

CHECKLIST

Mainstreaming Gender Considerations into National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention

Subject to Output 4.1 of the GEF ID 10785 project titled: “Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)”

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This document was authored by Dr. Fouad Bergigui, an international consultant, synthesizing the contents of the following guidance document: *UNEP (2021). Incorporating Gender Dimensions into National Strategy Setting in Chemicals Management for Minamata Convention National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining and Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans*, where Dr. Bergigui is a co-author. This document was reviewed by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions. GGKP led the development, facilitation of design, layout and dissemination, ensuring the checklist’s accessibility and alignment with global knowledge-sharing objectives.

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This checklist provides practical guidance to national partners on integrating gender considerations into National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention.

While noticeable progress has been made since the adoption of the Convention, further efforts are required to address the interaction between gender dynamics and the cumulative impacts of exposure to persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

The journey starts with understanding the multifaceted impacts of POPs on human health and the environment, and recognizing how socio-economic and health burdens can vary according to gender norms, roles and perceptions within different social contexts.

This approach enables national experts to identify potential blind spots in POPs-related policies and interventions and to address the underlying drivers of gender inequality affecting those most vulnerable to the harmful effects of chemicals and wastes containing or contaminated with POPs.

Achieving gender-transformative outcomes through NIPs requires a shift in chemicals management from viewing POPs exposure solely as an environmental or public health challenge to recognizing it as an issue of socio-economic equity. Applying gender responsive perspectives can help break the cycle of pollution and inequality and accelerate progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the 2030 deadline approaching.

The [Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm \(BRS\) Conventions website](#) offers a wide range of resources, such as the BRS Gender Action Plan, training modules and case studies on integrating gender perspectives in the sound management of chemicals and waste.

With informed action, the gendergap can be narrowed, and meaningful change is possible.



ENTRY POINTS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING:

Throughout the NIP development, review, update and implementation

STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT

Gender mainstreaming goes beyond simply ensuring equal numbers of women and men at meetings and workshops.

- ☐ Consult with representatives of social groups most at risk from POPs exposure, including women, children and other vulnerable groups, and ensure their inputs are incorporated into the NIP.
- ☐ Engage women and men from relevant stakeholder groups across formal and informal sectors exposed to POPs, ensuring balanced representation across targeted economic sectors and subsectors.
- ☐ Use consultation formats (workshops, surveys, focus groups) that enable women's groups and other stakeholders to provide input that is recorded and reflected in the NIP.
- ☐ Invite women representatives to participate in NIP-related decision-making processes (such as technical committees and validation workshops) and document their contributions.
- ☐ Establish cross-sectoral and gender-responsive communication channels using local languages, social media, and platforms such as workers' unions, family health centres and consumer protection associations.
- ☐ Apply an intersectional approach by identifying and engaging women and girls who face overlapping forms of disadvantage and discrimination (e.g. Indigenous women living in poverty).

ALTERNATIVES TO POPs

Countries are still facing numerous obstacles, including switching costs, limited R&D infrastructure, human resources, lengthy reform processes and behavioural resistance to change.

- ☐ Partner with development banks, UN Women and microfinance institutions to help women and other vulnerable groups access productive assets and financial services needed to transition to safer alternatives to POPs.
- ☐ Highlight opportunities for women's leadership in sectors transitioning away from POPs, and recommend supportive measures such as targeted training and incentives.
- ☐ Produce sex-disaggregated cost estimates of POPs exposure to strengthen the case for action and prioritize those most at risk, including women.
- ☐ Support women and men in their diverse social and professional roles to fully benefit from capacity-building activities that strengthen institutional and human capacities for adopting safer alternatives to POPs.
- ☐ Use context-specific outreach approaches (e.g. field schools, community educators) to raise awareness about safer alternatives, with tailored messaging for women and other vulnerable groups.



ENTRY POINTS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING:

Throughout the NIP development, review, update and implementation

INVENTORIES AND MONITORING

Gender balance has not yet been adequately addressed in scientific and policy expertise related to POPs management.

- ☐ Promote gender balance when preparing Terms of Reference (ToR) for technical and managerial positions, including consultants, experts and negotiators.
- ☐ Strengthen POPs monitoring mechanisms by collecting sex-disaggregated and gender-differentiated data (e.g. household surveys of at-risk populations living near sites containing or contaminated with POPs).
- ☐ Conduct gender-sensitive POPs inventories, where possible, by identifying and documenting differentiated exposure pathways throughout the full life cycle of POPs.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Gender-responsive knowledge remains fragmented and confined to limited expert groups, and a comprehensive understanding has yet to be developed.

- ☐ Engage gender specialists alongside policymakers and POPs experts in national and global knowledge-sharing platforms to help bridge the knowledge gaps in gender mainstreaming and POPs management.
- ☐ Strengthen institutional capacity to integrate gender considerations into POPs management plans, ensuring that action plans include concrete follow-up activities.
- ☐ Invest in gender focal teams instead of single focal points to ensure continuity and preserve institutional memory despite staff turnover.

FINANCING ALTERNATIVES TO POPs

There is a mismatch between the level of funding required and the financing available at both the national and global levels, meaning countries need to do more with less.

- ☐ Enable women to fully benefit from both traditional financing mechanisms and innovative financing schemes, such as mobile money and digital wallets.
- ☐ Promote gender-responsive microfinancing schemes that support women's groups typically underserved by conventional financing systems.
- ☐ Apply gender-responsive budgeting in development projects to ensure that women's groups and other vulnerable social groups fully benefit from interventions.



ENTRY POINTS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING:

Throughout the NIP development, review, update and implementation

HEALTH ASPECTS

It is essential to apply a gender lens when assessing the cumulative health impacts and true costs of exposure to POPs.

- ☐ Establish multidisciplinary task forces to integrate gender considerations into environmental health research frameworks and protocols.
- ☐ Invest in gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated data to better understand the complex interplay between sex, gender, exposure and associated health impacts.
- ☐ Assess the cumulative costs of exposure to POPs, including impacts on maternal health and the health of future generations.
- ☐ Raise public awareness about the full scope of POPs exposure, with specific emphasis on women of reproductive age and other vulnerable groups.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Not only are POPs harmful, but their cumulative economic costs, most of which remain invisible, along with their health impacts, including those passed on to future generations, are often overlooked.

- ☐ Adapt awareness-raising activities to local contexts and ensure they are inclusive of those most at risk, such as women of reproductive age, children, youth and the elderly working in the informal sector.
- ☐ Reduce risks for all workers, particularly women of reproductive age in sectors and industries exposed to POPs, to mitigate the health burden passed on to future generations.
- ☐ Develop tailored, gender-responsive advocacy and awareness-raising materials – instead of one-size-fits-all campaigns, including through the use of ICTs and behavioural approaches – to reach hard-to-access groups and engage those resistant to change.
- ☐ De-risk investments in childcare facilities to support children's education and tackle child labour concerns in sectors such as the e-waste value chain.
- ☐ Promote safer and cleaner alternatives to energy sources used in households.
- ☐ Expand access to social security services, including for workers in the informal sector.
- ☐ Ensure women have equal access to training, productive assets and financial services to reduce exposure and improve their livelihoods.



DURING HIRING AND PROCUREMENT PROCESSES

Step 1 - When drafting Terms of Reference (ToR) for consultants or other service providers

- ☐ Use gender-neutral language.
- ☐ Clearly define gender-related responsibilities to ensure all personnel are accountable for integrating gender considerations into their assigned tasks under NIP-related activities.
- ☐ Encourage candidates with relevant gender experience to apply by including statements such as “Experience in gender mainstreaming and/or women’s empowerment is desirable and will be considered an asset.”
- ☐ Where appropriate, indicate that the workforce should include women and men, including individuals from vulnerable or underrepresented groups. Consider earmarking a portion of procurement for these groups, where permissible.
- ☐ Translate ToRs and procurement documents into relevant national and local languages (when knowledge of another language is not required) to ensure both women and men of local community fully understand the requirements and are encouraged to apply.

Step 2 - When advertising vacancies, consultancies and procurement opportunities

- ☐ Disseminate announcements through national and local partner networks specific to each country.
- ☐ Include statements such as: “All genders, minorities and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply”; “Women-led organizations are encouraged to apply”; and “Female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply”.
- ☐ Advertise procurement opportunities through non-traditional platforms such as social media, and use email lists to ensure outreach to women-led organizations.
- ☐ Collaborate with women's organizations and networks to identify women vendors, including women-led organizations and women-owned businesses.



DURING HIRING AND PROCUREMENT PROCESSES

Step 3 – When organizing selection committees and interview panels

- ☐ Ensure that the selection of experts and suppliers is conducted by gender-balanced selection committees and interview panels (e.g. ensure at least one woman participates in each committee and include a question on gender in all interviews).
- ☐ When hiring consultants and experts, encourage participation of the underrepresented gender by applying affirmative measures in cases where male and female candidates receive equal rankings.
- ☐ When procuring goods, consider awarding additional points to: women vendors, women-led organizations, women-owned businesses, companies with women in senior decision-making positions (e.g. number of women on boards), suppliers demonstrating gender balance in their workforce and vendors with gender-responsive policies (e.g. maternal/parental leave, anti-discrimination, sexual harassment policies).
- ☐ Use affirmative tie-break criteria, such as women's leadership, when evaluating suppliers or vendors with identical scores or pricing.

Step 4 – When finalizing contractual arrangements with project personnel and consultants

- ☐ Include a Code of Conduct in all contractual arrangements with project personnel and consultants to prevent sexual harassment.
- ☐ Include a gender-related key result in the contractual performance assessment of project staff and collaborators, such as: "Gender mainstreaming is effectively supported beyond awareness-raising and numerical parity, contributing to women's empowerment and enhanced participation in decision-making."



DURING TRAINING SESSIONS

Step 1 – When planning for meetings and organizing workshops

- ☐ Consult both women and men when scheduling training and awareness-raising activities to ensure that timing and venues are suitable and do not conflict with domestic, productive, or community responsibilities. Where feasible, provide childcare facilities or child-friendly spaces during workshops and meetings to enable participation of parents.
- ☐ Organize consultations and training in women-only cohorts, when relevant and effective, to allow women to share their perspectives freely, strengthen their leadership skills and actively participate in decision-making.
- ☐ Where possible, hold meetings in locations closer to where women live, including structuring sessions over several days for a few hours at a time to accommodate their time constraints.

Step 2 - When conducting capacity building activities

- ☐ Train national workforce, key partners and other stakeholder organizations early in the process by incorporating gender-specific modules to strengthen understanding of gender considerations relevant to NIPs.
- ☐ Encourage women trainers to apply, enabling them to deliver gender-responsive guidance to communities and groups most disproportionately affected.
- ☐ Include specific countermeasures identified through risk assessments related to POPs exposure among men, women, youth, the elderly and children in the training materials.





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