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## Gender and climate change



Civil society speak in one voice demanding solutions to climate change problems.

Photo: Trevor Davies

### KEY POINTS

- One out of three ministers and two out of three permanent secretaries in the ministries relevant to climate change are women, so women do have a voice but are not yet equally involved in decision making at this level.
- To date, there is no REDD+ project running in Namibia
- National Gender Policy 2010 - 2012 calls for gender mainstreaming in natural disaster management.
- 54% of households use wood or charcoal as fuel for cooking. Of these comprising 87.4 % are rural households and 15.9% of urban households. (NHIES 2009-2010 provisional figures)
- A number of NGOs are providing training to rural communities in the use of various types of solar cookers and ovens.



There is no doubt that the overall climate is changing, and this poses serious global challenges. This is because climate change is an environmental, social, economic, energy, food, political, ethical and moral challenge. It is a crisis perpetuated by the endless pursuit of growth and prosperity.

Ultimately, the world faces not just a climate crisis, but also a crisis of sustainability. The key contributor to global warming is human-induced climate change, because of exploitative, unsustainable economic growth, consumption and production patterns, applied especially by the global North and the elites in developing countries. Women in the south contribute the least to climate change yet feel its effects the most.

Against this background, the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance has embarked on a campaign for an Addendum to the SADC Gender Protocol on Gender and Climate Change. This underscores the fact that like a Constitution, a Protocol is a living document that should be open to amendment, reflecting specific needs and concerns at any given time. This is yet another

example of how - by being organised and strategic - civil society is yet again prying open democratic spaces and getting gender into key areas of the regional agenda.

There are precedents in the region to governments elaborating on gender instruments in response to civil society demands. In 1998, a year after the signing of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development, Heads of State adopted an addendum on violence against women and children. Just as women's organisations drafted this addendum, so the Alliance has drafted an Addendum on Gender and Climate Change for consideration by Heads of State through their ministers.

Even before the adoption of this addendum, the Alliance decided in 2012 to include an eleventh chapter in the Barometer on gender and climate change. This measures the performance of governments against the draft provisions of the Addendum. The message is simply that there is no time to waste. While governments prevaricate on legal niceties, citizens - especially women - demand accountability.

## Representation



*It is proposed that the Addendum on Gender and Climate Change makes reference to ensuring women and men equal participation in all decisions related to climate change at all levels by 2015 as specified in Article 12-13 of 2008 SADC Gender Protocol.*

**Table 11.1: Representation of women and men in key decision-making positions in environment and agriculture**

	MALE	FEMALE
Minister of Environment and Tourism		✓
Deputy Minister of Environment Tourism	✓	
Permanent Secretary Ministry of Environment and Tourism		✓
Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry	✓	
Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry	✓	
Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry	✓	
Minister of Fisheries / Marine Resources	✓	
Deputy Minister of Fisheries / Marine Resources	✓	
Permanent Secretary Ministry of Fisheries / Marine Resources		✓
Total	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>
Proportion	<b>67%</b>	<b>33%</b>

Table 11.1 shows that women make occupy 33% of key decision-making positions in environment and agriculture which are relevant to climate change. In

fact the Minister of Environment and Tourism is a former Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare and thus brings insight on gender issues to this position.

## Institutional, legal and policy framework



*It is proposed that the Addendum calls on all SADC States that by 2015 they ensure that the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) mechanism takes into consideration the different roles and impacts on women and men when integrating the concerns and priorities of local communities and forest dependent communities; and sharing of benefits, land and forest rights .*

The REDD+ mechanism is a relatively new concept in Namibia. To date, there is no REDD+ project running. However, in other initiatives which are related to REDD+ such as community forestry and tree planting projects, the role of women is acknowledged and they are empowered to participate in all activities. Women also serve in various administrative positions in these projects. (Source of information: Interview with Jonathan Kamwi, Department of Forestry)

### National Policy on Climate Change for Namibia

The National Policy on Climate Change for Namibia - 2011 includes a section on gender issues and child welfare as follows:

“Namibia's vulnerability and adaptation assessment indicates that the poor and rural populations of Namibia, most of them being women, are most vulnerable to climate change because rural populations are extremely dependent on natural resources. Children in rural areas are still very prone to curable diseases and thus more vulnerable to illness, child and infant mortality. The policy recognises that both rural and urban communities are vulnerable to climate change effects. Therefore the government will:

- Ensure that communities are empowered and both men and women participate meaningfully in the planning, testing and roll out of adaptation and mitigation activities in both rural and urban areas.
- Ensure that climate change response activities are gender sensitive.
- Include gender and climate change in the curriculum of education and training programmes.” (pp 23-24)

The **Proposed Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, 2009** includes section 3.10 - Mainstreaming gender, children and the vulnerable:

“The mainstreaming of gender, child welfare and issues pertaining to vulnerable groups must be included in climate change responses at local, regional and national level. This mainstreaming shall be integrated into existing policies and laws and shall be led by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare with support from other government agencies (especially at local and regional levels), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs).” (p 27)

The **National Gender Policy 2010 - 2020** includes a section on Gender and the Environment as follows:

“Gender challenges in environmental management include the low involvement of women in decision-making on environmental management, environmental hazards, cultural practices and attitudes towards ownership and control of land, inadequate information and education on sustainable environmental management, and the need for gender-responsive environmental policies and programmes.” (p 36)

Strategies include:

- Ensuring women's participation on an equal basis with men in decision-making regarding sustainable environmental management, and ensuring gender balance in management structures through legislation, where appropriate.



Councillor, Fredrick Gorden Shimanda, stresses a point at a climate change workshop in Okahandja, Namibia. Photo: Eugene Eiseb

- Evaluating all policies and programmes in terms of their environmental impact, and their effect on women's equal access to and use of natural resources.
- Educating and increasing women's access to information, including in the areas of science, technology and economics, thus enhancing their knowledge, skills and opportunities for participation in environmental decisions.
- Promoting and protecting use of the knowledge, innovations and practices of women of indigenous

and local communities, and safeguarding their existing intellectual property rights.

- Putting measures in place to reduce risks to women from identified environmental hazards at home, at work and in other environments, including appropriate application of clean technologies.
- Empowering women as producers and consumers so that they can take effective environmental action, along with men, in their homes, communities and workplaces.
- Encouraging the design of projects in areas of concern regarding the environment that would specifically benefit women and creating projects to be managed by women.
- Increasing the percentage of women, particularly at grassroots level, involved as decision-makers, planners, managers, scientists and technical advisors.
- Involving women in the design, development and implementation of policies and programmes for natural resource management and environmental protection and conservation and climate change.
- Ensuring adequate research to assess how and to what extent women in particular are susceptible or exposed to, or affected by environmental degradation and hazards, including research and data collection on specific groups of women, especially women living in poverty.
- Promoting access to safe drinking water and sanitation by committing adequate resources, and working closely with civil society to engage in community education.

### Development of Renewable Energy Sources

The population in Namibia is small and dispersed, with vast and thinly populated areas particularly in the south. Consequently grid extension is very costly. Through the Energy White Paper of 1998, the government has committed itself to introducing renewable energy sources. The Ministry of Mines and Energy of Namibia has introduced a revolving fund to support solar energy usage for off-grid purposes to lower the threshold for renewable energy investments. Namibian national electricity utility, NamPower, has approved the Renewable Energy Policy Paper which states that the company's target for the renewable is 10% of the total installed capacity and the first target is 40 MW by 2011. However, there is no gender analysis in these policies and mechanisms.

### Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)

In 1995 and 1996 legislation was passed in Namibia which empowered communal area residents with rights over natural resources. By forming conservancies - registered legal entities with defined land boundaries, management principles and registered members - communities received the rights to manage, use and generate benefits from the natural resources in their area, through trophy hunting, tourism and other

resource uses. The National CBNRM Programme in Namibia is a government programme under the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, run in partnership with a number of stakeholders joined in the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO). (MET website)



Country facilitator, Sarry Xoagus-Eises and Intern, Laurentia Golley on a farm visit, Namibia. *Photo: Mutani David Xoagub*

The conservancy movement has been a great success, and there are now 71 registered conservancies in Namibia, and several in the process of registration. The three main elements of the CBNRM programme are: a natural resource management and conservation programme, promoting wise and sustainable management of natural resources, and encouraging biodiversity conservation by creating the necessary conditions for sustainable use; a rural development programme, which seeks to devolve rights and responsibilities over wildlife and tourism to rural communities, thereby creating opportunities for enterprise development and income generation; an empowerment and capacity building programme, which encourages and assists communities and their local institutions to develop the skills and experience to sustainably develop and pro-actively pilot their own futures. (NACSO website)

Strategies for integrating women into decision making processes in the conservancies include the training of women as Community Resource Monitors for the sustainable use of plant resources, the provision of basic training in public speaking, ensuring that women are the main recipients of training relating to the plant resources which they manage, establishing sub-committees of women to ensure that women are able to make meaningful inputs into management, and adopting innovative ways to enable women to participate in important tasks relating to plants. (IRDNC 2011)

## Country Pilot Programme: Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change

Namibia is one of only ten pilot countries for a worldwide project on community-based adaptation, which looks at measures that can be taken at community level to build resilience against climate change. The two local NGOs implementing this pilot programme, Creative Entrepreneurs Solutions and Omalundu Imuna Kommitiye Elungameno (OIKE), are both founded and led by women in Northern Namibia.

The target communities are mostly subsistence farmers (of whom the majority are women) and youth who depend to a high degree on agriculture (rain fed dry land crops), natural resources and livestock rearing both for subsistence as well as cash incomes in semi arid areas. The target communities are living in Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto, Oshana and Kavango regions, in northern Namibia.

This Country Pilot Project focuses on the following community-based adaptation techniques:

- Water security (flood and rain water harvesting for irrigation, livestock and fish farming).
- Food security (sustainable agricultural practices such as irrigated vegetable production using harvested flood and rain water) and improved dry land crop production through soil improving management strategies such as composting, bio char, crop rotation and conservation agriculture.
- Flood and drought resistant crops (improved drought resistant mahangu varieties, mushroom, rice and sweet stem sorghum) for human nutrition sources as well as fodder security for livestock/chicken/fish fodder to boost availability of protein nutrition and incomes.
- Energy efficient stoves and renewable energy in combination with agro forestry/ general reforestation and improved natural resource management.
- Awareness building interventions on climate change, coping strategies, global warming and nutrition needs.

## Gender disaggregated data



*It is proposed that the Addendum calls on all SADC States that by 2015 they establish a system to collect sex-disaggregated data and develop qualitative and quantitative indicators on climate change.*

The years 2008-2009 and 2011 saw high levels of flooding across northern Namibia through increased rainfall in this part of the country as well as in southern Angola, which displaced thousands of people, mainly women and children, who spent months in evacuation centres, while many men stayed behind to guard their flooded properties. In addition, many communities were cut off and not able to access relief assistance and essential services. Many schools were closed, and livelihoods across these regions were severely disrupted.

Some sex disaggregated data on the gendered impact of the floods has been collected, for example in the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment - Namibia - Floods 2009 report, as follows:

During the disaster, some men stayed closer to their homes and moved cattle and other properties to higher grounds while their wives and children went to camps. Emergency shelter and encampments created a specific kind of disruption. The lack of privacy exposed people to reduced dignity and to increased risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. The lack of provision of essential commodities placed women at risk, as some felt desperate enough to engage in transactional sex to acquire basic goods for their children.

The floods caused considerable disruptions of HIV and Aids services, especially in outreach (81 percent) and orphans and vulnerable children (79 percent) support services. Antiretroviral treatment disruption affected 23 percent of people living with HIV and Aids, who were also not able to access home-based care support services. There was disruption of prevention of mother-to-child transmission services for affected mothers who delivered during the period of the emergency.

With regard to other health services, the highest reduction was reported in the provision of psycho-social support followed by treatment of opportunistic infections. In relocation camps, HIV/STI was expected to rise due to the expected increase in transactional and casual sex, as well as a lack of access to preventive services including condoms.

The lack of sufficient, varied foods contributed to malnutrition. Fear of stigma and denial of rights resulted in many living with HIV being afraid of disclosure and not using services. In relocation camps, crowded living conditions often led to increased cases of gender based violence and child abuse. These may not have been reported because local customs do not support women to speak out on such issues and local beliefs tend to condone spousal violence.



Climate change hits us so badly: Women protesters at COP17 in Durban demand that their needs be included on global warming agenda. Photo: Saeanna Chingamuka

However, the UNFPA and NRCS Field Visit Report on Protection in Flood Relief and Recovery - 17th-31st July 2011 stated that a number of protection issues such as violence, exploitation of children and women, gender based violence, lost IDs, and access to relief services were highlighted in previous floods, but due to a lack of data and systematic reporting on these issues, no comprehensive evaluation was available.

A field visit to six flood affected regions (Kavango, Caprivi, Oshikoto, Oshana, Ohangwena and Omusati) conducted by UNFPA and NRCS between 17th and 31st July 2011 found that that government, UN agencies and NGOs had made some considerable progress in the protection sector during the preparedness and relief phases of the recent flood cycle. Regarding coordination, a protection sector approach had been promoted, with UNFPA becoming the protection lead agency within the UN County Team, while the Namibian government had yet to formally designate a lead ministry. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare to set up regional child protection committees and worked with an NGO to establish child friendly spaces in camps. UNICEF and UNESCO worked with the Ministry of Education to produce and test an emergency preparedness and response manual for the education sector, and a number of state and non-governmental protection providers conducted outreach services to varying degrees and coverage as well as some training and awareness raising workshops on some protection topics. Protection referrals did take place but were not necessarily systematic across regions.

The UNFPA and NRCS Field Visit Report on Protection in Flood Relief and Recovery - 17th-31st July 2011 includes a comprehensive framework of recommendations to improve coherence in the protection sector and ensure that gaps are addressed and systems are in place ahead of the next rains to further improve

protection in preparedness, response and recovery as well as find durable solutions to significantly reduce vulnerabilities and increase resilience to hazards in the long term.

With regard to coordination and access to assistance, it was recommended that a designated government line ministry should lead the protection sector; national and regional protection working groups with clearly defined TOR and roles and responsibilities be established that cover all areas of protection; systems for protection assessment, monitoring, referral and sensitisation be improved; comprehensive training of protection actors at national and regional levels be conducted; resources be mobilised for improved logistics including evacuation, pre-positioning of sufficient family-sized tents and NFIs at constituency level; installation of adequately separated sanitation facilities in camps, and the provision of appropriate food rations.

With regard to identity, documentation and registration, it was recommended to amend and roll out IDP registration form to include further disaggregation by age and status; mobilise resources for scaling up outreach services to assess and replace lost documents; and to assess and prevent statelessness of children (and some adults) who have no birth certificates.

With regard to child protection, it was recommended to extend Lifeline/Childline and psychosocial support to all camp settings; conduct further emergency preparedness and response roll out in schools in regions having more 'cut off communities'; conduct further sensitisation among stakeholders on protection needs of OVCs and scale up outreach services on OVC registration.

With regard to gender based violence the report recommended to organise community awareness meetings on laws, policies, human rights, prevention of GBV and HIV and AIDS and organise women's groups at community level; improve referral of GBV cases to appropriate stakeholders; ensure gender balance of police officers deployed to camp settings; and scale up reproductive health outreach to camp settings

In relation to the rule of law and justice, it was recommended to implement laws banning brewing, sale and consumption of alcohol within relocation camps; and encourage the establishment of community-level policing and protection initiatives.

With regard to natural disaster management, the National Gender Policy 2010 - 2012 states that "Some areas of concern include separate spaces for women and children in evacuation centres, supplies for

reproductive health needs, the physical layout of camps (for security purposes) and separate sanitation facilities for women and men, appropriately situated, to avoid incidents of rape.” (p 41)

Strategies highlighted in the policy include:

- Ensuring gender mainstreaming in natural disaster management.
- Developing an engendered Emergency and Management Unit (EMU). Expanding and strengthening existing structures at local, regional and national levels to be able to respond to national natural disasters.
- Ensuring the continuity of family- and community life during disaster times, and developing structures to meet the needs of men, women and children. (p 42)

The Drought and Flooding Risk Assessment Tool for Gender Specific Decision-Making Summary Report produced under the Africa Adaptation Project - Namibia makes the following recommendations:

Gender conscious policy interventions are needed both at project and planning levels with the view to making the gender mainstreaming objective set out in Namibia's CCSAP. To this end, meticulous review of existing regulatory, policy and planning tools will be important and improvements need to be based on the review. On the regulatory side, gender and risk reduction analysis could be incorporated as a compulsory element for all development projects. At the policy level, the 1998 National Disaster Reduction Plan, the 1997 National Drought Policy as well as other existing policies and action plans with bearing on drought and flooding need to be subjected to be gender proofed.

Methodic assessment of existing tools and methods on gender needs to be made; effective tools and methods should be employed on relevant projects and planning, including budgeting. Involvement of more women in decision-making is useful in mainstreaming gender on adaptation and disaster risk reduction and preparedness. Similarly, consideration should be given to capacity building and training on the interfaces between/among gender - drought, flooding, adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

All the above strategies and recommendations can be used as indicators for measuring progress in the years ahead.



Reinhardt Kavendji, Wellness officer at Gobab explaining what climate change means. Photo: David Mutani Xoagus

## Sustainable technology



*It is proposed that the Addendum calls on all SADC States to develop, deploy and disseminate sustainable technology that is responsive to women and men for example; promoting cleaner burning fuel for household use that will reduce air pollution and cut annual cooking costs for women by 25%.*

The Namibia Renewable Energy Programme (NAMREP) was started in 2003 to improve livelihoods and income generation activities of rural people (both men and women) by providing them with access to off-grid renewable energy technologies. The programme focuses on small-scale solar energy technologies, including photovoltaic pumps, solar water heaters, solar home systems and solar cookers. Households are expected to purchase these through loans from the solar revolving fund. The private sector is now also entering this field and has developed micro-financing programmes dedicated to renewable energy technologies. (source)

Such loans are obviously more difficult for rural women to access due to their greater poverty compared to men. The number of households who are accessing solar technologies is still very small.

Since Namibia enjoys over 300 days of sunshine annually, much more could be done to develop solar technologies, and not only for household use. One new noteworthy project in this regard is the Tsumkwe Energy hybrid system that was commissioned in August 2011. This state-of-the art solar diesel system, with a capacity of 200 kWp solar and 300 kW diesel, is the largest of its



kind in Africa, feeding its electricity into a mini-grid supplying the entire settlement of Tsumkwe in Eastern Namibia, inhabited mainly by indigenous San people. The hybrid system now provides 24 hours of electricity, 7 days a week, at 50 per cent of the cost of the previous system, which only used diesel and only operated for 12 hours per day. If proven technically robust, the hybrid system will provide a feasible strategy towards rural off-grid electrification in Namibia and other developing countries.

Another new project is the Combating Bush Encroachment for Namibia's Development, which has installed a 250 kW bush-to-electricity power plant on a commercial farm in Namibia. This will be fueled with invader bush and feed electricity directly into the national grid. This proof-of-concept project will determine the financial feasibility of this approach, assess the technical robustness of the technology and establish Namibia's first Independent Power Producer.

Both the above projects are being implemented through expertise from the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia.

54% of households use wood or charcoal as fuel for cooking, comprising 87.4 percent of rural households and 15.9 per cent of urban households. (NHIES 2009-2010 provisional figures)

A number of NGOs are providing training to rural communities in the use of various types of solar cookers and ovens, for example Creative Entrepreneurial Solutions in the North and NaDEET in the South, but their reach is still very limited.

Projects in the biomass sector that are most successful are entirely commercially driven, notably charcoal production and the tsootso stove manufacturer in Oshakati. These enterprises are characterised by having either strong markets or paying much attention to the marketing process. Lessons from these enterprises would be valuable in the whole sector. (REEECAP)

## Public education and awareness raising on gender and climate change



*It is proposed that the Addendum calls on all SADC States to conduct gender sensitive education, training and public awareness campaigns on climate change and sustainable development and; ensure that public media plays a significant role in sharing information on gender dimensions of climate change and sustainable development.*

### Community based adaptation to climate change pilot programme

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### African Adaptation Project

Namibia is one of twenty countries to take part in the African Adaptation Project, a joint venture between the government of Japan and the UNDP under the Cool Earth Partnership. This project encompasses a wide range of activities and actors, including the Climate Change Adaptation Ambassadors Programme, the Namibia Climate Change Adaptation Youth Action Programme, and the Let's Act to Adapt - Dealing with

Climate Change community information toolkits and training.



The time is now: youth at COP17 demonstrations say planet earth is sitting on a time bomb unless climate change is slowed down.  
Photo: Saeanna Chingamuka

- The Climate Change Adaptation Ambassadors Programme has trained 82 selected policy makers from the relevant government ministries on understanding climate change and advocating for adaptation measures. Gender issues, which have been defined a key to the AAP NAM project, were mainstreamed in learning materials and events, and gender reflections were encouraged in the working groups. A separate gender theme paper was also developed, and the selection criteria for the ambassadors included gender balance, where appropriate.

- The Namibia climate change adaptation youth action programme seeks to educate and engage young people on issues of climate change in ways that promote gender equality, equally acknowledge the important role of young women and men, and work towards the empowerment of girls and women.
- The Let's Act to Adapt - Dealing with Climate Change community information toolkits and training designed for the specific environmental conditions of various regions of Namibia include a Gender Screening Tool.

These programmes are driven through partnerships between government, UN Agencies, research institutions, NGOs and CBOs.

In Namibia, media coverage of climate change still occupies a small proportion of total media reporting relative to the scale of the problem, which threatens the lives and livelihoods of thousands of people. Public awareness of climate change may be rising but the understanding of climate change, its causes and consequences, remains low. While the number of climate change journalists is growing in number and experience, and they are creating networks to help each other as they report on climate change, the gendered impact of climate change hardly features in their reportage.

There is a need for training journalists and media houses in Namibia on the impact of climate change on women and men, and the importance of including a gender analysis of climate change in their stories.

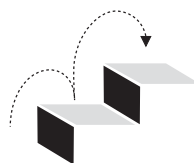
## Gender and climate change financing



*It is proposed that the Addendum calls on States to ensure that women and men can equally access climate change financing vehicles available to SADC.*

It seems that there are no financing initiatives focussing specifically on gender and climate change at present in Namibia.

Much of the funding for climate change initiatives and research comes from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with UNDP acting as the implementing agent. UNDP has included gender aspects in the current projects it is supporting, for example under the Africa Adaptation Project as described above.



### Next steps

- Civil society organisations to take advantage of the recently established Transitional Committee of the Green Climate Fund to lobby for policies that promote sustainable development, and are grounded in gender equity.
- Increase women in decision-making through partnerships with the women already occupying strategic positions, for example in agriculture and rural development and land resettlement.
- Civil society to lobby for the Addendum to the SADC Protocol and nominate gender, climate change and sustainable development champions and ambassadors amongst relevant government ministers to run with the campaign for an Addendum.