

## Bhutan

# Integrating gender targets into LEDS and NAMAs

Activity	Gender assessment to identify entry points and targets for women to participate in LEDS and NAMA design
Country	Bhutan
Sector(s) involved	Transport, Housing, Municipal Waste, Industry
Time frame	2012–2015

### Case summary

In 2012, Bhutan launched its Carbon Neutral Strategy (CNS) as a follow-up to the carbon neutral commitments pledged by the government during the Copenhagen UNFCCC-COP15 meeting in 2009. With the support of the UNDP Low-Emission Capacity Building Programme, the government is undertaking the design of NAMAs, LEDS and MRV across a number of key sectors including: transport; waste; housing, and industry. To help mainstream gender balance into this design process, a Rapid Gender Capacity Needs Assessment was developed and implemented throughout 2013. Its recommendations are expected to enable more effective integration of gender balance into Bhutan's national strategies and the implementation of its NAMAs and LEDS.

The gender assessment was developed to: identify and develop capacities to enhance scaled up mitigation actions (NAMAs, LEDS and MRV); integrate gender issues in climate policy development; and provide gender disaggregated data to the government to improve policy-making.

The assessment primarily focuses at the national level, but also seeks to engage relevant stakeholders from local governments, civil society, and industry. It has improved capacity and provided key recommendations and entry points for gender mainstreaming in national strategies. The recommendations produced will be included in the long-term objective of developing NAMAs and LEDS in the country.



Women working, Bhutan

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## Background

In the philosophy of the Royal Government of Bhutan, gender equality is considered an inherent aspect of good governance. Yet despite this, gender gaps exist across many key sectors including: education; engineering; medical science; civil services and political decision making (Dorji, 2014).

Supported by strong political motivation to address these issues, the government also recognised that international support through climate change donor funding in many cases specifically requires a 'gender-sensitive approach' in climate funding proposals.

Following commitments made during the 2009 UNFCCC-COP in Copenhagen to remain carbon neutral, the Royal Government of Bhutan adopted its 'Green' Economic Development Policy in 2010 which recommended mainstreaming of gender and environment in all sectors and in 2012 drafted a strategy called the 'National Strategy and Action Plan for Low Carbon Development' commonly known as 'Carbon Neutral Strategy'. The strategy laid out recommendations for development of NAMAs, and LEDS in a number of key sectors.

In May 2013, the UNDP Bhutan Country Office held a gender mainstreaming capacity development workshop in Punakha to improve gender mainstreaming as a strategy for improved results in the energy and environment (E&E) portfolio, with focus on climate change-related projects. The training exercise targeted project managers, project stakeholders, and UNDP staff. As an output of the workshop, the Low Emission Capacity Building (LECB) programme of UNDP was selected as one of five participating projects. Consequently, the LECB Programme undertook measures to: (1) set targets for gender balance; and (2) carry out a rapid needs assessment of Bhutan's NAMAs and LEDS.

In July, a consultant was hired to conduct a Rapid Gender Capacity Needs Assessment for the project, focused on priority sectors for NAMAs and LEDS. A decision on identification of the sectors for NAMAs and LEDS was based on sector assessments taken for Bhutan's National Communication to the UNFCCC and the 2012 Carbon Neutral Strategy.

## Activities

- » **Sector and stakeholder mapping:** The project identified the potential sectors relevant to NAMAs and LEDS prioritized under LECB where increased female participation could be most effective and beneficial. The selected sectors included: transport, waste, housing, and industry. Mapping was undertaken by bringing together and interviewing key stakeholders from all local and national government organisations, gender focal persons from each ministry and agency, together with representatives from the national Mainstreaming Reference Group (MRG) and national technical consultants.
- » **Rapid Gender Capacity Needs Assessment:** undertaken in 2013 to identify gender gaps and entry points for gender mainstreaming in identified NAMAs and LEDS sectors and to build capacity of key stakeholders.
- » **Capacity building and training:** Key entry points were identified from the needs assessment for gender mainstreaming in NAMA and LEDS. The main focus was on awareness creation, capacity building and training exercises. Sector-specific training programmes aimed at key stakeholder groups were proposed to build capacities on coordination, planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of NAMAs and LEDS. Training workshops are designed to include: 30% female participation; Gender focal persons from line ministries; and participation by members of the national MRG, to provide guidance and mainstream cross-cutting issues when developing the LEDS.
- » **Mainstreaming gender in the National Environment Strategy (NES) document:** The UNDP LECB programme aims at integrating Rapid Gender Assessment recommendations with the National Environment Strategy document (2013–2014).

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- » **Integrate gender focus into NAMA and LEDS:** The long-term objective of the UNDP LECB programme is to strategize and formulate NAMAs and LEDS in identified sectors in Bhutan integrated with gender a focus. A clear scope, objectives, emissions reduction targets and MRV will be developed for NAMAs to be implemented post-2015. It also includes identifying clear institutional arrangements with a coordinating agency for each NAMA consisting of gender focal officials who are trained via capacity building workshops in mainstreaming gender into the design of NAMAs.
- » **Generate gender disaggregated data:** providing gender disaggregation of data on a sectoral basis is now a regular feature of the UNDP LECB programme's progress reports.

## Institutions involved

The National Environment Commission; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Low-Emission Capacity Building (LECB) Project Management Secretariat; Department of Industry (DoI).

## Cooperation with

The Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA); UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Center (APRC); UNDP Bhutan; World Bank; Global Environment Facility (GEF).

## Finance

The UNDP-LECB program and its rapid gender capacity needs assessment is jointly funded by: The European Commission; the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) and the Australian Government. A total funding of USD 630,000 is commissioned for Bhutan's LECB Programme. Beyond this, implementation of gender mainstreaming recommendations in climate policies will be incorporated as a part of specific strategy for sectors for which recommendations are drawn, and therefore, finances will be allocated from the general budget of Five Year Plans.

## Gender Capacity Needs Rapid Assessment Process



Adapted from: Penjor, Y. (2013) Gender Capacity Needs Assessment. Bhutan Low Emission Capacity Building Programme (LECB).

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## Impact of activities

- » **Building technical expertise:** The overall LECB program helped in building technical expertise of gender focal officials in ministries and particularly of women in decision making positions on gender issues and gender mainstreaming in climate policy making.
- » **Identification of the gender gaps and entry points:** The rapid assessment identified gender gaps and capacity needs of the institutional/individual LECB project stakeholders on gender mainstreaming in identified NAMAs and LEDS sectors, including:
  - » **Transport sector:** Improvements in employment of women conductors, female professional drivers including taxi drivers is envisioned. These are areas which have not previously been targeted from a gender perspective. In addition, provision of day care services, health services and education for children of working women are also being considered in the programme.
  - » **Housing sector:** The impact of selecting this sector on gender considerations is immense. 30% of the households targeted are headed by women who undertake energy related decisions. In the case of institutions too, most employees involved in energy decision-making are women. Therefore, having 30% participation by women in a capacity building programme is likely to improve impact.
  - » **Municipal waste sector:** The current employment ratio in municipal waste management is considered to be more skewed towards females. However, during the assessment it was identified that most of the women even at the managerial level are insufficiently trained. The activity involved training of female officers in this sector.

## Why is it good practice

- » The UNDP LECB programme undertook an **integrated approach for mainstreaming gender issues** with the national policy making process of the government. The recommendations from the Rapid Gender Capacity Needs Assessments under the programme are now proposed for inclusion in the National Environment Strategy (NES) and 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan document for the country. This was useful in gathering adequate attention in framing the country's **annual work plans and budget**. **Gender provisions were incorporated in national plans and sectoral budgets.**
- » Secondly, to achieve a practical **results oriented outcome** of the process, an **evidenced based approach** was followed. **Rapid gender assessment** was undertaken with line ministries to identify the most effective entry points and recommendations for mainstreaming gender issues.
- » Each line ministry in Bhutan has **gender focal persons** who deal with social issues on gender involved in their sectors. **The UNDP targeted these gender focal officials for integrating climate perspective on gender in their respective sectors.** In this manner, long-term capacity is added to gender focal officials in line ministries.
- » Furthermore, the programme directly aims at building women's capacities and not at giving gender based privileges to push participation in the mainstream sectors. For example, nomination of candidates for participation in project management teams and trainings are all **sector and qualification based and not gender or hierarchy based.** In this manner, the programme aims at creating a **multiplier impact on society for building long-term capacities.**

## Success factors

- » **Political commitment:** the willingness of the national government to mainstream gender issues at all levels including integration in the development of NAMAs and LEDS acted as the primary driving force behind its success. The government has already provided for gender mainstreaming across all sectors in its 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, and now, beyond Rapid Gender Assessment, they are in the process of incorporating the recommendations into the NES and the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan.

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- » **Policy Screening:** The government's policy formulation protocol requires mainstreaming of all cross cutting issues at the formulation stage of the policy. The policy has to undergo a screening tool of which gender is one of the 22 variables.
- » **Including gender focus in government TORs for consultants:** ensuring mandatory 30% female representation to encourage greater female participation and female entrepreneurship.
- » **Mainstreaming Reference Group (MRG):** played a crucial role in integrating gender issues in policy programmes. It is a government led group representing various sectors which reviews policies and plans for mainstreaming cross sectoral issues including gender. Similarly, for gender mainstreaming in NAMAs and LEDS in the four selected sectors, review and approval of identified entry points by the MRG was key for their integration in the NES.
- » **Multi-Stakeholder approach:** While the project is operated at the national level, it engaged relevant stakeholders in national and local government, civil society and the private sector, for multi-level, cross sectoral impact.
- » **Rapid Gender Capacity Needs Assessments:** facilitated identification of entry points and relevant gaps with one-to-one consultations as well as group consultations with gender focal officials and MRGs. This helped streamline practical results-oriented recommendations for gender mainstreaming activities.
- » **Training for mainstreaming cross cutting issues:** All ministries, agencies and planners at the district level were provided training by the MRG and such training will continue in the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. The MRG members conducted high level awareness-raising workshops on the importance of mainstreaming crosscutting issues. These workshops focussed on key decision-makers including directors and secretaries.

Overcoming barriers/  
challenges

## Capacity

What were the main barriers/challenges to delivery?  
How were these barriers/challenges overcome?

There is a need for greater national expertise on the issue of gender. The national consultant hired for the rapid assessment also did not have adequate capacity and experience on the subject.

The National Women and Children Commission is responsible for assessing all gender related issues in Bhutan. In order to address the capacity problem NCWC organised gender training exercises for focal-point persons, funded by DANIDA.

Frequent changes in trained officials from government positions after training, poses a serious challenge to successful continuity. Because of this, newer employees need to be trained each time. It results in wasted time and resources by training people who then do not multiply the impacts.

In this context, UNDP has followed a multi-focal approach. It made representation of at least three women from each sector a mandatory requirement for all LECB trainings. This is in addition to the representation of gender focal-points in each sector. In this way, UNDP is able to reduce the risk of lost capacity from trained officials through switching roles.

The challenge of ensuring gender equity is an issue which cuts across all sectors and spheres of society. However, during rapid assessments, the attempt to institutionalize gender only from a climate perspective made it technical and difficult to understand for stakeholders.

To address this, the study broadly followed the 2008 UNDP Capacity Assessment User Guide on incorporating gender considerations into Low-Emission Development Planning. The process also built on lessons learned by the UNDP Cambodia Country Office during 2010–2011 through a gender mainstreaming initiative. Group consultations and one to one interactions with gender focal officials and women participants helped in gaining country specific gender understanding.

## Institutional

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Information	<p>Actual implementation of the recommendations resulting from the gender rapid assessments in policy making was a challenge.</p> <p>The Government has set up the MRGs in Bhutan that comprise of relevant stakeholders who assess and analyse policies with the view to mainstreaming gender and other cross cutting issues before they are approved in national policies. MRGs were involved during the rapid assessments for gender in July and recommendations from the assessments are planned to be included in NES.</p>
Sociocultural	<p>Very limited reference sources were available for a gender-based mitigation study. Nationally, a very limited number of studies had been carried out on climate change and gender.</p> <p>Rapid assessments with relevant stakeholder and ministry focal officials helped identify recommendations. Over time it is anticipated that knowledge and experience will increase in undertaking the activities.</p> <p>Despite a policy push for gender equality, women in Bhutan are still not sufficiently engaged in decision making processes in key economic sectors.</p> <p>With strengthened education and improved facilitation, increased participation from women in decision making process is encouraged. Over time it is anticipated that these capacity building activities and training will overcome such issues.</p>
Lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Sectors for NAMAs and LEDS were carefully selected to maximise benefits for women:</b> The sectors were prioritized by which would most effectively engage female participation. For example, for the housing sector, houses were targeted for capacity building where women led the management of the house.</li> <li>» <b>Rapid assessments for gender mainstreaming in the beginning of the programme helped in identifying the gaps, entry points and specific opportunities:</b> For example, in the waste management sector, waste transfer-stations were identified as a key component where increased female participation could be achieved. This was included in the NAMA design only after the rapid assessment took place.</li> <li>» <b>A practical and implementable approach:</b> targeting individual and institutional capacity needs and focussing less on the policy level capacity building at the outset.</li> <li>» <b>Primary targets of the programme were the gender focal persons:</b> in each sector, agency, department and ministry. Building capacities at this level was useful in gender focused integration of plans and in adding capacities to the existing knowledge.</li> </ul>
How to replicate this practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Ensure strong political support:</b> to ensure that recommendations and ideas formulated during the gender assessments are incorporated into national strategy documents.</li> <li>» <b>Budget allocations should specifically target integration of gender into climate policy frameworks:</b> without such support, mainstreaming gender into key sectors for NAMA and LEDS would be challenging.</li> <li>» <b>Consider need for training or support to ensure participation:</b> In Bhutan, most of the female population are educated so with specific training in key sectoral and gender issues this made it easier to mobilise women's participation in capacity building workshops. In the absence of an educated population this may be more challenging.</li> <li>» <b>Undertake Rapid Gender Assessments in specific sectors:</b> to identify country specific needs, gaps and opportunities in gender mainstreaming.</li> <li>» <b>Establish MRGs:</b> to undertake detailed analysis of policy and planning processes at both central and local levels and identify windows of opportunity for the integration and mainstreaming of gender approaches within policy planning.</li> <li>» <b>Establish Gender Focal Points:</b> in relevant ministerial divisions and sectors to mainstream gender issues into policy and practice.</li> </ul>

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Contact for enquiries	» Mr. Karma Tshering, National Environment Commission, ktshering@nec.gov.bt
Further key resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Penjor, Y (2013), Gender Capacity Needs Report, Bhutan LECB Project – Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions And Low Emission Development Strategy, Environment &amp; Climate Change Consultancy Services, Thimphu, Bhutan</li> <li>» NCWC (2008), National Plan of Action for Gender (2008–2013), Gross National Happiness Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu.</li> <li>» National Environment Strategy for Bhutan – the middle path, available at: <a href="http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Middle%20Path.pdf">www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Middle%20Path.pdf</a></li> </ul>
Website(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Low Emission Capacity Building Program, Bhutan, available at: <a href="http://www.lowemissiondevelopment.org/countries/bhutan">www.lowemissiondevelopment.org/countries/bhutan</a></li> <li>» National Environment Commission, Bhutan: <a href="http://www.nec.gov.bt">www.nec.gov.bt</a></li> <li>» National Commission for Women and Children, Bhutan: <a href="http://www.ncwc.org.bt">www.ncwc.org.bt</a></li> </ul>
Case study author(s)	Swati Agarwal (TERI); Manish Kumar Shrivastava (TERI) <b>Edited by:</b> Nicholas Harrison (Ecofys) <b>Editorial support:</b> Frauke Röser, Thomas Day, Daniel Lafond, Niklas Höhne and Katja Eisbrenner (Ecofys). <b>Coordination by:</b> Ecofys <a href="http://www.ecofys.com">www.ecofys.com</a> and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
Case study contributor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Tshewang Zangmo, Gender Focal, National Environment Commission, Bhutan</li> <li>» Mr Dasho Paljor J Dorji, Special Advisor, National Environment Commission, Bhutan</li> <li>» Mr. Karma Tshering, National Environment Commission, Bhutan</li> <li>» Sonam Dagay, Environment Officer, Low Emission Capacity Building Project, National Environment Commission</li> </ul>
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