

How Côte d'Ivoire is Accelerating Gender Mainstreaming in Climate Change Action: Working with national gender advisors

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A conversation with Jean Douglas Anaman, National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process coordinator at the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Côte d'Ivoire.

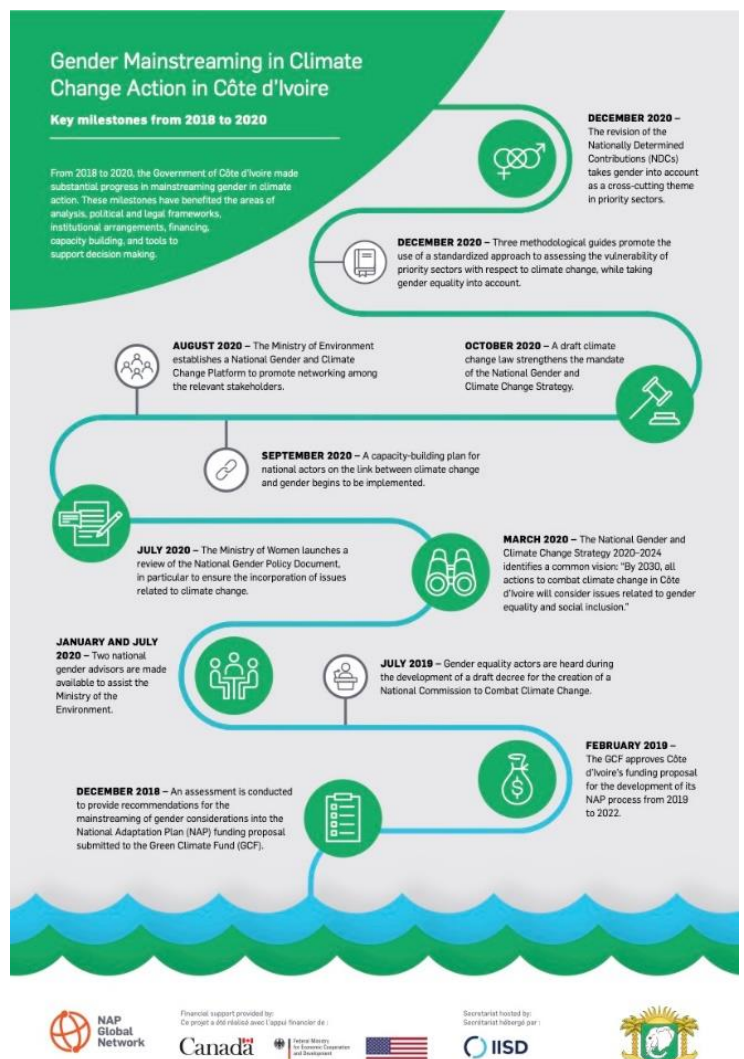
[Our research](#) has shown that most countries have capacities in the area of gender – especially in the agriculture and health care sectors, in which the roles and needs of women and men are often highly differentiated. Nevertheless, these resources often remain unused or underexploited in the context of the NAP process.

Côte d'Ivoire is leading the way forward. Since January and July 2020, and thanks to the support of the NAP Global Network and the [Green Climate Fund \(GCF\)](#) through the [United Nations Development Programme](#), two national gender advisors have been made available to assist the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Côte d'Ivoire in mainstreaming gender considerations into climate change action. As shown in the following infographic, this is one of the milestones illustrating the considerable progress that Côte d'Ivoire has made in this area since 2018.



Jean Douglas Anaman,
NAP process coordinator

[We spoke with Jean Douglas Anaman](#), NAP process coordinator at the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, to better understand how the work undertaken by these two advisors helps improve the NAP process in Côte d'Ivoire.



Infographic: Gender Mainstreaming in Climate Change Action in Côte d'Ivoire. Click on the infographic for more.

At what stage is Côte d'Ivoire in its NAP process, and why was it important for you work over the long term with several national gender advisors at this stage of the process?

In December 2018, with the support of the NAP Global Network, we finalized [an assessment](#) that provided recommendations for incorporating gender considerations into the NAP funding proposal submitted to the GCF. At that time, our activities suffered from a lack of gender perspective, but we had not yet considered creating these national gender advisor positions.

It is true that the Ministry had already established a Gender and Environment Focal Point, as well as a Gender and Social Inclusion Unit, and this is commendable. But the personnel lacked the necessary capacities to address the cross-cutting issue of climate change.

In February 2019, when the GCF approved the funding of Côte d'Ivoire's proposal for the development of its NAP process over the 2019–2022 timeframe, we became aware of the key role that these advisors could play in improving our capacities and equipping us to ensure the systematic inclusion of gender issues in the process as a whole.

What is the background of these two national gender advisors who were made available to assist your ministry? Did they already have experience in adaptation and in the NAP process?

The two national gender advisors had no experience in climate change adaptation prior to joining our team. They have different but complementary backgrounds. One of them is highly focused on community development projects, which is advantageous when it comes to understanding the root causes of the vulnerability of local actors in the face of climate change. The other has very good knowledge of the various institutional arrangements, which facilitates stakeholder involvement.

Including these two advisors, we now have eight people whose role is to support the integration of gender issues into climate change action within the Ministry of the Environment. This may seem like a large number, but we have learned that it is truly

necessary and justified given the workload and the needs in terms of capacity building.

How do these national gender advisors help you to take better account of gender issues in the NAP process?

The two advisors help us build our capacities and skills in the area of gender equality. For example, they have enabled us to foster and develop an initiative focused on institutional gender-climate dialogue, which is a direct result of this capacity building. This dialogue will allow the participants to know each other better, to share information, and to create a consensus and better consistency in the promotion of the cause.

The national gender advisors are also involved in the vulnerability studies that will inform the identification of the priority adaptation measures for the most vulnerable sectors. We are especially interested in understanding the impact of climate hazards on women and men in these sectors.

What difference does this work with gender experts make? Can you give two or three concrete examples of its impact?

Our work with these advisors opens up new opportunities for us that we hadn't expected at the outset. The impact goes well beyond the framework that was initially defined.

First of all, the availability of these advisors allows the gender experts at the Ministry of the Environment to take ownership of climate change issues and address the linkages between gender and climate with much more ease and efficiency.

Second, because the advisors support us in everything we do, we now look systematically at the gender component, whether for financing, research, or the hiring of consultants.

Third, the collaboration between the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Women is continuously growing stronger. For example, we are currently working with the Ministry of Women to update the national gender policy, namely by taking into account the relationship between gender and climate change, and by institutionalizing all of the

gender units that exist within the sectoral ministries. The Ministry of Women now views us as a key partner. This is a significant change since 2018. But we need to go beyond that. We are now aiming to ensure a continuous process of collaboration between the two ministries in terms of data and information exchange, fundraising, and monitoring and evaluation.

Finally, our team is now approached by a variety of stakeholders to help them take into account the linkages between gender and climate change. These actors come to us because they trust us. This is a major step forward for the mainstreaming of gender considerations into climate change action in Côte d'Ivoire at all levels.

What have you learned about the best way of incorporating national gender experts into the agencies responsible for coordinating the NAP process?

In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, our starting point was that we had no expertise on the links between gender and climate change. We learned how important it was to have national gender advisors right there as members of our team to help us create progress in this area.

We noticed that the advisors can gradually acquire knowledge of adaptation and mitigation issues through their various interactions with climate change experts. But to manage to bring about a lasting change in working methods, these advisors must be committed over the long term, in other words, for at least six months.

When gender advisors are able to participate in all processes and to support the unit in which they are involved to use new approaches and new tools, real added value is created.



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