Women as agents of change: towards a climate and gender justice approach

Background paper

November, 2018
Produced by the Government of Ireland, this policy brief highlights the linkages between gender equality and climate change. It draws on lessons from our international development cooperation programme, Irish Aid, and aims to raise awareness of the urgency of reflecting gender in efforts to address climate change. It seeks to challenge decision-makers and practitioners to change how they work at global and local levels to unlock the potential of women as agents of change, in the implementation of the Paris Agreement and achievement of the SDGs.

For more information on Irish Aid climate change work, refer to https://www.climatelearningplatform.org/ or contact the climate change team;

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Cover photos
Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland with community women and Irish Aid staff during her visit to the Irish Aid Programmes in Malawi in June 2018. Photo Credit; Tracy C. Kajumba

Others; Tanzania Embassy, CLIOMA and Kampala Embassy used photos
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Executive Summary

Gender inequality in light of climate change implies that there is unequal distribution of climate risks that affect women and men, boys and girls based on their vulnerabilities and capacities. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2014 report on Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability notes with medium evidence and high agreement that climate change reinforces Multidimensional Inequality and Vulnerability.

Within the framework of the SDGs, Goals 5 and 13 address issues of gender equality and climate action respectively, with specific targets and indicators. However, significant gaps still exist including the rise of conflict, exclusion and environmental degradation as well as undermining of women’s rights, shrinking civic space and rise in human rights abuses, which combined increase social economic vulnerability. Increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases add to the future uncertainty of climate impacts on poor households. The IPCC 2018 special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C notes that limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.

Although the Paris Agreement highlights climate change as a common concern of humankind, gender considerations are not given strong emphasis. On a positive note however, there are entry points for strengthening gender approaches in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The UNFCCC decisions have focused on ensuring that there is gender balance among chairs of bodies, informal negotiating groups, and ensuring gender balance in national delegations to sessions under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. In addition, the agreement on a Gender Action Plan (GAP) in 2017 evolving from the previous Lima Work Programme on Gender presents an opportunity to strengthen gender equality.

Despite the above entry points, trends analysis to date show that since this decision in Doha adopted the goal of gender balance on constituted bodies, little progress has been made towards realising the goal. In addition, limited domestic climate finance resources, low awareness and capacity constraints have made it harder for many countries to gain access to relevant climate funds, private sector finance and carbon markets, which increaser the burden of climate change impacts on the most vulnerable especially developing countries and marginalized groups who often face higher barriers to accessing and benefiting from such financial mechanisms.

The Government of Ireland acknowledges the above challenges and has put in place measures in policies and practice to ensure that climate action is supported and that gender equality is not perpetuated. Globally, Ireland is the chair for the commission on the status of women and in 2018, climate was high on the agenda, reflected in the final resolutions of CSW62. Under the EU priorities Ireland is supporting access to energy which is affordable, secure and low-carbon through an integrated climate change and energy policy. Ireland has to date contributed a total of €55m in climate finance in 2017, up from €50.6 million in 2016; €36 million in 2015 and €33.6 million in 2014, and will be supporting the UNFCCC Secretariat to implement key elements of the Gender Action Plan from late 2018.
At programme level, the Government of Ireland has supported Key Partner Countries to address gender and climate change as cross cutting issues and also as standalone programmes in the bilateral programmes. This is done through analyses in the preparation and review of Country Strategies, as well as political economy and vulnerability analyses. Key relevant programmes include gendered access to pro poor renewable energy sources, gender and climate resilience agriculture, adaptive social protection and greening the health sector to tackle issues of access, nutrition and livelihoods. Gaps still exist in relation to integrated adaptive programming, generating evidence to inform policy and programmes, as well as strengthen partnerships for addressing gender and climate issues.

**Key messages for Policymakers**

1.0 A meaningful transformation in addressing gender in climate action must be driven at national level. Partner governments urgently need support to build their capacity to integrate gender into national adaptation and mitigation plans, and NDCs, and into sectoral plans and programmes.

2.0 Women’s voices need to be heard - at all levels and especially in international fora. Gender balance in national delegations to UNFCCC should be encouraged and women supported to maximise their voice, confidence and negotiations skills while ‘at the table’. More funding at grassroots level will help empower women.

3.0 Gender and climate policies and practice need to be strengthened in climate funding instruments.

4.0 Spending targets should be given consideration, along with the application of gender and climate ‘markers’ to track allocation of resources.

5.0 Integration of gender and climate across multilateral agreements and frameworks is important. For example, national Action Plans on Women Peace and Security (1325) can incorporate important climate messages, as can the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

**Key messages for practitioners**

6.0 Addressing gender and climate change coherently at multilateral, national, sub-national and grassroots levels requires a fundamental shift in ambition and ways of working.

7.0 This should be informed by a solid analysis of power dynamics, capacity gaps, and incentives, accompanied by training and support in addressing gender in climate responses.

8.0 Placing gender and climate objectives at the heart of programme objectives will make them more effective. Stand-alone interventions may need to be complemented by action to address structural issues too.

9.0 Effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability are critical, especially the use of gender disaggregated data in climate vulnerability assessments, and reporting progress against gender and climate SDGs, among others.

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1 Irish Aid key Partner countries include; Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Southern Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Vietnam
10.0 Introduction

Climate change impacts the poorest and the most vulnerable, especially poor women and men, boys and girls. However, gender inequalities mean there is unequal distribution of climate risks that affect different categories based on their vulnerabilities and capacities. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2014 report on Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability notes with medium evidence and high agreement that climate change reinforces Multidimensional Inequality and Vulnerability.² People who are socially, economically, culturally, politically, institutionally, or otherwise marginalized in society are especially vulnerable to climate change which also affects adaptation and mitigation responses. Women and girls are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change because of their heavy dependence on natural resources and agriculture, their critical role in food production, household water supply and energy, and their lack of access to key services. Increased incidence of extreme weather events (floods, droughts, hurricanes among others), and the impact this has on soil health, access to water, and so on, are all taking their toll. Accelerated action is required to address known inequalities.

The narrative of “vulnerability” has also inhibited a richer analysis of what poor women and men from poor households can contribute to addressing climate change challenges - both in adaptation and mitigation. This narrative has masked their roles as vital agents of change. Women have unique knowledge and skills to tackle climate change. Transformative and innovative approaches are needed to unlock this potential.

To date, the inequalities between men and women have not been adequately addressed in climate policy and action – although there are some signs of progress. At country, regional and international levels, climate policy and decision making processes have not addressed gender differences in a meaningful way, leading to a widening gap in how effectively women are supported and limitations on their engagement. Often this is despite the existence of policies and regulations to address gender inequality issues.

Put simply, climate change exacerbates inequalities between men and women. Climate policy and action at global, national, local and household level should be informed by the principles of gender equality and climate justice. This can be practically done by focusing on outcomes, and ensuring messages from local levels can be heard effectively at global level.

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### 2.0. International Frameworks for gender and Climate Change

#### 2.1. Gender equality and Climate Change in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Within the framework of the SDGs, Goals 5 and 13 address issues of gender equality and climate action respectively, with specific targets and indicators. Although lessons from the Millennium Development Goal implementation reinforces the need for action to cut across goals, and not be limited to stand-alone gender and climate goals.

Gender inequality remains a big challenge to the achievement of the SDGs. Evidence clearly shows that the presence of gender inequality can severely hinder economic growth, and can lead to people being trapped in poverty across generations (World Bank, 2014). Across the world, women’s rights continue to be violated. Women still have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities. The impact of gender inequality, climate change, hunger and conflict as inter-woven barriers to progress cannot be overstated.

The UN Women’s 2018 flagship report reveals significant gaps for women’s empowerment. Key issues highlighted include the rise of conflict, exclusion and environmental degradation. The UN Women report also notes the large-scale extraction of natural resources, climate change and environmental degradation, which are advancing at an unprecedented pace, undermine the livelihoods of millions of women and men, particularly in the developing world. Women’s rights are also facing renewed resistance from different kinds of fundamentalism. Civic space is shrinking and women’s human rights defenders are facing threats and persecution by both state and non-state actors.

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3 UN Women, 2018. Turning promises into action: Gender Equality in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development
In relation to SDG 13, the world continues to experience rising sea levels, extreme weather conditions and increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases. Environmental disasters arising out of the effects of climate change are estimated to significantly affect women and children, who are 14 times more likely to die in a disaster than men. The IPCC 2018 special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C notes that limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society. With clear benefits to people and natural ecosystems, limiting global warming to 1.5°C compared to 2°C could go hand in hand with ensuring a more sustainable and equitable society.

There is need to close the gender gap in land access and ownership, support women to build assets, equity in labour conditions, access to quality education for women and girls, equal access to financial services, and access to appropriate technology for women. There is also a need for increased public and political participation of women. The stereotyping of women into low income livelihood activities that have little potential for progress hinders the economic empowerment necessary for women to break out of poverty. Evidence of what works, and the understanding of how climate affects men and women differently is required to inform progressive adaptation options for women and men. Irish Aid remains committed to supporting efforts to promote gender equality, as a key element of climate action.

### 2.2. Gender and climate change in the United Nations Framework on Climate Change

#### 2.2.1 Gender and the Paris Agreement

In December 2015, 196 countries adopted the ‘Paris Agreement’, during the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 21st Conference of Parties (COP21). This is the first global treaty on climate change. The Paris Agreement was a landmark deal, reflecting consensus on the urgency of action on climate change, and committing the nations of the world to bold efforts in this regard. Ireland is a strong supporter of the Paris Agreement as the multilateral mechanism to drive climate action.

Although the Paris Agreement highlights climate change as a common concern of humankind, gender considerations are not given strong emphasis in the document itself. Gender is marginally mentioned in the preamble, and in relation to articles on adaptation and capacity building. However, it is absent in articles relevant to mitigation, finance and technology transfer. Unfortunately, these...

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5 Global Warming of 1.5 °C; an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty
6 The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the UNFCCC, dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building, starting in the year 2020. The agreement was negotiated by representatives of 196 state parties at the 21st Conference of Parties (CoP21) of the UNFCCC in Le Bourget, France and adopted by consensus on 12 December 2015
omissions inhibit the extent to which gender responsiveness will be reinforced from local to global in terms of implementation and reporting, which risks reinforcing gender inequality in certain dimensions, worsened by the fact that in some countries gender policies are not effectively being implemented.

Articles 4, 5, and 6 on mitigation, especially in relation to the commitments of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and maintenance of carbon sinks, lack explicit reference to gender. As NDCs are benchmarked and progress reported, the contributions, capacities and vulnerabilities of women and men could be lost. An analysis\(^7\) of the 162 INDCs submitted as of April 2016 showed that only 40% explicitly mention “gender” or “women” in the context of their national priorities and ambitions for reducing emissions. Sub-Saharan Africa is a notable exception, however. A full three quarters of sub-Saharan African countries reference “gender” or “women”, making the region a global leader in integrating gender equality into sustainable development priorities — despite implementation challenges. In general, however, there must be more awareness of the role that women play in conservation of forests and reforestation, the management of natural resources and energy use.

Under article 7 paragraph 5, countries acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a ‘country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and a fully transparent approach, and this has given rise to helpful assessments of the extent to which National Adaptation Plans have been gender responsive, and learning between countries on how best to approach gender responsive adaptation planning. On adaptation and capacity building in particular, the Paris Agreement provides the framing for gender responsive action, but there is a need for greater support to enable countries to implement plans appropriately and in a way that actually impacts on women’s lives.

Article 10 of the Paris Agreement highlights the importance of the availability of technology, in support of both adaptation and mitigation. Gender dimensions of technology access are entirely missing, which is a significant omission. Although many smallholders (including women) lack disposable income to finance technology needs, it is important that technology planners and designers recognise and account for gender differences. Unless there is a deliberate focus on the technology needs of both women and men, technology development will remain masculinised. Women’s representation and participation in identifying technology needs and decision-making is absolutely necessary.

Article 9 of the Paris Agreement makes reference to the need for increased availability of climate finance, and transparent commitments of financial support from developed to developing countries. However, there is limited reference for the need for climate finance to be distributed in a gender equitable way. Climate finance is key to supporting costs of adaptation and mitigation and so omitting gender budgeting and allocation runs the risk of reinforcing gender inequalities, impacting on poor women the most.

With the exception of adaptation and capacity building, gender has not been well integrated into the Paris Agreement. There is an urgency now in establishing a comprehensive framework for countries to address gender in other aspects of the implementation of the agreement, to ensure more effective, gender-responsive climate change responses at global and national levels. Countries also require

\(^7\) USAID/IUCN, 2016, Gender in Mitigation Actions
support to ensure gender equality can be adequately addressed across all the areas of the Paris agreement.

2.2.2. Addressing gender within the UNFCCC processes

Despite the challenge of an inadequate reference to gender in the Paris Agreement, the UNFCCC is making efforts to integrate gender into its implementation. This is reinforced by agreements between countries, including within the sphere of the Kyoto Protocol. These decisions emphasise the equal representation of women within the decision-making processes themselves, including improved participation of women – towards gender balance- in technical bodies established under UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. Some of the other decisions included ensuring that gender balance among chairs of bodies, among informal negotiating groups, and ensuring gender balance in national delegations to sessions under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

A decision was taken by the Parties (countries negotiating) which recognized the importance of a balanced representation of women from developing and developed country Parties in the UNFCCC process so that gender-responsive climate policy responds to the differing needs of men and women in national and local contexts. However, trends analysis to date show that since this decision in Doha adopted the goal of gender balance on constituted bodies, little progress has been made towards realising the goal. In 2016, only 4 of the constituted bodies could be categorised as close to or at gender balance. (Bodies classed as “approaching gender balance” have passed a threshold of 40% of women members). In all monitored years, the rate of participation of women as heads of delegation is lower than their participation in delegations in general. This may reflect a lower number of women in senior positions in environment and climate Ministries or departments at a national level, from which many Parties appoint their delegates to UNFCCC meetings.

Another landmark within the UNFCCC context was the agreement on a Gender Action Plan (GAP) in 2017. This evolved from the previous Lima Work Programme on Gender, and moved from concepts to implementation of gender responsive climate policies. The GAP seeks to

Climate change is a key concern of the UN Security Council, as it represents a threat to peace and stability. Ireland’s own experience of conflict has taught us that the role of women must never be overlooked. This is particularly true when it comes to climate stress. Women are the most directly affected by climate change, but also the stakeholder group with the most to contribute to peace processes. Women – particularly those at the frontline of climate and conflict – must have a stronger voice at the Security Council.

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9 UNFCCC, 2017. Achieving the goal of gender balance; technical paper by the secretariat
advance women’s full, equal and meaningful participation and promote gender-responsive climate policy and the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Convention and the work of Parties, the secretariat, United Nations entities and all stakeholders at all levels’.

The goal of gender balance within national delegations is an important measure, as it can ensure a flow of potential women nominees to constituted bodies, negotiating teams, or chair positions. This often alters the gender dynamic within the room. Somewhat unhelpfully, the compliance committee for the Paris Agreement emphasises equitable gender representation within regional groupings, which can mask extreme gender inequality within national teams. Another risk is of gender imbalance across technical strands of negotiations. Yet challenges regularly emerge, such as the growth in allegations of sexual misconduct at climate negotiations, which represent additional barriers to progress.

By contrast to the enforcement mechanisms embedded within the Kyoto protocol, the Paris agreement compliance mechanism is facilitative in nature and functions in a manner that is “transparent, non-adversarial and non-punitive”. This means that it is up to the participating governments to address gender equality or not. At national level, most countries have gender and climate change policies and strategies, at varying stages of implementation. Some are performing well, helped in some cases (e.g. Malawi, Rwanda, etc) by the introduction of quotas for women’s representation in certain arenas. Others, however, are grappling with national implementation. Success in meeting global goals will have to come from action at local level. This reinforces the need for gender-sensitive climate finance to reach local levels, and subsequently provide meaningful learning to inform the Paris agreement and global climate action. The next section examines climate finance.
2.2.3. Gender Equality and climate finance

Typically adaptation costs are expressed in monetary terms, while benefits are captured in terms of avoided climate impacts, expressed in monetary as well as non-monetary terms.

In 2016, an OECD-DAC study on bilateral ODA to gender and climate change reported that:

- Climate ODA that also supports the achievement of gender equality accounted for 31% of bilateral ODA to climate change in 2014.
- Just 3% of this ODA had gender equality as a principal objective, while 28% integrated gender equality as a secondary objective.
- Gender equality is better integrated in adaptation than in mitigation activities.
- Attention to gender equality is uneven across climate-related sectors. While gender equality is quite well integrated in climate-related aid to agriculture and water, it is poorly addressed in economic infrastructure sectors.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s 5th Assessment Report, there is a gap between global adaptation needs and the funds available for adaptation. The report cites estimates of the global costs of adaptation in developing countries to range between US$70 billion and US$100 billion per year to 2050. UNEP (2014) suggests that these values are likely to be a significant underestimate, particularly in the period after 2030. The real costs of adaptation are likely to be at least two to three times higher than previously estimated, and probably much higher towards 2050. A failure to find adaptation solutions will impact the poor and vulnerable enhanced by a failure to mobilise and meet climate finance commitments and contribution at global level. Article 4.3 of the Climate Convention requires developed countries to provide new and additional financial resources to meet the agreed full costs incurred by developing countries. However more clarity is required on climate finance flows, where they will come from and how women will access them.

The principal instrument for funding climate action under the Paris Agreement is the Green Climate Fund, established in 2010. Ireland has contributed €2m per year to the GCF for the last 2 years as part of the Programme for Government commitment to international climate finance. Despite the gender imbalance within the Board of Governors of the fund, in 2014 the GCF developed a gender policy and action plan. This serves a number of purposes including, promoting gender-sensitive approaches into results frameworks, disaggregation of results by gender where relevant, and linking the gender policy to the Fund’s environmental and social management system. It is mandatory to include a gender assessment in GCF proposals, and they suggest that a gender action plan (not mandatory) is also included in the funding proposal. Furthermore, elements of due diligence must be put in place for ensuring that programmes comply with the gender policy. Many of the elements of the GCF policy built on good practice elsewhere, recognising the need for clear policy guidance on gender mainstreaming, baselines on gender sensitivity for accreditation, clear accountability
mechanisms, sex disaggregated data, need for tools and procedures, skills and competencies and periodic audits to ensure the policy implementation process is on track.\footnote{GCF Gender Policy and Action Plan 2014}

**Other climate finance sources:** A policy brief by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA)\footnote{UNDP, 2016. Overview of linkages between gender and climate change. A policy brief} concluded that much remains to be done to engender the overall global climate finance regime. Limited domestic climate finance resources, low awareness and capacity constraints have made it harder for many countries to gain access to relevant climate funds, private sector finance and carbon markets. These obstacles are greater for developing countries and marginalized groups who often face higher barriers to accessing and benefiting from such financial mechanisms. Among these marginalised groups are women at local level, who play a key role in climate action. One notable exception is the Global Environment Facility’s (GEF) Small Grants Programme, which has made more than 16,030 small grants directly to civil society and community based organizations, totalling $653.2 million.\footnote{UNEP, 2015} A minimum requirement in GEF project standards is a social and gender analysis; stakeholder consultations; a gender responsive results-framework and the inclusion of gender sensitive activities. Other climate finance mechanisms could usefully learn lessons from this mechanism, especially in how to support grassroots and women organisations to address gender and climate issues.

Overall, there is a need to leverage additional finance behind climate action, and there is broad acknowledgement that this cannot all be grant-based, nor can it come exclusively from the ODA budgets of developed countries. That said, as new actors become engaged in climate action, and as new instruments emerge, it will be important to maintain consistency in the message about the need to reflect gender considerations, regardless of the instrument or source of finance.

### 3.0. Why is progress on gender and climate mainstreaming so slow?

According to the Global Gender Gap report (World Economic Forum, 2017)\footnote{The Global Gender Gap Report benchmarks 144 countries on their progress towards gender parity across four thematic dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.}, the average progress on closing the global gender gap stands at 68.0%, there is an average gap of 32.9% remaining to be closed. This has actually widened since last year, especially in the areas of economic participation, political empowerment and health.

notes that global greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 are likely to be at the high end of the range of the scenarios consistent with the 2°C and 1.5°C goals respectively, making it increasingly difficult to be on track to meet the 2030 emission goals.

The above gaps reflect challenges in implementation of gender and climate actions at local and global level. It is evident that goals will not be achieved without a comprehensive review of implementation strategies and progress. An important starting point is to explore some of the obstacles holding back progress. Below are some obstacles identified by Irish Aid in consultation with key partners, staff and civil society;

**Overall, there is a power imbalance when it comes to gender.** Women are poorly represented at national and global level where key decisions are made. This means that gender dimensions are rarely prioritised in national policies and implementation priorities, apart from rare exceptional male leaders. Both gender and climate can be side lined by politicians, in favour of quick win policies pursuing economic development or investment that will generate visible change within the electoral cycle. This side lining of gender and climate means that often there is limited or no accountability for progress at institutional level, especially with limited women’s representation. By omitting gender disaggregated measurements, or side lining climate action, governments never entirely know where they are making progress, reinforcing the vicious cycle of lack of accountability and poor progress. Where progress has been made in enhancing women’s representation in key bodies or organisations, there is often a residual power imbalance hindering women’s voice. There are some inspirational women leaders emerging in the climate arena in developing countries, however, and these must be strongly encouraged to shift the power dynamics at play at all levels.

**There is an evidence gap compelling decision-makers to make gender sensitive climate action a priority.** Some contend that poor progress to date is sufficient evidence of how gender insensitive approaches do not work. This has some merit, but large scale investments often need to be justified with a solid evidence base. The problem has been made worse by the existence of so-called ‘zombie’ statistics on gender, compelling figures with no statistical basis, which activists have been erroneously using for many years, eroding the credibility of what evidence does exist. More tangible evidence is urgently needed of the cost-benefit analysis of addressing gender and climate issues in a coherent way. Many investments lack a gender analysis from the outset, which itself means there are no baselines, and often hinders effective targeting. Programmes need to have robust results frameworks attempting to track risks and shocks, measure women’s economic empowerment, capturing the real changes in women and men’s lives. This is important to ensure climate programmes designed in good faith do not worsen gender equality, but also to generate the case for change.

**Lack of capacity at all levels hinders progress.** Because gender-sensitive responses are rarely prioritised, they rarely attract sufficient funding or human talent within government systems to make them successful, and generate transformational change. Many
government offices lack the technical capacity to meaningfully analyse gender issues, and break it down into tangible messages for decision-makers. This is mirrored at the multilateral level in many cases. In climate change, the discourse can often be dominated by physical scientists, who are not accustomed to dealing with socio-economic issues, and they lack the capacity to meaningfully address gender issues. In many cases, where gender resource persons have been allocated, they are often over-stretched, with impossible mandates to support change across a range of institutions. In the key multilateral fora (UNFCCC), there are not enough gender experts to support the different strands of negotiations, or who have the language to effectively influence change.

**Mistakes are being made in good faith at implementation level,** which further erodes the credibility of gender-sensitive programming on climate action. Mainstreaming gender into different programmes that work alongside each other, however successful they may be, will fail to capture the multi-dimensional nature of how climate affects women and men differently. Often programmes focused on women treat them as a homogenous group, failing to capture essential differences across generations, ethnicity, and socio-economic standing. Sometimes, a focus on gender fails to capture the very poor (men and women) who are most affected by climate change, even if these effects do not show up in national statistics. And finally, sometimes basic interventions at community or household level, while they target resources at vulnerable women, fail to capture the structural barriers holding women back, such as legislation around land ownership, cultural norms excluding them from decision making, property ownership, representation and access to financial resources among others.

**Access to good data is also a constraint to progress on gender and climate.** There are challenges in the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of reliable, timely, accessible and sufficiently disaggregated data. Where good data exists, it does not always translate into the evidence basis for policymaking. To strengthen accountability, climate and gender goals for both the UNFCCC and the SDGs should be monitored, tracked, gaps identified and challenges in implementation highlighted and reported.

A recent (2018) Irish Aid and IIED synthesis evaluation of livelihood and climate relevant interventions in Ethiopia noted that strong situational (macro to micro) mechanisms preclude poor women as beneficiaries. Gender equality expertise in research & development organisations is also insufficient to identify and overcome structural and other factors that reduce the gender inclusiveness of interventions. Different and better strategies are needed for reaching women headed households and women in poor male headed households.

This requires engagement by a broader range of actors, such as business, civil society, and communities themselves. Putting the available tools to use on gender and climate, in a way that builds consensus across society, requires political leadership, resources and commitment.
4.0. Ireland’s policy and Implementation approaches to climate change and gender

4.1. Ireland’s Policy approaches on Gender Equality and Climate Change

‘The Global Island- Ireland’s Foreign Policy for a Changing World’ is clear on how gender equality informs Ireland’s approaches. We champion gender in a number of ways; through emphasising gender equality in our peacekeeping missions, championing LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Intersex) issues at the UN, focusing on gender equality outcomes through our Irish Aid-funded projects, active campaigning against gender-based violence (GBV) issues in our Embassies abroad, and our role in chairing the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN in New York.

Ireland’s foreign policy also recognises Climate change as one of the biggest global challenges of this century, due to increasing global warming and related extreme weather events, flooding and rising sea-levels. Because it affects poorest communities most, climate change is a priority in Ireland’s international development policy and there is a push for climate change to be addressed in an integrated manner in the post 2015 development framework. Ireland is supporting developing countries and vulnerable communities to develop their own national responses to environmental degradation, natural resource management and efforts to conserve and promote biodiversity and address climate change. Under the EU priorities Ireland is supporting access to energy which is affordable, secure and low-carbon through an integrated climate change and energy policy.

The new draft Ireland’s new international development policy “Transforming our world” 2017-2022 frames gender equality and climate resilience as major cross-cutting themes which will determine the success or otherwise of our interventions, as well as policy priorities in their own right. The policy’s vision is a world that is more equal, more peaceful and more sustainable. Our action will be embedded in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with an intention to Leave No One Behind. This guides us to focusing the majority of our efforts on women and girls, as well as mainstreaming climate considerations into all that we do. Ireland’s abiding commitment to human rights means that we must continue to ensure that human rights principles and standards are promoted, protected and integrated across all development efforts. This leads us to committing resources to gender equality, and other

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Irish Aid, 2018. Transforming Our World; Help Ireland Make a Difference. Ireland’s new international development policy
forms of social differentiation, ensuring that they are taken into account in development interventions.

Ireland is also committed to taking a Whole of Government approach to the challenges of climate change. The Programme for Government 2016-19 committed us to enhanced climate action, including contributing €175m in climate finance by 2020. We are well on track to achieving this, with a climate finance figure in 2017 of [€57m]. Led by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Ireland has prioritised gender in our engagement with the UNFCCC and will be supporting the UNFCCC Secretariat to implement key elements of the Gender Action Plan from late 2018. Our international work led by Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, has prioritised Climate Smart Agriculture, and the role of women within that. In our engagement with key European Union processes, as well as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and of course, the UN, Ireland has consistently championed gender equality issues, and the need for bold action on climate change.

Ireland is the current chair for the Commission on the Status of Women. In 2018, CSW62 focused on issues relating to rural women and girls. In 2019, CSW63 will consider social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Ireland’s leadership helped to ensure that climate change was high on the agenda of the CSW62 commitments (refer to final conclusions)\(^\text{16}\). This linked gender equality with the commitments of the Paris agreement, noted that adverse impacts of climate change are exacerbating vulnerabilities, but especially the inequalities across men and women, boys and girls; disadvantages, vulnerabilities and inequalities that rural women and men, girls and boys and their families face\(^\text{17}\).

Domestically, Ireland’s National Strategy for Women and Girls (2017-2020) focuses on advancing socio economic equality for women and girls and supporting programmes to

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ensure that women have equal access to and control over resources, services and opportunities. The strategy continues to prioritise protection, gender mainstreaming, and the prevention of gender-based violence. On climate action, Ireland is working hard on the implementation of both the National Mitigation Plan and the National Adaptation Framework (NAF). The NAF in particular commits the Government to working closely with local centres for excellence on climate change, with actions firmly rooted at community level.

4.2. Addressing gender equality and climate change in Irish Aid Programmes

This section outlines some of the key practical approaches, progress and lessons from Irish Aid work. It covers the key areas of Irish Aid gender-sensitive climate action programming to date, namely access to energy, climate resilient agriculture and social protection.

Irish Aid addresses gender equality and climate change as cross cutting issues and also as standalone programmes in the bilateral programmes in Key Partner Countries. We address gender mainstreaming by undertaking gender analyses in the preparation and review of Country Strategies, as well as political economy and vulnerability analyses. This often includes finding opportunities for work beyond our bilateral assistance programme within the Embassies, and finding ways to work closely with Civil Society and UN partners on gender mainstreaming. We have produced comprehensive Climate Risk Assessments for most of our Key Partner Countries, to help guide programming to the most vulnerable sectors, regions, and sections of society. However, much more remains to be done to reflect gender equality and climate change in development programming.

Many of Irish Aid supported programmes target the most vulnerable (women in male headed households, female headed households, and young people who are landless) and help to build their adaptive capacity to climate change. Typically, this is done by introducing activities suitable for households that are asset-poor, particularly those on small plots of land. Increasing the asset base of rural poor women can improve their access to and control over key household productive resources, which in turn reduces their vulnerability in times of climate shocks and stresses.

**Gendered access to renewable energy**

Poor people’s access to clean energy contributes to their economic empowerment and poverty reduction, their health, and that of ecosystems upon which they rely. A lack of access to clean and reliable energy has a significant impact on rural women and girls, and affects gender relations at household and community level. Cooking from biomass in the absence of clean cooking solutions is

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18 Irish Aid key Partner countries include; Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Southern Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Vietnam
particularly detrimental to the health of women and children, who are often associated with household activities and regular exposure to toxic smoke from traditional cook stoves.  

In Irish Aid-funded programmes in Malawi, energy solutions for the poor is integrated with social protection and disaster risk reduction initiatives. The Malawi energy initiative targets the most vulnerable, 30% of whom are female-headed households with severely depleted assets, and who are most affected by localised climate change impacts including drought and floods. The low cost energy solutions contribute to reduced demand for firewood, which in turn reduces deforestation and environmental degradation at local level. It also reduces the workload typically borne by women and girls.

By supporting local (mostly women-dominated) producer groups to manufacture and sell the simple stoves, the programme has also contributed to increased incomes for the women and men engaged in producing the stoves. As of June 2018, there are 271 cook stove production groups made up of over 50% women.

Evidence from studies in Malawi indicate that wood fuel usage in households reduced on average by 0.50kg per day (182Kg per year) when compared to the 3-stone fire. By September 2018, 781,385 stoves have been produced and 46,171 households had access to solar power. The programme is contributing to Malawi’s national target of producing 2,000,000 stoves by 2020, but it also has social, economic and environmental benefits for individuals, households and ecosystems.

In Ethiopia, the Government aims to ‘green’ the health sector, through extending solar energy in health centres and recognise the positive impact clean energy has on health outcomes at household level. Health centres with better access to power automatically improves the quality of care on offer, with benefits in terms of longer hours of operation, ability to perform simple operations, and the ability to sustain cold chains. Irish Aid contributes to the programme, which also provides energy efficient cook-stoves and simple solar energy for mothers with new born babies who have attended the health facilities. This provides incentives for mothers to attend clinics, and improve the basic health of their children.

Irish Aid has supported GIZ in Ethiopia to distribute 104,600 improved cook stoves to rural households. This has reduced indoor pollution especially for women and children. Additionally, 5,163 tons of fuel wood have been saved, equivalent to saving 2,950 hectares of land from deforestation. In addition, solar panels have been installed in 44 health centres, increasing the proportion of electrified health facilities in two regions by 5% and 9% respectively.

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19 UNIDO, 2014. Guide on gender mainstreaming energy and climate change projects
20 https://energypedia.info/wiki/Malawi_Cookstove_DB
21 IIED and Irish Aid 2018. Developing Climate Resilience in Malawi by Combining Energy Delivery with Social Cash Transfer (SCT) / Social Protection Programmes (Draft report)
22 LTS International, 2016. Lesson learning study for the enhancing community resilience programme
23 Irish Aid Ethiopia internal reports 2018 and mid-term review report 2016
Gender and climate resilient agriculture

Many rural households in Sub Saharan Africa are highly vulnerable to increasingly erratic patterns of rainfall, with a low ability to cope with climate variability. There is a high dependence on rain fed agriculture, and lack of alternative livelihoods that leaves many people vulnerable to stresses and shocks. Women represent the main source of agricultural labour in Africa. (Denton, 2002; UNDP, 2010). Gender segregation of tasks is changing, with women taking over key agricultural tasks once done only by men such as land preparation, buying seed etc.

Targeting women in terms of technology, access to climate information, and climate resilient agriculture approaches is becoming more important as they are increasingly the primary producers of food and cash crops amidst climate variability and change.

Ireland has a long history of supporting smallholder agriculture, especially in Ethiopia, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique. Increasingly the support focuses on integrating agriculture with food security, climate change, natural resource management, value chains, and access to markets, taking a more multidimensional approach.

Key gender and climate elements of our agriculture programmes in key partner countries include:

- Widespread promotion of gender-sensitive Climate Resilient Agriculture practices including soil and water conservation management (mulching, composting), conservation agriculture (zero and minimum tillage), multiple cropping, provision of inputs & technologies (improved crop seeds, forage seeds & weather resistant planting materials with ability to survive adverse growing conditions).

- Promoting post-harvest handling technologies aimed at reducing the work load for women and reduce post-harvest losses. In Ethiopia, maize shellers, multi-crop thresher and enset processors have been distributed to women’s cooperatives groups. In addition, programmes have introduced food storage

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Irish Aid Support to Economic Empowerment and Access to Land for women affected by climate change

An Irish Aid and IIED (2016) study on supporting pastoralist groups facing climate change effects in Tanzania revealed that the Irish Aid funded programme supported economic empowerment for women which led to capacity to control household finances. The programme also led to equity in household decision-making. Widows and divorced women, were able to successfully claim small areas of land from clan leaders to support themselves and their children. Women were also able to run for formal positions of office on village councils where decisions are made.


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24 Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, Sierra Leone/Liberia and Vietnam
facilities, and trained women on how to operate the technologies. The technologies have capacity to save labour and time for women (for example by not having to shell maize cobs) which can be used on family care, community roles, and other income-generating activities that can increase adaptation.

- Our programmes have also made explicit links to nutrition outcomes, providing women with access to nutritionally rich food, to improve their health status. Target groups are mostly pregnant women, lactating mothers and children. In addition, the emphasis is on promoting crops and techniques that can withstand climate extremes, and help households to restore their livelihoods after an extreme event.

- Irish Aid has also supported operational research in agriculture that encourages innovation, across a number of countries. These have helped deepen understanding of climate and agriculture linkages with a focus on gender. It was observed that female headed households are poorer and hence have fewer options for livelihood improvements and achieving climate resilience. Evidence also shows that targeting women and female headed households in agriculture and climate relevant interventions can close gender equality deficits. Working closely with the International Institute for Environment and Development, the Irish Aid climate change and development learning platform case studies provide examples and lessons on how the gender inequality of climate risks can be overcome, especially in Ethiopia and Mozambique.

### Engaging Men and Boys

In Mozambique, an Irish Aid supported nutrition and gender equality project in Inhambane region has taken an interesting approach. By focusing on male engagement and women’s empowerment in the family context, it aims to create lasting influence. The programme provides information on relevant legislation (land law, family and gender-based violence laws) and training on nutrition in communities affected by climate change, as well as conducts training on gender and nutrition in emergency responses. The programme has led to behaviour change between women and men in terms of sharing gender roles and has empowered a coalition of Mozambican NGOs and activists that works with men to champion gender equality and rights.

Gender, Heath and Climate Change

Irish Aid supports health programmes in key partner countries where there is low access and utilisation of basic health services, poor household sanitation, high maternal and infant mortality rates, as well as high prevalence of HIV/AIDS infections. Irish Aid programmes support national and sub national governments to improve health facilities and human resource systems for better health service delivery.
In regard to reducing and managing HIV/AIDS infections, Irish Aid programmes in Uganda and Mozambique recognise the link between HIV infection nutritional health and other social economic shocks and stresses including climate change. In Uganda, Irish Aid is working with FAO to address climate change impacts which can increase exposure of communities to new HIV and AIDS infections, hasten the progression from infection to AIDS and reduce adherence to medication due to poor diets and loss of income. This is done through improving livelihoods, incomes, awareness raising and nutrition by engaging communities, schools and people living with HIV/AIDS in climate smart technologies including kitchen gardens, energy saving technologies, local manure production among others. This improves the nutrition status of PLWHA, and increases their incomes, as well as their resilience to climate risks and shocks.

In Ethiopia, the health programme has integrated nutrition and health of poor rural women and children to increase access to maternal health care services. This was done by improving awareness of and demand for ante-natal care, and the physical facilities using climate smart technology and exploring options for greening the health sector through providing solar energy and water harvesting systems in health centres, targeting mothers with new born babies with provision of energy efficient cook-stoves and simple solar energy.

The health programme in Tanzania has commissioned a case study research on the effectiveness of health provision for women and girls in the context of gender-based violence and climate change. This will provide the much needed evidence on climate change, health and gender linkages.
Gender perspectives of Social Protection and Climate Adaptation

Irish Aid has a long term track record of supporting social protection (SP) programmes, especially in Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, with our investment growing over the years. In many cases, our support also contributes to the development of social protection systems themselves, to enhance their effectiveness or scalability. In 2017, we issued a Social Protection Strategy which highlights the importance placed on social protection by Ireland as a means to reduce extreme poverty, and empower the poorest. The Strategy states clearly that the Ireland’s primary purpose in supporting Social Protection programmes is ‘to build first and then to prevent erosion of assets and capacities at individual, community and national levels by stresses and inequalities’. A key advantage of social protection from a climate perspective is its ability to build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events. Irish Aid believes that sustainable social protection systems need to address chronic vulnerabilities and develop the capacity to respond effectively to sudden and slow onset of shocks including climate impacts.

From a gender perspective, social protection is acknowledged for driving improvements in gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment, contributing to SDG 5, target 4. By making women the main transfer recipients, programmes can directly reduce gender gaps in access to health, food and education, and enable women’s accumulation of productive resources and assets. Transfers can boost rural women’s influence in household decision-making and participation in social networks, with positive spill over effects on food production and nutrition. If designed poorly, however, social protection programmes run the risk of having a detrimental impact on gender equality, by, for example, increasing women’s labour burden. There is mixed evidence on the extent to which cash transfers increase, or reduce, the prevalence of domestic violence, although it would appear that it depends on the education level of the woman.

In Mozambique, Inhambane region, social protection delivery has been linked to local climate adaptation, to address inequality and vulnerability where statistics from an IIED and Irish Aid household survey (2018) showed that 57% of households are female headed and 97% of them depend on agriculture with an average land holding of 1.7 ha. Female headed households receive less support from extension services – only 4% as compared to 20% of male headed households.

25 Irish Aid, 2017. Social Protection strategy
Despite these important linkages, gender issues have received relatively little and inconsistent attention in social protection programming more generally.\textsuperscript{28} 

The Irish Aid Social Protection programmes in Mozambique, Ethiopia, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia have undertaken operational research to explore how they can best respond to climate change, specifically by supporting the most vulnerable to adapt their livelihoods to be more climate resilient. Floods & droughts are drivers of recent crop losses, and climate-related risks are perceived as the main challenges to agricultural production. Under a district level intervention, the most poor and vulnerable voices (with special attention to women and girls) are now being included in local adaptation planning for risk preparedness and recovery.

Social protection has also been used to strengthen resilience through integration with other areas of intervention. In Malawi, for instance, the resilience pillar of Irish Aid’s strategy links Social Protection with Disaster Risk Reduction, Humanitarian Assistance, Climate Change and Energy. This approach ensures continuity and coordination of support to households, layering of interventions to complement each other, and real-time responsiveness to shocks, or the threat of extreme weather events. Work ongoing in partnership with the Institute for Development Studies is exploring the options for embedding shock responsiveness in Social Protection programmes. If designed and implemented well, horizontal or vertical expansion of social protection schemes during a climate shock as the potential to reverse pre-existing gender inequalities.

### 5.0. Conclusions and Key Messages

#### 5.1. Conclusion: Towards a climate and gender justice approach

Climate change is fundamentally a human rights issue, as it hinders access to the basic human rights of access to food, health, education, etc. Framing it in this way encourages us to take a human-centred approach, and safeguard the rights of the most vulnerable, especially women and girls. Because of this, there is a need for action in making the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change more representative of humanity, and a need for advocacy ‘outside the room’, especially at national level. Ultimately, there is a need to challenge social and cultural norms that inhibit women and girls from being engaged in decision-making processes that affect them. They also need to be given the voice to articulate their needs, and make their full contribution. This also means finding space for the most vulnerable to speak truth to power and directly tell their stories to the key decision makers.

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\textsuperscript{28} FAO and IPC-IG, 2018. Bringing a gender perspective into shock-responsive social protection
makers. This reinforces the human face of climate change, and reminds us all that it is a shared, moral responsibility to address it effectively. Ireland remains committed to championing the rights of women and girls in the face of climate change at all levels. We appreciate that they need special attention as the group most vulnerable, but importantly, we need to unlock the unique capabilities and strengths that women and men, boys and girls have, to address this challenge of a generation.

5.2. Key Messages for Policy makers

Partner governments urgently need capacity support in gender and climate

- Support is needed to integrate gender into national adaptation plans, and climate finance proposals in meaningful ways.
- Climate finance readiness funds also need to provide incentives and resources for governments to build capacity in this area.
- At all levels, there must be an open conversation among climate and gender technical staff to understand climate impacts on gender relations. This is the only way to improve the quality of negotiations, policies, programmes and implementation.

Women’s voices need to be louder – and heard- at all levels, especially in international fora.

- By recognising countries that have made progress in increasing women’s representation in UNFCCC National Delegations, this could motivate others to take steps to improve their performance. There is a need to explore how national quotas have made a difference in some countries.
- To ensure women are not only ‘represented’ but actually participating, there is an urgent need to strengthen capacity support available for women experts and negotiators- to build their confidence, skills, and effectiveness while ‘at the table’. Peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups can also be effective. A range of tools and guidelines are available to help in this regard.29
- Provide evidence of the value addition of engaging women in terms of positive outcomes. Mapping women’s contribution would add value to the advocacy process – not as a way of justifying why women should attend, but highlighting their value and contribution.

29 See for example ideas in the IPU publication Gender Sensitive Parliaments, which provides guidance on how parliament structures can respond to the needs and interests of both men and women in their structures, operations, methods and work. archive.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gsp11ex-e.pdf
Women have a right to be at the table at negotiations. But it is not necessarily the case that stronger women’s representation leads to better gender outcomes. It is important to go beyond the numbers and address how gender issues are addressed by male delegates in negotiations. Male gender champions must be encouraged in advancing gender equality in climate action.

Funding agencies need to be encouraged to strengthen gender and climate policies and practice

- Funding organisations must lead by example in terms of gender and climate change mainstreaming in their policies, guidelines, strategies and practices. This will create incentives for organisations receiving funds to comply, and create system-wide change.

- Organisations should explore innovative ways to consciously compel decision makers to address gender equality issues in their plans and budgets. Compliance certification, or performance-related bonuses could create the necessary incentives.

- Campaign to make access to funding easier for small and indigenous organisations, tailoring interventions to addressing climate impacts at local level. There is need to support meaningful partnerships that are as local as possible and as global as necessary building on existing capacity to address inequality and vulnerability. There is much to be learned from existing examples of best practice, for example the GEF Small Grants Programme, and these lessons must be shared and taken to scale.

- Grassroots organisations need their capacity built to channel significant funding to local levels, and continue to generate evidence on gender and climate. Funding organisations can play a useful role in partnership with others to achieve this, and create a broader-based access to climate finance at local level.

- Many bilateral and multilateral agencies routinely track the spend allocated to both gender equality and climate change objectives (as well as nutrition). These so-called ‘markers’ are a helpful way to ensure transparency of targeting, but their potential to encourage more collaboration across objectives (e.g. in gender and climate) is less explored. Setting ambitious targets for both gender and climate-relevant spending could incentivise the right programme designs.

A constructive dialogue is needed on climate change as it relates to men and boys

- The messaging needs to change from one of men and boys perpetuating gender inequality to one which focuses on their capacity to work alongside women and girls
to support their empowerment and gender equality. Too often we underemphasise that poor men and boys face the same challenges as women and girls but that they are impacted in different ways.

- Men and boys must be encouraged to challenge traditional gender roles and social norms too. They can become feminist activists too. The key is in understanding the interaction between the men and women’s power, roles and identities and gaps in their gendered relations.

- More analysis needs to be done on climate impacts that are unique to young men in particular, with anecdotal evidence pointing to loss of identity or self-esteem, substance abuse, risk of violent behaviour or radicalisation, incentives for dangerous migration, and so on.

- We need to better understand the dynamics of access and control of resources, power relations and how they interact with climate change coping and adaptation responses. Taking such a political economy approach to understanding climate change will help inform appropriate responses across the board, as well as unpack gender relations.

**Policy integration matters too**

- Gender equality features across a range of multilateral processes, but the messaging isn’t always as joined up as it could be. Policymakers need to find opportunities to strengthen integration across agreements. For example, national Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security (1325) provides a means to build in important climate messages.

5.3. **Key messages for Practitioners**

**Understand what’s really going on:** There is no substitute for robust gender analysis; either stand alone, or as part of political economy and climate vulnerability assessments. These are needed to understand underlying causes of gender inequality and climate change vulnerability. Where necessary, capacity development of implementing partners should be prioritised to achieve this.

In many organisations, technical staff need training and support in how to address cross cutting themes in a holistic way. We must recognise that most staff do not possess the skills to address both gender and climate. Nevertheless all staff can contribute something, no matter how small, to an equality focus. The message that gender equality is an effective way to ensure activities benefit all types of citizens must be emphasised. Communities of practice should emphasise the generation of training modules on basic mainstreaming, to improve programming.
This should not be seen as ‘more work’ or require additional resources. Simple harmonisation of approaches across gender analysis, climate change vulnerability and assessments, and project baselines is possible.

**Design projects in response to the analysis:**
- Include climate change and gender objectives as part of the fundamental elements of the programmes or strategies. This will ensure that climate and gender are given due attention and explicitly promoted in programme implementation and documentation.
- The design should explicitly address issues emerging from the baseline assessments. Where there is doubt about what the assessments say, supplementary qualitative assessments may be necessary, to ensure targeting, interventions, etc, are appropriate.
- Programme Theories of Change are a great place to start capturing gender and climate linkages, and this can inform the results frameworks. The Theory of Change helps to explore potential (non-linear) pathways of change, and hopefully will help to encourage adaptive programming that can adjust course in response to emerging evidence.
- Allocate resources to meaningfully addressing climate change and gender issues. Financial resources will be required to strengthen the mainstreaming process, especially for baseline assessments, training and capacity building, research and learning as well as monitoring and evaluation.
- Often mainstreaming may not be enough depending on the existing context and gender inequalities, which may also require stand-alone programmes, such as GBV and FGM, to further highlight and address the issue.
- Recognise that direct interventions that target women (whether in the community, in male-headed households or female-headed households), may be inhibited in their impact unless structural issues are simultaneously addressed. Often it is the structural barriers to progress that really hold women back.

**Track change effectively, through effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability**
- Strengthen indicators that measure gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in climate change interventions. This should be supported by gender statistics and differentiating the needs and experiences of women and men, boys and girls. Indicators are relevant and useful at national strategic level, as well as at project and programme level.
- Link reporting on climate action to SDG indicators by mapping indicators to both climate and gender SDGs.
- Support national statistical offices to ensure reporting on both gender equality and climate action.
• There is an important role for sex-disaggregated data. Although not all countries have set up monitoring systems that can collect disaggregated data, every effort must be made to advocate for an encourage the collection of this data, particularly in vulnerability mapping assessments. Sex disaggregated data has an important role at each stage of programming for maximum impact.

• Ensure there is clear accountability for gender and climate change mainstreaming, with tangible results that are reported on at the appropriate level.

**Keep learning, through investment in generating and sharing evidence on gender and climate linkages**

• Analyse and document changes that have happened as a result of promoting gender equality goals. This is relevant at both global and local levels. Find evidence of transformative change as flagship advocacy pieces.

• Generate gender and climate action statistics to provide evidence of what works and what does not work across different sectors, policies, and programmes. An absence of rigorous evidence will always be challenged by decision makers.

• Good evidence of women’s economic empowerment as a way to build resilience is a particular gap. Data collection and analysis of this should be specifically promoted.

• Integrate gender and climate objectives into large scale research programmes. This will contribute to adding to the body of evidence, especially in a multi-dimensional way.

**Conclusion**

Ireland will intensify how we champion gender and climate as key factors in achieving the SDGs. Specifically, we will continue to:

• Champion gender at the UNFCCC, and support the Gender Action Plan in all its elements including strengthening civil society and grassroots voice, especially of women;

• Use our voice at the UN, the EU other multilateral fora to champion the rights of the most marginalised and vulnerable; and to challenging the status quo constraining women from making their full contribution, including to climate action;

• Ensure that our partnerships at global and bilateral levels are characterised by a clear focus on gender and climate change; and

• Support a generation of evidence and learning about what works in gender responsive climate action.

• Work to improve coherence on gender and climate in our domestic and international resources.
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