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**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (GEAP)**

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BACKGROUND ON THE GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (GEAP)

1. The Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) was approved at the 47th GEF Council in November 2014.¹ Following this decision, the GEF Secretariat has taken steps to implement the actions as agreed and outlined in the GEAP.
2. Responding to the GEF-6 Policy Recommendation, the GEAP was developed in close collaboration and consultation with the GEF Agencies, Secretariats of the relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), and other experts to enhance coherence through implementation of concrete actions on gender mainstreaming at both the corporate and focal area levels.
3. The GEAP provides a concrete road map to implement the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming,² while building on the existing and planned gender strategies and plans of the GEF Agencies. The goal of the GEAP is to operationalize the mainstreaming of gender in GEF policy and programming to advance both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equality and social inclusion.
4. This initial GEAP is intended to serve during the GEF-6 period, from fiscal years 2015 to 2018 (FY15-18). The GEAP also includes a work plan with key actions/outputs with a timeline. It proposes a step-wise approach in achieving the goals and objectives of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, ensuring that project results and progress related to gender equality and women's empowerment can be better designed, implemented, and reported.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE KEY ACTIONS

5. The GEF Secretariat, in coordination with the GEF Agencies and other partners, has implemented the agreed actions for FY15 as planned. Annex 1 provides a status note on each planned action. The description below highlights some of the actions undertaken during the past 6 months.

Capacity Development

6. The GEF Secretariat is committed to enhance staff capacity and ability to mainstream gender. The secretariat has created a gender anchor function with gender specific expertise to coordinate implementation of the GEAP. Under the leadership and commitment of the GEF management on gender and social issues, a Gender and Social Issues core team has been created in the GEF Secretariat, consisting of staff from different units and supported by the newly recruited gender expert. This team will coordinate and facilitate a timely and sound implementation of the GEAP with a focus on building GEF staff capacity to better incorporate and address gender dimensions in their respective area of responsibility. A capacity and needs survey is being developed to assess GEF Secretariat staff capacity in mainstreaming gender. This survey will also inform GEF management on important staff training and learning needs.

¹ GEF, Gender Equality Action Plan, GEF/C.47/09.Rev.01, October 2014

² GEF, GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1, May 2011

7. After a thorough selection process, the GEF Secretariat has hired a highly qualified gender expert, as an extended term consultant, to provide technical advice to GEF management and on-going support to GEF staff to ensure gender sensitive programming, policies, and project cycle management procedures. The consultant is also expected to advise GEF management on longer term internal capacity and operational needs, and enabling institutional structures for gender mainstreaming.

8. The GEF Secretariat will continue to work in partnership in implementing the GEAP by engaging the GEF Agencies, related Multilateral Environment Agreements, civil society organizations, and other partners. Recognizing that each GEF Agency has different expertise and approach to gender mainstreaming, the Secretariat is establishing an Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender (IAWG), comprising of gender focal points from each GEF Agency and key partners. The Terms of Reference for the IAWG is under development, and it is envisaged that the IAWG will serve as platform to ensure effective consultations, coordination and implementation of the GEAP. The IAWG will also provide opportunities for building synergies, sharing of lessons learned, best practices and tools.

9. The GEF Council also stressed the need to better reach out to the GEF Operational Focal Points, Convention Focal Points, and other partners on the ground in implementing the GEAP. The GEF Secretariat has utilized the existing mechanisms, including the Extended Constituency Workshops (ECWs) at the sub-regional level and National Dialogue Initiatives at the country level to introduce and raise awareness on the GEF policy and action plan on gender equality, and promote their application to GEF projects. A specific session on gender mainstreaming was included in the workshop agendas and delivered by the GEF Secretariat staff. So far, a total of eight ECWs have been organized with over 380 participants, and several more are planned during this calendar year. These sessions have stimulated active discussions on the issue, and generated strong interest and support to mainstreaming gender in GEF projects.

Programming and Policy

10. The GEAP commits the GEF to strengthen gender considerations in all programs and projects. As part of the objective on the Gender and social issues work stream, the core team is will work in close collaboration with Staff and provide tools and on-going technical advice to GEFSEC staff to strengthen gender equality and women empowerment aspects in programming and policy processes and procedures. Efforts will also be placed on key programs and projects that could generate significant results for gender equality and women's empowerment to contribute to achieving the goals of global environment benefits.

Results Based Management (RBM)

11. The GEAP recognizes the importance of a gender sensitive Result Based Management framework. Through the implementation of the RBM Action Plan, work is ongoing to strengthen the monitoring and reporting on the GEF-6 core gender indicators (agreed under the GEAP) as part of the GEF-6 Results Framework, using tracking tools to monitor progress.

12. As part of the Annual Monitoring Review FY15, the GEF Secretariat has conducted a gender review of the project portfolio, which covered 102 projects across focal areas. The review

analyzed whether GEF projects have: addressed gender equality and women's empowerment issues; incorporated gender responsive project results framework (including objective, outcome, output, and/or indicators); and applied gender responsive approaches and tools. Among the FY15 project cohort, 56 percent reported on gender specific information. The share of projects reporting on gender issues has increased steadily during the past years, Detail results of the analysis is reported in the AMR FY15 Part II paper, which is presented at this GEF Council.

Knowledge Management and Communication

13. The GEF CEO and senior staff have participated and shared experiences/lessons related to gender mainstreaming in GEF projects at several prominent international conferences and events. This included the CEO's participation at the High level Session on Gender at the UN Conference on Disaster Risk Management in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015, where she presented GEF's work in empowering and enhancing capacity of women's groups for disaster risk control and adaptation to climate change. At the Green Climate Fund Gender-Responsive Indicator Workshop, GEF senior staff presented and shared experiences in applying gender responsive indicators in GEF programs and projects. On the occasion of the International Women's Day, the GEF Secretariat also featured its work related to gender equality and women's empowerment through the GEF website and social media.

Project Cycle

14. The GEF Secretariat, in coordination with the GEF Agencies, has reviewed and updated the GEF-6 project templates and guidelines, and incorporated a specific section in the templates to describe gender considerations, including approaches and plans to address gender equality and women's empowerment through GEF projects. Specifically, the templates for the Project Implementation Form (PIF), Program Framework Document (PFD), and the CEO Endorsement Request have been updated. These project templates are recognized as one of the key tools to enable gender responsive project design and implementation of GEF projects.

FUTURE REPORTING ON THE PROGRESS

15. The GEF Secretariat will continue to provide updates on the progress made on the implementation of the GEAP on an annual basis through an information paper to the GEF Council at the spring meetings.

ANNEX: IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

Key Elements	Actions (Outputs)	Status	F Y 1 5	F Y 1 6	F Y 1 7	F Y 1 8
Project Cycle	Develop a Guideline Paper on Mainstreaming Gender in GEF Project Cycle (particularly in relation to the implementation and monitoring of the actions identified under the gender core indicators (e.g. gender analysis, gender responsive project framework, etc.) ³ .	Review and compilation of related policies and practices of the GEF Agencies are ongoing to prepare the draft guideline paper together with the Gender Inter-Agency Working Group.				
	Review and update GEF Project Templates and Guidelines (includes project documents, monitoring and evaluation reports, etc.) that incorporate and clarify specific section on gender mainstreaming	Completed updating the Project Templates for the PIF, PFD, and CEO Endorsement Request that incorporate specific section on gender.				
Program/Policy	Incorporate and strengthen gender elements in key GEF programs and projects, including Integrated Approach Pilots and Small Grants Programme	The IAPs and SGP have incorporated strategy and approach on gender issues. The plans and approach will be further specified under the child projects of each IAP.				
	Support gender responsive projects, based on country demand and in line with GEF-6 strategy	Gender responsive project designs have been considered for the PIFs in the June 2015 Work Program.				
	Mainstream gender in key strategic GEF Council Documents, including relevant policies and guidelines, and review and, as necessary, update the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.	Review of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming will be considered together with the Safeguards Policy after their evaluation.				
Knowledge Management	GEF Knowledge Management Strategy/Action Plan and Gender Equality Action Plan are cross-referenced to effectively generate knowledge on gender and global environment	This work will be implemented in FY16. Consultation between the Gender and KM teams are ongoing to incorporate gender elements in the KM Action Plan.				
	Develop an interactive gender equality webpage on the GEF website, with link to relevant GEF Agencies and partners sites to facilitate exchange of good practices, approaches, and tools (including online training tools, webinars, etc.)	This work will be undertaken in FY16 and onwards as planned, once the focus on KM approach and products are clarified.				

³ For the development of the guideline paper, actions could include mapping of existing standards and practices of the GEF Agencies; and identifying existing guidance and tools for gender marker/screening, gender analysis, gender-responsive project framework, and others that can be used by GEF projects.)

	Develop analytical products on thematic issues (e.g. gender and protected areas management, gender and renewable energy, etc.), aligned with the gender learning questions to be identified under each focal area and their results framework. .	This work will be undertaken in FY16 and onwards as planned.				
Results-based Management (RBM)	Report on the annual progress on the implementation of the GEAP, based on agreed RBM strategy.	The AMR FY15 has incorporated gender analysis of the project portfolio. In addition, this Council information paper serves as an annual progress report on the implementation of the GEAP.				
	Monitor and report on the GEF-6 core gender indicators at the corporate level	Discussion is ongoing to incorporate and track the gender core indicators together with the other focal area indicators as part of the GEF-6 results framework. Monitoring and reporting on the Gender Core Indicators will start from FY 16 as planned.				
	Review and identify gender-responsive focal area indicators, which to be cross-referenced in the RBM strategy.	The work has just started and will report on the progress in FY16.				
	Develop a guidance note and list of gender-responsive indicators that are relevant for GEF projects under different focal areas.	This work will be conducted in FY16 as planned.				
	Evaluate gender equality results of GEF projects (e.g. terminal evaluation, thematic and country evaluation)	The IEO in the SEAR June 2015 reports on two evaluations that include gender dimensions: The joint GEF-UNDP Evaluation of the SGP and the LDCF/SCC Annual Evaluation Report 2014. The terminal evaluation guidelines are currently being reviewed, and will include gender dimensions.				
	Develop detailed implementation work plan and budget for implementing the Gender Equality Action Plan, and update it as needed	Work plan and budget has been drafted, and will be discussed with the Gender Inter-Agency Working Group before finalization.				
Capacity Development	Enhance staff capacity and expertise at the GEF Secretariat by creating a gender anchor with gender specific expertise to oversee coordination to implement the GEAP, in addition to having gender focal points from relevant teams within the GEF Secretariat.	Gender expert has been hired through a thorough recruitment process. Gender and Social Issues work stream has been established under the GEF Policy, Partnership, and Operation Unit.				

	Establish and clarify accountability structure and appropriate incentive system on gender equality among GEF Secretariat management and staff	Internal gender capacity assessment is ongoing, and initial structure has been developed.				
	Establish an Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender (note: it will be functional throughout FY15-18)	Draft ToR of the Inter-Agency Working Group has been prepared, and will be finalized with the GEF Agencies and partners to formally establish the IAWG.				
	Conduct capacity-need assessment and provide training opportunities for GEF Secretariat staff on issues related to gender equality	This work is planned under FY16 and onwards, based on internal capacity assessment at the GEF Secretariat.				
	Provide support and guidance on the implementation of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming to the GEF Operational Focal Points and other partners	Total of more than 380 GEF Operational Focal Points, Conventions' Focal Points, and CSO representatives have been informed and provided hands-on guidance a Gender Mainstreaming session of the Extended Constituency Workshops (ECWs), National Dialogue Initiatives (NDIs).				