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Independent Evaluation Office

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Contents

Foreword	v
Acknowledgments	vi
Abbreviations	vii
Executive summary	viii
1: Introduction	1
2: Background and context	2
2.1 OPS5 findings and the Council's response	3
2.2 The GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming	4
2.3 The Gender Equality Action Plan	6
3: Evaluation objectives	8
4: Approach and methodology	9
4.1 Meta-analysis	9
4.2 Quality-at-entry review of projects at CEO endorsement or approval	10
4.3 Review of completed projects	11
4.4 Assessment of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and the GEAP	11
5: Results of the quality-at-entry review ..	14
5.1 Classification of projects by rating category ..	21
5.2 Attention to gender by focal area	24
5.3 Results by GEF Agency	25
6: Results of the review of completed projects	27
6.1 Classification of projects by rating category ..	29
6.2 Attention to gender by focal area	33
6.3 Results by GEF agency	34
7: Meta-analysis of best practice	35
7.1 Best practices	35
7.2 Future trends and directions	38
8: Assessment of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming	40
8.1 Appropriateness of the policy	40
8.2 Role of the Gender Equality Action Plan in policy implementation	42
8.3 Comparison of actions with other climate funds	45
9: Conclusions and recommendations	47
9.1 Conclusions on trends in gender mainstreaming	47
9.2 Conclusions regarding the appropriateness of the policy	47
9.3 Conclusions regarding the gender equality action plan's role in the policy's implementation	48
9.4 Recommendations	48
Annexes	
A: Recommendations of the OPS5 substudy	51
B: Gender rating	52
C: GEF core gender indicators	54
D: Evaluation matrix	55
E: Interviewees	60
References	64
Figures	
4.1 Gender evaluation elements and reviewed time frames	13
5.1 Quality-at-entry gender rating	18
6.1 Gender rating for completed projects by GEF replenishment period	30
Tables	
4.1 Population and sample sizes for the quality-at-entry review and baseline	10
4.2 OPS6 population and sample sizes for the quality-at-entry review by focal area	10

4.3	OPS6 population and sample sizes for the quality-at-entry review by GEF Agency	11	5.15	Quality-at-entry gender ratings by GEF Agency (number of projects)	26
4.4	Population and sample sizes for the review of completed projects by focal area	12	5.16	Quality-at-entry review of gender analysis by GEF Agency (number of projects)	26
4.5	OPS6 population and sample sizes for the review of completed projects by GEF Agency . .	12	5.17	Weighted gender rating score by GEF Agency. .	26
5.1	Quality-at-entry review sample by project modality and replenishment period	14	6.1	Overview of projects reviewed, by GEF replenishment period.	27
5.2	Gender consideration in elements of the project documentation	15	6.2	Consideration of gender in project documentation for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline . .	27
5.3	Quality-at-entry gender consideration in project documentation OPS5 baseline.	15	6.3	Gender considerations in project results frameworks of completed projects	28
5.4	Quality-at-entry gender considerations in project results frameworks	15	6.4	Review of gender analysis in completed projects, OPS6 cohort	28
5.5	Quality-at-entry review of gender analysis.	16	6.5	Completed projects' gender rating for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline	29
5.6	Quality-at-entry review of social assessment . .	16	6.6	Completed projects' gender rating and weighted gender rating score by region	29
5.7	Quality-at-entry gender rating by project modality (number of projects).	18	6.7	Completed projects rated gender mainstreamed.	32
5.8	Quality-at-entry gender rating for OPS6 data and OPS5 baseline (number of projects)	18	6.8	Completed projects' gender rating by focal area (number of projects)	33
5.9	Weighted gender rating score for OPS6 cohort and OPS5 baseline	19	6.9	Weighted gender rating score for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline by focal area	33
5.10	Quality-at-entry gender rating and weighted gender rating score by region	20	6.10	Completed projects' gender rating by GEF Agency (number of projects)	34
5.11	Quality-at-entry gender mainstreamed good practice examples	23	6.11	Weighted gender rating scores for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline by GEF Agency.	34
5.12	Quality-at-entry gender ratings by focal area (number of projects).	24			
5.13	Quality-at-entry weighted gender rating score by focal area	25			
5.14	Quality-at-entry gender rating climate change focal area, OPS6 and OPS5 baseline (number of projects).	25			

Foreword

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) adopted its Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in May 2011 to enhance 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 to establish gender mainstreaming in its policies, programs, and operations. This is the third assessment of gender mainstreaming in the GEF following those completed in 2009 and 2013.

The purpose of this evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF is to follow up on the 2013 assessment of gender mainstreaming and to assess progress toward achieving gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment since October 2013. The three objectives of the evaluation are to assess the trends of gender mainstreaming in the GEF since 2013, to assess the extent to which the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming has been implemented by means of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), and to review the appropriateness of the policy for the GEF and its implementation in line with international best practice in the field.

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach. The team conducted an extensive portfolio review; assessed the GEF Secretariat's responsiveness to the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming; carried out a meta-analysis of GEF Agencies' gender mainstreaming policies, strategies, and action plans; and interviewed key stakeholders. Three country visits served to cross-check and validate the data collected.

The final report of the evaluation was presented to the GEF Council in May 2017. Since then, the evaluation findings have been shared with the GEF Gender Partnership and have informed the revision of the GEF's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and related guidance which will come into effect in July 2018.



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Senior Evaluation Officer Anna Viggh, of the Global Environment Facility's Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO) led this evaluation. The team consisted of Dennis Bours, an Evaluation Officer in the IEO; Ghada Jiha, Consultant; and IEO Research Assistant Malac Kabir. Ronald MacPherson, Consultant, conducted a country field visit for the evaluation.

The evaluation benefited from guidance and oversight provided by Juha Uitto, Director of the IEO, and quality control was provided by Geeta Batra, IEO Chief Evaluation Officer.

The evaluation team was supported by Evelyn Chihuguyu, IEO Program Assistant, and Marie-Constance Manuella Koukoui, IEO Senior Executive Assistant. The report was edited by Tora Estep, and designed and laid out by Nita Congress.

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The GEF IEO is grateful to all of these individuals and institutions for their contributions. Final responsibility for this report remains firmly with the Office.

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank	MSP	medium-size project
AfDB	African Development Bank	OPS	overall performance study
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	PIF	project identification form
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	POP	persistent organic pollutant
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
FSP	full-size project	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FY	fiscal year	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
GEAP	Gender Equality Action Plan	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
GEF	Global Environment Facility	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development		
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund		

The GEF replenishment periods are as follows: pilot phase: 1991–94; GEF-1 1995–98; GEF-2: 1999–2002; GEF-3: 2003–06; GEF-4: 2006–10; GEF-5: 2010–14; GEF-6: 2014–18; GEF-7: 2018–22.

All dollar amounts are U.S. dollars unless otherwise indicated.

Executive summary

At its 50th meeting in May 2016, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council approved the approach paper for the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6), which included the objective to report on the progress toward achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment. This overarching objective was translated into three objectives for the evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF:

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 the Fifth Overall Performance Study (OPS5).

This OPS6 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF aims to follow up on the OPS5 substudy on gender mainstreaming and to assess the progress toward achieving gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment since October 2013. The evaluation’s findings and conclusions were presented at the 52nd Council Meeting in May 2017 and will inform the final OPS6 report. These

findings will also inform the revision of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, which the GEF Secretariat is updating for submission to the 53rd Council Meeting in November 2017.

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming came into effect when it was approved by the GEF Council at the 40th Council Meeting in May 2011. It was initially approved as annex II of the GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards and Gender Mainstreaming. The GEF Secretariat clarified parts of the policy to reflect Council deliberations and issued it as a stand-alone policy document in May 2012. The GEF Council approved the GEAP at the 47th Council Meeting in October 2014, which aims—among other things—to operationalize the gender mainstreaming policy.

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming expresses the GEF’s commitment to enhancing the degree to which the GEF and its partner agencies promote gender equality through GEF operations. It commits the GEF to address the link between gender equality and environmental sustainability and to encourage gender mainstreaming in its policies, programs, and operations. The GEF relies on its partner agencies to mainstream gender. All GEF Agencies have their own policies and strategies on gender mainstreaming and on promoting gender equality in the context of project interventions; the GEF Agencies apply these policies to GEF projects as well.

An assessment of the GEF Secretariat's responsiveness to the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming was carried out, including an examination of the Secretariat's progress in meeting the gender-mainstreaming capacity-building requirements stipulated in the policy. A meta-analysis of GEF Agencies' and comparable climate finance mechanisms' gender mainstreaming policies, strategies, and action plans was conducted. A quality-at-entry review of projects at Chief Executive Officer (CEO) endorsement or approval and a review of completed projects took place. The OPS5 project cohort was used as a baseline with which OPS6 gender results were compared. The baseline projects (from OPS5) were reassessed given changes in the way gender mainstreaming is currently measured. The evaluation team interviewed select stakeholders from the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, country representatives, and convention stakeholders regarding the mainstreaming of gender in GEF activities. Field visits to select projects in Ghana, Honduras, and the Philippines provided in-depth, field-verified inputs to the national processes, findings, and recommendations. Finally, method triangulation, combining quantitative and qualitative methods of verifying and complementing evaluative findings, and data triangulation, collecting data from different sources, were used to increase data validity and to limit interpretation errors.

In its evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF, the Independent Evaluation Office reached the following six conclusions and three recommendations.

Conclusions on trends in gender mainstreaming

Conclusion 1: Current trends in gender mainstreaming in the GEF show modest improvement over the previous OPS period. According to the

quality-at-entry review, the area of most significant change is in the dramatic reduction of gender-blind projects from 64 percent, before the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming was introduced (OPS5 pre-May 2011), to 1.3 percent in OPS6, and the growth of nearly six times the number of projects rated gender aware in this same time period. However, when comparing post-May 2011 OPS5 data (after adoption of the policy) with the OPS6 rating, the increase in the percentage of projects rated gender sensitive and gender mainstreamed was limited. The OPS6 review of completed projects shows modest signs of improvement compared with the OPS5 baseline of completed projects, with a decline in gender-blind projects and a similar increase in the percentage of completed projects rated gender aware.

Conclusion 2: Projects that conducted gender analyses achieved higher gender ratings. Very few projects conducted gender analyses, despite it being one of the minimum requirements of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. Only 13.9 percent of medium-size projects and full-size projects in the quality-at-entry review and 15.7 percent of completed projects reviewed had done a gender analysis prior to CEO endorsement/approval. The evaluation team used a weighted gender rating score, with a value between zero and four—zero being gender blind and four being gender transformative—to make comparisons among projects. The quality-at-entry review weighted gender rating score for the OPS6 cohort was 1.68; projects for which a gender analysis had taken place before CEO endorsement/approval had a combined score of 2.97. Projects that either planned a gender analysis or for which a gender analysis had taken place at entry had a weighted gender rating score of 2.22. Improvements were noted in terms of gender consideration in project documentation.

Conclusions regarding the appropriateness of the policy

Conclusion 3: While the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming has increased attention to, and performance of, gender in GEF operations, its framework and certain provisions and implementation remain unclear. The objective of the policy is “attaining 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 leaves too much room for interpretation on gender analysis and on the responsibilities of the GEF Agencies vis-à-vis the GEF Secretariat regarding its implementation. Including gender-disaggregated and gender-specific indicators in project results frameworks is highly variable across GEF projects, as is the collection and use of gender-related data to measure gender equality-related progress and results during monitoring, in mid-term reviews, and in terminal evaluations. The policy is not informed by or situated in wider human rights and gender-equality norms governing international development frameworks, nor does it reference gender-related mandates or decisions issued by the conventions.

Conclusion 4: Institutional capacity to implement the policy and achieve gender mainstreaming is insufficient. Recruiting a dedicated senior gender specialist as part of the GEF Secretariat team is widely recognized as an important and essential step forward that has helped increase attention to gender equality and women’s empowerment. However, this is insufficient on its own to build wider staff competencies and capacities to support gender mainstreaming across GEF programming and processes.

Conclusions regarding the Gender Equality Action Plan’s role in the policy’s implementation

Conclusion 5: The GEAP has been a relevant and effective framework for implementing the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. The GEAP has facilitated implementation of the GEF policy’s requirements, and key stakeholders concur that the action plan has been a good directive for action. The GEF Secretariat has provided annual updates on progress made on the implementation of the GEAP through information documents to the GEF Council. Given the time frame of the GEAP and the updating of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, pointing out that a strong action plan facilitates strategic priority setting and can drive GEF’s institutional agenda on gender mainstreaming is important.

Conclusion 6: The GEF Gender Partnership is slowly developing into a relevant and effective platform for building a wider constituency on gender and the environment. The GEF Gender Partnership has brought together the gender focal points and practitioners of GEF agencies, other climate funds, the secretariats of relevant conventions, and other partners. It has become an important forum for leveraging the wide range of skills and experiences of members on gender equality and women’s empowerment in the GEF. It has facilitated several reviews, helping to compile and build the evaluative evidence on gender and the environment, and aims to produce a series of tools that will strengthen the GEF’s capacity to mainstream gender systematically in projects and support the achievement of results related to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The GEF Secretariat should consider revising its policy to better align with best practice standards. Because the GEF acts as the financial mechanism for five major international environmental conventions and is a partnership of 18 agencies, this revision should include anchoring the policy in the conventions' gender-related decisions and the GEF agencies' best practice standards. In revising the policy, the GEF Secretariat should take into account that policies rooted in rights-based frameworks result in more effective gender mainstreaming. Given the GEF Gender Partnership's effectiveness, the GEF Secretariat should consider the partnership as the vehicle for stakeholder engagement in updating its policy. Finally, the policy should provide greater guidance on gender analysis and on the responsibilities of the GEF Agencies vis-à-vis the GEF Secretariat.

Recommendation 2: The GEF Secretariat with its partners should develop an action plan for implementing the gender policy during GEF-7. An appropriate gender action plan should support the implementation of the potentially revised Policy

on Gender Mainstreaming and should include continued focus on developing and finalizing comprehensive guidelines, tools, and methods. This should be done in collaboration with the GEF Gender Partnership, drawing on the knowledge and best practice standards of GEF Agencies, other climate funds, the secretariats of relevant conventions, and other partners. Upstream analytical work on the associated links between gender equality and project performance across GEF programmatic areas would support mainstreaming.

Recommendation 3: To achieve the objectives of institutional strengthening and gender mainstreaming, the GEF Secretariat should ensure that adequate resources are made available. During GEF-7, institutional capacity within the Secretariat and its staff on gender mainstreaming will need strengthening, and resources within the agencies that have strong institutional gender focus and expertise should be leveraged.

1: Introduction

At its 50th meeting in May 2016, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council approved the approach paper for the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6; GEF IEO 2016b). The approach paper indicates that OPS6 will aim to report on the progress toward achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. The overarching OPS6 evaluative question on gender in the GEF is "To what extent have gender issues and assessment of its effectiveness been mainstreamed into GEF's work since the development of its gender policy?"

This OPS6 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF aims to follow up on the Fifth Overall Performance Study (OPS5) substudy on gender mainstreaming and to assess the progress toward achieving gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment since October 2013. The evaluation's findings and conclusions were presented at the 52nd Council Meeting in May 2017 and will inform the final OPS6 report. These findings will also inform the revision of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, which the GEF Secretariat is updating for submission to the 53rd Council Meeting in November 2017.

2: Background and context

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming came into effect when it was approved by the GEF Council at the 40th Council Meeting in May 2011. Up to that point, the only GEF policy with a gender element was the 1996 Policy on Public Involvement in GEF Projects, which mentions women as part of “disadvantaged populations in and around the project site” (GEF 1996, 2) to engage with collaboratively. The 2011 gender policy was initially approved as annex II of the GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards and Gender Mainstreaming (GEF 2011). The GEF Secretariat clarified parts of the policy to reflect Council deliberations and issued it as a stand-alone policy document in May 2012 (GEF 2012).

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming originates partly from guidance issued by the various conventions for which the GEF operates as a financial mechanism. These conventions increased their gender-related guidance in the years prior to the adoption of the policy. For example, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was the last convention without a clear mandate on gender mainstreaming; it issued such a mandate at the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties through the Cancun Agreements (UNFCCC 2011) and provided additional guidance to the GEF (UNFCCC 2011, 6). Conventions’ guidance has overarching significance for GEF activities under several or all focal areas, and the 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.

The GEF Council approved the GEF 2020 Strategy at the 46th Council Meeting in May 2014. It provides several core operational principles, which represent the key “nuts and bolts” of the GEF’s operational system (GEF 2015a). Under the principle of mobilizing local and global stakeholders, the strategy states that the “GEF will continue to strengthen its focus on gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment...The GEF will emphasize the use of gender analysis as part of socio-economic assessments” and “gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data will be used in GEF projects to demonstrate concrete results and progress related to gender equality” (GEF 2015a, 24).

The GEF-6 policy recommendations state that more concerted action must be taken to enhance gender mainstreaming, and the Secretariat must ensure that it has the necessary capacity to develop and implement the gender action plan (GEF 2014a).

The GEF Council approved the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) at the 47th Council Meeting in October 2014, which aims—among other things—to operationalize the gender mainstreaming policy (GEF 2014b).

2.1 OPS5 findings and the Council's response

OPS5 assessed gender in the GEF in a technical document, focusing on (1) assessing the trends in gender mainstreaming at the GEF and in GEF projects and (2) assessing the progress of the implementation of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and the appropriateness of the policy (GEF IEO 2013). The following sections provide the substudy's key findings, and [annex A](#) presents the recommendations. One notable recommendation was that the GEF Secretariat, in consultation with GEF Agencies, should explore a more systematic way to determine whether or not projects are gender relevant. The substudy also stated that "International gender specialists are increasingly providing evidence that the categories that do not take gender into account (such as energy technologies, street lighting and energy efficiency) are in fact gender relevant" (GEF IEO 2013, 35). The OPS6 evaluation's team agrees that projects that touch upon people's lives—and GEF-supported interventions do, either directly or indirectly through, for example, employment opportunities created—always have gender relevance.

Key Finding 1: Of the 281 projects completed since OPS4 (Fourth Overall Performance Study), 124 (44 percent) did not consider gender and were not expected to do so. When these are excluded from the analysis, 55 (35 percent) of the remaining 157 projects adequately mainstreamed gender in design and implementation.

Note that the view on gender relevance has changed for the OPS6 evaluation; now all GEF-supported interventions are considered to be gender relevant. The definition of gender mainstreaming has changed since OPS5, and the GEAP states that "mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities" (GEF 2014b, 16). This description has informed the new gender rating explained in [annex B](#).

Key Finding 2: Of the 157 remaining [completed] projects, 43 (27 percent) did not mention gender. However, based on the terminal evaluations of these projects, the evaluators determined that these 43 [projects] should have considered gender and were thus gender relevant. They were designated Serious Omissions (SO), as the lack of attention for gender where it was needed may have resulted in gender related, unintended negative consequences.

Key Finding 3: Among the 157 completed projects, 38 percent [59 projects] mentioned gender, but did not incorporate gender into their activities. The evaluators rated these projects as Gender Not Sufficient (NS).

The OPS6 evaluation uses a new gender rating scale; the classifications SO and NS are not used in this evaluation. All projects that were part of the OPS5 gender study sample were also reassessed using these new ratings to provide a comparable baseline.

Key Finding 4: Based on a review of CEO- [Chief Executive Officer] endorsed and approved projects under GEF-5, the proportion of projects (excluding projects rated not relevant—NR) that mainstreamed gender increased from 22 percent of the reviewed projects before May 2011 to 31 percent following adoption of the GEF Gender Mainstreaming Policy in May 2011, excluding the projects rated NR.

Key Finding 5: The total number of CEO-endorsed and approved projects rated NS or SO declined from 78 percent in the pre-May 2011 period to 68 percent after May 2011, excluding the projects rated NR.

Key Finding 6: There was some improvement in the CEO-endorsed and approved projects following the adoption of the GEF Gender Mainstreaming Policy in May 2011. However, a major shift occurred in late 2011 due to gender mainstreaming in Enabling Activities.

Key Finding 7: Recent strategies and policies adopted by the GEF and the GEF Agencies in the last two years provide good examples of best international practice and guidance to the

GEF for improving project design and approval processes.

Key Finding 8: The GEF Secretariat has made significant efforts to develop the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and to put in place institutional systems to implement the policy since GEF-4. In order to adequately implement the policy, the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies requires resources and support.

2.2 The GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, adopted in May 2011, expresses the GEF's commitment to enhancing the degree to which the GEF and its partner agencies promote gender equality through GEF operations (GEF 2012). It commits the GEF to address the link between gender equality and environmental sustainability and to encourage gender mainstreaming in its policies, programs, and operations. The aim of the policy is distinct from—though related to—questions about the environmental and socioeconomic benefits that GEF projects aim to achieve through financing sustainable development efforts, which relate to GEF goals and objectives established in the GEF Instrument and GEF focal area strategies. The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming states that

gender equality is an important goal in the context of the projects that it [the GEF] finances because it advances both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equity and social inclusion... Accounting for gender equity and equality is an important consideration when financing projects that address global environmental issues, because gender relations, roles and responsibilities exercise important influence on women and men's access to and control over environmental resources and the goods and services they provide. The GEF acknowledges that project results can often be superior when gender considerations are integrated into the design and implementation of projects, where relevant. (GEF 2012, 1)

Prior to the adoption of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming the only reference to gender and social concerns in the GEF project identification form (PIF) template for medium-size projects (MSPs) and full-size projects (FSPs) was the following: "A.2. Stakeholders: Identify key stakeholders (including civil society organizations, indigenous people, gender groups and others as relevant) and describe how they will be involved in project preparation." This was an insufficient impetus for client countries or GEF Agencies to mainstream gender into GEF projects. Until May 2011, a general response about "the involvement of stakeholders," or no response at all, was common in project review sheets (GEF IEO 2013, 23).

The GEF relies on its partner agencies (the 10 GEF Agencies and 8 GEF Project Agencies, hereafter all referred to as "GEF Agencies") to mainstream gender. The impetus for the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming came about as the GEF began the process of accrediting new institutions—the GEF project agencies—to become eligible to request and receive GEF resources directly to design, implement, and supervise GEF projects. The GEF acknowledges that project results are often improved when gender considerations are integrated into the design and implementation of projects. All GEF Agencies have their own policies and strategies on gender mainstreaming and on promoting gender equality in the context of project interventions; the GEF Agencies apply these policies to GEF projects as well.

The objective of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming is that "the GEF Secretariat and GEF 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" (GEF 2012, 2). The policy requires GEF Agencies to have policies or strategies that satisfy seven minimum requirements to ensure gender mainstreaming (GEF 2012, 2–3):

- **Strengthening institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming.** “The Agency has instituted measures to strengthen its institutional framework for gender mainstreaming, for example, by having a focal point for gender, or other staff, to support the development, implementation, monitoring, and provision of guidance on gender mainstreaming.”
- **Considering gender elements in project review and design.** “The Agency’s criteria for project review and project design require it to pay attention to socio-economic aspects in its projects, including gender elements.”
- **Undertaking gender analysis.** “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 and men of different ages, ethnicities, and social structure and status.”
- **Identifying measures to minimize or mitigate adverse gender impacts.** “The Agency is required to identify measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse gender impacts.”
- **Addressing gender-sensitive activities.** “The Agency’s policies, strategy, or action plan address gender sensitive activities while recognizing and respecting the different roles that women and men play in resource management and in society.”
- **Monitoring and evaluating gender-mainstreaming progress.** “The Agency has a system for monitoring and evaluating progress in gender mainstreaming, including the use of gender disaggregated monitoring indicators.”
- **Including gender experts in projects.** “The Agency monitors and provides necessary

support for implementation of its policies, strategy, or action plan by experienced social/gender experts on gender mainstreaming in projects.”

The policy also has four requirements for the GEF Secretariat (GEF 2012, 3):

- **Strengthen gender-mainstreaming capacities among staff.** “The GEF Secretariat will strengthen gender-mainstreaming capacities among the GEF Secretariat staff to increase their understanding of gender mainstreaming, as well as socio-economic aspects in general.”
- **Designate a focal point for gender issues.** “The GEF Secretariat shall designate a focal point for gender issues to support developing, implementing, and monitoring guidance and strategy on gender mainstreaming and coordinating internally and externally on such issues.”
- **Work with partner agencies and other partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming with a more systematic approach to programming.** “Recognizing that each GEF Partner Agency has a different gender policy, strategy, or action plan, with varying application to GEF projects, the GEF Secretariat will work with its Partner Agencies and other partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming, including, as feasible, a more systematic approach to programming that incorporates this issue.”
- **Develop networks with partners with gender experience.** “The GEF Secretariat will establish and strengthen networks with partners that have substantive experience working on gender issues, and utilize their expertise to develop and implement GEF projects.”

Applying the policy requires the Secretariat to hire consultants to assess the existing 10 GEF Agencies’ compliance. The review will be based on the

GEF Agencies' self-assessments and will take place once per replenishment cycle, starting in the final year of the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund and in line with the policy on monitoring agencies' compliance (GEF 2016a). Finally, the GEF Accreditation Panel will require all applicants to demonstrate compliance with the minimum requirements.

Currently the GEF Secretariat is reviewing and updating the policy, and a revised policy will be submitted to the 53rd Council Meeting in November 2017. The findings and recommendations of this evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF will feed into OPS6 and inform policy revisions.

2.3 The Gender Equality Action Plan

Although participants in the Third Meeting for the Sixth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund appreciated the increase in projects aiming for gender mainstreaming and appreciated the gender analysis that was presented to the Council as part of the Annual Monitoring Reviews during fiscal year (FY) 2011 and FY2012, the GEF-6 policy recommendations of February 2014 demanded more concerted action to be taken to enhance gender mainstreaming (GEF 2016a, 9). Participants in the Sixth Replenishment Meetings asked the GEF Secretariat, in collaboration with GEF Agencies and other relevant partners, to develop an action plan to enhance gender mainstreaming. The Secretariat was also asked to ensure that it has the necessary capacity to develop and implement the action plan.

The GEAP, developed in close collaboration and consultation with the GEF Agencies, secretariats of the relevant multilateral environmental agreements, and other experts (including Climate Investment Fund and Green Climate Fund), aspires to narrow the existing gaps and

enhance coherence by implementing concrete gender-mainstreaming actions at corporate and focal area levels. The GEAP aims to operationalize the gender-mainstreaming policy, to advance both the GEF's goal of attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equity and social inclusion, and provides a concrete road map, building on GEF Agencies' existing and planned gender strategies and plans.

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming does not define or describe what gender mainstreaming means or how to undertake a gender analysis. Instead, the United Nations Economic and Social Council definition of gender mainstreaming has been adopted as part of the GEAP, which states that

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. (GEF 2014b, 16)

The GEAP describes gender analysis as

the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women both perform different roles. This leads to women and men having different experience, knowledge, skills and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so policies, programs and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men. (GEF 2014b, 16)

While the GEAP is not a policy document, the Council welcomed its content and approved its implementation at the 47th Council Meeting.

The GEAP is intended to serve as a roadmap during the GEF-6 period, from FY2015 to FY2018, July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018. The action plan consists of a step-wise approach to achieving the GEF policy's goals and objectives and ensuring that project results and gender-related progress are better designed, implemented, and reported. Results will be monitored annually to assess progress in implementing the GEAP, which will be reported through the Annual Monitoring Review exercise and the Progress Report on the GEAP (for example, GEF 2016b). To meet the challenges of gender mainstreaming in GEF operations, policies, and projects effectively, the action plan addresses five key elements (GEF 2014b, 8–13):

- **Project cycle.** “Recognizing that each GEF Agency has a different gender policy, strategy, and/or action plan, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Agencies, will clarify and facilitate a consistent approach by providing practical guidance for the implementation of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in key steps of the GEF project cycle.”
- **Programming and policies.** “Along with the new business model of GEF 2020, the GEF will adopt a more strategic and comprehensive approach toward gender mainstreaming across GEF programs and projects. The GEF will aim to strengthen mainstreaming gender in all programs and projects, while initially focusing its efforts on key programs and projects that could generate significant results for gender equality and women's empowerment to contribute to achieving the goals of global environmental benefits.”
- **Knowledge management.** “The GEF will enhance its role in knowledge management on

gender equality, in line with its overall strategy on knowledge management. The GEF can build on existing related knowledge facilities as well as develop new knowledge on gender and environment through its diverse projects.”

- **Results-based management.** “The GEF will further strengthen GEF-wide accountability for gender mainstreaming by enhancing gender-specific performance targets at all levels. At the corporate level, the GEF Results-based Management Framework will include the set of Core Gender Indicators to examine concrete progress on gender related processes and outputs [see [annex C](#)]. These gender indicators will be further discussed and coordinated with the development of the overall RBM [results-based management] strategy/ action plan of the GEF, with a view to avoid overburdening the system but at the same time ensuring visible outcomes and outputs. These gender indicators will be applied to all projects, and monitored and aggregated at the focal area and corporate levels.”
- **Capacity development.** “To effectively implement the GEAP, it is important to further strengthen capacity among the GEF Secretariat staff to increase their understanding of gender equality and women's empowerment, according to their roles and responsibilities. This is also expected to lead to effective projects that address gender issues as staff become more aware of, and have increased capacity on gender issues.”

The GEAP requires gender-responsive approaches and activities to be incorporated in the GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies and Integrated Approaches Pilots, along with the five core gender indicators at the corporate level (see [annex C](#)), which are to be monitored and aggregated at the focal area and corporate levels.

3: Evaluation objectives

The OPS6 approach paper indicates that OPS6 will aim to report on the progress toward achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment. The overarching OPS6 evaluative question is “To what extent have gender issues and assessment of its effectiveness been mainstreamed into GEF’s work since the development of its gender policy?” (GEF IEO 2016b, 9–10).

The objectives of the OPS6 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF are to

- assess the trends of gender mainstreaming in the GEF since OPS5;
- assess the extent to which the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming has been implemented by means of the GEAP;
- review the appropriateness of the policy for the GEF and its implementation in line with international best practice in the field and in relation to gender-mainstreaming efforts taking place in other climate finance mechanisms.

The evaluation’s findings, conclusions, and recommendations will feed into OPS6 and inform the revision of the gender policy.

The objectives of the OPS6 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF translates into four study elements:

- A review of the implementation of recommendations from the OPS5 substudy on the Policy

on Gender Mainstreaming (see [annex A](#) for recommendations; GEF IEO 2013)

- An assessment of the gender-mainstreaming trends in the GEF since OPS5 and more specifically since approval of the GEAP
- An assessment of the appropriateness of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and its implementation in light of international best practice
- A comparison of the GEAP with actions taken by comparable climate and environmental funds

The evaluation accounts for the policy’s recent adoption and focuses on reviewing the GEF Secretariat’s progress in implementing the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming at the institutional level. It also presents a project-level analysis of gender mainstreaming in GEF projects, both at quality-at-entry and in terminal evaluations.

The overarching OPS6 evaluative question and evaluation objectives translate into several sub-questions grouped by the core evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, results, and sustainability). [Annex D](#) provides the question matrix, with questions marked “process review” reflecting on the GEAP policy implementation process and questions marked “project portfolio analysis” informing the quality-at-entry analysis and the reviews of completed projects. [Annex E](#) provides the list of interviewees who responded.

4: Approach and methodology

An assessment of the GEF Secretariat's responsiveness to the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming was carried out, including an examination of the Secretariat's progress in meeting the gender-mainstreaming capacity-building requirements stipulated in the policy.

A meta-analysis of GEF Agencies' gender mainstreaming policies, strategies, and action plans was conducted. A quality-at-entry review of projects at CEO endorsement or approval and a review of completed projects took place. The OPS5 project cohort was used as a baseline with which OPS6 gender results were compared. The baseline projects (from OPS5) were reassessed given changes in the way gender mainstreaming is currently measured. Further information on sample and population sizes is provided later in this report under the subheadings "Quality-at-Entry Review of Projects at CEO Endorsement or Approval" and "Review of Completed Projects."

The evaluation team interviewed select stakeholders from the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, country representatives, and convention stakeholders regarding the mainstreaming of gender in GEF activities. Field visits to select projects in Ghana, Honduras, and the Philippines provided in-depth, field-verified inputs to the national processes, findings, and recommendations. Countries were selected based on these criteria: (1) geographical spread, (2) a representative mix of GEF Agencies, (3) a representative mix of project focal

areas, and (4) the presence of at least two Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) projects to exploit synergies with the ongoing evaluation of the SCCF.

Method triangulation, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to verify and complement evaluative findings, and data triangulation, collecting data from different sources, were used to increase data validity and to limit interpretation errors.

4.1 Meta-analysis

A meta-analysis of GEF Agency and third-party evaluations of GEF Agencies' gender-mainstreaming policies, strategies, and action plans was done to (1) assess the appropriateness of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming for the GEF in light of international best practice and (2) assess the GEAP on the process of policy implementation compared with actions taken by comparable climate and environmental funds. The meta-analysis included a literature review on international best practice for gender mainstreaming, with emphasis on the gender-environment nexus. The analysis also gathered evidence from GEF Independent Evaluation Office evaluations conducted since OPS5 and other available evaluations on the trends of mainstreaming gender in GEF projects with regards to project results.

4.2 Quality-at-entry review of projects at CEO endorsement or approval

This evaluation conducted a quality-at-entry review of a sample of GEF projects (full size, medium size, and enabling activities) approved during GEF-6, after the approval of the GEAP, between October 2014 and September 2016. The review population consisted of 467 MSPs and FSPs and 98 enabling activities. The quality-at-entry analysis shows the extent to which the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and its implementation via the GEAP is reflected in GEF project design.

The evaluation team reviewed and rated a stratified random sample of 304 projects: one stratum sample of 223 MSPs and FSPs and a second stratum sample of 81 enabling activities. A second-order stratification to guarantee proportional representation took place by focal area. The data were compared with the baseline data of two OPS5 samples: one sample comprised 111 projects endorsed or approved by the GEF CEO before the adoption of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in May 2011 and a second sample of 271 projects that were endorsed or approved

after the adoption of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 provide details on population and sample sizes. The data were also compared with the information provided in the FY2015 and FY2016 Annual Monitoring Reports prepared by the GEF Secretariat. A 95 percent probability exists that the sample results contain the actual population value, and if so, that population value will be within ± 5 percent of the results the evaluation found in the sample. [Chapter 5](#) provides a discussion of the quality-at-entry analysis.

TABLE 4.1 Population and sample sizes for the quality-at-entry review and baseline

	MSP/FSP	Enabling activity	Total
OPS5 baseline, pre-May 2011			
Population	152	2	154
Sample	109	2	111
OPS5 baseline, post-May 2011			
Population	275	154	429
Sample	161	110	271
OPS6 quality-at-entry review			
Population	467	98	565
Sample	223	81	304

TABLE 4.2 OPS6 population and sample sizes for the quality-at-entry review by focal area

Focal area	Population size			Sample size		
	MSP/FSP	Enabling activity	Total	MSP/FSP	Enabling activity	Total
Biodiversity	82	0	82	38	0	38
Chemicals and waste	7	61	68	7	50	57
Climate change	184	35	219	86	29	115
International waters	28	0	28	13	0	13
Land degradation	25	1	26	12	1	13
Multifocal area	106	1	107	50	1	51
Persistent organic pollutants	35	0	35	17	0	17
Total	467	98	565	223	81	304

TABLE 4.3 OPS6 population and sample sizes for the quality-at-entry review by GEF Agency

GEF Agency	Population size			Sample size		
	MSP/FSP	EA	Total	MSP/FSP	EA	Total
Asian Development Bank	9	0	9	3	0	3
African Development Bank	14	0	14	6	0	6
Conservation International	7	0	7	3	0	3
European Bank for Reconstruction & Development	4	0	4	3	0	3
Food & Agricultural Organization of the UN	55	0	55	18	0	18
Inter-American Development Bank	6	0	6	3	0	3
International Fund for Agricultural Development	13	0	13	4	0	4
IUCN	2	1	3	1	1	2
United Nations Development Programme	185	48	233	90	37	127
United Nations Environment Programme	91	30	121	51	25	76
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	43	19	62	20	18	38
World Bank	37	0	37	21	0	21
World Wildlife Fund	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total	467	98	565	223	81	304

NOTE: EA = enabling activity; IUCN = International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

4.3 Review of completed projects

A review of project documents, midterm reviews, and terminal evaluations of a sample of completed GEF projects submitted since the conclusion of OPS5 illustrates the trends in mainstreaming gender in GEF projects with regards to project results and updates the findings from the similar exercise conducted for OPS5. This component included a review of terminal evaluations and related terminal evaluation reviews and midterm reviews from the OPS6 project cohort to determine trends in gender mainstreaming reflected in project results and to identify lessons learned.

The review population consisted of 581 MSPs or FSPs and three enabling activities. The evaluation team reviewed and rated a random sample of 246 completed MSPs and FSPs and the three enabling activities. The sample was stratified by focal area to guarantee proportional representation. The

data were compared with the baseline data of the OPS5 population of completed projects. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 provide details on population and sample sizes. A 95 percent probability exists that sample results contain the actual population value, and if so, that population value will be within ± 5 percent of the results the evaluation found in the sample. [Chapter 6](#) presents a discussion of the analysis of completed projects.

4.4 Assessment of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and the GEAP

The evaluation team used the following five criteria to assess the appropriateness of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming for facilitating a consistent approach to gender mainstreaming in GEF operations:

- Does the policy clearly state its objectives?

TABLE 4.4 Population and sample sizes for the review of completed projects by focal area

Focal area	OP5 population size			OP6 population size			OPS6 sample size		
	MSP/FSP	EA	Total	MSP/FSP	EA	Total	MSP/FSP	EA	Total
Biodiversity	126	0	126	199	1	200	82	1	83
Chemicals and waste	3	0	3	7	0	7	7	0	7
Climate change	67	0	67	164	2	166	68	2	68
International waters	35	0	35	59	0	59	25	0	25
Land degradation	17	0	17	48	0	48	20	0	20
Multifocal area	23	0	23	72	0	72	30	0	30
POPs	9	1	10	32	0	32	14	0	14
Total	280	1	281	581	3	584	246	3	249

NOTE: EA = enabling activity. POPs = persistent organic pollutants.

TABLE 4.5 OPS6 population and sample sizes for the review of completed projects by GEF Agency

GEF Agency	Population size			Sample size		
	MSP/FSP	EA	Total	MSP/FSP	EA	Total
Asian Development Bank	8	0	8	3	0	3
African Development Bank	1	0	1	0	0	0
Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN	6	0	6	2	0	2
Inter-American Development Bank	3	0	3	1	0	1
International Fund for Agricultural Development	13	0	13	6	0	6
United Nations Development Programme	276	1	277	122	1	123
United Nations Environment Programme	73	1	74	32	1	33
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	18	0	18	8	0	8
World Bank	183	1	184	72	1	73
Total	581	3	584	246	3	249

NOTE: EA = enabling activity.

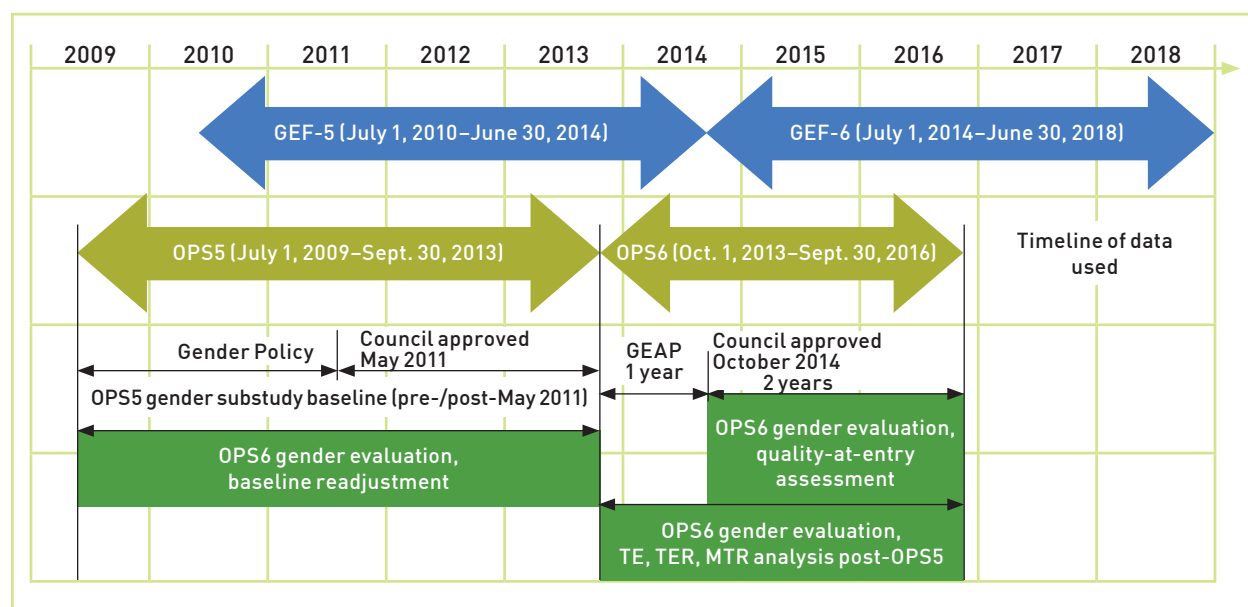
- Are the requirements for the policy's implementation clearly stated in the policy?
- Were policy requirements implemented?
- Does a mechanism exist to monitor policy implementation, including indicators to measure performance or success?
- Has the policy contributed to enhancing gender mainstreaming in GEF projects?

The evaluation team also examined the GEAP's relevance and effectiveness in supporting the implementation of the GEF policy by reviewing it against the five elements identified in the plan as being critical for mainstreaming gender in GEF operations and projects: (1) project cycle, (2) programming and policies, (3) knowledge management, (4) results-based management, and (5) capacity development.

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of key evaluation elements and the time frames reviewed. The main focus of the evaluation is the GEF Trust Fund, but because the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming also applies to the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the SCCF, the assessment also includes these funds. In particular, the quality-at-entry review and the review of terminal

evaluations and midterm reviews of completed projects included LDCF and SCCF projects. The quality-at-entry review sample included 21 LDCF projects and 14 SCCF projects, while the review of completed projects sample included three LDCF and two SCCF projects, which reflects the level of maturity of the LDCF and SCCF portfolios.

FIGURE 4.1 Gender evaluation elements and reviewed time frames



NOTE: MTR = midterm review; TE = terminal evaluation; TER = terminal evaluation review.

5: Results of the quality-at-entry review

A stratified random sample of 304 projects was examined, using all project documentation available at entry.¹ Table 5.1 provides an overview of the sample by replenishment period and project modality. The sample was stratified by project modality and focal area, and equal representation of project modality by GEF replenishment period was verified after sampling.

The evaluation team rated the project on whether the documents at entry considered gender in the project's context description, partner description,² and project description, and in gender-specific objectives and activities (table 5.2).

Almost all projects, 98.4 percent (299 out of 304 projects), considered gender in the project description. Three quarters of projects considered gender in the context description. The focus is less on gender-specific objectives and activities; almost 33 percent of the projects mention gender with respect to gender-specific objectives and

TABLE 5.1 Quality-at-entry review sample by project modality and replenishment period

Replenishment period	MSP/FSP	Enabling activity	Total
GEF-5	184	1	185
GEF-6	39	80	119
Total	223	81	304

activities, with only 65 projects (21.4 percent) mentioning gender in the partner description.

Enabling activities in particular perform better in terms of considering gender in the context description, but have a lower rating—compared with MSPs and FSPs—in terms of gender considerations in the partner description and in gender-specific objectives and activities. What contributes to this lower rating is that the request for approval of an enabling activity template puts less demand on the gender consideration, in line with the lower grant amount to be approved. The enabling activity template requires a description of “how the gender equality and women’s empowerment are considered in the project design and implementation.” In comparison, the CEO endorsement/approval template for MSPs and FSPs require a focus on the differences, needs, roles, and priorities of women and men. The MSP/FSP template further demands information on whether a gender analysis took place, the inclusion of a gender-responsive results framework and sex-disaggregated indicators, and

¹Project preparation grant document, PIF, request for CEO endorsement, project review, Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) review, GEF Agency’s response to comments, tracking tools, project documents, gender analysis, and social assessment.

²The “partner description” refers to parts of the project documentation that discuss institutional and partnership arrangements developed as part of the project and parts of the documentation reflecting on coordination with other relevant initiatives and partners in the area.

TABLE 5.2 Gender consideration in elements of the project documentation

Project modality	In context description		In partner description		In project description		In gender-specific objectives/activities	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
MSP/FSP	165	74.0	54	24.2	218	97.8	79	35.4
Enabling activity	66	81.5	11	13.6	81	100.0	21	25.9
Total	231	76.0	65	21.4	299	98.4	100	32.9

information on the share of women and men direct beneficiaries.

Comparing OPS6 quality-at-entry data with the OPS5 baseline data (table 5.3)—which required all sampled projects to be reassessed—the biggest gain is evident in MSPs and FSPs, where gender consideration in project documentation rose from 56.5 percent to almost 98 percent (218 out of 223 MSPs and FSPs).³ However, improvements in including gender considerations do not tell

TABLE 5.3 Quality-at-entry gender consideration in project documentation OPS5 baseline

Project modality	OPS5 pre-May 2011		OPS5 post-May 2011	
	No.	%	No.	%
MSP/FSP	40	36.7	91	56.5
Enabling activity	0	0.0	101	91.8
Total	40	36.0	192	70.8

whether such considerations have a meaningful effect on the goal of gender equality. In accordance with the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, the GEF anticipates that including gender-specific objectives and activities and collaborating with strong gender partners on the ground will contribute to the goal of gender equality and to ensuring sufficient buy-in to support longer-term gender

³In the reassessment of OPS5 sampled projects no differentiation was made as to where gender considerations were visible in project documents.

equality results. Looking at table 5.2, these are also the parts in the project documentation where ample room exists for improvement with respect to gender considerations.

A second analysis focused on gender considerations in project results frameworks. The evaluation team looked at gender-disaggregated indicators and identified projects that included gender-specific indicators that go beyond gender disaggregation. The latter type of indicators either measure the results of gender-specific activities and objectives, or provide separate measures for men and women, such as separate vulnerability indicators that account for gender-specific roles, needs, and access to resources. The results (table 5.4) show that while more than 70 percent of projects used gender-disaggregated indicators, only 17.8 percent (54 out of 304 projects) included gender-specific indicators in their project results framework. No equivalent OPS5 data are available

TABLE 5.4 Quality-at-entry gender considerations in project results frameworks

Project modality	Gender-disaggregated indicators		Gender-specific indicators	
	No.	%	No.	%
MSP/FSP	165	74.0	40	17.9
Enabling activity	52	64.2	14	17.3
Total	217	71.4	54	17.8

to compare against, because this type of analysis was not done for OPS5.

The updated CEO endorsement/approval template for MSPs and FSPs demands a discussion of “how gender equality and women’s empowerment issues are mainstreamed into the project implementation and monitoring, taking into account the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men.” In addition, the document requires the agency to say whether the project conducted a gender analysis during project preparation. Quality-at-entry project documentation was analyzed for the inclusion and mention of a gender analysis and/or social assessment with gender elements. Only in a small number of instances (13.9 percent of MSPs and FSPs) did such analysis take place and in even fewer instances were the results of such an analysis shared. Almost half of the MSP/FSP projects fail to mention a gender analysis either being planned or completed (table 5.5). None of the enabling activities indicated that a gender analysis or social assessment had taken place. A gender analysis was planned in roughly half of the enabling activity projects, while the other half of the projects failed to mention a gender analysis (table 5.6). Fifty-two percent of projects either planned or conducted a gender analysis. The figure is the same when focusing specifically on MSPs and FSPs.

The evaluation team specifically reviewed projects without mention of a gender analysis to determine whether a social assessment was being planned or had taken place (table 5.6). Most of these projects also failed to mention a social assessment being planned or having taken place: 86.6 percent and 82.1 percent of MSPs and FSPs and enabling activities, respectively. This is surprising, given that to align with the minimum requirements of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, the GEF Agency is required “to undertake social assessment, including gender analysis, or to use similar

TABLE 5.5 Quality-at-entry review of gender analysis

Gender analysis status	Projects	
	Number	Percent
MSPs/FSPs		
Not mentioned	106	47.5
Planned	86	38.6
Took place, but not shared	19	8.5
Took place and shared	12	5.4
Total	223	100.0
Enabling activities		
Not mentioned	39	48.1
Planned	42	51.9
Took place, but not shared	0	0.0
Took place and shared	0	0.0
Total	81	100.0

TABLE 5.6 Quality-at-entry review of social assessment

Social assessment status	Projects	
	Number	Percent
MSPs/FSPs		
Not mentioned	92	86.8
Planned	11	10.4
Took place, but not shared	1	0.9
Took place and shared	2	1.9
Total	106	100.0
Enabling activities		
Not mentioned	32	82.1
Planned	7	17.9
Took place, but not shared	0	0.0
Took place and shared	0	0.0
Total	39	100.0

methods to assess the potential roles, benefits, impacts and risks for women and men of different ages, ethnicities, and social structure and status. These studies may be used, along with other types of studies to better inform project formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation” (GEF 2012, 2).

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming leaves room for interpretation as to whether such an analysis needs to take place before or after CEO endorsement/approval. The CEO endorsement/approval template now requires GEF Agencies to report whether a gender analysis has taken place. Because the aim of a gender analysis is to facilitate the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men into the project's design, the evaluation team asserts that a gender analysis must be part of the project design process, in advance of CEO endorsement/approval.

A gender analysis or social assessment with gender elements is an important component of gender mainstreaming in project review and design. Consequently, none of the projects lacking mention of a gender analysis or social assessment were rated gender mainstreamed and less than 5 percent of these 124 projects were rated gender sensitive; the majority of these projects (114 out of 124) were rated gender aware. The meaningful inclusion of gender in project review and design demands a gender analysis or social assessment with gender elements.

A final part of the quality-at-entry review focused on applying the following gender rating, which [annex B](#) describes further. The gender rating was piloted in the LDCF program evaluation (GEF IEO 2016a), was used in the 2017 SCCF program evaluation (GEF IEO 2017), and—based on discussion with gender focal points and the acceptance of approach papers and evaluation findings in the case of the LDCF—has been well received by the GEF Secretariat, LDCF/SCCF Council, and gender focal points of various donors. The gender rating scales used are as follows:

- **Not gender relevant.** Gender plays no role in the planned intervention.
- **Gender blind.** Project does not demonstrate awareness of the roles, rights, responsibilities,

and power relations associated with being male or female.

- **Gender aware.** Project recognizes the economic/social/political roles, rights, entitlements, responsibilities, obligations, and power relations socially assigned to men and women. However, it might work around existing gender differences and inequalities, or it does not sufficiently show how it addresses gender differences and promotes gender equalities.
- **Gender sensitive.** Project adopts gender-sensitive methodologies (a gender assessment is undertaken, gender-disaggregated data are collected, and gender-sensitive indicators are integrated in monitoring and evaluation to address gender differences and promote gender equality).
- **Gender mainstreamed.** Project ensures that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to most, if not all, activities. It assesses the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs, in any area and at all levels.
- **Gender transformative.** Project goes beyond gender mainstreaming and facilitates a critical examination of gender norms, roles, and relationships; strengthens or creates systems that support gender equity; and/or questions and changes gender norms and dynamics.

Projects that were part of the OPS5 pre–May 2011 and post–May 2011 samples were reassessed using this gender rating to identify trends of gender mainstreaming in the GEF since OPS5.

The evaluation team rated 18 percent (55 out of 304 projects) of CEO-endorsed and -approved projects under OPS6 as gender mainstreamed or higher; 16.4 percent were rated gender mainstreamed,

while five projects (1.6 percent) are seen as potentially gender transformative. MSPs and FSPs performed better than enabling activities, with 21.1 percent (47 of 223 projects) rated as gender mainstreamed, versus 3.7 percent (three out of 81 projects) for enabling activities (table 5.7).

Focusing on the gender mainstreaming rating category, the results are similar to the OPS5 post-May 2011 reassessed baseline data (table 5.8 and figure 5.1). The biggest change over time is that in the OPS6 project sample only four projects (1.3 percent) are rated gender blind, compared with 64 percent and 29.2 percent of projects in the OPS5 pre-May 2011 and post-May 2011 samples respectively (71 out of 111 projects and 79 out of 271 projects).

The biggest increase under OPS6 is in the category “gender aware.” Despite this category’s recognition of the economic, social, and political roles, rights, entitlements, responsibilities, obligations, and power relations socially assigned to men and women, a project rated gender aware

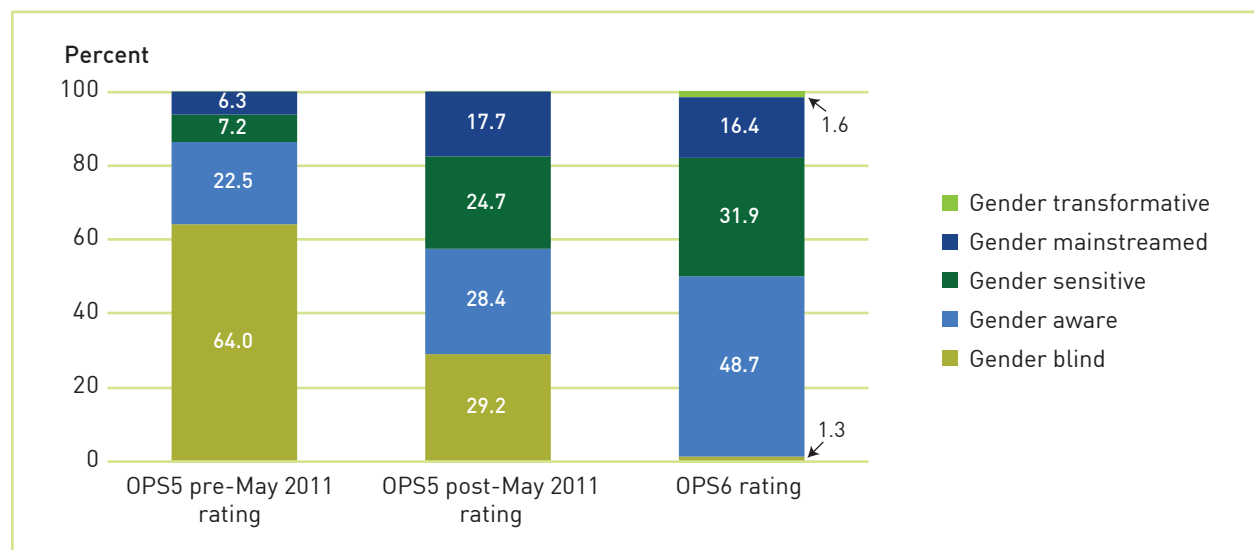
TABLE 5.7 Quality-at-entry gender rating by project modality (number of projects)

Gender rating	MSP/FSP	Enabling activity	Total
0. Gender blind	4	0	4
1. Gender aware	103	45	148
2. Gender sensitive	64	33	97
3. Gender mainstreamed	47	3	50
4. Gender transformative	5	0	5
Total	223	81	304

TABLE 5.8 Quality-at-entry gender rating for OPS6 data and OPS5 baseline (number of projects)

Gender rating	OPS6	OPS5 post-May 2011	OPS5 pre-May 2011
0. Gender blind	4	79	71
1. Gender aware	148	77	25
2. Gender sensitive	97	67	8
3. Gender mainstreamed	50	48	7
4. Gender transformative	5	0	0
Total	304	271	111

FIGURE 5.1 Quality-at-entry gender rating



might work around existing gender differences and inequalities, or might not sufficiently show how it addresses gender differences and promotes gender equality. While the lower number of gender-blind projects is positive, growth in the rating categories “gender sensitive” and “gender mainstreamed” is limited when comparing post-May 2011 OPS5 data with the OPS6 rating, about 7 percentage points for “gender sensitive” and 0.3 percentage points for “gender mainstreamed” and higher (figure 5.1).

The evaluation team used a weighted gender rating score to examine trends and make comparisons between sets of projects, for example between focal areas or GEF Agencies. The score gives one point for a gender-aware project, two points for a gender-sensitive project, three points for a gender-mainstreamed project, and four points for a gender-transformative project. The sum of these is then divided by the total number of projects, giving a weighted gender rating score with a value between zero and four; zero being gender blind and four being gender transformative (equation 5.1).

Comparing the weighted gender rating score for the OPS5 pre-May 2011, OPS5 post-May 2011, and OPS6 quality-at-entry data, the score has increased over time (table 5.9). A score of 3 means that, on average, all projects of a set of projects are rated gender mainstreamed. A score of 1.68 for the OPS6 quality-at-entry sample means that projects are not reaching, on average, the rating category “gender sensitive.” Projects are, on average, however, closer to being gender sensitive than to being gender aware. Note that assuming the

TABLE 5.9 Weighted gender rating score for OPS6 cohort and OPS5 baseline

Data set	Weighted gender rating score
OPS6 quality-at-entry	1.68
OPS5 post-May 2011	1.31
OPS5 pre-May 2011	0.56

figure shows that the OPS6 cohort is “56 percent mainstreamed,” e.g. 1.68/3, would be incorrect—3 being the score for gender mainstreamed.

Given that similar gender data are available from the LDCF and SCCF program evaluations (GEF IEO 2016a, 2017), comparing the score between funds is possible. When excluding LDCF and SCCF from the OPS6 quality-at-entry data, the weighted gender rating score is 1.62. The scores from the LDCF and SCCF data sets—part of the LDCF and SCCF program evaluations of 2015 and 2016—are 1.77 and 1.82, respectively, which shows that the adaptation-focused set of projects under the LDCF and the SCCF score slightly higher than other projects in the OPS6 cohort.

Assessing the gender rating and weighted gender rating score by region shows that Africa, Asia, and Europe and Central Asia have higher scores, compared with Latin America and the Caribbean and regional and global projects. Most of the gender-mainstreamed projects are also geographically located in Africa, Asia, and Europe and Central Asia (table 5.10).

Thirteen projects that were part of GEF-4 and GEF-5 were visited in Ghana, Honduras, and the Philippines as part of a field-verification

EQUATION 5.1

$$\text{Weighted gender rating score} = \frac{\text{No. of gender-aware projects} + \{ \text{No. of gender-sensitive projects} \times 2 \} + \{ \text{No. of gender-mainstreamed projects} \times 3 \} + \{ \text{No. of gender-transformative projects} \times 4 \}}{\text{Total number of projects}}$$

TABLE 5.10 Quality-at-entry gender rating and weighted gender rating score by region

Region	Number of projects					Total	Weighted gender rating score
	Gender blind	Gender aware	Gender sensitive	Gender mainstreamed	Gender transformative		
Africa	0	50	41	16	2	109	1.72
Asia	0	30	25	17	0	72	1.82
Europe & Central Asia	1	20	9	10	0	40	1.70
Latin Am. & Caribbean	2	28	15	5	1	51	1.51
Regional	0	3	2	0	0	5	1.40
Global	1	17	5	2	2	27	1.52
Total	4	148	97	50	5	304	1.68

exercise to validate these ratings.⁴ Consistent with the findings of this evaluation, the majority of the projects fell under the “gender-aware” and “gender-sensitive” ratings. Only one was considered “gender mainstreamed,” and two were rated “gender blind.”

In the Ghana project Preparation of Ghana’s Initial Biennial Update Report to UNFCCC (GEF ID 5445), the project implementation team retrospectively conceded that while the technical assessments it prepared did include sex-disaggregated data and some discussion of gender, it would have benefited from incorporating a gender analysis and from ensuring more and more balanced representation of women and men in the process. In acknowledging these limitations, the implementing partner is ensuring that Ghana’s next biennial UNFCCC update (due later in 2017) addresses the previous report’s weaknesses. It has engaged dedicated gender experts in the current process and the

national Ministry for Gender, Children, and Social Protection.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)–implemented Promoting Value Chain Approach to Adaptation in Agriculture project (GEF ID 4368) in Ghana was the only visited project to earn a “gender-mainstreamed” rating. The project engaged a gender specialist as part of the core implementation team and conducted gender-sensitivity training for all project team members, including on the project’s guiding gender principles. It also used an approach that ensured the inclusion of women, youth, and vulnerable people in decision-making processes and in community-level capacity development efforts, by, for example, convening women-only training and consultation sessions where necessary. The evaluation team found a strong level of women’s participation within the project’s producer group-focused activities, given that women dominate this part of the cassava production value chain in Ghana.

The two enabling activity projects visited in Honduras received “gender-aware” ratings. Despite clear gender-related mandates and decisions in the UNFCCC, and an even stronger gender mandate in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the projects did not sufficiently emphasize

⁴Note that these projects are not part of the OPS6 sample selected for the quality-at-entry review, given that none of the sampled projects have started implementation. However, prior to the country visits, these projects were assessed using the same criteria as the OPS6 sample, and country visits helped to validate these findings. Most of the projects visited were part of the OPS5 quality-at-entry review sample of projects.

mainstreaming gender in national biodiversity strategic action plans or in the national report to the UNFCCC.

While the Honduran project implementers of National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011–2020 Strategic Plan (GEF ID 5016) viewed gender as relevant for the updating of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP), the General Directorate for Biodiversity was unaware of gender-related convention guidance. It also has not, thus far, included the National Institute of Women as a partner in integrating Honduras' obligations under the CBD into its national development and sectoral planning frameworks (Plan of Nation 2012–2038). Though women were invited to participate in the stocktaking exercise associated with the development of the NBSAP, the project did not use a specific mechanism to ensure their participation. In the absence of gender-specific indicators, the project also has not monitored the level of women's participation.

However, gender-sensitive projects visited tended to undertake a gender analysis (or gender-informed social analysis), adopt gender-sensitive methodologies to design project activities, and include gender-sensitive indicators as part of the project results framework. For example, in seeking to restore the productive capacity of critical watersheds and enhance biodiversity conservation in select resources-dependent communities in the Philippines, the Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management Sector Project (GEF ID 3980) undertook a social assessment and developed a gender action plan to address the specific needs of women, especially indigenous women, in natural resource management and access to services and to increase their participation in decision-making mechanisms such as watershed management committees and community

councils by establishing specific quotas (30 percent). A social assessment specialist on the project team monitors the implementation of the project's gender action plan and reports on gender-related achievements quarterly. This project, in the view of the evaluation team, would have received a gender-mainstreamed rating, had the regional-level implementing partners been aware of the gender action plan.

The Philippines project Improve the Health and Environment of Artisanal Gold Mining Communities by Reducing Mercury Emissions (GEF ID 5216) is another example of a gender-sensitive project. The project undertook a situational analysis of women in the mining sector to support the design of activities related to raising community awareness of the health risks of mercury and building mining communities' capacity in alternative technologies in artisanal gold mining. It also incorporated gender-disaggregated indicators in the results framework.

5.1 Classification of projects by rating category

[Annex B](#) further explains the gender rating categories. Unlike the OPS5 substudy that included a gender not relevant category, all projects analyzed as part of the OPS6 cohort for the quality-at-entry review are regarded as gender relevant.

GENDER BLIND

Of the 304 projects reviewed, four were rated gender blind. Two of these projects indicated in the request for CEO endorsement a lack of gender relevance, but the evaluation team disagrees with that statement. One project focused on emission reduction in the aviation sector, while the other was a public lighting energy efficiency program. The remaining two projects were rated gender blind due to a lack of meaningful coverage of

gender, e.g., mentioning that 50 percent of the population are women is not sufficient to be rated as gender aware.

GENDER AWARE

Almost 50 percent of the projects reviewed (148 out of 304 projects) were rated gender aware. Three subsets of projects can be distinguished: (1) projects that mention gender superficially, but just enough to avoid being rated gender blind; (2) projects that focus mainly on gender balance and inclusion, without explaining why; and (3) projects that show a clear understanding of and appreciation for the economic/social/political roles, rights, entitlements, responsibilities, obligations, and power relations socially assigned to men and women, but do not explain how gender considerations inform their activities and how activities address gender equality. The latter group could easily have been rated gender sensitive if the projects had provided more information on how gender-relevant information was going to be applied. Two thirds of World Bank projects and almost 57 percent of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) projects fall in the “gender-aware” category. Almost 59 percent of the persistent organic pollutant (POP) focal area projects and 54 percent of international waters focal area projects are in the “gender-aware” category.

GENDER SENSITIVE

The evaluation team rated 97 out of 304 projects, almost one third of projects, as gender sensitive. All projects within this group have undertaken or are planning a gender analysis or social assessment with a gender component. For this rating, two subsets of projects are distinguishable: (1) those that do not explain how the results of a gender analysis or social assessment will inform their activities and (2) those that do. Some of the

projects in the latter group could move toward the gender-mainstreamed rating if they were to extend the gender focus to more of the planned activities. Note that two of the projects in this category will not be able to move toward being gender mainstreamed, because only a few of the planned activities lend themselves to gender mainstreaming. Making the goal of gender equality central to most, if not all, activities will not be possible for these projects. This is the case for one project under the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund, which focuses on implementing a national strategy and action plan on access to genetic resources, and for a second project developing a partial risk-sharing facility for energy efficiency. Almost 45 percent of Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) projects and 63.2 percent of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) projects were rated gender sensitive. More than 50 percent of projects in the chemicals and waste focal area and 46.2 percent of projects in the land degradation focal area were rated gender sensitive.

GENDER MAINSTREAMED

Fifty of the 304 projects reviewed were rated gender mainstreamed. These projects included gender-disaggregated indicators, and almost half of them had gender-specific indicators. All of these projects had planned or completed a gender analysis or social assessment with a gender element. Almost all of the projects rated gender mainstreamed targeted the different needs and vulnerabilities of men and women and are expected to have moderately to significantly different outcomes for them. All three Asian Development Bank (ADB) projects reviewed were rated gender mainstreamed. Looking at GEF Agencies with larger portfolios in the sample, almost 20 percent of UNDP projects, around 16 percent of UNIDO projects, and 14.5 percent of

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) projects were rated gender mainstreamed. None of the 21 World Bank projects reviewed was rated gender mainstreamed. Multifocal area projects outperform single focal area projects when comparing gender ratings by focal area, with 23.5 percent of multifocal area projects being rated gender mainstreamed. Roughly 22 percent of climate change and 16 percent of biodiversity focal area projects were rated gender mainstreamed.

Table 5.11 presents five projects that can be regarded as “good examples” with respect to a gender-mainstreamed rating. All four projects are part of the GEF-5 replenishment period, and all are FSP.

They are considered good practices because project documents are consistent in integrating gender in project approach, outcomes, outputs, and /or activities and in monitoring and evaluation frameworks. The FAO climate change project in Malawi (GEF ID 5328) provides

an extensive description of gender issues, gender-differentiated vulnerabilities, identification of priority issues, and corresponding actions. Gender is referenced in almost all project components, and an extensive gender mainstreaming strategy has been developed to monitor the effectiveness of activities for women and men. The UNDP project in Samoa, Economy-Wide Integration of Climate Change Adaptation and DRM/DRR to Reduce Climate Vulnerability of Communities in Samoa (GEF ID 5417), developed a strong gender baseline, founded on earlier work on gender-differentiated impacts for the Pilot Project for Climate Resilience and a U.S. Agency for International Development sociocultural gender analysis; it also sought partnerships with the Ministry of Women, Communities and Social Development and women’s groups to diversify women’s livelihood opportunities. UNEP’s ecosystem project in Haiti (GEF ID 5531) analyzed gender vulnerabilities, including how male vulnerabilities influence overall social pressures; set a strong baseline that informed gender-differentiated

TABLE 5.11 Quality-at-entry gender mainstreamed good practice examples

GEF ID	Lead GEF Agency	Country	Focal area	Title	Project modality	Trust fund
5328	FAO	Malawi	Climate change	Building Climate Change Resilience in the Fisheries Sector in Malawi	FSP	LDCF
5417	UNDP	Samoa	Climate change	Economy-Wide Integration of Climate Change Adaptation and DRM/DRR [Disaster Risk Management/Disaster Risk Reduction] to Reduce Climate Vulnerability of Communities in Samoa	FSP	LDCF
5531	UNEP	Haiti	Multifocal area	Ecosystem Approach to Haiti Côte Sud	FSP	Multi-trust fund
5674	AfDB	Regional—Uganda, Congo, Dem Rep.	International waters	Lakes Edward and Albert Integrated Fisheries and Water Resources Management Project	FSP	GEF Trust Fund
5886	UNDP	Global	Biodiversity	Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation	MSP	GEF Trust Fund

targets and activities; and included gender-disaggregated targets and indicators in its results framework. The international waters focal area project by the African Development Bank (AfDB) in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lakes Edward and Albert Integrated Fisheries and Water Resources Management Project (GEF ID 5674), combines gender-differentiated project activities with the gendered policy harmonization of fisheries regulations. The project results framework includes a specific outcome on enhanced women's access to resources and gender-specific and gender-disaggregated indicators. Thirty percent of the overall project budget is to be allocated to gender components.

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE

The evaluation team rated five projects gender transformative. These projects potentially facilitate a critical examination of gender norms, roles, and relationships; strengthen or create systems that support gender equity; and/or question and change gender norms and dynamics. All three Conservation International projects reviewed were rated gender transformative (GEF IDs 5668, 5712, and 5735). The other two projects rated gender transformative at entry are led by UNEP

(GEF ID 5730) and UNIDO (GEF ID 5704). Three of the projects are part of the biodiversity focal area; the other two projects are part of the climate change focal area.

5.2 Attention to gender by focal area

The focal areas climate change, chemicals and waste, multifocal area, and biodiversity have the most projects reviewed as part of the quality-at-entry sample. Among the focal areas, multifocal area projects outperform single focal areas in their quality-at-entry gender ratings.

Three of the four gender-blind projects are in the climate change focal area, but this focal area also has the most projects with 115 projects (table 5.12). Twenty-two percent of projects in the climate change focal area were rated gender mainstreamed.

The weighted gender rating score (table 5.13) was calculated for the four larger focal areas, revealing that differences among focal areas are small. Chemicals and waste underperforms in comparison, but 50 of the 57 projects in this sample are enabling activities, which have fewer gender-reporting requirements. When looking

TABLE 5.12 Quality-at-entry gender ratings by focal area (number of projects)

Focal area	Gender blind	Gender aware	Gender sensitive	Gender mainstreamed	Gender transformative	Total
Biodiversity	1	20	8	6	3	38
Chemicals and waste	0	27	29	1	0	57
Climate change	3	56	29	25	2	115
International waters	0	7	4	2	0	13
Land degradation	0	5	6	2	0	13
Multifocal area	0	23	16	12	0	51
POPs	0	10	5	2	0	17
Total	4	148	97	50	5	304

TABLE 5.13 Quality-at-entry weighted gender rating score by focal area

Focal area	Number of projects	Weighted gender rating score	
		All projects	MSPs/FSPs only
Biodiversity	38	1.74	1.74
Chemicals and waste	57	1.54	1.71
Climate change	115	1.71	1.81
Multifocal area	51	1.78	1.78

at the weighted gender rating score for MSPs and FSPs only, chemicals and waste has a score that is similar to the other focal areas. Twenty-nine enabling activities are in the climate change focal area, and one enabling activity is in the multifocal area. In the case of the climate change focal area, the large number of enabling activities negatively affects the weighted gender rating score.

Focusing on the focal area with the largest share of projects in this analysis—climate change—the evaluation team compared the OPS6 findings with the OPS5 baseline (table 5.14). Comparing weighted gender rating scores across portfolios for climate change and other focal areas clearly shows that the climate change focal area has undergone the biggest improvements. The climate change focal area improved its score almost 0.8 points from the OPS5 post–May 2011 rating to the OPS6 rating.

5.3 Results by GEF Agency

Of the quality-at-entry sample, UNDP and UNEP projects make up the most projects reviewed, followed by UNIDO, World Bank, and FAO projects. Of these five GEF Agencies' projects, 19.7 percent of the UNDP's projects rated gender mainstreamed. The remaining four GEF Agencies had percentages below the quality-at-entry's sample total of 16.4 percent: 15.8 percent for UNIDO, 14.5 percent for UNEP, 11.1 percent for FAO, while none of the World Bank projects reviewed were rated gender mainstreamed (table 5.15).

As stated previously, a gender analysis or social assessment with gender elements is an important component of gender mainstreaming in project review and design, and it is one of the minimum requirements of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. Table 5.16 shows the quality-at-entry review of inclusion of a gender analysis by GEF Agency.

TABLE 5.14 Quality-at-entry gender rating climate change focal area, OPS6 and OPS5 baseline (number of projects)

Gender rating	OPS6	OPS5 post–May 2011	OPS5 pre–May 2011
0. Gender blind	3	41	25
1. Gender aware	56	19	4
2. Gender sensitive	29	14	3
3. Gender mainstreamed	25	11	3
4. Gender transformative	2	0	0
Total	115	85	35
Weighted gender rating score	1.71	0.94	0.54

TABLE 5.15 Quality-at-entry gender ratings by GEF Agency (number of projects)

GEF Agency	Gender blind	Gender aware	Gender sensitive	Gender mainstreamed	Gender transformative	Total
ADB	0	0	0	3	0	3
AfDB	0	1	3	2	0	6
CI	0	0	0	0	3	3
EBRD	0	2	1	0	0	3
FAO	0	8	8	2	0	18
IDB	1	2	0	0	0	3
IFAD	0	1	2	1	0	4
IUCN	0	2	0	0	0	2
UNDP	3	72	27	25	0	127
UNEP	0	39	25	11	1	76
UNIDO	0	7	24	6	1	38
World Bank	0	14	7	0	0	21
Total	4	148	97	50	5	304

NOTE: CI = Conservation International; EBRD = European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; IDB = Inter-American Development Bank; IUCN = International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

TABLE 5.16 Quality-at-entry review of gender analysis by GEF Agency (number of projects)

Gender analysis status	UNDP	UNEP	UNIDO	World Bank	FAO
Not mentioned	65	41	11	13	6
Planned	53	30	23	7	10
Took place, but not shared	7	5	1	1	2
Took place and shared	2	0	3	0	0
Total	127	76	38	21	18

Agencies that do a gender analysis as part of project design generally have a better gender rating. The World Bank does not mention a gender analysis in almost 62 percent of the projects reviewed; UNEP and UNDP follow with 53.9 and 51.2 percent of projects not mentioning a gender analysis. UNIDO and FAO, however, plan to or have done a gender analysis in 71.1 percent and 66.7 percent of their projects respectively. These differences are also visible in the weighted gender rating scores by GEF Agency in table 5.17.

TABLE 5.17 Weighted gender rating score by GEF Agency

GEF Agency	Number of projects	Weighted gender rating score
FAO	18	1.67
UNDP	127	1.58
UNEP	76	1.66
UNIDO	38	2.03
World Bank	21	1.33

6: Results of the review of completed projects

A stratified random sample of 249 projects, including three enabling activities, was examined using all documentation available at project completion.¹ The evaluation team first rated projects on whether gender considerations were evident in any of the project documentation reviewed. Note that most of the projects reviewed were designed before the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming came into effect. Whereas the project-at-entry review looked at projects' design, the review of completed projects focused on gender results achieved, either by design or by chance.

The OPS5 substudy data of 281 projects, including one enabling activity, was reassessed to serve as a baseline. The overview of projects reviewed by replenishment period (table 6.1) shows that the data set has evolved from OPS5 to OPS6; for OPS5 most of the projects reviewed were part of replenishment periods GEF-2 and GEF-3, whereas for OPS6 most of the completed projects reviewed are from the GEF-3 and GEF-4 replenishment periods.

Only 35 percent of the OPS6 completed projects reviewed by the evaluation team considered

¹Project preparation grant document, PIF, request for CEO endorsement, project review, Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) review, GEF Agency's response to comments, tracking tools, project documents, gender analysis, social assessment, project implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, and terminal evaluation reviews.

TABLE 6.1 Overview of projects reviewed, by GEF replenishment period

Replenishment period	Number of projects reviewed	
	OPS6 cohort	OPS5 baseline
Pilot	0	1
GEF-1	7	15
GEF-2	24	77
GEF-3	103	160
GEF-4	112	28
GEF-5	3	0
Total	249	281

gender, compared with close to 40 percent of the OPS5 baseline projects (table 6.2). Note that the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming came into effect in May 2011. The effect of its adoption is not yet visible in the OPS6 cohort of completed projects, given that almost all of the projects were developed before the policy.

TABLE 6.2 Consideration of gender in project documentation for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline

Gender considered	OPS6 cohort		OPS5 baseline	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	86	34.5	112	39.9
No	163	65.5	169	60.1
Total	249	100.0	281	100.0

The second analysis of the review of completed projects focused on gender considerations in project results frameworks, specifically the inclusion of gender-disaggregated and gender-specific indicators. Only 26.5 percent of completed projects reviewed included gender-disaggregated indicators. Three projects (1.2 percent) used gender-specific indicators in their project results frameworks (table 6.3). No equivalent OPS5 data are available to compare against.

TABLE 6.3 Gender considerations in project results frameworks of completed projects

Gender considered	Gender-disaggregated indicators		Gender-specific indicators	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	66	26.5	3	1.2
No	183	73.5	246	98.8
Total	249	100.0	249	100.0

The evaluation team assessed documentation of completed projects to identify the inclusion and mention of a gender analysis and/or social assessment. A gender analysis took place in 15.6 percent of the completed projects, and 3.2 percent of the projects reviewed shared the results of the analysis. Five projects mention that a gender analysis was planned, but provided no evidence of such an analysis having taken place by the time of project completion (table 6.4). No equivalent OPS5 data

TABLE 6.4 Review of gender analysis in completed projects, OPS6 cohort

Gender analysis status	Number	Percent
Not mentioned	205	82.3
Planned	5	2.0
Took place, but not shared	31	12.4
Took place and shared	8	3.2
Total	249	100.0

are available to compare against, because the categorization used in OPS5 was different.

A final aspect of the completed projects review focused on applying the gender rating, described in [annex B](#), to the OPS6 cohort of completed projects and to reassess the OPS5 baseline. Roughly 45 percent of projects reviewed are gender blind. Forty-one percent of projects were rated gender aware, 11.2 percent were rated gender sensitive, and 2.4 percent were rated gender mainstreamed (A decrease of more than 15 percentage points has occurred in the gender-blind category between the OPS6 data and the OPS5 baseline. Similarly, projects rated gender aware have increased by more than 15 percentage points. A strong correlation likely exists between the decrease in gender-blind projects and the increase in gender-aware projects from OPS5 to OPS6.

Compared with the OPS5 baseline, fewer projects are gender mainstreamed, but overall a slight improvement has occurred when looking at the weighted gender rating score. For the OPS6 cohort of completed projects, the weighted gender rating score is 0.71 compared with 0.65 for the OPS5 baseline. A score of 0.71 for the OPS6 completed projects sample means that projects are not reaching, on average, the “gender aware” rating. But projects are, on average, closer to being gender aware than to being gender blind. While the percentage of completed projects considering gender under OPS5 was slightly higher (table 6.5), closed projects that were part of the OPS6 cohort that do consider gender do so—on average—slightly better. Given that the OPS6 data set is “younger,” changes in gender policies of GEF Agencies and general advances in the field of gender equality thinking are likely to have had a positive—albeit small—influence on the weighted gender rating score, when comparing the OPS6 cohort against the OPS5 baseline.

TABLE 6.5 Completed projects' gender rating for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline

Gender rating	OPS6 cohort		OPS5 baseline	
	No.	%	No.	%
0. Gender blind	113	45.4	169	60.1
1. Gender aware	102	41.0	68	24.2
2. Gender sensitive	28	11.2	17	6.0
3. Gender mainstreamed	6	2.4	27	9.6
4. Gender transformative	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	249	100.0	281	100.0
Weighted score	0.71		0.65	

Assessing the gender rating and the weighted gender rating score by region shows that Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean regions have higher scores, compared with Europe and Central Asia and regional and global projects. All the gender-mainstreamed projects are also geographically located in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean regions (table 6.6).

The evaluation team combined OPS5 and OPS6 gender-rating data for completed projects to review the performance across GEF replenishment periods for a combined data set of 537 projects. The pilot phase and GEF-5 were not taken into account, given that the low number

of completed projects for these replenishment periods was not representative. Through the GEF replenishment periods, a clear, albeit slow, improvement is apparent when it comes to gender in GEF-funded projects (figure 6.1). When comparing the GEF-3 and GEF-4 periods, which perform similarly, the fact that GEF-4 terminal evaluations are still being received must be accounted for, so the overall performance of the period is likely to change over time, as new data become available.

6.1 Classification of projects by rating category

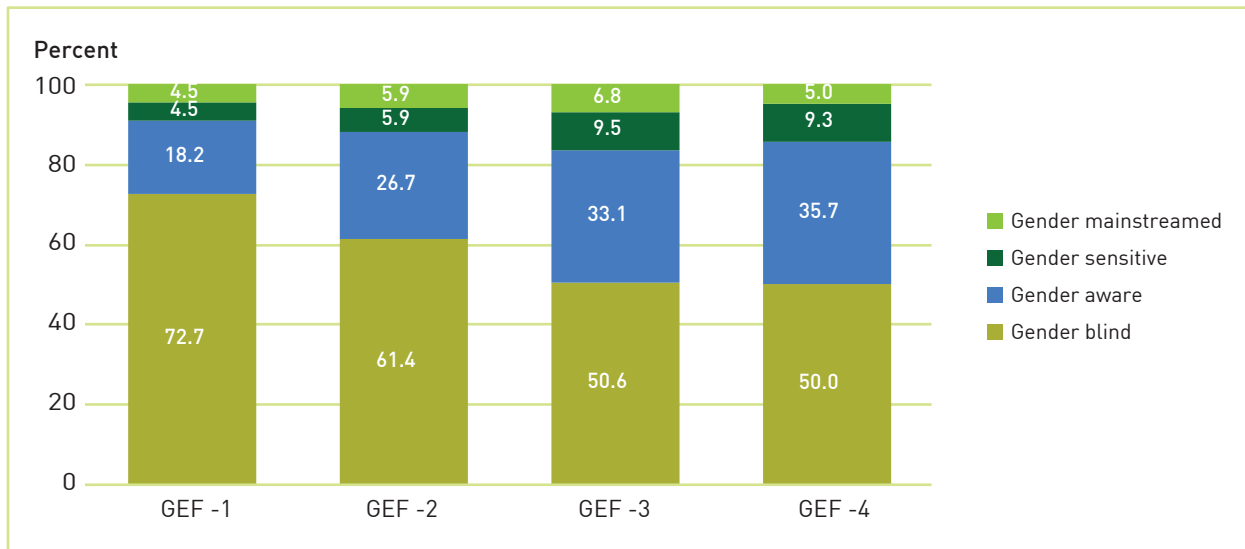
[Annex B](#) provides additional explanation of the gender rating categories. All OPS6 completed projects analyzed by the evaluation team are considered gender relevant.

Gender blind. Although all completed projects are regarded as gender relevant, 113 of the 249 projects (45.4 percent) do not mention gender in a meaningful way. Most of the projects rated gender blind were rated as such due to the absence of gender reference in the project documents. Almost 70 percent of UNEP projects were rated gender blind, as were 54.8 percent of World Bank projects. All seven completed projects under the ozone-depleting substances focal area were rated gender blind by the evaluation team, as were 14

TABLE 6.6 Completed projects' gender rating and weighted gender rating score by region

Region	Number of projects				Total	Weighted gender rating score
	Gender blind	Gender aware	Gender sensitive	Gender mainstreamed		
Africa	27	27	13	3	70	0.89
Asia	20	30	8	2	60	0.87
Europe & Central Asia	29	14	3	0	46	0.43
Latin Am. & Caribbean	18	20	3	1	42	0.69
Regional	4	5	0	0	9	0.56
Global	15	6	1	0	22	0.36
Total	113	102	28	6	249	0.71

FIGURE 6.1 Gender rating for completed projects by GEF replenishment period



out of 25 projects (56 percent) under the international waters focal area. With 37 projects, most gender-blind projects are part of the biodiversity focal area.

In some cases, the at-entry project documentation showed gender awareness, but this did not translate into the project's implementation. UNEP's regional biodiversity project Removing Barriers to Invasive Plant Management in Africa (GEF ID 2140), for example, mentions women in the context and project description, but the project has no gender-targeted components, activities, outcomes, or outputs. The project's monitoring and evaluation system was also gender blind. The terminal evaluation noted low engagement with women and did not specify whether any engagement with women was by design or by chance. Another example is UNIDO's Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Improved Energy Efficiency in the Industrial Sector project in Cambodia (GEF ID 3976). The terminal evaluation noted that almost half of the industrial small and medium enterprises visited during the evaluation were headed by female CEOs, and small and

medium enterprises in the garment industry had more than 75 percent female employees. That data did not inform the project's implementation and project implementation reports, or the terminal evaluation provided no evidence of gender being considered during project implementation. As a last example, in the World Bank project Forest and Environment Development Policy Grant (FEDPG) in Cameroon (GEF ID 1063) the project document talks about gender, "The Partners shall seek to adopt a common approach...relating to cross-cutting domains such as respect of the rights of indigenous peoples, gender equality, etc." (World Bank 2016b, 53), but the project implementation reports, midterm review, and terminal evaluation provide no evidence of any gender results.

A need exists to ensure that project evaluators conducting terminal evaluations look more critically at projects' gender performance. Many terminal evaluations simply state that gender issues were not addressed, or that no gender impacts are planned or expected, without giving further explanation to substantiate such a

conclusion. The evaluators of Argentina's Third UNFCCC National Communications project (GEF ID 3964) came to the conclusion that because "the project involved production of studies and capacity building...there were no direct poverty, gender, or social development impacts, even though project outputs included studies on labor impacts and social vulnerability to climate change" (World Bank 2016a, 31). Studies and capacity building on labor impacts and social vulnerability should, by definition, tackle gender issues.

Gender aware. Forty-one percent of projects reviewed (102 out of 249 projects) were rated gender aware. Three subsets of projects are distinguishable: (1) projects where indirect positive effects are expected because women are part of the target population, but not specifically targeted; (2) projects that try to account for gender, but do so without a gender analysis, gender strategy, or action plan; and (3) a smaller group of projects (16 in total) where a gender analysis took place, and sometimes even a gender-mainstreaming plan was developed, but these had no bearing on the project implementation. Some of the projects in the second group may have done more on gender, but these efforts were not reported. Most gender-aware projects (34 projects) are part of the biodiversity focal area.

Gender sensitive. Twenty-eight projects (11.2 percent) were rated gender sensitive by the evaluation team. Most of the projects within this group completed a gender analysis or social assessment. Some projects did not discuss a gender analysis, but gender elements in project components and project implementation point toward a gender analysis having taken place. For example, one of the completed projects visited in the OPS6 cohort, the UNDP project in Honduras, Conservation of Biodiversity in the Indigenous Productive Landscapes of the Moskitia, supported the inclusion and/or equal representation of women on the

boards of indigenous federations and local committees to enhance gender balance in decision making and, with the support of a gender consultant, designed interventions to build the capacity of women in the fishery and ecotourism sectors. Some of the gender-sensitive projects focused primarily on women's participation and gender balance in activities, whereas others adopted a gender equality and women's empowerment approach in some of the project activities. Projects in the latter group could have moved to the gender-mainstreamed category if they had extended the gender focus to more of the planned activities. In relative terms, most of the land degradation focal area projects are rated gender aware or gender sensitive, 45 and 25 percent respectively.

Gender mainstreamed. Only 2.4 percent of completed projects reviewed (six of 249 projects) were rated gender mainstreamed (table 6.7). Four of the projects are part of the GEF Trust Fund, while two projects fall under the LDCF. This is notable, given that only three LDCF projects were part of the OPS6 cohort.

The World Bank project in Burundi, Agricultural Rehabilitation and Sustainable Land Management Project (GEF ID 2357), appears to have had an important impact in building social cohesion in the communities in which it operated. The initial opposition husbands displayed regarding women's participation in producer organizations was over time replaced by a greater respect for their wives and more participation of women in household spending decisions. The World Bank project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Southern Provinces Rural Electrification II Program (GEF ID 2366), shows that rural electrification projects can achieve a gender-mainstreamed rating. Project documents provided an extensive gender-disaggregated contextual description, extensive consultations with local

TABLE 6.7 Completed projects rated gender mainstreamed

GEF ID	GEF Agency	Country	Focal area	Title	Trust fund
2357	World Bank	Burundi	Land degradation	Agricultural Rehabilitation and Sustainable Land Management Project	GEF Trust Fund
2366	World Bank	Lao PDR	Climate change	Southern Provinces Rural Electrification II Program	GEF Trust Fund
2511	UNDP	Senegal	Land degradation	Groundnut Basin Soil Management and Regeneration	GEF Trust Fund
3319	UNDP	Niger	Climate change	Implementing NAPA [National Adaptation Programme of Action] Priority Interventions to Build Resilience and Adaptive Capacity of the Agriculture Sector to Climate Change	LDCF
3404	UNDP	Cambodia	Climate change	Promoting Climate-Resilient Water Management and Agricultural Practices	LDCF
3604	UNDP	Colombia	Biodiversity	Mainstreaming Traditional Knowledge Associated with Agro-biodiversity in Colombian Agro-ecosystems	GEF Trust Fund

communities and women's groups were held, and a gender-sensitive approach was used to target disadvantaged households.

UNDP's land degradation project in Senegal, Groundnut Basin Soil Management and Regeneration (GEF ID 2511), actively tackled the common practice and tradition of excluding women in issues of access to land. Rural councils have adopted deliberations to grant good quality and well-located land to women's groups. Despite some regional differences related to religious pressures, project interventions have developed in communities, especially for women, a sense of confidence and of having better control over their quality of life.

The Implementing NAPA Priority Interventions to Build Resilience and Adaptive Capacity of the Agriculture Sector to Climate Change project by UNDP in Niger (GEF ID 3319) specifically targeted women and vulnerable groups. The project has helped to remedy existing gender imbalances by enhancing women's skills in management, administration, and teamwork, and lending direct support to

women's groups, setting up appropriate activities to allow them genuine autonomy. Women were also the main beneficiaries of water engineering works, which reduced the distances they had to walk to fetch water.

UNDP's project in Cambodia, Promoting Climate-Resilient Water Management and Agricultural Practices (GEF ID 3404), followed an integrated approach to agriculture, water, and gender, involving all three related ministries at the national level and departments at the grassroots level. A gender analysis was carried out, and a gender action plan was developed, focusing on women's participation related to four strategic goals: access to climate information, domestic water, water for irrigation, and irrigation and agriculture. Training materials on gender and climate change were developed, which also informed the next five-year strategic plan of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Men and women were equally involved in economic activities; women gained confidence in participating in the project implementation, which also induced a positive change in men's gender attitudes.

Finally, UNDP's biodiversity project in Colombia, Mainstreaming Traditional Knowledge Associated with Agro-biodiversity in Colombian Agro-ecosystems (GEF ID 3604), implemented a gender strategy that focused on equitable social participation, quality participation, leadership, empowerment, self-esteem, and economic autonomy. Gender equity was a specific project component, and the terminal evaluation notes gender impacts from gender-specific activities and from improving the conditions for family subsistence farming.

Gender transformative. None of the completed projects of the OPS6 cohort were rated gender transformative by the evaluation team.

6.2 Attention to gender by focal area

Biodiversity, climate change, multifocal area, and international waters had the most completed projects reviewed in the sample (table 6.8). Climate change, POPs, international waters, and multifocal area had the highest number of “not gender relevant” ratings in the completed projects sample in the OPS5 gender substudy, 77.6 percent, 61.5 percent, 51.4 percent, and 39.1 percent, respectively—although the expectation would be that these focal areas would represent a larger number of gender-blind projects. While

three of these focal areas have large numbers of gender-blind projects, the POPs focal area in the OPS6 cohort has fewer gender-blind projects. In the OPS6 cohort, all projects in the ozone-depleting substances focal area were rated gender blind. In absolute numbers, most gender-blind projects are part of the biodiversity focal area.

The weighted gender rating score (table 6.9) was calculated for the four larger focal areas. All focal areas except biodiversity improved, compared with OPS5 baseline data. Climate change and international waters have a weighted gender rating score below the overall score of the OPS6 cohort of completed projects. Differences among focal areas are small, but the cohort of multifocal area projects outperforms single focal areas in their completed projects' gender ratings and improved the most when compared with the OPS5 baseline data.

TABLE 6.9 Weighted gender rating score for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline by focal area

Focal area	OPS6 cohort	OPS5 baseline
Biodiversity	0.71	0.88
Climate change	0.64	0.35
International waters	0.52	0.36
Multifocal area	0.83	0.50
Total	0.71	0.65

TABLE 6.8 Completed projects' gender rating by focal area (number of projects)

Focal area	Gender blind	Gender aware	Gender sensitive	Gender mainstreamed	Total
Biodiversity	37	34	11	1	83
Climate change	34	30	3	3	70
International waters	14	9	2	0	25
Land degradation	4	9	5	2	20
Multifocal area	12	11	7	0	30
Ozone-depleting substances	7	0	0	0	7
POPs	5	9	0	0	14
Total	113	102	28	6	249

6.3 Results by GEF agency

Of the GEF Agencies, UNDP, World Bank, and UNEP have the most projects reviewed of the completed projects sample. UNDP and the World Bank are the only GEF Agencies to have completed projects rated gender mainstreamed and achieved the most gender-sensitive ratings in their respective completed projects (table 6.10).

UNDP's gender performance improved, when comparing the weighted gender rating scores of the OPS6 cohort with the OPS5 baseline (table 6.11). UNEP's and the World Bank's weighted gender rating scores declined. In UNEP's case, almost 70 percent of completed projects rated

TABLE 6.11 Weighted gender rating scores for OPS6 and OPS5 baseline by GEF Agency

GEF Agency	OPS6 cohort	OPS5 baseline
UNDP	0.85	0.69
UNEP	0.30	0.43
World Bank	0.58	0.71
Total	0.71	0.65

gender blind and no completed projects rated above gender aware. Both UNEP and the World Bank have a weighted gender rating score that is below the overall score of the OPS6 cohort of completed projects.

TABLE 6.10 Completed projects' gender rating by GEF Agency (number of projects)

GEF Agency	Gender blind	Gender aware	Gender sensitive	Gender mainstreamed	Total
ADB	1	1	1	0	3
FAO	0	1	1	0	2
Inter-American Dev. Bank	1	0	0	0	1
IFAD	1	2	3	0	6
UNDP	44	57	18	4	123
UNEP	23	10	0	0	33
UNIDO	3	5	0	0	8
World Bank	40	26	5	2	73
Total	113	102	28	6	249

7: Meta-analysis of best practice

Gender mainstreaming has been the intergovernmentally agreed-upon global strategy for achieving gender equality since 1997. This process ensures that women's and men's concerns and experiences are integral dimensions 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 gender inequality is not perpetuated (UN 1997).

In the area of the environment, evolving convention mandates on gender have shifted global awareness on gender and climate change in normative spaces. Multilateral environmental agreements increasingly reference gender in their texts, and decisions are becoming progressively gender focused. A growing body of research and experience has demonstrated that integrating gender perspectives throughout the project cycle improves outcomes and the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions. These trends, together with increasing donor demand to respond to gender equality and the empowerment of women, have served as the impetus for mainstreaming gender in climate finance institutions.

Based on a review of the gender policies, strategies, and action plans of GEF Agencies and other climate funds, and several corporate evaluations of gender policies, this section highlights international best practices for mainstreaming gender in institutions and programs.

7.1 Best practices

Gender policies acknowledge gender equality not only as a human right or development objective in and of itself, but as an essential cornerstone for achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions—economic, social, and environmental. A UN Women review of corporate gender equality evaluations in the United Nations system found that gender policies guided by and rooted in rights-based frameworks result in more effective gender mainstreaming because gender equality, which lies at the core of the human rights-based approach, appeared to be more accepted internally (UN Women 2015). Many of the gender policies of GEF Agencies and climate funds reviewed are informed by and grounded in human rights principles or normative agreements on gender, social development, or the environment. The gender policies of the Green Climate Fund (GCF 2014) and the Adaptation Fund (AF 2016), for example, directly align their goals and objectives with human rights norms, including gender equality, and with other governmentally agreed-upon development frameworks. References are made to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN 1948), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (UN 1979), the International Labour Organization's Fundamental Conventions (ILO 2003), and the Sustainable Development Goals (UN 2015).

Integrating or linking gender policies to corporate strategic plans and results frameworks helps to mainstream gender at the highest levels; connect its relevance to the institution's mandate in specific ways; and enhance ownership and accountability provided by planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting processes for the corporate strategic plans.

The relevance of a gender policy is significantly strengthened when the connections between gender equality results and the development outcomes of an organization are made explicit. IFAD and UNEP have integrated or intend to integrate their gender policies into their corporate strategic frameworks and programming.¹ In UNEP's Strategic Framework 2018–2019, each subprogram will include at least one fully fledged gender equality expected accomplishment in its results framework, with corresponding indicators (UNEP 2015). UNDP operationally links its Gender Equality Strategy (2014–2017) (UNDP 2014) to UNDP's strategic plan (2014–2017) by offering strategic guidance and suggested entry points for mainstreaming gender in all seven of its outcomes, including a stand-alone outcome on gender equality and women's empowerment. Among the climate funds, the Green Climate Fund is the first climate financing mechanism whose institutional mandate calls for integrating gender-based perspectives from the outset of its operations. Its governing instrument includes several references to gender and women in the fund's objectives, governance, and operational modalities, including on stakeholder participation. It also mandates gender balance for its staff and board.

¹ The UN agencies in general have a systemwide imperative to mainstream gender in all their work and are guided by the *System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*, which was introduced in 2012.

Gender analysis is the foundation on which systematic gender mainstreaming rests and should be considered a mandatory element of any project design. Many GEF Agencies and climate funds require mandatory gender assessments, or at a minimum a socioeconomic analysis, that incorporates gender dimensions at the outset of project preparation. A gender analysis provides important evidence for ensuring that priority setting, project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and budgets address gender inequalities that are particular to each national context.²

GEF Agencies, such as ADB and Conservation International, also require the design of gender action plans or gender mainstreaming strategies, respectively, to accompany project implementation (ADB 2013; CI 2014). ADB's gender action plans incorporate gender-inclusive design features, clear gender targets and monitoring indicators, and/or components to benefit women and girls directly. These plans form part of the project package that is presented in the report and recommendation to the president to the board and are monitored on a quarterly basis throughout project implementation.

Gender mainstreaming requires that efforts be made to broaden women's participation at all levels of decision making. Expanding women's agency and voice through participation and decision making is a key principle of gender mainstreaming. In its gender policy, FAO allocates 30 percent of its operational work and budget at country and regional levels to women-specific, targeted interventions (FAO 2013). Priority is given,

² The most commonly used gender frameworks include the Harvard Analytical Framework (Overholt et al. 1984), the Gender Planning Framework (Moser 1993), the Social Relations Framework (Kabeer 1994), and the Women's Empowerment Framework (Longwe 1995).

inter alia, to strengthening rural women's organizations and networks and increasing women's leadership and participation in rural institutions. The Climate Investment Funds similarly provide a dedicated role for gender-focused organizations and women's groups and endeavor to ensure gender-balanced participation in executive board meetings (CIF 2014, 2016).

The seniority level of gender advisors, gender focal points, and location of gender units is crucial for translating gender policies and communicating the importance of gender mainstreaming to institutions' substantive and operational work. The recruitment or appointment of senior gender advisors, specialists, or focal points with clear authority has been an effective institutional mechanism for meaningfully operationalizing and implementing the requirements of gender policies and action plans. As a case in point, to lead the implementation of its gender strategy, AfDB recruited a special envoy on gender, a position equivalent to that of a vice president, to head its dedicated gender division. UNIDO adopted a policy and a strategy on gender equality and empowerment of women, which outlines steps to integrate gender equality equally throughout its structures and programs. To enable this, UNIDO has set up a gender equality architecture, with a Gender Mainstreaming Steering Board headed by the director general to provide strategic direction and accountability. The board is supported in its efforts by the Office for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women to assist with and oversee the practical implementation of gender equality commitments.

Gender mainstreaming must be viewed as an institutionwide mandate for which all staff is responsible. Building the institutional capacity of the organization on gender mainstreaming is essential for supporting the systematic incorporation of gender into operational activities. To

do so, GEF Agencies support mandatory training and other capacity development opportunities on gender mainstreaming for nongender technical experts, including senior management and the board. Often the lack of capacity on technical approaches to gender mainstreaming becomes a key barrier to making progress on gender mainstreaming.

Dedicated and adequate human and financial resources are provided to implement gender policies, strategies, and plans. A commitment to gender mainstreaming recognizes that without dedicated and adequate human and financial resources, efforts to support the implementation of policies and plans will be ad hoc and fragmented. The Adaptation Fund, the Green Climate Fund, and UNEP, for example, clearly earmark resources from their institutional budgets to implement their respective gender policies and action plans.

Implementing a reliable system for tracking financial data on gender equality enhances institutional accountability and ensures that financial targets are set and met. Many GEF Agencies apply their own form of gender markers to programs and projects to assess their contribution toward achieving gender equality and to track and monitor the resources allocated to gender mainstreaming. ADB has introduced a four-tiered project categorization/classification system to monitor the organization's gender performance (ADB 2012). It is considered a best practice and is being adapted for use by AfDB. According to this scheme, projects are categorized into four gender mainstreaming categories with clear criteria and thresholds: category I: gender equity as a theme; category II: effective gender mainstreaming; category III: some gender elements; and category IV: no gender elements.

Establishing portfolio performance ratings at project entry, implementation, and completion can help in monitoring and assessing change in institutional performance on gender and the contribution of an institution's projects to gender equality results, especially for agencies and financial mechanisms with grant, loan, and/or investment portfolios. Some gender policies or gender action plans establish portfolio performance indicators and targets within their own results frameworks. Often, or ideally, these indicators are included in and reported on as part of the overall corporate results framework. Several agencies, especially multilateral development banks and climate funds, including the GEF, have introduced such measures to ensure quality in the design and implementation process and in results at project completion. IFAD uses a project completion report scoring system that also measures changes brought about in, for example, women's economic empowerment, women's representation and decision making, and workload reduction and balance.

Accountability for translating gender mainstreaming into practice is system wide and lies at the highest levels. Gender policies must define responsibilities for policy implementation at all levels of the institution, from technical staff to senior management. Placing accountability at the highest level not only improves performance, but also builds institutional commitment. All policies reviewed had clear accountability frameworks in place to monitor and report on progress and results of policy implementation to make timely, corrective measures, if needed.

7.2 Future trends and directions

The document review and interviews with various stakeholders, including GEF Agencies and conventions, also highlighted four important trends that are influencing the development of more recent

gender policies and strategies in GEF Agencies and climate finance mechanisms and informing international best practice standards.

Introducing a mix of incentives can enhance institutional performance on gender mainstreaming.

While no GEF Agency or climate fund reviewed has found the "right" incentive(s) to promote gender mainstreaming, a few interesting examples are worth noting. Some GEF Agencies are experimenting with performance-based incentives, such as IFAD's regional gender awards, which recognize excellence in individual projects, and UNEP's selection of a well-designed gender project to highlight as an example of a good practice. The gender policies of the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund introduce financial incentives. For example, the Green Climate Fund gender policy considers assigning more weight to projects with well-designed gender elements in the approval process, and the Adaptation Fund policy states that it will not fund projects or programs that do not articulate gender considerations.

Ensuring quality during implementation. A noticeable shift has occurred in the focus among many GEF Agencies from quality-at-entry to better implementation and monitoring to ensure the delivery of projects' intended gender equality results.³ Some Agencies have revised their tracking and project completion reports to better capture and report gender equality results and to measure gender impacts as part of terminal evaluations. Several key stakeholders interviewed indicated that projects benefited from "layers of support" at all levels during implementation, by, for example, including a gender (or social development) expert on the project management team, having gender focal points or specialists at country

³These Agencies include ADB, AfDB, IFAD, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Bank.

level and/or gender advisors at regional level, retaining gender consultants on an as-needed basis, and implementing annual supervision missions.

Measuring outcomes rather than outputs or processes. Identifying meaningful gender-sensitive indicators and benchmarks in the context of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting continues to be a challenge for several agencies;⁴ however, a review of a few GEF Agencies' (ADB, IFAD, UNDP, the World Bank) indicators in results frameworks finds that increasingly qualitative indicators are being included to measure different dimensions of change in women's lives (i.e., access to information, opportunities, or resources and participation in decision making). Taking steps to strengthen management of gender equality results at the outcome level allows organizations to identify

structural challenges related to implementation bottlenecks so that project design and implementation strategies can address these (UN Women 2015).

Looking beyond gender mainstreaming. GEF Agencies increasingly recognize that gender mainstreaming in the project cycle is insufficient to produce robust gender equality results. Given their broader development mandates, nearly all GEF Agencies' gender policies and/or action plans increasingly focus on addressing the root causes of gender inequality to achieve transformative and lasting change in women's lives. Recognizing the multisectoral dimensions of gender inequality necessitates an approach that goes "beyond gender mainstreaming" in the project cycle and tackles social norms, attitudes, and behaviors at household, community, and national levels that conspire to maintain women's unequal legal, political, social, and economic status in society.

⁴To put the challenge in context, nearly 80 percent of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators for gender equality either lack data or do not have accepted standards for measurement (see UN 2012).

8: Assessment of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming

The evaluation team reviewed and assessed the appropriateness of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, first in relation to its objectives and requirements and then in relation to international best practice. The evaluation team also examined the relevance and effectiveness of the Gender Equality Action Plan in supporting the implementation of the GEF policy and compared these actions to the actions of similar climate funds.

8.1 Appropriateness of the policy

The Policy on Gender Mainstreaming was developed in the context of the GEF accreditation pilot, launched in 2012 to accredit up to 10 agencies and to support broadening of the GEF partnership. It sought to adopt a more strategic and comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming across GEF programs and projects.

The overall goal of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming is “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” (GEF 2012, 2). To achieve this goal, the policy calls on the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies to mainstream gender into their operations, including efforts to analyze systematically and address the specific needs of women and men in GEF projects.

The policy establishes seven minimum requirements for GEF Agencies,¹ including the 10 original GEF Agencies that were already accredited and approved to receive GEF funding. It also includes four requirements for the GEF Secretariat to fulfill that broadly aim at strengthening the institutional capacity of the GEF on gender mainstreaming.²

Because the emphasis of the GEF policy served primarily to accredit GEF Agencies, it is not anchored to any strategic gender objectives or higher-level outcomes. The importance of gender equality is limited to the context of the projects that GEF finances. While the policy acknowledges that gender mainstreaming advances the GEF goal of attaining global environmental benefits and the goals of gender equity and social inclusion, it stops short of providing a compelling rationale for why

¹ The seven minimum requirements are (1) institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming, (2) consideration of gender elements in project review and design, (3) undertaking of a gender analysis, (4) measures to minimize or mitigate adverse gender impacts, (5) integration of gender-sensitive activities, (6) monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming progress, and (7) inclusion of gender experts in projects.

² These requirements are (1) to strengthen gender mainstreaming capacities among its (GEF Secretariat) staff, (2) to designate a focal point for gender issues, (3) to work with other GEF Agencies and partners to strengthen gender mainstreaming with a more systematic approach to programming, and (4) to develop alliances with networks of individuals and organizations that work on gender equality.

gender matters in environment-focused interventions. It also does not explain how the inclusion of gender equality in environmental projects would generate benefits beyond project effectiveness and efficiency.

Although the GEF serves as the financial mechanism for five conventions and is responsible for translating the conventions' broad, strategic guidance into operational criteria for GEF projects and programs, the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming does not reference the conventions' gender-related mandates or decisions.³ The policy is also not informed by, or situated in, wider human rights and gender equality norms governing international development frameworks, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, or the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In contrast, the (more recent) gender policies of the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund and of GEF Agencies directly align with human rights norms, including gender equality, and overarching development frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals. These policies not only acknowledge the role of gender equality as a means to achieving corporate development objectives but also its intrinsic value ("the right thing to do") as a human right or an issue of social justice.

Policy requirements, insofar as establishing whether GEF Agencies satisfy the seven minimum requirements, have been implemented. By 2013, the GEF Secretariat had completed an assessment of the original 10 GEF Agencies to ensure their compliance with the minimum requirements of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (GEF 2013). GEF Agencies that had not fully met the requirements

were requested to submit time-bound action plans, explaining steps that the Agencies would take to meet them.

In interviews with GEF Agencies at the corporate level, stakeholders confirmed they have been able to align their existing institutional gender policies and plans with the GEF policy requirements. One GEF Agency credited the GEF policy for helping it to strengthen its internal standards on gender, as part of the accreditation process. Others stated that they have used the GEF policy as leverage to push their respective GEF units to do better on gender from a compliance perspective. According to one stakeholder, "Having that mandate from the GEF is very important in order to get projects to do it. It has helped create an enabling environment for ensuring attention to and integration of gender into projects."

At the same time, several GEF Agencies stated that they rely on internal gender policies, guidance, tools, and processes to mainstream gender into their projects. In their view, their corporate requirements on gender have evolved and now exceed those of the GEF policy. The fact that GEF Agency policy requirements exceed those of the GEF risks marginalizing the GEF gender policy altogether, making it superfluous and less relevant. GEF Agency stakeholders acknowledged that the policy needed to be updated and to align more closely with international best practice standards with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment (as discussed in a previous section).

The assessment of implementing the four GEF Secretariat policy requirements reveals a mixed record. Initially, the policy was issued without an appropriate implementation framework. Its translation primarily hinged on a gender focal point, whose designation was one of the four requirements. Fifteen percent of the focal point's

³ The CBD, the UNFCCC, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

time was allocated to implementing the policy's requirements of building the capacity of the Secretariat on gender mainstreaming, supporting GEF Agencies in the preparation and formulation of projects, and strengthening GEF engagement in gender networks. Not until 2014, three years after the policy's adoption, did the GEF Secretariat develop and the GEF Council approve the GEAP to guide the operationalization of the policy.

For GEF-6 (July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018), the GEF Council and Secretariat also recognized the need for a dedicated gender specialist to drive its institutionwide effort on gender mainstreaming. A gender expert (consultant status) was hired in 2015 before a full-time senior gender specialist was recruited as staff in June 2016.

Further, the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming was issued without a results or an accountability framework. It did not include any requirements for the GEF Secretariat to track and assess progress against any set performance targets or benchmarks, nor did it assign clear roles to oversee overall progress or to report on obligations to the GEF senior management or the GEF Council. While the policy called for a review in 2015, this review did not take place on time and is currently ongoing.

Based on portfolio reviews undertaken as part of this evaluation, the evaluation team has found evidence that the policy has contributed to increased attention to and improved performance of gender in GEF operations. At the same time, however, it has noted variable and inconsistent practices across projects with respect to the conduct of gender analyses; the inclusion of gender-disaggregated and gender-specific indicators in project results frameworks; and the collection and use of gender-related data to measure and report on progress and gender equality-related results during monitoring, in midterm reviews, and in terminal evaluations. This

is due to the policy's lack of common standards and requirements for gender mainstreaming, whose implementation at the operational level relies on existing systems and tools of individual GEF Agencies. While building in such flexibility might be necessary for financial mechanisms, the absence of such standards does not facilitate a systematic or consistent approach to integrating gender in GEF projects.

8.2 Role of the Gender Equality Action Plan in policy implementation

In 2014, the GEF Council approved the GEAP to—among other things—“operationalize the mainstreaming of gender in GEF policy and programming to advance both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment” (GEF 2014b, 6). The GEAP was developed through a multistakeholder, consultative process with GEF Agencies, staff of convention secretariats, and representatives of other climate funds. Its initial period of implementation is during GEF-6, from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018.

The GEAP identifies five elements critical for mainstreaming gender in GEF operations and projects: (1) project cycle, (2) programming and policies, (3) knowledge management, (4) results-based management, and (5) capacity development. Based on data from document reviews and interviews with key stakeholders, the evaluation team concludes that the GEAP has served as a relevant framework for implementing the requirements of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and has provided a good “mandate for action,” with actions and outputs on a four-year time frame. Overall, it has advanced the GEF's efforts to strengthen the integration of gender in GEF programming and operations more systematically and has put in place a results framework and some indicators to support accountability

and better monitoring of gender mainstreaming progress.

PROJECT CYCLE

The GEF Secretariat updated its project templates, in consultation with GEF Agencies, to facilitate a systematic approach to mainstreaming gender in projects. Specific sections have been included in the PIF, the project review sheet, the program framework document, and the request for CEO endorsement for MSPs and FSPs that allow GEF Agencies to make projects' gender considerations and gender-focused approaches explicit. Ensuring the quality-at-entry of projects alone, however, does not necessarily translate into implemented gender equality actions, budgets, or results. Guidance for the project implementation reports and midterm reviews is also needed to better support the integration of gender perspectives during the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation phases of GEF projects. At present, reporting on gender in these templates is voluntary and hence produces missed opportunities for capturing progress and results of gender mainstreaming in projects.

In collaboration with the GEF Gender Partnership, an inter-Agency working group that was established under the GEAP, the GEF Secretariat has prepared draft gender mainstreaming guidelines. The guidelines seek to offer a practical framework for systematically addressing gender across the GEF project cycle. In the development and discussions of the draft guidelines, however, the drafting team recognized the need to first update the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming before finalizing the guidelines.

PROGRAMMING AND POLICIES

The GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies have incorporated gender-responsive approaches and

activities, with projects using and incorporating GEF gender indicators that are monitored and aggregated at the focal area and corporate levels (GEF 2014c). However, these programming frameworks have not necessarily filtered into revised tracking tools or reporting templates.

Under the Workstream on Gender and Social Issues, the core team, coordinated by the GEF senior gender specialist, worked closely with the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies, and partners to incorporate gender-responsive strategies and approaches in the design of the integrated approach pilots, key programmatic approaches, and the Small Grants Programme. These strategies also provide a set of metrics to monitor gender-specific outcomes.⁴

A review of official GEF documents and data from interviews with key stakeholders provided an inconsistent picture as to whether attention to gender in council documents and GEF reports to conferences of the parties has increased.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

One of the GEAP's most significant achievements has been the establishment of the GEF Gender Partnership. The partnership has brought together the gender focal points and practitioners of GEF Agencies, other climate funds, the secretariats of relevant conventions, and other partners. Stakeholders interviewed described it as an important forum for leveraging the wide range of skills and experiences of members on gender equality and women's empowerment. The GEF Gender Partnership provides partners with a space to share and exchange knowledge, learning, and best practice,

⁴The Workstream on Gender and Social issues was launched in June 2015, and first reported on in the September 2015 Update on the Implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEF 2015b).

and to discuss common issues, challenges, and solutions that they face in their work.

RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

The GEAP contains a results framework for gender mainstreaming that introduces portfolio performance ratings based on three outcomes. These outcomes correspond to a set of five core gender indicators (see [annex C](#)) and baselines and targets.⁵ The GEF Secretariat reports annually on three of the five gender indicators (two related to quality-of-entry and one related to project monitoring and completion) in the Annual Portfolio Monitoring Report and in the Corporate Scorecard, where it is captured under Corporate Efficiency and Effectiveness. Sex-disaggregated data for gender indicator 3 has been difficult to track, collect, and aggregate, in part due to the challenge of measuring the “share” instead of the “number” of women and men as direct beneficiaries and in part due to the different tracking tools used by each focal area, which may or may not be collecting such data. Given that collecting sex-disaggregated data is the first step toward understanding the different needs, roles, opportunities, and vulnerabilities of men and women, the GEF Secretariat plans to report on the percentage of projects that provide sex-disaggregated data on beneficiaries in the forthcoming Corporate Scorecard based on a recent review and analysis of midterm reviews and terminal evaluations. With respect to the only indicator that captures outcome/impact-level results, the GEF is currently not collecting data or information on GEF gender indicator 4 (the number of national/regional/global policies, legislation, plans, and strategies that incorporate gender dimensions). The GEF Secretariat also reports

annually to the GEF Council on the progress of GEAP implementation.

Although the GEF-6 Core Gender Indicators have allowed the GEF to better track its progress on gender mainstreaming, stakeholders find that they overemphasize process and outputs. A mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators at the outcome level is needed to measure gender equality results and impacts. The Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund presents an opportunity to revisit the GEF-6 gender indicators and to consider their ambition and appropriateness with respect to pushing the institutional agenda on gender mainstreaming.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Recruiting a dedicated gender specialist was viewed as being a “game changer,” drawing greater visibility for the GEF’s work on gender and substantively enhancing the GEF Secretariat’s engagement on gender, especially with external partners.⁶ To support institutionwide efforts on gender mainstreaming, the GEF Secretariat established the Workstream on Gender and Social Issues, which is coordinated by the senior gender specialist and draws on three to four staff members from across the Secretariat. Among its activities, the Workstream supports the implementation of the GEAP, reviews gender components of project proposals, and contributes to the development of a monitoring and reporting system on the GEF-6 Core Gender Indicators in coordination with the results-based management team.

Some stakeholders nevertheless argued that additional efforts are needed to expand the GEF

⁵ These baseline values are based on data provided in GEF IEO (2013, 11).

⁶ After going through a recruitment process, the gender consultant was selected and hired into a full-time staff position.

Secretariat's institutional capacity on gender. Stakeholders gave mixed responses to the question of how increased staff capacity and expertise on gender at the GEF Secretariat had translated into improved technical support for GEF programs and projects since approval of the GEAP. While many observed an increase in project review-related comments on gender, few found them helpful, with many stakeholders expressing the need for more meaningful exchanges with the GEF on gender-responsive project approaches and interventions in the different focal areas.

Progress in enhancing the GEF Secretariat's gender competencies is an area that requires more effort. A gender capacity staff assessment was completed in 2015, but has not been followed up with a capacity development plan. It did, however, highlight capacity development needs in the area of gender methodologies and tools and the need for technical training tailored to specific focal areas. A subgroup of the GEF Gender Partnership (the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, the Small Grants Programme, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, and UN Women) is designing an electronic learning curriculum and series of modules on gender and environment to support capacity development of staff and partners, including GEF operational focal points.

8.3 Comparison of actions with other climate funds

Similar to the GEF, climate finance mechanisms have made concerted efforts to integrate gender into their institutions and operations in recent years. The Green Climate Fund issued its Gender Policy and Action Plan 2014–2017 in 2014 (GCF 2014), followed by the Gender Policy and Action Plan FY2017–FY2019 of the Adaptation Fund in 2016 (AF 2016). While the Climate Investment Funds do not yet have a gender policy in place, the

organization has been guided by two successive gender action plans (Phase I during FY2015–FY2016, and Phase II covering FY2017–FY2020; CIF 2014, 2016).

To guide the implementation of gender policies, climate financing mechanisms have developed time-bound gender action plans, outlining areas of action that are comparable to the GEAP. Generally, these actions entail

- appointing a dedicated gender specialist, with support gender focal points or consultants as needed, to build and support institutional capacity on gender mainstreaming, including those of partners;
- strengthening gender mainstreaming in project cycle support through revised operational guidelines and templates and/or development of new guidance;
- establishing a results-based management system to track and measure gender performance, including the development of performance indicators (i.e., performance monitoring or portfolio classification system, gender scorecard);
- documenting and communicating experience, results, good practices, and lessons from gender mainstreaming in projects and within institutions through multiple platforms and networks.

However, these climate financing mechanisms have crucial differences with the GEF GEAP in two key aspects, which are particularly important for further strengthening the relevance of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and building greater ownership and accountability for it. First, included in the gender action plans of the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund is a priority area dedicated to “governance institutional structure,”

which outlines the role of their respective boards in ensuring that approved project or program proposals include articulated gender considerations (Adaptation Fund) or in ensuring that monitoring reports on the implementation of the gender policy and gender action plan are issued periodically.

Second, recognizing that resources and financing are essential for operationalizing gender policies, the gender action plans of the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund include a component on “resource allocation and budgeting” that holds the funds accountable for providing adequate

resources from their respective administrative budgets to implement the gender policy at institutional and operational levels. The Adaptation Fund includes a further action to track expenditures. At the project level, both funds’ policies introduce incentives to ensure that gender elements are fully reflected in projects. The Green Climate Fund, for example, is considering assigning more weight in the approval process to projects with well-designed gender elements, while the Adaptation Fund states that it will not fund projects or programs that do not articulate gender considerations.

9: Conclusions and recommendations

In its evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the GEF, the Independent Evaluation Office reached the following six conclusions and three recommendations.

9.1 Conclusions on trends in gender mainstreaming

Conclusion 1: Current trends in gender mainstreaming in the GEF show modest improvement over the previous OPS period. According to the quality-at-entry review, the area of most significant change is in the dramatic reduction of gender-blind projects from 64 percent, before the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming was introduced (OPS5 pre-May 2011), to 1.3 percent in OPS6, and the growth of nearly six times the number of projects rated gender aware in this same time period. However, when comparing post-May 2011 OPS5 data (after adoption of the policy) with the OPS6 rating, the increase in the percentage of projects rated gender sensitive and gender mainstreamed was limited. The OPS6 review of completed projects shows modest signs of improvement compared with the OPS5 baseline of completed projects, with a decline in gender-blind projects and a similar increase in the percentage of completed projects rated gender aware.

Conclusion 2: Projects that conducted gender analyses achieved higher gender ratings. Very few projects conducted gender analyses, despite it being one of the minimum requirements of the

Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. Only 13.9 percent of MSPs and FSPs in the quality-at-entry review and 15.7 percent of completed projects reviewed had done a gender analysis prior to CEO endorsement/approval. The evaluation team used a weighted gender rating score, with a value between zero and four—zero being gender blind and four being gender transformative—to make comparisons among projects. The quality-at-entry review weighted gender rating score for the OPS6 cohort was 1.68; projects for which a gender analysis had taken place before CEO endorsement/approval had a combined score of 2.97. Projects that either planned a gender analysis or for which a gender analysis had taken place at entry had a weighted gender rating score of 2.22. Improvements were noted in terms of gender consideration in project documentation.

9.2 Conclusions regarding the appropriateness of the policy

Conclusion 3: While the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming has increased attention to, and performance of, gender in GEF operations, its framework and certain provisions and implementation remain unclear. The objective of the policy is “attaining 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 leaves too much room for interpretation on gender analysis and on the responsibilities of the GEF Agencies

vis-à-vis the GEF Secretariat regarding its implementation. Including gender-disaggregated and gender-specific indicators in project results frameworks is highly variable across GEF projects, as is the collection and use of gender-related data to measure gender equality-related progress and results during monitoring, in midterm reviews, and in terminal evaluations. The policy is not informed by or situated in wider human rights and gender-equality norms governing international development frameworks, nor does it reference gender-related mandates or decisions issued by the conventions.

Conclusion 4: Institutional capacity to implement the policy and achieve gender mainstreaming is insufficient. Recruiting a dedicated senior gender specialist as part of the GEF Secretariat team is widely recognized as an important and essential step forward that has helped increase attention to gender equality and women's empowerment. However, this is insufficient on its own to build wider staff competencies and capacities to support gender mainstreaming across GEF programming and processes.

9.3 Conclusions regarding the gender equality action plan's role in the policy's implementation

Conclusion 5: The GEAP has been a relevant and effective framework for implementing the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. The GEAP has facilitated implementation of the GEF policy's requirements, and key stakeholders concur that the action plan has been a good directive for action. The GEF Secretariat has provided annual updates on progress made on the implementation of the GEAP through information documents to the GEF Council. Given the time frame of the GEAP and the updating of the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, it is important to point out that a strong action plan facilitates strategic priority setting

and can drive GEF's institutional agenda on gender mainstreaming.

Conclusion 6: The GEF Gender Partnership is slowly developing into a relevant and effective platform for building a wider constituency on gender and the environment. The GEF Gender Partnership has brought together the gender focal points and practitioners of GEF Agencies, other climate funds, the secretariats of relevant conventions, and other partners. It has become an important forum for leveraging the wide range of skills and experiences of members on gender equality and women's empowerment in the GEF. It has facilitated several reviews, helping to compile and build the evaluative evidence on gender and the environment, and aims to produce a series of tools that will strengthen the GEF's capacity to mainstream gender systematically in projects and support the achievement of results related to gender equality and women's empowerment.

9.4 Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The GEF Secretariat should consider revising its policy to better align with best practice standards. Because the GEF acts as the financial mechanism for five major international environmental conventions and is a partnership of 18 agencies, this revision should include anchoring the policy in the conventions' gender-related decisions and the GEF Agencies' best practice standards. In revising the policy, the GEF Secretariat should take into account that policies rooted in rights-based frameworks result in more effective gender mainstreaming. Given the GEF Gender Partnership's effectiveness, the GEF Secretariat should consider the partnership as the vehicle for stakeholder engagement in updating its policy. Lastly, the policy should provide greater guidance on gender analysis and on the responsibilities of the GEF Agencies vis-à-vis the GEF Secretariat.

Recommendation 2: The GEF Secretariat with its partners should develop an action plan for implementing the gender policy during GEF-7. An appropriate gender action plan should support the implementation of the potentially revised Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and should include continued focus on developing and finalizing comprehensive guidelines, tools, and methods. This should be done in collaboration with the GEF Gender Partnership, drawing on the knowledge and best practice standards of GEF Agencies, other climate funds, the secretariats of relevant conventions, and other partners. Upstream analytical work on the associated links between gender equality and project performance across GEF programmatic areas would support mainstreaming.

Recommendation 3: To achieve the objectives of institutional strengthening and gender mainstreaming, the GEF Secretariat should ensure that adequate resources are made available.

During GEF-7, institutional capacity within the Secretariat and its staff on gender mainstreaming will need strengthening, and resources within the agencies that have strong institutional gender focus and expertise should be leveraged.

Annex A: Recommendations of the OPS5 substudy

Following are the recommendations made in the OPS5 substudy on the GEF's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (GEF IEO 2013, 35–37).

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 not rated 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 gender mainstreaming progress. Projects reviewed since OPS4 that conducted gender or social assessments in the preproject 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 Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in 2015 should include some reference to the empowerment of women, because many 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 GEF Secretariat's capacity to undertake gender mainstreaming seriously.

Annex B: Gender rating

The gender mainstreaming description that is part of the GEAP glossary states that “Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities.” And “It [gender mainstreaming] 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” (GEF 2014b, 7).

The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality, and the goal of projects that account for gender is to mainstream gender according to the aforementioned description. The decision was made to “relax” the gender mainstreaming description a little in the gender rating and not aim for making gender perspectives and gender equality central to “all activities,” but to “most, if not all, activities.”

GEF IEO (2013) uses the following project rating categories for gender mainstreaming:

- **Serious omission.** The project contained little or no reference to gender issues, but it should have included gender concerns because of the nature of the project.
- **Not sufficient.** Gender issues were mentioned in the project documents, but no real attention was paid to these concerns in project activities.

- **Gender mainstreamed.** Gender issues were integrated into the project.
- **Not relevant.** Gender and social issues were not considered and were not expected to be considered in the project.

In line with the gender rationale of the UNDP Gender Marker, the appropriateness of having initiatives where gender equality and/or women’s empowerment issues can be considered “not applicable” or “not relevant” was questioned. In practice, projects rarely lack gender relevance, given that they then would be assumed to have no relevance to humans. The OPS5 substudy also stated that “International gender specialists are increasingly providing evidence that the categories that do not take gender into account (such as energy technologies, street lighting and energy efficiency) are in fact gender relevant” (GEF IEO 2013, 35). The evaluation team of this evaluation agrees that projects that touch upon the lives of people—and GEF-supported interventions do, either directly or indirectly through, for example, employment opportunities created—always have gender relevance.

The rating category “gender blind” was added for those projects that do not demonstrate any gender awareness, but should. Gender aware and gender sensitive are chosen as categorizations because their connotation is seen as more positive than the categories used in the earlier mentioned substudy. The gender rating takes gender mainstreaming as

the goal for projects, but has added an even higher goal of being gender transformative to identify those projects that go beyond gender mainstreaming and could be an example to others when it comes to gender.

The gender rating applied uses the following rating categories:

- **Not gender relevant.** Gender plays no role in the planned intervention.
- **Gender blind.** Project does not demonstrate awareness of the roles, rights, responsibilities, and power relations associated with being male or female.

Gender is not mentioned in project documents beyond an isolated mention in the context description, gender is not tracked by the tracking tools and monitoring and evaluation instruments, no gender analysis took place, and no gender action plan or gender strategy was developed for the project.
- **Gender aware.** Project recognizes the economic/social/political roles, rights, entitlements, responsibilities, obligations, and power relations socially assigned to men and women, but might work around existing gender differences and inequalities, or does not sufficiently show how it addresses gender differences and promotes gender equality.

Gender is mentioned in the project document, but how gender equality is being promoted is unclear. One or two gender-disaggregated indicators might be present, but whether and how that data informs project management is unclear. Gender might be mentioned in a social assessment, but what is done with that information is unclear. No gender action plan or gender strategy was developed for the project.

- **Gender sensitive.** Project adopts gender-sensitive methodologies to address gender differences and promote gender equality.

A gender analysis or social analysis with gender aspects is undertaken, gender-disaggregated data are collected, gender-sensitive indicators are integrated in monitoring and evaluation, and the data collected inform project management. But the gender focus is only apparent in a limited number of project activities.

- **Gender mainstreamed.** Project ensures that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to most, if not all, activities. It assesses the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs, in any area and at all levels.

Like the gender-sensitive category, but gender-relevant components are present in most, if not all, activities.

- **Gender transformative.** Project goes beyond gender mainstreaming and facilitates a “critical examination” of gender norms, roles, and relationships; strengthens or creates systems that support gender equity; and/or questions and changes gender norms and dynamics.

Like the gender-mainstreamed category, but the way gender is addressed might result in behavioral changes toward gender norms and dynamics in the systems targeted by and systems beyond the project.

Annex C: GEF core gender indicators

Outcome	Gender indicators	Source of verification
Project design fully integrates gender concerns	<p>Percentage of projects that have conducted gender analysis during project preparation</p> <p>Percentage of projects that have incorporated gender-responsive project results framework (e.g., gender-responsive output, outcome, indicator, budget, etc.)</p>	Project document at CEO endorsement
Project implementation ensures gender-equitable participation in and benefit from project activities	<p>Share of women and men as direct beneficiaries of project</p> <p>Share of convention-related national reports incorporated gender dimensions (e.g., national biodiversity strategy and action plan, national adaptation program of action/national action plan, transboundary diagnostic analysis/strategic action program, etc.)</p>	Project implementation reports, midterm evaluation reports, and terminal evaluation reviews
Project monitoring and evaluation give adequate attention to gender mainstreaming	Percentage of monitoring and evaluation reports (e.g., project implementation reports, midterm evaluation reports, and terminal evaluation reviews) that incorporates gender equality/women's empowerment issues and assess results/progress	Project implementation reports, midterm evaluation reports, and terminal evaluation reviews

SOURCE: GEF (2014b, 12).

Annex D: Evaluation matrix

Criterion/ phase	Key question	Indicator/ basic data	Source of information	Study element
1. Relevance				
1. Design and planning	To what extent do the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and the Gender Equality Action Plan align with normative guidance and decisions of conventions (UNFCCC, CBD, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and relevant chemical conventions and protocols) on gender mainstreaming and gender equality?	Key stakeholders, gender policy, GEAP, and Conference of the Parties guidance	Interviews, literature review	Process review
	To what extent has the GEAP served as a relevant framework to guide the implementation of the gender mainstreaming policy?	Key stakeholders, gender policy, GEAP	Interviews, document review	Process review
	Was a gender analysis conducted at the onset of the project?	Project documents	Portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	Was the project formulated according to the needs and interests of men and women?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
2. Implementa- tion	To what extent does the process of implementing the policy align with international best practice?	Key stakeholders, policy documents of other agencies	Interviews, literature review	Process review
	How do process and progress of GEAP implementation compare with similar climate finance mechanisms?	Key stakeholders, policy documents of other agencies	Interviews, literature review	Process review
	Did project activities meet the needs of the various groups of stakeholders, including women and other groups most likely to have their rights violated?	Project documents	Portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
3. Results	Did project results respond to women's needs and priorities, as identified at the design stage?	Project documents	Portfolio analysis	Project portfolio analysis

Criterion/ phase	Key question	Indicator/ basic data	Source of information	Study element
2. Effectiveness				
1. Design and planning	Did the project have gender-specific indicators or gender-disaggregated indicators to measure progress?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	Did project design introduce measures/mechanisms to ensure the participation of women and/or women's organizations in project activities?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis	Project portfolio analysis
2. Implementa- tion	To what extent have planning, results-based management, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and knowledge management systems been aligned with gender mainstreaming and gender equality?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	Did the project collect gender-specific or gender-disaggregated indicator data to measure progress?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	What was the overall participation of women or women's organizations in project implementation?	Key stakeholders	Interviews, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
3. Results	To what extent has gender been mainstreamed at an institutional level at the GEF Secretariat?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	Was the interagency working group on gender established as planned?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	Was the guideline paper on mainstreaming gender in the GEF project cycle developed, and does it properly reflect the policy and the GEAP?	Key stakeholders, draft documents	Interviews, document review	Process review
	Have GEF project templates and guidelines been updated to incorporate and clarify specific sections on gender mainstreaming?	Key stakeholders, GEF templates	Interviews, document review	Process review
	Was an interactive gender-equality GEF webpage implemented?	Key stakeholders	Interview	Process review
	Does reporting on progress adequately cover the process of GEAP implementation?	Key stakeholders, Council documents, GGP minutes, GEF reports to conventions	Interviews, document review	Process review
	Does the reporting on GEF-6 core indicators adequately capture progress on gender-related processes and outputs?	Key stakeholders, Council documents, GEF reports to conventions	Interviews, document review	Process review

Criterion/ phase	Key question	Indicator/ basic data	Source of information	Study element
3. Results	Did the project create or contribute to conditions that facilitated or enhanced women's participation and inclusion?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	To what degree were the benefits or results distributed equitably between women and men?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	Were gender elements better incorporated and strengthened in projects post-GEAP?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis	Process review Project portfolio analysis
3. Efficiency				
1. Design and planning	Is there an envisaged process for updating the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming?	Key stakeholders, GGP minutes	Interviews, document review	Process review
	Did the project allocate resources to support the mainstreaming of gender throughout the project life cycle: design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis	Project portfolio analysis
2. Implementation	Is GEAP implementation supported by a detailed work plan and budget?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	Is that plan updated as needed over time?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	Have these resources (human and financial) been adequate?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	Did constraints (e.g., political, practical, and bureaucratic) exist to addressing gender equality efficiently during project implementation?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	What level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
3. Results	What have been some of the constraints (e.g., political, practical, and bureaucratic) to implementing the GEAP at the GEF Secretariat and at the project level?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	What level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review

Criterion/ phase	Key question	Indicator/ basic data	Source of information	Study element
4. Results				
1. Design and planning	Did the project include any gender-mainstreaming or gender-equality objectives?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
2. Implemen- tation	Did the project monitoring framework capture gender-equality results?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
2. Implemen- tation	How did projects mitigate any negative outcomes during implementation?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
3. Results	Is gender mainstreamed in key strategic GEF council documents, including relevant policies and guidelines?	Key stakeholders Council documents, policies, and guidelines	Interviews, document review	Process review
	What have been some of the enabling factors that have facilitated the GEAP process?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	What lessons can be drawn to further promote gender mainstreaming in the GEF?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	What have been some of the positive gender-mainstreaming and/or -equality results achieved?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis	Project portfolio analysis
	Did the project have any positive or negative effects or impacts, including unintended consequences, on gender issues and more specifically on women?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	Are project stakeholders more cognizant of gender equality and the value of women's participation and leadership in GEF projects?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	What lessons can be learned to inform and strengthen GEF project interventions with respect to gender mainstreaming and gender equality?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews	Process review, project portfolio analysis

Criterion/ phase	Key question	Indicator/ basic data	Source of information	Study element
5. Sustainability				
1. Design and planning	To what extent have senior/focal point managers demonstrated commitment to/been supportive of gender mainstreaming at the GEF Secretariat and in GEF focal areas?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	To what extent were women and gender focal points of GEF Agencies involved in the development of the GEAP and related work plans and budgets?	Key stakeholders, GGP minutes	Interviews, document review	Process review
	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?	Key stakeholders	Country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	To what extent were women involved in the preparation of the strategy?	Key stakeholders	Country visits	Project portfolio analysis
2. Implemen- tation	To what extent has staff capacity and expertise on gender and gender mainstreaming increased at the GEF Secretariat since the introduction of the GEAP?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	To what extent were women and/or women's organizations involved in the implementation of the project?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	If applicable, to what extent did project capacity-building initiatives ensure the inclusion of women or women's organizations?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	To what extent were capacity-building initiatives geared toward the specific needs of women?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
3. Results	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?	Key stakeholders	Interviews	Process review
	To what extent do stakeholders have the commitment, confidence, and capacity to build on the gender changes promoted by the intervention?	Key stakeholders	Interviews, country visits	Project portfolio analysis
	To what extent are mechanisms in place to sustain women's engagement beyond the end of the project?	Key stakeholders, project documents	Interviews, portfolio analysis, country visits	Project portfolio analysis

NOTE: GGP = GEF Gender Partnership.

Annex E: Interviewees

- Mr. Abba, Ghana Standards Authority, Ghana, Staff
- Ada Osorio, Association of Indigenous Miskito Women (MIMAT—Mairin Indian Miskitu Asla Takanka), Honduras, Puerto Lempira, Gracias a Dios, Administrator
- Adel Siapno, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines, International Affairs and Foreign Assisted Programs, Assistant Secretary
- Alexis Irías, UNDP Honduras, Natural Resources Specialist
- Alicia Lacuth, Apu Prana, Honduras, Puerto Lempira, Gracias a Dios, Director
- Analiza Rebuelta Teh, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Philippines, GEF Operational Focal Point and Undersecretary
- Antonio Fulong, District Health Center Poblacion Jose Panganiban, Philippines, Camarines Norte Province, Medical Doctor
- Ariel Erasga, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines, Forest Management Bureau Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management Project (INREMP), National Project Coordination Office, Social Development Specialist
- Arlene Galvez, Ban Toxics, Philippines, Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Miners (ASGM), Community Coordinator (Camarines Norte Province)
- Artemio Habitan, Department of Energy, Philippines, Energy Efficiency & Conservation Division, Division Chief
- Asferachew Abate Abebe, World Bank, Ghana, Senior Environment Specialist
- Augusto Lagon, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines, Cordillera Administrative Region, Assistant Regional Director
- Ayanleh Daher Aden, AfDB, Environment and Climate Change Officer, GEF Coordination Unit, Environment and Climate Change Division
- Barangay Local Government Unit, Philippines, Labo, Camarines Norte Province, member
- Briggith Allen, Unity of La Moskitia (MASTA—Miskitu Asla Takanka), Honduras, Puerto Lempira, Gracias a Dios, Administrative Technician
- Bruce Dunn, ADB, Principal Environment Specialist, Environment and Safeguards Division, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department
- Cendela Lopez, Association of Indigenous Miskito Women (MIMAT—Mairin Indian Miskitu Asla Takanka), Honduras, Puerto Lempira, Gracias a Dios, President
- Christian Hernaez, Department of Energy, Philippines, Program Officer
- Ciara Daniels, UNDP, UNDP-Global Environmental Finance Unit, Bureau for Policy and Program Support, Sustainable Development Cluster, Results and Knowledge Coordinator/Gender Focal Point
- Connie Tinoco, Moskitia Project UNDP, Honduras, Civil Society Organization Specialist
- Conrado Bravante, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Philippines, Project Management Division, Chief
- Cora Gregorio, Pagasa Steel, Philippines, Training Officer
- Cornelius Adablah, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD), Ghana, West Africa Regional Fisheries Programme Ghana (WARFP), National Project Coordinator
- Daniel Tutu Benefor, Ghana, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Climate Change Unit, Senior Program Officer

- Daisy Samayoa, General Directorate for Biodiversity (DiBio), Secretary of Energy, Natural Resources and Environment and Mines, (MiAmbiente), Honduras, Project Coordination Office, Officer
- Delton Allen, UNDP Honduras, Indigenous Peoples Specialist
- Dennis Funes, UNDP Honduras, Sustainable Development and Resilience, Program Specialist
- Dinara Besekei Sutton, World Bank, GEF–World Bank Coordination, Climate Change Fund Management Unit (GCCFM), Natural Resources Management Specialist
- Divina Suyapa Casco, General Directorate for Biodiversity (DiBio), Secretary of Energy, Natural Resources and Environment and Mines, (MiAmbiente), Honduras, Officer
- Dominique Isabelle Kayser, World Bank, GEF–World Bank Coordination, Climate Change Fund Management Unit (GCCFM), Former Senior Operations Officer
- Eddie Abugan, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Philippines, Project Preparation Division, Chief
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