



Gender and Climate Change: Assessing the Evolution of Gender Mainstreaming Tools

Author
Arunima Hakhu



THE ENERGY AND RESOURCES INSTITUTE
Creating Innovative Solutions for a Sustainable Future

© The Energy and Resources Institute 2019

The material in this publication is copyrighted. Content from this policy brief may be used for non-commercial purposes, provided it is attributed to the source. Enquiries concerning reproduction should be sent to the address:

The Energy and Resources Institute

Darbari Seth Block, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110 003, India

Authors

Arunima Hakhu, Research Associate, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is grateful to Dr. Prodipto Ghosh and Mr. R. R. Rashmi, distinguished fellows, TERI, for their feedback on the initial drafts. The author acknowledges Smt. Kalyani Raj, Secretary General, All India Women's Conference, for her support and guidance. The author thanks Ms. Neha Pahuja and Dr. Kavya Michael for their encouragement and constructive comments

All opinions expressed, as well as omissions and eventual errors are the responsibility of the authors alone.

Editorial and design: Ipshita Mitra, Sudeep Pawar

PUBLISHED BY

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Project Monitoring Cell

TERI, Darbari Seth Block, IHC Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003, India Tel.: +91 11 2468 2100 or 2468 2111 |
Fax: +91 11 2468 2144 or 2468 2145

Email: pmc@teri.res.in | Web: www.teriin.org

Table of Contents

Gender and Climate Change: Information Brief		5
1.	Background	5
2.	Run Up to the Gender Action Plan	5
2.1	<i>Marrakesh: Improving Women's Representation in the Conference of Parties</i>	6
2.2	<i>Doha Round of Negotiations: Moving Beyond Representation</i>	6
2.3	<i>The Lima Work Programme on Gender</i>	6
2.4	<i>Including Gender in the Paris Agreement</i>	6
3.	Tools to Mainstream Gender	6
3.1	<i>Gender Policy and Action Plan</i>	7
3.2	<i>Gender and the Global Environment Facility</i>	7
3.3	<i>Elements of Gender Action Plan</i>	7
4.	Discussion	8
5.	The Way Forward	9
6.	Conclusion	10
Bibliography		10

Gender and Climate Change: Information Brief

1. Background

Framing any climate action needs to take stock of social roles underpinning the social contract in a community. Given the diversity in risk, resilience, preparedness, and levels of development, different communities will likely be affected non-homogeneously (Denton, 2002). Coinciding social stressors like class, caste, age, and gender, will likely become starker against the onslaught of disturbances in the form of air pollution, floods, and droughts (Rao and Hans, 2018).¹

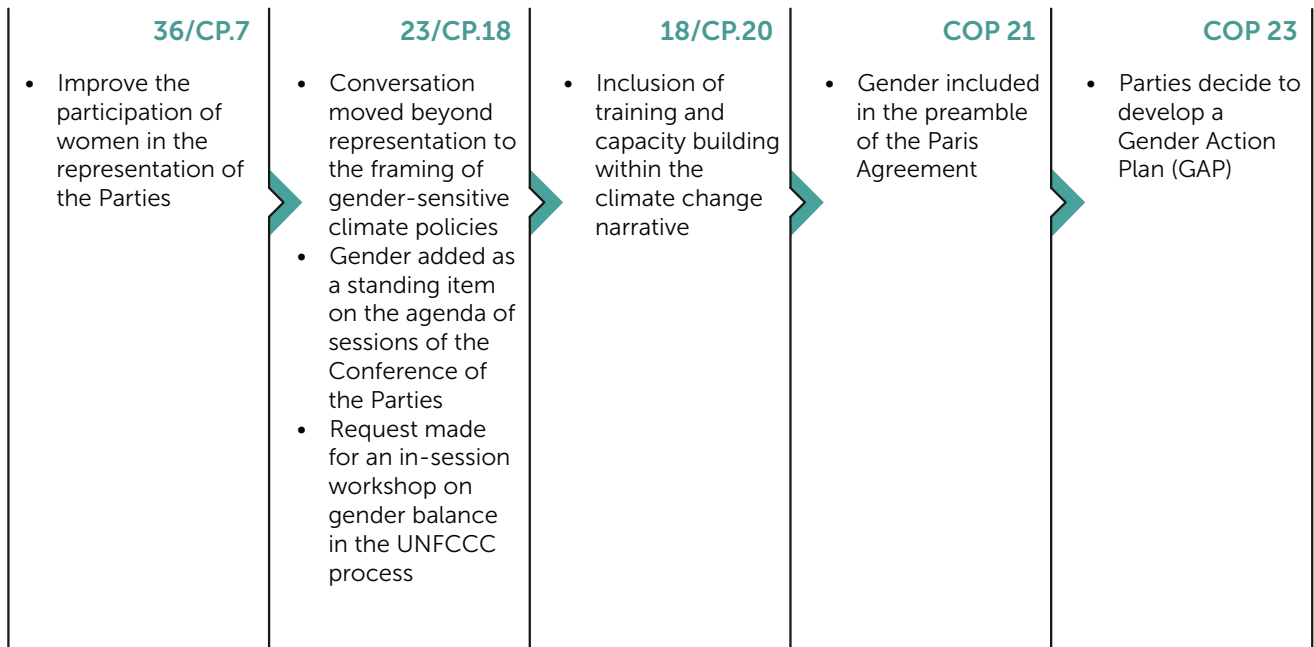
Mainstreaming gender considerations into climate change governance becomes critical as gender influences social organizations (Kronsell, 2013). It influences power relations, institutional norms, and effective and representative participation of people (Kronsell, 2013). Used as a tool to analyse power relations, mainstreaming gender considerations into any field becomes a political endeavour (Westholm and Arora-Jonsson, 2018). This information brief will look at gender as an entry point into the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) decisions. Broadly, it will trace the treatment of gender in climate change governance. In particular, it will look at the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and its implications.

2. Run Up to the Gender Action Plan

GAP is the result of a significant effort to mainstream gender in all stages of the Paris Agreement processes—consultations, planning, and reporting (Revelo, Granat, and Owren, 2015). The run up to GAP is marked by advocacy, normative shifts in literature, and massive political will. The plan is the amalgamation of various UNFCCC decisions that acknowledge:

1. The affected are not similarly affected—there are differences in socio-economic and political contexts of the affected.
2. That the affected can be beneficiaries and leaders of climate action, simultaneously.



¹ Emergent issues

2.1 Marrakesh: Improving Women's Representation in the Conference of Parties

Discussions on gender within the context of climate negotiations began with decision 36/CP.7 that aimed to improve the effective participation of women in the representation of the Parties in bodies established under the UNFCCC (UNFCCC, 2001). It emphasized that the Parties contemplate the nomination of women for elective posts in bodies established under the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol. The UNFCCC secretariat was asked to maintain information on the gender composition of each body with elective posts established under the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC, 2001).

2.2 Doha Round of Negotiations: Moving Beyond Representation

It was only with COP 18, in decision 23/CP.18, that the conversation within the context of gender equality moved beyond representation to the framing of gender-sensitive climate policies. It was here that gender was added to the standing item on the agenda of the future COPs. The request to organize an in-session workshop on gender balance was also envisaged in this session.

2.3 The Lima Work Programme on Gender

Decision 18/CP.20, or the LWPG, 2014, underscored the importance of gender-responsive climate policies in fostering balanced participation of women and men in UNFCCC processes (UNFCCC, 2014). The LWPG was a clarion call to enhance the implementation of existing gender-responsive decisions and improving women's participation in delegations. It recognized that all aspects of climate change inherently have gender dimensions (and repercussions). Built into the framework of LWPG (Articles 11 and 12) was a two-pronged request by the Parties to organize in-session workshops on gender-responsive climate policies that focused on mitigation and adaptation, respectively. This was done to further elaborate, even understand, the scope and nature of what would culminate into

the GAP. This request was granted, and so, gender workshops were undertaken at the SB48, 2018 and at COP24, 2018.

2.4 Including Gender in the Paris Agreement

It took immense pressure from the civil society and political will to include the word "gender" in the preamble of the Paris Agreement. By invoking Human Rights, it acknowledged that as a cross-cutting concern in both the north and south blocs, gender considerations should underpin any action that addresses climate change. Article 7 on Adaptation urges countries to form gender-responsive Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). By including in its text, the importance of traditional and local knowledge and experiences of indigenous peoples, it invoked the concept of intersectionality and finally acknowledged differing vulnerabilities faced along the lines of gender. This acknowledgment is reinforced in Article 11 on Capacity Building as it reiterates the role of effective participation of genders, and the need to endow skills to both men and women.

3. Tools to Mainstream Gender

Over the years, many gender mainstreaming tools were created and revised (UNDP, 2007; UN Habitat, 2009; ADB, 2012; UNDP, 2013 and 2014; UNIDO, 2014; UN Women and GCF, 2017). In particular, this section will take stock of the gender policies of Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund, and GAP.

Gender mainstreaming tools evolved in order to respond to the three key needs in climate change governance:

1. Collecting gender-disaggregated data to evaluate gender differential impacts of climate change and climate policy.
2. Moving beyond gender budgeting to the creation of national-level dedicated funds servicing climate action with gender considerations as their focus.
3. Improving governance and coordination mechanisms at the sub-national, national, and international levels.

3.1 Gender Policy and Action Plan

In 2011, in Durban, Green Climate Fund (GCF) became the first climate fund to have explicit gender mandates² (GCF, 2011). Its Gender Policy and Action Plan (GPAP) recognized gender as a cross-cutting issue and crucial in shifting to climate-resilient development. The GPAP mandates that gender balance be maintained within its board as well. The GCF is particularly crucially placed as it contributes to knowledge creation and scaling up of best practices wherever possible. The GCF gives higher weightage to projects that delineate a clear gender strategy within their design.

The GPAP mandates a socio-economic and gender assessment in order to establish baseline data. This assessment includes:

- a. Tailoring project responses to gendered needs
- b. Identifying drivers of change and their gender dynamics
- c. Including gender equitable stakeholder consultations
- d. Using a gendered lens in the application of social and environmental safeguards
- e. Checking for gender sensitivity at various stages of project completion

In order to do this, the GPAP mandates that the GCF offers guidance, recommendations, and reviews in line with the aim of mainstreaming gender into climate policy.

3.2 Gender and the Global Environment Facility

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) first adopted gender mandates in 2011. It adopted a policy on Gender Equality to undertake much of the activities underlined by the GPAP, including monitoring gender-disaggregated results. It strived to transform gender-aware activities to gender-responsive activities (GEF, 2017). Its mandate included the creation of knowledge and raising awareness on the gender dimensions

related to the environment. Over time, the policy has drawn from the following resources:

- a. Independent Evaluation Office's reportage on gender mainstreaming in the GEF
- b. The progress report on implementing the GEF Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)³

In addition to encouraging gender-responsive project planning and implementation, GEAP mandated the compilation of a guidance paper based on project results. This guidance paper was initially intended at clarifying the monitoring and reporting of gendered indicators of a project's success that are identified as follows (GEF, 2018):

A. Entry-level indicators

- a. Percentage of projects that have conducted a gender analysis
- b. Percentage of projects that have elements of gender-responsive results' framework

B. Implementation indicators

- a. Sex-disaggregated share of direct beneficiaries of the project
- b. Percentage of project progress reports that incorporate elements of gender equality or women's empowerment

Additionally, the GEF has a Gender Implementation strategy to guide the GEF secretariat.

3.3 Elements of Gender Action Plan

GAP is a decision pertaining to all bodies under the UNFCCC, unlike the GPAP or the GEAP. Adopted in decision 3/CP.23, GAP outlines five priority areas:

- a. Building capacity, sharing knowledge on capacity development, and disseminating this knowledge within concerned networks
- b. Gender balance and women's leadership
- c. Coherence
- d. Gender-responsive implementation of the Paris Agreement
- e. Monitoring and reporting

² References found in Articles 3, 11, 21, 31, 71

³ The Gender Equality Action Plan is a collaborative and consultative process involving GEF agencies and the multi-stakeholder GEF Gender Partnership.

Each priority area outlines activities that are either mandated or prescriptive in nature. Priority Area A⁴ and activity E.1⁵ are directed at all stakeholders. The other priority area activities are specific to UNFCCC and constituent bodies. These activities serve as guiding posts for the Parties, observers, and the UNFCCC secretariat to conduct gender-responsive activities.

GAP intends to support and enhance the implementation of decisions and mandates pertaining to gender already adopted in the UNFCCC. The GAP targets include, inter alia: inclusion of gender concerns in climate policies and programmes, initiation of dialogues on the issue, relegation of funds to promote participation of women delegates (especially from the south bloc) in its meetings, and organization of training programmes for women. Importantly, mitigation has been identified as a point of intervention. It recognizes differing vulnerabilities faced by communities, and treats climate action on the whole as a space where representation from all genders is crucial. Acting as a placeholder, GAP stands to facilitate actions and thinking across mitigation, adaptation, and support action till the time concrete national and international policies and planning opportunities emerge in response.

4. Discussion

When comparing the three gender tools mentioned in the previous sections, we observe the normative shifts that started with the adoption of gender mandates in GEF and GCF. These gender policies are exemplary frameworks—they play a pivotal role in evaluating GAP in particular and climate governance in general. That funding organizations adopted gender-responsive policies was a clear adoption of the advocacy for clear financial outlays needed to further gender mandates in

climate policies. GAP goes a step further to outline the need for all UNFCCC bodies to follow suit.

Yet, these tools aren't without their shortcomings.⁶ The GCF and GEF gender policies have had more time to evolve and have come up with indicators to measure the success of gender mainstreaming efforts. Similar developments need to happen within the GAP.

First, as it stands, GAP is weak on defining specific targets or indicators of success. Dissociating potential far-reaching co-benefits from direct benefits of climate action is especially relevant where efforts to create awareness and education are the main prerogatives of GAP.⁷ Clearly outlined outcomes are easier to measure for policy impact and can nudge relevant authorities to the areas where future efforts need to be targeted.

The second shortcoming is that GAP relies on the active role of advocacy and stakeholders to push for cogent policies and focused implementation. Incentivizing gender-responsive framing, implementation and monitoring of plans and activities are of import for the success of GAP. Currently, there are no incentive mechanisms devised within the GAP.

Third, at this point in time, GAP also lacks a cogent definition of financial commitments or timelines to achieve targets—a problem it borrows from its parent decision, the LWPG. GAP doesn't mention institutional channels of possible financial cooperation that interested stakeholders and relevant parties could provide. GAP also doesn't specify the time frame over which such plans may be evaluated for effectiveness or comparison.

Fourth, as with the framework of Nationally Determined Contributions, GAP for a country will be framed in a voluntary manner. This means that a country could take liberties in setting ambition. This is a potential point

⁴ Priority Area A refers to activities suggested to build capacity and knowledge (UNFCCC, 2017)

⁵ Activity E.1 of the Priority Area E: Monitoring and reporting recommend making submissions on i) differing impacts of climate change on genders, especially keeping local communities and indigenous people in mind; ii) mainstreaming gender considerations into climate action, capacity building, action for climate empowerment, technology and finance policies; iii) policies, plans, and reports on progress made in terms of gender representation in delegations (UNFCCC, 2017)

⁶ The Independent Evaluation Office, in fact, found that "there has only been a limited increase in the percentage of projects rated gender sensitive or gender mainstreamed" in its Overall Performance Study (OPS) 5 (GEF, 2017; p. 53).

⁷ In Bonn, the Parties demonstrated their visualizations of country GAPs. Each visualization of GAP brought to the fore that mainstreaming gender considerations into climate policy has cascading effects. In each case, there was no clear delineation of co-benefits from climate action and actual benefits of the country GAP.

of concern as it raises the question: How does one gauge ambition, especially when GAPs submitted by different countries are contrasted? Countries could be hamstrung in terms of capacity or finance, and so their GAPs could be deemed “not ambitious enough”. The document acknowledges context specificity in merely two activities: promoting travel funds and capturing differentiated impacts on indigenous communities.⁸ There are neither any mentions of intra-regional socio-economic inequalities, nor are there activities addressing these inequalities through trainings aimed specifically at disadvantaged groups. This is especially relevant for a country like India where caste affiliations are still a detriment to accessing socio-economic opportunities. Regarding countries as homogenous entities glosses over the inequalities these countries suffer within their political boundaries. Poor rural women from developing countries happen to be the socio-economic group most vulnerable to climate change. This group may never get representation on an international platform due to the existing power relations within their country.

5. The Way Forward

The progress of gender mandates within GCF and GEF have precedents to offer in the field of climate change policies. Moving forward, the GAP for each country needs to specify targets they plan to achieve, and indicate a preliminary framework outlining the way in which they plan to evaluate these targets. Country-specific GAPs need to be designed such that they target specific outcomes that can be evaluated to track progress, beyond mere “box checking”.⁹ Country-specific GAPs also need to avoid linking gender issues with solely women’s issues.¹⁰ By extension, each

country’s GAP needs to indicate financial outlays made and timelines over which these finances are deployed in order to achieve a specified target. This can be done through the gender mandates already outlined by GCF and GEF. Further, countries will need to be incentivized to make ambitious plans. To cater for financial constraints, there is a need to strengthen existing institutional channels that facilitate north-south and south-south cooperation (like the ones identified by the UN Office for South-South Cooperation [UNOSSC]) within the framework of GAP.

Discussions at SB48 and COP24 reiterated the need to challenge prevalent narratives underscored by existing socio-economic hierarchies. GAP needs to address intersecting vulnerabilities along the lines of caste, class, and gender within a country to address intra-national inequalities. Country GAPs need to move beyond symptomatic solution engineering to transformational resolutions that enhance effective participation.¹¹ Parties at SB48 made a case for inviting active and regular interventions by civil society and decision-makers at national level in order to ensure inclusiveness and effective implementation. GAPs for a country could be designed to be more sensitive of socio-economic divisions within a country through time-bound affirmative action. Weaker socio-economic groups can be identified and targeted. These groups can be given extensive trainings through channels already indicated in the existing GAP document. While climate policies that cater to the immediate needs of women such as reducing their exposure to indoor air pollution are necessary and need to be given priority, these remain topical treatments that make incremental impacts.

⁸ For more information, refer to activities B.1 and E.1 (a) in the Decision -/CP.23 document.

⁹ GEF’s report notes the GEAP framework is limited to “box checking”, as it lacks systematic and adequate reporting on activities, their progress and results on gender equality (GEF, 2018). Details online at https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.54.Inf_04_PR_GEAP_0.pdf; last accessed on November 18, 2019.

¹⁰ GPAP’s latest report notes that the term “gender” is often interchangeably used with the term “women”, which poses a problem in terms of project design and implementation. The report suggests further capacity building of various stakeholders in order to tackle this issue.

¹¹ Transformative solutions that challenge existing power hierarchies are more effective in mainstreaming gender concerns (Pearse, 2017; Westholm and Arora-Jonsson, 2018).

Additionally, policies addressing the structural roots of gendered differences should be envisaged in a way that does not exacerbate existing gendered vulnerabilities (Arora-Jonsson, 2011). For example, schemes like the REDD+ could adversely affect vulnerable groups such as tribal women, who are reliant on the forest for their livelihoods. This argument lends strength to the importance of i) Conceiving bottom-up solutions that address the affected as entities capable of leading change, and not just as beneficiaries, ii) Establishing safeguards in order to address the adverse effects of climate action, and iii) Continuous bargaining in the form of planned workshops and discussions involving all interest groups. Incorporating interests and the lived experiences of locals address these points, highlighting that gender mainstreaming needs to occur at all levels.¹² This mainstreaming needs to happen within the realms of policy conception, implementation, and reporting.

The importance of continued stakeholder discussions on LWPG and GAP shone through at SB50, where discussions ensuing from the gender workshops set expectations for COP25 planned in December 2019. Points that could deepen the impact of GAP were raised. Some of the chief points among them were (UNFCCC, 2019):

1. Identifying gender experts and tapping into this resource pool, and training the trainers to enhance participation from grassroots, local, and indigenous groups.
2. Targeted capacity building for men to enhance gender inclusion.
3. Deepening knowledge on gender through extensive gender analysis and data collection to foster gender-responsive mitigation action and gender budgeting at the national level, especially vis-à-vis NDC implementation.
4. Institutionalizing travel funds and mentorship activities for underrepresented groups.

6. Conclusion

The relevance of social transformation with gender at its core in the climate change narrative has been highlighted by a growing body of literature (Pearse, 2018). From nominal representation to effective participation, gender as a tool to understand and address inequality has increasingly resonated with the climate policy space. While the progress has been piecemeal, it has spurred bottom-up efforts to mainstream gender into various climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.


The conception of a UNFCCC-wide mandate on gender mainstreaming has been one such step from the efforts put in by bodies like GCF and GEF. Within GAP, there exist inputs from gender justice literature and advocacy, and clear political will to bring gender concerns to the fore. At the country level, its framework presents GAP as an opportunity to tackle distributional inequities and mal-recognition informed by relevant stakeholders. Due to its prescriptive nature, however, the implementation and reporting of gender mandates will be critical to its success in mainstreaming gender concerns in climate policies.¹³

Bibliography

- Aguilar Revelo, L., M. Granat, and C. Owren. 2015. *Roots for the Future: The Landscape and Way Forward on Gender and Climate Change*. Washington, DC: International Union for Conservation.
- Arora-Jonsson, A. 2011. Virtue and vulnerability: Discourses on women, gender and climate change. *Global Environmental Change*, 21(2); 744–751.
- Asian Development Bank. 2012. *Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming Categories of ADB Projects*. Philippines: ADB

¹³ *Discussions in SB48, Bonn, brought out the need for coordination mechanisms beyond the mandates of GAP. Delegates and observers shared experiences from their countries regarding the extent of intersection of government departments oriented towards women and climate change response planning, or the lack thereof. Broadly, ministries responsible for rolling out climate action and ministries representing women and their needs often have different mandates. That gender mainstreaming needs to occur across ministries to foster effective implementation, preferably at the same time, was discussed. Ministerial changes to foster gender mainstreaming, however, is beyond the scope of this brief.*

- Denton, F. 2002. Climate change vulnerability, impacts, and adaptation: why does gender matter? *Climate Change*, 10; 10–20.
- Global Environment Facility. 2017. A New Policy on Gender Equality for the GEF. Details online at <https://www.thegef.org/news/new-policy-gender-equality-gef>; last accessed on November 18, 2019.
- Global Environment Facility. 2017. Evaluation on Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF. Washington, DC: GEF.
- Global Environment Facility Secretariat. 2018. Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programmes. Washington, DC: GEF.
- Green Climate Fund. 2011. Governing Instrument for the Green Climate Fund. Conference of Parties 17. Durban: GCF.
- Kronsell, A. 2013. Gender and transition in climate governance. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 7; 1–15.
- Pearse, R. 2017. Gender and climate change. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 8; 1–16.
- Rao, N. and A. Hans. 2018. Gender and Climate Change: Emergent Issues for Research, Policy and Practice. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 53 (17).
- UN Women and Green Climate Fund. 2017. Mainstreaming Gender in Green Climate Fund Projects. Incheon: GCF.
- UNFCCC. 2001. Improving the participation of women in the representation of Parties in bodies established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or the Kyoto Protocol. Conference of Parties 7. Marrakesh: UNFCCC.
- UNFCCC. 2012. Promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol. Conference of Parties 18. Doha: UNFCCC.
- UNFCCC. 2014. Lima work programme on gender. Conference of Parties 20. Lima: UNFCCC.
- UNFCCC. 2017. Establishment of a gender action plan. Conference of Parties 23. Bonn: UNFCCC.
- UNFCCC. 2019. Informal summary report on the Subsidiary Body for Implementation in-session workshop on gender to assess the impact of the Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan. Bonn Climate Change Conference (SB50). Bonn: UNFCCC.
- UN-Habitat. 2009. Gender Equality For a Better Urban Future: An Overview of UN-HABITAT's Gender Equality Action Plan (2008–2013). Nairobi: UN-Habitat.
- United Nations Development Programme. 2007. Gender Mainstreaming: A Key Driver of Development in Environment & Energy. New York: UNDP.
- United Nations Development Programme. 2014. Gender Mainstreaming Made Easy Volume II: Resource Handbook for All Staff. Mogadishu: UNDP.
- United Nations Development Programme. 2013. Gender Mainstreaming Made Easy: Handbook for Programme Staff. Mogadishu: UNDP.
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization. 2014. Guide on Gender Mainstreaming: Energy and Climate Change Projects. Vienna: UNIDO.
- Westholm, L. and S. A. Jonsson. 2018. What room for politics and change in global climate governance? Addressing gender in co-benefits and safeguards. *Environmental Politics*, 27 (5); 917–938.



The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
Darbari Seth Block,
IHC Complex, Lodhi Road,
New Delhi - 110 003, INDIA

Tel: (+91 11) 2468 2100
Fax: (+91 11) 2468 2144, 2468 2145
Web: www.teriin.org
Email: arunima.hakhu@teri.res.in