

Towards Gender-Responsive National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Processes: Progress and Recommendations for the Way Forward

NAP Global Network Synthesis Report, 2017-18



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Global
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The NAP Global Network is a group of individuals and institutions who are coming together to enhance bilateral support for the NAP process in developing countries. With participation from both developing countries and bilateral agencies, the Network facilitates peer learning and exchange on the NAP process, improve coordination among bilateral development partners, and support national-level action. Initial financial support for the Network has been provided by Germany and the United States. The NAP Global Network secretariat is hosted by the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

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Executive Summary

This report presents an analysis of progress on integrating gender considerations in National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes, based on a review of completed NAP documents available on NAP Central as of January 2018, as well as data collected directly from country NAP teams. Although countries are at different stages in their NAP processes, we believe that enough progress has been made to generate some useful lessons.

While there is no single approach to addressing gender inequality and the linkages to climate change adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), we have found that countries face similar challenges. These include:

- The framing of gender issues, as being primarily about women
- The approach to adaptation, focusing on climate-sensitive sectors and “hard” adaptation options, which can make it difficult to introduce sociocultural issues such as gender
- Institutional barriers, which limit dialogue and collaboration between gender and climate change adaptation actors
- Capacity challenges, for both gender and adaptation actors
- Information gaps, including sex-disaggregated data related to climate impacts and adaptation needs and gender analysis of adaptation options, barriers and opportunities

The key findings emerging from the analysis are:

- Most countries have made an effort to integrate gender considerations in their NAP documents.
- The focus of gender integration in NAP documents tends to be on women only, versus the differences between women and men in the same context.
- Women are most often positioned as a particularly vulnerable group and/or as beneficiaries of adaptation actions, rather than stakeholders or agents of change.
- There is limited evidence that context-specific gender analysis has been used in NAP processes so far.
- Adaptation options targeting women often focus on household issues.
- In-country capacities to integrate gender exist, but in many cases have not been effectively utilized.
- The role of gender actors in the NAP process varies across countries.
- Broader policies and plans can create an enabling environment for integration of gender in the NAP process.

Based on the above challenges, as well as our findings, we recommend the following actions by NAP teams:

- Commit to a gender-responsive NAP process going forward.
- Develop a more nuanced understanding of gender and climate change linkages to inform the NAP process.
- Use the NAP process to enhance institutional linkages between climate change adaptation and gender equality.
- Improve gender balance in NAP-related institutional arrangements.
- Identify existing capacities and gaps related to gender and climate change adaptation.
- Undertake gender-balanced and inclusive stakeholder engagement for NAP processes.
- Use gender analysis and stakeholder inputs efficiently and effectively.

Recognizing the important role played by development partners in supporting country NAP processes, we offer the following recommendations for these actors:

- Invest in in-country capacity building on gender adaptation.
- Enable participatory and inclusive adaptation decision-making processes.
- Harmonize guidance on gender mainstreaming in adaptation.
- Share knowledge on gender and climate change adaptation with government partners and other actors.

Acronyms

GAP	Gender Action Plan
ICRW	International Centre for Research on Women
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
LEG	Least Developed Countries Expert Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TTF	Targeted Topics Forum
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

1 Introduction

In early 2017, the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Global Network embarked on an initiative to better understand how developing countries are integrating gender considerations in their NAP processes. Given that the NAP is a country-driven, iterative process, we recognize that there is no single approach to addressing gender inequality and the linkages to climate change adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). However, we hoped to identify some common themes and useful approaches that could be shared across countries as NAP processes advance.

This first synthesis report is one output of this initiative.¹ Its aim is to review progress to date on integrating gender considerations in NAP processes, based on a review of completed NAP documents available on NAP Central at the end of January 2018, as well as data collected directly from country NAP teams.² Based on this review, we draw out lessons learned to date and identify common themes across countries. We hope that these insights will be useful for countries engaged in NAP processes, at whatever stage, who are interested in pursuing gender-responsive approaches. It will also be of interest to development partners who are providing capacity development and technical support to adaptation actors involved in NAP processes.

We begin by describing the context and rationale for sharing knowledge and lessons on gender in NAPs, followed by a discussion of the key considerations for gender-responsive NAP processes. We then describe our approach to this initial synthesis, including the limitations of the methodology. The key findings are presented, including concrete examples from different countries, followed by a discussion of the opportunities and challenges associated with integrating gender considerations in NAP processes. Drawing on these, as well as our experience working with particular countries, we offer recommendations for improving integration of gender considerations in the planning and institutional arrangements for NAP processes.



¹ For more information on our gender work, please see: <http://www.napglobalnetwork.org/themes/gender/>

² In this report, "NAP team" refers to the collective of people leading and coordinating the NAP process.

2 Rationale

Recent decisions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have highlighted the important linkages between climate action and gender equality. When the NAP process was established in 2010, the decision highlighted the need for gender-sensitive approaches in adaptation action (UNFCCC, 2010). In 2014, the Lima Work Programme on Gender and Climate Change was established, providing an opportunity for Parties to explore these issues in more depth. Subsequently, the 2015 Paris Agreement referred to gender-responsive approaches, as well as to the goals of gender equality and empowerment of women (UNFCCC, 2015a). The Lima Work Programme was renewed in 2016, focusing on strengthening gender-responsive climate policy, including for adaptation (UNFCCC, 2016a). The UNFCCC has also recognized that the NAP process is a key opportunity to integrate gender considerations (UNFCCC, 2015b; 2016b).

Beyond the UNFCCC, gender equality is recognized as a universal human right, for example in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, among others. Gender equality is at the centre of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) for 2030, where it is included as both a stand-alone goal and a cross-cutting issue across a number of other goals (United Nations, 2015). Experience from decades of development investments demonstrates the need to address gender inequalities for effectiveness and sustainability. This applies equally to climate change adaptation, as illustrated in Box 1. For more information, please see our [brief](#) on gender-responsive NAP processes.

For all of these reasons, the NAP Global Network has identified gender as a [priority theme](#). Through our work with countries providing technical support on NAP processes, we have found that this is an issue of interest to many NAP teams and stakeholders. As well, this first synthesis report comes at a time when the Gender Action Plan (GAP) under the UNFCCC has just entered into force. Among other priorities, the GAP highlights the need to enhance knowledge on systematic integration of gender considerations in activities under the UNFCCC and the Paris agreement (UNFCCC, 2017). This report is one contribution to knowledge development in this area. Although countries are at different stages in their NAP processes, we believe that enough progress has been made to generate some useful lessons.



Box 1. Key Concepts

Gender refers to the “economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female” (United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], 2005, n.p.). It encompasses the socially constructed roles, behaviours and activities that are deemed appropriate for people of different genders and influences the relationships among people falling within these groups. “Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued” (UN Women Training Centre, 2017, n.p.) in a particular context at a given time. Gender intersects with other sociocultural characteristics such as race, ethnicity, disability sexual orientation and age (UN Women Training Centre, 2017; UN Women, n.d.; Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency [SIDA], 2015). Gender diversity recognizes that some people’s identity and self-expression fall outside commonly understood gender norms (Gender Spectrum, 2017).

Gender, along with other sociocultural characteristics, influences vulnerability to climate change.

Gender analysis examines “the differences between and among women, men, girls and boys in terms of their relative distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power in a given context” (SIDA, 2015). It aims to understand roles and relationships between males and females, their activities and their respective needs and priorities (UN Women Training Centre, 2017). Gender analysis provides a basis for understanding the different effects that policy decisions and development investments may have on women, men, girls and boys. Gender analysis is the basis for integrating gender considerations in policies, programs and institutions (Government of Canada, 2017).*

In the context of the NAP process, gender analysis aims to understand differences in needs, priorities and capacities for climate change adaptation between and people of different genders.

Gender equality refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men and girls and boys (UN Women, n.d.; UN Women Training Centre, 2017), as well as for individuals with a non-binary gender identity. Gender equality does not mean that women and men are the same. Rather, it is a situation where people’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities do not depend on whether they were born male or female (UN Women, n.d.) or whether they fit within a binary definition of gender.

Gender equality is both a precondition for, and an objective of, sustainable development and therefore also for adaptation to climate change.

Equity is fairness or justice in the way people are treated (Merriam-Webster, 2017).

In the context of adaptation, we refer to equity in terms of participation and influence in decision making, access to and control over resources for adaptation and benefits resulting from adaptation actions.

* The majority of documents upon which this research is based use a binary definition of gender, referring to male and female. Consequently, while recognizing that gender is in reality a spectrum, for the remainder of this report we will primarily discuss differences between women and men.

3 Gender-Responsive NAP Processes: An overview

Gender-responsive approaches examine and actively address gender norms, roles and inequalities (World Health Organization [WHO], 2009). Gender-responsive approaches go beyond sensitivity to gender differences—they actively seek to promote gender equality (WHO, 2009; CARE & International Center for Research on Women [ICRW], 2007). This often involves specific actions to empower women in their households and communities as well as broader policy and planning processes (Burns & Lee, 2015).

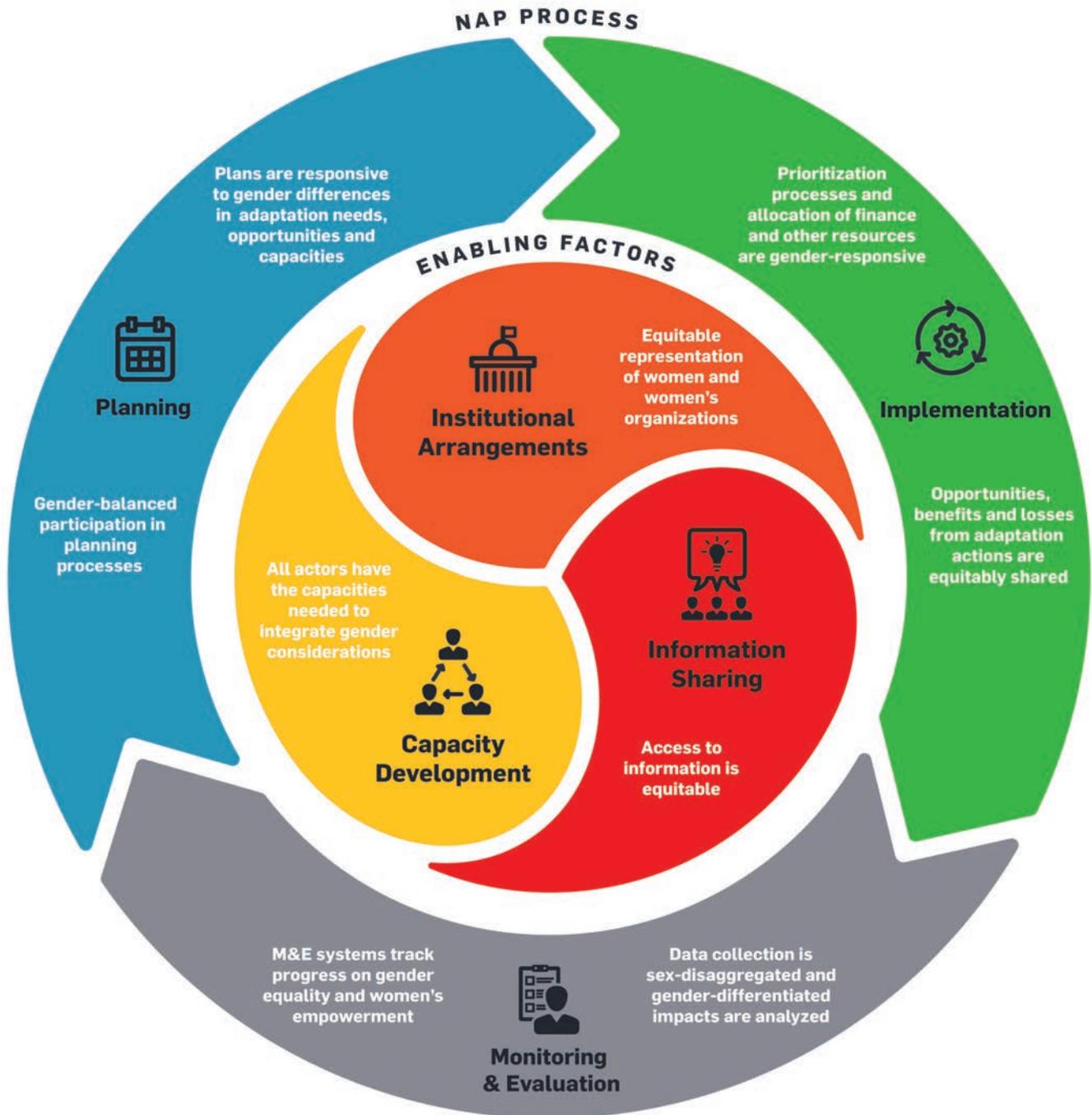
In the context of the NAP process, this involves looking at three key issues (Dazé & Dekens, 2017):

- Recognition of gender **differences in adaptation needs, opportunities and capacities**
- Equitable **participation and influence** by women and men in adaptation decision-making processes
- Equitable **access to financial resources and other benefits** resulting from investments in adaptation between women and men

A gender-responsive NAP process involves attention to these issues throughout the iterative cycle of planning, implementation and M&E, as shown in Figure 1. Gender issues must also be considered in institutional arrangements, capacity development and information sharing, which are enabling factors for the NAP process. Given that most countries are in the early stages of their NAP processes, the focus of this synthesis is the planning stage, along with the institutional arrangements.



Figure 1. A Gender-Responsive NAP Process



Source: Dazé & Dekens, 2017.

4 Synthesis Approach

Our methodology for this synthesis involved two key elements:

1. Review of NAP documents
2. Data collection directly from country NAP teams

The first element involved a systematic review of NAP documents to identify evidence of integration of gender considerations.³ The approach was inspired by the [Gender Climate Tracker](#) methodology for assessing integration of gender in NDCs. The sample of documents consisted of those found on NAP Central as of the end of January 2018. This allowed us to review adaptation planning documents from nine countries, namely: Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, Kenya, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan and Togo.

The document review looked at five key issues:

- How gender issues are **framed** in the document, in terms of references to gender and related concepts (such as gender equality or gender mainstreaming).
- The **positioning of women** in the document, as a particularly vulnerable group, as agents of change, or otherwise.
- **Additional entry points** for integrating gender considerations, such as references to “inequality,” “social inclusion” or “human rights.”
- Integration of gender considerations in **the planning phase** of the NAP process, including the use of gender analysis, participation of women and/or women’s organizations in planning, and how gender has been considered in the identification of adaptation options
- Consideration of gender issues in the **institutional arrangements** for the NAP process, both in relation to government institutional mechanisms and stakeholder platforms.

A summary of the results of the document reviews can be found in Annex A.

The second major source of data was direct interaction with countries participating in our Targeted Topics Forum (TTF) held in early February 2018. This included a self-assessment process completed by country teams. The self-assessment involved a guided reflection process on the steps countries have taken to integrate gender considerations in their NAP processes so far, and what they can do to build and/or improve upon these efforts going forward. We received completed self-assessments from 15 countries: Albania, Brazil, Benin, Grenada, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Madagascar, Malawi, Mexico, the Philippines,

³ This report builds on the NAP Global Network’s contribution to the [assessment of progress on the process to formulate and implement NAPs](#), which was conducted by the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) on behalf of the UNFCCC.

Tanzania, Thailand, Togo and Tuvalu. We have reviewed the information provided to identify trends based on countries' own evaluations of their progress on integrating gender. Countries participating in the TTF also identified challenges they are encountering and priority next steps that they would take—an overview of key themes that emerged is provided in Section 6.

There are a few limitations to the approach for this first synthesis. Firstly, the NAP process is country-driven, meaning that there is a lack of uniformity across different countries in the approach they are taking and the focus and structure of documents produced. This makes a systematic analysis somewhat challenging. Related to this is the fact that our sample size for the document reviews is small, as few countries had submitted final NAP documents when we conducted our analysis. Many NAP documents present overarching frameworks, with details to be worked out in implementation, communication and financing strategies. This means that a lack of evidence in a NAP document does not mean that gender issues have not been considered—it may simply be that this has not been documented. Finally, gender-responsive approaches are largely about process, which is often difficult to determine from NAP documents. We have tried to address this through the inclusion of the country self-assessments as part of our analysis. This has provided additional information on the concrete steps that countries have taken (or plan to take) to integrate gender; however, there remain gaps in our understanding of the details of what countries have done on this issue.

Despite these limitations, we feel that our analysis provides useful insights into the barriers and enabling factors for gender-responsive NAP processes. It is important to note that the goal of this synthesis report is not to assess the quality of NAP documents or to call out specific countries on what they have or have not done. Rather, the aim is to identify trends in country approaches to integrating gender considerations, drawing out lessons that are relevant across contexts and at different stages of adaptation planning. We hope that the lessons from these early experiences can support learning and improved practice over time as countries iteratively advance their NAP processes.



5 Key Findings

In this section, we present the key findings from the NAP document reviews and the country self-assessments.

Most countries have made an effort to integrate gender considerations in their NAP documents.

The majority of the NAP documents reviewed mention the word “gender” (eight out of nine). Among the eight documents that do make reference to gender, the number of mentions ranges from a single reference to multiple, with three of the documents referencing the word gender more than 10 times in documents ranging from 64 to 143 pages. This includes references to approaches such as gender sensitivity or gender mainstreaming, such as in Sudan, where gender sensitivity is identified as a “foundational principle” for the NAP (Republic of the Sudan, 2016). Some countries have flagged gender issues that must be addressed, such as gender-based discrimination and violence. For example, in Cameroon, addressing gender-based violence is identified as one approach to reducing vulnerability to climate change (Republic of Cameroon Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development, 2015). A couple of countries, including Kenya, have expressed aspirations toward the achievement of gender equity or equality through the NAP process. In Kenya, Palestine and Cameroon, gender has been identified as a specific priority that the NAP will address through action on adaptation (Government of Kenya, 2016; State of Palestine Environment Quality Authority, 2016; Republic of Cameroon Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development, 2015).

The fact that most of the NAP documents mention gender is very positive, as it reflects the recognition that gender must be considered for adaptation action to be effective. However, few of the documents elaborate how these approaches, principles or ambitions will be achieved in their specific context. Exceptions include Kenya, where specific activities have been identified to address gender issues that exacerbate vulnerability to climate change (Government of Kenya, 2016), and Sudan, where women’s empowerment is identified as a priority adaptation measure for the Central States (Republic of the Sudan, 2016). Actions identified in these NAP documents include enhancing access to financial services and social protection for vulnerable groups, including women.

As countries move forward with their NAP processes, it will be important to reflect on what overarching commitments to addressing gender considerations mean in practice.

The focus of gender integration in NAP documents tends to be on women only, versus the differences between women and men in the same context.

Almost all of the documents that mention gender also mention the word “women” (seven out of nine). Of these seven documents, five make reference to women more than 10 times, with one of the documents mentioning women over 100 times in a document of 140 pages. The fact that women tend to be mentioned more often than gender suggests that addressing gender issues is interpreted as being about women. This is supported by a number of the documents that identify specific adaptation strategies for women, for example the establishment of women’s cooperative societies in Sudan (Republic of the Sudan, 2016) and awareness raising on prevention of water- and food-borne disease for women in Palestine (State of Palestine Environment Quality Authority, 2016).

Given that gender inequalities tend to disadvantage women, recognizing their particular needs and vulnerabilities is a good starting point. However, without an understanding of the issues that lead to female marginalization, strategies for women’s empowerment are unlikely to be effective. The process of achieving gender equality must inevitably involve working with men, to challenge entrenched ideas about roles, responsibilities and power in households, communities and institutions.

For gender-responsive NAP processes, countries must engage both women and men in addressing gender norms, relationships and power structures.

Women are most often positioned as a particularly vulnerable group and/or as beneficiaries of adaptation actions, rather than stakeholders or agents of change.

The positioning of women in the reviewed NAP documents also provides some insights into how gender issues are framed in relation to adaptation. Most of the documents (seven out of nine) identify women as a group that is particularly vulnerable to climate change and/or as beneficiaries of adaptation actions (six out of nine). For example, Brazil’s strategy for vulnerable populations highlights the status of women as a contributing factor to vulnerability to climate change (Brazil Ministry of Environment, 2016). Fewer documents position women as agents of change (four out of nine) or as stakeholders in adaptation planning processes (two out of nine). One example is Togo, where it is noted that both women and men play a critical role in social and economic development, and consequently that adaptation planning must integrate gender for equitable results between women and men (République Togolaise, 2017).

Where women are identified as a particularly vulnerable group, they are often grouped together with, for example, children and the elderly, as a collective of “most vulnerable.” There is limited analysis of the drivers of vulnerability of these different groups and how they may differ, requiring different responses. Further, this approach may obscure the differences among women and the intersection of gender with other issues such as ethnicity, poverty and disability. These issues will become increasingly important in the prioritization of adaptation actions and development of implementation strategies, requiring a more nuanced understanding of who is vulnerable to climate risks and changes, and why.

Being gender-responsive means challenging assumptions about vulnerability and adaptive capacity, recognizing differences among women and men and considering how gender intersects with other socioeconomic characteristics to influence adaptation needs and priorities.

There is limited evidence that context-specific gender analysis has been used in NAP processes so far.

Approximately half of the reviewed documents presented some evidence that gender analysis was used to inform the planning (five out of nine). In some cases, this analysis focuses on gender-differentiated impacts of climate change (or more accurately, specific impacts on women). For example, Brazil, Cameroon and Togo highlighted women's vulnerability to particular climate risks (Brazil Ministry of Environment, 2016; Republic of Cameroon Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development, 2015; République Togolaise, 2017). In others, the factors that make women more vulnerable were analyzed, such as in Palestine, where the NAP document describes the factors that limit adaptive capacity, highlighting the particular challenges faced by women, including high unemployment compared to men and undervalued contributions in the home (State of Palestine Environment Quality Authority, 2016).

In the self-assessments, 10 of the 15 countries indicated that gender analysis had not been used in the planning phase of the NAP process so far. However, all of these country teams indicated that there are still opportunities to incorporate this in upcoming steps of the process. For example, some countries are looking to NAP readiness funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) as an opportunity to undertake targeted gender analysis (see Box 2 for more information), while others see opportunities to bring in external experts to provide support in conducting this analysis to inform future decision making. Among those countries that indicated that they had used gender analysis, the role of gender actors⁴ in the process was highlighted. Country teams felt that using gender analysis enabled better targeting of adaptation options.

Context-specific gender analysis supports informed decision making in the NAP process, for more effective adaptation planning, better targeting of investments and increased equity in outcomes.



⁴ "Gender actors" refers to the range of different government and civil society actors that are working on gender and women's empowerment. This may include the ministry of women's affairs or its equivalent, gender focal points, NGOs focused on gender and/or women's groups.

Box 2. The Green Climate Fund: Supporting gender mainstreaming in climate action

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) represents a key opportunity for countries to access finance for formulation and implementation of NAPs. The GCF has developed a [Gender Policy and Action Plan](#), which outlines commitments to gender equality and inclusiveness in implementation of GCF-funded activities, as well as equitable benefits for women and men from GCF investments. They have developed a three-pronged approach to ensure consideration of gender at different points in the project cycle (GCF & UN Women, 2017):

1. **Gender analysis**, to be presented with the funding proposal to the GCF, providing an overview of gender issues for consideration in the project, as well as opportunities to address gender inequality within the project implementation.
2. **Gender action plan**, also for inclusion with the funding proposal, outlining how activities will be gender-responsive and identifying sex-disaggregated targets and gender performance indicators.
3. **Gender-sensitive M&E framework**, incorporating the above targets and indicators.

The [guidelines](#) developed by the GCF to support countries in mainstreaming gender emphasize the need for gender analysis to inform project development and implementation. The need for women and men to be involved in decisions about projects is also highlighted (GCF & UN Women, 2017). Countries can get a head start on these requirements by conducting gender analysis to inform the NAP process and ensuring that both women and men, including those from particularly vulnerable groups, are involved in decisions around adaptation priorities and implementation strategies.

Adaptation options targeting women often focus on household issues.

When countries identify specific adaptation options for women in their NAP documents, there is a tendency for these to focus on actions related to their role as household managers, taking care of water, food production and health for their families. The NAP documents developed by Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Palestine and Sudan emphasize the need for adaptation by women to address health issues, including waterborne diseases and malaria (Burkina Faso Ministry of Environment and Fishery Resources, 2015; Republic of Cameroon Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development, 2015; State of Palestine Environment Quality Authority, 2016; Republic of the Sudan, 2016). Access to water for household use is a common issue highlighted, such as in Burkina Faso, where one of the options identified focuses on preserving water resources and increasing access to sanitation to improve access for women to drinking water in the dry season. A couple of documents also address food production, for example in Sudan's NAP where the need for agricultural inputs for women's home gardens is identified (Republic of the Sudan, 2016).

While it is the reality that women are often the main domestic managers, this does not capture the full range of roles that they play. There is a risk that emphasizing their household responsibilities will inhibit progress by reinforcing traditional gender roles. Women are increasingly involved in income-generating activities, and adaptation strategies must enable their economic empowerment as a means to household and community resilience. Few of the reviewed NAP documents address this issue. One exception is Burkina Faso, where one option identified is to introduce income-generating activities for women to increase their resilience and adaptive capacity (Burkina Faso Ministry of Environment and Fishery Resources, 2015).

As countries move into prioritization of adaptation options and elaboration of implementation strategies, more consideration of the evolving roles of women and men will be needed to ensure equitable benefits from adaptation investments and enable progress on gender equality.

In-country capacities to integrate gender exist, but in many cases have not been effectively utilized.

Most of the countries completing self-assessments indicated that capacities to integrate gender considerations do exist in their country context; however, more than half of these felt that these had not been effectively utilized during the NAP process so far. The capacities can be found in different parts of government, including ministries responsible for gender, local government, agriculture and water, as well as in donors and UN organizations, NGOs and other civil society organizations working on gender issues and in academic institutions. To better utilize these capacities going forward, opportunities include enhancing participation in the NAP process and incorporating these actors in the institutional arrangements for adaptation at different levels. In some cases, more knowledge and/or analysis is needed to enable these actors to apply their knowledge to adaptation.

Where countries felt that the capacities did not exist, gaps identified included skills in sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis, gender-sensitive facilitation and methodologies for integrating gender across sectors. Actors requiring these capacities include the NAP team, gender units in line ministries and civil society organizations. In contexts where it was felt that these capacities had been effectively used, country teams noted that this was facilitated by including gender representatives (both governmental and civil society) in institutional arrangements from the start, and by undertaking consultations with women's organizations.

Mapping existing capacities on gender and adaptation as part of broader capacity assessments can facilitate identification of gaps and effective utilization of in-country capacities already in place.

The role of gender actors in the NAP process varies across countries.

We looked at two aspects of engagement of gender actors in the NAP process: the institutional arrangements and the stakeholder engagement mechanisms, where these exist. In the review of NAP documents, three of the documents specifically mention that the government ministry responsible for gender and/or women is included in the government institutional mechanisms established for the NAP process. In the self-assessment, 10 of the 15 countries indicated that the ministry of women's affairs or its equivalent was represented in the NAP institutional arrangements (this includes two of the three countries which indicated the same in their NAP documents). However, more than half of these noted that they had not been actively involved in the process to date. To promote stronger engagement in future, country teams highlighted the need to appoint specific representatives, to include gender on the agenda of upcoming NAP process meetings and to provide training for these actors to enhance their ability to participate.

Stakeholders in NAP processes include communities, civil society organizations and the private sector. Generally speaking, the reviewed NAP documents did not provide much information on stakeholder engagement in the process. However, three of the documents did highlight the role of women's groups in stakeholder platforms for the NAP process. Approximately half of the self-assessments indicated that women are recognized as a distinct stakeholder group in the NAP process (again, including two of the three that noted this in their documents). However, in a few countries, it was felt that their views had not been clearly reflected in decisions and documentation to date.

To improve gender-responsiveness, there may be a need for increased stakeholder engagement in general, and targeted outreach to women and gender actors in particular. For those that have not yet considered women as a stakeholder group, there are opportunities in the elaboration and implementation of adaptation projects, as well as involving women's networks in the NAP process.

Attention to gender is needed in both the institutional arrangements and stakeholder engagement for the NAP process, to capture diverse perspectives and ensure that participation and influence in decision making are gender-balanced.

Broader policies and plans can create an enabling environment for integration of gender in the NAP process.

As noted in Box 3, having gender identified as an issue in a country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) can represent an entry point for addressing it in the NAP process. Several countries also highlighted the role of broader development policies and planning documents in establishing a mandate for a gender-responsive NAP process. This includes gender policies, but also other types of policy documents. For example, gender is mainstreamed in Tuvalu's National Strategic Plan and in Kenya's Constitution, and these overarching documents provide a framework for integration in the NAP process. Other countries have already developed specific tools to support integrated approaches, such as in Tanzania where guidelines have been developed for mainstreaming gender in climate change policies, plans and strategies (Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, n.d.). Similarly, countries that have already put gender-sensitive budgeting processes in place plan to extend this practice to resources allocated for adaptation. In Malawi, for example, the national budget includes deliberate allocation of resources to correct gender imbalances, and this policy will be extended to funding for adaptation.

A good starting point for integrating gender in the NAP process is to review existing commitments, policies and guidance on gender equality and mainstreaming and understand how they can be applied in the context of climate change adaptation.

Box 3. Linking Efforts to Integrate Gender in NDCs and NAPs

NDCs outline country commitments to the achievement of the goals set out in the Paris Agreement, including the goal of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change (UNFCCC, 2015a). Analysis by the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) found that 64 out of 190 NDCs that were reviewed included a reference to "women" or "gender." Of these, 27 mentioned women or gender in relation to adaptation, while a further 22 referred to gender as a cross-cutting issue (Gender Climate Tracker, n.d.). For those countries that have established an objective to address gender issues in relation to adaptation, the NAP process represents a key opportunity to operationalize these commitments (Hammill & Price-Kelly, 2017). Through NAP processes, countries can establish concrete objectives for gender in adaptation, undertake gender-responsive planning and put in place the systems needed to track gender-differentiated impacts of adaptation investments, which can support reporting on gender-related commitments in NDCs.

6 Gender-Responsive Adaptation Planning: Challenges and opportunities

Discussions with countries participating in the TTF highlighted a number of key challenges that have been encountered in integrating gender considerations in adaptation planning. These are presented below.

- **Framing of gender issues:** The framing of gender issues in many contexts is a challenge to integration in the NAP process. Gender is often interpreted as being about women, which can serve to obscure differences among women, vulnerability of some men and the intersectionality with other issues such as ethnicity and disability. This has implications for the effectiveness of efforts toward gender equality. Men, particularly those who perceive themselves as having something to lose if women are empowered, may be alienated by this framing. Approaches to gender integration must focus on differences between women and men, as well as among women and among men, in order to be inclusive and address social norms that present barriers to gender equality. Men are key players in achieving gender equality, and they must be part of the solution.
- **Approach to adaptation:** In many countries, adaptation is approached as a technical issue, with adaptation planning organized around key climate-sensitive sectors, such as water, agriculture and energy. With this approach, adaptation planning may focus more on “hard options” such as technologies and infrastructure. While these are certainly part of the solution, this can make it difficult to introduce sociocultural issues such as gender, as they may not seem relevant to the actors involved. This can make it difficult to identify the best entry points to integrate gender considerations.
- **Institutional barriers:** Related to the above, the fact that gender and climate change are both cross-cutting issues can create challenges in establishing effective institutional mechanisms for integrating gender in the NAP process. Ministries responsible for adaptation planning may not traditionally have collaborated with those responsible for gender equality, while gender-focused actors may not see the relevance of the NAP process for their work. Social and cultural barriers to gender equality play out in institutions as well as in households and communities, which can create barriers to women’s leadership and gender-balanced participation in decision making.



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- **Capacity challenges:** The complexity of gender issues and the intersections with vulnerability to climate change and adaptive capacity mean that actors involved in the NAP process may lack awareness of gender issues and how to concretely consider them in planning and decision making. These actors require clear guidance on gender concepts, entry points for integration and strategies for gender-responsive adaptation planning and action. Similarly, gender actors may encounter difficulties in applying their knowledge to the challenge of climate change adaptation, which can limit their ability to meaningfully engage in the NAP process. Human and financial resources to undertake gender mainstreaming were also identified as an obstacle.
 - **Information gaps:** The above issue is exacerbated by gaps in the data and analysis available to link gender, adaptation and particular sectors or interventions. Specific gaps include sex-disaggregated data related to climate impacts and adaptation needs and gender analysis of adaptation options, barriers and opportunities. Without this information, it is difficult for adaptation decision-makers to determine what needs to be done to ensure that the NAP process is responsive to gender differences.

At the same time, countries have identified concrete steps that they can take to overcome these challenges. While the steps are country-specific, they tend to focus on a few key opportunities, as described below.

- **Establishing institutional mechanisms for integrating gender in adaptation:** Several countries indicated that their top priority is to establish mechanisms to facilitate collaboration between gender and climate change actors. In some cases, this would involve including the ministry responsible for gender in key coordination mechanisms for the NAP process. In others, there is an intention to develop a specific working group on gender and adaptation or to identify gender and climate change focal points within key ministries or coordination committees.
- **Capacity development:** A number of countries have prioritized capacity development for NAP teams, gender actors and stakeholders in the NAP process, to put in place the knowledge and skills needed to effectively integrate gender considerations. Specific actions here include skills gap analysis, training workshops for relevant actors, development of guidance and accessing technical assistance.
- **Conducting gender analysis to inform the NAP process:** In many countries, filling information gaps is a key priority. Some intend to compile existing studies on gender and climate change or undertake gender-differentiated vulnerability analysis, while others have expressed interest in conducting a specific gender analysis for the NAP process or in reviewing NAP documents with a gender lens.
- **Integrating gender in NAP M&E systems:** Recognizing the important role played by M&E systems in determining what is tracked and reported on, integration in monitoring and evaluation of the NAP was prioritized by a number of countries. Identified actions in this area include the identification of indicators to track progress on gender issues, incorporating collection of sex-disaggregated data and review of existing M&E frameworks to better integrate gender considerations.
- **Improving stakeholder involvement in the NAP process:** Several countries recognized that gender-responsive action requires strong stakeholder engagement. Actions in this area included stakeholder mapping, targeted workshops and, as mentioned above, enhancing capacity of stakeholders to meaningfully participate in the NAP process.

7 Recommendations

This section presents recommendations for increasing gender-responsiveness of NAP processes, for both government teams leading NAP processes and development partners who are supporting countries in formulating and implementing NAPs.

a) Recommendations for government actors

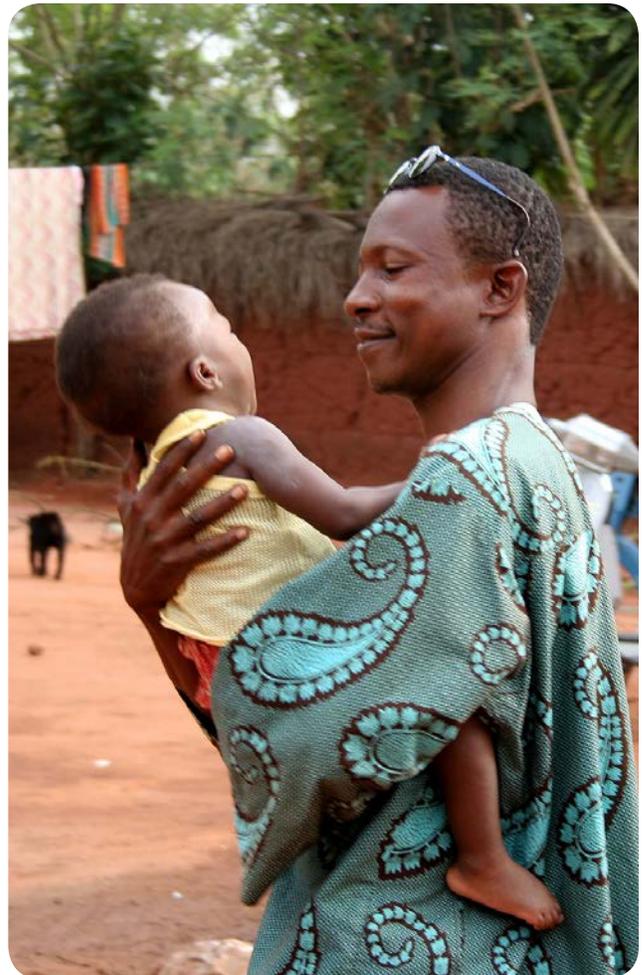
Government actors lead the NAP process, meaning they have the power to shape how it unfolds and how gender issues are integrated. These recommendations are oriented toward NAP focal points and other actors who are involved in coordination of the NAP process.

Commit to a gender-responsive NAP process going forward.

What this commitment looks like will depend on the context; however, our analysis demonstrates that opportunities remain to more effectively integrate gender considerations, regardless of the stage that countries are at in their NAP processes. The most important first step for NAP teams to take is to reflect on how gender issues have been addressed in the process so far to identify strengths and weaknesses. On this basis, country teams can identify concrete steps to address gender in the process as it moves forward.

Develop a more nuanced understanding of gender and climate change linkages to inform the NAP process.

Targeted gender analysis will support informed decision making in the NAP process, enabling NAP teams to unpack assumptions and analyze specific issues related to their particular context and NAP process. This includes differences among women and men and intersections of gender with other drivers of vulnerability to climate change.



This analysis will be useful even if a NAP document has already been completed, to support development of implementation strategies, funding proposals and M&E systems. It is recommended that NAP teams collaborate with gender actors in government or civil society to undertake this analysis, using it as a basis for ongoing dialogue and iterative integration of gender as the NAP process advances.

Use the NAP process to enhance institutional linkages between climate change adaptation and gender equality.

Dialogue between gender and climate change adaptation actors is vital for effective integration of gender in NAP processes. Creating institutional linkages between the ministry responsible for gender and the team leading the NAP process creates the conditions for this dialogue to occur and increases the likelihood that gender issues will be considered. There are many ways to achieve this—it may involve representation on decision-making and coordination mechanisms, identification of focal points or specific working groups focusing on gender and adaptation. Countries must find the best approach for their particular policy and institutional context, building on and strengthening what is already in place.

Improve gender balance in NAP-related institutional arrangements, in terms of both participation and influence.

The planning and coordination mechanisms that are established for the NAP process should strive for gender balance in participation and influence in decision making. Recognizing that participation is often determined by role, not by individual, this may require specific actions to promote women's leadership in relevant ministries, and to ensure that institutions with women in decision-making roles are included. On the other hand, in some contexts, men are the minority in coordination mechanisms for adaptation, requiring targeted efforts to ensure their perspectives are captured. Gender balance must go beyond representation, addressing power imbalances in decision making and challenging traditional roles.

Identify existing capacities and gaps related to gender and climate change adaptation.

For NAP processes to be gender-responsive, capacities are needed by both gender actors and adaptation actors, within government and among stakeholders. The capacities needed differ, with adaptation actors requiring awareness of gender issues, skills in gender-responsive facilitation and ideally, knowledge of methods and tools for gender analysis and mainstreaming. Conversely, gender actors need an understanding of adaptation and where the entry points exist for applying a gender lens in the NAP process. To ensure that existing capacities are effectively utilized, countries should undertake mapping of gender and adaptation actors and stakeholders to determine where the knowledge and skills can be accessed. This will also enable identification of gaps that may need to be filled with additional resources.

Undertake gender-balanced and inclusive stakeholder engagement for NAP processes.

UNFCCC guidance recommends that NAP processes should be participatory and transparent, with consideration of vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems (UNFCCC, 2011). This creates a clear mandate for stakeholder engagement in the process. Gender-balanced involvement of stakeholders in adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring & evaluation is critical for NAP processes to be gender-responsive, again with the understanding that gender balance is about more than representation. However, achieving gender balance is only an initial step in ensuring that adaptation decision making is inclusive—attention is needed to ensure that vulnerable groups are represented, and importantly, that diverse voices are heard and have the opportunity to influence the process. This may require targeted outreach and capacity building to enable marginalized groups to meaningfully engage.

Use gender analysis and stakeholder inputs efficiently and effectively.

Many countries face resource limitations for undertaking their NAP processes, which can limit the scope of analysis and stakeholder engagement that can be feasibly conducted. An important first step is taking stock of what has already been done that can inform the NAP process. For example, gender analysis may have been completed for relevant sectors such as agriculture, and/or adaptation projects may have completed participatory vulnerability assessments with women and men at the community level. Analyzing what is already in place to inform the NAP process can help ensure that additional analysis and stakeholder engagement is targeted and strategic, making the best use of available resources. Further, gathering data and securing inputs from stakeholders do not automatically lead to better integration of gender—it is how this information is analyzed and applied that will determine how gender-responsive NAP processes are. Countries should view this as an ongoing effort throughout the iterative NAP process.

b) Recommendations for development partners supporting NAP processes

Many bilateral and multilateral development partners are providing support to countries for their NAP processes.⁵ These partners have an opportunity to work with countries to improve integration of gender, building on existing policies and programs.

Invest in in-country capacity building on gender and adaptation.

Capacity to integrate gender in the NAP process is a barrier to progress on this issue. Development partners can support country governments in filling capacity gaps, for example by providing dedicated human resources (such as a climate change advisor in the ministry focused on gender) and facilitating access to training and technical support. To ensure that information is available for gender-responsive decision making in the longer term, the establishment of systems for sex-disaggregated data collection and gender analysis to inform adaptation decision making is another potential area of support. Finally, development partners can contribute to creating opportunities for dialogue among gender and adaptation actors by, for example, financing workshops and knowledge-sharing platforms.



⁵ For more information on finance for NAP processes, please see the NAP Global Network [guidance note](#).

Enable participatory and inclusive adaptation decision-making processes.

Development partners should recognize that the NAP is a process, not a document. Participation takes time and ensuring that the process is inclusive requires additional effort and resources, both human and financial. The iterative nature of the process should allow for capacity development and learning by doing, for adaptation outcomes that are equitable and sustained over the longer term. Incorporating flexibility in support to NAP formulation and implementation can facilitate this. At the same time, countries may need support to understand trade-offs associated with different approaches in order to identify the most strategic way forward in their particular context.

Harmonize guidance on gender mainstreaming in adaptation.

Countries seeking financial assistance for their NAP process face a range of different policies and requirements in relation to gender mainstreaming in adaptation policymaking and program implementation. To increase efficiency, different institutions could work together to ensure that guidance provided to countries is consistent, practical and allows for increasing integration of gender considerations over time as countries develop their capacity, undertake analysis and more effectively engage stakeholders. Aligning gender mainstreaming guidance for NAPs with existing tools and approaches for integrating gender in policies and programs, such as the SDGs, can help to maximize synergies and avoid duplication of effort.

Share knowledge on gender and climate change adaptation with government partners and other actors.

Development partners often have a great deal of experience in supporting gender-responsive policy development and program implementation in adaptation and other relevant sectors, sometimes across multiple countries and regions. This knowledge should be captured and shared, in relevant formats and languages, with governments engaged in NAP processes to enable them to incorporate the lessons learned. Concise commentary pieces (such as blogs), case studies, policy briefs and guidance documents may be useful in this regard. Creating opportunities for exchange across countries can also support ongoing learning on gender and climate change adaptation, toward gender-responsive NAP processes.

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Annex A:

Overview of NAP Document Reviews

Issue	# of NAP documents
Framing of gender issues	
Gender mentioned	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Gender equality/equity	○ ○ ○
Gender sensitivity	○ ○ ○
Gender differences	○ ○
Gender-based discrimination	○ ○
Gender mainstreaming	○
Gender-based violence	○
Gender sensitivity identified as a principle for the plan	○ ○ ○ ○
Gender identified as a priority sector or adaptation option	○ ○ ○
Gender identified as a cross-cutting issue for the plan	○ ○
Positioning of women	
As a group that is particularly vulnerable to climate change	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
As beneficiaries of adaptation actions	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
As agents of change	○ ○ ○ ○
As stakeholders in adaptation planning processes	○ ○
Additional entry points for integrating gender considerations	
Reference to other concepts that may represent entry points	○ ○ ○ ○
Evidence of integration of gender considerations in the planning phase of the NAP process*	
Use of gender analysis	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Participation of women and/or women's groups	○ ○ ○
Identification of adaptation options	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Implementation strategies	○ ○ ○ ○
M&E framework	○ ○ ○
Evidence of consideration of gender issues in the institutional arrangements for the NAP process*	
Government institutional mechanisms	○ ○
Stakeholder platforms	○ ○

*A lack of evidence does not necessarily mean that gender was not considered—it may be that this is just not captured in the NAP document.



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