



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

Policy: **SD/PL/02**

Approved on November 30, 2017

POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY

Summary	This Policy sets out the guiding principles and mandatory requirements for mainstreaming gender across the GEF's governance and operations with a view to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in support of the GEF's mandate to achieve global environmental benefits. This Policy supersedes the 2011 Gender Mainstreaming Policy.
Approved by	GEF Council
Approval Date	November 30, 2017 (53 rd Council Meeting)
Effective Date	July 1, 2018
Applicability	This Policy applies to the Council, the Secretariat, and GEF Partner Agencies (hereafter "Agencies"); and all GEF projects and programs submitted on or after the date of effectiveness. For GEF-Financed Activities under implementation, the Policy applies to all annual project implementation reports as well as mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations submitted after one year of the date of effectiveness.
Council Doc	Policy on Gender Equality (GEF/C.53/04)
Related Doc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender Equality Guidelines (SD/GN/02)• Stakeholder Engagement Policy (SD/PL/01)• Guidelines for the Implementation of the Public Involvement Policy (GEF/C.47/Inf.06) – <i>to be updated</i>• Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (GEF/C.42/Inf.03/Rev.1)• Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards (OP/PL/03)• Application of Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards (SD/GN/03)• Fiduciary Standards (GA/PL/02)• Monitoring Agencies' Compliance with GEF Policies (ME/PL/02)• Monitoring and Evaluation Policy• Project and Program Cycle Policy (OP/PL/01)• Project and Program Cycle Guidelines (GEF/C.52/Inf.06)
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Definitions

CEO Approval means the approval of a fully developed medium-sized project or enabling activity by the GEF CEO.

CEO Endorsement means the endorsement of a fully developed full-sized project by the GEF CEO.

Enabling Activity means a project for the preparation of a plan, strategy or report to fulfill commitments under a Convention.

Empowerment of Women and Girls means an expansion of agency throughout women's lives, via participation and decision-making, including support to (i) women's rights, access to and control over resources; (ii) women's access to opportunities and resources; (iii) actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality; and (iv) women's ability to exert influence in society.¹

GEF Agency means an institution eligible to request and receive GEF resources directly from the GEF Trustee on behalf of an eligible recipient for the design and implementation of GEF-financed projects.

GEF-Financed Activity means any full-sized project, medium-sized project, enabling activity or regional or national outreach activity financed from any GEF-managed trust fund.

Gender refers to the roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, including class, race, poverty level, ethnic group, sexual orientation, and age. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities.²

Gender Analysis means a critical examination of how differences in gender norms, roles, power structures, activities, needs, opportunities and rights affect men, women, girls and boys in a certain situation or context. It includes collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and gender information to understand gender differences and gaps, determine gender differentiated impacts and risks, to identify measures to avoid adverse gender impacts, and to uncover and act on opportunities to address gender gaps and inequalities relevant to the activity.

¹ Definition builds on UN Women, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) – concepts and definitions

² Ibid.

Gender Equality means the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Mainstreaming Gender means the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs. It is a way to make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.³

Gender-Responsive Approach means that the particular needs, priorities, power structures, status and relationships between men and women are recognized and adequately addressed in the design, implementation and evaluation of activities. The approach seeks to ensure that women and men are given equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from an intervention, and promotes targeted measures to address inequalities and promote the empowerment of women.

Gender Gap means any disparity and inequality between women and men's condition due to their position or role in society. It concerns inequalities in terms of their participation, their access to opportunities, rights, power to influence and make decision, incomes and benefits, and control and use of resources.⁴

Gender-Sensitive Indicator means an indicator that can be used at various levels to monitor and report on socio-economic and gender-sensitive changes over a period of time.

Program Framework Document means the document that sets forth the concept of a program that is proposed for GEF financing.

Project Identification Form means the applicable document that sets forth the concept of a full-sized project or medium-sized project that is requesting GEF financing.

Stakeholder means an individual or group that has an interest in the outcome of a GEF-financed activity or is likely to be affected by it, such as local communities, Indigenous Peoples, civil society organizations, and private sector entities, comprising women, men, girls and boys.

Stakeholder Engagement means a process involving stakeholder identification and analysis, planning of Stakeholder Engagement, disclosure of information, consultation and participation, monitoring, evaluation and learning throughout the project cycle, addressing grievances, and on-going reporting to stakeholders.

³ [Definition builds on ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2](#)

⁴ Definition builds on UN Women, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) – concepts and definitions

Introduction

1. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is an international partnership of countries, international institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector that addresses global environmental issues. The GEF's ability to effectively generate global environmental benefits and catalyze the transformative change needed to protect the global environment is underpinned by efforts to promote Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (hereafter Empowerment of Women).

2. Men and women use natural resources differently and as a result, they are affected differently by changes to these resources. Gender inequality and social exclusion increase the negative effects of environmental degradation on women and girls. Despite promising policy and legal reforms, persistent gender-discriminatory social and cultural norms, unequal access to land, water and productive assets, and unequal decision-making continue to limit opportunities for women and men to equally participate in, contribute to, and or benefit from environmental policies, projects and programs.

3. While women face unique barriers, they are also increasingly recognized as agents of change who make valuable contributions to the environment. The conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) that the GEF serves increasingly underscore the important role women play in the realization of each of the Conventions' respective objectives⁵, and call for specific actions to ensure that gender equality, including women's participation and empowerment, is addressed when pursuing these objectives. The recognition that efforts to combat environmental degradation and those to address gender inequality can be mutually supportive is also reflected in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which recognizes gender equality and women's empowerment as a sustainable development goal in its own right, as well as a catalyst for reaching all other goals.

4. It is in recognition of this that this Policy understands that a gender-responsive approach – i.e., one that identifies gender differences, promotes shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and empowers women and girls – is integral to the GEF's ability to achieve global environmental benefits.

⁵ **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification** (UNCCD) articles 5, 10 and 19 and Article 8 of the Annexes on Africa, the Gender Action Plan (Decision 30/COP.13) as well as COP decisions 9/COP.10, 9/COP.11; **Convention on Biological Diversity** (CBD) decisions IX/8, X/19, XI/2, XIII/1, and the CBD 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action, decision XII/7; **Stockholm Convention on POPs** articles 7, 10 and the Gender Action Plan of the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS-GAP); BC-13/20, RC-8/13, SC-8/23 of the BRS Conventions; **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC) decisions 36/CP.7, 1/CP.16, 23/CP.18, 18/CP.20, D 1/CP.21 (Paris Agreement), 21/CP.22 and over 50 other decisions or mandates related to gender, women or socially responsible policy

Application

5. This Policy applies to the Council, the Secretariat, and all GEF Partner Agencies (hereafter referred to as “Agencies”). The Policy applies to all GEF-Financed Activities.⁶

Purpose and Objective

6. This Policy sets out the guiding principles and mandatory requirements for Mainstreaming Gender across the GEF’s governance and operations with a view to promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in support of the GEF’s mandate to achieve global environmental benefits.

7. This Policy aims to ensure equal opportunities for women and men to participate in, contribute to and benefit from GEF-Financed Activities in support of the GEF’s efforts to achieve global environment benefits.

Guiding Principles

8. The following principles guide efforts to promote Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in GEF governance and operations:

- (a) Efforts to Mainstream Gender and promote Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women are pursued in accordance with the decisions on gender under the MEAs that the GEF serves, and in recognition of related international and national commitments to gender equality and human rights.
- (b) GEF-Financed Activities address and do not exacerbate existing gender-based inequalities.
- (c) Stakeholder Engagement and analysis are conducted in an inclusive and gender-responsive manner, so that the rights of women and men and the different knowledge, needs, roles and interests of women and men are recognized and addressed.
- (d) GEF-Financed Activities are conducted, designed and implemented in an inclusive manner so that women’s participation and voice are, regardless of their background, age, race, ethnicity or religion, reflected in decision-making, and that consultations with women’s organizations, including Indigenous women and local women’s groups, are supported at all scales.
- (e) A Gender-Responsive Approach is applied throughout the identification, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GEF-Financed Activities.

⁶ Including activities funded through all GEF-managed trust funds, unless decided otherwise by the LDCF/SCCF Council in response to guidance from the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

- (f) Opportunities to address Gender Gaps and support the Empowerment of Women are seized in order to help achieve global environmental benefits.

Policy Requirements

9. The Policy introduces mandatory requirements in three areas: (A) Project and program cycle; (B) Monitoring, learning and capacity development; (C) Agency policies, procedures and capabilities; and (D) Compliance.

A. GEF Project and Program Cycle

9. In Program Framework Documents and Project Identification Forms submitted for Work Program entry or CEO Approval, Agencies provide indicative information on Gender considerations relevant to the proposed activity, and any measures to address these, including the process to collect sex-disaggregated data and information on Gender.

10. At or prior to CEO Endorsement/ Approval, Agencies provide:

- (a) Gender Analysis or equivalent socio-economic assessment that identifies and describes any gender differences, gender differentiated impacts and risks, and opportunities to address Gender Gaps and promote the Empowerment of Women that may be relevant to the proposed activity;
- (b) any corresponding gender-responsive measures to address differences, identified impacts and risks, and opportunities through a gender action plan or equivalent;
- (c) if gender-responsive measures have been identified, the results framework or logical framework include actions, Gender-Sensitive Indicators and sex-disaggregated targets.

11. In its review of Program Framework Documents, Project Identification Forms, and Requests for CEO Endorsement/ Approval, the Secretariat assesses whether the documentation reflects the principles set out in this Policy and is consistent with the provisions presented in paragraphs 9 - 10.

12. Agencies oversee the implementation of gender-responsive measures as documented at CEO Endorsement/ Approval, and provide information in their annual project implementation reports, mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations on progress, Gender-Sensitive Indicators and results.

13. The Secretariat updates and maintains project templates, in consultation with Agencies so that they reflect the principles set out in this Policy and are consistent with the provisions presented in paragraphs 9 – 10.

B. Monitoring, learning and capacity development

14. The Secretariat tracks and reports annually to the Council, and, as required, to the MEAs which the GEF serves on portfolio-level progress, sex-disaggregated data, gender information and results.

15. The Secretariat develops and disseminates guidelines and action plans, within six months following the adoption of this Policy, in consultation with Agencies and other relevant stakeholders and expert organizations, to support the effective and coherent implementation of this Policy.

16. The Secretariat and Agencies generate and share knowledge on good practice, methodologies and lessons learned on promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women related to the GEF's areas of work, with a view to inform programming in furtherance of this Policy.

17. The Secretariat and Agencies leverage national, regional and global outreach events and activities to raise awareness and support capacity development on gender mainstreaming related to the GEF's areas of work.

18. The Secretariat mainstreams gender in other GEF-financed activities, such as national and regional outreach activities executed by the Secretariat, and in the development of GEF policies, guidelines, strategies and communication and knowledge products.

C. Agency policies, procedures and capabilities

19. Agencies demonstrate that they have in place the necessary policies, procedures and capabilities required to ensure that:

- (a) Gender Analyses, socio-economic assessments or the equivalent are applied to inform Gender-responsive design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including budgeting and staffing, of Agency activities;
- (b) Activities implemented by the Agency do not exacerbate existing gender-related inequalities and, where relevant, address Gender Gaps;
- (c) Activities implemented by the Agency strive to provide equal opportunities for women and men to benefit;
- (d) Women and men are provided equal opportunities in terms of participation and decision-making throughout the identification, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities implemented by the Agency;
- (e) Collection of sex disaggregated data and information on gender, and the use of Gender-Sensitive Indicators, sex-disaggregated targets and results, as relevant, are regularly incorporated in monitoring, evaluation and reporting of Agency activities.

D. Compliance

20. The Secretariat facilitates an assessment of Agencies' compliance with the requirements set out in Paragraph 19, for Council review and decision within 18 months of the date of effectiveness of this Policy.

21. If an Agency does not meet the requirements set out in Paragraph 19, the Agency, in consultation with the Secretariat, develops a concrete, time-bound action plan to achieve compliance. The Secretariat, on behalf of the Agency, submits the action plan for review and approval by the Council. Unless the Council decides otherwise, the Agency may continue to seek GEF financing while it implements the time-bound action plan.

22. Once an Agency has been found to meet the requirements set out in Paragraph 19, the Agency and the Secretariat carry out periodic reporting and monitoring of compliance using the modalities set out in the *Policy on Monitoring Agencies' Compliance*⁷.

Effectiveness

23. The Policy will come into effect on July 1, 2018 and will remain in effect until amended or superseded by the Council. The Policy applies to all new GEF-Financed Activities submitted on or after the date of effectiveness. For GEF-Financed Activities under implementation, the Policy applies to all annual project implementation reports as well as mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations submitted after one year of the date of effectiveness.

Review of the Policy

24. The Council decides on the review and revision of this Policy.

⁷ SD/PL/04

(http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Monitoring_Agency_Compliance_Policy_SDPL04.pdf)