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**PROGRESS REPORT
ON
ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY**

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INTRODUCTION

1. The GEF Policy on Gender Equality (hereafter Policy), approved by the 53rd GEF Council (November 2017), introduced a set of principles and requirements to mainstream gender in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GEF programs and projects. The thrust of the Policy was towards a gender-responsive or “do good” approach. The Policy further requested the Secretariat to track and report annually to the Council on progress in advancing gender equality in projects and in the Secretariat’s actions.

2. This report follows the structure of the previous years’ report. It updates on the progress in integrating gender perspectives at the project design stage and features some good practice examples on gender mainstreaming. It presents key lessons learned in the implementation of selected projects as reported by Agencies in their terminal evaluations. The report also presents the work undertaken by the Secretariat to support the implementation of the Policy and advance gender equality with GEF partners. The last section charts a way forward for the GEF Secretariat to continue its leadership in advancing gender equality in the realization of global environmental benefits.

3. The findings of this report corroborate those of the earlier reports.¹ All projects reviewed for this reporting period complied with the Policy, and in addition, incorporated gender equality and women’s empowerment substantively in the design of projects and programs. This was realized in part with the GEF Secretariat’s rigorous review of projects and programs to ensure compliance.

4. The good practice examples and reports submitted showed evidence of how mainstreaming gender ensures better outcomes for women and in realizing gender-responsive environmental policies and actions on the ground. The key messages that stood out from the examples and reports include:

- ✓ **Adopting a gender equality and social inclusion approach from the beginning and having a dedicated budget to integrate gender equality in the project’s components** ensures the comprehensive integration of gender equality in the projects – from the recruitment of project staff, to designing the projects’ outputs and activities, and the tracking and reporting of project results.
- ✓ **Projects that conducted sector- and community-specific gender analysis and well-planned stakeholder consultations were more successful in identifying the needed project interventions** including ensuring that women and women’s groups participate in and contribute to policy discussions and benefit from the projects’ gender-specific interventions.
- ✓ **Putting in place targeted actions to ensure women’s participation, in addition to mainstreaming gender across the project components remain key.** Specific actions highlighted include: introducing **affirmative** approaches such as targeting women providers of services to expand opportunities for women in sectors where women have traditionally been marginalized, and providing women and their families with **child care, financial support, and a self-care space** to encourage their sustained participation and contributions to the project.
- ✓ Having effective **coordination mechanisms within project teams as well as with upstream engagements** facilitated communications on needs, challenges and gaps. Within project teams,

¹ 1st Progress Report: GEF/C.56/Inf.03 is available [here](#); 2nd Progress Report: GEF/C.58/Inf.05 is available [here](#); 3rd Progress Report: GEF/C.60/Inf.09 is available [here](#); 4th Progress Report: GEF/C.63/Inf.07 is available [here](#); 5th Progress Report: GEF/C.66/Inf.07 is available [here](#).

having a strong inter-institutional gender coordination group ensured the regular review and adjustment of gender-specific project activities or project outputs. Upstream coordination, e.g., with national or sub-national institutions ensured their continued engagement, interest and support to the projects' gender equality goals.

- ✓ **Baseline data and gender indicators enabled monitoring progress on gender equality.** Projects that incorporated gender indicators into the results framework were able to monitor progress on the projects' gender-specific results and impact. In the absence of baseline data, some projects created instruction manuals for collecting and storing gender-disaggregated data, as well as a guideline for ministries on utilizing the data. The data served as the foundation for a gender action plan.

5. **In the coming year**, the GEF Secretariat's efforts to promote gender equality in its projects and operations will be supported by the following actions:

- ✓ ***Capacity-building to broaden understanding on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, and the broader social inclusion agenda*** for GEF technical staff, implementing and executing agencies. Tools, methodologies and training materials will be developed with gender experts, and capacity-building workshops organized with support from GEF's knowledge and learning team. Expanded Constituency Workshops and other meetings will also be considered as spaces to broaden understanding on gender equality from the GEF perspective.
- ✓ ***Enhance collaboration and partnerships to advance gender equality and social inclusion.*** Through the GEF Gender Partnership, the GEF Secretariat will collaborate with the UN Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), the gender teams of the secretariats of the Conventions that the GEF serves, the climate funds' gender teams, women and youth networks and other stakeholders to organize consultations and co-develop knowledge products on topics related to social inclusion and gender equality considerations in GEF projects.
- ✓ ***Connect with projects and stakeholders on the ground*** through participating in workshops organized by the GEF project teams. Workshops and field visits are key opportunities for GEF Secretariat staff to gather first-hand accounts of inspiring experiences and challenges in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment and their leadership in GEF-funded projects. They provide valuable inputs to the GEF as it develops or updates its policies, strategies and approaches on engaging with and supporting women's groups and in integrating gender considerations in GEF projects.
- ✓ ***Raise visibility for and awareness on GEF's gender equality policy and approaches in global conferences.*** Building on the GEF Secretariat's productive engagements at COPs and the International Water Conference, the Secretariat will continue to work with the gender teams of the Secretariats of the Conventions that the GEF serves, the climate funds, organizations working on IW-related programming, and with the gender and women's networks to identify opportunities for collaboration to raise awareness and bring GEF's expertise in COPs and related meetings. These global meetings are space for networking and learning, which is important for the GEF Secretariat's efforts at broadening partnerships and advancing its social inclusion agenda.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

Quality at entry

6. The analysis of progress on gender equality in projects and programs at the Project Information Form (PIF) stage considered under the work program June 2024 and December 2024 as well as those that have been submitted for CEO Endorsement/Approval for the period November 16, 2023 to November 15, 2024² continues to demonstrate good compliance with the principles and requirements set out in the Policy. Gender dimensions were reflected in the projects reviewed, with indicative plans to carry out gender analyses and develop gender action plans. Projects that have reached CEO Endorsement/Approval have integrated gender perspectives in the project components and outputs, as informed by gender analyses conducted. Gender Action Plans accompanied the submission, together with results framework that included gender-sensitive indicators as appropriate.

7. All the PIFs considered under the work program June 2024 and December 2024 embedded gender perspectives throughout the project, including in the project description and in project components and outputs, in compliance with the GEF guidance.

8. The substantive integration of gender issues in the PIFs is a first step to ensure the meaningful reflection of gender equality and women's empowerment in CEO Endorsement/Approval documents. As such, the Secretariat reviews the integration of gender dimensions in project design with the view to ensuring compliance with the Policy and GEF guidance. A PIF that is compliant: i) ensures that gender perspectives are woven into the project description and in the project components; ii) has undertaken a gender analysis that informs the integration of gender perspectives in the project; iii) ensures that women's and gender experts' perspectives are taken into account in the development of plans, policies and related actions to achieve the environmental objectives of the project; iv) ensures that women, women's organizations and gender experts are represented in boards, steering committees and related decision-making bodies; v) ensures that all knowledge products and platforms incorporate lessons learned or best practices on gender mainstreaming and advancing gender equality; vi) commits to ensuring that gender indicators developed in the gender action plan will be integrated into the project's results framework and are monitored and reported, and vii) commits to develop a gender action plan that is budgeted.

9. It is worth highlighting that one of the PIFs during this reporting period had gender equality as its core focus – project ID 11501 (FAO) "*Addressing Tenure Governance and Gender Equality in Land Rights to Strengthen LDN Initiatives.*" By building capacity and facilitating knowledge exchange, the project supports countries in addressing gender equality, tenure security, and land degradation neutrality (LDN), fostering sustainable land management practices and protecting the environment. Given the important gender dimensions of tenure issues to women and the gender inequalities observed in tenure governance and rights, the project's integration of gender equality in land rights was very much in line with GEF's integration approach and will allow for better capturing of socio-economic benefits of GEF's investments.

10. At the CEO Endorsement/Approval stage, projects should have a detailed gender analysis, a gender action plan and a gender-responsive results framework that includes gender-sensitive indicators.

²The review does not include Enabling Activities.

Projects are also asked to specify whether the project addresses inequalities observed in any of the three domains: participation in natural resources governance; socio-economic benefits; access to natural resources.

11. A review of 57 FSP, 27 MSP and 4 GBFF projects submitted for CEO Endorsement or Approval³ during the period November 16, 2023 to October 15, 2024 showed that all of the projects presented a gender analysis or assessment and indicated plans to develop a gender-responsive results framework and include gender-sensitive indicators.

12. The gender analyses considered gender inequalities observed in the communities where the projects are going to be implemented, for example, legal or cultural constraints to women's participation and access to resources. The gender analyses served to inform the development of a project's gender action plan and the specific project outcomes, outputs and activities.

13. Projects' gender action plans or gender strategy included specific actions to address how the identified gender inequalities would be addressed and contribute to enhancing women's leadership, economic empowerment and agency through awareness-raising and training, capacity-enhancement, including on gaining access to financial resources or providing dedicated support for women and women-led enterprises to access grants for SMEs, or including them in project pilots. Gender action plans also included information on the development and dissemination of gender-sensitive knowledge products or publications that integrate gender mainstreaming best practices. Increasingly, gender action plans include gender-sensitive indicators and are budgeted. Reporting on gender action plans were also integrated in the M&E component of the projects.

14. All of the projects reviewed confirmed plans to address at least one of the following gender issues: (i) *improve the participation and decision-making of women in natural resources governance* (100 percent), (ii) *target socio-economic benefits and services for women* (91 percent), (iii) *contribute to more equal access to and control of natural resources* (90 percent)⁴. The projects ensured that women, including grassroots women and women community leaders, and gender experts were represented and meaningfully engaged in decision-making processes or in the development or review of policies, frameworks, strategies, and guidelines. Additional efforts were made to establish quotas for women's participation in all training sessions and to secure the necessary budget for these activities. The projects considered various factors that could hinder women's participation, and addressed those through the provision of childcare services, addressing women's safety and sanitation needs in project sites, and providing financial grants for their families. To ensure that women realized economic benefits from projects, targeted support for women-led businesses were put in place, such as providing business incubation services and assistance with legal and regulatory compliance to formalize business operations. Women and women's groups were also given seats in decision-making processes and bodies that discussed and adopted policies on access to resources, such as land, to ensure that their voice were considered.

³ These do not include Enabling Activities (EA).

⁴ These figures do not include projects regarding the development of CBIT.

15. In summary, the analysis of CEO Endorsement/Approvals show marked improvements in the reflection of gender equality considerations. This could be attributed to the GEF Secretariat's consistent application of the GEF Policy on Gender Equality and diligent review of projects from a gender perspective. The GEF Secretariat's regular and continued interaction with GEF Agencies, including through the GEF Gender Partnership was a contributing factor. Many GEF Agencies have also adopted more rigorous and ambitious corporate gender equality strategy and gender markers. Finally, the Conventions that the GEF serves have gender action plans, incorporate gender perspectives in their thematic discussions, and provide gender-specific mandates for agencies and the GEF to respond to.

Quality at implementation

16. To get a better understanding of gender-related results of projects during implementation or at a project's completion, a review of selected gender reports from 99 GEF-6 and GEF-7 projects for the period November 16, 2023 – October 15, 2024 was done.

17. **Key points from the MTR and TE reports** include the following:

- ✓ **Gender analysis** is a critical step in the project design stage. The findings of the analysis, and **stakeholder consultations** guide the substantive incorporation of gender equality perspectives and actions towards women's empowerment in the project's results framework. Some projects reported that although a gender analysis was undertaken, the findings of the analysis were not incorporated into the project components, missing opportunities to address gender inequalities in the project implementation.
- ✓ **Provision of guidance**, for example, on collecting sex-disaggregated data, and **gender-sensitive methodologies and strategies** to support gender mainstreaming efforts throughout the project cycle, and **budgetary allocations** to ensure the implementation of the gender strategy and gender action plan, and provisions to adjust and potentially allocate funds towards targeted empowerment interventions where necessary.
- ✓ **Putting in place targeted actions to ensure women's participation, in addition to mainstreaming gender across the project components remain key.** Specific activities or interventions in this regard include: promoting gender diversity and leadership of women in executive and decision-making committees or bodies, monitoring gender distribution in staffing and putting in place measures to increase women's representation in higher-level project staff positions, and introducing **affirmative approaches** such as i) creating a conducive environment to encourage women's engagement by equipping project sites with private and well-kept toilet facilities, providing safe transportation options and responding to women's family and other responsibilities by providing child care or other support services; ii) targeting women providers of services to expand opportunities for women in sectors where women have traditionally been marginalized, for example, the energy sector.
- ✓ **Providing a safe space and a respectful environment to hold regular community engagement and awareness-raising activities on the project's progress** in promoting gender equality. Projects reported that involving both women and men, including young women and men, has had a significant impact on advancing gender equality objectives in the project. These efforts also contributed to

strengthening family units by encouraging the participation of all family members in project activities, including children, adults, and elderly individuals.

- ✓ The importance of effective **coordination mechanisms** was stressed in the projects reviewed. Within project teams, having a strong inter-institutional gender coordination group or a gender working group ensured the regular review and adjustment of gender-specific project activities responding to feedback from women and other beneficiaries, and project implementation outcomes. One project has noted the importance of closely coordinating upstream, i.e., with regional-level or national institutions to ensure their continued engagement, interest and support to the project. Coordination allowed for the identification of needs and the development of training plans to strengthen capacities on gender mainstreaming, leading to the realization of the project's gender-specific results and goals.
- ✓ **Baseline data and gender indicators enabled monitoring progress on gender equality.** Projects that incorporated gender indicators into the results framework were able to monitor progress on the projects' gender-specific results and impact. Projects found it challenging to establish baseline data (due to very limited time allocated for conducting gender analysis and focused group discussions), hence, no targets could be set. Some projects addressed this gap by creating an instruction manual for collecting and storing gender-disaggregated data, as well as a guideline for ministries on utilizing this data. The manual data played a crucial role in revising sectoral planning and budgeting guidelines. For some other projects, the data served as the foundation for a gender action plan, which identified areas requiring additional efforts, highlighted disparities of gender equality, and determined where more time and budget allocation was necessary.

18. A number of concrete recommendations from the lessons and gaps highlighted in the reports reviewed are presented below, as inputs to the further development of actions, guidance, policy, by the Secretariat, in cooperation with Implementing Agencies.

- ✓ **Allocate sufficient human resources, expertise and budget** to ensure that the integration of gender perspectives is implemented consistently, and in a substantive way throughout the project cycle – from the analysis, to the design, through implementation, reporting and monitoring. Financial resources and expertise are also required to ensure that women's needs are considered and responded too to allow for and ensure their participation and engagement in projects.
- ✓ **Provide clearer guidelines and recommendations** on expected outcomes and results to advance gender equality early on in the project design phase to provide project developers with the information they need in developing their results framework or designing data collection tools to incorporate gender-sensitive information in the project document. **Provide clear guidance on approaches to tackle the identified gender inequalities of the project.** Engage gender experts and women groups working on the thematic area/sector and seek their advice on how best to address gender inequalities in the sector, other than counting women as beneficiaries of trainings or other forms of gender-disaggregation.
- ✓ **Develop gender-sensitive methodologies, guidelines and manuals** to address gaps on **setting baseline data or collecting diagnostic information**, especially in projects that are heavily technical (e.g., climate mitigation, MRV), and identifying appropriate gender indicators for project outputs and

activities. Projects reported that indicators that did not provide diagnostic information (gender analysis) was insufficient for evaluation. These could only measure the proportion of women who benefited (sex-disaggregated data) from the actions, but not the reductions in the gaps that could have been identified during the gender analysis (before the start of the project). This is a basis for facilitating the **monitoring and reporting processes of gender results**.

- ✓ **Use innovative approaches to assess the gender impacts of projects** when baseline data are not available, for example, using street lighting projects, where MRV procedures allowed gender-related data to be collected and impacts analyzed. This integration of gender indicators into sectoral MRV systems was an innovative approach. It created replicable models for monitoring gender in other mitigation actions. The street lighting projects' positive effects on women's safety highlight the social co-benefits of mitigation measures from a gender lens.
- ✓ **Use adaptive management approach to the fullest.** In the case of gender strategies, action plans, gender-specific activities in projects and programs, unintended results or responses from stakeholders are expected. Projects that allowed for and embraced adaptive management were able to adapt and enhance their projects' gender action plan based on learnings from the projects' initial implementation experience, and from regular monitoring of gender-specific actions.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

19. To get a deeper insight of good practices and lessons learned in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in projects, the Secretariat prepared some good examples presented in the boxes below. The examples highlight crucial interventions and actions taken to address gender dimensions and inequalities in projects. A summary of the key lessons learned in advancing gender equality in projects are the following:

- ✓ **Adopting a gender equality and social inclusion approach from the beginning and being deliberate in gender mainstreaming efforts** facilitates efforts at addressing issues such as advancing women's leadership, access to resources and services, and social norms that hinder women's participation in decisions and economic activities. The Micronesia project, for example, introduced some affirmative actions to ensure that women-led businesses were prioritized in identifying their vendors, a recognition of women's role and contribution in the energy sector. Taking an inclusive approach throughout, the project realized that as women became more active and integral partners in clean energy advocacy, the project also helped challenge societal gender norms in Micronesia.

Box 1: GEF ID 9863 (UNDP), Micronesia Public Sector Buildings Energy Efficiency (MPSBEE)

The project "Micronesia Public Sector Buildings Energy Efficiency (MPSBEE)" has shown a strong commitment to gender equality by addressing the division of labor based on gender, especially for women working as doctors, nurses, teachers, and government staff in public buildings. The project recognized that energy use and job roles differ between men and women, and it adopted a gender-responsive approach that contributed significantly to both social and environmental outcomes. The project's gender equality and social inclusion approach promoted equal access to improved working conditions, employment, and training opportunities. Both men and women engaged in needs assessments, training materials development, and in training. Stakeholders suggested increasing the frequency of gender training to address new challenges and improve project activities for better gender outcomes.

The project deliberately promoted gender equality in its structure and activities. Within the Project Management Unit, two of the seven members, including the project manager, were women, who brought leadership and gender perspective into the project. Furthermore, gender considerations influenced the choice of pilot buildings, which were predominantly occupied by women, such as administrative buildings and hospitals.

Through inclusive planning, the project improved women's access to sustainable energy services and encouraged their participation in energy conservation and efficiency activities. The gender action plan was adapted throughout the project, urging partners to incorporate gender equality and social inclusion insights whenever possible. To further promote female involvement, an "affirmation approach" was introduced to increase female participation in upcoming trainings and women-led businesses were prioritized as vendors, including one female-led company responsible for installing energy-efficient air conditioners at Pohnpei State Hospital.

The gender-responsive design led to social and health benefits, such as improved air quality and workplace conditions in public buildings, which mainly benefited women and children. The success of women vendors highlighted the growing role of women in the energy sector. Stakeholders noted that as women became more active and integral partners in clean energy advocacy, the project also helped challenge societal gender norms in Micronesia.

Overall, the project improved the physical, social, and economic environment in retrofitted buildings, promoting health and safety for everyone while raising public awareness about the importance of clean energy.

- ✓ **Having a specific framework, with dedicated budget to integrate gender equality in the project's sector ensures the comprehensive integration of gender equality** from the project's design to implementation. The Mekong River Delta Aquifer project below applied the Gender Integration and Equality Approach for Transboundary Aquifers to ensure that the project was gender-responsive in all the project's aspects, including in the recruitment of project staff to ensure gender balance in technical and governance roles, and in the conduct of gender analysis aimed at assessing water and gender equality nexus in the aspects of livelihoods and resource management, and identify key areas of intervention. The use of UNESCO WWAP Toolkit on Water and Gender, will facilitate monitoring, sharing of best practices, and institutionalizing gender-responsive governance in water management at both local and national levels.

Box 2: GEF ID: 10520 (FAO) Enhancing sustainability of the Transboundary Cambodia - Mekong River Delta Aquifer

The GEF International Waters project "Enhancing sustainability of the Transboundary Cambodia - Mekong River Delta Aquifer" is a collaboration between Cambodia and Viet Nam aimed at strengthening environmental sustainability and water security in the Lower Mekong Basin. The project prioritizes improved governance and sustainable use of the Cambodia-Mekong River Delta Transboundary Aquifer, marking the first significant investment in this critical shared resource. A central innovation is the comprehensive integration of gender equality and ethnic minority inclusion from the project's design to implementation. The link between groundwater management and gender is well-established. Women, especially in rural areas, play a key role in agriculture, food, and water security, often being responsible for securing water for their families. However, societal norms restrict their participation in water governance, particularly in managerial and technical roles. Furthermore, inclusive and gender-responsive policies are limited, and sex-disaggregated data in water governance remains scarce.

To address these issues, the project has **budgeted a comprehensive gender component** that applies the "Gender Integration and Equality Approach for Transboundary Aquifers (TBA-GiEA)," developed by UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP). The TBA-GiEA promotes gender equality and social inclusion by ensuring the representation of women and men across project activities and through targeted actions supporting women's empowerment and ethnic minorities. This framework strengthens recruitment policies to balance gender representation in technical and governance roles. The TBA-GiEA also emphasizes robust gender analyses to assess water and gender interconnections, livelihoods, and resource management, helping identify key areas for intervention.

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), a required process for any International Waters project, will inform consensus-driven actions that improve gender equality and water management. These findings will feed into the preparation of the Strategic Action Program (SAP), setting the foundation for Gender Action Plans that align with current policies in both countries. Effective information management, including the UNESCO WWAP Toolkit on Water and Gender, will facilitate monitoring, sharing of best practices, and institutionalizing gender-responsive governance in water management at both local and national levels. In overall, the project aims to enhance livelihoods and resource management through inclusive, gender-informed decision-making, with the new UNESCO TBA-GiEA tool.

- ✓ **To ensure that women are able to dedicate their time in project activities and fully benefit from it, child care, financial support, and a self-care space** were provided by the Cerrado (baru) project in Brazil, which then saw a higher number of women participating in their projects. Grants were provided to families to ensure financial stability during the on-site training period, allowing women's full attention to the activities. A pop up natural beauty parlor was also organized, as an added attraction to women participants. More than a space for exchange about the use the Cerrado plants for self-care, the beauty parlor represented an important empowerment action for the women, connecting their ancestral self-care practices with the strengthening of the baru production chain.

Box 3: GEF ID: 10911 (FunBio) Cerrado standing with income generation: the baru production chain as an ally of biodiversity and traditional peoples

The project "Cerrado standing with income generation: the baru production chain as an ally of biodiversity and traditional peoples" aims to conserve the Cerrado by generating sustainable income for communities in the state of Goiás. Women are mainly responsible for managing socio-biodiversity products such as the baru (*Dipteryx alata*), a Brazilian nut sold in foreign markets as a superfood

A survey involving 58 household interviews in 32 communities in five municipalities showed that 75% of the collectors are women, with an average age of 50, mainly black (82.7%), with no schooling or incomplete primary education (52%) and no salaried workers (84.5%). Among the main challenges identified are the lack of structure for processing and disposing of baru, as well as a lack of knowledge about collective organization of production.

To ensure the presence of women in the training component, which included issues ranging from best practices to agribusiness models, the project offers support with caregivers for the children. In addition, participants receive grants to ensure family stability during the on-site training period, allowing full dedication to the activities. The result was a high number of women taking part, equivalent to 60% of the total.

A pop up Natural Beauty Parlour was also organized, a workshop in which extractivists, quilombola (slave descendents) and farmer women shared knowledge about the use of native Cerrado plants for self-care. The activity became a space for discussion about beauty, self-esteem, gender roles and the economic, social, environmental and spiritual value of Cerrado species. This beauty parlour represented an important empowerment action for the women, connecting their ancestral self-care practices with the strengthening of the baru production chain, and became a guaranteed space throughout the training process at the demand of the course participants themselves.

- ✓ **Projects that conducted sector- and community-specific gender analysis were more successful in identifying the needed project interventions** to address gender inequalities and ensure that women can take part and benefit from the projects. In the Georgia project below, women's limited access to decision-making roles was addressed through the establishment of a small farmers' and pastoralists' union that allocated quotas for women's participation and leadership roles, allowing them to have a voice in policies on land tenure, infrastructure planning and local pasture management. Knowledge

exchange among farmers on the project's success in increasing pasture availability and leadership roles for women were also facilitated.

Box 4: GEF ID: 10151 (FAO) Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands

The project "*Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands*" aims to restore degraded pasturelands in three Georgian municipalities, emphasizing gender equality and women's empowerment as essential in combating degradation. In Georgian family farming, responsibilities are highly gender-specific, with men handling feeding and herding, while women focus on livestock care and milk processing. Sustainable pasture management is therefore critical for women, as livestock health directly impacts household income and food security. However, women's roles are often undervalued due to their low social status, which limits their participation in decision-making and capacity development.

To address these challenges, the project established Pasture User Unions (PUUs) to represent small farmers and mobile pastoralists, incorporating specific activities to ensure women's equitable participation and leadership. Gender considerations were also integrated into the National Pastureland Management Policy. Gender analysis on pasture tenure rights and consultations with women's groups informed the development of a Land Code aligned with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests (VGGT), promoting gender equality.

Key strategies include Pasture User Mapping to involve female heads of households in pasture inventories and meetings, prioritizing the registration of women as PUU members, and encouraging joint attendance for women co-owning livestock with male family members. The project aims for at least 30 percent female PUU membership, with a minimum of one woman on each executive body. In addition, local pasture management must consider women's needs in infrastructure planning at the municipality level and prioritize lease allocations to female-headed households, enhancing women's access to essential resources.

Monitoring visits have shown increased pasture availability, and the project's success is spreading through farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchanges in other Georgian regions.

SECRETARIAT'S ACTIONS TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY

20. For the period November 2023 to October 2024, the GEF Secretariat has led or collaborated with the GEF Partnership in strategic actions to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in GEF projects and operations. The key actions that are presented in this report are highlights and best examples of the GEF Secretariat's work and are not exhaustive. The actions are grouped under the following headings:

- i) Capacity-building and broadening understanding on gender equality and gender mainstreaming
- ii) Enhancing collaboration and partnerships to advance gender equality
- iii) Connecting with projects and stakeholders on the ground
- iv) Raising visibility for and awareness on GEF's gender equality policy and approaches in global forums and processes

Capacity-building and broadening understanding on gender equality and gender mainstreaming

21. The GEF Secretariat's main entry point to build capacity and broaden understanding on gender equality and gender mainstreaming is through its review of and comments to projects which are received by GEF program managers as well as the implementing agency teams. In addition, project teams and project managers reach out regularly to the GEF Gender Specialist to better understand the comments or to discuss strategic ways of reflecting gender considerations in the projects. For this reporting period, project teams of the GEF-8 Integrated Programs have reached out to the GEF Secretariat as they were developing their gender mainstreaming plan to ensure that GEF's guidance and approach to gender mainstreaming were captured in their project design from the onset. This collaboration in the earlier phase of project design was very well-received by project teams as it creates some benchmarks and common understanding for the integration of gender perspectives in GEF projects. The GEF Secretariat's engagement was not seen as one-off but the beginning of regular interaction and joint activities between the GEF Secretariat and IP project teams on gender-related work.

22. The GEF Secretariat presents GEF's gender equality policy and approach to social inclusion to broader audiences in its regular introduction to the GEF webinars, GEF-led Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs), webinars organized by partners on gender-responsive environmental finance, events commemorating International Women's Day, and in various events related to the Conference of the Parties (COPs) of the Conventions that the GEF serves, including the COPs of the Minamata Convention and the UNFCCC.

23. The GEF Gender Partnership is a platform and a resource for capacity-building and learning. In June 2024, the GEF Secretariat convened a one-day GGP hybrid meeting in Washington DC at the sidelines of the June Council. The representatives of the women's group to the GBFF Council, some experts and Council members, were invited to the meeting. The GGP discussed emerging issues and priority themes, including: i) broader social inclusion policies and practices; ii) going beyond the "beneficiary" concept to a more robust and substantive indicators for measuring advances on gender equality; and iii) strengthening the monitoring, reporting, and communication capacities of the members of the GGP. It was in this meeting that the proposal to establish a GGP Community of Practice dedicated for learning and exchange on gender practices among the Integrated Program teams was presented.

24. Examples of capacity-building and learning activities initiated and led by GGP members, with the technical support from the GEF Secretariat include: i) *Accelerating transformative change through effective gender mainstreaming* led by UNIDO, with support from the GEF Secretariat and UN Women; ii) *Global training workshop on mainstreaming gender in dryland management* (GEF-7 Dryland Sustainable Landscape Impact Program) organized by FAO and IUCN as co-lead agencies; and iii) *Regional training workshop: Accelerating Gender-Responsive Climate Action and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation in Asia and the Pacific*, co-organized by UN Women Center for Excellence, UNFCCC Secretariat and UNEP, with experts from OHCHR, GCF, GEF and AF. The capacity-building and learning exchanges were platforms for the GEF Secretariat to elaborate on the GEF's gender equality requirements by giving tailored examples from project reviews and project reports, and conversations with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders on the ground. Participation in such workshops was also an opportunity for learning and networking, as well as planning for future joint work, including discussions on indicators, minimum standards, better monitoring and reporting, guidance documents, among others.

Box 5: UNIDO-led workshop: Accelerating Transformative Change through Effective Gender Mainstreaming

UNIDO collaborated with the GEF Secretariat and UN Women, as part of the GEF Gender Partnership workplan, in organizing the workshop "Accelerating Transformative Change through Effective Gender Mainstreaming" for UNIDO's project management teams.

The workshop, held at UNIDO Headquarters in Vienna on April 23-26, 2024, had close to 80 participants. UN Women and the GEF Secretariat presented the technical aspects of gender mainstreaming and examples of good gender mainstreaming practices and gender analysis, respectively. The workshop was a mix of presentation, interaction with participants, and group discussions. UNIDO staff, especially those managing GEF projects, shared successes and challenges in integrating gender perspectives in their projects. They emphasized that having a strong corporate commitment from UNIDO and dedicated institutional gender team helped frame projects in a gender-responsive manner. However, the level of ambition and the depth of gender equality considerations in projects depended on budgets and human resources, e.g., having a dedicated gender focal point within project teams. A sufficient budget was needed from the project concept stage to allow the conduct of a thorough gender analysis to inform project design.

The participants appreciated the GEF Secretariat's sharing of examples from GEF projects to demonstrate what a good gender analysis entails, what it means to mainstream gender in the project components, outputs and activities, and what a good gender action plan looks like. The GEF Secretariat also provided examples of reporting on gender-specific results and what could be improved in terms of reporting. The participants appreciated the knowledge and experiences shared by the UNIDO teams. They conveyed the importance of and the need for regular training and capacity-building workshops on gender mainstreaming.

In a follow-up session, project managers expressed positive feedback about the workshop. They shared how they have been using the concepts and practices learned from the workshop in their project design. They are also now reviewing and looking at projects with a gender lens. They feel more confident using the tools and guidelines provided. However, they also noted ongoing challenges related to budget constraints, tight timelines, and the short timeframes and lack of budget for presenting gender analyses and action plans.

There is a common demand from the GEF Gender Partnership to hold workshops on gender mainstreaming on a regular basis. UN Women and other gender experts, including from the academe and think tanks have expressed interest to collaborate and hold joint workshops to strengthen the integration of gender equality and promote women's leadership in GEF projects and related environmental projects.

Enhancing collaboration and partnerships to advance gender equality

25. While the GEF Gender Partnership remains the main platform for engagements to amplify advocacy for gender equality and advance gender mainstreaming in GEF's work, policy and knowledge building efforts, collaboration with the climate funds' gender leads, and with the United Nations Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) have also been key partners to the GEF.

26. GEF Secretariat leveraged opportunities to enhance collaboration with the other climate funds – Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, Green Climate Fund through regular exchanges and providing inputs to discussions relating to harmonization across the climate funds. The climate funds collaborated in their engagements in training workshops including for the National Gender and Climate

Change Focal Points at UNFCCC COP 28, and at the Regional training workshop for Asia-Pacific countries on gender-responsive climate action and nationally-determined contributions. The GEF, GCF and AF shared their gender equality policy or strategy, their requirements for gender mainstreaming in project design and implementation, as well as monitoring and reporting gender-specific results. They also elaborated on various entry points in their respective project cycles, operations and special projects or windows to provide targeted financial support to women's or other marginalized groups, and their respective social inclusion approach or strategy. Such collaboration was very much appreciated and supported by government representatives, the organizers of the meetings, as well as the UNFCCC gender team.

Box 6: GEF Gender Partnership: Community of Practice among gender teams of GEF-8 Integrated Programs

The GEF's eighth replenishment introduced integrated programming to drive systemic changes in environmental management and sustainability. In developing the 11 Integrated Programs, gender dimensions remained a central component. This focus not only meets GEF's Gender Equality Policy requirements but also recognizes that advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in IPs brings greater socio-economic and global environmental benefits.

Over the years, members of the GEF Gender Partnership (GGP) have gathered significant knowledge and lessons learned on implementing gender-specific requirements in GEF-funded projects. These knowledge exchanges have taken place within the framework of the GGP and bilaterally.

The idea of creating a Community of Practice (CoP) among the gender teams of the 11 Integrated Programs was proposed by Conservation International as a formal platform to facilitate knowledge exchange of existing knowledge products, lessons learned, and Gender Assessments and Action Plans in a more systematic way. The CI proposal was subsequently supported by the GGP membership and Terms of Reference were adopted.

This CoP will be convened by the GEF Senior Gender Specialist Secretariat, working closely with the Knowledge and Learning Specialist from the GEF Secretariat and the appointed CoP Secretary from among the GGP members. The members of the CoP, once formed, will develop their workplan and priority deliverables which could include: reports on shared practices, challenges and lessons learned on mainstreaming gender in IP programming; sharing of indicators, information on budgets including constraints and best practices, experiences on reporting gender-specific results; dissemination of existing Gender Action Plans and knowledge products on best practices and lessons learned. The CoP will be a resource in the development of policy briefs, training materials and tools on gender mainstreaming, as well as a source of expertise for capacity-building and awareness-raising activities or events organized by the GGP or the GEF Secretariat.

27. The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) gathers representatives from over 70 UN departments, specialized agencies, funds and programmes. Its annual meetings are a platform for deliberations on system-wide issues, knowledge sharing, and follow-up action on key topics relating to gender equality. With broad membership from the entire UN System, the IANWGE is a key partner for the GEF Secretariat and a key resource for expertise, most recent developments, methodologies, approaches, tools on gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, intersectional approaches, consideration of LGBTQI+ and SOGI issues. Gender and environment, although one of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action⁵, has not been adequately discussed

⁵ The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is a landmark document for advancing women's rights and gender equality worldwide, agreed upon during the 4th World Conference on women in 1995. More information [here](#).

and covered by this group of gender experts. At its March 2023 annual meeting, GGP members UNEP and the GEF Secretariat proposed to lead and form the Working Group on gender equality and the environment, with GGP members FAO, UNDP and UNIDO as WG members. Collaboration with IANWGE started with the UNIDO workshop "*Accelerating Transformative Change through Effective Gender Mainstreaming*" which benefited from gender experts provided by UN Women. The GEF Gender Specialist has also benefited from pilot courses on gender mainstreaming and gender analysis run by UN Women. The courses strengthened the GEF Secretariat's capacity to lead the GGP's work and advance gender mainstreaming in GEF projects. Collaboration with IANWGE is expected to grow with the Working Group on gender equality and the environment and the mutual need and benefits that IANWGE and the GGP would gain each grouping's unique contributions, as well as the overlap in membership.

Connecting with projects and stakeholders on the ground

28. The GEF CEO has reiterated the importance for the GEF Secretariat to connect with projects and with stakeholders on the ground. For the work on gender mainstreaming and advancing gender equality in project outcomes, outputs and activities, projects site visits allow for engagements and discussion with partners and project team members on the gender dimensions of the projects, including challenges and successes in rolling out gender-specific actions related to projects. Engagement with stakeholders or convening women leaders to define the critical gender aspects of specific thematic area and their demonstrated leadership roles are key opportunities for learning from each other, but equally important for the GEF partnership, as policies, strategies and project requirements on gender and social inclusion are reviewed and updated.

Box 7. Global training workshop on mainstreaming gender in dryland management (GEF-7 Dryland Sustainable Landscape Impact Program)

The GEF Secretariat engaged with the project team members, executing partners, including a leader of a woman's cooperative at the *Global training workshop on mainstreaming gender in dryland management (GEF-7 Dryland Sustainable Landscape Impact Program)* organized by FAO and IUCN (September 4-6, 2024, Nairobi). Representatives of 11 child projects were present to share their experiences on gender mainstreaming in their projects, learn from other's experiences and discuss a common way forward across the 11 projects on the implementation of their gender action plans and the identified gender-specific activities or outputs in their projects. Common challenges identified were: i) lack of understanding or awareness about the gender action plan and how they relate to the project components; ii) lack of resources and absence of gender focal point in projects to support implementation; iii) absence of a common understanding of terminologies and concepts related to gender and how to integrate gender concepts and actions into the project results framework.

The workshop was an opportunity for the GEF Secretariat to engage face-to-face with participants over three days to elaborate on the GEF policies and requirements on gender mainstreaming and share good practice examples for a successful development and implementation of gender equality objectives in GEF projects. The workshop concluded with a strategy document containing specific action points for all child projects: i) reviewing the gender action plans and understand how to reflect those actions in the project's components and results framework; ii) identifying a common set of indicators which the child projects can select from based on their specific context; iii) connecting all the child projects through knowledge sharing platforms or community of practice; iv) identifying an approach (or template) for monitoring and reporting of gender-specific results of the project.

29. The GEF Secretariat supported the first convening of the **Women Ocean Guardians (WOG)**, an initiative led by Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Conservation International (CI). The underlying rationale for the initiative was to provide a safe space for women leaders of coastal and marine protected areas to freely and confidently share experiences and personal journeys demonstrating their leadership

in their communities and develop a network of guardians of the ocean. In a facilitated interaction, the women ocean guardians came up with their Call to Action which was presented at the global pre-meeting for the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC), scheduled to be held in Nice, France in June 2025. Similar convenings will be organized for the Asia-Pacific and African women ocean guardians before June 2025. The aim is to have one set of key messages from the women ocean guardians in all the different regions to be presented to the UNOC to ensure that women's voices inform the conference deliberations and outcomes. For the GEF Secretariat, participating in and supporting meetings of grassroots and community leaders are vital for the GEF Secretariat's social inclusion approach and advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in global environmental processes.

30. GEF's Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECW) and related regional meetings are venues to connect with stakeholders and meet GEF's partners and beneficiaries. At the ECW meeting in Liberia in February 2024, the GEF Secretariat interacted with women leaders of GEF small grants program and visited a project with people with disabilities as project executors and beneficiaries. These interactions with project partners on the ground provided a better appreciation of GEF's impacts on marginalized communities. At the same time, the frank discussions with grassroots women and other representatives of CSOs shed light on their key challenges and needs, such as ensuring project sustainability and continued support for capacity-building and engagements in intergovernmental or other global processes.

31. The *Regional training workshop: Accelerating Gender-Responsive Climate Action and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation in Asia and the Pacific*, co-organized by UN Women Center for Excellence, UNFCCC Secretariat and UNEP, was an opportunity for the three climate funds – Adaptation Fund, GCF and the GEF to speak to National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points (NGCCFPs) to the UNFCCC and representatives of different line ministries responsible for the climate change portfolio at the national level who are undertaking gender mainstreaming in climate change policy and programming as part of the NDCs. The workshop was an opportunity for the GEF to present examples of how participating countries such as Fiji, Indonesia and Cambodia incorporated gender dimensions in their climate-related projects. The three funds also shared opportunities for engagements with NGCCFP and other government officials to ensure the integration of and implementation of the gender-specific aspects in projects and programs funded by the climate funds. The workshop provided opportunities to learn and to network. For the GEF, the session on indicators and gender-environment data was very useful as the GEF strengthens its efforts in to capture, track and report on the gender equality results of GEF investments. Meeting UN counterparts and the three climate funds was an opportunity to discuss future joint work on topics such as LGBTQI+ and SOGI, and better linking UN Women and UNEP's Empower program (supporting gender-responsive environmental programming) with GEF projects

Raising awareness on and visibility of GEF's gender equality policy and gender-responsive finance approaches in global forums

32. The GEF Secretariat participated in global meetings such as the Conference of the Parties of multilateral environment agreements, and the 10th International Water Conference (IWC-10, see Box 8) to raise awareness on and bring visibility to GEF's gender-responsive financing approach.

Box 8. Raising the visibility of gender equality and social inclusion at IWC-10

At IWC-10, the GEF Secretariat led partners in sessions focused on gender equality and the inclusion of youth, women, indigenous peoples in International Waters projects. With UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Conservation International (CI) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the GEF Secretariat led the organization of a clinic on integrating gender equality and social inclusion in GEF-IW projects.

The productive session, which attracted a good participant turnout, concluded with the following key messages: Integrate gender perspectives and involve women and gender experts in the development of the Transboundary Diagnostic Assessment and Strategic Action Plan for the project; Incorporate activities and outputs that contribute to women's/women's groups' self-enhancement (e.g., micro-finance schemes, grant programs, credits, loans, and capacity-building for women in fishing communities); Establish clear and measurable gender-responsive indicators and put in place gender-responsive monitoring mechanisms to track project impacts on women and men.

With messages of inclusion from the Plenary bringing together youth, women, Indigenous People's voices, concrete recommendations for future work were presented, including to foster collaboration to share best practices in gender mainstreaming and project implementation and to pursue work related to developing guidelines and methodologies, indicators, other knowledge products, and updating the IW:Learn website gender page. The GEF Secretariat invited UNESCO-WWAP to the GEF Gender Partnership where they will continue discussing joint work including as a follow-up to the IWC-10 recommendations.

33. The GEF Secretariat participated in the Minamata Convention Secretariat-led knowledge lab session on *Mainstreaming gender in capacity-building projects: practical approaches*, at the Conventions 5th Conference of the Parties in October 2023 where it presented its gender policy and requirements and provided examples of how gender considerations have been integrated and captured in project design, reporting, and project evaluation processes. The knowledge lab participants are current and prospective applicants for projects targeting financing mechanisms and special programs falling under the Minamata Convention.

34. At the 16th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the GEF Secretariat joined partners and allies in a number of high-profile events including the launch of the CBD Women's Caucus Gender and Biodiversity Champions platform aimed at gathering support towards the implementation of the Gender Plan of Action (GPA) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the UK government-led Principles for inclusive, locally-led, gender responsive biodiversity action. The GEF Secretariat also joined two events featuring women's leadership in conservation – the Women in Conservation event which gathered, among others, women leaders in conservation finance, and the Women Ocean Guardians event, which brought together women community leaders in coastal and marine protected areas to present their Call to Action to support women leadership in these areas. As a leading grant mechanism for biodiversity conservation, the GEF Secretariat committed to supporting the aforementioned initiatives and platforms through its regular programming and through the GEF Gender Partnership.

CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

35. The report presented gains in advancing gender equality at the GEF, as demonstrated in the enhanced reflection of gender equality actions in GEF projects at design stage, as well as reported in project terminal evaluations. Projects incorporated gender dimensions in the project description and

project components, with gender-specific indicators. Some projects included budgets for their gender action plans and laid out gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation plans.

36. A review of terminal evaluations submitted during the reporting period, reaffirmed the importance of being intentional in integrating gender equality into the project's life cycle – from design to monitoring and reporting. Similar to the past reports, undertaking a detailed sector-specific gender analysis helped tailor the project's interventions to address gender inequalities in the community. Having gender-specific indicators is important for monitoring and reporting gender results. To ensure women's active participation and sustained engagement in the projects, projects introduced specific measures such as providing childcare, financial support and allocating quotas for women entrepreneurs and service providers.

37. The GEF Secretariat has stepped up its work and efforts to strengthen the reflection of gender perspectives and promote women's empowerment and leadership in GEF projects and operations. For the period November 2023 to October 2024, the GEF Secretariat has led or collaborated with partners in capacity-building and broadening understanding on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, as well as on gender-responsive finance. The GEF Secretariat expanded its partnership and strengthened collaboration with existing partners, including the GEF Gender Partnership, UN IANWGE and with the climate funds' gender leads. Productive exchanges were realized, and networks established during project visits and regional events that provided space to connect with stakeholders on the ground. The GEF Secretariat took advantage of opportunities to raise visibility for and awareness on GEF's gender equality policy and approaches in global processes and meetings, including the International Waters Conference and the Conference of the Parties of the multilateral conventions that the GEF serves.

38. In the coming year, the GEF Secretariat, will continue to work with GEF Secretariat staff, the GGP and relevant partners, including governments and women's organizations to advance GEF's broader social inclusion agenda and promote gender-transformative programming.

39. The priority areas of work, aimed also at contributing to GEF-9 preparations, are outlined below:

Capacity-building and broadening understanding on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and the broader social inclusion agenda

40. In partnership with the Knowledge Management and Integration division at the GEF Secretariat, guidance documents will be prepared and capacity-building workshop(s) organized for the GEF Secretariat staff, GEF implementing and executing agencies, governments and other stakeholders. The guidance documents will include checklists, guide questions, tools and methodologies, presentation samples tailored to GEF's focal areas on areas such as conducting gender analysis, identifying gender indicators, and tracking and reporting gender-specific results. The capacity-building workshops will be tailored to GEF Secretariat's and other partners' identified needs.

41. The Expanded Constituency Workshop, with a focus on integrated programming, will be a key target for in-depth presentations on gender mainstreaming and the application of GEF's inclusion agenda in GEF projects. The Senior Gender Specialist will work closely with the KM and Integration team to co-

develop session presentations and key documents on gender equality and promoting women's empowerment and social inclusion in GEF projects for these ECWs.

Enhancing collaboration and partnerships to advance gender equality and social inclusion

42. Through the GEF Gender Partnership, the GEF Secretariat will explore opportunities within and outside of the partnership including with the UN Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), the gender leads in the other climate funds⁶ and the broader GEF Partnership, and other stakeholders to follow up on discussions related to gender indicators, LGBTQI+ and social inclusion, and co-develop training materials, tools and methodologies for gender analysis, mainstreaming gender considerations and social inclusion in GEF projects.

43. Cooperation with supportive governments, diverse women's organizations, LGBTQI+ communities, people with disability, youth networks and Indigenous Peoples and local communities will be expanded and strengthened. Regular consultations and engagements with these partners will be conducted as the GEF elaborates on its social inclusion approach and in preparation for the GEF-9 replenishment.

44. Information-sharing and consultations will also be organized with the climate funds' gender teams, and the GGP on advancing the broader social inclusion agenda, including how sexual orientation and gender identities (SOGI) and sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse are considered in environmental programming.

Connecting with projects and stakeholders on the ground

45. Participating in workshops organized by GEF project teams and field visits will continue to be an important avenue to bring GEF's perspectives on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and for the GEF Secretariat to meet with project teams and stakeholders on the ground, on their experiences advancing gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership in GEF-funded projects. These visits are critical in informing and guiding GEF's future direction and approach in engaging with and supporting women's groups, as well as in integrating gender equality and social inclusion considerations in GEF projects and programs more broadly.

46. These engagements, in particular, with GEF-8 Integrated Programs, will be undertaken back-to-back with missions that allow for field visits, or during Expanded Constituency Workshops, learning missions or related regional meetings, and in collaboration with implementing agencies.

Raising visibility for and awareness on GEF's gender equality policy and approaches in global conferences relevant to GEF's focal areas

⁶ Collaboration among the gender leader of the climate funds will be in support of implementing [The Multilateral Climate Funds Action Plan on Complementarity and Coherence](#). See Annex II of *Relations with the Conventions and other International Institutions* GEF/C.67/07/Rev.01.

47. Building on the GEF Secretariat's Partnership team's productive engagements at COPs, the International Water Conference and related meetings in the past years, the Secretariat will continue to work with the gender focal points of the Conventions, scientific and academic groups and think tanks, and with women's and youth organizations to bring visibility to GEF's gender-related policy and work. The GEF Secretariat gender team's expertise and contributions in events organized during these conferences have been valued by partners, including the Convention Secretariats.

48. These global meetings are space for networking, which is important for the GEF Secretariat's efforts at broadening partnerships and advancing its social inclusion agenda. The GEF's gender team value the learnings from its engagements at the COPs and meetings related to the IW program, with all key partners presenting new evidence, data, tools and approaches on advancing the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda in environmental projects.

49. The GEF Partnership Division will continue its engagement with the gender team of the Secretariats of the Conventions that the GEF serves, the gender teams of the climate funds, UNESCO-WWAP and Wildlife Conservation Society (for IW-related meetings), and with the gender and women's constituencies or networks following and attending these conferences and plan and collaborate with them on opportunities to raise awareness and bring GEF's expertise in the global discussions and arena.