LEDS GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

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LEDS in Practice

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Promote gender equality
To realize the benefits of low emission development

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Key messages

- Gender equality is fundamental to achieving sustainable development, and well designed LEDS yield benefits to sustainable development by enhancing gender equality.
- LEDS that actively engage both women and men are more effective, efficient, and sustainable.
- Gender responsive LEDS can contribute to reducing poverty.

How can gender equality support low emission development?

Gender equality is fundamental to achieving sustainable development, as recognized by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—explicitly in SDG 5 on gender equality, and as a prerequisite to achieving other SDGs, from improved education to health to addressing climate change. By actively engaging both women and men in all segments of society, countries can tap into hidden potential and make their transition to low carbon societies truly sustainable. For example, women often play a central role in sectors where emissions can be substantially reduced in tandem with development benefits, such as efficient household energy use, support to income generation activities, and shaping consumption patterns towards low emission products. In addition, identification of women as active members of society and promoting their participation in new/nontraditional climate related job opportunities, for example as renewable energy technicians and entrepreneurs, will contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth. Studies show that gender diversity in high level decision making has a positive impact on business performance and investment in general, as evidenced by the better performance of companies with more women on their board with regard to returns on investment, sales, and equity.[1]

Gender equality means both women and men are granted equal opportunities to develop and to make choices without being constrained by social gender roles and stereotypes.

Gender mainstreaming refers to the consideration of gender equality concerns in all policy, program, administrative, and financial activities, and in organizational procedures, thereby contributing to organizational transformation.

Women's empowerment is a process that aims to create a level playing field by specifically addressing barriers women face in accessing services, finance, and income opportunities, and by increasing their participation in decision making.

Also in the LEDS GP series on realizing the benefits of low emission development:

- *Create green jobs*
- *Gain the competitive edge*
- *Ensure energy security*
- *Boost ecosystem resilience*
- *Use trade policy*

This series of short papers gives an overview of selected benefits and development goals linked to LEDS and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Series editor: Natalie Harms, Energy research Centre of the Netherlands (ECN)

Gender equality can contribute to low emission development strategies (LEDS) and increase the efficiency and adequacy of climate change initiatives by:

- enhancing the sustainability of LEDS design and implementation by ensuring full and active participation of women and men
- identifying and providing solutions to lift women and men out of poverty
- understanding how women's and men's differentiated consumer patterns affect their carbon footprint.

Engaging women in LEDS is therefore not only the right, but also the smart thing to do.

How can low emission development benefit gender equality?

LEDS can increase gender equality by creating equal opportunities for women to benefit from improved services and conditions (including health care, education, transport, and access to water and affordable, efficient energy services), and from participation in income generation opportunities.

Governments, particularly those in developing countries, have explicitly recognized in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that women are not only affected differently by climate change, but also can contribute differently to climate change action. LEDS that recognize both men's *and* women's social roles and responsibilities in various sectors, and tap into their potential to reduce emissions, will not only be more effective and efficient—they can also provide access to services and income opportunities that can dismantle gender inequalities. For instance, enabling women's access to efficient energy technology in agriculture and households, such as small manure-fed biogas plants that power smoke-free cook stoves, will reduce emissions significantly in these sectors, while improving women's health and agricultural production. The time and cost women previously spent on obtaining fuel can be invested in education or in income generating activities, empowering women and increasing family wellbeing. LEDS can impact gender equality if they are designed to enable women's access to new skill development, to finance and technology, to health, education, decision making, and to markets; if they support women's entrepreneurship in low emission development; and by reducing unequal social burdens women face every day.

A female masonry worker (photo credit: SNV Vietnam)

Integrating gender equality goals into low emission policies and plans

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), about 40% of NDCs recognize women as key stakeholders within climate change policies; 12 out of 27 LEDS assessed by IUCN also address women as key to achieving low emission development pathways.[2] One of the ways this is done is by creating spaces for women to voice their needs, concerns, and ideas, and by enabling women to join and benefit from LEDS initiatives. Jordan's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), for instance, calls for sector ministries to adopt the Action Plans suggested by the Program for Mainstreaming Gender in Climate Change Efforts in Jordan, including its objectives, actions, and indicators, and requires the Ministry of Environment to monitor and encourage implementation of gender responsive activities.

Integrating gender equality into LEDS implementation requires overcoming institutional, structural, social, economic, cultural, and financial barriers, by:

- ensuring that interministerial coordination includes the ministries of women's affairs or equivalent women's organizations
- both building the capacity of women's groups and institutions on climate change issues, and increasing decision makers' capacity and awareness on gender equality, to enable all stakeholders to speak the same language (in terms of official language and comprehension of technical jargon)
- democratizing financial mechanisms and removing bias toward small scale finance schemes, which are often more appropriate for gender responsive climate and energy projects or to support female-led businesses
- collecting sex disaggregated data to identify barriers and opportunities for women and men to benefit from interventions, including impact monitoring
- combining gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment measures to create a level playing field for both men and women and to move gender equality goals from ambition on paper to action on the ground.

Methodology and tools

Generating gender equality benefits through low emission development will require gender mainstreaming—assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, policy, or program—in all areas and at all levels, and developing a strategy to integrate women's and men's concerns into their design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Gender analyses of institutions, policies, and actions can shed light on women's and men's needs, interests, roles, and levels of participation, and can identify relevant stakeholders (see Resources). Gender mainstreaming can build on a wealth of existing tools and guidelines developed for selected regional contexts and sectors, such as integrating gender into forestry,[3] and in the energy sector.[4]

Important indicators to track include:

- women's access to information and participation in decision making processes
- women's participation in mitigation initiatives, including new job opportunities
- improvement in health and education rates due to use of cleaner (energy) technologies
- improvement in women's income generation as a result of LEDS interventions.

Case study
Gender action plans in Peru and Tuvalu

A Peruvian farmer at work in the marketplace (Photo credit: Bioversity International)

Recognizing that climate change has an important gender dimension, and in order to increase the benefits generated from climate change interventions for women and men, Peru has developed a Climate Change Gender Action Plan (ccGAP).[5] In preparation for the Peru ccGAP, the national context, climate change, and gender equality priorities were assessed. A participatory process was set in place to collect additional data, including a consultation process with women's groups. The analysis supported the identification of present and future contributions of women and men in the eight priority areas that make up Peru's climate change policy. This information was then translated into the activities, gender indicators, and expected results that constituted Peru's ccGAP.

Tuvalu's Energy Sector Development Project (ESDP) will support the country's target of 100% renewable energy and 30% efficiency improvements by 2020. The project considers gender equality as a crosscutting issue associated with energy development. A gender scoping study was undertaken during ESDP preparations, with a Gender Action Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework subsequently prepared. This will ensure men and women have equal input into the project's design and implementation, and share equally in the benefits of increased energy affordability.

Women in Nui island, Tuvalu participating in a UNDP cash for work programme (Photo credit: Silke von Brockhausen/UNDP)

The eight priority areas identified during the Peru ccGAP are:

- forests
- water
- energy
- food security
- solid waste management
- health
- education
- risk reduction management.

Resources

Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) guidelines, toolboxes and case studies	http://gender-climate.org/resource
GenderCC introduction to gender and climate change	http://comm.gendercc.net/course/view.php
IUCN G-REEN: The Gender and Renewable Energy Platform	http://genderandenvironment.org/energy
UNFCCC on gender and climate change	http://unfccc.int/gender_and_climate_change/items/7516.php
UNFCC Women and Gender Constituency	http://womengenderclimate.org

Aguilar, L. (2009) *Training manual on gender and climate change*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, UNDP and Global Gender and Climate Alliance.

Aguilar, L., Granat, M. and Owren, C. (2015) *Roots for the future: the landscape and way forward on gender and climate change*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN and Global Gender and Climate Alliance (on the gender dimension of adaptation, mitigation, finance, and more).

ENPI (2004) '*Glossary of gender and development terms*' in Toolkit on mainstreaming gender equality in EC development cooperation. European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.

UNDP (2012) *Gender and climate finance*. Gender and Climate Change Africa – Policy brief 5. New York: UNDP and Global Gender and Climate Alliance.

USAID and IUCN (2014) *Women at the forefront of the clean energy future*. USAID/IUCN Gender Equality for Climate Change Opportunities (GECCO) initiative.

Notes

1 Carter, N.M. and Wagner, H.M. (2011) *The bottom line: Corporate performance and women's representation on boards (2004–2008)*. New York: Catalyst.

2 IUCN and USAID (2016) *Gender in Mitigation Action*. EGI brief. Washington, DC: IUCN Global Gender Office.

3 Quesada-Aguilar, A., Blomstrom, E. and Jarrah, R. (2013) *From research to action, leaf by leaf: Getting gender right in the REDD+ social and environmental standards. Lessons from Action Research: Booklet 1*. Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) and the REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (SES) Secretariat.

4 UNIDO (2014) *Guide on gender mainstreaming: Energy and climate projects*. Vienna: United Nations Industrial Development Organization; ENERGIA (2011) *Mainstreaming gender in energy projects, a practical handbook*. The Hague: ENERGIA.

5 IUCN GGO (2015) *Peru Climate Change Gender Action Plan (ccGAP) Report*. IUCN Gender Equality for Climate Change Opportunities (GECCO) initiative.

The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN**) is an intergovernmental organization comprised of over 1,200 members, including more than 200 government and more than 900 nongovernment organizations. The Global Gender Office, based in Washington, DC, provides innovative approaches, technical support, policy development, and capacity building to a wide range of partners and IUCN members, ensuring gender equality is central to sustainable global environmental solutions. For over 20 years the Global Gender Office has addressed gender equality issues across various aspects of the environmental sector to ensure equitable sustainable development, including the facilitation of sector specific tools and methodologies such as Gender Action Plans. www.iucn.org and genderandenvironment.org

The **LEDS GP Benefits Assessment and Communication Working Group** focuses on identifying, communicating, and integrating social, economic, and environmental benefits associated with low emission pathways. The group works to advise on development impact assessment to provide tools and exchange knowledge and guidance on how to align development priorities with climate change policies and measures. Contact: benefits@ledsgp.org

The **Low Emission Development Strategies Global Partnership (LEDS GP)** was founded in 2011 to enhance coordination, information exchange, and cooperation among countries and international programs working to advance low emission, climate resilient growth. LEDS GP currently brings together LEDS leaders and practitioners from more than 160 countries and international institutions through innovative peer to peer learning and collaboration via forums and networks. www.ledsgp.org

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