

Policy Talk: Importance of Gender Equity in Low Carbon Development for a Sustainable Asia

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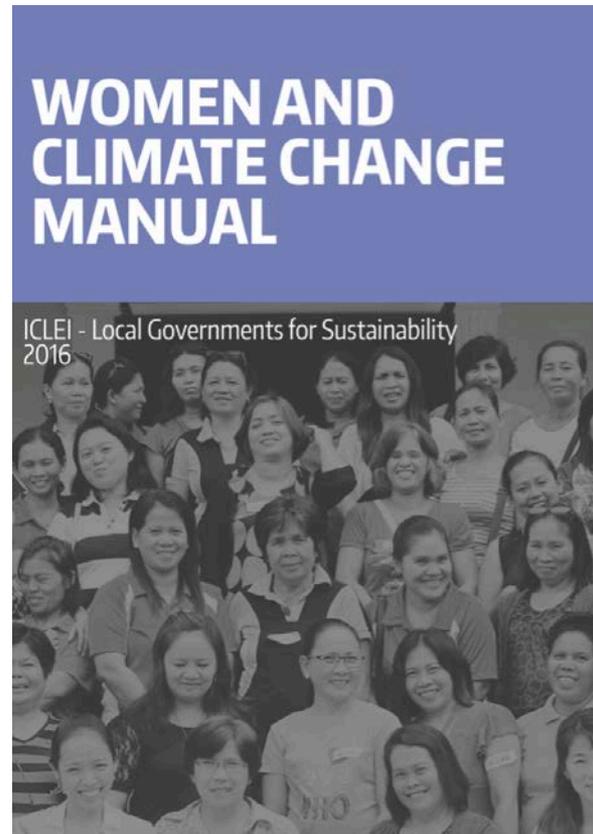
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Gender equity at the local, subnational and national level



Capacity-building

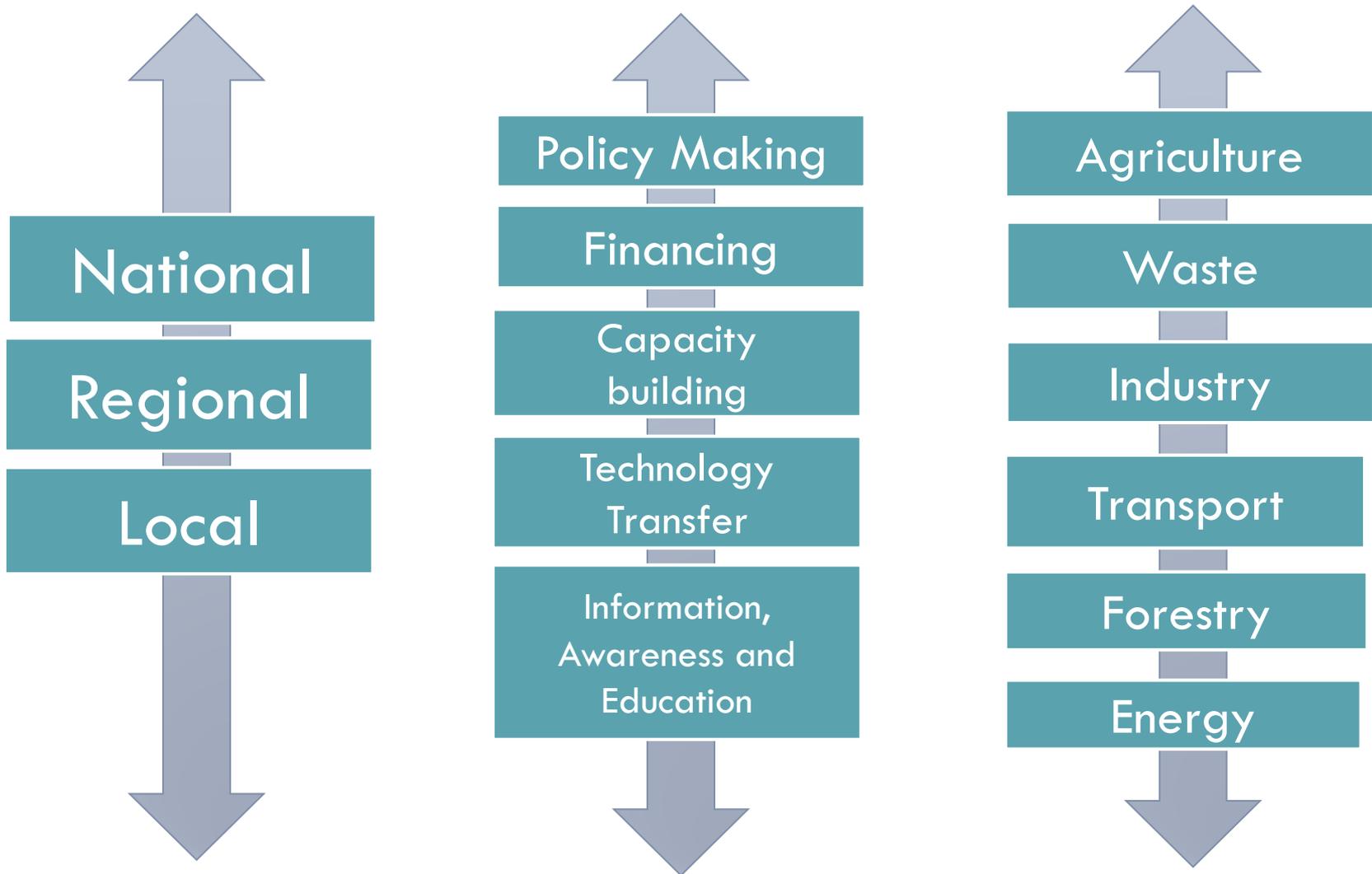


Knowledge Products



National Policy

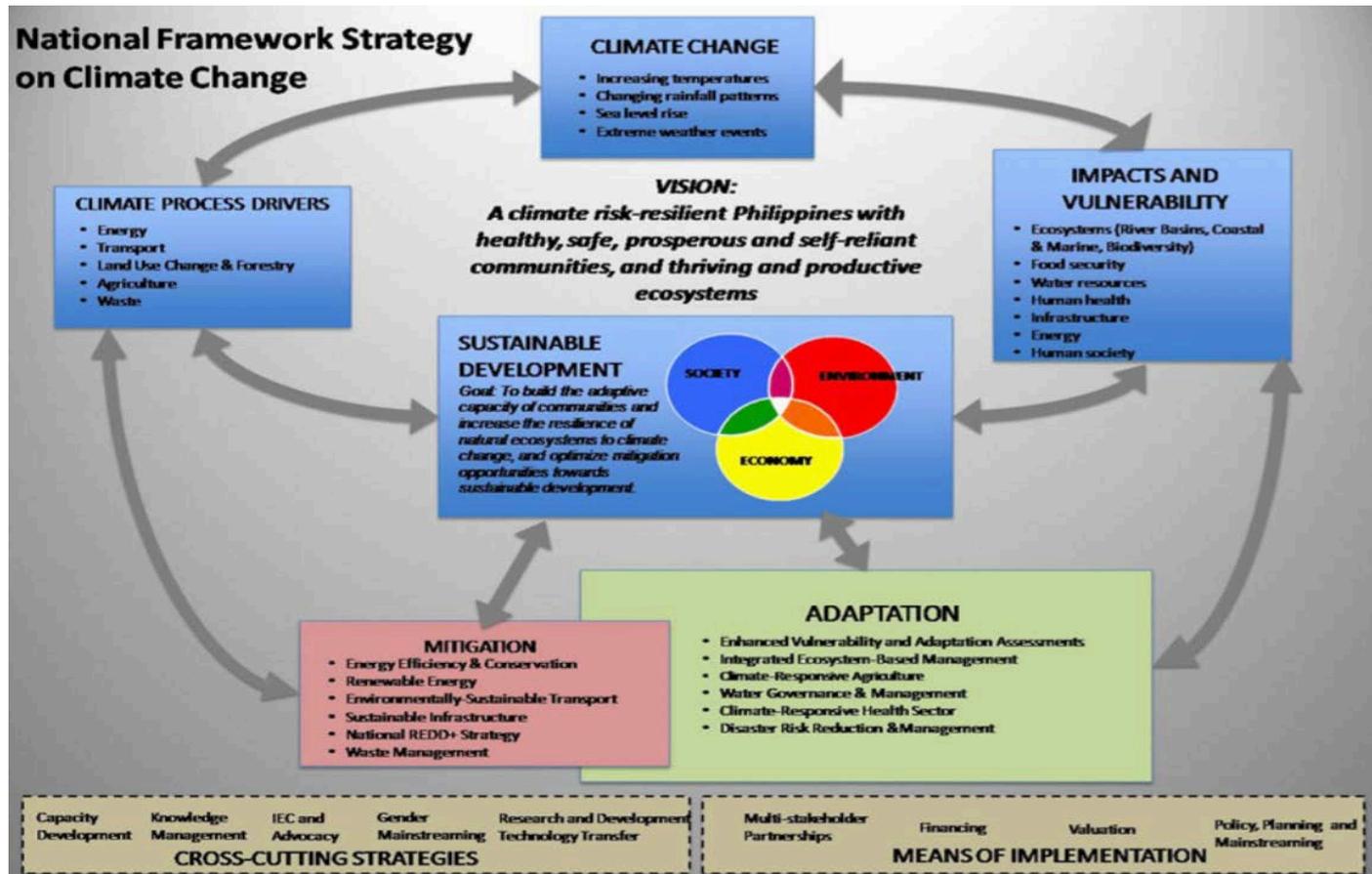
Gender equity as a cross-cutting issue in low carbon development



Multi-dimensional, integrated approach to low carbon development

- Do we take a **climate-first** (emission reductions) approach?
- **Multi-dimensional approach** takes into account environmental, social and economic benefits, including gender-responsiveness, instead of merely treating them as co-benefits.
- These **sustainable development goals** include energy security for all, health, sustainable livelihoods, for women and men.
- SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
 1. LCD must take into consideration the interplay between **techno-economic** and **social-political aspect**. LCD has to include societal change, such as institutional settings (ie care economy), gender-biased power relations, and cultural values.
 2. LCD must employ an **interdisciplinary** and **multilevel approach**. LCD must encompass vertical (national-local) and horizontal (academe, private sector, women's groups) levels of governance and decision-making.

Multi-dimensional, integrated approach to low carbon development



“To build the adaptive capacities of women and men in their communities, increase the resilience of vulnerable sectors and natural ecosystems to climate change, and optimize mitigation opportunities towards gender-responsive and rights-based sustainable development.”

Gender mainstreaming in low carbon development

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” (UN ECOSOC, 1997).

Gender mainstreaming in low carbon development

1. Does the policy affect women and men differently and might it lead to positive/negative impacts on gender equality?
2. What data/knowledge is available to assess the impacts of the measure on gender equality, e.g. sex-disaggregated data?
3. To what extent does the project contribute to increasing women's influence in policy design, planning and decision-making processes?
4. Do the financial resources and measures benefit women to the same extent as men? Does the project lead to a more balanced distribution of public resources among women and men?

Gender mainstreaming in low carbon development: Establishing connections

Key intersections:

1. **Gender and Energy**
2. Gender and Technology
3. Gender and Financing
4. Gender and REDD+
5. **Gender and Cities**
6. Gender and IEC
7. Gender and Agriculture

Gender and Energy Nexus: Gendered Energy Divide

- Energy poverty (especially in rural communities in Asia) has gender dimensions:
 1. Men and women have different energy dynamics (roles in household, decision-making areas, energy needs, coping mechanisms). For example, women are generally more vulnerable to health hazards from household pollution generated by fuels such as coal, wood, and charcoal.
 2. Without access to modern energy services, women spend most of their day performing basic subsistence tasks which limits wage, education opportunities as well as social and political interaction.
 3. Women are often excluded from discussions about energy plans and policies. Excluding women from decision-making is likely to result in gender-blind planning, financing, execution and implementation.

Gender and Energy Nexus: Policy Implications

1. Energy policies and programs need to be gender-responsive. This means incorporating meaningful roles for women in planning, designing and executing energy programs.
2. Energy-health nexus. The provision of modern sustainable energy services to health facilities especially in off-grid areas or rural communities can improve women's health. Improved access to energy (SE4All) can lead to gender equity.
3. Barriers, such as lack of access to credit and training, limit the possibilities for women to develop and use energy-based technologies. Thus capacity-building activities, financing and technological development should incorporate a gender perspective.

Gender and Cities: Synergies between gender and low carbon activities

There is a need to disaggregate the **contribution** made to climate change based on gender, as well as the **differentiated impacts** from climate change based on gender. At the city level, gender lens can inform local policy:

1. **Energy:** Women are more directly responsible for energy use in the home, and therefore, can be more effectively targeted to reduce home-based energy emissions, through choice of appliances and behavior change.
2. **Transport:** With a lower participation rate in the formal economy, women's travel needs are generally less oriented to structured commuting in cities than men's. They may be making more frequent, local trips, which can be targeted in mobility planning to be less energy intensive.
3. **Waste:** Women are still more responsible for household purchasing and consumption. Their choice of goods, and the levels of packaging influences waste volumes.

Moving forward: Recommendations

1. **Planning and Policy Making.** Gender mainstreaming must be done at all levels of planning, decision-making, and programming.
2. **Knowledge and Capacity Development.** Capacity and knowledge development must enhance the roles and status of women as participants and agents of change, build on their strengths and experiences, knowledge and coping capacity, and ensure women's access to information. This includes developing and integrating gendered and accessible capacity building programs.
3. **Knowledge products.** Gendered knowledge products and tools must be developed to improve awareness on gender equity in climate change, supported by information, education and communication activities.
4. **Monitoring System.** Gender-sensitive performance monitoring systems and indicators must be developed and implemented to ensure positive impact on gender equity.

Additional references

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability. Women and Climate Change Manual.

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