

Conducting Gender Analysis to Inform National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Processes:

Reflections from six African countries

1.0 Introduction

As countries advance their National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes, they are increasingly focused on issues of effectiveness, aiming to put into practice the principles and approaches that have been highlighted in decisions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This includes the Paris Agreement, which calls for climate action to be gender-responsive (UNFCCC, 2015), and the Gender Action Plan, which highlights the need to integrate gender considerations in adaptation plans and actions (UNFCCC, 2017). The NAP process, a key mechanism for countries to accelerate climate change adaptation efforts, represents an important opportunity for ensuring that investments in adaptation are effective and sustainable and that they generate equitable benefits for women and men,¹ including the most vulnerable.

Since 2018, the NAP Global Network has been working with six country governments in Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea-Conakry, Madagascar and Togo) to undertake targeted gender analyses to inform

¹ 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 briefing note we will primarily discuss differences between women and men.



their NAP processes.² Although the countries are at different stages in the formulation and implementation of their NAPs, each felt that they had reached a strategic moment to conduct these analyses to inform the coming steps in the process. This briefing note describes the rationale and approach that we have taken in supporting these NAP-focused gender analyses. It provides insights from the analyses, presenting common themes that are emerging as well as lessons learned from the process. In sharing these reflections, we aim to demonstrate the value of targeted gender analysis in promoting adaptation action that is gender-responsive, while also documenting learning that may be useful for other countries that are working to integrate gender considerations in their NAP processes.

2.0 Why Are Targeted Gender Analyses Needed to Inform NAP Processes?

Gender analysis is a key tool used in development policy and practice. It explores differences between and among women, men, girls and boys in terms of their roles, responsibilities, access to and control over resources. Gender analysis also aims to understand gender roles and dynamics, as well as how these influence the respective needs and priorities of women and men. It provides a basis for integrating gender considerations in policies, programs and institutions, in an effort to ensure equitable benefits for women, men, boys and girls (Government of Canada, 2017; Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, 2015; UN Women Training Centre, 2017). Undertaking gender analysis and applying it in decision making are essential steps in ensuring that NAP processes are gender-responsive.

However, our research has found that, while most countries are making an effort to address gender considerations in their NAP processes, there is limited evidence that context-specific gender analysis has been applied in the processes we analyzed. Further, 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. This can lead to unhelpful generalizations about women's particular vulnerability, without interrogation of the reasons for this or recognition of the differences among women and the ways in which some men may be vulnerable. Without a more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics and how they influence vulnerability to climate change and capacity to adapt, there is a risk that NAP processes will exacerbate existing inequalities and/or miss opportunities to promote more equitable participation and benefits. This has implications for both the NAP process's effectiveness and its sustainability. Consequently, we recommend targeted gender analysis to support informed decision making in the NAP process (Dazé & Dekens, 2018).

3.0 The NAP Global Network Approach to NAP-Focused Gender Analysis

For the six countries involved in this study, the NAP Global Network conducted a rapid assessment of issues to inform decision making in the NAP process. The specific methodology varied from country to country; however, in general, it involved a review of available literature combined with stakeholder consultations through interviews and workshops. Each analysis involved ongoing communication and collaboration with the government team, leading the NAP process to ensure that it was as targeted as possible and linked to emerging entry points for its application.

² This analysis is based on gender analyses completed by ministries of each of the six country partners: Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Ecologie et des Forêts de Madagascar, 2019; Ministère de l'Environnement, des Eaux et Forêts de Guinée, in press; Ministère de l'Environnement et des Ressources Forestières du Togo, in press; Ministère du Cadre de Vie et du Développement Durable du Bénin, in press; Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable de la République de la Côte d'Ivoire, 2019; Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission, in press.

Each gender analysis was comprised of four major components:

1. A policy and institutional analysis on gender and climate change adaptation
2. A technical analysis exploring the links between gender and climate change to identify practical considerations for prioritizing, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating adaptation actions
3. Analysis of the implications for the NAP process
4. Development of recommendations for the NAP process

These components are described in the sections that follow.

3.1 Policy and Institutional Analysis

The analysis of a country's relevant policies and institutions addressing sustainable development, gender equality and climate change provides a basis for ensuring that the NAP process builds on existing mandates, systems and capacities. It involves examining relevant policies and the links that exist among them; for example, the extent to which gender is integrated in climate change policies and vice versa. It also assesses the coordination mechanisms in place to support the NAP process, as well as those that exist for integrating gender considerations, to help identify any synergies and gaps that may need to be enhanced or addressed. The analysis also identifies those key actors that have knowledge and capacity that can support integration of gender considerations in the NAP process, along with existing initiatives that may have useful lessons to be drawn upon or entry points that can be used in the implementation of gender-responsive approaches to adaptation.

3.2 Technical Analysis

The technical analysis focuses on understanding the gender issues that must be taken into consideration in the planning, prioritization and implementation of adaptation actions. It explores the three key dimensions of a gender-responsive NAP process, shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Dimensions of a gender-responsive NAP process



Source: Dazé & Dekens, 2017.

To understand these dimensions, the analysis considers how current and future climate risks affect women and men differently, and why. This provides a basis for determining how adaptation needs may differ for women and men, also taking into account other issues such as age, poverty levels, ethnicity or livelihood strategies that may influence this. The analysis also assesses existing capacities for climate change adaptation and how gender inequality affects these capacities.

To identify issues related to participation and influence in decision making, the process looks at the balance of decision-making power between women and men in households, communities and societies. Finally, to assess the likelihood that the benefits from adaptation will be equitably distributed, the analysis explores issues such as access to and control over resources, division of labour between women and men, and equal access to information, services and economic opportunities.

3.3 Analysis of the Implications for the NAP Process

The policy, institutional and technical analyses provide an overview of the context in which the NAP process is being undertaken. The third component of the analysis considers how this context will influence the opportunities and challenges for integrating gender considerations in the planning and implementation of adaptation actions. It aims to answer questions such as:

- Does the NAP process provide an opportunity to **reframe** the gender equality issue?
- How do gender issues play out in the **priority sectors or adaptation options** identified in the NAP?
- What **gender issues** need to be taken into account when identifying and prioritizing adaptation options?
- Which **adaptation actions** may be difficult for women or men to participate in or benefit from?
- Are there gender-specific issues of **access to or control over resources** that may present a barrier to adaptation?
- Does gender inequality create barriers to **participation** in adaptation planning and decision making?
- What **actors** need to be involved in adaptation planning processes to ensure that gender considerations are integrated?

The answers to these and other relevant questions provide the basis for developing recommendations, as outlined in the next section.

3.4 Development of Recommendations for the NAP Process

The final component of the gender analysis involves the development of recommendations for the NAP process in the specific country. These are of two types: process recommendations and technical recommendations.

Process recommendations address how the NAP process is facilitated and are primarily targeted to the NAP coordination team. They address issues such as the institutional arrangements for the NAP process, capacity-building needs to ensure a gender-responsive process, and how gender considerations should be integrated in communication strategies and data and information management systems for the NAP process. A key focus here is to identify concrete measures that can be taken to ensure effective participation of women, women's groups and organizations promoting gender equality in adaptation planning processes. **Technical recommendations** address how adaptation actions are implemented. They are relevant for any actors involved in implementing adaptation actions, from sectoral ministries to community-based organizations. These recommendations provide guidance on ensuring that adaptation investments address the particular needs of women and men and provide equitable benefits. They highlight gender issues that must be considered in implementing adaptation actions in particular sectors, such as agriculture, water and health. Finally, the recommendations may include considerations for financing strategies and decision making, as well as for monitoring and evaluating the NAP process and its outcomes.

4.0 Common Themes from the Policy and Institutional Analyses

The following are some common themes that emerged from the policy and institutional components of the gender analyses across the six countries.

Legal and policy frameworks on gender and/or women, designed to address gender equality, exist in each of the analyzed countries, providing a mandate for integrating gender in NAP processes. In their national development

plans, all countries identified gender equality and climate change as two cross-cutting policy priority issues, which provides a basis for integrating gender in their NAP processes. Some of these gender policies have been in place for up to 25 years; some have been recently updated (such as Guinea-Conakry's in 2017), while others are in the process of being reviewed. The common priorities identified in the gender policies across most countries are relevant in the context of climate change because

they focus on addressing the root causes of gender inequalities, which is needed to reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts. These broadly include: improving equal access to education and other basic social services, improving equal participation in decision making, women's economic empowerment and gender mainstreaming. In some cases, such as in Madagascar, the revision of the gender policy is providing the opportunity to reframe the gender equality agenda from a women's issue to an issue about the differences and dynamics between women and men. This suggests that countries have the policy basis in place to ensure that reducing gender inequalities is an explicit focus of their NAP process.

The extent to which existing gender policies have helped in-country NAP teams in framing gender issues in the context of the NAP process appears limited. Different understandings and interpretations around "gender" prevail among stakeholders involved in the NAP process. The gender policies are often difficult to access because they are not available on the Internet (except for Togo), and awareness about the policies is limited among climate change actors. Explicit references to climate change, including adaptation, are largely absent in all gender policies, including in the more recent policies. For example, the 2017 Revised National Gender Policy in Guinea-Conakry states that women are more affected by climate change than men, but it does not explain how and why. To fill this gap, Côte d'Ivoire is in the process of developing a standalone gender and climate change strategy. It is expected that the process will support the integration of gender equality in the NAP process as much as it could support the integration of climate change in the updating of the gender policy. In general, though the policy basis is in place for integrating gender equality, more work is needed to ensure that adaptation stakeholders are aware of this and recognize its importance for the NAP process.

The linking of climate change and gender equality is new and lagging behind in policies and institutional arrangements. Governments are starting to integrate climate change and gender equality into development planning, but are largely treating these two policy priorities separately. For example, when thematic focal points exist within a ministry on both issues (climate/environment and gender), they do not undertake joint activities. The mechanisms for connecting focal points are weak or nonexistent, both within and across ministries





and institutions. Only a few sectoral climate adaptation policies and strategies integrate gender concerns (such as the health sector NAP in Madagascar), and their level of implementation is unclear. A gender-responsive NAP process can play a role in strengthening the linkages between climate change and gender equality at the policy and institutional levels. This is particularly important as countries are in the process of developing their legal and policy frameworks on climate change and establishing interministerial committees for climate change and/or the NAP process—it is an opportunity to ensure that the links to gender are built into these climate change frameworks from the beginning.

Countries are putting in place the institutional architecture to support gender mainstreaming, but capacities are limited. All of the countries analyzed have a ministry in charge of coordinating gender and/or women's issues; however, these are

typically smaller and younger ministries with relatively weaker convening power. Institutional arrangements on gender equality at the national level have been created fairly recently, and resources available on gender in terms of qualified personnel and finance tend to be inadequate. For example, while the Guinean Directorate for Women and Gender Promotion comprises around 100 civil servants, very few staff have sufficient capacities to deliver gender trainings (Ministère de l'Environnement, des Eaux et Forêts de Guinée, in press). Beyond ministries focusing on gender, countries have established gender focal points (or "cells" or "services" or "units") in other institutions, including the agriculture and environment sectors. However, these are often not operational or effective, and their roles may not be clearly defined. They tend to have too many responsibilities and often lack human, financial and material resources. For the NAP process specifically, this means that access to expertise and resources for integrating gender remains a challenge, and investments in capacity development are needed.

Capacities on gender exist in all countries—primarily in the agriculture and health sectors—but these have not yet been leveraged in the context of the NAP process. Networks of non-governmental organizations led by women and/or focusing on issues such as domestic violence, women's empowerment, environmental issues and agriculture exist in all countries. For example, Benin has a gender and climate change observatory at the University of Abomey-Calavi and a platform for women's participation in decision making (Plateforme pour la Participation des Femmes dans les Instances de Décisions [PFID]). Madagascar has a national platform on women, sustainable development and food security, which includes 18 branches located across the country. Côte d'Ivoire has an interprofessional fund for research and agricultural extension services (Fonds Interprofessionnel pour la recherche et le conseil agricole [FIRCA]) with a dedicated service on gender and environment, which includes a multistakeholder gender and agriculture platform. In addition, some governments, including Benin and Côte d'Ivoire, have observatories in charge of monitoring gender actions. Benin also has a national institute for the promotion of women, created in 2009 under the Office of the President. If given adequate training on climate adaptation and the NAP process, these existing in-country experts on gender can provide relevant resources and analysis to support the integration of gender considerations in NAP processes.

5.0 Common Themes from the Technical Analyses

The following are a few of the common themes that emerged from the technical components of the gender analyses across the different countries. This is not an exhaustive summary of the issues coming out of the country analyses. Rather, it draws out some insights that highlight the importance of context-specific gender analysis in determining how to integrate gender considerations in NAP processes.

Overcoming barriers in access to basic services will help to unlock women's potential as agents of change in adaptation. In the countries analyzed, there are still considerable gender gaps in access to education, literacy and income-generating opportunities. For example, data from Côte d'Ivoire shows that one third of girls between 15 and 19 quit their education or their job due to early marriage or pregnancy (Centre de développement de l'OCDE, 2017). In Togo, it was estimated that, in 2015, almost half of adult females were illiterate, as compared to just over 20 per cent of men (World Bank, 2019a). Enrolment in technical and professional training in Madagascar is dominated by men (75 per cent, 2014 data), with the exception of those courses oriented toward the service sector (Gender Links, 2015). These disparities mean that women and girls are at a disadvantage when it comes to accessing information, engaging in planning and decision-making processes, and investing in adaptation actions. For women to realize their potential as agents of change in adaptation, these gaps must be overcome through investments in basic services that are targeted and gender-responsive.

Sector-based adaptation strategies must consider the full range of activities in the sector, taking the different roles of women and men into account. Many countries are taking a sector-based approach to adaptation planning, identifying adaptation options for sectors that have been identified as being particularly vulnerable to climate change. Our analysis has found that there are important differences in the roles women and men tend to play within these key sectors across the different countries. In the agricultural sector in Côte d'Ivoire, for example, the majority of subsistence producers are women, while men are responsible for commercial crops such as cacao (Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable de la République de la Côte d'Ivoire [MINEDD], 2019). In Ethiopia, women make up less than 10 per cent of the workforce in the industrial agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors (Central Statistical Agency & World Bank, 2014), though they are often responsible for subsistence crops that feed their families (Alebachew, 2001). Similarly, in the fisheries sector in Benin, the analysis found that men are typically responsible for fishing, while women undertake the smoking and drying of the fish to prepare them for market (Egbetowokpo, Adjakpa, Houndénou & Houssou, 2015). In order to develop robust and inclusive adaptation strategies for these sectors, countries must understand the full range of activities that is involved (both formal and informal), where responsibilities for those activities lie and what the adaptation needs are, considering the gender differences in roles, responsibilities and opportunities within the sector.

An understanding of the impact of migration on gender dynamics is needed to inform adaptation planning. In the countries studied, migration is an important strategy, whether as a traditional livelihood practice, a means of securing household incomes or as a coping mechanism in periods of scarcity, including those caused by climate hazards and changes. In each of these scenarios, gender dynamics play a role in the decision to migrate, as well as in the effects of this decision on the person or people migrating and on those left behind. In Côte d'Ivoire, it was observed that the cultivation area for cacao has shifted and the period between harvests has lengthened, leading to increased migration by men in search of income-generating activities. This increases the burden on women left behind (MINEDD, 2019). Research in Ethiopia found that, as women's responsibilities increased when male household members migrated, their decision-making power also increased in relation to the running of the household (Camfield et al., 2018).

Women remain under-represented in decision making in climate-vulnerable sectors, which has implications for how gender-responsive adaptation action in those sectors will be. The country analyses revealed gaps in women's participation in decision making at multiple levels. In Guinea-Conakry, for example, it was found that the needs of female farmers are generally not reflected in community-level mechanisms for managing irrigation systems, in part because they are not involved in relevant planning and decision-making processes (MEEF, in press). Data from Madagascar showed that women held very few public sector posts, representing only 6 per cent of decision makers from the community to the national level (Banque Africaine de Développement, 2017). Similarly, in Benin, only 22 per cent of decision-making posts in the public service are held by women, a percentage that decreases as you move up the hierarchy (United Nations Development Programme, 2013). Though these statistics are not specific to climate change and related sectors, they highlight the gap in representation that must be overcome for participation in decision making to be gender-balanced.

More attention must be paid to gender in other priority sectors for adaptation, beyond agriculture, water and health. It was relatively easy in the analyses to find information on gendered impacts of climate change for the agriculture, water and health sectors. Even if there has not been much in the way of specific research on climate impacts, there is information available on the gender context of these sectors, which provides a basis for analyzing the gender dimensions of adaptation. However, for the transport, infrastructure and urban sectors, less information was available to inform the gender analysis for the NAP process. Additional research and analysis are therefore needed in these sectors to inform gender-responsive decision making for adaptation. This is particularly needed in those countries that will be revisiting their priority sectors for climate change adaptation in the context of updating their Nationally Determined Contributions. For example, discussions are underway in Guinea-Conakry to add the urban sector to the list of priorities, recognizing that half of the population lives in urban areas.

6.0 Lessons Learned from the Process

This section provides some lessons from the process of conducting NAP-focused gender analyses. They highlight some of the key issues that governments, and the development partners supporting them, should keep in mind when initiating similar analyses.

- **The relevance of a NAP-focused gender analysis is strongly dependent on the process used to carry out the analysis.** Considering that the linking of climate change to gender equality is new or limited in most countries, NAP-focused gender analyses can be used in a number of ways to inform a country's NAP process. Specifically, these analyses can help governments to understand how to best frame gender issues in line with the country context; map existing expertise and capacities that can support integration of gender considerations in NAP processes; identify entities and individuals with gender expertise who require capacity building for effective engagement in the NAP process; and propose changes to the membership or procedures of institutional arrangements for the NAP to improve gender integration. Not surprisingly, the involvement of the NAP focal point and other stakeholders involved in the NAP process in the analysis is crucial to ensuring that the recommendations are owned by in-country actors and can be implemented based on available or planned resources. A participatory gender analysis process also serves to raise awareness about the NAP process, gender and the links between the two. It can help to establish, or strengthen, the link between the NAP team and the ministry responsible for gender and/or women's issues.
- **Related to the above, a team of experts rather than an individual is often needed to conduct these analyses.** The pool of international and national experts with expertise on climate adaptation (including NAPs) and gender is limited, a problem even more pronounced in francophone countries. Due to a general lack of understanding of the NAP process, there is also a risk that the analysis will focus on gender issues as they relate to climate adaptation in general without making it NAP-specific. In our experience, the analysis is best



undertaken by a team comprising experts on gender, adaptation and the NAP process. We found that bringing at least one expert in each country team that had already been involved in a similar analysis in another country is a useful approach to foster learning and capacity building on the methodology. Capacity building on gender and NAPs at the regional level, particularly in francophone Africa, should be a priority for development partners to enhance the availability of expertise to support gender-responsive NAP processes.

- **To provide useful recommendations, the NAP-focused gender analysis does not need to be a complicated process.** The analysis does not require the development or use of complex tools. A common framework based on guiding questions targeting different aspects of the NAP process was used as a basis for conducting these analyses, building on existing information, capacities and resources. This framework allowed for the flexibility to focus on the most relevant issues based on identified entry points in the NAP process, providing a basis for specific, focused recommendations. On average, and due to the nature of the participatory process, we found that countries need to plan for a four-to-six-month process to conduct the analysis.
- **While context-specific information on the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women is often limited, a basis always exists for conducting gender analysis for the NAP process.** Given the frequent lack of available and accessible sex-disaggregated data and documented information, a useful first step is to review existing information available on gender and women (not necessarily linked to climate change or climate variability). For example, gender analyses conducted in areas such as water, agriculture and health can form a strong basis for consideration of gender issues for adaptation in these sectors. Findings from such analyses can be extrapolated to analyze the implications for climate change adaptation, ensuring that assumptions are interrogated and documented. Further, local actors, if appropriately guided, can start documenting gender-specific climate impacts and capacities for adaptation based on their own experiences and knowledge.
- **Countries are pivoting toward dedicated support to their NAP processes via the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Readiness Programme, which requires integration of gender considerations.** This represents a fundamental shift in terms of supporting the integration of gender considerations in NAP processes. The GCF, established under the UNFCCC, is the largest multilateral climate fund and largest source of multilateral adaptation financing. In 2016, the GCF allocated up to USD 3 million per country for the formulation of NAPs, becoming the most important source of financial support on NAPs for many countries (International Institute for Sustainable Development & German Corporation for International Cooperation, 2017). All of the countries analyzed are either in the process of developing their NAP readiness proposal or have already submitted their proposals. To date, of the six countries analyzed, only Côte d'Ivoire has received approval. Addressing gender issues is one of the 10 criteria used by the GCF Secretariat for reviewing proposals submitted by countries. For example, the proposal for Côte d'Ivoire states that the project management unit for the implementation of the proposal will include a communication and gender sub-unit to ensure that gender considerations are integrated across all activities.

7.0 Conclusions

Based on experience in these six countries, we are convinced that there is value in conducting NAP-focused gender analyses. The approach—combining policy, institutional and technical components—has provided context-specific analysis of gender and adaptation issues and recommendations to inform the NAP process in the respective countries. In addition, the gender analysis processes themselves have served to increase awareness, promote dialogue and create connections between gender and climate change actors. Through dialogue with countries, we have learned that there are many points in NAP processes where gender analysis can be usefully applied:

- At the very beginning of the process, to frame the issue and to identify potential sources of information and knowledge to support the integration of gender in the NAP process.
- When adaptation planning documents are under development, to inform how gender issues are reflected (e.g., NAP document, mainstreaming guidelines, sectoral adaptation strategies).
- In the establishment of mechanisms for coordination and stakeholder engagement for climate change in general, including for the NAP process.
- When adaptation options are being prioritized.
- During the elaboration of implementation strategies for prioritized adaptation actions.
- When resource mobilization strategies are being established, to ensure that allocation of resources is gender-responsive.
- In the development and implementation of funding proposals, particularly to providers of finance who prioritize integration of gender (including the GCF as well as many bilateral development partners).
- To inform the development of monitoring and evaluation systems for adaptation.

It is important to identify one or more entry points in the NAP process at the early stage of the gender analysis to ensure that it is targeted and provides recommendations that are relevant and focused. Once a foundation has been established, the iterative nature of the NAP process provides considerable opportunities for more informed and comprehensive integration of gender considerations as countries move through the process.

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