

Fifth Overall Performance Study

Approach Paper Sub-study on the GEF's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming August 20, 2013

Evolution of Gender Mainstreaming at the GEF

1. As stated in its preamble, the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming entered into effect when it was adopted by the GEF Council on May 26, 2011. The Policy developed from principles, overall directions and safeguards, dating back to a policy on public participation in GEF projects from 1996 (*Public Involvement in GEF Projects*), the key GEF policy that relates specifically to social issues, including gender, until the current policy. This policy was initially adopted as annex II of the *GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards and Gender Mainstreaming* approved by the GEF Council in May 26, 2011 (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 document on May 1, 2012 (GEF/PL/SD/02).
2. The GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming originates partly from guidance issued by various conventions. 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 Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session¹. Such guidance from conventions addresses issues that are not specific to any single focal area, but has overarching significance for GEF activities under several or all focal areas. GEF so-called “cross-cutting policies” are hence usually addressed through channels other than the focal area strategies. They are developed by the GEF Secretariat and approved by the GEF Council.
3. The GEF relies on its Partner 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 ten GEF Agencies.
4. With regard to the GEF policy-making process, a cross-cutting policy focused solely on gender mainstreaming developed from an overall effort to revise and improve social and environmental safeguards. The publication *Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF* (2008) highlighted concerns over the need to strengthen gender mainstreaming through a more systematic approach to GEF programming that incorporates this issue, and the recognition that particular attention should be paid to enhancing both women's and men's condition for its project interventions to achieve their global environmental objectives. The process of including gender mainstreaming in GEF policies evolved from the perspective of a policy on public participation that included provisions to ensure involvement of gender (*Public Involvement in GEF Projects*, 1996) to being addressed in the context of “local benefits”,

¹ Report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session held in Cancun from November 29 to December 10, 2010. 3/CP.16, Additional guidance to the Global Environment Facility
<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a02.pdf#page=6>.

where it was articulated as a linkage between global environmental benefits and local benefits. A gender mainstreaming policy was then incorporated into the GEF Council's efforts to develop environmental and social safeguards (*GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards and Gender Mainstreaming*, GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1 May 26, 2011) and finally became a stand-alone cross-cutting policy on May 1, 2012 (*Policy on Gender Mainstreaming*, GEF/PL/SD/02 May 1, 2012). A specific gender mainstreaming requirement to "provide socioeconomic benefits in ways that are culturally appropriate, and gender and generationally inclusive" as part of minimum standards related to indigenous people is also included in a policy and guidelines referring to minimum standards on environmental and social safeguards for GEF Partner Agencies (*GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards*, GEF/C.41/10/Rev.1, November 18, 2011; *Application of Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards*, GN/SD/03, November 9, 2012).

5. There was thus one decision moment for the GEF Council to adopt a Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (May 26, 2011 40th GEF Council Meeting) followed by the publication of the Policy as a stand alone document by the Secretariat nearly a year later on May 1, 2012. The publication *Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF* issued by the Secretariat in 2008 raised the issue of gender mainstreaming in GEF operations. In addition, OPS4 raised specific issues and recommendations on gender mainstreaming that were subsequently addressed in the Council's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (table 1 below).

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming

6. The objective of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming 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. In the context of the GEF policy, gender mainstreaming "means being deliberate in giving visibility and support to both women's and men's contributions individually, rather than assuming that both groups will benefit equally from gender-neutral development interventions" (*Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF*, 2008).

7. The GEF acknowledges that project results can often be improved when gender considerations are integrated into the design and implementation of projects, where relevant. All GEF Partner Agencies (the ten GEF Agencies and GEF Project 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. 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."

8. Policy documents and the GEF are defining Agencies as GEF Project Agencies--new institutions that the GEF has accredited after June 2011 to receive GEF resources to implement and execute GEF-financed projects apart from the ten GEF Agencies-- and GEF Agencies--the ten institutions that were entitled to receive GEF Trust Fund resources directly as of June 2011. The GEF Partner Agencies category includes both GEF Agencies and GEF Project Agencies.

9. The policy requires GEF Partner Agencies to have policies or strategies that satisfy seven minimum requirements to ensure gender mainstreaming: institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming, consideration of gender elements in project review and design, undertaking of gender analysis, measures to minimize/mitigate adverse gender impacts, integration of

gender sensitive activities, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming progress, and inclusion of gender experts in projects.

10. The policy also has four requirements for the GEF Secretariat: to strengthen gender-mainstreaming capacities among its staff, designate a focal point for gender issues, work with its Partner Agencies and other partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming with a more systematic approach to programming, and develop networks with partners that have gender experience. 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.

OPS4 Findings and Recommendations on Gender Mainstreaming and the Council’s Policy Making Response

11. Table 1 links OPS4 findings and recommendations on GEF gender mainstreaming policy and practices with GEF Council responses during GEF-5. OPS4 assessed gender mainstreaming in the GEF in a technical document that emphasized the need for a streamlined cross-cutting gender policy in GEF operations. During the GEF-5 period, the Council approved a policy that addressed most of OPS4 concerns and recommendations. OPS4 noted that “Social and gender issues in GEF strategies and projects are not addressed systematically, and the GEF cannot rely completely on the social and gender policies of its Agencies.” The GEF Council response ensued as illustrated in table 1.

Table 1: GEF Council Policy Response to OPS4 Findings and Recommendations

OPS4 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	GEF POLICY	KEY PRESCRIPTIONS FROM THE POLICY
<p>Recommendation 7: Project performance should be further strengthened through improved guidelines, a better fee structure, and strengthening of social and gender issues. (Page 17)</p>	<p>The Council adopted a Policy on Gender Mainstreaming that commits the GEF and its Agencies to ensuring the equal treatment of men and women in its operations. It requires that each GEF Partner Agencies have adopted either a policy, strategy, or action plan, or their equivalent, that meet certain minimum requirements.</p> <p><i>GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming (May 2011 GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1)</i></p> <p>Corporate-wide guidelines forthcoming</p>	<p>Secretariat will need to hire consultants to assess whether each of the existing ten GEF Agencies complies with the final GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. The Secretariat shall convey this report to the Council together with a Council paper containing recommendations.</p> <p><i>GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming (May 2011 GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1)</i></p>
<p>Social and gender issues in GEF strategies and projects are not addressed systematically, and the GEF cannot rely completely on the social and gender policies of its Agencies (Page 17).</p>	<p>Policy on Gender Mainstreaming adopted requires that each GEF Partner Agencies have adopted either a policy, strategy, or action plan, or their equivalent, that meet certain minimum requirements.</p> <p>The GEF Accreditation Panel will assess whether applicants for</p>	<p>The GEF Accreditation Panel will require that all applicants demonstrate compliance with the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in order to be accredited as a GEF Project Agency.</p> <p><i>GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming (May 2011</i></p>

	<p>accreditation meet this policy.</p> <p><i>GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming (May 2011 GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1)</i></p>	<i>GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1)</i>
<p>GEF projects thoroughly assess options that, without undermining the effectiveness or efficiency of attainment of global environmental benefits, contribute to improvements of the livelihood of local populations, including gender aspects. (Page 150)</p>	<p>GEF-financed operations that achieve benefits in one area should not lead to adverse environmental or social impacts in other areas. All efforts should be made to avoid adverse impacts, and if avoidance is not feasible, then they should be minimized, mitigated, and offset, as appropriate.</p> <p><i>Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (Nov 2011 GEF/C.41/10 Rev.1)</i></p>	<p>Minimum Standard for projects: Provide socioeconomic benefits in ways that are culturally appropriate, and gender and generationally inclusive.</p> <p><i>Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (Nov 2011 GEF/C.41/10 Rev.1)</i></p>
<p>GEF operations have no adverse effects on indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, women, the poor, and other vulnerable populations (Page 150)</p>	<p>The Agency is required to identify measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse gender impacts.</p> <p><i>Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (May 2012 GEF/PL/SD/02)</i></p>	<p>The Agency is required to undertake social assessment, including gender analysis, or to use similar methods to assess the potential roles, benefits, impacts and risks for women.</p> <p><i>Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (May 2012 GEF/PL/SD/02)</i></p>
<p>All the NAPA priority projects should use evidence based inquiry into the ways climate change effects are differentiated between genders, introduce measures that identify women’s vulnerability to climate change, and listen to the voices of climate vulnerable women (Page 90).</p>	<p>The GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall strive to attain the goal of gender equality, the equal treatment of women and men, including the equal access to resources and services through its operations. To accomplish this goal, the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall mainstream gender into their operations, including efforts to analyze systematically and address the specific needs of both women and men in GEF projects.</p> <p><i>Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (May 2012 GEF/PL/SD/02)</i></p>	<p>- GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall mainstream gender into their operations, including efforts to analyze systematically and address the specific needs of both women and men in GEF projects.</p> <p>- use of gender disaggregated monitoring indicators.</p> <p><i>Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (May 2012 GEF/PL/SD/02)</i></p>
<p>Some revisions of terminal evaluation guidelines and practices can be included in the upcoming revision of the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.</p>	Ongoing	

Objective

12. The terms of reference of the Fifth Overall Performance Study (OPS5) of the GEF includes a key question on the “extent to which cross-cutting policies have achieved their objectives and whether this strengthens results on the ground.” The purpose of this OPS5 sub-study is to assess the extent to which the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming has been

implemented and the appropriateness of the policy for the GEF in line with international best practices in the field, and to assess trends of gender mainstreaming in the GEF. The findings and conclusions of the sub-study will inform the final report of OPS5. Findings are also expected to inform the review of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in 2015, as decided by the GEF Council at the adoption of the policy.

Scope and Methodology

13. This sub-study proposes to undertake 1) an assessment of the progress of the implementation of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming to date and the appropriateness of the policy, and 2) an assessment of the trends of gender mainstreaming in the GEF. 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. It will consist of four components:

- A **desk review and meta-evaluation** of GEF Agency and third party evaluations of the GEF Agencies' gender mainstreaming policies, strategies and action plans will be conducted to assess the appropriateness of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming for the GEF. The desk review and meta-evaluation will also gather evaluative evidence 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.

This component will entail a desk-review of GEF Secretariat documents and interviews with the Secretariat. It will also review and incorporate findings from the ongoing assessment by the GEF Secretariat of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming's seven requirements for the Agencies. The GEF Secretariat will have a draft report and preliminary findings of the assessment by mid-September for review by this sub-study.

- A **quality-at-entry review** of GEF projects approved in GEF-5 before and after the approval of policy. This analysis will provide a picture of the extent 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 sample of full-size project proposals that were approved during GEF-5 before and after the adoption of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in May 2011. This component will also draw from information provided in the fiscal year 2011 and 2012 Annual Monitoring Reports prepared by the GEF Secretariat.

- A **project portfolio review** of terminal evaluations of GEF projects submitted since OPS4 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 from the OPS5 projects cohort (281 projects) to determine trends in gender mainstreaming reflected in project results. This work will provide an update on the findings from the similar exercise conducted for OPS4. OPS4 determined that gender was mentioned in less than

half of the 210 project terminal evaluations reviewed. However, OPS4 noted that while gender was being reported on in the terminal evaluations, it was not conducted in a systematic manner.

14. The main focus of the sub-study is the GEF Trust, but since the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming is also applicable to LDCF and SCCF, the assessment will include these funds. In particular, the quality-at-entry review will include LDCF and SCCF projects.

International Evaluation Best Practices and Design of the Evaluation

15. Guidance from the current literature on integrating gender mainstreaming in evaluation (UNEG² and ECG³) will inform the design of this evaluation. 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, sustainability and impact.
- 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.

16. Taking into consideration these international best practices for evaluation, as well as the GEF Gender Mainstreaming Policy requirements, this approach paper identifies the following questions presented in table 2. The evaluation will take into account that given the recent adoption of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, it will be too early for many effects anticipated by the implementation of the policy to be visible. Yet, this exercise will be particularly relevant to understand the anticipated findings from the implementation of a gender mainstreaming policy and assess missed opportunities in mainstreaming gender at the level of GEF project design and for results reported in terminal evaluations.

² Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation - Towards UNEG Guidance. United Nation Evaluation Group. Guidance Document. UNEG/G (2011) 2. 19 Mar 2012.

³ ECG Gender Equality and Development Evaluation Units: Lessons from Evaluations of Development Support of Selected Multilateral Agencies. ECG Paper #5. Evaluation Cooperation Group. December 2012.

Table 2: Framing Evaluation Criteria and Questions from Best Practices and the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming Requirements

CRITERIA	DESIGN AND PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION	RESULTS
Relevance	<p>- Was a gender analysis conducted at the onset of the project?</p> <p>- Was the project formulated according to the needs and interest of both men and women?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirements 3 and 5)</p>	<p>- Did the activities undertaken meet the needs of the various groups of stakeholders, including those who are most likely to have their rights violated, as women?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirements 2, 3 and 5)</p>	<p>- Did the project results respond to women, as identified at the design stage?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirement 6)</p>
Effectiveness	<p>- To what degree were the results achieved equitably among the stakeholders, including men and women?</p> <p>(GEF Minimum Environmental and Social Safeguard Standard 4)</p>	<p>- Were gender disaggregated data used?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirement 6)</p>	<p>- To what degree were the results achieved equitably distributed among genders?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirement 6 and Minimum Environmental and Social Safeguard Standard 4)</p>
Efficiency		<p>- Were there any constraints (e.g. political, practical, bureaucratic) to addressing gender equality efficiently during implementation? What level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirement 2 and 4)</p>	
Sustainability	<p>- 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?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirement 2)</p>		<p>- To what extent do stakeholders have confidence that they will be able to build on the gender changes promoted by the intervention?</p>
Impact	<p>- Did the project envisage any specific effect on gender?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirements 2, 3 and 4)</p>		<p>- Did the project have any positive or negative effects or impact on gender issues and more specifically on women?</p> <p>(Gender Mainstreaming Policy Requirements 2, 3 and 4)</p>