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Overview and Strategic Plan

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1. Introduction

GenderCC - Women For Climate Justice is the global network of women's organisations and networks, activists and civil society organisations emphasizing gender perspectives, and gender experts from all world regions working for women's rights, gender and climate justice. The network is serviced by the organisation of the same name, registered in early 2008 as a not-for-profit charitable organisation in Berlin, Germany.

GenderCC has evolved in the context of the UNFCCC process but its activities, connections and learnings include women and gender experts at all levels, as well as in policy, research and practical implementation. The founders and leaders of *GenderCC* represent a broad range of approaches from research to grass roots activities to strong advocacy programmes. All are working at various levels in their home countries and regions, and internationally on women, gender and climate issues and related areas.

GenderCC continues to evolve, growing its network, expertise and experience. The present document gives an overview of our current thinking and activities.

2. Mission

2.1. Vision

The change we envision is fundamental. *GenderCC* believes that in order to achieve women's rights, gender justice and climate justice, fundamental changes are necessary to overcome the existing systems of power, politics, and economics.

The challenges of climate change and gender injustice resemble each other - they require whole system change: not just gender mainstreaming but transforming gender relations and societal structures. Not just technical amendments to reduce emissions, but real mitigation through awareness and change of unsustainable life-styles and the current ideology and practice of unlimited economic growth. Not the perpetuation of the current division of resources and labour but a responsible cooperative approach to achieving sustainable and equitable societies.

We believe that ***linking women's rights, gender justice and climate justice*** is key to achieving these fundamental changes. This is a question of justice and equity as much as a matter of quality and effectiveness of decisions.

Our understanding of ***women's rights and gender justice*** is that of societies that honour and support the contribution and rights of all members in equal measure, while acknowledging specific needs and interests so that injustices are overcome and everyone enjoys the same responsibility, freedom and support to develop their potentials.

We believe it is important to specify our demands and vision as ***women's rights and gender justice***. General terms like 'people', 'rights', or 'justice' are assumed and or claimed as automatically already including women and gender considerations but that is often not the case. In the context of climate change, this means to explain the gender sensitive aspects of adaptation and mitigation, such as: specifying how women and men experience climate change differently, how climate change increases and multiplies existing gender injustices, how women and men contribute differently in terms of emissions, and how they take differential responsibilities in managing life and livelihoods.

Climate justice, equity and sustainable development are fundamental considerations in the debate on climate change but often left out of mainstream discourse. Yet all forms of injustices based on sex, gender, race and class, colonial and post-colonial dependencies that have existed for centuries will only be reaffirmed, and possibly aggravated, in the current system of dealing with climate change.

Yet equal rights for all human beings and equity within and between nations are paramount in activities and negotiations.

Climate change, caused by human activities, is threatening the lives and livelihoods of billions of people and the existence of millions of species. We need to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions dramatically, while at the same time raising the quality of life for the majority of the world's people.

For climate related policies to actually work, we must stop promoting false solutions that allow the rich to avoid the major changes they need to make, help corporations to increase their profits and have negative knock-on effects on the world's poor and the planet's ecosystem. We need a just transition to a low-carbon society that protects people's rights, jobs and well-being. The right to survive is not negotiable; and neither should the rights to development and to maintain a level of development. Natural resources must be conserved for the common good, not privatized and unsustainably exploited. Local communities' sovereignty over land, energy, forests and water must be upheld and reclaimed.

It is not possible to develop and execute a 'master plan' for **whole system change**. Diverse strategies and mechanisms must be cultivated to initiate changes that will increase the likelihood of a systemic shift occurring. Changes need to include small and large, internal and external transformations - affecting individuals, relationships, structures and institutions, and cultures.

Furthermore, different ways of communicating and collaborating are required, moving beyond traditional concepts of leadership and beyond individual thinking and individually-led action. When exploring current systems and scoping potential change, we need *learning processes* instead of, or at least prior to, *negotiation*. We need truly frank, inclusive and equitable dialogue that helps collective intelligence to emerge instead of settings that are pitching one interest against the other, resulting in the least common denominator at the best of times.

2.2. Goals

GenderCC is working to achieve gender and climate justice by:

- Raising awareness and building capacity relating to gender and climate issues among decision-makers and others working on climate change in order to achieve improved policies;
- Raising awareness and building capacity relating to gender and climate issues among women (and men) worldwide in order to increase pressure on policy-makers for effective mitigation and adaptation;
- Increasing the global knowledge base on gender and climate issues through research, action learning and frequent knowledge exchange to identify a growing host of options for most effective mitigation and adaptation
- Developing more effective climate protection and adaptation through empowering women and men to make maximum, active contributions to mitigation and adaptation measures, while denouncing the disproportionately negative impacts imposed on women by false solutions;
- Increasing the participation of women in the formal policy making process, including grass roots women;
- Raising awareness and capacity building on gender and climate change issues among youth and children;

- Bridging the gap between local action and decision making by bringing local experiences to the decision making levels through advocacy and lobbying;
- Strengthening the capacity of the GenderCC members to effectively participate in climate change negotiations through training, facilitating sharing of information and experiences;

2.3. Guiding Principles

The main principles that guide our work are *creating strategic linkages and combining different strategies* as well as principles of good *governance*:

Implementing diverse strategies: GenderCC believes that an integrated approach, working both within and outside the current system of decision-making on climate change is crucial to achieve climate justice.

Current processes and mechanisms are not enough and do not provide the spaces to develop innovation and drastic collaborative action. We need to create opportunities to ask what development is supposed to be, and who defines that for whom? How much of the current system of nation states and sovereignty can be maintained when designing a truly effective system of climate protection? Is human well-being indeed defined by economic well-being? Can we develop beyond mastering nature to understanding ecology and live as integral parts of natural systems?

However, we also believe that it is crucially important to achieve the best possible outcome in the existing decision-making processes, and to use those for spreading information and changing opinions of decision-makers and stakeholders. Simultaneously, initiatives to change the current dynamics of existing decision making process must be going on within the system

Hence, we are integrating several strategies to achieve change, and whenever we can afford it, we protest and establish alternative spaces; bring grass roots voices to the fore of campaigns and into decision-making; and advocate and negotiate inside the corridors of power, while ostensibly linking one to the other.

Gender mainstreaming and a feminist vision: The injustices between women and men cannot be eliminated solely by way of gender mainstreaming, participation and emancipation. Hence, the problems of climate change and justice cannot be adequately analyzed without considering the social category of gender and the power relations between both genders. It is not enough to focus on the “victims” of gender injustice. Instead, there needs to be a systematic confrontation with the structures that are the source of disadvantages as the factors that perpetuate injustice.

If the question of justice is posed in a critical feminist setting, it cannot lead to an ideal and perpetual status: justice is not achieved once and for all. Instead, it will have to be established again and again in a process where questions about justice will uncover injustices.

Feminist theory and thought about such issues as sharing and caring, of putting human beings before economic gain in order to achieve sustainable and equitable societies are important for “thinking outside the box” and taking steps toward a rethinking of the way societies and economies can function without leading to climate catastrophe.

Linking local, national and global: Experiences and requirements from the ground need to be brought to the UN fora. Vice versa, decisions and discussions from the international negotiations need to be conveyed to the grass roots for further campaigning, education and enabling action. Climate change related action demands full and informed participa-

tion of each individual in order to bring about the needed changes to either mitigate or adapt successfully, indeed even to arrive at mitigation and adaptation policies that are socially and environmentally healthy and just. For this to happen, intensive campaigns on the realities of the situation, on the policies that are decided and the processes that make them, need to reach as large and widespread a public as possible. Intensive, high quality information and education materials on all aspects of climate change itself as well as the policies being undertaken must be made accessible and available to local communities.

Influencing and collaborating: GenderCC is working within a landscape of different stakeholders, groups, organisations and individuals who pursue a range of diverse respective interests. It is useful to differentiate between *strategic partners* and *boundary partners*:¹

For GenderCC, the main boundary partners are *governments* as they create the legal and economic frameworks for climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as affirmative action and other measures towards achieving women's rights and gender justice.

Yet GenderCC also wishes to influence those who *finance* climate change related activities (IGOs, donor agencies, foundations); the *private sector* as regards economic activities that destroy the environment and disadvantage women; *local communities* as they need to act as responsible custodians of their natural resources and their traditional knowledge; and *NGOs* as they at times have significant influence on policy-making as well public awareness. Organizations working with grass roots people (for example, community based adaptation activities) are also considered as boundary partners.

2.4. Underlying Assumptions and Theories of Change

We seek to clearly convey the reasoning that underpins our activities so that we foster mutual understanding and learn from our experiences. We do not pretend to know all that is necessary in order to achieve women's rights, gender justice and climate justice but we are committed to considering all we collectively know and to learning all we can in order to find out what really works to achieve change.

In the table below, we differentiate some of our assumptions on what we need to do to achieve the desired changes, and how this underpins our activities. Each quadrant represents a distinct approach to change, focusing on changing individuals, relationships, structures, or culture.²

¹ Stakeholders can be defined as individuals, organisations or social groups who influence, or can influence a decision (policy, project, etc), or who are affected by it. - We are using the concepts developed in Outcome Mapping (IDRC and others): strategic partners are (potential) allies whom we want to work with to achieve our goals. Boundary partners are those who we wish to change in order to achieve our goals.

² The theory-of-change concept is a useful tool in this context: We all distil our life experience in a certain way and draw conclusions from our experience about how the world works and how, as a result of that, we can achieve our goals and changes we wish to see. Our theories of change can be quite different, depending on our culture, our education and life experiences. The table captures a framework used by the Generative Change Community (www.gc-community.net). Two streams of work have been integrated: the literature on social conflict and conflict transformation, which identifies four dimensions in which conflict creates change and where change must occur for conflict to be transformed to lasting peace, and the four quadrants of Integral Theory. See Lederach, J. P., R. Neufeldt, et al. (2007). *Reflective Peace building: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit*. The Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame. - Wilber, K. (2003). *Introduction to Integral Theory and Practice: IOS Basic and the AQAL Map*.

Four Dimensions of Sustainable Change

<p>Individual: Personal transformation is necessary to achieve gender and climate justice</p> <p><i>If we believe that individuals are key, then we typically work to help individuals develop greater self-awareness; educate to broaden knowledge base; train to increase competencies and skills; and review assumptions, mindsets, mental models.</i></p> <p>GenderCC works to, for example: provide access to information for women around the world; promote the empowerment of women (which will enhance their participation); educate policy makers on gender aspects of climate change (which will increase the likelihood of achieving appropriate structural changes).</p>	<p>Relationships: Transforming relationships is key to achieving gender and climate justice</p> <p><i>If we believe that relationships are key, then we typically work to build trust between individuals, groups, sectors; promote respect and recognition between women and men; increase knowledge and awareness of interdependence of women and men; and change patterns of dysfunctional relations in families, workplaces, and politics.</i></p> <p>GenderCC works to, for example: include male gender experts in its working groups and activities; collaborate with other stakeholder groups such as trade unions, Indigenous Peoples, Youth and others in advocacy and practical implementation; promote inclusive processes of planning and decision-making.</p>
<p>Culture: Transforming collective patterns of thinking and acting is key to achieving gender and climate justice</p> <p><i>If we believe that culture is key, then we typically work to change the unwritten rules and values that sustain patterns of exclusion of women and maintain their subordination; explore and transform implicit collective habits of thinking and behaviour; promote a more inclusive, participatory culture of “civic engagement”, in particular women’s participation in decision-making; and transform patterns of overly simplistic and distorted discourse about women and men and their roles in society.</i></p> <p>GenderCC works to, for example: increase women’s and gender experts’ participation in climate related policy making processes; promote the understanding of climate change and climate protection as a matter of justice and sustainable development; reach out to women at all levels and ordinary citizens to inform about climate change and related policies.</p>	<p>Structures / Systems: Transforming structures, processes, mechanisms is key to achieving gender and climate justice</p> <p><i>If we believe that structures and systems are key, then we typically work to lobby for more just policies, greater transparency and accountability, institutional reform; creating just and equitable allocation of resources and services; and reforming processes of participation, decision-making, and budget allocation.</i></p> <p>GenderCC works to, for example: develop and advocate for policies, laws, procedures, mechanisms that promote women’s rights, gender justice and climate justice (which will impact individuals, relationships, and culture over time), including gender mainstreaming mechanisms such as quota systems for equal participation of women, compulsory gender impact assessment, gender budgeting, and other mechanisms that help to build women’s capacities; set up gender institutions within decision-making processes, e.g. the constituency status within UNFCCC, a high level advisory board on gender, etc.</p>

3. Strategic Activity Areas

Given the diversity and different contexts of work within GenderCC, we constantly check who can do what in her respective country and region, and her context of work in policy, research, or implementation, and how we can coordinate for optimum impact. Actions taken at the national and international level, respectively, should interconnect, bearing in mind that acting at the international level is based on the experience at the local and national level and reflects back. The slogan “*emissions down, women’s rights up*” is central to our advocacy, awareness raising and campaigning. All other demands for structural change, against false solutions, etc. are based on that: unless emissions are reduced, there is no way how women’s rights and the right to development can be fulfilled. The same applies the other way round: there is no climate justice without gender justice.

Our diversity of background, expertise and strategies is key to our strength: “*We are a forest, we don’t want to be a monoculture tree plantation. We are trees, we are flowers, and our common goal is climate justice*” (Titi Soentoro, 2008).

3.1. Developing GenderCC

Conceptual Development: We believe that gender-mainstreaming is an important concept and a set of useful tools, necessary to ensure women’s participation and the inclusion of gender aspects into the debates. Yet it is not enough to achieve the fundamental shifts we envision. We believe our challenge is to develop a broader feminist vision beyond gender-mainstreaming. GenderCC wishes to invest in developing that thinking and engage in dialogue with others about our ideas.

Network Development: We believe that in order to be most effective, GenderCC should be powerful, broad and diverse, with maximum outreach and ability to mobilize. The GenderCC network should grow to include women and gender experts, individuals and organisations from more countries, backgrounds, and sectors and at all levels.

Reflection and learning: We also believe that we need spaces and opportunities for conversations and learning to address questions of a more fundamental nature and develop our thinking, knowledge and strategies. This can include convening or co-hosting conferences and workshops that allow exchange and dialogue across sectors, countries and backgrounds - broadly within the GenderCC membership as well as beyond. Exposure and training programs for policy makers can also be conducted to provide opportunities for innovative dialogue between decision-makers, communities, indigenous women, activists, and others.

3.2. Awareness Raising & Capacity Building

We believe that a better informed civil society and general public create more pressure on the climate policy process to deliver the radical decisions that are needed. Knowledge changes individuals’ opinions and empowers them to act.

3.3. Networking and Alliance Building

We believe that we can multiply our resources and impacts, create more pressure, and synergies when working with other groups, organisations, and individuals. Most men will also support GenderCC once they have understood the issues and seen positive impacts.

3.4. Research

We believe that research can and should deliver facts and knowledge that prove the necessity of gender-just climate related policies, and we wish to base our analysis and recommendations on fact-based evidence wherever possible.

3.5. Pilot projects

We work to engage in gender and climate related projects on the ground in all parts of the world, including pilot projects on mitigation and adaptation. We will facilitate exchange among GenderCC members and pilot projects and aim to collaborate with other groups and networks.

3.6. Campaigning

We believe that UNFCCC is neither truly open to women's demands nor able to come to the necessary radical decisions to solve the problem of climate change. Therefore, media attention is necessary to create political pressure on the process.

3.7. Advocacy in the UNFCCC Process

Some of our activities are based on the assumption that the UNFCCC framework can produce a fair deal that can guide the world towards real mitigation and provide for adaptation to climate change. While we engage in advocacy and lobbying with the process, we are keeping in mind that the UNFCCC framework mirrors the world's power structure. It favours the interests of the wealthiest and more powerful industrialized countries although they are the ones who contribute most to global warming, while those who suffer most from climate change lead mostly low-carbon life-styles but are represented with the smallest delegations.

Faced with the exclusion of women and gender expertise in the UNFCCC process it makes sense to demand being heard within this process. With the status of WOMEN & GENDER constituency we advance our struggle for ensuring that women's voices are present in the process.

3.8. Advocacy on National Level Policy Making

We believe that if women participate everywhere and gender-mainstreaming tools are available and used, then an important step towards meeting women's demands and needs and including them in policy making is being made. The national level is very important to GenderCC as a whole; it's here that gender differentiations really become apparent.

4. Structure and Governance

4.1. Entities

GenderCC is structured in several entities:

General Membership: Individuals, groups and organisations that have the potential to contribute to GenderCC's work, e.g. participate in working groups, engage in advocacy, or become focal points, etc. should be particularly encouraged to join.

GenderCC Steering Group (SG): Individuals from around the world, providing the main leadership functions of GenderCC; agreeing the mission statement, policies, and strategic plans, etc.; overseeing implementation; initiating monitoring and evaluation activities; inviting additional members into the SG; overseeing the work of the international secretariat, representing GenderCC formally towards the outside. The current Steering Group has developed from a large circle of women and organizations participating in discussions and development of perspectives on gender and climate change over the years.

GenderCC International Secretariat: currently located in Berlin, Germany, where the organisation was founded and registered, and acting as an administrator and central service point for the network. Staff and interns formally report to the members of the formal Board of Directors, who are also Steering Group members present in Berlin.

GenderCC Board of Directors: GenderCC is registered in Germany as a not-for-profit, charitable organisation. According to German law, there has to be a Board of Directors who takes ultimate financial responsibility.

GenderCC Focal Points: Individuals in every (sub-)region, working to enhance outreach into the regions; further anchor GenderCC international activities in the realities of women and communities on the ground; provide avenues of channelling experiences and interests from local and regional to international level; and provide a vehicle for building learning platforms and exchange opportunities across regions and countries within GenderCC.

Finally, the **GenderCC wider network** is represented by the list serve with several hundred subscribers, including individuals and organisations who are not formally GenderCC members.

4.2. Decision-making

Developing GenderCC positions: Principally, GenderCC positions and key documents should be developed in consultation with all members (via a specific list serve for GenderCC members).

When GenderCC positions that have been developed in consultation with members are being articulated and published in specific documents like submissions to UNFCCC, press releases and the like, consulting the SG will suffice.

Decision-making at the Secretariat: Urgent decisions in the day-to-day running of GenderCC may also be made at the discretion of the secretariat, if possible including phone consultations with members of the SG.

Quorum: We aim for consensus decisions within the Steering Group. If that is not possible then the standard quorum requirement is a simple majority for standard situations and decisions. For some decisions 2/3 majority may be necessary - e.g. accepting or rejecting certain donors with large contributions that are rejected by some; changes in the governance structure, location and registration of the organisation; moving the secretariat; decision-making processes.

Annual Plan and Budget: As stated in German law, both annual plans and budgets need to be put in front of all GenderCC members at an Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM also needs to agree the Board's annual reports on activities and finances. In the future, GenderCC will hold AGMs on the margins of the annual UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties.

4.3. Funding

GenderCC has been and is being funded by a number of developed country governments, foundations, and development NGOs.

GenderCC is in the process of developing its guiding principles of accepting financial support, without generally excluding certain kinds of funding (e.g. Auctioning of Carbon Credits in Europe, UNDP). The main criterion is whether a donor is, or could likely be trying to influence positions or activities of GenderCC.

Some members of the core group strongly object to GenderCC being funded by IFI's such as the World Bank, the IMF, the ADB or certain donor country agencies like USAID. Other criteria include, for example: not exploiting women; not causing destruction of natural environments that cause impoverishment, violence, discrimination, etc. to women.