



Anklamer Str. 38  
10115 Berlin, Germany  
+49.30.21980088  
secretariat@gendercc.net  
www.gendercc.net

## Recommendations to national governments on gender-responsive climate policy

During the 'Gender into Urban Climate Change Initiative' project, women's organisations assessed the climate policies of cities with a gender lens, applying the 'Gender Assessment and Monitoring of Mitigation and Adaptation' (GAMMA) approach. Later on, the methodology was adapted to national levels and applied in four countries: India, Indonesia, South Africa, and Mexico.

Shortcomings revealed through this process include a lack of awareness, knowledge and consideration of the gender dimensions of climate change. Yet, without taking gender equality into account, climate policy can aggravate gender and social inequality. On the other hand, climate policy can yield a multitude of co-benefits such as improved air quality and health, conservation of biodiversity, enhanced liveability of human settlements, job creation and enhanced resilience not only to the impacts of climate change but also to other constraints and hazards. Most of these co-benefits can only be achieved if social and gender dimensions are properly integrated.

As a result of the project, we offer here a set of selected recommendations to national governments with a special emphasis on how to support local government to develop and implement gender-responsive climate policies.

### Principles

Governments should recognize

- That gender equality is about gender roles and norms, and power relations, and needs to take the underprivileged role of women into account, as well as the privileges of men;
- That gender equality is about gender diversity, rather than a binary concept;
- That women and other disadvantaged genders and groups are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and at the same time play a key role in the responses to climate change as active subjects with autonomy, dignity and their own needs and interests;
- That gender-responsive climate policy must be based on the right to water, food, energy and mobility services, land, decent housing and



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- health, and must include gender-just transitions towards sustainable and localized economies;
- That traditional knowledge systems, innovation and technologies developed at the local level by women in their communities must be acknowledged, as well as women's capacities to advance their leadership for community resilience and for gender-responsive climate policies.

### **Institutions, governance and participation**

Governments should better coordinate their work between different secretariats, ministries, and agencies, including involving departments and agencies in charge of gender equality.

The establishment of Gender Focal Desks within key departments can ensure that gender perspectives are incorporated into policies, programmes, and annual budgeting. Creating a special institution that deals with gender mainstreaming in climate policies and actions at national, provincial, and municipal levels should be considered.

Governments should identify networks and organisations that can support communication and sensitisation initiatives at the national, regional and local levels in order to work towards large scale social mobilisation and communication.

Governments should ensure the representation and involvement of women's organisations and civil society organisations representing other vulnerable groups, as well as gender experts in formulating, implementing, and evaluating climate policies and actions at all levels, in order to bridge the gap between government and citizens.

### **Adaptation and Mitigation Policies**

Governments should ensure gender mainstreaming in all climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, including developing a gender action plan, and allocating budget to gender-responsive action.

Existing policies and plans need to be reviewed for their gender-responsiveness, in particular NDCs. This process can build on the GAMMA approach and should include consultations involving gender experts and representatives of civil society organisations working on gender equality and climate change.

Government should increase awareness and knowledge about gender equality and climate change among national, regional and local



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governments and should provide capacity building and training on the gender dimensions of climate change, as well as on practical approaches to develop, implement and monitor gender-responsive policies.

### **Finance**

Governments should substantially increase climate financing mechanisms with a demonstrated positive gender impact.

Government should apply gender-responsive budgeting for all climate change related actions.

### **Research, knowledge and capacity-building**

Governments should encourage and fund research on gender issues in climate change, and should collect gender and sex-disaggregated data.

Traditional knowledge of local communities, as well as women's knowledge should be acknowledged, gathered and included into the planning of policies and measures.

Governments need to strengthen the design and implementation of gender analysis instruments and indicators, as well as the qualitative analysis of power relations between all the diversity genders.

Institutional capacity building and training needs to cover the gender dimensions of climate change, as well as approaches to integrate gender equality into priorities, policies, programmes and projects.

### **Horizontal and vertical collaboration and coordination**

National governments should recognise the unique role of local government in developing and implementing climate actions, in particular in urban planning and urban development.

National government should lead by example in mainstreaming gender into climate policy, and support subnational and local government on gender integration through guidance, training and finance. Moreover, greater vertical inter-institutional coordination between different government levels should be promoted.

National governments should assist cities to integrate gender into their climate change policies by providing cities with access to regional networks and facilitating the sharing of information, experiences, and best practices.



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National policies should give authority to cities to enhance public transport infrastructure and make financial resources and capacity available to create accessible, affordable and safe public transport systems.

Equally, governments should give the power to cities to procure their own clean energy and use renewables to improve electricity access for its citizens. Especially smaller cities should be supported with the technical and logistical capacity needed to seize this opportunity and develop business models that will benefit women, young people and marginalised groups in communities.

Practitioners' experience and knowledge from local and regional government can also provide useful inputs to policy-making at national levels. Innovative mitigation and adaptation actions at local levels should be evaluated using national resources, in order to make them available for replication on a larger scale.

Governments, both in the Global South and North, should collaborate on practical approaches towards gender-responsive climate policy.

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"Gender Into Urban Climate Change Initiative" was a project led by Gender CC-Women for Climate Justice and conducted in collaboration with All India Women's Conference, Aksi! for gender, social and ecological justice and Solidaritas Perempuan in Indonesia, GenderCC Southern Africa and Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia in Mexico.

The project was launched in 2015 and was part of the International Climate Initiative (IKI), supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) on the basis of a decision adopted by the German Bundestag. It explored options for integrating gender and social aspects into urban climate policies, built capacity at local level in order to strengthen citizens' ability to become involved in urban planning processes and implementation, and developed gender-responsive policy recommendations to enhance the effectiveness, inclusiveness and acceptance of local mitigation and adaptation policies.

GenderCC-Women for Climate Justice is a global network of women's organisations, gender experts and activists working for gender equality, women's rights and climate justice. Please find more information at [www.gendercc.net](http://www.gendercc.net).