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Adaptation Fund Study Provides Concrete Successes, Lessons and Potential Models for Integrating Gender Considerations in Climate Change Adaptation Projects

Study Showcases Best Practices and Knowledge on Gender in Five Case Studies

Washington, D.C. (April 13, 2020) -- A new study produced by the Adaptation Fund (AF) examining best practices and lessons in mainstreaming gender in select AF projects found common threads through several case studies that can serve as project-level learning models.

It is hoped the information can help empower implementing partners, governments, civil society and the private sector in fostering further actions, impacts and potential replication or scale-up of effective gender-responsive adaptation strategies. Such actions can be pivotal to helping ensure project effectiveness and sustainability, while also promoting gender equality as a key goal.

The study, [Assessing Progress: Integrating Gender in AF Projects and Programmes](#), focused on a review of successes and lessons learned in mainstreaming gender elements in five AF projects within distinct geographic regions: [Ecuador](#), [Mongolia](#), [Morocco](#), [Rwanda](#) and [Seychelles](#).

It showed that integrating gender elements throughout project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation has multiple benefits. It highlighted effective approaches, tools, challenges and learning opportunities for increasing and accelerating gender mainstreaming efforts across the adaptation field.

“The study provides an overview of lessons on mainstreaming gender in select projects funded by the Adaptation Fund that are of value to those working in this field,” said **Cristina Dengel**, AF’s Knowledge Management Officer. *“The report captures knowledge to support accelerating learning on effective women’s empowerment and gender-responsive adaptation strategies and measures throughout a project’s lifecycle. The key take-home message showed that integrating gender elements in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation has multifaceted benefits. It also detailed challenges and limitations to serve as a learning opportunity for implementing entities (IEs) in current and future interventions.”*

The study arose from AF’s [Learning & Sharing](#) strategic pillar to advance and disseminate timely knowledge and experiences from among the Fund’s [100 concrete projects](#) on the ground.

“Some of the common successes arising from these select case studies were grounded in awareness-raising efforts, identification of gender inequalities through gender assessments, associated gender-specific activities, organization of informational workshops designed to build women’s and men’s capacity to adapt to climate change, skills training for women and men promoting diversified income opportunities, and coherence-building on issues for gender equality



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and environmental and social management through alliances and associations,” **Dengel** added. “Challenges and limitations were due to factors ranging from the context of the project and enabling environment, to low capacity in integrating gender considerations, or political will.”

“The Adaptation Fund has been very advanced with its efforts to integrate gender considerations into adaptation, and these concrete examples of gender mainstreaming in action show how they can enhance project effectiveness on the ground in vulnerable countries,” said Mr. **Ibila Djibril**, AF Board Chair.

“Advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is one of the cross-cutting principles of our [Medium-Term Strategy](#) focused on action, innovation and learning. This study takes a comprehensive look at a strong cross-sample of projects funded by the Adaptation Fund that are effectively putting this into action. We hope these case examples can serve as sources of ideas and inspiration for future climate adaptation projects, in how integrating gender considerations in project design can yield better adaptation results and at the same time promote greater gender equality in the communities that benefit from these projects. We are happy to share these lessons with other funds and agencies that serve to implement the Paris Agreement, and enhance our collective effort,” said Mr. **Mikko Ollikainen**, Manager of the Adaptation Fund.

The study, which was conducted by an external gender specialist in consultation with AF staff, further builds on AF’s work to support gender mainstreaming and provide equal opportunities for women and men in projects through its progressive environmental and social policies, and [gender policy and action plan](#) that are aligned with the Paris Agreement and UN Sustainable Development Goals

“Gender-related learning is one of the pillars of the Gender Action Plan, and this very first of its kind gender study allows us to take stock of the progress of AF’s gender mainstreaming efforts on the ground, before and after the approvals of these policies, and to map out the future direction of the Fund’s gender work,” said Ms. **Young Lee**, AF’s Gender Focal Point and Governance Specialist. “The study captures not only good practices related to gender mainstreaming efforts in projects, but also challenges and difficulties that IEs have faced with integrating gender considerations throughout a project life cycle. AF could draw lessons on how gender integration in project implementation can be strengthened and how it can better support IEs in their gender mainstreaming efforts in projects. It showed improved project design thanks to gender-responsive comprehensive stakeholder engagement and the power of gender-specific indicators and gender responsive monitoring. Opportunities to improve gender mainstreaming efforts within the broader AF project portfolio include tackling the varied gender-related capacity of IEs and executing entities.”

Meanwhile, many AF projects with strong gender components are having tangible impacts on the ground.



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The AF-funded project in [Rwanda](#) restoring natural drainage practices to reduce flooding fostered gender-inclusive approaches that included an equal number of women and men trained in community outreach with bicycles to support their roles. It expanded farmer training and livelihood diversification, leading to improved crop production and incomes that helped women support their children through school. Of 3,407 people hired to implement adaptive measures, 63 percent were women.

Similar benefits were seen in [the Morocco project](#), which is restoring traditional canal systems to address drought and fostering sustainable livelihoods. *“This project offered lots of opportunities for women in this region,”* said **Soumya Laouane**, a beneficiary and member of the Nissae El Ghad Women of Tomorrow Cooperative. *“Prior to this, women were not used to leaving their homes. Now you have lots of women working for the cooperative and earning a monthly income. It’s a big transformation, and you can see that these women have a different lifestyle now.”*

Another AF project providing innovative solutions to address droughts [in Chile](#) includes a strong focus on empowering women who have been disproportionately affected by climate change. **Eliana Palma**, a farmer in Litueche supported with a greenhouse, rooftop water storage tank and training in diversifying crops, hosts a regular gathering of 20 female farmers to share lessons and tools. *“There are many women in this project,”* she said. *“Every day we have to do many things, irrigating, making fertilizers, checking to ensure that nothing has been attacked by disease. I’ve learned a lot about how to improve the quality of the land and avoid degradation.”*

ABOUT the ADAPTATION FUND

Since 2010, the Adaptation Fund has committed about US\$ 720 million for climate change adaptation and resilience projects and programmes, including 100 concrete localized adaptation projects in the most vulnerable communities of developing countries around the world with more than 8 million direct beneficiaries. It also pioneered Direct Access, empowering countries to access funding and develop projects directly through accredited national implementing entities.

Communications: Matthew Pueschel, mpueschel@adaptation-fund.org or +1-202-473-6743