

# Can the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Set New Best-Practice for Gender-Responsiveness? A Deep Dive ...

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Mechanisms*

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## GREEN CLIMATE FUND

- Centerpiece of UNFCCC long term finance commitments (Copenhagen & Paris Agreement)
  - Multilateral climate fund under the UNFCCC ( decision in Cancun/COP16; Governing Instrument approved after Transitional Committee design process at Durban COP 17)
  - Operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC ; serves in same role under the Paris Agreement
  - Independent Secretariat in Songdo/Incheon, South Korea opened in Dec. 2013
- Board (24 members, 12 from developed, 12 from developing countries; dedicated seat each for LDCs and SIDS); met 18 times
  - Initial Resource mobilization (IRM) netted US\$ 10.3 bn in pledges
  - Allows recipient countries **direct access**; but countries need to accredit a national implementing entity (NIE) or regional implementing entity (RIE) first
  - “country-driven approach” = importance of national planning documents (NAPA, NAPs, NAMAs, national development planning)
  - First multilateral climate fund with “gender-sensitive approach” from the outset
  - Since BM 11 (October 2015) approval of 54 projects/programmes (worth \$2.6 bn)

## The GCF and gender responsiveness

- Cancun decision 1/CP.16 established Green Climate Fund and a design process via a Transitional Committee (2011)
- Became fully operation in November 2015 with approval of first eight projects
- Early engagement of gender experts and women advocates (including hbs) in the design process (participation in TC meetings, technical submissions, focusing on integration of a gender perspective into all segments of operational design and policy-making by taking a holistic approach), resulting in GCF Governing Instrument
- Durban Decision 3/CP.17 approved [GCF Governing Instrument](#) with key references to gender -- **first climate fund with mandate to integrate gender considerations from the outset**
  - **“gender-sensitive approach”** in section on objectives and guiding principles (Art.3) → anchoring gender-responsiveness as cross-cutting issue
  - **gender-balance** as goal for Board and Secretariat staff (Arts. 11 and 21)
  - **gender aspects of stakeholder involvement** to develop fund priorities (Art.31)
  - **women as crucial group** for input and participation in the design, decision on and implementation of strategies and activities of the Fund (Art. 71)

# Objectives and guiding principles of the GCF

## Para 2, Governing Instrument:

*The Fund will contribute to the achievement of the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). **In the context of sustainable development, the Fund will promote the paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways** by providing support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change, taking into account the needs of those developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The Fund will be **guided by the principles and provisions of the Convention.***

## Para 3, Governing Instrument:

*The Fund will pursue a **country-driven approach** and promote and strengthen engagement at the country level through the **effective involvement of relevant institutions and stakeholders**. The Fund will be scalable and flexible and will be a continuously learning institution guided by processes for monitoring and evaluation. The Fund will strive to maximize the impacts of its funding for adaptation and mitigation, and seek a balance between the two, while promoting **environmental, social, economic and development co-benefits** and taking a **gender-sensitive approach**.*



### GCF Result Areas -- Project/Program Impacts

Can be public or private sector projects/programmes that have one or more impacts in:

#### Mitigation

- Reduced emissions through **increased low-emission energy access and power generation**
- Reduced emissions through **increased access to low-emission transport**
- Reduced emissions from **buildings, cities, industries and appliances**
- Reduced emissions from **land use, deforestation, forest degradation, and through sustainable management of forests, and conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks**

#### Adaptation

- **Increased resilience and enhanced livelihoods** of the most vulnerable people, communities, and regions
- Increased resilience of **health and well-being, and food and water security**
- Increased **resilience of infrastructure and the built environment** to climate change threats
- Increased **resilience of ecosystems and ecosystem services**

## Gender advocacy in GCF with “dual strategy”:

- Persistent **lobby by CSOs** ([led by hbs](#)) for a GCF gender policy and action plan (after long delays, finally adopted at BM9 in March 2015)
  - Policy is currently under revision – proposed new “**Gender and Social Inclusion**” (**GESI**) Policy -- could be adopted at B.19 -- some CSO concerns
  - Weakness of original GCF gender policy decision: “**national contextualization**” (Lima Gender Programme Formulation) – to be avoided in gender policy update
- Additionally, right away focus on outreach to Board members and GCF Secretariat (via technical submissions, policy analysis etc.) on the **early and simultaneous integration of gender considerations in key operational policies**, including
  - **accreditation requirements** (f.ex. public and commercial banks acting as financial intermediary of GCF resources with own gender policy and capacity)
  - **results management and performance measurement**
  - inclusion in **investment criteria**;
  - Provision of **readiness support financing**, including to improve gender capacity of NDAs and gender inclusion in country project/program pipelines

## Gender integration in key GCF operational policies

Gender advocacy mainstreaming focus = early integration of gender considerations as key operational policies were developed & approved, incl.

- **Accreditation requirements:** all applicant entities (public & private) need to show gender competency (policy/action plan & track record); missing gender policy as conditionality before first GCF finance disbursement (f.ex. DB, but also CSE)
- **Results management & performance measurement:** mandate for gender integration in portfolio level adaptation & mitigation PMF (via sub-indicators); however, no mandatory gender indicators at project level (only can option/choice)
- **Investment criteria:** explicit as sub-criteria under main criteria, f.ex. on “sustainable development impact” and “needs of recipients” – first application needs improvements (ITAP capacity; proposal approval process)
- **Readiness and preparatory support** via NDA/focal point support for country coordination & stakeholder engagement (human resource development, TA, workshops, outreach activities, pipeline development; gender capacity building )
- **Enhanced Direct Access Pilot Approach:** gender consideration included in US\$ 200 Mio Pilot (f.ex. via Small Grants Facility approaches SANBI/AF) as part of TOR for request for proposals (in national oversight/national decision-making)

# HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG

## NORTH AMERICA

### Basic Fiduciary Standards

Key administrative and financial capacities  
Transparency and accountability

### Specialized Fiduciary Standards

Project management

Grant award and/or funding allocation mechanisms

On-lending and/or blending

### Gender Policy

Policies and procedures, competencies, and track record

### Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

#### Institutional ESMS policy-level:

✓ **Performance Standard (PS) 1:** Assessment and management of relevant PS1-8 environmental and social risks and impacts through an environmental and social management (ESMS)

#### Project-level:

- ✓ **PS2:** Labor and working conditions
- ✓ **PS3:** Resource efficiency and pollution prevention
- ✓ **PS4:** Community health, safety & security
- ✓ **PS5:** Land acquisition & involuntary resettlement
- ✓ **PS6:** Biodiversity conservation & sustainable management of living natural resources
- ✓ **PS7:** Indigenous peoples
- ✓ **PS8:** Cultural heritage

# HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG

## NORTH AMERICA

### The Fund's Six High-level Investment Criteria\*

#### Impact potential

Potential of the programme/project to contribute to the achievement of the Fund's objectives and result areas

#### Paradigm shift potential

Degree to which the proposed activity can catalyze impact beyond a one-off project or programme investment

#### Sustainable development potential

Wider benefits and priorities, including environmental, social, and economic co-benefits as well as **gender-sensitive development impact**

#### Responsive to recipients needs

Vulnerability and financing needs of the beneficiary country and **population in the targeted group**

#### Promote country ownership

Beneficiary country ownership of and capacity to implement a funded project or programme (policies, climate strategies and institutions)

#### Efficiency & effectiveness

Economic and, if appropriate, financial soundness of the program/project, and for mitigation-specific programs/projects, cost-effectiveness and co-financing

\* The Fund is currently developing assessment methodologies.

# GCF Gender policy and action plan – adopted March 2015

## Principles of current **GCF GENDER POLICY**:

- **Commitment** to contribute to gender equality
- **Comprehensiveness** in scope and coverage of all GCF activities
- **Accountability** = monitoring gender impacts – RMF/PMF, GCF Management & staff, IRM
- **Country-Ownership** – NDAs/focal points informed
- **Gender competencies** – staff, key advisory & decision-making bodies & readiness support
- **Resource allocation** contributes to gender equality, including via – if necessary – targeted funding for women’s activities

## GCF Gender Action Plan (2015-2017) Priority Areas:

- **Governance and institutional structure** – appointment of senior gender specialist
- **Administrative and operational guidelines** – guidance for NDAs and IEs
- **Capacity building** -- gender training for GCF external partners and GCF Board and staff
- **Monitoring and reporting** – integration in RMF; specific gender portfolio indicators
- **Resource allocation and budgeting** – extra weight for good gender-integrated projects ?
- **Knowledge generation and communication** – support for knowledge exchange, part of GCF communication outreach

## Proposed new Gender and Social Inclusion Policy (GESI)

- Review process mandate since 2015, but delayed – B.19 (March 2018) consideration
- Missed opportunity to do a thorough desk review of gender integration in GCF approved project proposals – very differing quality, lots of shortcomings

### Positive:

- Articulated human-rights based approach – proposes human rights compliance mechanism
- Mandates inclusion of gender and social expertise in Board committees and panels
- Proposes detailed new 3 year Gender Action Logframe with indicators, responsibilities and budget
- Highlights need for targeted resource allocation – BUT: does not provide for possibility of set-asides; does not articulate that projects without sufficient gender integration will not be funded

### Concerns:

- **GESI** approach might reduce the primary focus on gender equality and women's empowerment
- Widening of approach not accompanied by more internal staff capacity/dedicated funding

### **Detailed CSO Submission:**

[https://us.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2012/10/gcf\\_gesi\\_draft\\_policy\\_-\\_joint\\_cso\\_submission\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://us.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2012/10/gcf_gesi_draft_policy_-_joint_cso_submission_final_version.pdf)



## Goal vs. reality: GCF gender balance

### GCF Board Gender Balance (as of October 2017):

- of 24 Board members, 6 were women (25%)  
(with 8 female alternate Board members)

## Gender Balance GCF Secretariat Staff (October 2017)

Filled positions		Geographical distribution		Gender balance	
Level	Headcount	Developed	Developing	Male	Female
IS-level	107	40 (37%)	67 (63%)	64 (60%)	43 (40%)
AS-level	27	4 (15%)	23 (85%)	8 (30%)	19 (70%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>44 (33%)</b>	<b>90 (67%)</b>	<b>72 (54%)</b>	<b>62 (46%)</b>

Abbreviations: AS = administrative support staff, IS = international professional staff.

## Key opportunities and challenges for improvement

- Strategic plan (mentions gender sensitivity, but insufficiently )
- Integration in **private sector MSME approach** (ongoing RFP for US\$200 Mio); GCF subsidies/financial support must be passed on to women entrepreneurs as end costumers, f.ex. in the form of easily accessible green credit lines for highly concessional, patient small-scale loans
- Strengthening of **Fund-level stakeholder participation mechanism** and improvement to **national level stakeholder participation guidance for NDAs**;
- **Participatory monitoring approach** as part of M&A framework – currently underdeveloped
- Improvements in **project proposal process/ initial project cycle** – weak/insufficiently documented stakeholder participation, weak gender integration, non-funded project gender action plans
- Integration of **gender expertise in key GCF panels and groups**– Ind. Technical Advisory Group (iTAP), Accreditation Panel, Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG)
- Potential establishment of a **Gender Advisory Group**
- **Accountability mechanisms set up**– “gender skills” as part of expertise asked for candidate recruitment; Ind. Evaluation Unit (IEU) with explicit criteria to focus on gender integration; Ind. Redress Mechanism (IRM) – ease of accessibility untested
- Participation of **gender/women’s groups as IEs & Executing Entities (EEs)**

## Integration of gender in GCF projects/programs: What works? What's missing?

- So far [54 approved projects/programs](#) worth 2.6 billion since November 2015 (B.11)
- **Project/program-specific gender & social impact analysis is mandatory** for all proposals, but so far project/program-specific gender action plans are not – TO DO for gender policy review
- Project/Program Gender Assessments and Action Plans only published since B.15 → suspicion that they don't exist for first 20+ GCF projects/programs approved
- Board has so far only imposed weak/missing gender assessment and action plan as conditionality before funding disbursement for one project ([AFD in Morocco](#)) → weak enforcement
- Varying quality of published gender assessments and action plans with frequent significant shortcomings:
  - Gender Action Plan as list of activities, but without clear indicators, responsibilities or assigned budgets
  - Assessment/Action are “outsourced” to consultants, with no gender expert/expertise in project/program implementation unit by Implementing Entity = no internal learning
  - Treated as an **add-on of activities**, but not sufficiently integrated in overall project design, including in overall budget and indicator log-frame

## GCF Project Example – Board mandated efforts to improve gender responsiveness

[FP042](#) -- GCF agricultural resilience/water provision project in Morocco Boudnib Plain with AFD implementing – gender assessment provided was insufficient, gender action plan missing entirely

Board approved project nevertheless at B.16, but as a condition for finance disbursements asks for elaborated gender action plan addressing:

- How women in the oasis region benefit from resilience efforts (for example diversification of economic livelihoods) and oasis water infrastructure upgrades (pumps) -- are their domestic water needs for the household also considered?
- What role do women have in local water management structures making decisions about water use in affected oasis → potential quota for engagement
- Gender-specific outreach and capacity-building to reflect different needs and capacities of men and women.

→ **Need for clear policy/communication to accredited entities and NDAs** that project/program proposals without sufficiently articulated and integrated gender dimensions will not be considered by the Board (Adaptation Fund has such a provision).

## Women/gender advocacy priority actions

### Fund-level:

- Continued technical input and gendered analysis of seemingly “unrelated” policies
  - Protecting grant financing, including full cost grant financing, in GCF
  - Pushing back against artificial dividing line between development adaptation (rejection of some GCF proposals with dedicated gender focus as “too much development”)
- Focus on improvements to the project approval process – two stage process proposed
  - Mandatory concept note stage would allow for early information and early input opportunity
  - currently project pipeline is nontransparent, project information comes too late
- Push to finalize GCF Environmental and Social Management Framework with **Environmental and Social Policy, Indigenous Peoples Policy, Review of Observer Participation** in Board proceedings (all scheduled for B.19)

### Recipient Country level:

- Women/gender groups must make their interest in GCF/presence known to NDAs, NIEs, other IEs operating in country – f.ex. offering their capacity as executing entities; making sure that GCF country programs (submitted by NDAs) include gender considerations
- Critical monitoring of proposed project/programs, as well as their implementation

## Further Information:

Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America: <https://us.boell.org>

Climate Funds Update: [www.climatefundsupdate.org](http://www.climatefundsupdate.org)

Hbs Green Climate Fund Dossier with GCF Country Info Database:

<https://us.boell.org/green-climate-fund-dossier-0>

Hbs Green Climate Fund Dossier Gender Focus:

<https://us.boell.org/2014/10/09/gender-gcf>

Climate Finals Fundamentals ([CFFs](#)) in English, French and Spanish:

- on [Gender & Climate Finance](#)
- on the [Green Climate Fund](#) (GCF)

**Thank you!**