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Recommendations for gendered research in the context of Climate Change

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) recalled in its draft conclusions on ‘Research and Systematic Observation’, as proposed by the Chair on 8 June 2010 *“the valuable role that the research dialogue is playing in informing deliberations within the UNFCCC process, and agreed that it should be continued at SBSTA 34 and beyond.”*

It is in this context, that GenderCC has prepared some essential recommendations on climate change research and gender. These are based on the inputs of participants during GenderCC’s Symposium “Gender and Climate Change Research: Gaps and Questions”, held on 7 June 2010 in Bonn¹.

We believe that there is a gender dimension in the causes and impacts of climate change and the responses to them. Therefore, research should, among others, provide data and information suitable to reveal gender differentials and to design policies and measures which address these differentials adequately in order to be effective, just and sustainable.

Today, there is still a huge lack of gender-disaggregated data and gendered knowledge that reflects different roles, needs and responsibilities of both women and men, and that contributes to minimize gender imbalances. Current studies and available data are by no means sufficient to draw general conclusions necessary for developing gender-sensitive policies or devising gender-responsive practices and measures. Current understanding of how gender-relations are impacted in the process of adaptation, climate response policies, practices and technologies, is fragmented, if not absent. Knowledge on gender is the basis for successful planning, implementation and evaluation of effective climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, as well as of gender-sensitive policy making.

Thus, we urgently need more substantive research in the context of ‘gender and climate change’, including large-scale studies which provide gender-specific baseline data, and small scale studies which provide more qualitative knowledge. Particularly, more research is needed at household-level and on all areas of care-work where women bear most of the responsibilities. These areas are relevant in the context of climate change, yet they have rarely been examined.

It is equally important that research is not only concentrating on aspects of vulnerability but rather includes men and women’s contributions to emissions as well as to meeting mitigation targets (e.g. looking at consumption patterns, energy demand, mobility etc.). Furthermore, we urgently need more studies on potential negative and positive impacts of different types of mitigation measures, e.g. lifestyle changes, economic policy instruments like taxes, pricing, subsidies; or introduction of new technologies.

¹ The Symposium has been organised by GenderCC - Women for Climate Justice, in cooperation with BRIDGE, Bread for the World, Gender & Disaster Network (GDN), Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED). More information can be found on our website: <http://www.gendercc.net/policy/meetings.html>.

GenderCC calls upon researchers and research institutions to:

- (1) Collect and provide sex-disaggregated data on all topics related to climate change, be it effects of climate change, needs concerning adaptation measures, or aspects of mitigation (e.g. energy consumption), or the effects of policies like REDD and others.
- (2) Identify entry points for gender-responsive approaches and elaborate on aspects where gender plays an important role.
- (3) Analyse and identify barriers concerning the gendering of research. In this context, the identification of gender hierarchies and of androcentric and male-dominated social or organisational structures is of specific importance.
- (4) Identify interest groups who are supporting or hindering gender-responsive research. All research should generally be based on the principle of transparency, thereby disclosing interests and interest groups linked to a specific study.
- (5) To strive for participatory and people-centred research, involving men and women concerned throughout the whole research process, return results to those concerned and get their feedback, and disseminate the findings. This enables a change from focusing on women as a vulnerable group to women (and men) as potential actors and leaders of change.
- (6) Share knowledge and data and make sure that they can be accessed easily.

These recommendations should be followed to mainstream gender into research activities. Moreover, there is a number of items that would urgently need to be considered as specific research questions on gender and climate change, in order to improve policy-making as well as activities on the ground:

- Gender differentials in the effects of climate change in the context of various other social differentials;
- Gendered impacts of climate policy, its mechanisms, programmes and measures on different groups (e.g. most vulnerable groups, poor people, indigenous peoples, ...);
- Women's role as actors towards building resilience at different spatial scales;
- Which societal changes, including changes of gender roles and power relations, are needed for the transition to a low-carbon and just future.

In the context of the UNFCCC and related processes and institutions, we furthermore request:

- (a) The provision of gender-trainings for researchers.
- (b) Awareness-raising on the relevance of gender-sensitive knowledge and data among decision-makers and practitioners in policy-making, programme and project implementation, and on relevant information resources.
- (c) Building networks and partnerships between research institutions, gender-, environment- and development institutions, as well as grassroots organisations in order to work together towards gender-sensitive research.

In accordance with the SBSTA, we encourage *“the [UNFCCC] secretariat to organize a workshop, in conjunction with its thirty-fourth session, subject to the availability of resources and under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, to allow further in-depth consideration to be given to issues addressed in the research dialogue”*², and we strongly request the integration of gender perspectives in this workshop.

We kindly would like to offer our support for the implementation of the above mentioned recommendations and measures. As gender-, environment and development organisations, as researchers and individuals, we already started to collect and compile available data and knowledge, and to build a network of researchers who work in the field of ‘gender and climate change’ and are interested in contributing to the process.

² FCCC/SBSTA/2010/L.8.