

60th GEF Council Meeting
June 14 - 18, 2021
Virtual Meeting

**PROGRESS REPORT
ON THE
GEF GENDER IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

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INTRODUCTION

1. The GEF Annual Progress Reports on Gender Implementation Strategy¹ provides regular updates to the GEF Council on the GEF's progress implementing the GEF Policy on Gender Equality Gender². This is the third progress report³ since the approval of the Gender Implementation Strategy⁴ in June 2018.
2. This third report on the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (hereafter Strategy) follows a similar structure as the previous annual progress reports (referenced above). The first part of the report provides a cumulative analysis and overview of progress related to the GEF-7 Results Framework on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE). The second part of the report highlights some activities undertaken by the Secretariat related to the four action areas outlined in the Strategy. The report concludes with reflections on emerging opportunities in GEF-8 to build on the significant progress across the GEF partnership in addressing gender equality and promoting women's empowerment.
3. The approval of the GEF Policy on Gender Equality at the onset of GEF-7 marked GEF's significantly increased ambition to address gender equality. The Policy provided the impetus for the GEF to introduce more robust standards on gender across the GEF project cycle and to promote gender-responsive approaches in GEF projects and programs. To support the effective implementation of the Policy, the GEF Secretariat launched a new Strategy as well as developed and disseminated practical guidelines⁵ and tools in close collaboration with GEF Agencies and partners.
4. GEF-7 projects and programs now provide ample evidence on how GEF's improved project requirements and greater ambition are increasingly being translated into practice across projects and programs. GEF-7 portfolio today reflects greater attention and considerations on the underlying principles of the Policy, including that to effectively reduce the rate and scale of global environmental change and its consequences, GEF project and programs must include actions to address interconnected factors that negatively impact sustainability, inclusion and equality.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

5. The analysis the GEF-7 portfolio continues to corroborate good compliance with new principles and requirements set out in the Policy. It shows that gender dimensions are

¹GEF/C.54/06 (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/.../EN_GEF.C.54.06_Gender_Strategy_0.pdf)

² SD/PL/02 (http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender_Equality_Policy.pdf)

³ 1st Progress Report: GEF/C.56/Inf.03 (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.56.Inf_03_Progress%20report%20on%20the%20GEF%20Gender%20Implementation%20Strategy.pdf)

2nd Progress Report: GEF/C.58/Inf.05 (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.58_Inf.05_Progress%20Report%20on%20the%20Gender%20Equality%20Implementation%20Strategy.pdf)

⁴GEF/C.54/06 (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/.../EN_GEF.C.54.06_Gender_Strategy_0.pdf)

⁵ <https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF%20Guidance%20on%20Gender.pdf>

considered early in project design and that plans are incorporated to carry out gender analyses and develop gender actions plans and sex-disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators during project development. The review also shows that GEF-7 projects that have reached CEO Endorsement/Approval have used gender analyses to inform project components and gender action plans, including gender sensitive indicators. The analysis shows that GEF-7 projects and programs incorporate a wide variety of important gender-responsive measures, including provisions and activities towards:

- (a) **Improving women’s participation, leadership and decision making in natural resource governance.** Gender norms, women’s greater time constraints and other structural constraints continue to prevent women from having the same opportunities as men to decision-making related to the management and sustainable use of natural resources. Most GEF-7 project and programs are to varying degrees addressing gender gaps related to participation and leadership in decision-making processes, i.e. helping to make institutions and policies more representative and supporting women to better engage in decisions that shape environmental planning and policymaking, as well as sustainable solutions and practices.
- (b) **Providing target efforts to improve women’s access to income-generated activities, services, credit, technology, information and or capacity building activities.** Women, in many places, do not have the same access to income-generation opportunities, credit, and technology as men. Women often face more obstacles than men in accessing financing, training, and information. Recognizing the benefits of supporting women’s socio-economic benefits to support sustainable development and global environment benefits, many GEF-7 projects and programs are designed to target sustainable livelihoods and income-generation opportunities for women.
- (c) **Addressing gender gaps related to inequal access and control of natural resources.** Women continue to be held back by structural constraints and gender norms related to access to and control of land, water, and other productive assets and biological resources. Even when the law guarantees women equal rights as men, many women have less control over natural resources.

6. The section below provides more detailed findings related to the GEF-7 Results Framework on GEWE as outlined in the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (see annex 1).

Outcome Area I: Gender-responsive GEF program and project design and development

Quality at entry

(1) *Quality at entry: GEF-7 CEO Endorsements/Approvals*

7. The GEF Secretariat analyzed 52 GEF-7 CEO Endorsements/Approvals, including 25 GEF-7 FSPs and 27 GEF-7 MSPs approved from July 1, 2018 to March 2021. The analysis showed that

out of the 52 GEF-7 CEO Endorsements/Approvals, 49 projects (94 percent) ⁶ had conducted a gender analysis and developed gender action plans, many of which detailed standalone and high-quality analysis and action plans. These gender analyses identified and described project specific gender dimensions and differences, gender differentiated impacts and risks, and barriers and opportunities to address gender gaps relevant to the proposed project objectives and activities. While varying in scope and detail, the gender action plans (or gender mainstreaming plans) detailed measures to help promote women’s participation and leadership, access to resources, or economic benefits within the scope of the projects. Activities described in the action plans include, for example, targets for women’s participation in training and capacity development events and or measures to ensure women’s equal participation in boards and committees.

8. As the examples, below, illustrates, (see box 1 and 2), the GEF new requirement to ensure that projects complete a gender analysis prior to CEO Endorsement is positively contributing to gender responsive measures and opportunities to connect efforts to promote gender equality and environmental sustainability ⁷.

⁶ Two of the projects that did not include a gender analysis were deemed different as their activities had to do with facilitating dialogues and the other one is focused Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of climate actions and reporting on NDC implementation under the Paris Agreement

⁷ For additional examples please see previous Progress Report: GEF/C.58/Inf.05 (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.58_Inf.05_Progress%20Report%20on%20the%20Gender%20Equality%20Implementation%20Strategy.pdf)

BOX 1: GEF ID: 10249 (FAO) Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia

The GEF-7 project “Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia” project, implemented by FAO, aims to reverse and prevent dryland ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss through an inclusive, integrated landscape and value chain approach securing multiple environment benefits and sustainable, resilient livelihoods in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia as well as at the national level.

The project recognizes that efforts to support the sustainable dryland management and biodiversity conservation processes require a gender-responsive and socially inclusive approach as well as a robust engagement and participation of all local residents, women and men and local authorities of all levels. It is seeking to promote social, economic and environmental comprehensive solutions it identified gender as a cross-cutting and multi-dimensional issues and recognized the imperative take into account the differentiated situation and needs of women, men and various social groups and to secure their equal participation as key component to ensure the successful implementation of the project. The project’s gender action plan details efforts to mainstreaming gender in all the four project components, including gender-specific actions with required budget and funds, provisions to incorporate and monitor gender-sensitive/r responsive outputs and activities into the project’s results framework and work plan. The action plan further outlines specific efforts to facilitate engagement with local women, men and different social groups to improve the sustainable use of natural resources as well as improving their respective capacities towards climate change adaptation and mitigation processes.

In preparing the gender action plan the project took into account the Mongolia government guidelines towards recognizing differentiated needs of women and men. The project commits to engaging with sectoral, national and local gender experts as strategic partners and stakeholders. The gender action plan outlines gender specific actions accompanied by gender sensitive indicators. In scaling up sustainable dryland management in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia, for example, the project plans to work with Farmers/crop producers in target areas to support more sustainable crop and fodder production practices through the introduction of improved/climate-smart technologies. The action plan includes measures to consult with both men and women farmers, crop producers and crop companies and government officials to discuss implementation of environment and biodiversity-friendly, climate-smart crop and fodder production; ensure equal opportunities for women and men to benefit from the capacity and business development support (at least 50% women/women-led cooperatives of the project beneficiaries are planned to access these new business development and conservation-based income-generation activities); ensure equal participation of women and men in the co-management structures (i.e., at least 40% women); ensuring that at least 50% of the beneficiaries will women addressing inherent barriers for women to access to income generating opportunities; and Incorporate social and gender issues that impact pastureland use and biodiversity protection into policy reforms, where possible.

The action plan, further, includes provisions to provide technical assistance to local governments and crop companies/farmers to enable them to provide the required technologies and inputs for environmentally friendly, climate-smart crop and fodder production. Efforts will also be made to improve post-harvest and storage practices; and to strengthen leadership skills in farmer groups/cooperatives. The project further intends to track the proportion of women farmers (or households involving both spouses) who benefited from technical assistance provided by the project.

BOX 2: GEF ID 10081 Uruguay (UNDP) Consolidating biodiversity and land conservation policies and actions as pillars of sustainable development

The GEF-7 project, “Consolidating biodiversity and land conservation policies and actions as pillars of sustainable development”, implemented by UNDP, aims to strengthen the systemic, financial, and institutional capacities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management. It is designed to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of protected areas (PAs) management, stewardship of private lands, and human well-being in Uruguay. The project incorporates three interrelated components that will enable a legal, financial, and institutional environment for biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality, implementation of biodiversity and land conservation measures in pilot areas (Santa Lucía River Watershed, Eastern Coastal Zone, and Serranías del Este and Quebradas del Norte), and the systematization and dissemination of knowledge and lessons learned for replication in other landscapes.

During project development, the project carried out a gender and social analysis that assessed among other things, national laws and regulations on women’s rights and gender equality related to project objectives, social participation, division of labor, and access to and management of resources. Building on data and information collected as part of stakeholder consultation and the gender analysis, project developed a gender action plan project that incorporates specific considerations to promote/address:

- Women’s participation in platforms for decision-making.
- Sexual division of labor/care.
- Access to resources (technical support, ownership, and management, etc.) and areas for participation and meetings specifically for women.
- Analysis of gender roles in relation to the environment (biodiversity, land, etc.) and the differentiated impacts resulting from their degradation (i.e. women’s agency, knowledge, and specific practices).
- Gender equality and justice in the environmental regulatory framework and instruments for the protection of PAs at the regulatory level as well as in executive institutions.
- Gender mainstreaming in regulations linked to environmental protection to ensure citizen participation.
- Specific issues linked to gender equality into agendas, and/or promote as a condition for their proper functioning the equal representation in different meeting opportunities of the various platforms for interinstitutional coordination in which the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP) participates.
- Presence of the SNAP in all of the territorial coordination bodies linked to gender equality (including training).

The action plan has outlined a set of activities and outputs with an accompanying budget. Some of the indicators outlined in the action plan include:

- Number of staff specifically dedicated to gender mainstreaming during the life of the project.
- Percentage of the project budget dedicated to mainstreaming gender into different actions (training, dissemination, support for producers, research, etc.).
- Percentage of SNAP and DINAMA project staff participating in training to raise awareness about the role of women in environmental issues, particularly those related to the project.
- Number of groups of women participating in the definition of specific priority actions for achieving LDN goals
- Percentage of reports related to the financial mechanisms differentiated by gender

9. The analysis of the GEF-7 CEO Endorsements/Approvals further found that 90 % (47 of the 52 projects) reviewed are planning to contribute to gender results in areas such as improving women's access and control over to natural resources, women's participation in natural resource decision-making at different levels, as well as supporting women's economic opportunities. The analysis also found good examples of projects that actively are reaching out to women's organizations and gender focal points of relevant national ministries, nongovernment organizations and civil society.

10. All GEF-7 projects reviewed during this period are tagged to address the main gender gaps. In particular, key findings include the following:

- **42% of projects include plans to contribute to promoting more equal access and control of land, water and other natural resources**, recognizing that extending rights to resources in law to women does not directly result in immediate improved outcomes. Laws and policies do not adequately facilitate the realization of women's rights (or their rights to participation in environmental decision-making) and that efforts are needed to support women to use legal reforms as resources to leverage and negotiate better arrangements, greater autonomy, and new opportunities. The analysis also found good examples of projects that are actively reaching out to women's organizations and gender focal points of relevant national ministries, nongovernment organizations and civil society.
- **96% include plans to improving women's participation and contribution to decision making**, recognizing that women's active participation in local, national and regional natural resources management improves environmental outcomes by, for example, harnessing critical ecological knowledge across genders, increasing stakeholder ownership and reducing conflicts. The analysis further shows that many projects are collecting sex disaggregated data incorporating specific gender disaggregated indicators to measure progress. Most certainly in all meetings, leadership teams, workshops and trainings, the intention as stated in many project documents is to ensure that women are given a voice in the planning and decision making.
- **69% of projects include addressing socio-economic benefits** and will target women as specific beneficiaries in the project design. For instance, a GEF project in Georgia⁸, plans to target at least 30% of women heads of household (including dairy and livestock entrepreneurs) to be among beneficiaries of plot level pasture management plans. The project states that "*Whether or not women are directly involved in pasture management, depending on prevailing gender norms, they are key actors in the dairy sector and have primary responsibility for household nutrition; they therefore have an important stake in sustainable pasture management*". The project also includes plans to create economic opportunities for women as well as

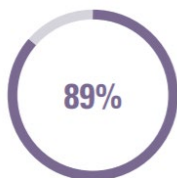
⁸ GEF ID 10151 (FAO): Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands

men in pasture management practices through building windbreaks and other erosion control practices.

(2) *Quality at entry: GEF-7 Project Identification Form (PIF)*

11. Similarly, to findings reported in the two previous progress reports (see reference above) and the GEF Scorecard (December 2020)⁹, the Secretariat's analysis continues to corroborate good compliance with the Policy. The analysis of 215 GEF-7 PIFs for FSPs, approved by the GEF Council from December 2018 to December 2021, suggests that GEF-7 projects are incorporating preliminary information on gender dimensions related to the project context and or the project components in the initial design of the project. While, the depth and scope of considerations on gender varies across the projects, these early considerations seem to help projects to identify, at an early stage, indicative strategic entry points to address gender differences and gaps relevant to the project. Moreover, many projects outline explicit plans to carry out gender analyses and developing gender actions plans during the project development stage. Out of the 215 PIF's approved by Council between December 2018 to December 2021:

- ▶ **87 percent explicitly state that they expect to develop sex disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators.** These numbers continue to be encouraging as they point to the fact that projects, at an early stage of design, plan to collect disaggregated data and information on gender which can serve to inform gender-responsive project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation moving forward.
- ▶ **93 percent are tagged to contribute to closing gender gaps and promoting GEWE.** The more detailed analysis of the GEF-7 PIF cohort, further show that:



89 percent expects to improve the participation and decision-making of women in natural resources governance. The analysis continues to find that many projects are planning to improve women participation and decision-making, including addressing adverse gender norms, women's time constraints and other socioeconomic and cultural barriers that prevent women the same opportunities as men to decision making related to the management and use of natural resources at local, national and regional levels.



79 percent expects to provide socio-economic benefits and services for women. The analysis finds that many projects elaborates on preliminary plans to contribute to socio-economic benefits or services for women, including a wide range of measures to leverage opportunities to target women as specific beneficiaries such as supporting alternative income generating activities and or providing targeted training and capacity development and financing opportunities.

⁹ GEF-7 Corporate Scorecard (December 2020): <https://www.thegef.org/publications/gef-7-corporate-scorecard-december-2020>



56 percent expects to contribute to more equal access to and control of natural resources of women and men. Despite the challenges addressing the complex issues of land rights and the relationships between use, control and ownership of land and other natural resources, the analysis finds that projects include explicit plans to promote women’s access and control over resources, including to, among other things, engaging women in land use planning

activities, raising awareness of women’s rights and improving women’s access to productive input inputs.

BOX 3: GEF ID 10408 Global (UNIDO) Global Cleantech Innovation Programme (GCIP II) to accelerate the uptake and investments in innovative cleantech solutions

The GEF-7 Global Cleantech Innovation Programme (GCIP II), implemented by UNIDO, builds on the success of the Global Cleantech Innovation Programme experiences from GEF-5 and GEF-6 (GCIP-I) that promoted an ecosystem approach to support cleantech innovations, fostering private sector initiative, entrepreneurship and engagement to accelerate the uptake of and investment in innovative cleantech solutions at scale. GCIP II seeks to leverage the power of entrepreneurship to find solutions to environmental and social challenges, while promoting inclusive economic growth that will help with building back better once the worst of the global COVID-19 pandemic is over. In addition to fostering a gender-responsive enabling regulatory environment for innovation and entrepreneurship in the cleantech sector, GCIP II aims to accelerate efforts by local start-ups to develop and commercialize innovative solutions with large environmental, economic and social benefits. A guiding principle of GCIP II is that women and men can equally lead, participate in, and benefit from GCIP interventions. To this end, the Programme is designed to work on enhancing the role of women as drivers of poverty reduction and climate action, promoting women entrepreneurs helping them to overcome sector-specific challenges and structural gender inequalities.

From 2013 to 2019, UNIDO implemented national chapters of the GCIP framework in nine countries. Building on these experiences, the expanded GEF-7 GCIP II will be launched in 10 countries, including Cambodia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine and Uruguay. Through targeted efforts reaching out to institutions that support women including NGOs and academic institutions – and by enhancing the visibility of the support the Programme provides to women, e.g. through the best female entrepreneur prize, GCIP II will continue to raise the gender gap ambition targeting at least 35% of beneficiaries being women. GCIP II also includes funding to establish a global coordination platform that will develop and disseminate common methodologies, guidelines and tools to promote cleantech entrepreneurship with a focus on gender equity (e.g. UNIDO’s Guide on Gender Mainstreaming Energy and Climate Change Projects). Such tools will include guidebooks to accelerate early-stage cleantech innovation, tailored support from the GCIP’s pool of cleantech innovation and entrepreneurship experts (trainers, mentors and judges), training modules and others. In each participating country, a gender mainstreaming strategy and action plan will be prepared based on a detailed gender analysis, which will guide the preparation of targeted interventions to promote gender equality and to enhance participation of women and youth in the cleantech sector.

GCIP-I has already shown higher levels of women’s participation than other acceleration and incubation programs with 25% of the 795 alumni supported being women-led enterprises. Some of the gender mainstreaming efforts included: (i) Setting targets for women participation; (ii) Creating special category awards, such as the Most Promising Woman-Led Business Award (Pakistan), Best Female Team (South Africa); (iii) Identifying selection criteria to provide preferential entry for women, and (iv) Conducting specific recruitment efforts to onboard women mentors, judges and trainers. Such efforts echoed throughout the countries: In Pakistan, during 2014-2017, women figured in 25-40% alumni team leader positions; in Ukraine and Thailand over 45 percent of mentors were women, in Thailand women-led or women co-led enterprises won the national awards in all 3 cycles; and in South Africa 44 percent of GCIP judges were women.

Through GCIP a myriad of women-led cleantech solutions and business were introduced to the world stage. Once such example is, Uf.Bee based in Ukraine who as the Winner of Best Women-led project in 2019 in Ukraine. Uf.Bee produces cotton napkins from beeswax, pine resin, and jojoba oil. These napkins are completely natural, biodegradable, and have antibacterial properties, prolonging the shelf life of food products. Therefore, the solution addresses the problem of food waste and single-use plastic pollution at household levels. Moreover, women-led GCIP teams are joining forces all over the world to combat COVID-19 through innovative cleantech solutions.

In GCIP II, female entrepreneurs are expected to play an even stronger role in ensuring the success of the Programme, by participating and facilitating post accelerator support, as well as in successful competition and acceleration national and global programmes, thus fostering the empowerment of women. Child project log-frames will be developed to reflect key gender dimensions of the respective outputs, activities, indicators and targets. This analysis will also incorporate the experience of countries under the previous GCIP for SMEs for a better understanding of the barriers faced by female entrepreneurs and so design effective mitigation tools.

Reference:

Women in cleantech are key levers for an inclusive recovery: <https://iap.unido.org/articles/women-cleantech-are-key-levers-inclusive-recovery>

12. Information on the four Impact Programs (IPs) was reported in the previous progress reports¹⁰. Below (box 3) illustrates an example of one Program that incorporate explicit gender responsive approaches.

(3) Quality at entry: GEF-6 CEO Endorsements/Approvals

13. The Secretariat has continued to review and monitor the GEF-6 portfolio even though the Policy only applies to new GEF-Financed Activities submitted on or after the date of effectiveness, July 1, 2018. In this report, the Secretariat reviewed the GEF-6 cohort of 40 projects, including 35 full-sized and 5 medium sized projects CEO endorsed/approved between April 1st, 2020 and March 30th, 2021¹¹. Comparing the findings presented in the progress report in 2020, covering 92 projects¹² and the findings presented in the 2019 progress report on gender covering 346 projects¹³, the analysis of these new CEO Endorsements/Approvals shows

¹⁰ 1st Progress Report: GEF/C.56/Inf.03 (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.56.Inf_03_Progress%20report%20on%20the%20GEF%20Gender%20Implementation%20Strategy.pdf)

2nd Progress Report: GEF/C.58/Inf.05 (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.58_Inf.05_Progress%20Report%20on%20the%20Gender%20Equality%20Implementation%20Strategy.pdf)

¹¹ This review does not include 12 LDCF projects which were submitted for CEO endorsement/approval (for further information please see LDCF/LDCF annual monitoring report (forthcoming June 2021)), nor does it include 7 CBIT projects which in GEF 6 were funded from a separate Trust fund.

¹² The review of the GEF-6 cohort 92 projects (63 full-sized and 29 mid-sized projects) CEO endorsed/approved between April 1st, 2019 and March 30th, 2020

¹³ Including GEF-6 cohort, of 240 full-sized and 106 mid-sized projects, CEO endorsed/approved between July 2014 and May 2018. For further information please see <https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting->

a continuing upward positive trend in terms of improvements addressing gender in project development.

14. Specifically, the analysis found that:

- (a) **The majority of projects have conducted a gender analysis during project preparation.** In particular, the analysis found that the practice of preparing any type of gender analysis is now ingrained in the process of project development. The totality of 40 projects analyzed were found to have carried out some type of gender analysis by the time of CEO endorsement/approval. This is a marked improvement when compared with the GEF-6 cohort reported in last progress report (2020) which was 88% and the baseline of 18%. Projects continue to adequately address gender with 35 out of 40 projects reviewed having prepared a separate gender analysis. While the scope and depth of the analyses varies, most include an assessment of the relevant socio-economic context of the project, sector or country as well as project specific information on gender differences, including women and men's different roles, needs, priorities, capacities and vulnerabilities relevant to the project activity.
- (b) **The majority of projects have incorporated a gender responsive project results framework:** The analysis found that 85% (34 out of 40 projects) of the cohort reviewed included a gender-responsive results framework and had provided sex-disaggregated data and gender sensitive indicators to monitor and report on gender results.

Outcome Area 2: Gender-responsive program and project reporting and results

Quality at implementation

15. As evident from the analysis, above, GEF's more robust standards on gender are being translated into practice across GEF projects and programs, including increased visibility and awareness that gender responsive approaches are critically important to help tackle the drivers of environmental degradation. There naturally will be a slight lag before these improvements will start appearing in project reporting on gender responsive measures and results. As such and as to be expected, the review of 271 GEF-6 and GEF-7 Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) and Midterm Reviews (MTRs) submitted in FY20 show mixed reporting on concrete activities and results on gender.

16. The review suggests that a little more than 50 percent reported on activities and results on gender. It is worth noting that many of the GEF-6 projects, in this cohort, were developed/approved, and their implementation commenced, before the GEF Policy on Gender Equality came into effect in July 2018. Other projects, in this cohort, are still in their first year

[documents/EN_GEF.C.58_Inf.05_Progress%20Report%20on%20the%20Gender%20Equality%20Implementation%20Strategy.pdf](#)

of implementation and as such indicated it was too early to report on any activities or results. It is also important to note that during the reporting period (FY20), that many projects experienced challenges as a result of the impacts from COVID-19 such as the inability to host meetings and facilitate face to face stakeholder consultations and or initiation of field activities.

17. While the review shows that the quality and extent of the information provided vary across the reports and Agencies, there are many some good examples of projects reporting on activities and emerging results on gender (please see below examples that illustrate some early progress on gender results in GEF projects and programs under implementation). In addition, it is expected that the application of the new GEF gender tags, deployed in GEF-7, will help improve reporting on gender results across GEF-7 project and programs moving forward. As the GEF continues to support the effective implementation of the Policy, the focus will naturally and gradually shift from compliance in design and development towards monitoring and reporting. Moving forward, this could include further guidance to Agencies in terms of reporting to the GEF Secretariat on gender responsive measures, results and indicators, as well collaborative efforts to promote knowledge sharing with Agencies and partners.

BOX 4: Gender mainstreaming in the GEF 6 Integrated Approach Pilot (IAP) Programs

In GEF 6, three Integrated Approach Pilot (IAP) Programs were launched, introducing the concept of integration for GEF financing where the focus is in a coherent manner across focal areas to promote synergy in generating multiple global environmental benefits. The three IAPs are Resilience Food Systems (RFS) addressing sustainability and resilience for food security in drylands in Africa, the Sustainable Cities Program (SCP) focusing on urban sustainability, and the Good Growth Partnership (GGP) focusing on taking deforestation out of commodity supply chains.

The three programs have all considered gender equality in their design and implementation. For the RFS, child projects included gender analyses or socio-economic studies. Some of these were stand-alone detailed gender analysis while others included detailed action plans. The Sustainable Cities mainly focused on gender action plans at the child project level while all GGP child projects had gender analyses and action plans.

All IAP programs are working on developing monitoring frameworks to monitor and track gender disaggregated data and gender sensitive indicators. Reaching the midway point – the RFS child projects are tracking gender indicators linked to the program framework. The Sustainable Cities child projects are currently not tracking sex disaggregated data but have mainstreamed gender in various ways while the GGP is monitoring progress based on detailed gender action plans.

The three IAPs have also invested in dialogues and gender learning. Workshops, trainings, toolkits are all part of the capacity building and knowledge generation efforts. The RFS has developed training guidelines on gender and resilience. The Sustainable Cities Program organized several training activities at national level as well as at the global level while the GGP are working through a Community of Practice (Green Commodities Community) and the Good Growth Conference (a round table on Women Speak their Truth).

While the IAP programs are only at the midway point of implementation, there are several emerging results on gender equality and women's empowerment. The RFS projects in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda are working to address women's barriers related to access, use and control of natural resources and are working on strategies aimed at formalization of land rights and to secure rights to access of water and forest resources. In Kenya the project is helping women with the construction of water pans so that they can have access to water for irrigation and also promoting woodlots for agroforestry, helping to reduce women's time burden by reducing travel to fetch firewood.

On women's participation and inclusion in decision making the SCP child projects in Viet Nam, Cote d'Ivoire, India, and Paraguay, for example, are ensuring women's participation in decision making bodies at different levels and promoting gender balanced participation in policy dialogs/events and training events. In Brazil, the GGP has partnered with the Women's Agribusiness Leadership an initiative to encourage women's participation and recognition in the agricultural sector. In Liberia, the GGP child project is working with town chiefs to ensure that meetings are held at appropriate times for women to be able to participate.

Women face more obstacles in accessing financing or credit facilities, training, or information. All three IAPs have recognized the benefits of promoting women's socio-economic benefits for global environmental benefits. Several countries are using the Farmer Field schools model where women are involved in the management level such as in Uganda in the RFS child project. In Kenya, the Water Fund is providing 50% more subsidy to all households headed by women and in Niger the Cash for Asset program is providing employment and income to female headed households and the handicapped. The GGP project in Liberia is working on having women have more access to loans through the existing Village Savings and Loan program. Building on the early progress and identified challenges, in the implementations, many IAP child projects' reports include information and updates on their activities and priorities, including

- Conducted gender and socio-economic analyses
- Activities to address identified gender gaps
- Developing specific guidance and tools to address gender equality
- Development and implementation of frameworks to monitor progress and capture lessons learnt on gender
- Facilitating dialogues and learning on gender and capturing and communicating lessons learned on gender
- Building partnerships through consultations with women's organizations, including Indigenous women and men and local women's groups

BOX 5: GEF ID 9135 Ethiopia (Multi-focal Area, GEF-6, UNDP) Integrated Landscape Management to Enhance Food Security and Ecosystem Resilience in Ethiopia

Smallholder farming is the mainstay of Ethiopia's economy across the country. Farming takes place in often highly degraded and vulnerable environments where there is substantial loss of vegetation, associated erosion and declining soil fertility that affects food production. In Ethiopia, women play a major role as food producers and processors. When communities are faced with resource scarcity it is predominantly women smallholders that bear the brunt. However, their contributions are often unrecognized, and they often have restricted access to resources and community participation. The Integrated Landscape Management to Enhance Food Security and Ecosystem Resilience project, implemented by UNDP in Ethiopia, aims to enhance long-term sustainability and resilience of food production systems by addressing the environmental drivers of food insecurity in Ethiopia applying Integrated Natural Resources Management with water- and climate-smart agriculture, value chain support and gender responsiveness. Thus, ensuring the gender mainstreaming is a core part of the project design including result indicators related to gender.

This project is a child project under the Resilient Food Systems program – RFS (GEF ID 9070), one of the GEF Integrated Approach Pilot Programs developed in GEF6 to foster sustainability and resilience for food security in Sub-Saharan Africa. The RFS is being implemented in twelve countries in sub-Saharan where gender related perspectives have been addressed through various channels in rural areas: women empowerment; secured access and rights to lands, water, forests, financial services, and technology; increased incomes, improved capacities in literacy, market/economic activities, and a better daily time management. The gender issues were extensively discussed between the program's regional coordinators, ICRAF and IFAD, and the country project teams, improving the mainstreaming of gender aspects throughout the child projects.

In the project design stage, the project first assessed the role of women in food security and natural resources management, understood the gender gaps, and identified major opportunities and challenges. The analysis particularly highlighted the trade-offs in their own development when responsible for accessing food, energy and water resources, and ensuring household food and nutrition security. Improved agricultural practices must, therefore, be gender-responsive and factor in impacts on women's time and energy expenditure given their multiple roles in both systems of cultivation and livestock husbandry. The analysis revealed a prevailing lack of women's inclusion in important decision-making and substantial barriers in the way of women's ownership of key natural resources, including land. Women have markedly lower access to essential productive inputs and services: only 51 percent of women farmers are estimated to have access to agricultural extension services; 8 percent have access to credit; and just 40 percent of married women own land with only 19.5 percent holding a land title.

Based on the analysis, the project reports that it has invested resources in capacity building and empowerment of women. The 12 districts developed and are applying gender mainstreaming action plans following the Training of Trainers for the application of the Gender-responsive Socio-Economic Indicators prepared by the project. Reliable project resources became available to support 114 Self-Help Groups with 1,181 households where 74 percent of the members are women. The groups are organized in several agricultural and off-farm income generation activities such as: poultry enterprise, fuel saving cook stove production, vegetable and seedling production, dairy, grain market, tailoring, ghee marketing, flour mill, and carpet. As a result, the income generated from the products enhanced their economic empowerment, and greater than 45 percent of the beneficiaries are female. Due to the increases in household incomes, sustainable management of natural resource is improved, and degradation of natural resources is minimized.

BOX 6: GEF ID 9239 Indonesia (Multi-focal Area, GEF-6, IFAD) Integrated Management of Peatland Landscapes in Indonesia (IMPLI)

In Indonesia, peatlands cover about 24.67 million hectares and less than 50 percent remain in relatively pristine form. Large areas have been severely degraded leading to high greenhouse gas emissions and significant loss of biodiversity and other ecosystem services. Major land conversion and associated land clearance and forest burning, as well as overexploitation of timber and non-timber forest products have turned at least 13 million hectares of peatlands into highly degraded landscapes prone to fire and sinking. The GEF-6 project, Integrated Management of Peatland Landscapes in Indonesia, implemented by IFAD (funded as part of the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Incentive Program), works to scale up sustainable peatland management through improved community-centred, landscape-level planning/zoning and strategy development for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving biodiversity values and enabling sustainable livelihoods in peatland areas through institutional capacity development, integrated management and awareness raising partnership with local communities. The project is funded as part of the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Incentive Program in GEF-6.

The Government of Indonesia has highly concerned about gender mainstreaming and established a guideline in every sector. In the environment and forestry sector, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Regulation¹ has enacted in 2017 and given a direction and reference to accelerate the implementation of gender equality and justice from preparation of the project. For example, the project considered gender equality for selecting the project management staff and community facilitators and provided lecture from selected university to the Community Work Team for Protection and Management of Peatland Ecosystem in the field.

The project conducted a gender analysis during project preparation and developed a gender-responsive project results framework, including gender-disaggregated indicators, which is at least 40 percent of total direct beneficiaries will be women, and monitoring and reporting will incorporate gender disaggregated information. The project includes women in the village-level entity in charge of monitoring of community-level intervention, which is a commendable step to ensure a gender-sensitive oversight in the project implementation, especially with the recruitment of social development and gender specialist. The project's collaboration with Bogor Agricultural University, the Islamic University of Riau, CIFOR, ICRAF and other institutions to conduct on-farm applied research also helps improve smallholder peatland farmers engagement including women in the project. Women's researchers are patiently listening and discussing with villagers to understand socio-economic and ethnographic situations, which also improve active engagement of local communities particularly women.

Cognizant of women's critical role in peatland livelihood systems, the project Gender Action Plan outlines measures to ensure women's equal participation in the peatland planning and management process in particular through capacity building, awareness-raising on gender among all stakeholders, and the creation of economic opportunities for women linked to markets through stable value chain relationship collaborating with the private sector, especially in agriculture and plant cultivation in peatland and fisheries in the areas of production and marketing. For capacity building and awareness raising, the project will set a minimum women's quorum (>40%) at any community meeting. Gender-sensitive training is provided to local government officials, CSOs and private sector. The training is about improving gender mainstreaming in peatland protection and management and fostering private sectors for scaling-up peatland management in different villages. The community livelihood and sustainable peatland management activities encourage more women's participation in implementing rewetting and rehabilitation-revegetation of peatland in their areas in line with improving community livelihood. To promote economic empowerment of women, the project will identify non-traditional livelihood activities that will primarily benefit female producers and processors, and support women's access to credit through third-party credit providers. To promote and deepen dialogues on gender in peatland, the project will also support a platform for networking and coordination on peatland management.

¹ The Ministry of Environment and Forestry Regulation Number P.31/MENLHK/SETJEN/SET.1/5/2017

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

18. The Strategy elaborated on a set of actions in four priority action areas, including:

- Action Area 1:** Gender-responsive approaches and results are systematically promoted in GEF programs and projects
- Action Area 2:** Strengthened capacity of GEF's Secretariat and its partners to mainstream gender and seize strategic entry points to promote gender equality and women's empowerment
- Action Area 3:** GEF's collaboration with partners to generate knowledge and contribute to learning on links between gender and the environment are improved
- Action Area 4:** GEF's corporate systems for tracking and reporting on gender equality results are enhanced

19. The sections below provide brief highlights of some relevant actions, in this reporting period, related to the four different action areas.

Action Area 1: Gender-responsive approaches and results are systematically promoted in GEF programs and projects

- As described in previous progress reports, the Secretariat initiated several efforts, early in GEF-7, to support the implementation of the Policy, including updates to the GEF project and program templates and the portal section on gender. The Secretariat has continued its efforts to review projects and programs at PIF and CEO Endorsement/Approval stages to ensure that the principles and requirements, set out in the Policy, are adequately incorporated in project design and development. The findings of the analysis of GEF-7 PIFs and CEO Endorsement/Approvals, as described in previous sections, suggest that the Policy, the Guidance to Advance Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in GEF Programs and Projects ¹⁴ and Secretariat's efforts are helping to ensure that new GEF programs and projects incorporate gender-responsive approaches. Gender-responsive approaches include improved stakeholder consultations involving individuals or groups with a gender perspective; more frequent use of gender analyses to inform project development and formulation of dedicated project gender action plans; and greater use of gender disaggregated and gender specific indicators.

¹⁴ GEF/C.54/Inf.05 (<https://www.thegef.org/publications/gef-guidance-gender-equality>). The guidance was developed in close collaboration with the GEF Gender Partnership, is organized around the GEF project cycle and provides details on key steps and practical actions to help Agencies and partners meeting the principles and requirements set out in the Policy. In collaboration with the GEF Gender Partnership, the guidance document continues to be actively promoted, among others, during Agencies Retreats, Secretariat meetings, GEF Introduction Seminars, and Extended Constituency Workshops (ECWs).

- As part of the recent updates to the GEF Portal, a specific section was included (as of FY2020) to guide GEF Agencies reporting on results and activities on gender in the Annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs) and Terminal Evaluations (TEs).
- In addition, the updated GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards included a set of new and enhanced provisions related to screening and addressing adverse gender-related impacts, including gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse.

Action area 2: Strengthened capacity of GEF’s secretariat and its partners to mainstream gender and leverage strategic entry points to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment

The Secretariat has continued supporting activities to build greater awareness and capacity among GEF staff, Agencies and partners, to operationalize the Policy.

- The GEF continues to actively promote the **Open Online Course on Gender and Environment**,¹⁵ designed to raise awareness and build capacity among GEF partners to mainstream gender in environmental policies, programs and projects. The Course contains close to 10 hours of instructive material covering thematic areas such as biodiversity, land degradation, climate change, international waters, and chemical and waste. It continues to attract attention and to reach a broad set of constituencies (across 185 countries and representatives from NGOs, Academia as well as national and local ministries). As of June 30, 2020, 15,526 people had enrolled and close to 12,636 certificates had been issued (out of the 15,526 enrolled 63 percent were female; 36 percent male; and 0,3 percent identified themselves as other). Building on the success of the course, the Secretariat sponsored the translation of all six modules to Spanish and French which was completed and launched in July 2020.
- **The Virtual Introduction Seminar, organized by the GEF Secretariat Country Support Programme (CSP), in February 2021**,^{16, 17} bringing together over 600 government officials, GEF operational focal points, GEF Council members and respective from GEF implementing agencies and civil society, included a dedicated session on gender and served as an opportunity for GEF partners to learn and share lessons and experiences addressing gender in GEF projects.
- **With Support from the GEF Communication Team, GEF has featured and promoted GEF projects and activities that address gender on GEF’s website and through social media presence.** Featured stories, blogs and news article tagged with ‘gender’ are now automatically included in the “What’s New” section of the GEF ‘Gender’

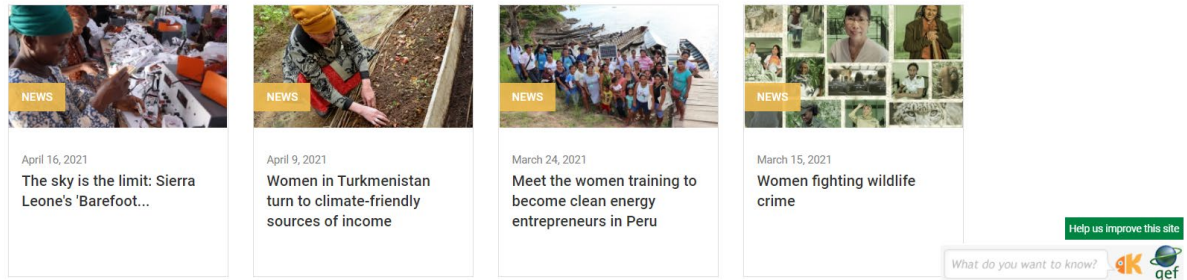
¹⁵See: <https://www.thegef.org/news/open-online-course-gender-and-environment>

¹⁶ <https://www.thegef.org/events/2021-gef-introduction-seminar>

¹⁷ <https://www.thegef.org/news/well-beyond-introduction>

topic page. In addition, a special Medium blog was prepared for the International Women's Day,¹⁸ highlighting a series of good practice projects and initiatives

What's New



- **Internally, interactive training sessions for GEF staff** were organized in the September 2020 to augment GEF Program Manager's proficiency to review projects/program on gender. This was supplemented by project review checklists.

Action area 3: GEF's collaboration with partners to generate knowledge and contribute to learning on links between gender and the environment are improved.

- **The GEF Gender Partnership (GGP)¹⁹ continues to serve as the main platform for leveraging a wide range of skills and experiences on gender equality and women's empowerment from across the GEF partnership**, and the platform for building a wider constituency on gender and the environment. The Secretariat continues to facilitate regular conference calls with GGP members to, among other things, share lessons learned addressing gender in the design and implementation of GEF projects and programs. A face to face GGP meeting was planned in 2020 but was postponed due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. As part of the virtual GEF Agency Retreat, organized in April 2020, the Secretariate facilitated a dedicated session with Agencies on lessons learned implementing the GEF Policy on Gender Equality. Agencies discussed good practices in project development but also discussed issues and challenges related to project implementation.
- **The first GEF Country Support Program's (CSP) Stakeholder Empowerment Series (SES) in October 2020, featured a virtual webinar on Gender and Environment.²⁰** It gathered more than 80 participants from multiple constituencies across different continents and provided opportunities for GEF partners to share experiences on how to integrate gender in GEF projects between practitioners from different regions. The session included guest presenters from the Philippines, Tajikistan, and Senegal

¹⁸ <https://thegef.medium.com/women-are-the-key-to-a-green-and-resilient-recovery-from-the-covid-19-pandemic-6ed3ff6a8a9f>

¹⁹ GGP includes the active participation of gender focal points from each GEF Agency, relevant MEA secretariats, and representatives from the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), GEF Network of Civil Society Organizations, GEF Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group, and other key partners.

²⁰ <https://www.thegef.org/events/csp-stakeholder-empowerment-series-ses-webinar-gender-and-environment>

that covered topics on climate change resilient communities in rural Senegal, conservation of ecosystems for snow leopard protection in Pamir Alay, and safe e-waste management in the Philippines.

- **The GEF-8 Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs), organized in February 2021²¹, included, for the first time, a dedicated TAG meeting on “Gender Responsive Approaches for Greater Environmental Impact and Results”.** The meeting, facilitated by the Secretariat, explored with experts emerging research related to the links between gender equality and environmental sustainability/goals and emerging global and national policy priorities addressing gender equality/women’s empowerment in environmental policy and financing. It examined progress/challenges and good practices and approaches mainstreaming gender across the GEF Partnership and elicited ideas and strategic elements on how the GEF can leverage new research evidence, good practices and approaches on gender to address gender equality in GEF programming and policy agenda to support greater environmental impact/results in GEF-8 and beyond. The deliberations and outcomes of this TAG discussion provided valuable guidance and support to the development of the draft GEF-8 Programming Directions (which was circulated for input from GEF Agencies and Convention Secretariats and later presented to the first GEF-8 replenishment meeting with Donors in April 2020), that included a set of proposed strategic entry points to be considered in the programming as well as a set of concrete and strategic entry points across the proposed Integrated Programs.

Action area 4: GEF’s corporate systems for tracking and reporting on gender equality results are enhanced

- GEF is continuing its efforts to implement the GEF gender tagging system, launched as part of the upgrade of GEF’s IT platform, the GEF Portal in July 2018. Ongoing efforts to monitor the portfolio and the information derived from the gendertags continue to support learning and serve to ensure policy compliance and prompt considerations on gender early in the project cycle. In addition, the Secretariat has improved the its implementation modules, through the portal, providing mechanisms for Agencies to more coherently report on gender results during implementation. This should allow a more systematic reporting of gender results across the GEF project portfolio moving forward.

MOVING FORWARD

20. Since the Policy became effective in July 2018, just three years ago, the GEF’s improved standards and increased ambition on gender equality has been translated into practice across GEF-7 portfolio. Projects are now better designed with gender sensitive stakeholder consultations and informed by gender analyses. Most projects incorporate gender-responsive

²¹ <https://www.thegef.org/news/more-400-scientists-brainstorm-gef-investment-priorities>

measures to address critical gender gaps and include gender sensitive indicators to monitor progress and results over time.

21. The dedicated GEF TAG meeting on gender, in February 2021, validated the progress that GEF has made on gender, highlighting how GEF's efforts have triggered greater project design, better gender informed projects and gender responsive activities to address gender gaps and to support the empowerment of women. The GEF Secretariat will build on the progress and lessons learned in GEF-7 to inform and strengthen approaches on gender in GEF-8 projects and programs. The GEF Partnership's collective learning around approaches to address gender gaps in environmental policy, financing and projects will prove important as countries around the world are pledging to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, restoring a healthy environment while ensuring a recovery that focuses on human well-being, improving inclusiveness and reducing inequality.

22. The Secretariat has already translated some early lessons learned in the draft GEF-8 Programming Directions with specific provisions already suggested to be incorporated, including:

- i. Supporting women's improved access, use, and control of resources, including land, water, forest, and fisheries.
- ii. Enhancing women's meaningful participation and role in natural resources governance and decision-making processes at all levels (i.e. promoting women's equal voice and leadership in community, rural and urban planning processes and supporting women as innovators and agents of change).
- iii. Targeting women as specific beneficiaries by supporting activities that support women's sustainable livelihoods, income-generation, entrepreneurial opportunities in the blue and green recovery and access to finance.
- iv. Investing in women's skills and capacity by supporting capacity development of different groups, including women's organizations, and government officials at the national and subnational levels.

23. In addition, the GEF will continue its efforts to promote knowledge sharing and mutual learning to further improve project and program design, implementation and reporting, as well as other targeted efforts to address any forthcoming implementation gaps or challenges.

ANNEX 1. GEF-7 RESULTS FRAMEWORK ON GEWE^{22, 23}

Outcome area I: Gender-responsive GEF program and project design and development		
Indicators	Baselines	Verification
Percentage of projects that have conducted a gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assessment	66%	PIFs, CEO Endorsement/ Approval, Gender tags
Percentage of projects that plan to carry out gender-responsive activities - Number of projects with specific gender action plans	Not available	
Percentage of projects that include sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators	78%	
Percentage (and number) of anticipated GEF beneficiaries that are female	Not available	GEF Core indicator 11
Percentage of projects that are tagged for expected contribution to closing gender gaps and promoting GEWE in one or more of the following categories: - <i>contributing to equal access to and control of natural resources of women and men</i> - <i>improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance</i> - <i>targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women</i>	Not available	Gender tags
Outcome area II: Gender-responsive program and project reporting and results		
Indicators	Baselines	Verification
Percentage (and number) of GEF beneficiaries that are female	Not available	PIRs/MTRs/ TEs (Qualitative analyses)
Percentage of projects that report on progress on gender-responsive measures, sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators, and lessons learned	73%	
Percentage of projects that report on results in one or more of the following categories: - contributing to equal access to and control of natural resources of women and men - improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance - targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women	Not available	

²² Excerpt from the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (GEF/C.54/06: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/.../EN_GEF.C.54.06_Gender_Strategy_0.pdf)

²³ All baseline data builds on reports on GEF-6 Core Gender Indicators. For further information, see GEAP Progress Report (GEF/C.54/Inf.04)