



Challenges and Opportunities for Integrating Family Planning Into Adaptation Finance



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Executive Summary

The Paris Agreement, negotiated in 2015 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, brought unprecedented attention to the issue of adaptation to climate change. Adaptation refers to “adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts.”¹ Questions arose about what kinds of activities and interventions were considered adaptation and should be eligible for climate adaptation finance. International finance for climate adaptation is growing globally, and through greater engagement with adaptation decisionmakers and processes the family planning/reproductive health (FP/RH) community could access adaptation funding as part of multisectoral adaptation projects.

A growing evidence base links women’s met needs for family planning with reduced human vulnerability to climate change and enhanced resilience in the face of climate change impacts. Yet to date, population and family planning have been largely left out of adaptation proposals and projects. This report highlights a number of multilateral funds that provide climate finance and identifies challenges and opportunities for the FP/RH community in justifying their proposed development interventions as adaptation interventions. The challenges include:

- A lack of consensus among funders and applicants about whether development activities count as adaptation.
- The need for FP/RH practitioners and advocates to be plugged into country-driven adaptation stakeholder engagement processes.
- The FP/RH community’s limited exposure to and understanding of the processes, protocols, and key decisionmakers within the multilateral adaptation finance architecture.
- A narrow interpretation of women’s empowerment in adaptation strategies.

The best opportunity for funding FP/RH is to integrate it within multisectoral adaptation proposals. This report identifies several approaches that the FP/RH community could use to strengthen the prospects for such integration:

- Track (and perhaps engage in) ongoing Green Climate Fund discussions on adaptation and development.
- Continue to build and communicate the evidence base linking FP/RH to climate change resilience and adaptive capacity.
- Engage more fully in national-level stakeholder engagement opportunities on adaptation, particularly as they relate to the National Adaptation Plan process.
- Map the national adaptation finance landscape.
- Participate in key events, meetings, and conferences related to adaptation planning.

Introduction

Adaptation is increasingly recognized as a valuable and important part of the global response to climate change. Adaptation refers to “adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climactic stimuli and their effects or impacts.” This includes “changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change.”² The Paris Agreement, negotiated in 2015 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), brings unprecedented attention to the issue, setting a long-term goal for adaptation (to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability) alongside its goals on mitigation and finance.³ Additionally, most of the Nationally Determined Contributions that form the backbone of the Paris Agreement contain an adaptation component.⁴ Nationally Determined Contributions are an outline of each country’s post-2020 climate actions that it intends to achieve.⁵ While the balance between mitigation and adaptation activities in international climate finance still skews heavily toward mitigation, finance for adaptation is growing globally.⁶

With this growing recognition, questions about what kinds of activities and interventions count as adaptation—and therefore should be eligible for climate adaptation finance—continue to be debated. While climate-proofing infrastructure and supporting climate-smart agriculture are the kinds of interventions typically seen as the frontline of adaptation action, strengthening business-as-usual development outcomes—in everything from health to education to poverty reduction—can contribute to reduced vulnerability and enhanced resilience in the face of climate change impacts.

Issues of population dynamics—in particular, population growth, high fertility, and family planning—are increasingly recognized in this intersection of development and adaptation. Regions of high population growth, high fertility, and high unmet need for family planning frequently overlap with regions of high vulnerability to climate change. Ongoing unmet need for family planning in these regions can exacerbate vulnerability and limit the adaptive capacity of individuals, households, and communities. Meeting women’s needs for family planning in these regions has multiple benefits:

- Women and their children are healthier—a fundamental building block of resilience.⁷
- Smaller families result in reduced household demand on climate-sensitive resources like food and water, and can result in increased time for women’s engagement in adaptation-related activities.
- Slower population growth reduces both pressure on the local natural resource base and the sheer scale of human vulnerability to climate change impacts.⁸

The important role of access to family planning in building resilience to the impacts of climate change and other stressors in sub-Saharan Africa is documented in a recent report by the United States Agency for International Development and Population Reference Bureau.⁹

This recognition has been reflected in policies, though in a limited way. In preparing National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), 37 least developed countries highlighted population growth as a factor that exacerbates the impacts of climate change. Yet only a small number (six) identified investing in family planning programs as a priority to address that challenge, and none of the NAPAs have channeled investment in family planning.¹⁰

The scientific literature also offers growing recognition of the ways in which family planning can contribute to climate change resilience. The Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) enumerates the value of expanding family planning/reproductive health (FP/RH) services. In Working Group II’s chapter on health, the IPCC summarizes literature that illustrates that meeting the need for family planning services in areas with both high fertility and high vulnerability to climate change (such as the Sahel region of Africa) can reduce human suffering as climate change proceeds.¹¹ While the literature summarized by the IPCC does not directly conclude that family planning is an adaptation

strategy, it clearly enumerates the health benefits of meeting women's needs for family planning and suggests that climate change enhances the urgency of such investments.

These findings were echoed by an expert working group convened by the Worldwatch Institute and Population Reference Bureau over the course of 2013 to examine questions of population dynamics and climate compatible development. Among their discoveries: Research suggests that reducing unintended pregnancies would result in multiple health, education, and economic benefits for women and their households, and that these benefits could potentially reduce human vulnerability to climate change impacts. The expert group recommended an increase in financing available for both climate change and family planning, and the creation of innovative financing for family planning within climate compatible development plans.¹²

In *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*, editor Paul Hawken draws attention to the value of expanding access to family planning. While the book focuses on (and quantifies) the potential reduced emissions that would result from slower population growth, he also acknowledges that meeting women's reproductive health needs can contribute to resilience.¹³

Given the growing evidence base that links women's met needs for family planning with reduced human vulnerability to climate change and enhanced resilience in the face of climate change impacts, why has population and family planning been left out of adaptation proposals and projects? To date, only a limited number of adaptation projects, supported through bilateral funds, have incorporated family planning.¹⁴ What are the prospects for international climate finance to support initiatives that incorporate family planning as part of a broader adaptation strategy?

This report explores these questions. It draws on a review of publicly-available multilateral finance institutions' investment frameworks and project documents, expert interviews, and third-party assessments of the climate finance architecture. The first section provides an overview of the investment strategies of key multilateral funds that provide adaptation finance. The second section outlines challenges to incorporating family planning in adaptation funding proposals. Taking these issues into account, the final section highlights opportunities for the population and FP/RH community to engage in resilience and adaptation initiatives and build prospects for inclusion in adaptation projects funded through multilateral climate funds.

Overview of Key Multilateral Climate Funds

This section provides a brief overview of key multilateral funds that provide climate finance and a summary of their investment frameworks. The first two funds reviewed—the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund—are two of the largest multilateral adaptation funds that are likely to be most relevant for the FP/RH community in the future. The second two funds highlighted—the GEF Trust Fund and the World Bank’s Forest Investment Program (FIP)—were chosen because their mandates, while not adaptation-specific, may also hold relevance for the FP/RH community. All four funds have a strong impact internationally, financing many projects around the world—hence their inclusion in this report.

The two adaptation funds are presented with an overview that highlights what has been learned from investment frameworks or other published documents regarding what the funds require from proposals to characterize interventions as adaptation (adaptation justification). In any proposal, applicants need to demonstrate how their proposed interventions address a climate threat, reduce vulnerability, or enhance the adaptive capacity of a specific population in a specific place. Addressing these points is critical for understanding how development interventions, such as the provision of FP/RH, can be justified as an adaptation intervention.

The two adaptation funds are then examined for how they address the issue of incremental costs. That is, whether and how the fund is explicit about covering only the project costs of interventions that are beyond business-as-usual development and are a direct response to a climate risk or threat. For example, in an agricultural project, one could argue that the cost of providing drought-resistant seeds would be the incremental cost because of projected climate change impacts, while farmer extension services would be considered business-as-usual development and require co-financing from a nonadaptation finance source. In a health project, the cost of climate-proofing a clinic could be considered the incremental cost of adaptation, while staffing and supplying the clinic would be seen as a business-as-usual development. A strict application of the incremental costs concept would likely shut out the possibility of adaptation funds supporting FP/RH, since it is widely accepted that fully meeting women’s family planning needs is a development goal in and of itself. Even in places where climate change impacts are severe, the need for family planning would exist with or without climate change.

While neither of the adaptation funds highlighted in this report limit their investments strictly to incremental costs, understanding the funds’ approaches to this concept is important for framing fundable projects. Finally, the funds’ coverage concludes with highlights from interviews conducted with Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund staff.

Coverage of the two nonadaptation funds includes an overview and highlights from portions of their program guidelines or investment criteria to indicate what is required in proposals to justify investment in an intervention.

Green Climate Fund

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) began operations in 2015. The GCF is an independent institution that functions under the guidance of the UNFCCC as a financial mechanism, for which the World Bank serves as the interim trustee. With \$10.3 billion in pledges, the GCF is the largest multilateral climate fund. It is expected that the operation of several smaller adaptation-focused funds, such as the Least Developed Countries Fund, the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience, and others, may fold their operations into the GCF over time. According to the GCF’s investment strategy, the fund is striving to achieve a 50:50 balance in mitigation and adaptation funding, though at present, 27 percent of the fund’s resources support adaptation projects, while 32 percent are cross-cutting.¹⁵

GCF’s Investment Framework contains six broad criteria used in proposal selection:

- Impact/result potential.

- Paradigm shift potential.
- Needs of the beneficiary country.
- Country ownership and institutional capacity.
- Economic efficiency.
- Financial viability (for revenue generating activities).

The framework includes definitions, sub-criteria, and illustrative indicators for each criterion.¹⁶ Of particular interest for population and FP/RH linkages is the paradigm shift potential criterion, defined by the GCF as the “degree to which the Fund can achieve sustainable development impact beyond a one-off project or programme investment through replicability and scalability.” Specific sub-criteria includes, “Contribution to the creation of an enabling environment (in other words, achieving systemic change) and to sustainable development, including social, economic and environmental co-benefits for a paradigm shift.”

Adaptation Justification

The GCF has not yet provided clear guidance on what constitutes sufficient justification for adaptation activities.¹⁷ The funding application template to be completed by applicants does not specify or provide prompts on evidence needed or methods to apply to justify proposed interventions.

Incremental Costs

Similarly, the subject of incremental costs is not clearly articulated. The GCF’s governing instrument states that the fund will finance “agreed full and agreed incremental costs for activities to enable and support enhanced action on adaptation, mitigation...,” though it does not specify in which situations full costs or incremental costs will be covered.¹⁸ As described below, the GCF is expected to clarify its approach to the issue in the coming year, and members of the FP/RH community should monitor the outcomes to better assess the extent to which the concept of incremental costs is likely to be applied in future funding decisions.

Interview Insights

According to GCF staff, the GCF has not, to date, received or funded proposals with a FP/RH component. The GCF’s current adaptation justification requirements would make it unlikely that FP/RH could be supported, not only as a standalone proposal but even as a component of a multisectoral project. A strong climate story is needed for all dimensions of an adaptation project, and the climate logic needs to be laid out clearly. For example, livelihood diversification and household water supply efforts are important in that they can support foundational aspects of resilience, but they would not be funded in the context of GCF projects because there is no specified climate logic to them—they are initiatives that should be undertaken regardless of the climate change situation. There may, however, be an opening for FP/RH from a gender perspective: If applicants could demonstrate that a lack of FP/RH was a barrier to women’s participation in project activities (particularly as a means of women’s economic empowerment), investing in efforts to reduce that barrier could be considered.¹⁹

Adaptation Fund

Operational since 2009, the Adaptation Fund is a financial instrument under the UNFCCC/Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement under which parties set internationally binding emission reduction targets.²⁰ The Adaptation Fund is financed through a share of proceeds from the Clean Development Mechanism, a global, environmental investment and credit scheme that allows a country with an emission-reduction or -limitation commitment under the Kyoto Protocol to implement an emission-reduction project in developing countries, and from countries’ voluntary contributions.²¹ The Adaptation Fund pioneered a direct access model in which National Implementing Entities (NIEs) can directly apply for funds and manage all aspects of adaptation projects, independent of multilateral or international institutions. NIEs are institutions accredited by the GCF and Adaptation Fund to submit proposals and receive funding. They are typically government agencies, academic institutions, or trust funds.

To date, the Adaptation Fund has channeled \$438 million to adaptation and resilience activities in 67 countries.²² The Adaptation Fund supports concrete adaptation actions, which it defines as a set of activities aimed at addressing the adverse impacts of and risks posed by climate change.

Adaptation Justification

In terms of required justification for what could be considered adaptation, the fund specifies that activities should produce a tangible impact on the ground by reducing vulnerability and increasing a country's adaptive capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change.²³

In a recent review of funded proposals, the Adaptation Fund Board found that “the core focus of projects, in terms of their outputs, is on structural/physical adaptation measures, representing responses that clearly meet the Fund's objective to finance concrete projects... However this does not mean strengthening of the enabling environment, and hence addressing the social and economic drivers of vulnerability, is being ignored—as demonstrated by the number of project outputs dedicated to this adaptation response type.”²⁴

Incremental Costs

From its inception, the Adaptation Fund has operated on the principle that the fund would support projects and programs on a full adaptation cost basis. Its operational guidelines, revised in 2013, more explicitly lay out its interpretation of funding the full cost of adaptation:

The Adaptation Fund does not require co-financing for the projects/programmes it funds. The principal and explicit aim of the project/programme should be to adapt and to increase resilience of a specific system or communities, to the adverse effects of climate change and variability. Therefore, the proposal should demonstrate that the project/programme activities are relevant in addressing its adaptation objectives and that, taken solely, without additional funding from other donors, they will help achieve these objectives. Although co-financing is not required, it is possible and often cost-effective to implement Adaptation Fund projects in parallel with projects funded from other sources. In such a situation, the Adaptation Fund project should be able to deliver its outcomes and outputs regardless of the success of the other project(s).²⁵

Interview Insights

In an interview, staff from the Adaptation Fund shared perspectives on the fund's history and approaches in the context of potential investments in FP/RH. They confirmed that the fund has never received a proposal with a FP/RH component and indicated that none of the projects in their current portfolio have a strong health component. They did indicate, however, that the Adaptation Fund's full adaptation cost approach would, in theory, allow for funding of FP/RH as part of a multisectoral adaptation project. Because the issue of population and family planning can be culturally sensitive, any proposal with a FP/RH component would be carefully screened (using the 15 principles of the fund's environmental and social policy,²⁶ including principles related to human rights, marginalized groups, and access and equity) to ensure that the proposed interventions were not top down, and were instead based on communities' interests. In this context, stakeholder engagement is crucial to demonstrate the country-driven aspect of proposals. It would need to be clear that the interest in supporting family planning as part of a broader adaptation strategy emerged from a vulnerability and risk assessment linked to community-level demands and not simply to an interest of the government.²⁷

Global Environment Facility Trust Fund

Climate change is one of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund's six focal areas. Established in 1994, it is the longest-standing public climate change fund. The GEF Trust Fund is currently in its sixth replenishment (GEF 6, 2014-2018), with total funds of \$4.43 billion.²⁸ Its climate change focal area currently covers only mitigation, but GEF 6 is piloting integrated approaches. Adaptation-related work is channeled through the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund.

Among GEF 6's pilots on integrated approaches is "Sustainability and Resilience for Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa," which touches significantly on adaptation themes.²⁹ This \$40-million pilot program initiated activity in 2015 and works with small-scale farmers in targeted agro-ecologies in dryland regions to sustainably increase yields and food security for 2 to 3 million households over five to 10 years. The pilot has four main components:

- Soil and water conservation.
- Diversification of production systems.
- Integrated natural resource management in agro-pastoral systems.
- Supportive policies and institutional frameworks for transformational change toward food security in Africa.

Justification of Interventions

Since the GEF Trust Fund does not operate as an adaptation fund, questions of adaptation justification and incremental costs are not applicable. Open questions exist, however, regarding justification of the kinds of interventions that enable "supportive policies and institutions for transformational change toward food security in Africa." The programming directions for the integrated approach pilots note that rapid population growth in sub-Saharan Africa is one of the fundamental challenges for food security, and the pilot's emphasis on the empowerment of women suggests a potential opening for justifying a FP/RH intervention, particularly in regions where unmet need is high.

Because women are more likely to be subsistence farmers, and because of the significant role women play as food producers and processors, the pilot intends to emphasize women's empowerment and participation. While it is not clear from project documents what specific interventions are being undertaken to promote women's empowerment, the pilot's objectives include promoting women's economic empowerment, increasing rural women's decisionmaking power and representation, and achieving an equitable workload balance,³⁰ all of which have clear links to meeting women's needs for family planning services.

World Bank's Forest Investment Program

The Forest Investment Program (FIP) is one of four funding windows of the World Bank's Climate Investment Funds. Operational since 2009, it is one of several forest-oriented funds at the World Bank focused on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.³¹ The FIP is notable in that, in addition to its direct investment in forest mitigation activities and forest governance, it also targets investments outside the forest sector that can help to reduce pressure on forests, including alternative livelihood strategies and poverty reduction. While family planning interventions have not been included in FIP programs to date, the potential for family planning programs to slow population growth (and thereby reduce pressure on forests in some areas), as well as to contribute to poverty reduction, may offer opportunities for the FP/RH community to join proposals for FIP funding.

Justification of Interventions

The FIP is not an adaptation fund, so questions of adaptation justification and incremental costs do not apply. Aspects of the FIP, however, overlap with broader sustainable development objectives. A dedicated grant mechanism (DGM) within the FIP for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) may be of particular interest to the FP/RH community because of its contextualization in broader sustainable development objectives and focus on locally-driven, culturally-responsive interventions.

The DGM aims to provide financing and learning opportunities to support IPLC participation in FIP efforts in its eight pilot countries.³² The eligibility criteria for activities are fairly broad. To be funded, program activities must be:

- Aligned with FIP objectives and complementing the FIP investment plan for the country.

- Aligned with one or more of the DGM's thematic areas (capacity development, promotion of rural livelihoods, or investments in sustainable management of forest landscapes).
- Designed and implemented under the initiative of indigenous peoples or local communities
- Based on inclusive and accountable processes.
- Compliant with relevant operational and safeguards policies.³³

One approach to community-based development, known as Population, Health, and Environment (PHE), has successfully integrated interventions that include family planning, primary health care, livelihoods, and natural resource management to conserve critical ecosystems in countries such as Madagascar and Tanzania. Lessons from these experiences could be noted and applied to FIP proposals.³⁴

Challenges to Financing Family Planning as an Adaptation Strategy

This section outlines key challenges to the inclusion of FP/RH in proposals for adaptation finance. They include:

- A lack of consensus among funders and applicants about whether development activities count as adaptation.
- The fact that most funds emphasize the need for adaptation activities to be country-driven, while FP/RH practitioners and advocates are not adequately plugged into adaptation stakeholder engagement processes.
- Relatedly, the FP/RH community's limited exposure to and understanding of the processes, protocols, and key decisionmakers within the multilateral adaptation finance architecture.
- Adaptation funds' narrow interpretation of women's empowerment in adaptation strategies.

Challenge 1: Lack of Consensus About What Counts as Adaptation

Unless it has a clear and direct link to a climate threat, business-as-usual development has rarely been supported through adaptation funds. As the previous section notes, part of the challenge—particularly for the Green Climate Fund—is a lack of clarity from funds on what is needed in project proposals to justify an intervention as an adaptation strategy. Health interventions in general are rarely included in proposals to the GCF and Adaptation Fund. If they are to evolve, it will be important for the funds to be open to learning and listening to input from the health sector.

Similarly, defining the concept of incremental costs is challenging, and no one definition is consistently applied by the major adaptation funds. In an unpublished briefing note, the World Resources Institute (WRI) analyzed the investment frameworks and practices of five adaptation funds: the Adaptation Fund, the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience, the Nordic Development Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund, and the Special Climate Change Fund.³⁵ WRI analysts found that all five funds have grappled with defining their role in covering the full or incremental cost of adaptation, defining that cost, and deciding what to do when the concept is hard to apply in practice. They also found a level of subjectivity in how the funds determined what constitutes adaptation and the relevant costs to be covered, although the Adaptation Fund offers the strongest and clearest guidance for applicants. As noted, the Adaptation Fund is committed to covering the full cost of proposed activities, provided that the adaptation reasoning for the intervention is clearly established. It provides guidance on establishing adaptation reasoning, data collection, and expected results, and applicants are not required to separate the costs of business-as-usual development from the cost of the adaptation activity, nor is co-financing required.

As the other funds' lack of clarity regarding questions of adaptation justification and incremental cost receives increased attention, they may seek to follow the Adaptation Fund's lead in providing clearer guidance. The issue came to the fore of the GCF's operations after several proposals came under scrutiny for too closely resembling conventional development projects, with insufficient connection to climate resilience. In April 2017 the GCF board, under recommendation from its independent Technical Advisory Panel, rejected a proposal for the first time. Titled "Responding to the Increasing Risk of Drought: Building Gender-Responsive Resilience of the Most Vulnerable Communities," the Ethiopian proposal was submitted to the GCF by the UN Development Program. The project sought to build the resilience of vulnerable populations by improving their access to water and food, promoting alternative livelihoods, empowering women, improving health and well-being, improving access to climate information, improving the resilience of ecosystems and the availability of ecosystem services, and introducing improved and climate-smart technologies.³⁶

Notes on the GCF board's discussion of the proposal indicate that some board members felt that many of the proposed rural development activities did not have a strong enough adaptation justification, and

therefore would be more appropriately submitted to a development bank. Other board members argued that the proposal's holistic approach was appropriate and that the GCF should be supporting the full costs of adaptation.³⁷ The board's lack of consensus meant that the proposal could not be approved. Over the following months the proposal's accredited entity, Ethiopia's Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation, revised the proposal based on feedback from the Technical Advisory Panel and the GCF board and resubmitted it; the proposal was approved by the GCF board in October 2017.³⁸

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have mounted an effort to urge the GCF to be more open to adaptation projects that contain conventional development interventions.³⁹ At its July 2017 meeting, the GCF board requested the Secretariat to prepare two papers for the board's consideration at its nineteenth meeting (in early 2018) that will clarify both eligibility criteria and incremental costs.⁴⁰ As the GCF takes steps to better explain what it considers as adaptation, other funds—and applicants—must continue to grapple with these questions until a clearer consensus is established.

Challenge 2: Family Planning/Reproductive Health Community Not Widely Engaged in Country-Driven Adaptation Efforts

Climate change impacts differ from locality to locality, and vulnerability to those impacts is highly context-specific. In recognition of this, the Cancun Adaptation Framework highlights among its key principles the importance of country-driven approaches to adaptation.⁴¹ The need for adaptation proposals to contain approaches and interventions that countries themselves (not the funder) identify as priorities can be to the advantage of the FP/RH community. The challenge, however, is that the FP/RH community has not yet widely engaged in adaptation planning processes with partners who focus on climate adaptation. The challenge extends to coordination across ministries, as well, where frequently ministries that oversee family planning service delivery (such as ministries of health) do not have strong links with those that oversee climate change activities (such as ministries of the environment).

While funds' governing instruments attempt to provide guidance for the proposal development process, they also recognize that adaptation should be a country-driven process, and they seek to be responsive to what countries put forward as their adaptation needs. For example, the Least Developed Countries Fund was established with the aim of assisting countries in preparing and implementing National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), which were intended to entail a high degree of consultation and stakeholder engagement to identify priority adaptation action.⁴² Similarly, the GCF is increasingly prioritizing the National Adaptation Plan process in its funding modalities.⁴³

While population growth was considered a key driver of vulnerability in many NAPAs, only one proposed expanding access to family planning as an adaptation project intervention that could address that vulnerability (it did not receive funding).⁴⁴ Similarly, high population growth rates are noted in many Nationally Determined Contributions (the climate change commitments submitted by countries under the UNFCCC's 2015 Paris Agreement), though none contain references to family planning. Uganda's Nationally Determined Contribution, however, does note the government's intention to "provide adequate support for policies and programmes that take into account the interactions between population dynamics, climate change and development."⁴⁵

The lack of participation from experts and advocates in the FP/RH community in country-based adaptation planning efforts could be one of the reasons such efforts have not been prioritized—and it offers a potential opportunity for greater engagement.

Challenge 3: Limited Understanding Within the Family Planning/Reproductive Health Community of Adaptation Finance Processes and Protocols

Given the lack of consensus among funders and applicants about which development activities count as adaptation and the fact that FP/RH practitioners and advocates are not adequately plugged into country-driven adaptation stakeholder engagement processes, it is not unexpected that the FP/RH community has had limited exposure to and understanding of the processes, protocols, and key decisionmakers within the multilateral adaptation finance architecture. This limited exposure and understanding results in missed opportunities, however, as international climate financing for adaptation grows.

The major multilateral climate finance institutions follow specific processes, mandated by their boards, for the submission of project concepts and proposals. Both the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund have Designated Authorities (called National Designated Authorities in the case of the GCF) who serve as the main point of contact for the funds and any of their activities in-country. Proposals can only be submitted by accredited implementing entities—either national, regional, or multilateral—and the accreditation process can be challenging and time-consuming.

Given these complex processes and protocols, it is not surprising that much of the multilateral adaptation finance to date has been channeled through major accredited multilateral implementing entities such as the UN Development Program. Breaking into this process can be difficult, but opportunities exist, especially with the “enhanced direct access” modalities newly underway at both the Adaptation Fund and the GCF.⁴⁶ Enhanced direct access allows accredited national implementing entities to make their own decisions about distributing and programming the funding they have received, which could open the door to any number of new partners in new program areas, including those in the FP/RH community.

Challenge 4: Adaptation Funds’ Narrow Interpretation of Women’s Empowerment and Gender-Sensitivity

It is widely recognized that adaptation strategies need to be gender-sensitive. Given women’s traditional roles as household providers of food, water, and fuel in many places around the world, they are strongly—and disproportionately—affected by and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Their roles in families and communities also can make them important change agents in building resilience and adaptive capacity. Indeed, the UNFCCC Cancun Agreements acknowledge that gender equality and the effective participation of women are important for all aspects of climate change responses, especially adaptation. More recently, attendees at the 23rd Conference of Parties (COP23) adopted the first Gender Action Plan to the UNFCCC, intended to bolster the role of women in climate decisionmaking and action. The plan includes among its goals strengthening the gender-responsiveness of climate finance.⁴⁷ Yet a narrow interpretation of women’s empowerment by stakeholders in international adaptation finance limits support for adaptation projects that feature empowerment as a central aim.

All of the major multilateral climate adaptation funds have mandates or policies requiring that gender considerations be integrated into project proposals, though the robustness of these policies and their application is uneven and difficult to assess. According to a Climate Funds Update analysis, stakeholder advocacy efforts and the growing prominence of and need for gender-responsive climate action within the UNFCCC have led to changes. Most climate funds are improving their collaborative efforts and expert exchange to help each other improve their operations’ gender-responsiveness. Nevertheless, analysts conclude that more work is needed to move toward systematic integration that goes beyond a gender add-on to fundamentally alter the focus of funding operations.⁴⁸

Despite this attention to gender-sensitivity and women’s empowerment, multilateral adaptation funds have supported few projects whose fundamental purpose is to empower women to be less vulnerable and better able to participate in adaptation activities. Rather, it is more common for supported projects to, for

example, collect gender disaggregated data or engage in activities such as gender-segregated focus group discussions that ensure women's views are heard.

A case in point is an Adaptation Fund project implemented by the Planning Institute of Jamaica with Jamaica's National Environment and Planning Agency, National Works Agency, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Ministry of Tourism. A video about the project highlights the important role women play throughout the agricultural value chain in Jamaica, and the project proposal highlights the ways in which women will benefit from the project's interventions:

In terms of gender, the programme targets benefits for both men and women. Both will benefit from community interventions but because women bear a greater level of the burden associated with natural disasters, they are likely to be more positively impacted by the work being done with respect to soil and land husbandry which will contribute to improved resilience especially, in upland communities and reduce downstream flooding. Similarly, women will be the primary and most direct beneficiaries of the water harvesting and storage interventions. This is because in rural Jamaica, women and children have primary responsibility for fetching water both for domestic and farming purposes...⁴⁹

Despite this focus on women and even the framing of women's empowerment, the project does not contain interventions that address the fundamental dimensions of women's vulnerability or lack of empowerment. Other projects receiving adaptation finance and promising women's empowerment suffer from a similar failure to address these dimensions. Recent research suggests the vital role of expanding access to family planning in improving women's agency, education, and labor force participation.⁵⁰ The FP/RH community could work to address this inconsistency through pursuing opportunities outlined in the next section and promoting a broader understanding of women's empowerment and gender-sensitivity.

Each of the four challenges addressed here—a lack of consensus about which development activities count as adaptation; the FP/RH community not yet being widely engaged in country-driven adaptation planning processes; its limited exposure to and understanding of the processes, protocols, and key decisionmakers within the multilateral adaptation finance architecture; and adaptation funds' narrow interpretation of women's empowerment in adaptation strategies—offers the promise of improvement. With a greater understanding of the challenges related to adaptation funding, the FP/RH community can take action now to strengthen its prospects for receiving international adaptation financing. As the following section details, the FP/RH community can create more space for such prospects through collaboration with key adaptation stakeholders to include FP/RH as part of multisectoral climate adaptation projects.

Opportunities to Strengthen Prospects for the Integration of Family Planning/Reproductive Health Into Proposals for International Adaptation Finance

This section outlines five opportunities that the FP/RH community could pursue to strengthen prospects for the integration of family planning into multisectoral proposals for international adaptation finance.

- Track (and perhaps engage in) ongoing GCF discussion on adaptation and development.
- Continue to build and communicate the evidence base linking FP/RH to climate change resilience and adaptive capacity.
- Engage more fully in national-level stakeholder engagement opportunities on adaptation, particularly as they relate to the National Adaptation Plan process.
- Map the national adaptation finance landscape.
- Participate in key events, meetings, and conferences related to adaptation planning.

Opportunity 1: Track the Outcomes of Green Climate Fund Discussions on Adaptation and Development

Issues of adaptation justification and incremental costs will likely continue to be in the spotlight over the coming year as the Green Climate Fund's Secretariat and board work to clarify these issues in their investment framework and funding decisions. Since the GCF is the single largest source of adaptation funding, how it moves forward will have significant impact on the future directions of adaptation finance. Given the GCF's goal of achieving 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaptation investment, its funding for adaptation is likely to continue to grow.

Where the GCF settles in its positions on adaptation justification and incremental costs will have important implications for if and how FP/RH could be successfully integrated into multisectoral proposals. If the GCF takes a broad view of what counts as adaptation, and clarifies that its financing can cover the full costs of adaptation efforts, there will be a much clearer pathway for the FP/RH community to join with partners in developing and submitting holistic, multisectoral proposals that include family planning as a strategy to reduce vulnerability and strengthen climate change resilience.

Many civil society organizations from development, climate, and humanitarian communities are working together to advocate for inclusion of conventional development interventions of the types that the GCF will support. They point to a conceptual model that frames adaptation activities on a continuum: At one end of the spectrum, vulnerability-oriented adaptation efforts overlap with traditional development activities that don't necessarily consider the specific impacts of climate change; at the other end, specialized activities target specific climate change impacts. In between lie a broad range of activities with different levels of emphasis on vulnerability and impacts.⁵¹

In a letter to the GCF board dated June 28, 2017, more than 80 NGOs wrote:

As civil society organizations actively engaged with the Green Climate Fund, we are writing with concerns about the Board's approach to adaptation, especially in light of its recent inability to reach consensus to approve two funding proposals meant to build resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change in Least Developed Countries. It is widely understood among development and adaptation practitioners that legitimate adaptation measures fall along a continuum, with interventions ranging from those that address the underlying vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change through to those that directly confront climate impacts. We expect that all Board members would share these widely-held understandings. While some on the Board have opined over

which activities represent “development” versus which represent “adaptation,” in practice, this distinction is largely artificial. Many adaptation efforts invariably overlap with traditional development initiatives. **Vulnerability to climate change impacts is highly correlated with development deficits and the capacity of people to build resilience. At the GCF, adaptation funding must be used to address and reduce these underlying causes of vulnerability to climate change, in addition to more obvious physical impacts** [emphasis in the original]. Adaptation funding at its best should be transformational, in line with the GCF mandate, and as such must go well beyond addressing the most immediate climate-related impacts.⁵²

The FP/RH community could join with allies in the broader development community to engage in efforts to encourage the GCF to support the full spectrum of adaptation activities within its portfolio. It should, at a minimum, track developments in this process as they unfold over the next year to assess further opportunities for engagement.

Opportunity 2: Continue to Build and Communicate the Evidence Base Demonstrating an Adaptation Justification for Family Planning/Reproductive Health

While the outcomes of discussions on adaptation and development are evolving, action can be taken now to more clearly articulate the ways in which meeting women’s needs for FP/RH contributes to adaptation efforts. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Fifth Assessment Report (as described in the introduction) provides a great starting place for articulating a compelling evidence base, and the messages from the Population Reference Bureau and Worldwatch expert working group and references in *Drawdown* help to round out the case.

The FP/RH community can continue to develop messages and knowledge products that highlight these findings for use with key targets, including funders and potential partners for adaptation projects that apply an integrated approach. Beyond messaging, the community should continue to document—qualitatively and quantitatively—the vulnerability-reduction benefits that come with greater access to FP/RH.

Greater efforts could be applied to document these linkages from the limited number of existing adaptation projects that have incorporated FP/RH dimensions. Two that have received funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) include:

- The PaMawa project, initiated in 2016 and targeted toward youth in Malawi, aims “to increase the adoption of positive behaviors related to climate change adaptation and sexual reproductive health and family planning among youth.” Project activities include developing messaging that draw connections between climate change resilience and population dynamics, and to develop integrated behavior change and communication materials on climate change adaptation and sexual and reproductive health.⁵³ Documenting and communicating the impacts and lessons learned from this project could be a powerful addition to the evidence base.
- The wide-ranging Hariyo Ban project, implemented by WWF Nepal with funding from USAID Nepal, included family planning service delivery as part of its broad objectives around protecting biodiversity and strengthening adaptation within vulnerable communities. Project planners identified the need to engage women and other marginalized groups while conducting hundreds of local vulnerability assessments that would form the basis of their local adaptation plans, and project implementers recognized that lack of family planning was one of the key factors that kept women from being able to participate in these local efforts. An early step in their process was to extend reproductive health services to women to better enable them to participate in project activities.⁵⁴ Documenting this part of the project could be particularly helpful in advancing the idea that women’s empowerment can and should have a broader scope than most adaptation projects currently employ.

Documenting the climate change benefits of these projects' family planning components could be extremely helpful in further building the case with potential partners and funders for the integration of FP/RH in adaptation project proposals. This documentation could be done by highlighting how family planning contributed to changes in indicators of resilience and adaptive capacity that may be part of the projects' monitoring and evaluation data, or even through documentation of the perceived benefits of family planning among project beneficiaries. In both projects, more documentation of how family planning links to women's empowerment and participation in the context of adaptation efforts could further help to make the case for including access to FP/RH as part of the gender dimension of adaptation projects.

In these efforts, partnering with advocates for women's empowerment could be particularly effective and meaningful within the context of international negotiations and finance as momentum grows in this space. Signs of this growing momentum are visible in COP23's recent adoption of the first Gender Action Plan to the UNFCCC, and in one of the official UNFCCC stakeholder groups—the Women and Gender constituency—identifying the promotion of health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, as one of their key demands for COP23 in November 2017.⁵⁵

Finally, continuing to document this evidence base in peer-reviewed literature is critical to further legitimizing the benefits of family planning for climate change adaptation. The inclusion of FP/RH in the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report was an important development that resulted from a handful of studies in peer-reviewed literature and has helped to open the door within the climate science community in considering the important role that family planning can play. As the IPCC working groups look toward the publication of the Sixth Assessment Reports in 2020/2021,⁵⁶ they will be scanning the peer-reviewed literature once again for the state of the science. Ensuring that there is additional published research on these links will be important if the issue of family planning is to continue to appear in the IPCC's outputs.

Opportunity 3: Build the Capacity of the Family Planning/Reproductive Health Community to Participate in National Climate Processes and Stakeholder Engagement

With a greater openness to the continuum of adaptation activities and a growing evidence base that links family planning and reproductive health to resilience and adaptive capacity, the FP/RH community would be well-positioned to participate in national-level processes designed to identify adaptation needs and priorities.

One key opportunity for engagement is the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process. Parties to the UNFCCC established the NAP process in 2011 to support and conduct comprehensive medium- and long-term adaptation planning. NAPs are likely to grow in importance as a central, national-level process to channel adaptation planning and action, and they can be an important influence in directing finance to adaptation activities. Stakeholder engagement is central to the NAP process throughout planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.⁵⁷ Furthermore, gender sensitivity is a key principle advanced through the NAP technical guidelines. The UNFCCC suggests activities that could support integrating a gender perspective into the NAP process. Ensuring women's met needs for family planning can contribute to several of the activities suggested by the UNFCCC, including:

- Harnessing the potential of women as agents of change within their communities, and investing in this potential as part of the NAP process.
- Ensuring the participation of the most vulnerable groups, including women, in the NAP process.⁵⁸

Reproductive health practitioners and advocates from civil society, as well as ministries of health, women, etc., could be supported to participate in such stakeholder engagement processes to ensure that opportunities for integration are optimized.

Opportunity 4: Map the National Adaptation Finance Landscape

To determine specific opportunities to engage in climate change adaptation proposal development, FP/RH experts should map the adaptation finance landscape to identify the main actors and decisionmakers at the national level. Key to understanding how adaptation finance flows, particularly for funds such as the GCF and the Adaptation Fund, is identifying the National Designated Authority and the accredited National Implementing Entities.

National Designated Authorities (NDAs) serve as the main point of contact in each country for the GCF and the Adaptation Fund, and they are typically based within the environment, planning, or foreign affairs ministry. NDAs play the critical role of gatekeeper in the development and approval of proposals, ensuring the quality of proposals and their alignment with government priorities.

National Implementing Entities (NIEs) are those institutions—typically government agencies, academic institutions, or trust funds—accredited by the GCF and Adaptation Fund to submit proposals and receive funding. There are very few accredited NIEs (most countries have only one). NIEs select partners, called executing entities, to implement projects. Executing entities can be government agencies, community organizations, or the private sector. They do not need to be accredited by the GCF or Adaptation Fund, but should be in good standing with both the NIE and the DA.⁵⁹

FP/RH experts interested in contributing to adaptation proposals could consider partnering with others in the development of multisectoral proposal concepts. Such partnerships would help to mitigate the challenges faced by standalone FP/RH projects seeking adaptation funding. A useful first step in this process would be to reach out to NDAs and NIEs to learn about current initiatives and priorities. Names and contact information for both are available on the websites of the GCF and the Adaptation Fund.

Opportunity 5: Participate in Upcoming Engagements on Adaptation Planning

In addition to specific efforts to engage in national-level stakeholder engagement processes and a strategic mapping of the adaptation finance landscape, the FP/RH community can seek opportunities to participate in events, meetings, and conferences related to adaptation planning and action. With a growing evidence base and documented project experience, such participation could help raise awareness of the linkages and build momentum toward integrated approaches that incorporate FP/RH.

The universe of events, meetings, and conferences related to adaptation is large. Strategically identifying high-impact opportunities to engage will be important. Since the NAP process is likely to continue to be impactful in setting funding strategies and priorities, targeting efforts that link directly to that process may be a worthy investment. The work of the NAP Global Network is a prime example of an institution well-situated for engagement and potential partnership and collaboration. Established by eleven developed and developing countries (with funding from Germany and the United States), the NAP Global Network helps to enhance adaptation planning and action, and supports peer learning and exchange. It investigates technical issues through periodic “Targeted Topics Forums” and hosts NAP Assemblies, country-level events that seek to bring together key stakeholders to inform and accelerate national planning processes.⁶⁰ These and other activities of the NAP Global Network represent potentially high-impact opportunities for engagement from the FP/RH community.

Conclusion

With the increased attention on climate change adaptation and the growing availability of international climate financing, the current lack of clarity around what counts as an adaptation activity and what is eligible for financing presents numerous challenges and opportunities for the inclusion of FP/RH as part of multisectoral climate adaptation projects. The potential for funding may be greater when FP/RH is integrated into other sectors—particularly women’s empowerment and participation—as part of a strategy to reduce vulnerability and strengthen climate change resilience. The integrated approaches of some funding mechanisms, such as the GEF Trust Fund’s food security pilot, illustrate this potential.

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