

## Faith For Earth Coalition

### Developing a Gender Global Governance Strategy for the Faith for Earth Coalition

## 1. Faith, Gender and the Environment

The Faith for Earth Coalition builds on the recognition that the full, meaningful and equal participation and leadership of women in all aspects of the Coalition's governance and outputs is vital for achieving the targeted impact. Therefore, one of the determined purposes of the Coalition is to "Promote gender equality and women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in efforts to solve global environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development" (cf. Concept on the Faith for Earth Coalition, p.6).

As part of the foundational documents, this gender global governance strategy is adopted by the Coalition to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in the Coalition. The strategy aims to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all areas of work of the Coalition, and support partners in the same endeavor.

Environmental conditions have different impacts on the lives of men and women due to existing gender inequality. The choices women and men make and how they can be agents of change depend on their roles in the society. In the global south women's and girl's traditional responsibilities as food growers, water and fuel gatherers and caregivers connect them closely to the available natural resources. Compounding this, several factors contribute to women's particular difficulties in redressing environmental imbalance: insecure land and tenure rights; obstructed access to natural resource assets; limited opportunities for participating in decision-making; limited access to basic education; lack of access to markets, capital, training, and technologies; and the double burden of responsibilities inside and outside the household. Due to these and other longstanding inequalities, women in general, and poor women in particular, are disproportionately impacted by increasingly longer droughts, more severe storms and flooding, species depletion, soil degradation, deforestation, and other negative environmental changes. Conversely, women are likely to benefit most directly from environmental conservation, protection and improvement, and evidence is clear that benefits experienced by women are passed more completely to their communities, including through a greater positive impact on the nutrition and education of their children. Thus, positive environmental outcomes for women are one important means to ensure sustainability. However, women are not only victims of climate change and environmental degradation. In many (faith) communities, women already provide much needed leadership at the local level through their strong engagement in voluntary and charity work that serves the spiritual and practical needs of the communities. They also possess knowledge and skills that are critical to finding context-specific solutions to environmental challenges. Experience shows that the resilience of households and (faith) communities depends greatly on the resilience of women. Identifying and addressing both women's and men's needs, as well as promoting women as decision makers, are critical elements to ensuring environmental sustainability. It is essential that all activities and outputs by the Faith for Earth Coalition incorporate and benefit from the knowledge and leadership of women, while also supporting women as they face today's unprecedented environmental challenges.

Underlying socio-economic factors are always present and will influence the ultimate impact of every activity conducted by the Faith for Earth Coalition. The exact form of these underlying factors must be established for each project, and their salience either ruled out or the optimal means of addressing these factors established. This is achieved through socioeconomic (gender) analysis before proceeding with even the most technical and apparently socially neutral of interventions.

UNEP is committed to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in conservation and sustainable development<sup>1</sup>. As a multistakeholder partnership hosted by UNEP, the Faith for Earth Coalition will connect to UNEP's Policy and Strategy on Gender Equality and the Environment (2014-2017) and the consecutive strategy and policy that will be adopted by UNEP in order to promote gender global governance. Recognizing that environmental conditions have different impacts on the lives of men and women due to existing gender inequality, the aim is to create an enabling environment for improving gender equality and the situation of women and girls everywhere, including in rural areas and local communities and among indigenous people and ethnic minorities.

## 2. The Gender Mainstreaming Approach of the Faith for Earth Coalition

The Faith for Earth Coalition takes a gender mainstreaming approach that integrates gender global governance into all areas of work on all levels.

*Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality<sup>2</sup>.*

Gender mainstreaming is achieved through the progressive establishment of shared understanding of the centrality of gender global governance to the achievement of sustainable development. The methodology facilitates the inclusion of this understanding into the decision-making processes through which development challenges are defined, projects formulated, and resources allocated by the Faith for Earth Coalition. Notwithstanding, the Faith for Earth Coalition applies due sensitivity in accordance with the circumstances regarding gender equality in some faith-based organizations.

The Coalition's gender mainstreaming strategy takes place at two levels: the institutional level and the programmatic level. On the institutional level, the strategy addresses Participation and Women's Leadership; Communication, Knowledge and Information Management and Coherence; Partnerships; Capacity-building and Oversight, Monitoring and Evaluation. On the programmatic level, the strategy covers Gender-responsive Programming, Capacity Building and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Secretariat of the Coalition is responsible for implementing and monitoring this strategy in collaboration with the Coalition Steering Committee. In implementing and monitoring this strategy, the Coalition Secretariat may collaborate with UNEP's established Gender Architecture as laid out in the UNEP Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment 2014-17.

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment 2014-17

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3, 18 September 1997, pages 27-34.). Section 1: concepts and principles.

## 3. Areas of Action

### 3.1. Institutional Level

#### Participation and Women's Leadership

1. Organizations wishing to become members of the Coalition must fulfil the following **gender-related membership criteria** (cf. Coalition Concept, p.8).

- a. Commitment to equality among all humans regardless of gender and religious orientation;
- b. Commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Human Rights standards, which include the principles of gender equality;
- c. Focus on the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the SDGs; SDG 5 specifically focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment;
- d. Adopt the principles of "Leave no one behind" – Inclusivity and diversity in regional, sectoral, religious and gender representation.

2. In order to ensure equal representation of women and men in the Coalition bodies, **female quotas** are applied to some of the bodies. Moreover, respect to gender equality is exerted in the composition of Coalition Operational Teams and Thematic Partnerships. Gender equality is one criterion against which project proposals by the Coalition Operational Teams and Thematic Partnerships to the Coalition Trust Fund are assessed.

- a. In order to promote young female faith leaders, the Youth Council shall have a gender ratio of 50 % which is to be communicated by the Secretariat to interested youth wanting to join the Coalition. The Secretariat oversees the implementation of the 50 % gender ratio and accepts applications for membership correspondingly.
- b. A gender ratio of 50 % is to be respected in the composition of the Regional and Local Youth Councils.
- c. The Youth Steering Committee has a gender ratio of 50 %. Respect to gender equality is exerted in the election of Youth Steering Committee Chairs.
- d. The Faith-Science Consortium has a gender ratio of 50 %. The Coalition Secretariat oversees the implementation of this ratio and invites members / accepts applications correspondingly.
- e. Gender equality among candidates for the Coalition Steering Committee shall be ensured.
- f. It is acknowledged that most high-level religious leaders worldwide are male, which is why a female quota for the Council of Elders is not practicable. The FBO Network as a network without an institutionalized Coalition body will not have a female quota.
- g. Project proposals by the Coalition Operational Teams and Thematic Partnerships are assessed against the following criterion: The more diversity in terms of religions, gender and regions among project partners (from all 4 Coalition bodies), the higher the probability of approval of a proposal.
- h. When distributing a label as part of the Labelling System for an Active Coalition Core – The Coalition Champions, the Secretariat considers the principle of gender equality.

3. The meetings of the Coalition Steering Group by default have a **gender-related agenda item** on their meeting agenda in order to discuss progress on the implementation of this strategy, or to address a specific gender-related project by the Coalition. If applicable, all other Coalition Councils shall also have a standard agenda item on gender equality in their meetings on a recurring basis.

4. At the **Coalition Global Forum**, there will be a **specific event** dedicated to the interconnections between gender equality and the environment. This event can be designed as Coalition Councils find appropriate and relevant.

### Communication, Knowledge, Information Management and Coherence

5. The Faith for Earth Coalition works to ensure the **exchange of information and knowledge** on gender global governance related to programmatic work, making clear the linkages between gender, environment and poverty. Knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment is systematically documented and publicly shared on the Coalition online knowledge platform.

6. The **Coalition's communication strategy** includes issues related to gender global governance as an integral component of internal and public information dissemination. The communication strategy and all its outputs take a gender-sensitive approach, as women and girls are disproportionately affected by environmental risks. Communication outputs will raise awareness to this fact. Women and girls will be featured in communication outputs in order to highlight their challenges but also in order to show their role in fighting climate change and environmental degradation as agents of change.

7. The Coalition plans to conduct **mapping exercises** with different foci. In these mapping exercises, the role of women and girls shall be considered as one variable in order to map the participation of women and girls in existing FBO work on the environment.

8. The Faith for Earth Coalition commits to being actively involved in a **community of practice** on gender equality and the empowerment of women as they related to faith and the environment.

9. The Faith for Earth Coalition commits to contribute to strengthening the **evidence base** and understanding of the differentiated impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on men and women and the role of women as agents of change.

10. The Faith for Earth Coalition works to ensure that members of the Coalition bodies are introduced to gender-related mandates and to the relevance of gender in the context of their work in a consistent and systematic manner.

### Partnerships

11. The Faith for Earth Coalition as a multistakeholder platform is based on trustful and strong partnerships among Religious and Spiritual Leaders, faith-based organizations, young people and scientists of faith at global, regional and local levels. The Coalition will be active in engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in gender global governance as they related to faith and the environment. Specific robust partnerships with organizations focusing on the intersections between gender equality, faith and the environment will be sought.

### Capacity building

12. The Faith for Earth Coalition will support the collection and consolidation of information and expertise on gender and the environment in different thematic areas as well as identifying experts on gender and the environment, as needed, and enhance knowledge platforms on gender and the environment.

13. If needed, the Coalition Secretariat, as a UNEP entity, seeks support from UNEP's Gender and Social Safeguards Unit and Gender Coordinators in their respective gender mainstreaming responsibilities, in particular in the design, implementation and monitoring of robust results-based projects that contribute to the advancement of equality and nondiscrimination, and in the sharing of gender-related knowledge and information.

### Oversight, Monitoring and Evaluation

14. The Coalition Secretariat is responsible for oversight and monitoring of the implementation of the Gender Global Governance Strategy. The implementation of the strategy is monitored with a monitoring management system to be applied by the Secretariat. Progress and results must be recorded and tracked. Biannually, the Secretariat publishes a progress report to be submitted to all Coalition bodies as well as UNEP's Executive Office. Reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment results takes place in relation to the Coalition biannual work plan (gender assessments of the work plan take place) as well as this strategy. In monitoring the implementation of the strategy, the Coalition Secretariat may seek assistance from UNEP's Gender Coordinators, Gender Focal Points and/or the Gender and Social Safeguards Unit.

15. When collecting data for monitoring, reporting or evaluation purposes, all key data is sex-disaggregated, or there is a specific reason noted for not disaggregating data by sex.

16. In the process of monitoring, the Coalition Secretariat collects, identifies and shares information and experiences on good practices positively contributing to mainstreaming gender in the Faith for Earth Coalition and strengthen quality of information sharing/flow and documentation on gender issues.

17. UNEP Evaluation Office will evaluate the implementation of this strategy at least every four years so that lessons learned can be factored into the design of new biannual work plans of the Coalition. Each evaluation undertaken by UNEP will be designed and implemented in accordance with the *UNEG Gender Norms and Standards* and the *UNEG Guidance on Integration of Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations* and monitored accordingly. The terms of reference for each evaluation will specify the gender equality considerations to be assessed by the evaluation team and will define the gender expertise to be included in the evaluation team.

### 3.2. Programmatic Level

18. The Coalition is committed to the achievement of gender-sensitive results in its programme performance as one important means of working towards environmental sustainability. This will require regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of identified gender actions against indicators to enable determining of results achieved at project and program levels.

### Gender-responsive programming

19. The integration of communities, indigenous people, gender perspectives and use of gender equality monitoring indicators at the project level are key. The aim of the Coalition is to enable partners and members sustain ecosystem services for human well-being and biodiversity for present and future generations taking into account the need to integrate gender perspectives, recognize and respect

traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities as well as equitable social development and inclusion.

20. In the planning, design and implementation of programs and projects, the Coalition ensures that all outputs are gender responsive. Depending on the output, the gender-responsiveness shall be operationalized in the most effective way. In addition to mainstreaming gender across all outputs, specific outputs and activities focusing on women and girls shall be produced, e.g. publications or trainings on the role of women in faith and environment; or specific capacity buildings for women faith groups dealing with the environment to name some examples. The Coalition will support the role of women as agents of change in a project setting.

21. Underlying socio-economic factors perpetuate gender inequality. The exact form of these underlying factors must be established for each Coalition project, and their salience either ruled out or the optimal means of addressing these factors established. This is achieved through socioeconomic gender analysis before proceeding with even the most technical and apparently socially neutral of interventions.

22. All Coalitions programs and projects:

- Ensure that supported activities do not discriminate against women and girls, reinforce gender-based inequalities and exclusion, or have disproportionate adverse gender-related impacts;
- Conduct gender analysis to promote the design and implementation of gender responsive and gender transformative projects that addresses different needs and constraints of women, men, girls, and boys, considering the effects of multiple forms of discrimination;
- Conduct gender-sensitive stakeholder analysis and provide equal opportunities in terms of participation and decision-making;
- Promote equal access to and control over productive resources and programme and project benefits;
- Empower and prioritize the needs of marginalized and vulnerable women and men of diverse socioeconomic contexts; and
- Identify and address risks of potential exposure of affected people to gender-based violence and other abuse that may occur in connection with any of UNEP's supported activities.

23. Coalition Operational Teams and Thematic Partnerships, as the entities to implement the Coalition's practical work, sign a commitment to this strategy and all action points regarding the mainstreaming of gender equality stipulated herein.

24. The Coalition will monitor how its outputs affect gender relations on the different levels of action and establishes corresponding monitoring mechanisms to measure this, for example use and analysis of gender equality indicators, the collection of sex-disaggregated data, the collection of baseline data related to gender equality. If required, the Coalition will collaborate with UNEP on the collection, use and analysis of such data, as UNEP has already collected sex-disaggregated data in some of its sub programs. If suitable, the Coalition will make use of the collected data in its programmatic planning.

25. Based on available resources, the Coalition will undertake analysis of how environmental damage from disasters and conflicts disproportionately affect women and children. These analyses can be conducted together with other UNEP entities engaged in similar endeavors as per UNEP's Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Strategy.

26. If required, the Coalition Secretariat will liaise with UNEP's Gender Coordinators and the Gender Focal Team to seek strategic guidance and advice on the effective implementation of this strategy on the project level of the Coalition, e.g. when assessing project proposals for the Coalition Trust Fund. UNEP's Gender Focal Points can be involved in the project planning process to maximize the mainstreaming of gender equality considerations into the Coalition and its outputs (particularly to support the provision of adequate gender analysis, baseline information and gender-sensitive indicators and to lay the groundwork for the inclusion of gender equality considerations into eventual evaluations).

### Capacity building

27. The Coalition commits to share existing knowledge, resources and know-how on how to design, plan, implement and monitor programs and activities in a gender-responsive way and how to integrate gender perspectives into program cycles and institutions.

28. The Coalition aims to intentionally collaborate with women's organizations and women and girls in local communities in order to empower them with knowledge and support regarding environmental issues.

29. The Coalition aims to promote the deployment of gender-responsive solutions to address climate change, including strengthening, protecting and preserving local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in different sectors and for improving climate resilience, and by fostering women's and girls' full participation and leadership in science, technology, research and development.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

30. The Coalition commits to effectively monitor and track its programs and projects in relation to their gender-responsiveness and specific gender equality indicators.

31. The Coalition's project data will be progressively disaggregated by age and sex, and this disaggregated data will be included in annual reports, so that progress can be measured effectively.

32. Each evaluation of projects and programs undertaken by UNEP will be designed and implemented in accordance with the *UNEG Gender Norms and Standards* and the *UNEG Guidance on Integration of Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations* and monitored accordingly. The terms of reference for each evaluation will specify the gender equality considerations to be assessed by the evaluation team and will define the gender expertise to be included in the evaluation team.

32. If necessary, the Coalition Secretariat will seek support from UNEP's Gender Implementation Committee which provides technical support for the development of systems and institutional mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on this Gender Global Governance Strategy as well as SDG 5 of the Agenda 2030, including the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data.