USAID PERFORM PROJECT

Malawians derive many benefits from the Miombo woodlands, including food, water and fuel. But these woodlands are decreasing at one of the highest rates in southern Africa, due to unsustainable fuel wood and charcoal use, poor agricultural practices, limited economic choices and high population growth.

Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) seeks to help address these issues by focusing on: reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) readiness; low-emissions land use opportunities and planning capacities, sustainability and capacity building; and integration within Malawi's development priorities. Because greenhouse gas emissions are overwhelmingly from the land sector, which is dominated by smallholder farmers, PERFORM also introduces low-emissions alternatives to smallholders.

Given that access, control, perception and use of forest and land resources have significant gender dimensions, integrating gender considerations is a crucial part of PERFORM's work. Gender analysis and planning is a key deliverable under PERFORM to:

- Assess gender aspects relevant to the PERFORM project
- Develop a comprehensive plan for addressing gender issues through project implementation, based on the assessment, and
- Help integrate the PERFORM gender plan in the project's work plan and life of project performance monitoring and evaluation plan.

To ensure effective gender mainstreaming in forest management, PERFORM conducted a gender analysis to identify gender aspects relevant to forest management and planning. The project then used the results of this assessment to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing gender issues through project implementation, which it integrated in the project work plan.

This experience showed that mainstreaming gender perspectives in climate policy and action needs to be appropriate to local contexts and address the different perspectives, roles, rights, needs, priorities and interests of men and women as stakeholders. Other lessons learnt include the importance of:

- Hiring a full-time gender specialist
- Conducting gender mainstreaming and gender sensitivity training, and
- Reviewing and considering existing manuals and toolkits to support all actors in their work.

Looking forward

There has been slow but steady progress in addressing the interlinkages between gender and climate change under UNFCCC. The work under the Convention has evolved from being gender blind at its inception to the launch of the Lima Work Programme on Gender at COP20. The work programme, due for review at COP22 in Marrakech, has made significant strides to advance gender equality mandates across all areas of the climate negotiations.

A potential tool for parties and observers to consider in moving efforts forward is the Gender Plan of Action set up by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Updated for 2015–2020 to reflect the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi biodiversity targets, the plan of action sets out concrete steps for parties and the CBD secretariat to take in advancing gender equality in the design and implementation of biodiversity policies and programmes.

Our recommendations are informed by Malawi's experiences in implementing both the UNFCCC and CBD mandates on advancing gender equality. The country saw a small but notable increase in women's participation in its UNFCCC delegations as a result of implementing the Lima Work Programme and other UNFCCC mandates on gender-responsive climate policy. It also took the needs and abilities of women into account when elaborating its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) and its national biodiversity strategic plan of action. These efforts were underpinned by the results of a study conducted in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda that showed the economic benefits of closing the gender gap.

Despite these positive steps, it remains clear that much work remains to be done, with many women and girls still unable to exercise their right to be agents and beneficiaries of climate action and responses or to participate fully in the shaping of such action and responses. Extending and strengthening the Lima Work Programme on Gender and considering a Gender Plan of Action under the UNFCCC would be concrete steps towards systematically addressing the gender gap as one of the most effective mechanisms for building climate resilience and reducing emissions.

Recommendations for COP22¹³:

- The COP should strengthen the Lima Work Programme on Gender by developing a Gender Plan of Action, learning from the CBD, to provide focused strategic guidance for advancing gender balance and equality, women's empowerment, and gender-responsive climate policy under the UNFCCC.
- The Gender Plan of Action should include a dedicated platform for parties and observers to share experiences and exchange ideas, best practices and lessons learnt, including to enhance the monitoring and review of the Convention's work on gender.
- Parties, observers and the UNFCCC secretariat should continue to support capacity building activities, including awareness raising on gender equality and climate change and training for LDC women delegates at regional levels.
- Further efforts to raise parties' awareness on gender equality and climate change should include convening a series of regional workshops and producing technical papers.
- Parties should increase efforts to integrate the gender perspective into discussions and decisions on adaptation, mitigation, finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity building under the Convention, in order to ensure parties' efforts to implement decisions are not gender-blind.

Acronyms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
CMP	Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
INDC	intended nationally determined contribution
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Technological and Scientific Advice
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WDF	Women Delegates Fund
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organisation

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Endnotes

- 1 The workshop report is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2015/12.
- 2 The workshop report is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2016/10.
- 3 See FCCC/SBI/2015/L.31 and FCCC/SBI/2016/L.16
- 4 See FCCC/CP/2016/4.
- 5 See http://unfccc.int/files/bodies/election_and_membership/application/pdf/membership_chart.pdf
- 6 See Government of Malawi COP reports, 2011-2015
- 7 Women's Environment and Development Organisation (2014) Women Delegates Fund: Ensuring women's access and influence on climate change policy
- 8 See <http://www.eurocapacity.org/homepage.shtml>
- 9 UNFCCC reports on gender composition, 2013–2016.
- 10 See http://www4.unfccc.int/Submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/588_278_131170866262327547-LDC%20submission_Lima%20Work%20Programme%20on%20Gender.pdf
- 11 See CBD decision UNEP/CBD/COP/DEC/XII/7
- 12 UN Women, UNDP, UNEP and World Bank Group (2015)
- 13 See http://www4.unfccc.int/Submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/588_278_131170866262327547-LDC%20submission_Lima%20Work%20Programme%20on%20Gender.pdf

The two-year Lima Work Programme on Gender launched at COP20 aimed to advance gender equality mandates across all areas of the UN climate negotiations. It is due to be reviewed at COP22 in Marrakech, presenting an opportunity for parties and observers to further strengthen and advance gender equality under the UNFCCC. This paper explores how the UNFCCC could learn from another multilateral environment agreement – the Convention on Biological Diversity’s (CBD) – and its Gender Plan of Action. Our recommendations are informed by Malawi’s experiences in implementing both the UNFCCC and CBD mandates on advancing gender equality.

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