

Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF





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Foreword

Gender relations, between women and men, and girls and boys, play a key role in the access to and control over environmental resources and the goods and services that they provide. Accounting for gender dimensions is an important consideration when running projects that address global environmental issues. To be successful, projects must recognize women's roles as primary land and resource managers, and weigh the different ways women and men consider conservation incentives.

The GEF has a long history of investing in local actions to achieve global environmental objectives. Today, we have an even deeper understanding of the relationships among household welfare, women's equality and environmental sustainability. Mainstreaming gender in the six focal areas of the GEF - biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, persistent organic pollutants, and ozone depletion - presents opportunities for further enhancing project value as well as advancing gender equality. This new publication reflects the GEF's renewed commitment to highlight the link between gender equality and environmental sustainability. It provides an account and a first analysis of the scope, content and depth of gender mainstreaming in GEF projects.

We recognize that gender mainstreaming is good for projects, good for gender equality and good for achieving GEF goals. To that end, we have adopted, since the early days of GEF, a public participation policy that has provisions to ensure both women's and men's involvement in GEF projects. The GEF Agencies have also developed their own gender

policies and strategies, which are applied to our projects. Through the project portfolio review, we found that about 40 percent of our projects that were reviewed included some kind of gender mainstreaming action. Of that total, about 20 percent involved components, outcomes, or activities that specifically target women, and in some cases men, to adequately address the gender dimension.

These results are encouraging, but clearly there is more work to be done. This publication is an important step forward to recognize some of our successes and challenges, and to strengthen our approach in the future. It is our hope that this document will trigger discussion and feedback from the public and private sectors as well as civil society to build on the successes we celebrated and the lessons we learned.

Moving forward, we are eager to work with the GEF agencies and other partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming through a more systematic approach to our programming that incorporates this issue. There are many ways to do this, and we welcome further dialogue that will help us find the best path forward.



Monique Barbut
CEO and Chairperson





About the GEF

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), which was established in 1991, is an independent financial mechanism that provides grants to developing countries for projects that benefit the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods in local communities. GEF grants support to projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants.

The GEF is the financial mechanism for implementation of the international conventions on biodiversity, climate change and persistent organic pollutants. The GEF is also a financial mechanism for the Convention to Combat Desertification and collaborates closely with other treaties and agreements. The GEF works closely with Convention Secretariats, Implementing Agencies, Executing Agencies, the private sector and civil society.

The GEF unites 178 member governments – in partnership with international institutions, nongovernmental organizations, indigenous and local communities, and the private sector – to address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives. In just 16 years, the GEF has evolved into an effective and transparent entity with a solid, outcomes-driven track record. As the largest funder of projects to improve the global environment, the GEF has allocated \$7.65 billion, supplemented by more than \$30.6 billion in co-financing, for more than 2,025 projects in more than 165 developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Through its Small Grants Programme, the GEF has also made more than 9,000 small grants directly to nongovernmental and community organizations, including women's groups.

GEF projects are implemented by one or more of the ten designated GEF Agencies: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Why Gender Mainstreaming Matters for GEF

In much of the world, women and men exhibit distinct differences in their perspectives and priorities concerning environmental quality, natural resource use, and access to energy services. Literature and studies on this topic recognize that failure to understand and address gender dimensions within environmental projects risks wasted development resources and negative effects on household welfare, women's equality, and environmental sustainability. Moreover, various studies, including an evaluation of gender conducted by the World Bank¹, find that project results are superior when gender considerations are integrated into the design and implementation of projects. For GEF projects to effectively achieve their desired objectives, project interventions should account for gender differences in how resources are used and managed, women's roles as primary land and resource manager, differing conservation incentives faced by women and men, and other gender-related issues.

The relevance of gender to environmental issues has been discussed since the early 1970s, when the growing debate on environmental issues intersected with the emergence of studies on women's roles

The GEF recognizes that, for its project interventions to achieve their global environmental objectives, particular attention should be paid to enhancing both women's and men's contributions.

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in development. In the context of environmental issues, a key difference in terms of gender relates to the access to, and control over, environmental resources and the goods and services that they provide. The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992) and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) made explicit references to the need to design environmental programs with a gender focus, in order to increase women's access to and control over resources, as well as improve the effectiveness of such projects. Social interactions according to gender and the relative status of men vs. women, class, and ethnicity all influence natural resource rights, control, and ownership, as well as who has the power and a voice in decision-making. These factors all have a critical impact on the success and sustainability of any development and environment intervention.

The Rio Conventions - namely the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the UN Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) - for which the GEF serves as financial mechanism also recognize the important linkage between gender-related issues and achievement of the Conventions' goals and objectives. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) emphasize the clear linkages between gender equality, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development. Not only is the third goal, "Promote gender equality and empower women," specifically targeted toward gender, it has been recognized that gender issues will play a key role in the effective achievement of the other seven goals, including the seventh goal, "Ensure environmental sustainability," for which the GEF plays a key role.

The GEF recognizes that, for its project interventions to achieve their global environmental objectives, particular attention should be paid

to enhancing both women's and men's contributions and taking into account their different needs, roles, and situations in every step of the project cycle, including project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

This publication provides an account and a first analysis of the scope, content, and depth of gender mainstreaming in GEF projects, and offers future directions to strengthen this approach. Prepared for both internal and external audiences, this analysis is intended not only to present GEF's work on gender and its status, but also to raise further awareness on the linkages between gender dimensions and the work of GEF, in order to stimulate discussion and invite feedback and guidance from all sectors.²

What is Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality?

Gender mainstreaming³ has been the primary methodology for integrating a gender approach into environment and development efforts. In practice, gender mainstreaming means being deliberate in giving visibility and support to both women's and men's contributions individually, rather than assuming that both groups will benefit equally from gender-neutral development interventions. Policies and programs that ignore the differential impact on gender groups are often gender-blind and potentially harmful for human development. Within a project context, gender mainstreaming commonly includes identifying gaps in equality through the use of sex-disaggregated data, developing strategies and policies to close those gaps, devoting resources and expertise for implementing such strategies, monitoring the results of implemen-

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tation, and holding individuals and institutions accountable for outcomes that promote gender equality.

Gender equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but rather implies equal treatment of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society at large.⁴ To achieve this goal, a two-pronged approach of gender mainstreaming is often required: 1) systematically analyzing and addressing in all initiatives the specific needs of both women and men; and 2) targeted interventions to enable women and men to participate in – and benefit equally from – development efforts. A full understanding of gender roles within a society, and consideration of women's and men's specific interests, needs, and priorities is necessary to achieve and sustain the goals of any project. Gender equality is not solely a women's issue; in fact, it seeks to tailor activities to the beneficiaries of the project from both sexes. Gender equality serves to the advantage of both men and women and cannot be achieved without the full engagement of both.⁵

¹ World Bank, 2002, *The Gender Dimensions of Bank Assistance*, Washington, DC.

² Much of the information in this section is extracted from: UNDP, 2007, *Gender Mainstreaming: Key Driver of Development in Environment & Energy – Conceptual Overview*, New York.

³ Gender mainstreaming is defined by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as: "...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality."

⁴ WHO, 2001, *Transforming health systems: gender and rights in reproductive health*, Geneva.

⁵ UNDP, 2007, *Gender Mainstreaming: Key Driver of Development in Environment & Energy – Conceptual Overview*, New York; and UNDP, 2008, *Gender Equality Strategy 2008-2011*, New York.





Within each of GEF's six focal areas – biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, persistent organic pollutants, and ozone depletion – gender mainstreaming offers opportunities to enhance project value as well as advance gender equality. The linkages between gender issues and the focal areas presented below are not intended to provide comprehensive coverage of all the possible connections. Rather, they offer examples and highlights from the review of GEF projects in which gender dimensions have been actively incorporated, and identify the potential link for increasing project quality and performance standards under each focal area.

Biodiversity

Gender relations play a key role in the access to and use of biological resources, as well as their management within protected areas and in production landscapes. For example, women and men often have different knowledge about, and preferences for, plants and animals. Women's roles in seed selection, seed saving, and use of wild plants for food and medicines play a major role in biodiversity conservation. Creation of protected areas often causes conflict, as women in particular could face challenges in performing daily tasks such as collecting wood and other non-timber products within the protected area, unless alternative options are provided. Many case studies from around the world have also demonstrated that biodiversity conservation efforts become more effective and efficient when women and vulnerable groups are empowered to participate as equal partners

in information sharing and generation, education and training, technology transfer, organizational development, financial assistance, and policy development.

Climate Change

Climate change affects both women and men, sometimes in very different ways. For instance, increases in temperature-related illnesses, increased scarcity of water resources, and forced population migration due to climate change could have a different burden on women and men, and girls and boys. Moreover, because women and men use energy differently, the introduction of renewable energy and energy-efficient services has different impacts on their daily lives. For example, introduction of efficient cooking stoves that reduce greenhouse gas emissions could also potentially reduce the work load



and health hazards for women and girls, while providing them with alternative income-generation opportunities. Increased transportation services that use renewable energy sources could give women access to more commercial, social, and political opportunities. In addition, the introduction of clean energy sources, such as photovoltaics, in rural areas could provide much-needed electricity while also enabling the introduction of information and communication technologies, which are critical tools for women's education, empowerment, economic productivity, and participation in markets.⁶

Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management

As pastoralists and agriculturists, women are disproportionately affected by land degradation. Women farmers are responsible for 60–80 percent of the developing world's food production. In many countries, they are the primary income producers, earning their livelihoods mainly from agriculture and other land-based activities. Land degradation adds to the pressure on both women and men to support their families under increasingly difficult physical, social, and economic conditions. Physically, women, as bearers of children, are more vulnerable to lack of food or water. In social, economic, and political contexts, women's status and busy schedules with household and field work often lead to marginalization of their concerns. Women are also most directly impacted by public decisions, laws, and planning related to land management. Studies have shown that involving both women and men in participatory land management promotes increased sustainable land use, reversal of desertification, and improved socio-economic conditions. Involving women in the design and implemen-

tation of programs and projects aimed at promoting sustainable land management is crucial, as in many cases women are the principal day-to-day decision-makers who determine land-management practices.⁷

International Waters

In most societies, women have primary responsibility for management of the household water supply. Water is necessary not only for drinking, but also for food production and preparation, care of domestic animals, personal hygiene, cleaning, washing, and waste disposal. Women and men often have different knowledge about water resources, including location, quality, and storage methods depending on the type of water use. However, efforts geared toward improving the management of the world's finite water resources often overlook the central role of women in water management. The development and harmonization of supportive policy and legislative frameworks and institutional capacity building is at the heart of the GEF's international waters portfolio approach for the improved management of transboundary waters. To ensure that the gender perspective is successfully incorporated into international water regime, policy, and activities, it is vital to advocate for the direct involvement of both women and men.⁸

POPs, Ozone Depletion, and Sustainable Chemicals Management

Efforts to ensure sound management of chemicals, including Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and ozone-depleting substances, have important gender dimensions. In daily life, men, women, and

children are exposed to different kinds of chemicals in varying concentrations. Biological factors — notably size and physiological differences between women and men and between adults and children — influence susceptibility to health damage from exposure to toxic chemicals. Social factors, primarily gender-determined occupational roles, also have an impact on the level and frequency of exposure to toxic chemicals, the kinds of chemicals encountered, and the resulting impacts on human health. These gender dimensions need to be reflected at both site- and policy-level interventions for sound chemical management.⁹

⁶ UNDP, 2007, Gender Mainstreaming – Key Driver of Development in Environment and Energy – Sustainable Energy Services.

⁷ UNDP, 2007, Gender Mainstreaming – Key Driver of Development in Environment & Energy: Sustainable Land Management

⁸ Inter-agency Task Force on Gender and Water (GWTF), 2006, Gender, Water, and Sanitation: A Policy Brief.

⁹ UNDP, 2007, Gender Mainstreaming – Key Driver of Development in Environment & Energy: Chemical Management.





GEF Policies Related to Gender

The GEF was one of the few international financial institutions to develop early-on an independent public participation policy, which includes provisions on gender issues. The policy, which was laid out in the document *Public Involvement in GEF-financed Projects*, approved by the GEF Council in April 1996, is the key GEF policy that relates specifically to social issues, including gender, and provides the basis for public involvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation of GEF-financed projects. It applies to all GEF focal areas programs and projects; spells out the rationale, terms, and principles for public involvement; and solidifies the operational requirement for stakeholder involvement and partnership in the design, implementation, and evaluation of GEF-financed activities. Upon approving the policy, the GEF Council stressed that, when applying the principles, there should be emphasis on local participation and local stakeholders, and specific national and local conditions should be taken into consideration. The document recognizes the need for developing strategies that incorporate stakeholder participation throughout the project cycle, especially for projects that impact the incomes and livelihoods of local groups, with particular attention to involving women in the design and implementation of GEF projects.

In addition, the GEF Operational Strategy¹⁰ provides ten operational principles and overall direction to the GEF focal areas to maximize global environmental benefits. Principle 7 relates directly to public participation, including gender, and states that “GEF projects shall

provide for full consultation with, and participation as appropriate of, the beneficiaries and affected groups of people.” The GEF Operational Programs, which guided programs under each focal area until 2007, also contained more specific details on the integration of stakeholder consultation and participation in GEF projects, where appropriate. Some of the biodiversity operational programs, including agriculture biodiversity, specifically recognized the role of gender in GEF activities.¹¹

In 2003, the GEF adopted and developed a Focal Area Strategy for each of the six focal areas and two cross-cutting areas (sustainable forest management and sound chemical management), to enable a focused and targeted approach that directs effective use of GEF resources. The Focal Area Strategies for biodiversity, POPs, and sustainable chemical management all highlight the importance of wider stakeholder involvement, however, the strategies are generally gender-blind with no specific reference to the linkage between gender dimensions and the focal areas. Recently, the International Waters focal area has initiated a dialogue with the Water Gender Alliance, and developed a tool to conduct a gender audit during the project preparation phase, to determine the relevance and lead to incorporating appropriate gender sensitive elements where needed in each project.

The GEF project cycle sets out the various steps that projects should progress through to obtain financial support from the GEF, including project review criteria and considerations. The initial project cycle policy and regulations were set out in 1995 and

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revised in 2000, 2003, and 2007. Initially, the social considerations and criteria were relatively broad, requesting that specific tools such as social assessment be applied in defining the roles of stakeholders, including consideration of gender dimensions. With the revisions in early 2000, the social considerations and criteria for GEF projects were more narrowly defined as stakeholder involvement, including descriptions of how stakeholders were involved in project development, including marginal groups.¹² The recently revised project cycle from 2007 has further simplified the review criteria to focus on GEF-specific criteria, such as global environment benefit. There is no specific GEF social consideration or criteria, under the assumption that all GEF Agencies have their own social and gender policies and strategies and rigorous internal screening and review processes to ensure their adequate application to GEF projects.

GEF monitoring and evaluation reports¹³ do not include a specific section to report on progress and results related to gender elements of the project, unless these were specifically included in the project results framework as a project outcome, output, or indicator. Sections on stakeholder involvement and sustainability have been used to report on broad issues of stakeholder participation, including gender issues.¹⁴

GEF Agencies' Policies Related to Gender

The GEF project design and implementation process also complies with the GEF Agencies' policies and procedures. All GEF Agencies have their own policies and strategies on gender mainstreaming and promoting gender equality in the context of project interventions, and these apply for GEF projects as well.

In recent years, following the UN's mandate on gender equality and other international agreements, many of the GEF Agencies have revised and strengthened their approach to gender issues in their operations, by developing Gender Plans of Action and gender-related strategies. Many of these GEF Agencies, including UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank, have also conducted internal reviews and assessments on gender mainstreaming.¹⁵ These assessments all concluded that, although some improvements had been made, generally the application of gender-related strategies remains weak, with mixed track records, particularly in the environment and energy sectors. Recognizing that each GEF Agency has a different gender policy and/or strategy, with varying application to GEF projects, the GEF is reviewing and drawing lessons from its past approach on gender mainstreaming, in order to more effectively address the related issues and opportunities. (See Annex 1 for more information on the gender policies and strategies of each GEF Agency.)

Related Conventions' Approach to Gender

The GEF is the financial mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and a financial mechanism for the UN Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD).

The UNFCCC does not mention either a gender perspective or women and men as specific stakeholders in the convention. The preamble to the CBD recognizes the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and

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affirms the need for full participation of women at all levels of policy-making and implementation of biodiversity conservation efforts. The UNCCD goes further in gender mainstreaming, by not only recognizing the role of women in rural livelihoods but also explicitly encouraging the equal participation of women and men in the convention.

The Conference of the Parties (COP) for each convention determines the policy, strategic direction, program priorities, and eligibility criteria for access to and utilization of financial resources available through the financial mechanism. In agreeing to act as financial mechanism to the conventions, the GEF strategy conforms to guidance provided to it by the COPs. The first guidance to the GEF related to gender was made at the CBD COP9 in May 2008, which requested the GEF to include gender, indigenous peoples and local community perspectives in the financing of biodiversity and its associated ecosystem services.¹⁶ (See Annex 2 for more information on the gender mainstreaming approaches of the related conventions.)

¹⁰ GEF, 2004, GEF Operational Strategy, Washington, DC.

¹¹ These operational policies are no longer effective, as of 2007.

¹² Page 23, GEF Evaluation Office, 2006, Local Benefit Study, Washington, DC.

¹³ GEF Project Implementation Review (annual monitoring report) and GEF Terminal Evaluation Report (final evaluation of the project when project implementation is completed).

¹⁴ UNEP's GEF PIR template specifically asks about relevant gender elements under the stakeholder involvement section.

¹⁵ UNDP, 2006, Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP, New York; and The World Bank, 2002, The Gender Dimensions of Bank Assistance: An evaluation of Results, Washington, DC.

¹⁶ CBD COP9 Decision IX/11, Review of implementation of Articles 20 and 21, A) In-depth review of the availability of financial resources.





SECTION 4 Portfolio Review and Analysis

The following section assesses the nature and extent of gender mainstreaming within a portfolio of recent GEF projects. The projects selected for this portfolio review were drawn from a list of all active GEF projects that were approved and implemented during the period of 2003-06. A total of 172 projects were analyzed, covering all GEF focal areas, including biodiversity (74 projects), climate change (36), land degradation (10), international waters (23), POPs (4), ozone depletion (2), and multi-focal area projects (23).¹⁷ The portfolio review was conducted using a methodology that has been used by similar gender analyses completed by other international organizations, particularly by the World Bank. (See Annex 3 for more detail on the methodology.)

Table 1: Results of the Project Review based on Six Gender Mainstreaming Criteria/Actions

Focal Areas	Number of Projects	Gender Keywords	Gender Analysis	Consultation	Project Objective	Project Component and Activities	M&E, Including Indicators	Budget for Gender Activities
Biodiversity	74	44	17	11	0	24	15	8
Climate Change	36	8	1	2	1	2	1	1
International Waters	23	6	3	4	0	3	1	2
Land Degradation	10	5	3	2	0	2	2	1
POPs	4	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
Ozone	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi-focal Area	23	12	7	8	0	5	4	0
Total	172	78 (45%)	31 (18%)	29 (17%)	1(0.6%)	36 (21%)	23 (13%)	12 (7%)

¹⁷ The list of projects, including results of the analysis, is posted on the GEF website (www.thegef.org).



SECTION 4: PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The findings and lessons can be considered indicative, as the portfolio projects were limited by targeting a specific period of GEF operation. The portfolio analysis shows that about 45 percent of the GEF projects included some gender related keywords, and 40 percent of the GEF projects (68 projects out of 172 projects) included some kind of gender mainstreaming actions. About 18 percent of the projects conducted gender analysis to design relevant project interventions. Moreover, 21 percent of the projects involved project activities, outcomes, and/or components that specifically target women, and in some cases men, to adequately address the gender dimension. While there were several GEF projects with strong gender elements, gender mainstreaming in GEF projects was generally found to be limited, compared to similar thematic analysis conducted by other organizations.¹⁸

Findings by Gender Mainstreaming Actions

Social Assessment and Gender Analysis

Gender analysis is often considered as a basic entry point of any gender mainstreaming exercise, as it reveals the connections between gender relations and the environmental problem to be solved under the project. In the case of the GEF projects reviewed, only 18 percent of the portfolio (31 projects) conducted or planned some kind of gender analysis during project preparation and/or implementation. For almost all of these 31 projects (with two exceptions), this gender analysis led to the development of additional gender-related actions, including gender-related project components, outputs, activities, or indicators.

Gender analysis can vary in content and scope. In most of these projects, gender analysis was conducted as part of the social assessment or social analysis, though there were a few projects where gender analysis was conducted as a separate stand-alone activity during project preparation or at the inception of the project implementation. This figure is particularly low compared to the results of a similar study done by the World Bank of its LAC Environment and Social Development Department's project portfolio, in which about 60 percent of the projects conducted gender analysis.¹⁹

Stakeholder Consultation

About 17 percent of the GEF projects that were analyzed (29 out of 172 projects) specified women as one of the many groups of stakeholders and beneficiaries that the project will or has consulted for project development and implementation. Most often, there was no detail on whom among the women (i.e. farmers, managers, etc.) were consulted or what issues were addressed by the consultation. However, some projects specifically consulted women's NGOs or unions to reflect their interests and needs in the project design, particularly in biodiversity, international waters, and land degradation focal areas projects. A few projects went into detail on their consultation with women. For example, the *Peru Protected Areas Management Project* described in detail their consultation with both the women farmers who reside around the protected areas and women protected areas staff on their different interests and needs in project design.

Project Objective

It is not surprising that only one project within the GEF portfolio reviewed included gender as part of the project objective statement. The objectives of GEF projects are usually linked to attaining global environmental benefits, which is the mandate of GEF. Gender mainstreaming is often an important tool or approach to attain this objective, but not necessarily the key objective of the project. For the single case that included gender in the objective statement, the *Renewable Energy Project* in Ethiopia, the project addressed greenhouse gas emission reduction through improved cook stoves. The project objective statement included that it would improve quality of life, especially for rural women.

Project Component and Activities

About 21 percent of the GEF projects reviewed (36 out of 172 projects) involved project activities, outcomes, and/or components that specifically target women, and in some cases men, to adequately address the gender dimension. It is important to note that, among the GEF projects that developed gender-related components and activities, about half of the biodiversity projects (10 out of 24 projects) did not conduct gender analysis before designing them. Gender activities without prior appropriate assessment and analysis could be misleading, since gender issues have not necessarily been clearly identified under the specific context. For the other focal areas, most of the projects (eight out of 11 projects) conducted some kind of gender analysis before designing gender-related components and activities.



Monitoring and Evaluation

Only about 13 percent of the GEF projects included gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation processes, including use of gender-disaggregated performance indicators and/or gender consideration in monitoring and evaluation exercises. Among the projects reviewed, 20 percent of the biodiversity portfolio and 17 percent of the multi-focal areas projects (most of which focused on natural resource use and ecosystem management) included gender-disaggregated indicators. In addition, several of the biodiversity projects also included women's NGO or union representatives as part of the Steering Committee to monitor progress of project implementation.

Budget for Gender-related Activities

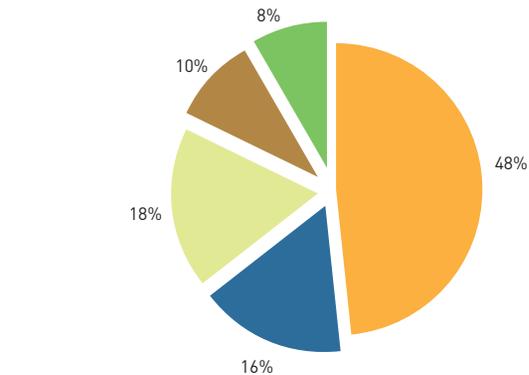
Given that gender-related activities are often imbedded in a larger project component, with the amount allocated to gender unspecified, the exact budget allocated to gender-related activities was impossible to determine. Three projects budgeted a Gender Specialist or Social Specialist position within the project to implement gender-related activities, which were also included under this criteria.

Extent of Gender Mainstreaming in GEF Projects

For the purpose of this analysis, gender mainstreaming was measured by the extent to which the six gender mainstreaming actions/criteria were incorporated into each project. Approximately 40 percent of GEF projects reviewed included, at the very least, some kind of gender mainstreaming action within a project. However, among these gender-sensitive projects, close to half of them (about

44 percent) matched with only one gender mainstreaming criteria (see Figure 1). This also means that, for example, many projects with gender-related components or activities most often did not have gender-disaggregated indicators to monitor their implementation in an adequate manner.

Figure 1: Extent of Gender Mainstreaming in GEF Projects



Match with Gender-Selection Criteria	# of projects
One criterion	30
Two criteria	10
Three criteria	11
Four criteria	6
Five criteria	5
Six criteria	0

Findings by Focal Areas

Biodiversity

Among the 74 biodiversity projects in the portfolio, 46 percent (34 projects) included some kind of gender mainstreaming action. Ten additional biodiversity projects also specified women as one of the many beneficiaries, but without any related action. Projects that were led by or involved indigenous communities tended to have a stronger focus on gender issues, considering the important role that indigenous women play in biodiversity conservation and development, and recognizing their specific needs for capacity development. In addition, gender aspects were more prominent in projects with certain themes, such as agriculture biodiversity projects including medicinal and herbal plant management, and participatory protected areas management projects. For example, the *Peru Participatory Management of Protected Areas Project* prominently incorporated gender dimensions (see Section 5).

Climate Change

Among the 36 climate change projects in the profile, only four (11 percent) involved any gender mainstreaming action. Four additional projects noted that the project could have some positive impact on or improvement in the health or well-being of women, but did not include any specific gender mainstreaming action. Among the four projects that included gender mainstreaming actions, three addressed improved livelihood and health of women through biomass energy production, focusing their initiatives on household cooking stoves

and biomass platforms that produce oil. The *Off-grid Rural Electrification Project* in Nicaragua incorporated a business development services component that targeted rural women entrepreneur groups. The *Mali Household Energy and Universal Rural Access Project* was the only project that addressed gender issues in a comprehensive manner (see Section 5).

International Waters

Among the 23 international waters projects in the portfolio, six (26 percent) included gender mainstreaming actions. These projects were not specific to a particular theme, and their focus ranged widely, from maritime transport pollution and fisheries, to large marine ecosystems and river basin management. The *Serbia Danube River Enterprise Pollution Reduction* project included substantial consideration of gender issues (see Section 5).

Multi-focal Area

Among the 23 multi-focal area projects that were in the portfolio, 12 (50 percent) included gender-mainstreaming actions and addressed significant gender-related information in their project documents, as compared to other focal areas projects. The majority of the multi-focal area projects that included gender-mainstreaming actions were either integrated ecosystem management or natural resource management projects. It was also apparent from the project documents that these multi-focal area projects involved experts from various fields, including not only environment specialists, but also agriculture and social specialists during the project formulation.

Land Degradation, POPs, and Ozone Depletion

For these focal areas, the numbers of projects analyzed under the portfolio review were very limited: ten for land degradation, four for POPs, and only two for ozone depletion. While it is not really feasible to provide any statistical analysis for these focal areas because of the small number of projects, some of the trends that were observed through the study are highlighted below.

The land degradation focal area projects tended to incorporate gender dimensions more prominently. Most of the projects that incorporated gender mainstreaming actions involved sustainable land management through sound agriculture practices. These projects recognized the division of labor between women and men, consulted both women and men during the process of project formulation, and designed gender-differentiated activities, including awareness-raising and training activities. The *Burundi Agricultural Rehabilitation and Sustainable Land Management Project* incorporated gender issues in a comprehensive manner (see Section 5).

Of the POPs focal area projects, gender action and involvement tended to be limited. Some projects simply noted that women were consulted during project development, but resulted in no related activity. For the two ozone depletion focal area projects, gender mainstreaming seemed to be very limited, with no gender issues reflected in project design.

Findings by GEF Agencies

The GEF project portfolio reviewed included projects implemented by eight out of the ten designated GEF Agencies. The African Development Bank and International Food and Agriculture Development (IFAD) did not have any project in this particular portfolio, which covered projects that were approved and had started implementation during the period of 2003-2006.

The UNDP, World Bank, and UNEP were responsible for the management of the majority of the projects, 147 out of 172 projects (85 percent). Among the UNDP projects, 38 percent (31 out of 82 projects) included gender mainstreaming actions, i.e. matched one or more gender mainstreaming criteria. For the World Bank, 35 percent of projects (23 out of 65 projects) included gender mainstreaming actions. For UNEP projects, only 12 percent (four out of 34 projects) included gender mainstreaming actions (see Table 2). In terms of trends within focal areas, all climate change projects and the majority of multi-focal area projects that incorporated gender elements were managed by the World Bank,²⁰ while the majority of the biodiversity and international waters projects with gender elements were managed by UNDP.

Table 2: Portfolio Analysis by GEF Agencies

Agencies	Number of projects in the portfolio analysis ²¹	Number of projects including gender-related action
ADB	4	2
EBRD	1	0
FAO	1	0
IADB	4	2
UNDP	82	31 (38%)
UNEP	34	4 (12%)
UNIDO	1	1
World Bank, including IFC	65	23 (35%)

It is difficult to determine whether these figures are consistent with the GEF Agencies' overall performance on gender mainstreaming for their projects, including those that are not financed by the GEF. In the case of the World Bank, an analysis conducted in 2005 for the LAC ESSD portfolio revealed that 60 percent of its projects included at least one gender mainstreaming action. The same study noted that, within the environment portfolio, which included GEF financed projects, only 44 percent included gender mainstreaming actions. To our knowledge, UNDP has not done a portfolio assessment using similar methodology; however, the 2005 *Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP*²² provides useful insight into UNDP's efforts to mainstream gender in its different practice areas. In general, the evaluation notes that, compared with other UNDP practice areas, programming in energy and environment has been found to be weak in terms of integrating a gender perspective.²³





SECTION 4: PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Findings on Monitoring and Evaluation

Analysis of the monitoring and evaluation reports from the GEF projects reviewed shows that, unless there were specific gender-related project outcomes, outputs, or indicators identified in the project results or logical framework at the project design phase, the project usually did not monitor or report progress on its gender elements. Even among projects that involved comprehensive gender elements in the project documents, such as the ones highlighted in the next section, all of them lacked information on their progress and implementation in the monitoring reports. Some of the projects reported on progress on gender-related issues, even though it was not an explicit project component, under the stakeholder involvement section of these reports.

Gender elements are yet to be systematically monitored and evaluated, not only at the GEF project level, but also at the focal area and corporate levels. Key reports at the focal area and corporate levels, such as the Annual Monitoring Reports, Annual Performance Reviews, Overall Performance Studies, and Focal Area Program Studies, have covered gender issues in a very limited manner. The only evaluation report that has looked into gender issues somewhat systematically so far is the GEF Local Benefit Study (see Annex 4 for more on this study).

¹⁸ The World Bank, 2008, Progress on Gender Mainstreaming in the World Bank's Work: FY02-FY07, Washington, DC.

¹⁹ Sophie Cardona, 2005, Reporting on Gender Activities in the ESSD Portfolio – Latin America and Caribbean Region, The World Bank.

²⁰ One climate change project in Nicaragua was jointly managed by UNDP and the World Bank.

²¹ When a project was implemented by more than one GEF Agency, all involved agencies were counted.

²² UNDP, 2005, Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP.

²³ UNDP, 2007, Gender Mainstreaming - A key driver of Development in Environment and Energy: Conceptual Overview.

GEF Small Grants Programme and Gender Mainstreaming

Many projects under the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP)²⁴ have been recognized for their success in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Gender is one of the mandatory cross-cutting requirements in the global SGP grant-making criteria and is therefore incorporated in the SGP project cycle. About 17 percent of the SGP projects supported worldwide have focused specifically on the involvement of women. The following are a few key elements of how GEF SGP tries to do a better job of mainstreaming gender:²⁵

- The GEF SGP promotes mainstreaming of gender at the earliest stages of the project cycle. This creates an enabling environment for both men and women to participate in the initial stages of project conception, project approval stages, and subsequent stages of project implementation. The result is projects with strong gender components.
- Needs assessment is done at the project development phase and is used to define the roles of women and men early in the project. This helps minimize conflict among different stakeholders during and after the project cycle with respect to roles in project activities and sharing of project benefits.
- SGP Country Programs encourage increased attention to documenting the contribution of women's knowledge to project activities in key areas where women already figure prominently (e.g., biodiversity management, in situ conservation of agro-biodiversity, conservation of medicinal plants, etc.). This contributes significantly to enhanced integration of gender considerations in current and future projects.

- SGP National Steering Committees employ checklists and criteria to assess and screen projects for how they mainstream gender. Projects that are found to successfully integrate gender dimensions while also addressing environmental targets are allocated higher ratings and are more likely to be approved for funding. Moreover, some SGP countries have developed gender guidelines to mainstream gender into the project cycle.
- SGP's demand-driven approach at the local level increases the likelihood of receiving proposals from women and marginalized groups with lower levels of formal education. SGP holds "write-shops" for proposal developers and also is able to receive projects in local languages—even in oral format through video proposals—thus encouraging maximum participation by marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as women and youth.

²⁴ The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a key GEF funding modality reaching out to indigenous and local communities, including women's groups worldwide. Launched in 1992, the SGP is designed to support grassroots initiatives with community-based and nongovernmental organizations in developing countries, aiming to deliver global environmental benefits while contributing to poverty reduction and local empowerment. As of the end of 2007, 101 countries were participating in the SGP, and more than 9,500 small grants had been provided to civil society organizations. The funding to date comprises \$247.2 million from GEF and \$242.8 million from other partners in cash or in-kind equivalents.

²⁵ UNDP, 2007, Gender Mainstreaming - A key driver of Development in Environment and Energy: Portfolio Review and Assessment.



SECTION 4: PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

- SGP also empowers women by encouraging stand-alone projects in line with the GEF focal areas, thus addressing the concerns of all community members. The grantees are encouraged to participate in the global peer-learning network.
- Pipeline projects are awarded extra points for women's participation, if women are the target group, or for interventions that benefit families headed by women, etc. Such an approach can help project managers to identify activities that address gender differences with regard to priorities and needs.
- Field evaluation, including monitoring and evaluation and participatory appraisals, incorporates gender-based indicators to track the status of gender mainstreaming in projects.
- Gender-focused training and sensitization workshops are provided for SGP National Coordinators at the global and/or regional levels, and SGP Country Programs in turn conduct such training and workshops for grantees at the national level. The latter are held at base line development and during project implementation stages. Such training and workshops have been instrumental in reinforcing the capacities of women and men and eliciting strong, positive contributions to project activities.
- SGP National Coordinators and Program Assistants are encouraged to take the UNDP online gender training.
- SGP National Coordinators and Program Assistants work and share lessons in collaboration with UNDP staff in the respective Country Offices.
- National Steering Committees—the country-level body with responsibility for reviewing and approving GEF SGP projects and guiding grantees during project implementation—are required to include a gender specialist.
- National Coordinators are also regularly asked to give an update of their work on gender mainstreaming and are encouraged to participate in the SGP network of women. Their performance is explicitly assessed during annual performance reviews with respect to results achieved in promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.



GEF Small Grants Programme Case Study: The Ntankah Village Women Common Initiative Group, Cameroon

The Ntankah Village Women Common Initiative Group is a grassroots organization in Cameroon focusing on gender empowerment, livelihood improvement, and HIV/AIDS care. Ntankah means “light on the hill” in a local dialect of Cameroon. The group chose its name as they wanted to act as a beacon to women to lead them out of dependency and under-development. Currently, the group consists of 24 women members, 14 of whom are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. The group aims at improving the long-term socio-economic conditions of the members in particular and women in general through increased education, empowerment, and self-esteem.

The group implements a project, supported by the GEF Small Grants Programme together with other donors, entitled Grassroots Women Environmental Protection and Poverty Alleviation Project. The project promotes women’s empowerment through sustainable agriculture, forest, and hunting practices, leading to biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management.

For example, the project seeks to curb the practice of slash-and-burn agriculture from a present level of 80 percent to less than 20 percent. Thirty-eight women have been taught about the detrimental effects of slash and burn, better farming methods, and soil and water conservation techniques. By selecting local maize varieties

preferred by women, farmers have been able to reduce dependence on pesticides and fertilizer. The project also promotes agro-forestry in the project area, introducing leguminous species to be used in more than 400 farms. In addition, 150 women were also taught to produce compost manure.

The group is also working on reducing unsustainable hunting, which is putting pressure on biodiversity. Presently, about 50 women have been trained in cane rat domestication, and 60 grassroots women have learned about modern pig production. The group also established an Environmental Information and Documentation Center for women’s continuous education and empowerment.

The end goals of the project are a decrease in soil erosion, increase in crop yield, reduction in greenhouse gas production, use of synthetic fertilizer, and biodiversity conservation, ultimately leading to increased income and empowerment of women.

Increased farming efficiency, income generation and energy sources provide the means to better care for HIV/AIDS patients, widows, and orphans. Women are further empowered through the project with active group participation and democratic practices. Through environmental protection, the project has been able to improve social and economic conditions of women and the entire local population. Direct and indirect beneficiaries of the Ntankah Village Women Group’s activities have reached more than 100 families and about 500 people, including women and children with HIV/AIDS.



The five GEF projects summarized in this chapter exemplify best practice in reflecting gender dimensions in GEF projects, and had some of the most significant levels of gender mainstreaming activities among the entire portfolio of projects reviewed.

BIODIVERSITY: Peru Participatory Protected Areas Management

(GEF Agency: The World Bank; GEF: \$14.8 million; Co-financing: \$15.91 million; GEF approval: FY2003)

This project, which is implemented by the Peruvian National Trust Fund for Protected Areas (PROFONANPE) is designed to support long-term protection of globally important ecosystems, and to promote biodiversity conservation by increasing the involvement of civil society institutions and the private sector in the planning, management, and sustainable use of Peru's biodiversity resources. In order to enhance women's participation in planning and sustainable management of protected areas in Peru, and also ensure sustainability of the invariable recurrent costs, the project adopted a Gender Strategy. Recognizing the important role of women, the outcomes of the project are to be achieved through gender-sensitive strategies, supported by a specific project budget of about \$773,000 allocated for implementation of the strategy. Increased participation by women in planning, managing, monitoring, and evaluating the protected areas project is one of the key performance indicators for implementing this project.

The Gender Strategy features innovative leadership allowing equal participation in decision-making. The project employs female protected areas specialists to address the local women through special training and communication strategies. In parallel, it will strengthen women's organizations, and finance and provide technical assistance and training to women's initiatives on sustainable use of natural resources. For example, sub-projects in buffer zones specifically address issues that are of concern to women, such as wood and non-timber forest product collection and animal raising duties in the Sierra. These concerns are addressed through training offered to women on how to use resources more efficiently to reduce pressure on protected areas, how to add more value to the non-timber resources collected and how, for instance, pastures can be improved to increase their loading coefficient. By its conclusion, the project aims to incorporate gender analysis and gender concerns into all aspects of policy, procedures, projects, and monitoring systems.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Mali Household Energy and Universal Rural Access

(GEF Agency: The World Bank; GEF: \$5.2 million; Co-financing: \$10.8 million; GEF approval: FY2003)

This project, which is implemented by the Mali Ministry of Mines, Energy, and Water, aims to increase access of isolated low income populations to basic energy services, in order to help achieve economic growth and poverty reduction targets and remove the barriers to adoption of renewable energy technologies that will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, primarily carbon dioxide.

Women are the major actors in fuel wood production in Mali. In charge of daily budgets, cooking, and commerce, women are also the main beneficiaries of rural electrification and measures to improve fuel supplies and reduce their costs. The project adopts renewable energy technologies to accelerate the use of electricity and telecommunications, and promote inter-fuel substitution through the development of sustainable woodland management to reduce pressure on wood resources.

The project included gender-sensitive activities through social assessment (including gender analysis) and consultation with both women and men during project preparation. Strategies adopted throughout the project implementation specify women as a major target and a direct beneficiary of the project, as women are identified as the sole family caretakers through cooking and collecting wood, among other daily tasks. For instance, an increase in the number of improved wood stoves, and kerosene and LPG stoves used is

directly correlated to a positive impact on women and children's education, health, and energy expenditures. Also, the biomass platforms permit mechanical processing of agricultural produce, which, when done manually, becomes a time consuming and arduous task expected of women. Mechanical processing of produce allows oil production, not only for use as fuel but for production of soaps that women can sell in order to generate income. Through these efforts, the project demonstrates social and economic development in communities. In addition, women's initiatives linked to electrification is supported in collaboration with micro-credit institutions. The quality of life of rural and peri-urban populations, particularly women, is expected to noticeably improve with the success of the project.

This project was designed to complement the completed Malian household energy strategy (SED), which was developed in the early 1990s, based on the important work of urban and rural studies and surveys by eight social scientists, five of whom were gender specialists. For SED, households actively participated in efficient stove design tests to identify the most attractive models, a participative approach that is closely followed by this project.

LAND DEGRADATION: Burundi Agricultural Rehabilitation and Sustainable Land Management

(GEF Agency: The World Bank; GEF: \$5.35 million; Co-financing: \$37 million; GEF approval: FY2004)

Burundi has been one of the poorest countries in the world, even

SECTION 5: CASE STUDIES: PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS AND BEST PRACTICES

before the severe civil crisis and ethnic conflict in the 1990s that further devastated living conditions, especially in rural areas. The *Agricultural Rehabilitation and Support Project* aims at reducing poverty and improving food security by revitalizing Burundi's agricultural sector and strengthening the natural resource base of its production. The project seeks to directly improve food security by investing in, revitalizing, and diversifying agricultural production and establishing sustainable land management.

Since women perform most of the labor in producing agricultural products in Burundi, this project utilizes gender-sensitive activities for an amplified effect. Due to the high illiteracy rate, particularly that of women, awareness-raising is accomplished mainly through discussion sessions. Farmer-to-farmer visits are organized, and the radio is used to diffuse information, as rural women have reported that this has been an effective method. The project also developed monitoring indicators to assess progress on awareness raising among women beneficiaries.

Although they perform most of the labor, women's secondary status has traditionally prevented them from having control over the production of and revenue from commercial crops. The project encourages their participation in decision-making and community politics by ensuring their voice is reflected in committee meetings. Also, their rights to land and credit are facilitated by supporting women's associations within the society and investing in producer organizations that have specific mechanisms for women's assistance.

Women are also the main economic beneficiaries of this project.

Potential subprojects for women include producing beans, potatoes, peanuts, sorghum, corn, and soybeans; raising goats, cattle, chickens, and rabbits; basket-making; tailoring; petty trade in foodstuffs and consumer basics such as cloth and soap; and mill for corn and cassava. To guarantee women's productivity, one of the result indicators is to have at least 4,000 subprojects, of which at least 30 percent are initiated and managed by women.

In the evaluation surveys of the project, the community is expected to collaborate with the agents. Several agents will be targeting women to include them in assessment of the project activities through a natural resources inventory, an agricultural survey, and other modalities.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS: Serbia- Danube River Enterprise Pollution Reduction Project

(GEF Agency: The World Bank; GEF: \$9.02 million; Co-financing: \$13.1 million; GEF approval: FY2003)

This project, which is implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Serbia, aims to reduce nutrient pollution from hotspot enterprises on the Danube River and its tributaries through investment in cleaner production and better waste management technologies, as well as through institutional and monitoring and enforcement development.

The objective of the project is to reduce nutrient flows into bodies of water connected to the Danube River from selected Republic of Serbia enterprises. Serbia's livestock sector is among the





largest sources of water pollution in Serbia's part of the Danube/ Black Sea Basin. Slaughterhouse waste also constitutes a significant source of nutrient pollution, especially in Vojvodina, where there are 240 slaughterhouses.

The project supports mechanisms to engage stakeholders in project implementation, with special attention to gender differences. Farms and slaughterhouses are directly involved in project implementation through sub-projects. In these sub-projects, agricultural advisors offer training and technical assistance to farmers to design farm manure management plans, and design and implement the public information campaign, while incorporating gender analysis in both. In the case of manure management plans for family farms, division of labor among the family with attention to crop cultivation, livestock husbandry, and management of livestock manure is crucial. For corporate farms and slaughter houses, gender-specific views on management are considered, with special attention to the potential impact on gender relations within the enterprise. The public information campaign is adjusted according to annual public opinion polls to most effectively reflect gender-specific differences in views on how nutrient pollution from livestock farms and slaughterhouses impacts human health and aquatic biodiversity. For instance, the social assessment analysis suggests that there is higher awareness among women than among men of pollution from livestock farms. Based on such findings, strategies used in the project are tailored, taking into account such differences in perception and preferences.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS: Global - Demonstrating and Promoting Best Techniques and Practices for Reducing Health Care Waste

(GEF Agency: UNDP; GEF: \$11 million; Co-financing: \$13.5 million; GEF approval: FY2006)

The GEF global program, which covers eight countries (Argentina, India, Latvia, Lebanon, the Philippines, Senegal, Tanzania, and Vietnam), promotes the use of alternative waste treatment technologies, improves waste segregation practices, and encourages the use of appropriate alternatives to mercury-containing devices. The program emphasizes building awareness of the links between waste management and public health (including occupational exposures), with a special focus on the health implications of exposure to dioxins and mercury for vulnerable populations, such as women workers, pregnant women, and children. In addition to relevant national ministries, hospitals, and health clinics, key partners in the program include health care professionals, waste workers, and providers of waste management services (among the most vulnerable subpopulations), as well as NGOs and civil society organizations operating in the areas of health, women, and the environment.

Women represent a large portion of workers employed in health care services. In both developed and developing countries, many

health care workers (such as nurses) receive low remuneration and face hazardous working conditions, including exposure to chemical agents that can cause cancer, respiratory disease, neurotoxic effects, and other illnesses. In developing countries in particular, the health sector is a major source of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other toxic substances, which mostly result from incineration of medical waste, as well as the breakage and improper disposal of mercury-containing devices (such as thermometers and blood pressure meters).

Because of their low status, especially in many developing countries, women have less control over their work environment and the risks they are exposed to. As developing countries strengthen and expand the coverage of their health care systems, associated releases of toxic chemicals could rise substantially, magnifying the risks experienced by health care workers and the public.





A series of lessons have emerged from GEF's portfolio of projects related to gender mainstreaming, as highlighted in this section. These lessons are also drawn from similar gender assessments conducted by the GEF Agencies.²⁶ The lessons learned are categorized in two broad areas: gender mainstreaming in project cycle and project design.

Lessons Related to Project Cycle

Social assessment, including gender analysis: Experience with best practice cases across GEF focal areas highlights the importance of including a gender analysis, as part of social assessment or as a stand-alone exercise, at the onset of a project. Gender analysis is an entry point for gender mainstreaming in projects, as it reveals connections between gender relations and the environmental problem to be solved under the project. Lack of information can lead to policies and activities that inadvertently impact gender relations and opportunities. The research embodied in the gender analysis is crucial for:

- Assessing the gender-related activities, including gender roles and responsibilities, resource use and management, and decision making raised by the project;
- Designing project framework and approach; and
- Demonstrating the need for gender disaggregated data and indicators.

Consistent approach: For gender mainstreaming to be effective, the gender mainstreaming action should be integrated in all stages of a project cycle. References to gender should be consistent throughout the project approach, the activities, indicators, and budget. Gender issues are often discussed during the GEF project preparation phase, in relation to stakeholders or beneficiaries, but they are not always incorporated in the project design or monitoring and evaluation process.

Monitoring and Evaluation, including gender disaggregated indicators: Only when performance indicators are clearly linked with project objectives, outcomes, and activities, can project results be fully assessed. Unless gender-related components, outcomes, outputs, and results indicators were identified at the onset of the project as part of the results/logical framework, the monitoring and evaluation exercise often failed to look into and assess progress in gender-related activities. Developing a set of gender disaggregated performance indicators, with gender disaggregated data, is essential to allow for proper monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring performance is also a key component of building accountability into every project.

²⁶ UNDP, 2007, Gender Mainstreaming - A key driver of Development in Environment and Energy: Portfolio Review and Assessment, New York; and World Bank, Sophie Cardona, 2005, Reporting on Gender Activities in the ESSD Portfolio - Latin America and Caribbean Region, Washington, DC.

Lessons Related to Project Design

Policy versus site-based projects: GEF projects that are site-based and involve local communities tend to have a stronger focus on gender mainstreaming. However, many studies and experience show that it is equally important to incorporate gender perspectives based on gender division of labor (e.g. gender-differentiated roles, responsibilities, and needs) in related sector and development policy formulation. Some of the climate change and international waters focal areas projects have successfully incorporated gender perspective in related regional/national policy by having representatives of women's organizations and NGOs involved in policy dialogue and working groups.

Incentives for participation: Women and men often have different interests and incentives to participate in GEF projects, and environmental projects in general. Opportunities to generate additional income are powerful incentives for both sexes, however, women are observed to be more likely to respond to incentives that address their family's basic needs, such as better health and nutrition. This trend was observed in projects where food security is a more important incentive, such as through agriculture biodiversity and sustainable land management projects. Other factors that were found to be incentives for women were the potential for time savings, contributions to their sense of self-esteem, empowerment, and kinship with other women in the community. Since men and women respond to different incentives, working with both sexes provides multiple avenues to address and resolve environmental concerns.

Income generation and micro-finance activities: Generally positive relationships were found between active women's involvement in income generation, and natural resource management and

expanding access to energy services. However, more in-depth review of such activities is required to identify challenges, opportunities, and best practices to improve quality of outcomes and their sustainability. Micro-finance initiatives were also often identified as an effective tool for women to participate in income-generation activities, particularly to meet family and household needs. With the initiation of women into active participation in income-generating activities, some projects have also recognized women's expanded involvement in public and project decision-making.

Awareness raising and training activities: Support for educational activities, on topics such as the environment, energy, and decision-making, supported by cofinance, often helped women access the knowledge and skills they need to be active participants in GEF projects, which are often technical in nature. For example, women were actively engaged during the operation of a micro-hydropower project, after receiving training on basic ecology and micro-hydropower operations. This training enabled them to participate with confidence in community meetings and other discussions on policies, financial controls and revenue collection systems. These lessons are particularly important, since many GEF projects, and environment projects in general, find it difficult to encourage women's participation in projects that are technology intense.

Involvement of women's organizations: While the responsibility for implementing a gender approach does not rest solely with women's organizations, they are natural vehicles for promoting gender equality at the local as well as the national level. Several GEF projects have employed women's organizations, including women's NGOs and unions, in the project, helping to identify relevant gender issues within the country's social context, and implementing and monitoring the gender aspects of the project.





Gender mainstreaming is crucial to the overall success of GEF projects, both for achieving the GEF's goals as well as for contributing to goals of gender equality. While further detailed analysis is required, particularly on the relevance and effectiveness of gender mainstreaming initiatives in GEF projects, this initial portfolio review and former evaluations have shown that our experience in gender mainstreaming has a mixed track record. There are many positive results and successful projects that are highlighted in this publication. However, many of these cases still depend on individual interest and efforts, rather than on a corporate approach backed by institutional systems and mechanisms.

Through lessons learned from other organizations,²⁷ the GEF is committed to strengthen gender mainstreaming in its projects through clear guidance, consistent institutional and managerial support and commitment, and organizational and behavioral change. Based on further dialogue with concerned partners, the GEF will undertake a series of actions to facilitate a more effective and systematic approach for gender mainstreaming, as outlined below:

- Articulate a vision, and put forward a guidance paper or plan of action with clear targets on how GEF will accord renewed priority to gender and strengthen gender mainstreaming throughout its operations.²⁸

- Identify and work on specific thematic issues with strong gender dimensions, such as sustainable forest management, indigenous peoples, and climate change adaptation, and incorporate gender in the focal area strategies and strategic programs, as appropriate.
- Strengthen the institutional framework for gender mainstreaming, and socio-economic aspects in general, by having a focal point to support developing, implementing, and monitoring guidance and strategy on gender mainstreaming, in coordination with concerned staff and partners.

²⁷ UNDP, 2006, Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP; IEG, 2002, Gender Dimensions in Development; and ADB, 2001, Evaluation Study of Gender in Development.

²⁸ The GEF Council approved a Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in 2011 (GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1). Refer to the attached Annex 5 of this publication.



SECTION 7: FUTURE DIRECTION AND NEXT STEPS

- Strengthen gender mainstreaming capacities among the GEF staff to increase their understanding of gender mainstreaming, as well as socio-economic aspects in general. Raising awareness about gender issues for all staff is considered as a basic requirement of gender mainstreaming.
- Pay increased attention to socio-economic aspects of GEF projects, including gender elements, as important drivers and incentives for achieving global environmental benefits through existing project review criteria on project design.
- Incorporate gender as an explicit element for review in monitoring and evaluation exercises at project, program and corporate levels, whenever appropriate. These studies will examine, more systematically and in-depth, whether gender issues were adequately reflected in project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of GEF projects.
- Ensure that appropriate funding is allocated within GEF projects to adequately address gender mainstreaming and implement gender mainstreaming actions, including gender analysis, consultation with both women and men, and identification of gender-disaggregated data and indicators in GEF projects. The project preparation grant, together with cofinancing

resources, could be utilized to conduct appropriate assessment and analysis related to gender and stakeholders in general.

- Establish and strengthen networks with partners that have substantive experience working on gender issues, and utilize their expertise to develop and implement GEF projects.





ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: GENDER POLICY AND STRATEGY OF GEF AGENCIES

1. ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB)

The ADB's Policy on Gender and Development (GAD), issued in 1998, reflects its commitment to promoting women's economic and social empowerment and their voice. The GAD Plan of Action (2008-2010) also proposes a renewed commitment to gender mainstreaming and identifies a balanced set of activities through which ADB operations will continue to lead toward tangible gender equality and women's empowerment results. The ADB publishes analytical work, such as country and sector specific reports, and checklists and toolkits to inform their gender-related strategies and programs, including environment and natural resources management. The ADB is also making efforts to integrate gender equality considerations in the design and implementation of investment projects. The ADB is in the process of redefining its operational priorities and processes to better serve the development needs of its client countries. A two-track approach - combining gender mainstreaming with gender-specific activities - is still considered appropriate and necessary, especially to address wide gender disparities, restrictive social norms, or new gender concerns.

2. AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (AfDB)

AfDB has been addressing gender as a cross-cutting issue in the context of its Vision Statement (1999) and Gender Policy (2001). The AfDB operationalizes the Gender Policy through its Gender Plan of Action (GPOA), adopted in 2004, which has been renewed by ensuring effective mainstreaming of gender issues in its activities and

supporting the efforts of regional member countries to attain gender equality objectives. The GPOA is also designed as the instrument for ensuring institutional accountability for gender mainstreaming, and is designed to promote a systematic, expanded, and accelerated approach that would lead to generation and utilization of best practices. At the operational level, the Bank implements a number of projects that aim to enhance the continuous access by women to a broad range of financial and non-financial services. This has recently been further enhanced by increased financial resources available to the AfDB, including those initiatives related to gender equality and women's empowerment. A recent assessment of the implementation of the GPOA found that it has positively influenced the way gender issues are addressed across the Bank. Gender issues are now featured very prominently in all framework documents, which articulate concrete strategies for gender mainstreaming.

3. EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT (EBRD)

Until recently, there has not been a systematic and consistent institutional approach to gender at the EBRD. The Bank has reached women mainly through its micro lending and donor funding programs, such as its TurnAround Management and Business Advisory Services Programme. Most recently, the new Environmental and Social Policy has incorporated gender in a more substantive way. The Bank has also set up a Gender Steering Group, which has proposed an action plan on gender aimed at preventing gender discrimination in projects, mitigating gender inequalities, and actively promoting greater opportunities for women in the region. The action plan seeks first to bring gender issues into the mainstream within the Bank to learn more about potential disparities in the Bank's operations. Secondly, it will improve capacity building through gender awareness training for Bank staff. A gender specialist was also hired to manage the gender programs.



4. INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT (IFAD)

IFAD's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment has been set out in a number of milestone documents and in the Strategic Framework of IFAD. Gender equality gains are recognized as essential to fulfill IFAD's mandate of raising levels of nutrition and standards of living and improve agricultural productivity and livelihoods of rural populations. The Plan of Action 2003-2006 was a first step toward operationalizing those principles and objectives of the Strategic Framework for IFAD 2002-2006 related to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

The newly formulated Gender Plan of Action 2008-2013 is in line with the system-wide strategy and policy on gender mainstreaming of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. The new Plan of Action brings together the individual plans of the technical divisions to pursue gender mainstreaming in their respective areas of expertise and links them to the existing four strategic gender objective areas: food and nutrition; natural resources; rural economies, labor and livelihoods; and policy and planning. In the context of the new IFAD Strategic Framework 2007-2010, other institutional change processes are currently underway to integrate gender in IFAD's work.

5. INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IADB)

The IADB has taken steps over the past decade to promote gender equity and improve women's status throughout the region. The Op-

erating Policy on Women in Development (OP- 761), issued in 1987, first established the institution's commitment to addressing the needs and priorities of women. This has been further strengthened through the adoption of a number of other strategies, highlighting key areas where gender issues play a major role in reducing poverty and promoting social equity and sustainable economic growth, including the environment and natural resources.

The recently issued IADB Strategic Framework and Policy on Gender Equality (2006), and the IADB Gender Mainstreaming Action Plans on Gender Mainstreaming (2003-2005) are supported by the Gender Mainstreaming Trust Fund (GMF), which was established in July 2005, with operational guidelines completed in October 2006. The GMF will support gender mainstreaming throughout the project cycle, improve the availability and quality of technical support and analysis of gender issues, and strengthen institutional mechanisms. Though the treatment of gender issues has increased significantly and institutional ownership of gender equity goals has grown, there is a consensus that the mainstreaming of gender into the Bank's work still faces many challenges, including improving the monitoring and tracking of efforts to integrate a gender focus into operations

6. THE WORLD BANK

The World Bank issued an Operational Policy on Gender and Development (OP and BP 4.20) in 2003 and revised it in 2004, drawing on the World Bank report on *Integrating Gender into the World Bank's Work: A Strategy for Action* (2001). The report reiterates the important dimension of the gender component in the fight against poverty



and in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. The Operational Policy covers incorporating gender into the World Bank's work, though it is not a mandatory policy for all projects. Projects within and across relevant sectors are designed to adequately take into account the gender implications of the project. To this end, the Bank performs periodic assessments on gender dimensions of development in the countries and sectors in which it has an active assistance program. The Bank's Country Assistance Strategy studies, identifies, and addresses any need for gender-responsive interventions. The policy specifically notes that it also applies to GEF-financed projects.²⁹ The implementation of this policy is regularly monitored by the World Bank.

7. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

UNDP is committed to supporting capacity development of its national partners to adopt approaches that advance women's rights and take account of the full range of their contributions to development, as a foundation for MDG achievement. The commitment of UNDP on gender issues is covered in its Gender Equality Strategy of 2008-2011. Under this strategy, the GEF is identified as a key partner and it is noted that UNDP will support GEF to mainstream gender equality considerations in their activities.

UNDP has a very strong mandate for both women's empowerment and gender equality. However, a 2005 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP found that the organization as a whole still lacks a systematic approach to gender mainstreaming, reflecting a lack of

leadership and commitment at the highest levels and of capacity at all levels. Following that evaluation, UNDP took action by producing the Gender Action Plan 2006-7 as an immediate response to integrate gender issues in the corporate planning cycle 2008-11. It also formed a Gender Steering and Implementation Committee in 2006 as the highest decision-making body on gender mainstreaming within UNDP. To consolidate the gains of the Gender Action Plan 2006-2007, and achieve the projected outcomes of the Gender Equality Strategy 2008-2011, UNDP plans to continue adapting its institutional framework.

8. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

In 2006, UNEP produced the UNEP Gender Plan of Action, which commits to organizational change and integrates gender into UNEP's Programme of Work for 2010-2011, and human resource management policies and practices. At the end of 2007, UNEP established an Operational Structure by recruiting a Senior Gender Adviser, and established a gender focal team of 61 staff members. Several consultations are being held throughout 2008 with UNEP divisions and regional offices to better formulate a policy on gender mainstreaming that will overcome the challenges of integrating gender into the projects. Workshops are run alongside the consultations to ensure that staff recognizes the links between gender mainstreaming tools, analysis, results-based management, and the human rights based approaches to programming. The different methodologies for integrating gender into environmental management and, in particular, UNEP's six priority areas will be tested early in 2009.



²⁹ But also notes that it only applies to GEF grants of more than US\$1 million. The World Bank, March 2003, OP4.20 Gender and Development.

9. UN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

The FAO Gender and Development Plan of Action (GPA) 2002-2007 presents a framework to mainstream gender into the work of FAO. In pursuit of FAO's mission to help build a food-secure world, it aims at removing the obstacles to women's and men's equal and active participation in, and enjoyment of the benefits from, agricultural and rural development. FAO GPA 2002-2007 is based on lessons learned in the implementation of two previous plans and a request by the FAO Programme Committee to improve the existing mechanisms of incorporating gender into its work. Gender mainstreaming became one of the sixteen Priority Areas for Inter-disciplinary Action identified in the FAO Medium Term Plan 2002-2007.



10. UN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (UNIDO)

UNIDO does not have a specific policy or strategy related to gender. UNIDO's Medium Term Programme Framework for the period 2002-2005 places emphasis on addressing gender equality through the promotion of women's entrepreneurship programs, in order to support the social, technical, and economic integration of women in the industrial development process. Mainstreaming is achieved through UNIDO's integrated program approach, which combines specific programs for Women's Entrepreneurship Development, focusing on appropriate support at the policy, institutional, and sector levels. UNIDO is currently developing a gender strategy and plans to complete it before the end of 2008.

ANNEX 2: GENDER POLICY AND STRATEGY OF RELATED CONVENTIONS

This annex provides brief information on the gender mainstreaming approach of the related Conventions: the CBD, UNFCCC, and UN-CCD. No information was found on gender-related activity of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

As a continuing response to global commitments and recommendations of international forums, and in compliance with internal mandates within the UN system calling for gender equality, the Secretariat of the CBD, with the technical support of IUCN, developed a Gender Plan of Action, which was endorsed at the May 2008 CBD COP9 meeting. This plan defines the role the CBD plays in stimulating and facilitating efforts, both in-house and with partners at the national, regional and global levels, to overcome constraints and take advantage of opportunities to promote gender equality and equity in the Convention process. The Plan outlines a framework for integrating a gender perspective within all Secretariat divisions and units during the period of 2008–2012. It establishes strategies with reachable targets and proposes instruments to address gender concerns in the areas of the CBD, including, for example, the identification of entry points for gender-biodiversity linkages in the CBD implementation processes through the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans.

UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The UNFCCC secretariat recognizes that there is a gender dimension to all activities relevant to climate change and that negative effects of climate change are likely to affect men and women differently. The UNFCCC secretariat provides support to countries in integrating gender into specific areas of work, such as in the National Communications and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), where the guidelines for the preparation of these reports call for incorporation of gender matters in decision making on adaptation to climate change, as well as in activities relating to raising environmental awareness. Furthermore, the secretariat is also piloting some specific areas of work where they believe there is scope to make climate policy more gender inclusive, such as in adaptation, technology, and financing.³⁰

UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) recognizes that a successful fight against dryland degradation is only effective with greater participation of women in research, planning, and decision-making venues at all levels of UNCCD implementation. Given the intimate relationship between desertification and poverty, a local-level understanding of the roles of men and women is essential to finding solutions. The UNCCD stresses the importance of a bottom-up participatory approach in identifying, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating projects that combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. The UNCCD approach thus seeks to combine sci-

ence and technology with local knowledge, to come up with effective solutions for sustainable dryland development.

ANNEX 3: METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE PROJECT PORTFOLIO REVIEW

The projects selected for this portfolio review were drawn from a list of all active GEF projects in FY2006 that were approved during the GEF-3 replenishment cycle, i.e. projects that were approved and implemented during the period of FY2003-FY2006. This cohort of projects was selected due to two reasons: 1) the GEF Evaluation Office's Local Benefit Study (see Annex 4), which evaluated GEF projects on gender issues, had already covered projects approved and implemented during the period of 1991-2001; and 2) the projects were not only approved during GEF-3, but also implemented during the period, so that it was possible to assess some degree of progress and results.

For this portfolio analysis, a total of 172 projects were analyzed, covering all GEF focal areas, including biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, international waters, POPs, ozone depletion, and multi-focal area projects. About half (44 percent) of the projects were biodiversity focal area projects (75 projects). The second largest portfolio was in the climate change focal area with 36 projects (21 percent of the total portfolio), followed by the multi-focal area and international waters focal area portfolio, with 23 projects each (13 percent). The land degradation, POPs, and ozone depletion focal areas accounted for ten, four, and two projects, respectively.



³⁰ The COP 13 in Bali also witnessed a significant breakthrough in achieving a gender-sensitive climate regime. A worldwide network of women was established, the *gendercc – women for climate justice*. The group published several position papers articulating the women's and gender perspectives on the most pressing issues under negotiation. Such a structure will also serve the women's goal of being recognized as a constituency in the UNFCCC process.

The 172 projects were first screened by using seven basic keywords related to gender: gender, female, male, boys, girls, women, and men. The final project documents for GEF CEO endorsement, including all annexes, were used for the screening exercise. Among the projects that included gender keywords, further analysis was conducted using the following six gender mainstreaming criteria:

1. **Gender analysis:** Projects that conducted gender analysis as part of the social assessment or as a separate analysis;
2. **Consultation with women and men:** Projects which conducted consultation with groups of women and/or men during project preparation, implementation, and/or monitoring and evaluation;
3. **Gender in project objective(s):** Projects that have a gender keyword within the project objective statement;
4. **Gender targeted project component, outcome, output, and/or activity:** Projects that include gender-sensitive actions in the project framework and associated project description;
5. **Gender informed monitoring and evaluation:** Projects that include gender-specific project performance indicators in their monitoring and evaluation process; and
6. **Budget allocated to gender activities:** Projects that explicitly allocate financial resources for gender-related activities, including gender specialists and consultants.

In addition, annual project monitoring reports that were submitted to the GEF Secretariat in FY2006, i.e. the GEF Project Implementation

Report, were also screened by using the same gender keywords to review the progress on gender-related project activities and to assess the nature and extent of reporting related to gender issues. Moreover, some of the Terminal Evaluation Reports that were submitted in FY2006 (i.e. GEF projects that were closed during this period) were also reviewed.

Limitations

The key methodological and analytical weaknesses of this evaluation is that this portfolio review was conducted as a desk study, with lack of direct observations/analysis through fieldwork. Moreover, even though some of the monitoring reports were reviewed, the analysis was mainly conducted by assessing the project document, which is a statement of intent, rather than a results assessment.

ANNEX 4: GEF LOCAL BENEFIT STUDY: GENDER ISSUES - AN ABSTRACT GEF Evaluation Office - June 2006³¹

Many projects included in the GEF Local Benefit Study (a total of 132 projects which were approved during the period of 1991-2001) demonstrated inadequate differentiation of the local population to enable them to take account of social factors relevant to project performance. The communities affected by projects often contained structural in-

³¹ Page 32 (general), 63 (biodiversity), and 107 (climate change), GEF Evaluation Office, 2006, Local Benefit Study, Washington, DC.



equalities along gender, class, ethnic, or other lines. Participatory processes that did not take account of the poor and marginalized further alienated the disadvantaged from resources upon which they depend. The limited approach to both gender and poverty targeting is a significant shortcoming: poverty issues were considered in the design of only 36 of 132 projects (27 percent), while gender was a consideration in 50 projects (38 percent).

In general, the projects reviewed lacked a coherent gender focus. They showed limited attention to gender issues, even though the needs, interests, and capabilities of women were habitually structurally different from those of men in relation to the resources focused on by the projects. Many projects in which gender analysis and gender-specific measures were weak or absent were also characterized by low involvement of women in decision making and the dominance of men. In some instances, the lack of adequate gender analysis and awareness led to negative impacts on women. Women in many project areas were often economically, socially, and politically marginalized, with poor access to government institutions and little voice in local decision making. Building on an analysis of the role of women in natural resource use and management, GEF projects have the opportunity to promote women's role in decision making in local and national institutions associated with delivering the projects' objectives. They can create valuable precedents in the field of environmental management by directly encouraging inclusion. This was rarely done effectively.

In the biodiversity portfolio, study findings show that 45 projects out of 88 (51 percent) identified women as stakeholders and beneficiaries. The remainder did not specifically focus on women as relevant stakeholders. One of the reasons for this omission is the lack of social analysis during project preparation and the propensity of project designers to see the "community" as a largely undifferentiated group. Of the 45 projects, 39 (87 percent) included activities that had the potential to operationalize gender targeting in implementation, although specific budget allocations for mainstreaming into project activities were rare. Among the 14 international waters projects that were studied, only two projects (14 percent) specifically provided for gender-sensitive stakeholder targeting and outcomes.

With regards to the climate change portfolio, 12 projects of the 30 studied (40 percent) were seen to have some impact on gender-related energy use. Only one linked the project to policies on gender or women in development. Thirteen projects (43 percent) did not encompass gender differences at all; seven of these were OP6 projects addressing household energy, where women are usually the key stakeholders. Only six projects (20 percent) had incorporated gender targeting practically into their design and implementation.

The major factor underlying the undifferentiated approach adopted by many projects was the lack of social analysis or assessment to identify differences within local communities along resource access and use, gender, ethnic, and poverty lines and for developing appropriate strategies.



ANNEX 5: POLICY ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Summary: This Policy expresses the Global Environment Facility's commitment to enhancing the degree to which the GEF and its Partner Agencies promote the goal of gender equality through GEF operations. The policy calls on the GEF and its Partner Agencies to mainstream gender into GEF operations, including efforts to analyze and address in GEF projects the specific needs and role of both women and men, as appropriate to each intervention. The Policy includes several requirements for the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies, including the following:

- (a) In order to be eligible to receive GEF financing for GEF projects, all GEF Partner Agencies will be required to have established either (a) policies, (b) strategies, or (c) action plans that promote gender equality; \
- (b) The policies, strategies, or action plans of each GEF Partner Agency will need to satisfy the minimum criteria on gender mainstreaming that are included in the policy for the Agency's systems to be assessed as adequate;
- (c) To support the application of the gender policy, the GEF Secretariat will coordinate the development of corporate-wide guidance for use by the GEF Agencies and GEF Secretariat program managers on the inclusion of gender aspects in the design of projects and on the monitoring and evaluation of gender dimensions in the context of its projects. Such guidance will take into account that not all GEF projects involve gender aspects in equal measure, depending on the focal area and scope of the project.
- (d) The GEF Agencies shall incorporate such guidance into their

project and program proposals submitted to the Secretariat for review.

Background: The Council approved this policy in the context of its review of Council Document GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1, *GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming*. The GEF Secretariat formatted the policy in line with its Policy Document Format and has clarified parts of the Policy to reflect Council deliberations, reduce duplication, and make it consistent with paragraphs 23 – 30 of Council Document GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1.

Applicability: This policy is applicable to GEF Partner Agencies and the GEF Secretariat.

Dates of Effectiveness and Revision: This policy entered into effect when it was adopted by the GEF Council on May 26, 2011. As decided by the GEF Council, this policy will be reviewed in 2015.

Sponsors: GEF Gender Focal Point, GEF Secretariat

Key Terms: Gender, Accreditation, GEF Project Agencies, Environmental and Social Safeguards.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms apply to this document.

1. **Accreditation Panel:** The panel to be constituted by the GEF Council that will review Stage 2 Applications for accreditation of GEF Project Agencies.
2. **Accreditation Panel Review:** A criteria-based review to be performed by the Accreditation Panel, which will include assessment of project performance capacity, agencies' governance framework, and environmental and social safeguards.
3. **GEF Agency:** Any one of the 10 institutions that were entitled to receive GEF Trust Fund resources directly as of June 2011. They include the following organizations: the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Development Program, United Nations Environment Program, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.
4. **GEF Partner Agencies:** Those agencies eligible to request and receive GEF resources directly for the design, implementation, and execution of GEF Projects. This category includes both GEF Agencies and GEF Project Agencies.
5. **GEF Project Agency:** Any of the institutions that the GEF has accredited after June 2011 to receive GEF resources to

implement and execute GEF-financed projects apart from the ten GEF Agencies.

6. **GEF Resources:** Resources from any GEF-managed trust fund, including the GEF Trust Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF).

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This Policy expresses the Global Environment Facility's commitment to enhancing the degree to which the GEF and its Partner Agencies promote the goal of gender equality through GEF operations. It commits the GEF to address the link between gender equality and environmental sustainability and towards gender mainstreaming in its policies, programs, and operations. It has been developed to assist the GEF and its Partner Agencies in ensuring that GEF operations promote gender equality and equity.
2. The GEF recognizes that gender equality is an important goal in the context of the projects that it finances because it advances both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equity and social inclusion.
3. While the degree of relevance of gender dimensions to may vary depending on the GEF focal area or type of engagement,¹ accounting for gender equity and equality is an important consideration when financing projects that address global environmental issues, because gender relations, roles and responsibilities exercise important influence on women and men's access to and control over environmental resources and the goods and services they provide.
4. The GEF acknowledges that project results can often be superior when gender considerations are integrated into the design and implementation of projects, where relevant. It is important, in many instances for programme and project interventions to take into account differences

in ways men and women perceive incentives linked to the sustainable use of resources and how these perceptions can influence the achievement of the results specified in project objectives.

5. The GEF has adopted, since its early days, a Public Involvement Policy that aims to ensure both women's and men's involvement in GEF projects.² This policy is a key GEF policy that relates specifically to social issues, including gender, and provides the basis for public involvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation of GEF-financed projects. It applies to all GEF focal areas programs and projects; spells out the rationale, terms, and principles for public involvement; and solidifies the operational requirement for stakeholder involvement and partnership in the design, implementation, and evaluation of GEF-financed activities.
6. All GEF Agencies have their own policies and strategies on gender mainstreaming and on promoting gender equality in the context of project interventions. The Agencies apply these policies to GEF projects as well. In recent years, following the UN's mandate on gender equality and other international agreements, many of the GEF Agencies have revised and strengthened their approach to gender issues in their operations, by developing Gender Plans of Action and gender related strategies.
7. Given these changes and new approaches to gender mainstreaming, the GEF is renewing and expanding its commitment towards gender mainstreaming, and building on its Public Involvement Policy by adopting a new Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.

¹ For example, gender integration is essential for some issues and GEF Focal Areas, such as sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation, while for other issues, such as energy efficiency and the phase-out of persistent organic pollutants, it is less essential. Guidance should reflect this and should focus on gender analysis for a specific project to determine adequate measures.

² This policy was adopted in April 1996. See Council document GEF/C.6/Inf.5, *Policy Paper on Public Involvement in GEF-Financed Projects*.out of persistent organic pollutants, it is less essential. Guidance should reflect this and should focus on gender analysis for a specific project to determine adequate measures.

II. Objectives

8. The GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall strive to attain the goal of gender equality, the equal treatment of women and men, including the equal access to resources and services through its operations.
9. To accomplish this goal, the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall mainstream gender into their operations, including efforts to analyze systematically and address the specific needs of both women and men in GEF projects.

III. Policy Requirements for GEF Partner Agencies

10. In order to implement GEF-financed projects, GEF Partner Agencies are required to have established either a policy or policies (this may include relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines), a strategy, or an action plan that requires the Agency to design and implement projects in such a way that both women and men (a) receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits; (b) do not suffer adverse effects during the development process; and (c) fosters full respect for their dignity and human rights;
 11. The policies, strategy, or action plan of each Partner Agency must satisfy the minimum requirements listed in paragraphs 13–19 below.
 12. The Agency must demonstrate sufficient institutional capability to implement their policies, strategy, or action plan and apply the provisions of each to GEF financed projects.
- Minimum Requirements:
13. The Agency has instituted measures to strengthen its institutional framework for gender mainstreaming, for example, by having a focal point for gender, or other staff, to support the development, implementation, monitoring, and provision of guidance on gender mainstreaming.
 14. The Agency's criteria for project review and project design require it to pay attention to socio-economic aspects in its projects, including gender elements. (In the context of GEF projects, since gender elements are important drivers and incentives for achieving global environmental benefits.)
 15. The Agency is required to undertake social assessment, including gender analysis, or to use similar methods to assess the potential roles, benefits, impacts and risks for women and men of different ages, ethnicities, and social structure and status. These studies may be used, along with other types of studies to inform project formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
 16. The Agency is required to identify measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse gender impacts.
 17. The Agency's policies, strategy, or action plan address gender sensitive activities while recognizing and respecting the different roles that women and men play in resource management and in

society.

18. The Agency has a system for monitoring and evaluating progress in gender mainstreaming, including the use of gender disaggregated monitoring indicators.
19. The Agency monitors and provides necessary support for implementation of its policies, strategy, or action plan by experienced social/gender experts on gender mainstreaming in projects.

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GEF SECRETARIAT

20. The GEF Secretariat will strengthen gender-mainstreaming capacities among the GEF Secretariat staff to increase their understanding of gender mainstreaming, as well as socio-economic aspects in general.
21. The GEF Secretariat shall designate a focal point for gender issues to support developing, implementing, and monitoring guidance and strategy on gender mainstreaming and coordinating internally and externally on such issues.
22. Recognizing that each GEF Partner Agency has a different gender policy, strategy, or action plan, with varying application to GEF projects, the GEF Secretariat will work with its Partner Agencies and other partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming, including, as feasible, a more systematic approach to programming

that incorporates this issue.

23. The GEF Secretariat will establish and strengthen networks with partners that have substantive experience working on gender issues, and utilize their expertise to develop and implement GEF projects.

V. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

24. This policy will apply equally to the ten GEF Agencies as well as to accredited GEF Project Agencies. The GEF Secretariat will hire consultants to assess whether the existing ten GEF Agencies comply with this Policy. The assessment will be implemented in a transparent way. The consultants will consolidate the results of their assessment in a report to the Secretariat, which will clearly indicate those areas in which the Agency meets minimum requirements of the Policy and where the Agencies do not. The Secretariat shall convey this report to the Council together with a Council paper containing recommendations. The Council may grant GEF Agencies a time bound waiver to enable the Agency to meet the criteria within a specific phase-in period.
25. With regard to entities that apply for accreditation as a GEF Project Agency, the GEF Accreditation panel will assess whether each applicant meets the minimum requirements of this policy. The GEF Accreditation Panel will require that all applicants demonstrate compliance with the minimum requirements mentioned above.

VI. Revision of the Policy

26. The GEF understands that gender mainstreaming at the corporate and the project level is a long-term undertaking and a sustained commitment, which includes tracking its progress. It also acknowledges that approaches to gender mainstreaming evolve. In light of this, the GEF Council will review its Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in 2015.

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