

FCPF, 21st Participants Committee Meeting (PC21)
Washington DC, May 3rd – 5th, 2016

**Gender, Women and forestry and REDD+ in FCPF: how to
promote Gender Equality and address women's issues?**

Statement from FCPF Women's Observer to FCPF PC members

For their effective participation and meaningful contribution to REDD+ & CC processes, Women from the South under the facilitation of REFACOF were granted a Seat as Observer in the FCPF during the Fifteenth Meeting of the FCPF Participants Committee (PC15) held in Lombok, Indonesia in July 2013. Since then, women have been participating to FCFP meetings advocating for Gender responsiveness in all REDD+ and related issues of the FCPF.

Forest-Dependent Indigenous Peoples and Forest Dwellers, and Southern CSOs are recognized as key partners in REDD+ design and implementation, based on their roles in forest management; women and their organizations, however, are not similarly recognized, despite the reliance of families on women's labor and knowledge of forest resources for their well being. Thus, despite the UNFCCC CoP16 decision on REDD+ calling for the full and effective participation of "indigenous peoples and local communities", women have in most cases been excluded from such participation and have not received the level of recognition and benefit sharing opportunities they deserve.

The inter-linkages between women and forests in many FCPF countries have been well documented by researchers, INGOs and NGOs. As well, the impacts of REDD+ on women and gender, and attention paid to these in safeguards have been the topic of several studies and case studies, presented at international, national and regional workshops. These knowledge-generating activities have developed a strong rationale for forest and REDD+ related investments to design targeted mechanisms and activities to assure that rural and indigenous women are not excluded from decision-making and have access to necessary knowledge and resources to manage forest resources while improving their livelihoods. Researchers and activists have alerted the REDD+ and FCPF community of the potential negative impacts to forests that can result if women's needs for forest products are ignored.

Women are afraid that if nothing is done towards securing women's rights and promoting gender equality, REDD+ can reinforce inequity and worsen women's situation in REDD+ countries.

The World Bank is now making gender equality and women's empowerment a high priority, so it is expected that the FCPF will now bring a new level of attention to these topics within the forest sector as well.

FCPF should be leading this, by making sure women are fully integrated in every REDD+ process, providing spaces and resources for women and women-led organizations to improve women's meaningful participation in decision-making, and benefit sharing, through capacity building and project implementation. The FCPF itself must develop and utilize accountability mechanisms to assure that desired results are achieved. This necessitates new resources and new mechanisms that are targeted specifically for women, similar to the Dedicated Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples.

In order to make significant progress on all the above issues, women's Observer call on FCPF CP members and the World Bank to:

- Ensure and facilitate the effective participation of women in their countries' REDD+ and related mechanisms by:
 1. Generating Gender disaggregated data in forest access control, ownership and decision making
 2. Conducting Gender analysis, Gender budgeting and Gender audits in forest issues for effective gender mainstreaming
 3. Adopting the Voluntary Guidelines on Land, Forest and Fisheries as developed by the FAO Committee on Food Security as a guiding document
 4. Apply Governance, Social and Environmental Safeguards as spelt out in the UNFCCC Cancun Document

- Develop specific funding mechanisms for the women that will help women improve and enhance their participation to the sustainable development of their countries in general, to combat climate change and poverty through the sustainable management of forests and the development of women's forest-based community enterprises.

- Develop mechanisms for capacity building for rural and indigenous women and their access to quality information to ensure qualitative and quantitative representation of the latter in the decision making process at all levels of intervention relating to REDD+&CC, sustainable forest management and forest-based economic development.

Three short-term actions are proposed to start with and build upon:

1. Organize 3 regional dialogues on Gender and REDD+ with key stakeholders, (including Ministries of Women's Affairs and women's organizations) to share the state of knowledge on how to best integrate gender in REDD+, identify existing gaps and opportunities, and generate buy-in and commitment. In preparation of the dialogue, there is a need to have the state of the knowledge that exists and

use that during the dialogue to build the future. The Forest Dialogue model of multi stakeholder dialogues could be employed to achieve this.

2. Support pilot projects that can field-test various approaches to demonstrate HOW to best achieve measurable results in a few countries. This could include capacity building for leadership and gender integration; use of the W+ Standard for certifying results for women's empowerment; innovations on how to gain men's support, etc.
3. Put in place a dedicated mechanism to provide funds earmarked for women and women-led organizations, to support a plan of action to be determined by women representatives in collaboration with FCPF Secretariat staff.

Achieving this is a significant milestone towards the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you very much.

On behalf of Women from the global South,

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