



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY  
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET



Roadmap  
for  
**Gender  
Equality**



*“As the GEF moves forward with a new and innovative investment strategy, we are deeply committed to initiating and enhancing projects to more effectively deliver on the goals for gender equality while addressing the challenges we face on the global environment. These are not separate issues. Only by engaging partners, both women and men, can we reverse the negative trends threatening our ecosystems and save them for our future generation.”*

**Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson,  
Global Environment Facility**

This brochure was prepared based on a paper titled *Strategic Positioning of the GEF* (GEF/R6/19).



## Introduction

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has a long history of investing in local actions geared toward social inclusion to achieve global environmental objectives. Mainstreaming gender<sup>1</sup> through GEF programs and projects presents opportunities for enhancing project value as well as advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

The GEF is committed to furthering its systematic engagement addressing gender mainstreaming during GEF-6, based on the *GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming*<sup>2</sup>, which was adopted by the GEF Council in May 2011 (refer to Annex 1). The GEF aims to achieve global environmental benefits and sustainable development by addressing issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment.

The GEF recognizes gender equality as an important goal in the context of projects that receive GEF support because it advances both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goals of gender equality and equity, and social inclusion.

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1. Gender mainstreaming means bringing the experience, knowledge, and interests of women and men to bear on the development agenda. Within a project context, gender mainstreaming commonly includes: identifying gaps in equality through the use of sex-disaggregated data, developing strategies and policies to close the gaps, devoting resources and expertise for implementing such strategies, monitoring the results of implementation, and holding individuals and institutions accountable for outcomes that promote gender equality.

2. Council document, GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1.



## Progress on Gender Mainstreaming at the GEF

Before the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* was adopted, the Public Involvement Policy<sup>3</sup> guided GEF operations on gender mainstreaming. The *Public Involvement Policy* calls for public participation, including both women and men, in every step of the GEF project cycle and operations. In 2008, the GEF renewed its commitment on gender mainstreaming by conducting the first comprehensive review on gender mainstreaming in GEF projects, described in the report, *Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF*.<sup>4</sup> The review highlighted the link between gender equality and environmental sustainability; the scope, content, and depth of gender mainstreaming in GEF projects across all focal areas; and future steps to be considered to strengthen mainstreaming gender at the GEF.

3. Council document, GEF/C.7/6.

4. 2008, GEF, *Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF*.

Informed by the recommendations made by the Fourth Overall Performance Study (OPS4)<sup>5</sup> and other reviews, the GEF has made significant progress in establishing operational systems for gender mainstreaming during GEF-5. Among the key actions undertaken, the GEF:

- (a) **Adopted a Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.** Developed and adopted a policy that clarifies GEF's commitment and minimum standards to promote gender equality through its operations. The Policy expresses the GEF's commitment to enhance the degree to which the GEF and its Agencies promote the goal of gender equality through GEF operations. The Policy also outlines several requirements for the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies on gender mainstreaming in GEF operations.

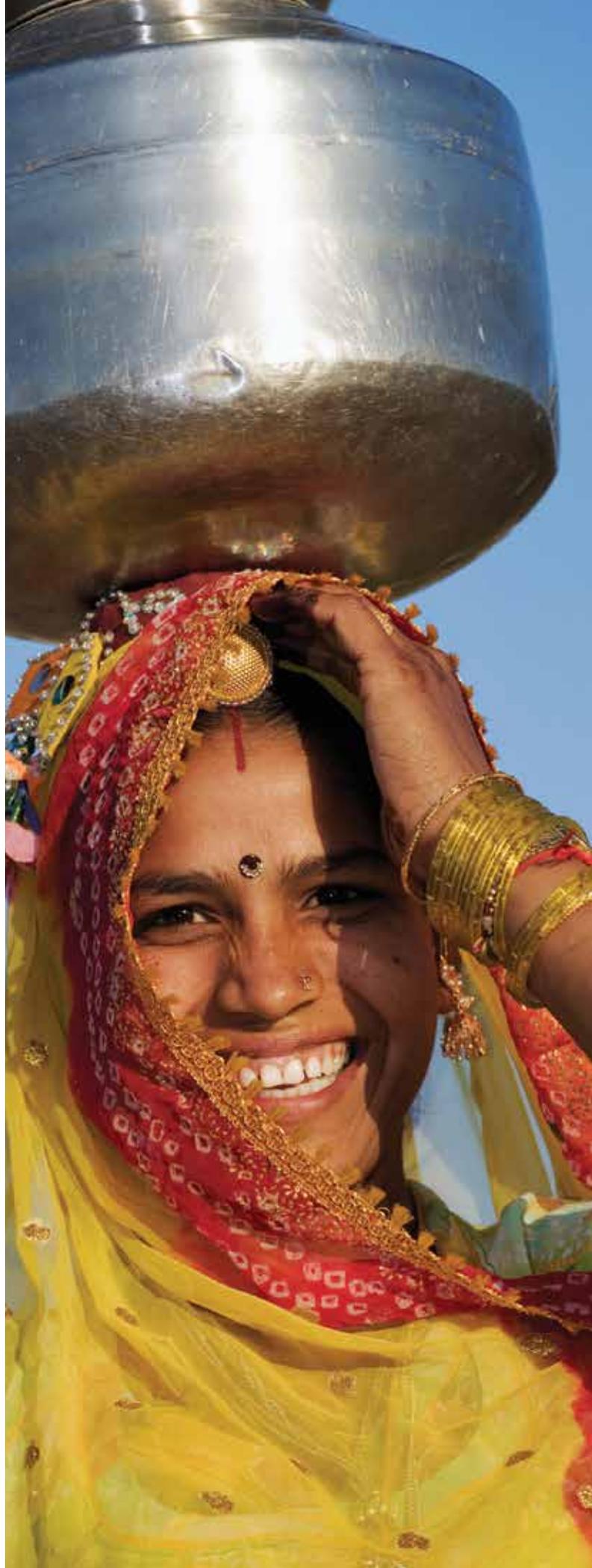
5. 2009, OPS4 Technical Document #9: *Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF*.

- (b) Incorporated gender sensitive approaches and indicators in some focal area strategies, including international waters and climate change adaptation.
- (c) Revised project templates and review criteria. Project templates include specific section to describe gender dimensions, benefits, and approaches. One of the project review criteria for GEF projects is to have appropriate gender consideration in project design and monitoring.
- (d) Incorporated gender in the Results-Based Management (RBM). Two gender indicators, including staffing and gender analysis in projects, were incorporated in the RBM at the institutional level.
- (e) Conducted annual monitoring review of gender-related portfolio. Annual reviews of projects across focal areas are conducted to see how gender mainstreaming has been addressed and integrated in GEF projects through the Annual Monitoring Review.
- (f) Designated a gender focal point at the GEF Secretariat. A senior staff of GEF Secretariat has been designated to coordinate and implement the work related to gender mainstreaming internally and externally.
- (g) Reviewed GEF Agencies on gender mainstreaming. Assessment was conducted among all ten of the existing GEF Agencies on whether they meet the minimum requirements of the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming*. The report<sup>6</sup> was discussed at the 45<sup>th</sup> GEF Council meeting in November 2013.

Since the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* was adopted in 2011, there has been a notable shift and significant progress in the attention paid to gender and social concerns in GEF projects. The GEF project templates and review criteria have been revised to describe socio-economic benefits and gender dimensions to be delivered by the project, and how it supports the achievement of global environmental benefits. As a result of these efforts, an increasing proportion of projects has mainstreamed gender in project design.<sup>7</sup> In particular, enabling activities

6. Council document, GEF/C.45/10.

7. 2013, GEF Evaluation Office, OPS5 Technical Document #16, Sub-Study on the GEF's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.





proposals, including, for example, proposals for the development of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, have seen significant improvement in addressing gender dimensions in its activities.

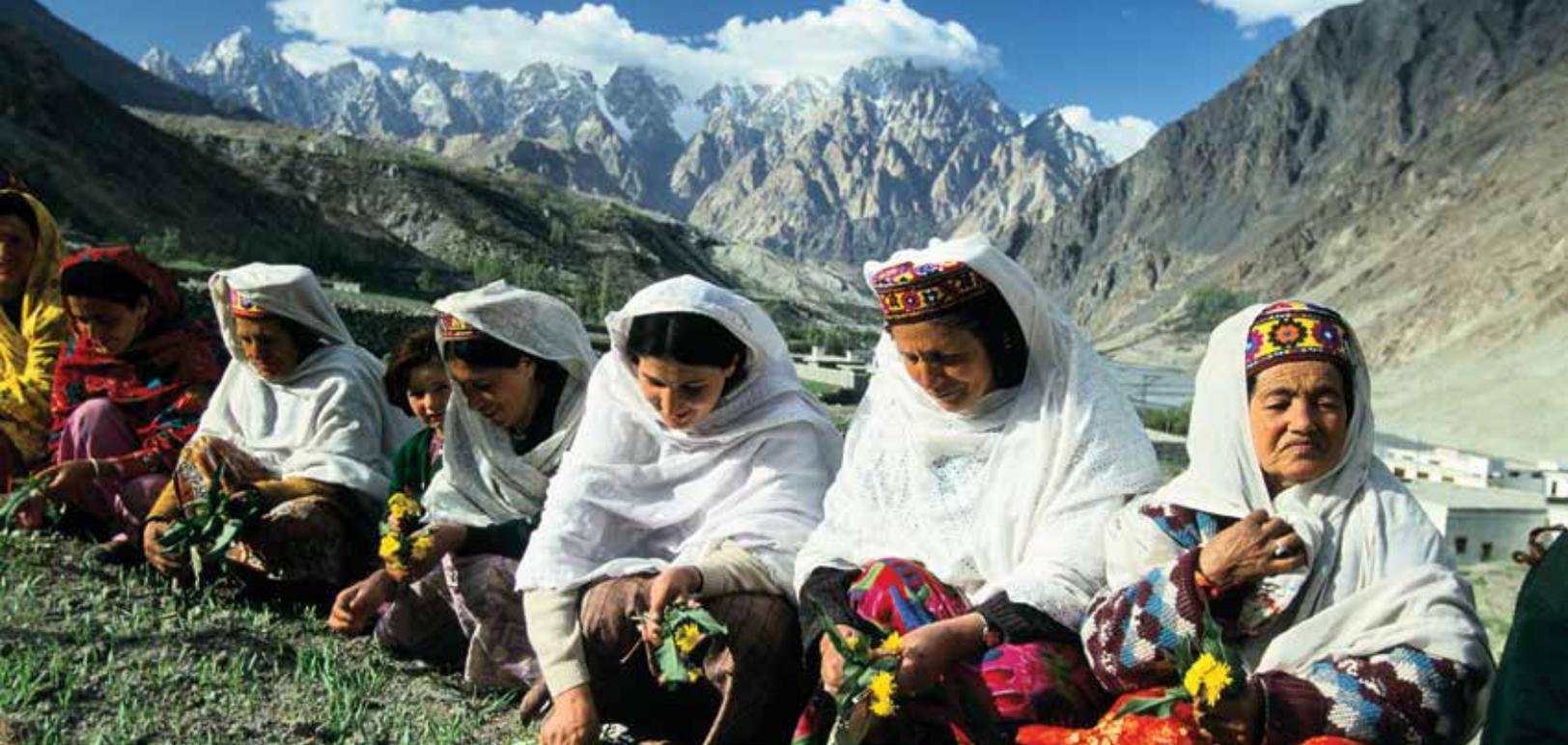
Recently, the GEF Secretariat assessed the ten GEF Agencies<sup>8</sup> on their compliance with *GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming*. This review shows that most agencies (8 out of 10) are aligned with the policy, and they have undertaken gender mainstreaming in a strategic manner and are able to show some success in strengthening gender elements in GEF projects.

The GEF Secretariat has also been providing regular

analysis and reporting on gender mainstreaming among its projects through the Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) in FY11 and FY12.<sup>9</sup> The portfolio of projects has been analyzed across all focal areas, and GEF has also systematically reviewed gender-specific information in the Project Implementation Reports, Mid-Term Evaluation Reports and Terminal Evaluation Reports. These reports have highlighted good practices across focal area projects in mainstreaming gender during project development and implementation. They have also provided important information on the progress and remaining challenges to further strengthen mainstreaming gender in GEF projects.

8. The GEF is also assessing compliance on gender policy of the new GEF Partner Agencies during the accreditation process.

9. Council document, GEF/C.42/05/Rev.01 and GEF/C.44/05.



## Challenges and Gaps

While much progress has been made in integrating gender in GEF projects during the past few years, the Secretariat recognizes that increased efforts are required to strengthen gender mainstreaming in GEF operations.

Previous reviews of GEF the portfolio<sup>10</sup> revealed that integration of gender in GEF projects varies among focal areas and its programs and projects. The recent OPS5 technical review on gender mainstreaming notes that while 73 percent of the gender-relevant GEF projects have mainstreamed gender in design and implementation in different degrees, only 35 percent of them adequately addressed gender mainstreaming with specific gender sensitive approach and indicators. Among the focal areas, gender mainstreaming has been relatively strong in projects related to natural resources management. The gender mainstreaming analysis under the AMR of FY11 and FY12 reached similar findings even though the project samples were different. The analysis from the AMR FY12 found that about 38 percent of the projects under biodiversity and land degradation focal areas addressed some approach to mainstreaming gender in project implementation, while about 10 to 18 percent did so for

other focal areas.

Earlier reviews of the portfolio recognized that project proposals as well as implementation and evaluation reports submitted by Agencies often lack gender-specific information due to the absence of gender-sensitive approach and indicators in project results framework. Only 13 percent of GEF projects included gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation processes, including gender-sensitive indicators.<sup>11</sup> This makes it difficult to collect sex-disaggregated data and track progress made on the engagement and impact of the project activities towards both women and men. The reviews also showed that the approach and information related to gender mainstreaming actions in GEF projects varies among and within the GEF Agencies. According to the OPS5 technical review on gender mainstreaming, the GEF Agencies have considered gender in a majority of the GEF projects that they manage. However, many of them (38 percent of the total projects reviewed) lacked a specific gender approach, including gender-sensitive actions and indicators in projects.

10. These analysis reviewed portfolio of project documents and monitoring and evaluation reports on description related to consideration and approaches on gender mainstreaming. This includes: gender analysis undertaken during project preparation and/or implementation; gender-sensitive project framework (i.e. project objective, outcomes, outputs, and activities that specifically target women and men), including use of gender-disaggregated indicators; and project staffing (e.g. gender specialist, target to recruit more women staff, etc.).

11. 2008, GEF, Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF



## Future Direction

During GEF-6, based on the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* and taking into consideration the findings from past related reviews, including the OPS5 technical review on gender mainstreaming, the Secretariat, in consultation with the GEF Agencies and other experts, will develop a *Gender Plan of Action* to further integrate gender consideration in GEF operations.

In preparing the action plan, the GEF will be in contact with and learn from experiences and lessons from other international institutions, including the Rio Conventions, GEF Agencies, Climate Investment Funds, Green Climate Fund, and many others that have developed or are developing similar action plans. The *GEF Gender Plan of Action* will be prepared by end of 2014.

The *GEF Gender Plan of Action* will provide a concrete road map to implement the GEF Policy on Gender

Mainstreaming during the coming years. Appropriate actions would need to build on the existing and planned gender strategies and plans of the GEF Agencies to avoid duplication of effort. Gender mainstreaming cannot be achieved in a vacuum and requires long-term commitment and engagement, including awareness raising and capacity building of internal and external partners.

The GEF will take a step-wise approach in achieving its goal and objectives on gender mainstreaming. Further, through the implementation of the action plan, the Secretariat and the GEF Agencies will explore how project results and progress related to gender can be better designed, implemented, and reported, particularly for those projects where gender mainstreaming is highly relevant.

The Secretariat will undertake a multi-stakeholder participatory process to identify and prioritize key

actions going forward and prepare the *Gender Plan of Action* to be endorsed by the GEF Council. The GEF plans to establish an interagency working group consisting of GEF Agency gender focal points and other experts to exchange ideas and practices to develop the *Gender Plan of Action*. Taking into account that each agency has its own gender policy, strategy, and/or action plan<sup>12</sup> with varying application to GEF projects, the Plan of Action will facilitate a systematic approach and provide practical guidance for the implementation of the *GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming*.

Based on initial inputs and consultation with the replenishment participants and GEF Agencies, below are several actions identified as key elements to be further considered during the preparation of the action plan:

### **Mainstreaming Gender in GEF Project Cycle, including Gender Analysis, Gender Screening, and Gender Sensitive Indicators**

Recognizing that each GEF Agency has a different gender policy, strategy, and/or action plan, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Agencies, will clarify and facilitate a systematic, consistent approach and provide practical guidance for the implementation of the *GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* in key steps of the GEF project cycle. This will specifically include application of gender analysis by the GEF Agencies at the project preparation phase; development of project frameworks with gender-sensitive outcomes and outputs; and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation for relevant projects.

Conducting gender analysis at the early stage of project preparation to determine the different roles, needs, and knowledge of women and men is recognized as a critical first step to set the baseline and develop appropriate project design with a gender sensitive approach. In GEF-6, appropriate gender analysis will be undertaken by the GEF Agencies as part of the socio-economic assessment during project preparation, and it will be reviewed before CEO endorsement.

Not all projects require equal attention to gender

12. In addition to agency-specific gender policies and strategies, there is also UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), which all UN agencies are mandated to meet the performance standards.

issues, depending on the GEF focal area and/or type of engagement. Accordingly, GEF Agencies will assess and screen for gender relevance of all GEF projects with a common categorization at entry. Building on the practices and experiences of various GEF Agencies (e.g., UNDP's Gender Marker, ADB's Gender Mainstreaming Categories, etc.) and other relevant partners, the Secretariat will prepare a simple and practical gender screening criteria and system at the project concept stage in coordination with the GEF Agencies to avoid duplication of effort while allowing some level of consistency in approach. With a clearly defined categorization, this system should help clarify each GEF project's relevance, engagement, and contribution toward the achievement of gender equality. Once under implementation, projects under different categories would be tracked and reported against on an annual basis through the AMR using information provided through the annual Project Implementation Reports and other tools. The Secretariat will also provide additional information and analysis through its portfolio monitoring and learning missions.

Further guidance will be provided on the use of gender-sensitive indicators for all relevant projects. The adoption of gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data within the project results framework is essential to monitoring progress and to achieving measurable results. To develop and apply these tools, the Secretariat will build on and draw lessons from good practices and practical tools that are already used by the GEF Agencies and others for mainstreaming gender in their projects.

### **Mainstreaming Gender in GEF Program Strategies**

Under GEF-6, the GEF will adopt a more comprehensive and programmatic approach toward gender mainstreaming across GEF programs and projects. The degree of relevance of gender dimensions in GEF projects differs depending on focal areas and specific programs. The GEF will focus its efforts on strengthening gender mainstreaming in programs and projects that could generate significant results and contribute to achieving the goals of gender equality and sustainable development.

Opportunities may include focusing on key programs and projects related to sustainable use of natural



resources such as agro-biodiversity, fisheries, and forest resources management under the biodiversity, land degradation, and international waters focal areas and integrated approaches. Within the climate change portfolio, renewable energy projects have historically generated positive benefits, particularly towards women. The chemicals portfolio has also generated noticeable impacts on the improvement of the health of women and children through active engagement of both women and men in awareness-raising and capacity-building activities as well as the eradication of exposure to these chemicals.

Gender sensitive approaches and activities have been incorporated in the GEF-6 focal area strategies and integrated approaches, along with the GEF core gender indicators at the corporate level. All

focal area projects will incorporate the core gender indicators, which will be monitored and aggregated at the focal area and corporate levels. Based on these strategies and programs, the Secretariat, together with the GEF Agencies, will identify specific projects and opportunities where gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women could be strengthened. Focusing on programs and projects that could potentially have significant improvement in project results through mainstreaming gender, the GEF intends to take a more systematic and programmatic approach in addressing gender issues during GEF-6.

### **Knowledge Management and Lessons Sharing on Gender Mainstreaming**

The Secretariat will establish an interagency working

group on gender mainstreaming, including the gender focal points of the Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and other experts, to advance gender mainstreaming in GEF operations and projects. The working group will serve as a platform to ensure effective operational coordination, exchange of information and experience among the GEF focal points of the GEF Agencies in relation to the GEF portfolio. The working group is also intended to deliver and provide advice on specific actions identified under the *GEF Gender Plan of Action*. This work will be done in coordination with similar working groups among the gender focal points of the Multilateral Development Banks and UN Agencies, and appropriate coordination and synergy will be sought.

An interactive GEF webpage on gender mainstreaming will be developed to facilitate exchange of knowledge and lessons on gender mainstreaming activities derived from specific programs and projects. The Secretariat will also undertake portfolio reviews and learning missions in coordination with the GEF Agencies and other partners, and strengthen its knowledge base and management on gender mainstreaming, while highlighting challenges and good practices among related projects.

These activities will also strengthen gender-mainstreaming capacities among the concerned GEF Secretariat staff to increase their understanding of gender mainstreaming, as well as socio-economic aspects in general. This is also expected to lead to effective investment in gender equality and women's empowerment issues as staff become more aware of and interested in gender responsive planning and budgeting. Relevant Secretariat staff will be encouraged to make use of various capacity development opportunities, including training, to increase their understanding on available tools and best practices on mainstreaming gender in projects.

Further, appropriate support and guidance will be provided to the GEF Operational Focal Points to enhance gender mainstreaming in country-level portfolio and project management. The sharing of knowledge and lessons on gender mainstreaming will be facilitated with increased involvement of relevant institutions at the country-level to enhance GEF operation and projects.

## **Ensure GEF Agency Compliance with the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming**

GEF recently undertook an assessment of the GEF Agencies on the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. The assessment examined each Agency to determine the degree to which its policies on gender comply with GEF's. Eight of the ten GEF Agencies met all minimum requirements; the two GEF Agencies that have not fully met the requirements of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming have committed to implementing a plan of action to ensure compliance with those provisions.<sup>13</sup>

The assessment was conducted to examine the GEF Agencies' implementation capacity to apply relevant policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines to their projects, and to establish a track record of their implementation experience. While most of the Agencies have met the minimum requirement, as recognized by the OPS5 technical study and other reviews, application of these standards varies from project to project. With the development of a practical guidance on gender mainstreaming that would apply across GEF Agencies, GEF expects that GEF Agencies will strengthen their systems and processes where appropriate to ensure that relevant GEF projects will include gender sufficiently and consistently.

For the new entities that apply for accreditation as a GEF Project Agency, the GEF accreditation criteria require that all applicants demonstrate consistency with the minimum requirements of the Policy with the same criteria as used to assess existing GEF Agencies.

## **Strengthen Results-based Management on Gender Mainstreaming**

During GEF-6, the GEF will further strengthen GEF-wide accountability for gender mainstreaming by enhancing gender-specific performance targets at all levels. At the corporate level, the GEF Results-based Management Framework will include a set of core Gender Indicators to examine concrete progress on gender related processes and outputs (see Table 1). These Gender Indicators will be applied to all projects under the GEF focal area and integrated approaches, and monitored and aggregated at the focal area and corporate level.

At the project level, the project results framework

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13. The two plans of action for UNIDO and UNEP have been discussed with the GEF Secretariat, and they will report on their progress in 2014.

**Table 1: Results Framework for Gender Mainstreaming in GEF Operations**

<b>Goal:</b> Achieve global environmental benefits and sustainable development through gender equality and empowerment of women		
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Gender Indicators</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<b>Project design fully integrates gender concerns.</b>	1. Percentage of projects that have conducted gender analysis during project preparation.	<b>Project Document at CEO endorsement.</b>
	2. Percentage of projects that have incorporated gender sensitive project results framework, including specific gender sensitive actions, indicators, targets, and/or budget.	
<b>Project implementation ensures gender equitable participation in and benefit from project activities.</b>	3. Share of women and men as direct beneficiaries of project.	<b>Project Implementation Reports, Mid-Term Evaluation Reports, and Terminal Evaluation Reports.</b>
	4. Number of national/regional/global policies, legislation, plans, and strategies that incorporate gender dimensions (e.g. NBSAP, NAPA, TDA/SAP, etc.)	
<b>Project monitoring and evaluation give adequate attention to gender mainstreaming.</b>	5. Percentage of Project Implementation Reports, Mid-term Evaluation Reports, and Terminal Evaluation Reports that incorporates gender equality/women's empowerment issues and assess results/progress.	<b>Project Implementation Reports, Mid-Term Evaluation Reports, and Terminal Evaluation Reports.</b>

will include gender-sensitive indicators, and sex-disaggregated data, for relevant projects. This will be monitored, analyzed, and reported on an annual basis through the AMR exercise and assessed and evaluated through the Medium-term and Terminal Evaluations. Project Implementation Reports (PIR), Project Evaluation Reports, and other information from the GEF Agencies will provide important inputs to the analysis and reporting.

In order to facilitate comprehensive project design, reporting, and analysis that are gender sensitive, the GEF will also review and mainstream gender in the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. The

GEF will incorporate a specific section on gender mainstreaming in the templates and/or guidelines for the Project Identification Form (PIF), CEO Endorsement Request Form, Project Implementation Report, Mid-term Evaluation Report, Terminal Evaluation Report and other relevant documents.

Table 1 specifies the GEF Gender Indicators, against which GEF will be reporting during GEF-6:<sup>14</sup>

14. These core gender indicators will be further reviewed and refined as necessary, in consultation with the Inter-agency Working Group, once it is established. Necessary adjustments may be made to the indicators based on initial implementation experiences. In addition to these quantitative indicators, efforts will be made to also identify appropriate qualitative indicators as relevant.



## Annex 1: GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming<sup>1</sup>

**Summary:** This Policy expresses the Global Environment Facility's commitment to enhancing the degree to which the GEF and its Partner Agencies promote the goal of gender equality through GEF operations. The policy calls on the GEF and its Partner Agencies to mainstream gender into GEF operations, including efforts to analyze and address in GEF projects the specific needs and role of both women and men, as appropriate to each intervention. The Policy includes several requirements for the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies, including the following:

- (a) In order to be eligible to receive GEF financing for GEF projects, all GEF Partner Agencies will be required to have established either (a) policies, (b) strategies, or (c) action plans that promote gender equality; \
- (b) The policies, strategies, or action plans of each GEF Partner Agency will need to satisfy the minimum criteria on gender mainstreaming that are included in the policy for the Agency's systems to be assessed as adequate;
- (c) To support the application of the gender policy, the GEF Secretariat will coordinate the development of corporate-wide guidance for use by the GEF Agencies and GEF Secretariat program managers on the inclusion of gender aspects in the design of projects and on the monitoring and evaluation of gender dimensions in the context of its projects. Such guidance will take into account that not all GEF projects involve gender aspects in equal measure, depending on the focal area and

1. GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, PL/SD/02, 1 May 2012.

scope of the project.

- (d) The GEF Agencies shall incorporate such guidance into their project and program proposals submitted to the Secretariat for review.

**Background:** The Council approved this policy in the context of its review of Council Document GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1, *GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming*. The GEF Secretariat formatted the policy in line with its Policy Document Format and has clarified parts of the Policy to reflect Council deliberations, reduce duplication, and make it consistent with paragraphs 23 – 30 of Council Document GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1.

**Applicability:** This policy is applicable to GEF Partner Agencies and the GEF Secretariat.

**Dates of Effectiveness and Revision:** This policy entered into effect when it was adopted by the GEF Council on May 26, 2011. As decided by the GEF Council, this policy will be reviewed in 2015.

**Sponsors:** GEF Gender Focal Point, GEF Secretariat

**Key Terms:** Gender, Accreditation, GEF Project Agencies, Environmental and Social Safeguards.

## Definitions

The following terms apply to this document.

1. **Accreditation Panel:** The panel to be constituted by the GEF Council that will review Stage 2 Applications for accreditation of GEF Project Agencies.
2. **Accreditation Panel Review:** A criteria-based review to be performed by the Accreditation Panel, which will include assessment of project performance capacity, agencies' governance framework, and environmental and social safeguards.
3. **GEF Agency:** Any one of the 10 institutions that were entitled to receive GEF Trust Fund resources directly as of June 2011. They include the following organizations: the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the

Inter-American Development Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Development Program, United Nations Environment Program, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

4. **GEF Partner Agencies:** Those agencies eligible to request and receive GEF resources directly for the design, implementation, and execution of GEF Projects. This category includes both GEF Agencies and GEF Project Agencies.
5. **GEF Project Agency:** Any of the institutions that the GEF has accredited after June 2011 to receive GEF resources to implement and execute GEF-financed projects apart from the ten GEF Agencies.
6. **GEF Resources:** Resources from any GEF-managed trust fund, including the GEF Trust Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF).

## I. Introduction

1. This Policy expresses the Global Environment Facility's commitment to enhancing the degree to which the GEF and its Partner Agencies promote the goal of gender equality through GEF operations. It commits the GEF to address the link between gender equality and environmental sustainability and towards gender mainstreaming in its policies, programs, and operations. It has been developed to assist the GEF and its Partner Agencies in ensuring that GEF operations promote gender equality and equity.
2. The GEF recognizes that gender equality is an important goal in the context of the projects that it finances because it advances both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equity and social inclusion.
3. While the degree of relevance of gender dimensions to may vary depending on the GEF focal area or type of engagement,<sup>1</sup> accounting for gender equity and equality is an important consideration when financing projects that address global environmental issues, because gender relations,

2. For example, gender integration is essential for some issues and GEF Focal Areas, such as sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation, while for other issues, such as energy efficiency and the phase-out of persistent organic pollutants, it is less essential. Guidance should reflect this and should focus on gender analysis for a specific project to determine adequate measures.



roles and responsibilities exercise important influence on women and men's access to and control over environmental resources and the goods and services they provide.

4. The GEF acknowledges that project results can often be superior when gender considerations are integrated into the design and implementation of projects, where relevant. It is important, in many instances for programme and project interventions to take into account differences in ways men and women perceive incentives linked to the sustainable use of resources and how these perceptions can influence the achievement of the results specified in project objectives.
5. The GEF has adopted, since its early days, a Public Involvement Policy that aims to ensure both women's and men's involvement in GEF projects.<sup>2</sup> This policy is a key GEF policy that

relates specifically to social issues, including gender, and provides the basis for public involvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation of GEF-financed projects. It applies to all GEF focal areas programs and projects; spells out the rationale, terms, and principles for public involvement; and solidifies the operational requirement for stakeholder involvement and partnership in the design, implementation, and evaluation of GEF-financed activities.

6. All GEF Agencies have their own policies and strategies on gender mainstreaming and on promoting gender equality in the context of project interventions. The Agencies apply these policies to GEF projects as well. In recent years, following the UN's mandate on gender equality and other international agreements, many of the GEF Agencies have revised and strengthened their approach to gender issues in their operations, by developing Gender Plans of Action and gender related strategies.

3. This policy was adopted in April 1996. See Council document GEF/C.6/Inf.5, *Policy Paper on Public Involvement in GEF-Financed Projects*.

7. Given these changes and new approaches to gender mainstreaming, the GEF is renewing and expanding its commitment towards gender mainstreaming, and building on its Public Involvement Policy by adopting a new Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.

## II. Objectives

8. The GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall strive to attain the goal of gender equality, the equal treatment of women and men, including the equal access to resources and services through its operations.
9. To accomplish this goal, the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall mainstream gender into their operations, including efforts to analyze systematically and address the specific needs of both women and men in GEF projects.

## III. Policy Requirements for GEF Partner Agencies

10. In order to implement GEF-financed projects, GEF Partner Agencies are required to have established either a policy or policies (this may include relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines), a strategy, or an action plan that requires the Agency to design and implement projects in such a way that both women and men (a) receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits; (b) do not suffer adverse effects during the development process; and that (c) fosters full respect for their dignity and human rights;
11. The policies, strategy, or action plan of each Partner Agency must satisfy the minimum requirements listed in paragraphs 13 – 19 below.
12. The Agency must demonstrate sufficient institutional capability to implement their policies, strategy, or action plan and apply the provisions of each to GEF financed projects.

### Minimum Requirements:

13. The Agency has instituted measures to strengthen its institutional framework for gender mainstreaming, for example, by having a focal point for gender, or other staff, to support the

development, implementation, monitoring, and provision of guidance on gender mainstreaming.

14. The Agency's criteria for project review and project design require it to pay attention to socio-economic aspects in its projects, including gender elements. (In the context of GEF projects, since gender elements are important drivers and incentives for achieving global environmental benefits.)
15. The Agency is required to undertake social assessment, including gender analysis, or to use similar methods to assess the potential roles, benefits, impacts and risks for women and men of different ages, ethnicities, and social structure and status. These studies may be used, along with other types of studies to inform project formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
16. The Agency is required to identify measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse gender impacts.
17. The Agency's policies, strategy, or action plan address gender sensitive activities while recognizing and respecting the different roles that women and men play in resource management and in society.
18. The Agency has a system for monitoring and evaluating progress in gender mainstreaming, including the use of gender disaggregated monitoring indicators.
19. The Agency monitors and provides necessary support for implementation of its policies, strategy, or action plan by experienced social/gender experts on gender mainstreaming in projects.

## IV. Requirements for the GEF Secretariat

20. The GEF Secretariat will strengthen gender-mainstreaming capacities among the GEF Secretariat staff to increase their understanding of gender mainstreaming, as well as socio-economic aspects in general.



**21.** The GEF Secretariat shall designate a focal point for gender issues to support developing, implementing, and monitoring guidance and strategy on gender mainstreaming and coordinating internally and externally on such issues.

**22.** Recognizing that each GEF Partner Agency has a different gender policy, strategy, or action plan, with varying application to GEF projects, the GEF Secretariat will work with its Partner Agencies and other partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming, including, as feasible, a more systematic approach to programming that incorporates this issue.

**23.** The GEF Secretariat will establish and strengthen networks with partners that have substantive experience working on gender issues, and utilize their expertise to develop and implement GEF projects.

## **V. Application of the Policy**

**24.** This policy will apply equally to the ten GEF Agencies as well as to accredited GEF Project Agencies. The GEF Secretariat will hire consultants to assess whether the existing ten GEF Agencies comply with this Policy. The assessment will be implemented in a transparent way. The consultants will consolidate the results of their assessment in a report to the Secretariat, which will clearly indicate those areas in which the Agency meets minimum requirements of the Policy and where the Agencies do not. The Secretariat shall convey this report to the

Council together with a Council paper containing recommendations. The Council may grant GEF Agencies a time bound waiver to enable the Agency to meet the criteria within a specific phase-in period.

**25.** With regard to entities that apply for accreditation as a GEF Project Agency, the GEF Accreditation panel will assess whether each applicant meets the minimum requirements of this policy. The GEF Accreditation Panel will require that all applicants demonstrate compliance with the minimum requirements mentioned above.

## **VI. Revision of the Policy**

**26.** The GEF understands that gender mainstreaming at the corporate and the project level is a long-term undertaking and a sustained commitment, which includes tracking its progress. It also acknowledges that approaches to gender mainstreaming evolve. In light of this, the GEF Council will review its Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in 2015.

## Photo Credits

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## About the GEF

The Global Environment Facility, established in 1991  
as an independent financial mechanism, provides  
resources to developing countries and countries  
with economies in transition for projects that benefit  
the global environment and promote sustainable  
livelihoods. The GEF is the financial mechanism  
for implementation of the United Nations (UN)  
Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),  
the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the  
Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD),  
the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic  
Pollutants (POPs), and the Minamata Convention on  
Mercury.

The GEF unites 183 countries – in partnership with  
international institutions, civil society organizations  
(CSOs), the private sector, indigenous peoples and  
local communities – to address global environmental  
issues in the areas of biodiversity, climate change,  
international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer,  
and chemicals.

Since its inception, the GEF has invested over \$11.5  
billion, supplemented by more than \$57 billion in  
co-financing, for 3,215 projects in more than 165  
developing countries and countries with economies in  
transition.

Over 23 years, the GEF has established itself as a  
mechanism that operates in an effective and efficient  
manner, delivering solid outcomes with its resources.  
Through its network of Partner Agencies with a  
broad set of competencies, the GEF is able to have a  
balanced, transparent and global reach.



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