

Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6)

Draft Terms of Reference for the

Sub-study on Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF

December 2016

Background

1. The GEF *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* came into effect when it was adopted by the GEF Council members at [40th Council Meeting](#) in May 2011. The policy was developed from principles and safeguards dating back to the 1996 Council document Public Involvement in GEF Projects ([GEF/C.7/6](#)), the key GEF policy that related specifically to social issues, including gender. The 2011 gender policy was initially adopted as Annex II of the GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards and Gender Mainstreaming ([GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1](#)). The GEF Secretariat clarified parts of the policy to reflect Council deliberations and issued it as a stand-alone policy document ([GEF/SD/PL/02](#)) in May 2012.
2. The *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* originates partly from guidance issued by the various Conventions for which the GEF operates as financial mechanism. Conventions increased their gender related guidance in the years prior to the adoption of the Policy. By way of illustration, UNFCCC was the last Convention that had not provided a clear mandate on gender mainstreaming, which it issued at the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties through the Cancun Agreements ([FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, Decision 1/CP.16](#)) and additional guidance to the GEF ([FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.2, Decision 3/CP.16](#)). Conventions' guidance has overarching significance for GEF activities under several or all focal areas, and GEF's cross-cutting policies are as such developed by the GEF Secretariat and approved by the GEF Council to go beyond focal area strategies and cover all GEF activities.
3. The *Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)* was approved by the GEF Council at the [47th Council meeting](#) in October 2014. The GEAP ([GEF/C.47/09.Rev.01](#)) aims to operationalize the gender mainstreaming policy.

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming

4. The *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* ([GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1](#) / [GEF/SD/PL/02](#)) expresses GEF's commitment to enhancing the degree to which the GEF and its Partner Agencies promote the goal of gender equality through GEF operations. It commits the GEF to address the link between gender equality and environmental sustainability and towards gender mainstreaming in its policies, programs, and operations. The aim of the Policy is distinct from questions relating to the benefits, both environmental and socioeconomic, that GEF projects aim to achieve through its financing of sustainable development efforts, which relate to GEF goals and objectives established in the GEF Instrument and in GEF focal area strategies.
5. The GEF relies on its Partner Agencies (the ten GEF Agencies and eight GEF Project Agencies) to mainstream gender and therefore, the impetus for the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* also came as the GEF began the process to accredit new institutions - the GEF Project Agencies - to become eligible to receive GEF resources to implement and execute GEF-financed projects apart from the existing ten GEF Agencies. The GEF acknowledges that project results can often be improved when gender considerations

are integrated into the design and implementation of projects. All GEF Partner Agencies have their own policies and strategies on gender mainstreaming and on promoting gender equality in the context of project interventions. The Agencies apply these policies to GEF projects as well.

6. The objective of the *GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* is that “the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall strive and attain the goal of gender equality, the equal treatment of women and men, including the equal access to resource and services through its operations.” The Policy requires GEF Partner Agencies to have policies or strategies that satisfy seven minimum requirements to ensure gender mainstreaming:

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| 1. Institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming | 2. Consideration of gender elements in project review and design |
| 3. Undertaking of gender analysis | 4. Measures to minimize/mitigate adverse gender impacts |
| 5. Integration of gender sensitive activities | 6. Monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming progress |
| 7. Inclusion of gender experts in projects. | |

7. The policy also has four requirements for the GEF Secretariat:

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| 1. To strengthen gender-mainstreaming capacities among its staff | 2. Designate a focal point for gender issues |
| 3. Work with its Partner Agencies and other partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming with a more systematic approach to programming, and | 4. Develop networks with partners that have gender experience. |

8. In applying the policy, the Secretariat is required to hire consultants to assess whether the existing ten GEF Agencies comply with the policy. Finally, the GEF Accreditation Panel will require that all applicants demonstrate compliance with the minimum requirements.

9. Currently the GEF Secretariat is reviewing and updating the policy and a revised policy will be submitted to the December 2017 Council meeting. The findings and recommendations of this sub-study on gender mainstreaming in the GEF will inform the revision of the policy.

The Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)

10. Participants to the Third Meeting for the Sixth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund appreciate the increase in projects that aim for gender mainstreaming, and appreciated the gender analysis that has been presented to the Council as part of the Annual Monitoring Reviews during FY11 and FY12. The GEF-6 Policy Recommendations ([GEF/R.6/21](#)) demand a more concerted action to be taken to enhance gender mainstreaming. Participants request that the GEF Secretariat, in collaboration with GEF Partner Agencies and other relevant partners, develop an action plan on gender to enhance gender mainstreaming. The Secretariat was also requested to ensure that it has the necessary capacity to develop and implement the action plan.

11. The *Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)* ([GEF/C.47/09.Rev.01](#)), developed in close collaboration and consultation with the GEF Partner Agencies, Secretariats of the relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), and other experts (including Climate Investment Fund - CIF, and Green Climate Fund – GCF), is expected to narrow the existing gaps, and enhance coherence through implementation of concrete

actions on gender mainstreaming at both the corporate and focal area levels. The *Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)* aims to operationalize the gender mainstreaming policy, to advance both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment, and provides a concrete road map, building on the existing and planned gender strategies and plans of the GEF Partner Agencies.

12. In the context of the GEF the ECOSOC definition of gender mainstreaming has been adopted as part of the GEAP: "Gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities. Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality."

13. The GEAP is intended to serve during the GEF-6 period, from fiscal years 2015 to 2018 (FY15-18). The action plan consists of a step-wise approach in achieving the goals and objectives of the GEF Policy, ensuring that project results and progress related to gender can be better designed, implemented, and reported. Results will be monitored annually to assess the progress in implementing the GEAP, which will be reported through the Annual Monitoring Review exercise. In order to effectively meet the challenges of gender mainstreaming in GEF operation, policy and projects, the action plan addresses five key elements:

1. Project cycle
2. Programming and policies
3. Knowledge management
4. Results-based management
5. Capacity development

Sub-Study Objectives

14. The approach paper for the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6) ([GEF/ME/C.50/07](#)) indicates that OPS6 will aim to report on the progress towards achieving gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. The overarching OPS6 evaluative question is: **"To what extent have gender issues and evaluation of its effectiveness been mainstreamed into GEF's work since the development of its gender policy?"**

15. The objectives of the OPS6 Sub-study on Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF are to:

1. Assess the extent to which the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* has been implemented by means of the *Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)*
2. Review the appropriateness of the policy for the GEF and its implementation in line with international best practices in the field and in relation to gender mainstreaming efforts taking place in other climate finance mechanisms
3. Assess the trends of gender mainstreaming in the GEF since OPS5.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the sub-study will inform OPS6 and the revision of the gender policy.

16. The OPS6 Sub-study on Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF proposes to undertake:

1. A review of the implementation of recommendations from the *OPS5 Sub-study on the GEF's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* ([Technical Document 16](#)). See annex 1 for the recommendations

2. An assessment of the appropriateness of the GEF *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* and its implementation, in the light of international best practices
3. A comparison of the GEAP against actions taken by comparable climate and environmental funds
4. An assessment of the trends of gender mainstreaming in the GEF since OPS5, and more specifically since approval of the GEAP.

The evaluation will take into account the policy's recent adoption and proposes that the assessment be undertaken through a review of the GEF Secretariat's progress on implementing the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming at the institutional level, and a project-level evaluation of gender mainstreaming in GEF projects, both at quality-at-entry and in terminal evaluations.

17. The overarching OPS6 evaluative question and sub-study objectives translate into a number of sub-questions grouped by the core evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, results and sustainability). The question matrix to reflect on GEAP policy implementation process is provided in annex 2. The question matrix for the project portfolio analysis, focusing on quality at entry as well as the review of completed projects, is provided in annex 3.

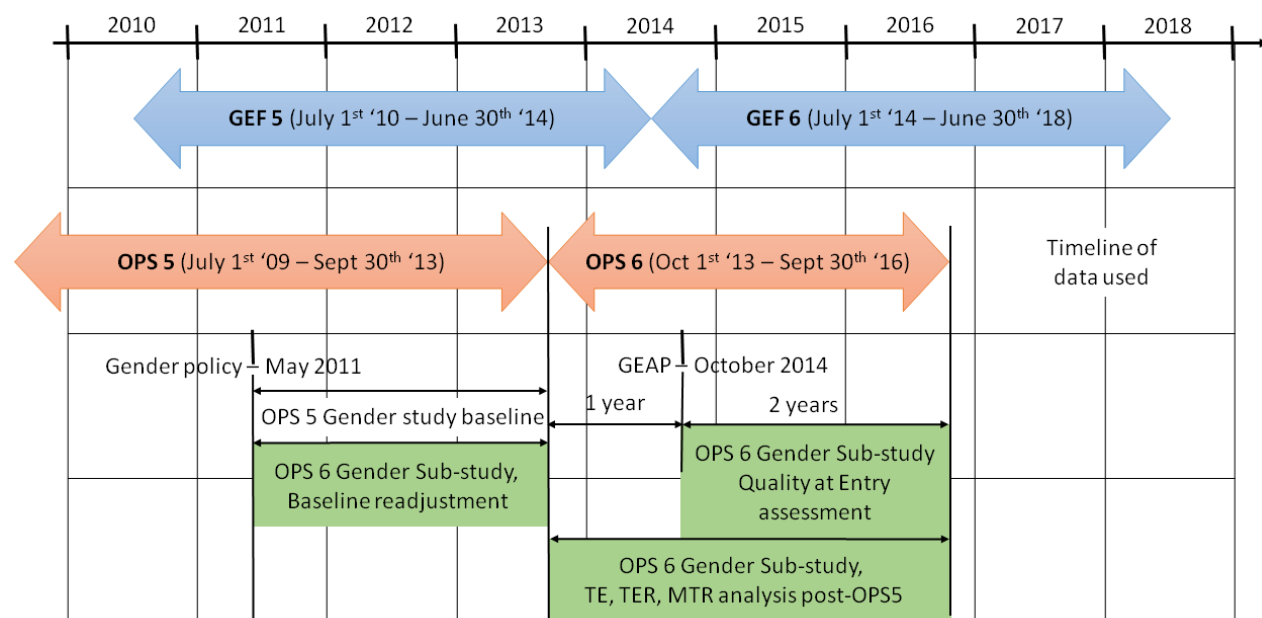
Methodology

18. The methods and tools for the sub-study will include the following main elements:

- A **meta-analysis** of GEF Partner Agency and third party evaluations of the GEF Partner Agencies' gender mainstreaming policies, strategies, action plans will be conducted to assess the appropriateness of the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* for the GEF in light of international best practices and the GEAP on the process of the implementation of the policy in comparison with actions taken by comparable climate and environmental funds. The meta-analysis will include a literature review on international best practice for gender mainstreaming, with emphasis on the gender-environment nexus. Lastly, the meta-analysis will also gather evaluative evidence from IEO evaluations conducted since OPS5 and other available evaluations on the trends of mainstreaming gender in GEF projects with regards to project results.
- An **assessment** of the GEF Secretariat's responsiveness to the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* will be conducted including an examination of the Secretariat's progress in meeting the gender mainstreaming capacity-building requirements stipulated in the policy, a review of the Secretariat's assessment of the existing ten GEF Agencies compliance with the policy, and an evaluation of the new GEF Project Agency accreditation process and a review of the progress of the GEAP.
- A **quality-at-entry review** of GEF projects approved during GEF-6, after the approval GEAP. This analysis will provide a picture of the extent to which the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* has been reflected in the design of GEF projects. This component will include a quality-at-entry assessment of a random sample of project proposals (full-size, mid-size and enabling activities) that were approved during GEF-6 after the approval of the GEAP in October 2014 and compare this sample to the quality-at-entry review baseline of GEF-5 projects approved after the adoption of the gender mainstreaming policy done for OPS5. A readjustment of the baseline might be needed, given changes in the way gender mainstreaming is currently being measured. This component will also draw from information provided in the fiscal years 2015 and 2016 Annual Monitoring Reports prepared by the GEF Secretariat.
- A **project portfolio review** of terminal evaluations of GEF projects submitted since OPS5 to provide a picture of the trends in mainstreaming gender in GEF projects with regards to project results. This component will include a review of terminal evaluations and related terminal evaluation reviews and mid-term reviews from the OPS6 projects cohort to determine trends in gender mainstreaming reflected in project results as well as identify lessons learned. This work will provide an update on the findings from the similar exercise conducted for OPS5 and OPS4.

- **Interviews** of select stakeholders from the GEF Secretariat, GEF Partner Agencies, Council members, country representatives, and Convention stakeholders regarding the mainstreaming of gender in GEF activities.
- **Project site visits** to a select number of projects to provide in-depth, field-verified inputs to the findings and recommendations. Project site visits will allow evaluators to capture the dimensions of gender mainstreaming in GEF activities and national processes through interviews with GEF stakeholders and knowledgeable individuals.

19. An overview of main sub-study elements and the timeframes reviewed are provided below:



20. The main focus of the sub-study is the GEF Trust, but since the *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* also applies to the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), the assessment will include these funds. In particular, the quality-at-entry review and the review of terminal evaluations and mid-term reviews of completed projects will include LDCF and SCCF projects.

21. Guidance from the current literature on integrating gender mainstreaming in evaluation will inform the design of this sub-study. It emphasizes the following basic elements of a gender evaluation framework:

- Evaluation principles are inclusion, participation, and fair power relations
- Evaluation criteria are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, results and sustainability of results
- Mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches is recommended. A mixed method approach is considered to be the most appropriate to generate an accurate and comprehensive picture of how gender is integrated into an intervention.

22. Taking into consideration the sub-study objectives, international best practices for evaluation, the GEF *Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* requirements and the GEAP, evaluative questions will further be developed for this sub-study - both for the analysis of the policy implementation process as well as the reviewing of (intermediate) results - in collaboration with a mid-level gender consultant.

Annex 1: Recommendations of OPS5 Sub-study on the GEF's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming

Recommendation 1. With the mainstreaming policy now in place, the GEF Secretariat in consultation with GEF Agencies should explore a more systematic way to determine whether or not projects are gender relevant and under what circumstances to incorporate gender surveys, sex-disaggregated data and gender specialists in project design and preparation

Recommendation 2. In line with the Gender Mainstreaming Policy, GEF projects (other than those in the NR category, such as those on geophysical mapping or energy efficient technology testing) should include gender experts on the team, gender analyses, and monitoring and evaluation of the gender mainstreaming progress. Projects reviewed since OPS4 that conducted gender or social assessments in the pre-project stage and engaged social scientists on the team showed improved outcomes for people living in the project area.

Recommendation 3. Sex-disaggregated information on project participants and achievements on gender mainstreaming, as well as gender qualifiers, are needed and should be included, especially in the review of project proposals and terminal evaluations. Relevant questions and gender markers are used by agencies including IFAD, UNDP and the World Bank.

Recommendation 4. The GEF should consider convening an interagency gender working group to prepare guidelines that work, using gender markers and other tools already prepared and used by GEF Agencies. The working group could exchange ideas and practices and provide the GEF with constructive next steps.

Recommendation 5. The revision of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in 2015 should include some reference to the empowerment of women, since many of the GEF projects contribute to empowerment through natural resources management, small-scale enterprises led by women or decision-making positions in community conservation or water committees taken up by women.

Recommendation 6. Since OPS4, the GEF Secretariat has made progress in responding to the OPS4 findings and recommendations, by developing the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, designating a gender focal point and conducting a regular gender review through the Annual Monitoring Review process since 2011. At the same time, capacity development and training in the GEF Secretariat in this area need to be strengthened and resources allocated for improving the capacity of the GEF Secretariat to undertake gender mainstreaming seriously.

Annex 2: Evaluation Criteria and Questions for the GEAP Policy Implementation Process Review

CRITERIA	DESIGN AND PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION	RESULTS
Relevance	- To what extent do the gender mainstreaming policy and GEAP align with normative guidance and decisions of conventions (UNFCCC, UNBCD, UNCCD, and relevant chemical conventions and protocol) on gender mainstreaming and gender equality? - To what extent has the GEAP served as a relevant framework to guide the implementation of the gender mainstreaming policy?	- To what extent does the process of implementing the policy align with international best practice? - How does process and progress of GEAP implementation compare to similar climate finance mechanisms?	
Effectiveness		- To what extent have planning, RBM, monitoring, reporting, evaluation and knowledge management systems been aligned with gender mainstreaming and gender equality principles?	- To what extent has gender been mainstreamed at an institutional level at the GEF Secretariat? - Was the Inter-Agency Working Group on gender established as planned? - Was the guideline paper on mainstreaming gender in GEF project cycle developed, and does it properly reflect the Policy as well as the GEAP? - Have GEF Project Templates and Guidelines been updated to incorporate and clarify specific sections on gender mainstreaming? - Was an interactive gender equality GEF webpage implemented? - Does reporting on progress adequately cover the process of GEAP implementation? - Does the reporting on GEF-6 core indicators adequately capture progress on gender related processes and outputs? - Were gender elements better incorporated and strengthened in projects post-GEAP

Efficiency	- Is there an envisaged process for updating the GEF policy on gender mainstreaming?	- Is GEAP implementation supported by a detailed work plan and budget? - Is that plan updated as needed over time? - Have these resources (human and financial) been adequate?	- What have been some of the constraints (e.g. political, practical, and bureaucratic) to implementing the GEAP at the GEFSEC and at the project level? - What level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?
Results			- Is gender mainstreamed in key strategic GEF Council Documents, including relevant policies and guidelines? - What have been some of the enabling factors that have facilitated the GEAP process? - What lessons can be drawn to further promote gender mainstreaming in the GEF?
Sustainability	- To what extent have senior / focal point managers demonstrated commitment for / been supportive of gender mainstreaming at the GEF Secretariat and in GEF focal areas? - To what extent were women and gender focal points of GEF Partner Agencies involved in the development of the GEAP and related work plans and budgets?	- To what extent has staff capacity and expertise on gender and gender mainstreaming increased at the GEF Secretariat since the introduction of the GEAP?	- Has increased staff capacity and expertise on gender at the GEF Secretariat resulted in improved technical support for GEF-programs and projects since the GEAP?

Annex 3: Evaluation Criteria and Questions for Project Portfolio Analysis

CRITERIA	DESIGN AND PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION	RESULTS
Relevance	- Was a gender analysis conducted at the onset of the project? - Was the project formulated according to the needs and interests of men and women?	- Did project activities meet the needs of the various groups of stakeholders, including women and other groups most likely to have their rights violated?	- Did project results respond to women's needs and priorities, as identified at the design stage?
Effectiveness	- Did the project have gender specific indicators or gender disaggregated indicators to measure progress? - Did project design introduce measures/mechanisms to ensure the participation of women and/or women's organizations in project activities?	- Did the project collect gender specific or gender disaggregated indicator data to measure progress? - What was the overall participation of women or women's organizations in project implementation?	- Did the project create or contribute to conditions that facilitated or enhanced women's participation and inclusion? - To what degree were the benefits/results distributed equitably between women and men? - Were gender elements better incorporated and strengthened in projects post-GEAP?
Efficiency	- Did the project allocate resources to support the mainstreaming of gender throughout the project life cycle: design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?	- Were there constraints (e.g. political, practical, and bureaucratic) to addressing gender equality efficiently during project implementation? - What level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?	
Results	- Did the project include any gender mainstreaming or gender equality objectives?	- Did the project monitoring framework capture gender equality results? - How did project mitigate any negative outcomes during implementation?	- What have been some of the positive gender mainstreaming and/or equality results achieved? - Did the project have any positive or negative effects or impact, including unintended consequences, on gender issues and more specifically on women? - Are project stakeholders more cognizant of gender equality and the value of women's participation and leadership in GEF projects? - What lessons can be learned to inform and strengthen GEF project interventions with respect to gender mainstreaming and gender equality?

Sustainability	- Did the intervention design include an appropriate sustainability and exit strategy (including promoting national/local ownership, use of local capacity, etc.) to support positive changes in gender equality after the end of the intervention? - To what extent were women involved in the preparation of the strategy?	- To what extent were women and/or women's organizations involved in the implementation of the project? - If applicable, to what extent did project capacity building initiatives ensure the inclusion of women or women's organizations? - To what extent were capacity building initiatives geared towards the specific needs of women?	- To what extent do stakeholders have the commitment, confidence and capacity to build on the gender changes promoted by the intervention? - To what extent are mechanisms in place to sustain women's engagement beyond the end of the project?
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