

GENDER & GREEN CLIMATE FUND



Background

Climate change is a problem that affects everyone, but those who are particularly vulnerable are women and marginalized gender groups. This is due to the social, economic, and cultural dynamics in play. Particularly in developing countries, women are responsible for providing food and acting as caretakers, and as such, climate-related disasters, such as droughts and floods, can have a greater impact on them, disrupting their livelihoods and leading to an increased risk of poverty. Limited access to land, financial resources, and decision-making power, make it more difficult for them to adapt to changing climatic conditions.

To ensure equitable and effective climate adaptation and mitigation efforts, dedicated financial resources are necessary. Access to climate finance can empower women in developing countries, by enabling them to participate in climate adaptation and mitigation projects, build resilience, and generate income, while also contributing to gender equality and climate action. Gender-responsive climate finance ensure that projects consider the specific needs and priorities of women, and can turn them into agents of change, fostering sustainable practices and resilient communities.

Investing in women's capacities can also lead to improved project outcomes, address gender disparities in the community, and promote sustainable development.



GREEN
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Green Climate Fund's Gender Policy

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is an international financial mechanism established in 2010 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to support developing countries reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. It channels its financial resources through a variety of entities, such as national institutions, international organizations, and the private sector, to ensure effective and impactful results.

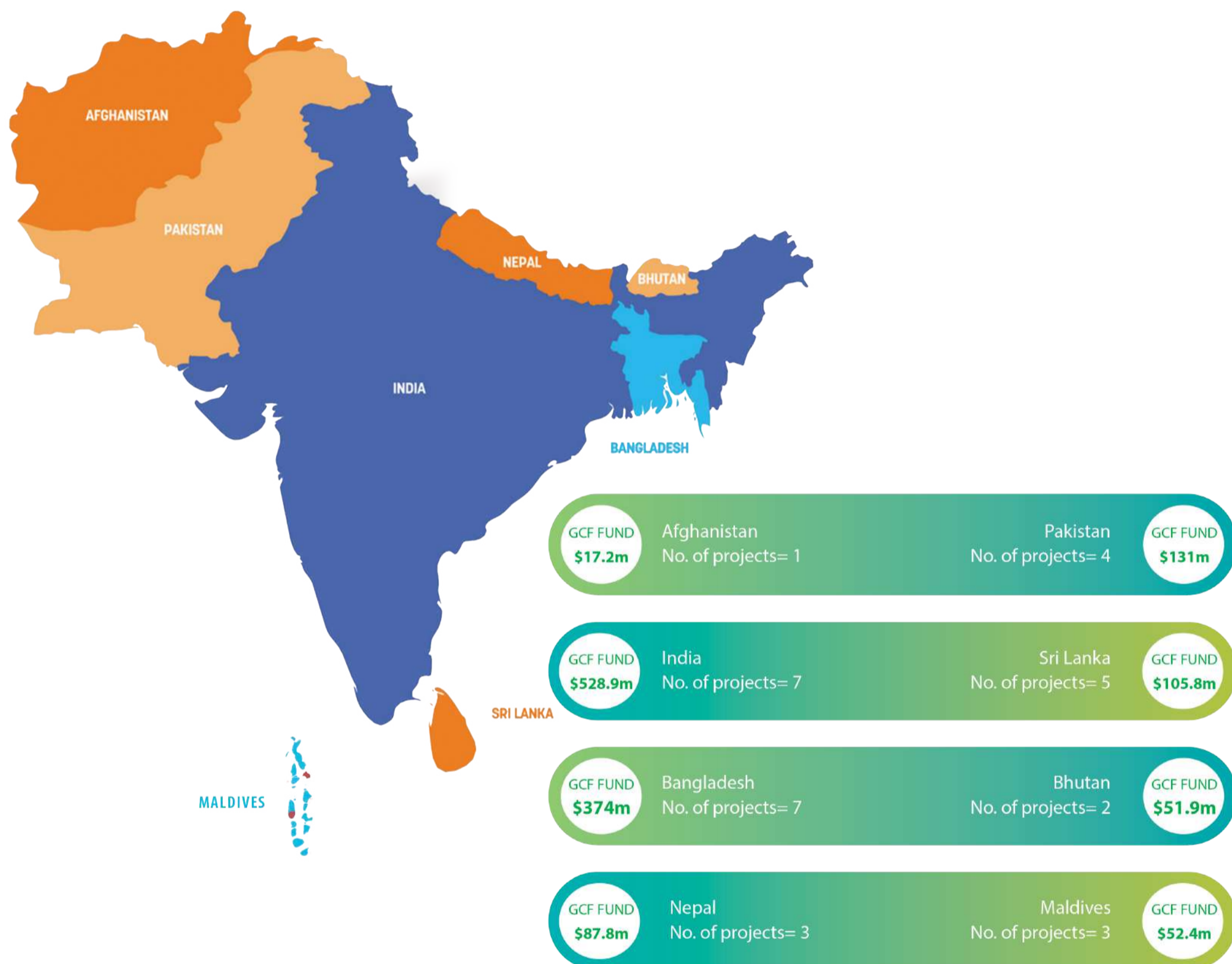
The GCF is taking steps to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and promote their meaningful participation in decision-making. In 2019, the GCF implemented a gender policy to ensure that men, women and vulnerable groups get equal opportunities in project preparation, implementation and even evaluation. It aims to promote gender-responsive climate action by addressing the specific needs, priorities, and capacities of women and men in developing countries. It emphasizes conducting gender analysis during project development to ensure that projects consider gender-specific vulnerabilities and capitalize on the unique strengths and contributions of women. By doing this, the GCF hopes to empower women and promote gender equality in the global response to climate change.

Priority Areas of the GCF Gender Action Plan, 2020-2023

The GCF has defined key priority areas for operationalizing the Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan, 2020-2023.

- i. Governance
- ii. Competencies and capacity development
- iii. Resource allocation, accessibility and budgeting
- iv. Operational procedures
- v. Knowledge generation and communications

Green Climate Fund in South Asia



The GCF has supported 32 projects—at least one in all eight countries in South Asia with an investment of USD 1.348 billion. India with seven projects tops the list of South Asian countries receiving GCF funding followed by Bangladesh, which also received seven projects but with much smaller funding. (Source: GCF website as per 25th June 2023)

Country Case Studies

PRC and Tewa put together a thorough study on GCF-funded projects in South Asian countries like India, Nepal and Bangladesh. The research looked at priorities and planned actions for these projects concerning gender, as well as any gaps and challenges in following the GCF's Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan. Here is a breakdown of what the GCF funded projects are doing in Nepal, India and Bangladesh.

Nepal: Building A Resilient Churia Region In Nepal (BRCRN)

In Nepal, the Building A Resilient Churia Region In Nepal (BRCRN) project is working on making the ecosystem and the local lives more sustainable in the Churia region. The goal is to reduce sedimentation in the rivers and help out the vulnerable communities. The project was approved by GCF in 2019, and it is set to wrap up in 2027. It has a total of USD \$47.43 million behind it (\$39.39 million from GCF and \$8.04 million from Nepal government). The project covers three provinces- Bagmati, Koshi, and Madesh, 11 districts, 113 municipalities and 26 critical river systems. It engages 3.2 million people-- 963,268 directly and 2,252,980 indirectly.

The project has identified nearly 130 women as Gender Champions to get more women engaged in sustainable natural resource management. Even so, there is still a low number of women involved in the project, and there is not much improvement in their livelihoods. To address this, the project aims to get at least 50% women, 31% indigenous people and 13% Dalits involved, and build their leadership skills and decision-making power.

But so far, there are only 18-20% Madhesi and 10% Indigenous People/Dalits/Muslims and 32% women taking part in the project activities from 2020 to 2022. So, the project needs to hire more women staff and encourage more people from diverse backgrounds to get involved.

India: Ground Water Recharge and Solar Micro Irrigation Project to Ensure Food Security and Enhance Resilience in Vulnerable Tribal Areas of Odisha

This project is designed to help secure access to water for drinking and irrigation for 5.2 million vulnerable people—51% of them women-- in Odisha, India.

It has got a total investment of USD \$166.3 million, \$34.3 million from GCF and the rest from co-financing. Implemented in 2017, the project focuses on enhancing groundwater recharge in community ponds, and it is set to be completed by 2023, with a possible extension until 2025. It will be implemented in the 15 vulnerable districts of Odisha.

It is also promoting gender equality with women being trained and encouraged to participate in local governing bodies like Municipalities and Panchayats. So far, the project has identified 7,707 out of the 9,000 tanks and completed their renovation. An app has been developed to monitor their use and 2,889 Jal-sathis (water champions to monitor water use aspect of the project), mostly women, have been identified. There are challenges, like getting women to adopt new technologies, but the project is making good progress.

Bangladesh: Extended Community Climate Change Project-Flood (ECCCP-Flood)

The ECCCP-Flood project is looking to make life easier for people living in flood-prone areas of Bangladesh. They want to make sure the community is resilient and that women do not face safety and security risks. During the flooding season, the community suffers a great loss and women in those areas face higher safety and security risks. The \$ 13.3 million project funded by GCF (\$9.681 million) and other financing sources (\$3.644 million) runs until 2024. The project is providing training and capacity-building opportunities for women, empowering them to play active role in decision-making for flood management and community resilience planning.

Women make up 90% of those involved in climate change projects from 2017 to 2022. They are managing safe drinking water, raising homestead plinths, rearing livestock, and improving the personal hygiene of their families.

The table below provides a comparative overview of the three projects in Nepal, India and Bangladesh:

	Bangladesh	India	Nepal
Name	Extended Community Climate Change Project – Flood (ECCCP-Flood)	Ground Water Recharge and Solar Micro Irrigation Project to Ensure Food Security and Enhance Resilience in Vulnerable Tribal Areas of Odisha	Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal (BRCRN)
Region	Niphamari, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha and Jamalpur	15 vulnerable districts of Odisha - Baragarh, Bolangir, Boudh, Gajapati, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Keonjhar, Koraput, Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Rayagada, Sambalpur and Sonepur	Koshi, Madhesh and Bagmati Provinces
Accredited Entity	Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations
National Designated Authority	Economics Relations Division, Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change	Ministry of Finance
Executing Entity	Eco-Social Development Organization, TMSS, Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra, National Development Programme, Natun Zibon Rochi, People's Oriented Programme Implementation, Gram Bikash Kendra, Society for Social Services, and Self-Help and Rehabilitation Programme	Odisha Community Tank Development and Management Society (OCTDMS), Special Purpose Vehicle, Department of Water Resources, Govt. of Odisha	Ministry of Forest and Environment and FAO

By looking at the case studies of the three countries, a few points have emerged:

Make sure there are more women involved in project management, design and implementation, and among beneficiaries

- Appoint a gender focal person for each project
- Make sure more women have their say in project management, design and implementation, and there are more women among beneficiaries and training participants. If any risk is foreseen for women in travelling to remote areas, make them understand the risk, take risk management measures and assure them of their safety and security.
- Provide guidance and facilitation to women before the project starts so that they have prior understanding of the benefits;

Ensure the training programmes are relatable, clear and mostly include

- Women, marginalized groups, tribal groups, socially excluded groups.
- Make sure the training is easily understandable for them;
- Take into consideration cultural traditions, norms and practices when addressing climate change;
- Provide life skills to beneficiaries so that in the events of displacement they are able to earn and take care of their families;
- Develop the capacity of institutions including stakeholders like executing agencies, network partners, and local partners in all project stages.
- Provide tailored gender training and capacity development support depending on the project requirement to the accredited entities and executing agencies.

Stakeholder buy-in from the beginning

- It is imperative that accredited entities and executing agencies, involve stakeholders in the whole process including stocktaking, planning, monitoring and reporting, and that women and men equally constitute the stakeholder group.
- Ensure timely review of the gender assessment and the project-level gender action plan submitted by the AE with the funding proposal.
- Develop knowledge products not only towards the end of the project but in the initial phases as well.

Gender-specific and disaggregated statistics

- The projects have diverse men and women as beneficiaries such as IPs and non-IPs, tribal and non-tribal groups, etc. At the community level, each individual has a distinct level of knowledge, understanding and coping capacity, hence intersectionality analysis should be made a part of gender-smart initiatives. The Gender Action Plan also demands the incorporation of gender-specific and disaggregated statistics in the M&E framework and requires the projects to follow the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) for involving indigenous peoples.

Paving the way to empowerment of women as change makers

- Women should be engaged not merely as passive recipients, but as the right holders with equal say in decision and policy making.
- In practical terms, both need-based and rights-based approaches have to be adopted to improve women's livelihoods and build their agency.



Conclusion & Way Forward

This summary provides us with useful information from three different case studies related to GCF-funded projects. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been delays in the activities.

It is important that projects are strictly followed and implemented so that vulnerable communities can have more resilience and adapt better when it comes to climate change. Women, men, indigenous people, local communities, and governments should all be involved in this process in order to make it successful. Women should be trained and empowered to protect themselves during disasters, and influence policy and decision-making.

Clear, relatable and culturally sensitive training and life skills should be provided to women, marginalized groups, tribal communities, and socially excluded groups as primary beneficiaries so that they can help their families out during disasters and the aftermath.

Regular monitoring and evaluation is crucial to ensure that the project reaches its full potential.

This was also discussed in a workshop on 'Gender in GCF-funded Projects In South Asian Countries'. These countries are working towards equal benefits for women and men, and making sure indigenous peoples are taken into account. In order to reach gender equality, this should all be addressed.

Some good practices that need to be continued in the future:

1. GCF-funded projects have targeted women as beneficiaries and ensured their participation in their project activities. The projects have invested in building women's capacity in climate-resilient agriculture technologies and practices and rehabilitating ecosystems.
2. Gender-specific studies have helped GCF-funded projects identify the problems and challenges of women and vulnerable groups.
3. GCF's gender action plan has helped projects integrate gender components into their activities and understand its impact on their objectives.

Here are some factors that are needed to improve in GCF-funded projects:

1. The GCF projects view women as project beneficiaries, but it is time to start looking at them as agents of change and right holders in the project.
2. Having a diverse and equal staff composition is essential, and gender action plans make that clear.
3. It is important to have inclusive stakeholder participation for the project to move forward, with diverse gender identities, IPs and marginalized communities being taken into account.
4. To make sure this works, gender sensitivity training should be provided to the core staff from NDA, AEs, and EEs.
5. Also, the GCF-funded entities should recognize the importance of CSOs that work with vulnerable communities more to really address local needs. Having a diverse representation of CSOs will build the effectiveness of the projects and ensure the representation of different groups of stakeholders.
6. To make sure gender parity is being addressed, entities have to comply with the GCF accountability mechanism, and the integration of gender should be intrinsic to the project output.
7. Gender-specialized budgeting should also be practiced to track what is reaching the targeted women or parties.
8. The responsible entities should also interact with the community people, not just conduct workshops, and the empowerment programmes and training should be conducted at the community level.
9. The percentage of GCF funds should be checked and increased if needed.

Acknowledgement

This publication is a synthesis of three country case studies of GCF funded projects in Bangladesh, Nepal and India. Prakriti Resources Centre acknowledges the authors Ms. Sumaiya Binte Selim, Ms Indira Shreesh and Ms. Vijeta Rattani of the country case studies from Bangladesh, Nepal and India respectively. Special thanks to Ms. Sadhana Shrestha for an excellent synthesis of the case studies. Anuja Shrestha deserves special gratitude for her support in this publication. We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Ms. Emerald Thapa and Mr. Binay Dhital in editing and finalising the publication. The publication is made possible with the support of Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action and Tewa.

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