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Policy frameworks and thematic issues, including new emerging issues: grassland and rangeland

Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender

ICCD/COP(16)/17

Note by the secretariat.

Summary

In accordance with the Gender Action Plan (GAP) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), as set out in decision 30/COP.13, and the Gender Action Plan Roadmap, as set out in decision 24/COP.15, gender equality remained a priority for the UNCCD during the period under review. Many gender-related activities have taken place in support of enhanced implementation of the Convention, as set out in the GAP and its Roadmap.

This note summarizes the activities of the Secretariat in response to decision 24/COP.15. In this respect the report provides information on gender parity across the Convention, an overview on consultation related a dedicated women's participation fund and the overall actions by the secretariat to support the implementation of the GAP and its roadmap.

It also includes a summary of (i) the UNCCD Gender Caucus held at the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 21) in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in 2023, (ii) gender related outcomes of the national reporting process under the UNCCD and (iii) the performance results of the UNCCD Secretariat in relation to the System-wide Action Plan for Mainstreaming Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) The document concludes with recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its Sixteenth Session.

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I. Background

The Gender Action Plan (GAP) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was developed in response to decision 30/COP.13 to support the gender-responsive implementation of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and to strengthen the implementation of the policy framework on gender (decision 9/COP.10). Since its adoption at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13), the GAP has been the backbone of the implementation of the Secretariat's gender-related activities. In addition, through decision 24/COP.15, the Parties to the UNCCD adopted the Gender Action Plan Roadmap (Roadmap) to identify concrete activities and measures to accelerate the implementation of the GAP.

By decision 24/COP.14, the COP requested the secretariat, in collaboration with the bodies constituted under the Convention, to monitor and report on the level of gender parity throughout the Convention and to consult with women's organizations and organizations that provide funding for women's participation in global treaty processes with a view to extending such funding to official sessions of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

Decision 24/COP.14 also requested the secretariat to facilitate the convening of the Gender Caucus on an annual basis and to continue to work with relevant international organizations, including the other Rio Conventions, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and other United Nations entities, to assist Parties in the implementation of the GAP and its Roadmap, particularly in the areas of policy, advocacy and research.

In addition, decision 24/COP.15 requested the Secretariat to synthesize and analyze information on gender issues contained in the national reports submitted by Parties as part of the reporting process.

This note provides an overview of the progress made in responding to the requests made by the COP in decision 24/COP.14, as well as other relevant gender-related activities undertaken by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism. Parties may read this note in conjunction with documents **ICCD/CRIC(22)/4**, **ICCD/CRIC(22)/5**, **ICCD/CRIC(22)/6**, **ICCD/CRIC(22)/7**, **ICCD/CRIC(22)/8**, **ICCD/CRIC (22)/9**, **ICCD/COP(16)/CST/5**, **ICCD/COP(16)/2**, **ICCD/COP(16)/3**, **ICCD/COP(16)/4**, **ICCD/COP(16)/15**, **ICCD/COP(16)/18**, **ICCD/COP(16)/19**, **ICCD/COP(16)/22**.

II. Gender parity across the Convention

The issue of gender parity was noted in Decision 24/COP.15(6), the COP: "Requests the secretariat, in collaboration with constituted bodies under the Convention, to monitor the level of gender parity across the Convention and report its findings to sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the Conference of the Parties." Accordingly, an analytical study was undertaken to establish a baseline for monitoring gender parity across the Convention in UNCCD subsidiary bodies and institutions: Committee on Science and Technology (CST), Science and Policy Interface (SPI), Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) Bureau, COP Bureau, UNCCD Secretariat staff, and national delegations to CRIC and COP. A snapshot of the gender parity situation in each of these bodies is provided, as well as recommendations tailored for each, on how to achieve a better gender balance.

The main findings from this analysis are: (1) The status of gender parity across UNCCD is uneven, with commendable levels of parity obtained in the CRIC Bureau, COP Bureau, SPI and Secretariat staff, within a balanced range of 40-60% women and men in each of these. (2) At the same time, gender parity is currently lacking in several of the UNCCD bodies and groups, namely: CST, Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Panel, Global Mechanism (GM) and overall national delegations to CRIC and COP. Participation of women in these groups was found to range between 0 to 33%, with an average of 20%, in these cases. (3) For the UNCCD bodies or groups which have not yet achieved gender parity, recommendations are made in this report encouraging consideration of corrective measures to be taken temporarily, until an acceptable level of gender parity is achieved in each case. (4) There are currently no strict requirements of parity under any of the UNCCD bodies or structures. With a view to maintaining consistent levels of gender parity over time, and from one election period to the next, it may be considered to establish intentional and explicit guidelines which limit the maximum number of men or women in any UNCCD body (to 60%). (5) It should be noted that it is more challenging to achieve and maintain a gender balance in bodies with a small number of members, as one or two positions can have a substantial impact on shifting the gender parity percentages of men as compared to women. (6) Significant gender imbalance is found in national delegations to CRIC and COP, with delegates to CRIC21 comprised of 67% men and 33% women, and delegates to COP15 comprised of 73 % men and 27% women.

The full report on gender parity across the Convention can be found on the UNCCD website at this location: <https://www.unccd.int/resources/reports/monitoring-gender-parity-levels-across-unccd>

III. Consultation on funding of women's participation in official UNCCD meetings

Exploration of potential funding support to increase women's participation in official UNCCD meetings was noted in Decision 24/COP.15(7), in which the COP: "Also requests the secretariat to consult with women's organizations and organizations that provide funding for women's participation in global treaty processes with a view to expanding these funds to also cover official UNCCD meetings." In compliance with this decision, an online consultation was held in April 2024, with 75 registered participants. This workshop was co-hosted with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), who also shared their gender parity data and approaches, to harness synergies among the Rio Conventions. The diversity of organizational representation at the workshop was very positive, with participants from CSOs accredited to UNCCD, women's organizations, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), sister UN agencies, UNCCD staff, Parties to the Convention, and funding agencies. The following questions were asked in an online poll: (1) would your organization consider extending funding to support increasing the number of women delegates at UNCCD COPs and CRICs? And (2) any suggestions for other suitable funding sources to pursue? Of the respondents, 36% indicated that they would be willing to consider extending funding for this purpose, and 43% indicated that they would possibly consider providing such funding. The rest of the respondents indicated that they would not be able to consider providing such funding support.

In regard to other funding sources to pursue, the following were mentioned: core funding; offer the possibility for countries to add voluntary earmarked fundings; awareness-raising sessions to involve organizations and governments and obtain their support; and that UNCCD should assist women's organizations to attend COP16. Next steps may include informal conversations with organizations and agencies which indicated in the consultations that they can consider providing support to women delegates to UNCCD CRICs and COPs. The UNFCCC experience with its Women Delegates Fund may be reviewed to ascertain lessons learned that UNCCD could build on, if a decision would be made to establish a similar fund.

IV. Support the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and its Roadmap, especially in the areas of policy, advocacy, and research.

A number of activities were conducted for the implementation of GAP and its Roadmap.

In accordance with priority 3 of the GAP, "strengthening women's land rights and access to resources," and point 2.1 of the Roadmap, "design and implement awareness-raising campaigns on women's land rights," UNCCD launched a major worldwide campaign to promote women's land rights in early 2023 and continued this campaign through 2024. The Her Land Her Rights campaign was launched in March 2023 on International Women's Day, and it was featured on 17 June 2023, during the Desertification and Drought Day global observance held in the United Nations General Assembly. The campaign promotes successful examples of women and girls' contributions to sustainable land management and mobilizes support to advance land rights for women and girls around the world. Campaign materials have been developed in all six UN languages. The campaign is achieving very high global visibility on social media, so far reaching more than 300 million viewers with the #HerLand hashtag on various social media platforms including X, LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. The #HerLand virtual exhibition was unveiled at the GEF Assembly in Vancouver in August 2023, and also presented at the UNCCD's Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention (CRIC21) in Uzbekistan and UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai. Campaign materials have been developed in all six UN languages.

As a key element of the campaign, UNCCD Land Ambassador President Halonen has engaged female leaders worldwide to sign Her Land Her Rights Call to Action – so far endorsed by more than 20 women leaders, including the former Presidents and Prime Ministers of Chile, Costa Rica, Estonia, Iceland, Namibia and New Zealand. UNCCD Goodwill Ambassador Inna Modja has led the development of a digital-first exhibition on women, girls and land (<https://herland.global/>) and has lent her voice to #HerLand song composed by fellow UNCCD Goodwill Ambassador and Grammy-award-winning musician Ricky Kej. In addition a related film on women, girls and land will premiere at COP16, as well as a book showcasing inspiring examples of women and girls' leadership in sustainable land management, and mobilizing to support to secure their land rights across the world.

Details on the HerLand campaign can be found at: <https://www.unccd.int/land-and-life/gender/herland>

UNCCD also co-hosted with Töpfer, Müller, Gaßner (TMG) and the Robert Bosch Foundation a "Strategy Workshop on Women's Equal Rights to Land and the Rio Conventions" in July 2023 in Berlin. The objective of the workshop was

to bring together international partners and jointly explore potential strategies and capacity building activities to increase gender equality and support Parties and other stakeholders to the Rio conventions, by developing a coordinated global strategy to leverage the unique experiences and capacities of the Rio convention secretariats and their partners.

This was the first ever workshop on women's land rights with all three Rio Conventions, and it brought together 60 stakeholders from more than 30 countries. The workshop included key actors that are working to implement women's land rights including National Focal Points, Convention secretariats and other UN bodies, and civil society organizations. The outcomes of the workshop included the following: (1) participants requested that the three Rio conventions integrate the work on women's land rights at the highest level, (2) national focal points attending the session agreed to raise the topic at the national level when addressing climate change, biodiversity lost and land degradation, and (3) a working group was established with the representatives of the conventions and other interested stakeholders to accelerate action and build partnerships to ensure that women can access land ownership.

A follow-up workshop was co-hosted by UNCCD, UNFCCC, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), TMG, the Robert Bosch Foundation in Berlin in June 2024, to take this process further and focusing on the objectives of (1) how to operationalize the synergies among the three Rio Conventions, and (2) how to strengthen the role of grassroots organizations on gender-responsive land governance.

Research on women-led solutions for drought resilience

In accordance with activity 2.4 under the GAP Roadmap and given that qualitative data is required to grasp the lived experiences of gender inequalities and the leadership roles of women in combatting drought, in early 2024 UNCCD initiated a study on "Women-led solutions for drought resilience and adaptation." The purpose of this research study is to identify examples of the essential role played by women in sustainable land management in drought-prone locations and regions so that their initiatives may be duly valued, expanded, and replicated and potentially attract resources to scale up these women-led actions. A researcher was hired in January 2023 and a Call for Submissions distributed widely through UNCCD and stakeholder network. A total of 87 case studies were submitted from a wide range of countries from several UNCCD Annexes and will be assessed by an Experts Group comprised by UNCCD, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Landesa, World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) and UN Food and Agriculture Association (FAO). Once these are systematized, the key findings will be presented at the International Day for Rural Women in October 2024, and at COP16 in coordination with the Gender Caucus.

Support to WOCAT for gender-responsive data-based policy design

Following up on previous work supporting WOCAT on developing gender-responsive Sustainable Land Management (SLM) technologies and approaches, in 2024 this research work was scaled up and expanded. This support corresponds to Decision 24/COP.15(11), the COP "encourages the secretariat, subject to the availability of funds, to continue collaboration with the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) to enhance the implementation of the Gender Plan of Action and its road map, including to generate gender-disaggregated data, to inform gender-responsive policy design for achieving land degradation neutrality." This second phase will entail selection of up to 40 organisations to apply the gender questionnaire, gathering gender-disaggregated data in the field and providing feedback on how to improve the questionnaire. The selection of these organizations will be done by July 2024, and the Phase 2 will be completed by July 2025. New topics such as value chains, entrepreneurship, youth and employment will be included in the questionnaire, and it will be adjusted to better reflect UNCCD-related gender indicators. Training materials will be developed and tailored for different stakeholder groups based on a needs assessment, and a gender module in English, French and Spanish will be created and integrated into the WOCAT database. The results of this research will be reported on during a Gender Caucus session at COP16.

Capacity-building activities

Several activities were undertaken to build capacity on advancing women's empowerment and gender equality in relation to DLDD, focusing on topics such as: what constitutes a gender-transformative approach, how to conduct a gender analysis, intersectionality and inclusion, prevention of sexual harassment, gender and climate action, and how to support women's farmers associations and women

environmental defenders. These activities were carried out in collaboration with G20 Landwise webinar series, FAO, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Landesa, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the accredited CSOs Both Ends and Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN). The target participants for these capacity-building sessions included (National Focal Points (NFPs), Parties, UNCCD staff, new interns in the onboarding process, and CSOs and other stakeholders.

To celebrate International Day of Rural Women in October 2023, the Gender Policy Officer and the Regional Liaison Officer (RLO) for Annex V (Central and Eastern Europe, CEE) held a capacity-building workshop in coordination with FAO, UNEP and UN Women, featuring the CEE experience in empowering rural women working in the agricultural sector through policy innovation and the key role of women farmers' associations. Presentations were made by nine Parties, in addition to UN agency representatives and farmers associations.

In addition, in collaboration with GM, a session was held to update the Africa Group (Annex 1) on gender and land tenure issues and activities emanating from CRIC21. Also, a presentation on UNCCD's gender framework was made at a regional meeting of Annex V and Annex IV.

UNCCD also co-organized gender themed side events or the Land Pavilion at the UNFCCC COP 28, in collaboration with UN Women, IUCN, FAO and the WeCAN network.

V. Support the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and its Roadmap, especially in the areas of strategic partnerships and mobilizing financial resources

Noting the very limited resources allocated to gender gap analysis and gender action plans during project preparation, the Global Mechanism has been integrating gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives throughout its support including in capacity building, assessments, feasibility studies, stakeholders' consultations and preparation of project concept notes and full project proposals as described in ICCD/CRIC (22)/5.

Approximately 533 participants (42% women) representing government organizations, CSOs, development partners as well as funding partners have participated in Global Mechanism organized project preparation capacity development workshops. The workshops provided participants with comprehensive information on various aspects of project design and implementation including ensuring adherence to gender mainstreaming standards, and exploring financing opportunities for projects and programmes. Efforts also continue to be made to undertake more detailed land tenure assessments during project design as land ownership affects men and women's abilities to engage effectively in project interventions if not considered during project design.

According to the recent mid-term evaluation of the GAP "Nearly all LDN target country profiles and projects, and the national drought plans now incorporate some considerations related to gender. In general, stakeholders considered that the implemented activities and delivered outputs were effective in achieving the GAP's goals. For example, 50% of the respondents to the survey conducted for this evaluation reckoned that the technical assistance and capacity building for integrating gender matters into LDN and drought projects and programmes was very or extremely effective (15% considered it slightly or not effective).

The GM support to the preparation of specific country level studies on gender matters such as gender gap analysis was also well rated by the respondents of the survey for this evaluation: 53% considered that these studies were very or extremely effective (compared to 15% with a negative opinion). However, it was highlighted during the interviews that a persistent challenge seems to lay in encouraging individuals and institutions to independently apply these tools and checklists internally. There has been a tendency for organizations to rely on external consultants for such tasks, and while consultants may execute the process effectively, the internal capacity to carry out these activities is often neglected. It seems that there is a gap in ensuring that individuals within the organization learn how to apply these tools and checklists autonomously, rather than depending solely on external expertise."

VI. Gender Caucus (summary)

After the new Gender Policy Officer was hired in July 2023, the UNCCD Gender Caucus was revitalized, with 29 standing members engaged in four online planning meetings, including CSOs, country Parties and UN agencies. Two in-person sessions of the Gender Caucus were held at Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention (CRIC21), in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in November 2023, with a total of 123 persons in attendance. These sessions featured presentations by UNCCD, Landesa, FAO and the Nurturing Community of Knowledge Practice for Women in Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems (WeCAN) network on: Rolling out the gender roadmap, Recommendations on gender phrasing for CRIC consideration, and Women's empowerment for drought-resilient drylands. Parties that presented during the panel were Mongolia, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. The session also included a launch by FAO of the "Making Every Voice Count for Adaptive Management (MEV-CAM)" toolkit.

Opening remarks were provided by the UNCCD Executive Secretary (ES), Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, who emphasized that securing land tenure for women is crucial for necessary land restoration; and that beyond meetings, actions be taken on the ground to empower women, provide resources, and acknowledge their leadership in tackling drought, land degradation and desertification. Gender balance at the Gender Caucus sessions was positive, with 54% women and 46% men in attendance. Country parties from all Annexes attended, as well as several sister UN agencies and a number of CSOs accredited to UNCCD.

Two or more Gender Caucus sessions will also be held during COP16, to share expertise and best practices on topics signaled in CRIC21, including examples used by sister UN agencies and by (International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) of gender-responsive indicators based on sex-disaggregated data.

The summary report on the Gender Caucus sessions held at CRIC21 can be found here: [Gender caucus report_cric 21 designed.pdf \(unccd.int\)](#)

VII. Gender-related information contained in the national reporting process under the UNCCD (PRAIS 4)

The UNCCD Gender Action Plan (GAP) recommends using national reports to document the efforts made to address gender equality and women's empowerment in the implementation of the UNCCD. Decision 24/COP.15 requests the secretariat to synthesize and analyze information on gender matters included in national reports submitted by Parties as part of the reporting process for consideration at CRIC 21. This decision also encourages Parties to submit, on a voluntary basis, reports on the implementation of key national-level activities contained in the GAP road map and requests the secretariat to compile such information on a regular basis, including monitoring the level of gender parity across the Convention and report its findings.

The national Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS) reporting process monitors progress made in the implementation of the UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework for implementing the Convention adopted at the thirteenth session of the COP (decision 7/COP.13). As regards gender related issues, national reporting templates now include a gender specific indicator for Strategic Objective 2 measuring trends in population exposure to land degradation disaggregated by sex. Another set of gender related questions are incorporated in the implementation framework providing Parties with the space to report on matters relevant to the gender-responsive implementation of the Convention and the GAP in terms of i) Financial and non-financial resources; ii) Policy and planning; and iii) Actions on the ground.

Of the 117 national reports received under PRAIS 4, altogether 107 countries submitted information on the implementation framework with 85 countries reporting on their approaches and/or experiences related to gender issues.

Among the topics related to financial and non-financial resources, countries underlined the importance for women to gain access to and benefit from a range of financial and non-financial resources.

Countries with successful strategies and approaches emphasized the need for specific funding streams for women accompanying programmes and projects related to land management, restoration, climate change, natural resource management and/or rural development.

Providing women with training and education to facilitate their access to financial resources, establishing women-friendly quotas, and incentivizing their participation in decision-making processes were also mentioned as promising strategies. It has been observed, for example, that having a quota of 40% women and taking a gender-responsive approach throughout the project leads to an increase in female participation and more equitable distribution of benefits.

A commitment to gender mainstreaming in national policies and legislation was also mentioned, as well as the development of technologies and systems that promote equality and equity for marginalized groups such as women and youth to facilitate access to financial means, as well as reducing discrimination and gender gaps.

Further details can be found in ICCD/CRIC(21)/3, ICCD/CRIC(21)/9, **ICCD/CRIC(22)/5**, and ICCD/COP(16)/CST/5.

VIII. System-wide Action Plan for Mainstreaming Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) Performance of the UNCCD Secretariat

In communicating the results of the 2022 UN-SWAP assessment for UNCCD, the UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Women commended UNCCD on exceeding five and meeting nine out of 17 relevant performance indicators. The following achievements were noted in particular: (1) significant results in gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) through UNCCD's programmatic initiatives; (2) strengthening of the gender architecture through recruitment of a Gender Officer to lead the GEEW initiatives; and maintaining the equal representation of women at all staff levels.

The UN-SWAP assessment also encourages UNCCD to build on the momentum of these achievements by undertaking the following: (1) finalizing the UNCCD Gender Policy; (2) establishing a financial benchmark and tacking the related disbursement of funds for the implementation of the gender equality and women's empowerment mandate; and (3) strengthening inter-agency linkages and sharing lessons learned by taking part in a UN-SWAP peer review.

IX. Mid-term evaluation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP)

The UNCCD commissioned in 2023 an evaluation of its Gender Action Plan (GAP), to be carried out by an external independent evaluator as part of the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the UNCCD's Strategic Framework (SF). This GAP evaluation is an independent external assessment of the results achieved in the GAP priority areas with a mainly formative nature, as it focuses on further improvement of the implementation of the GAP. In this sense, the evaluation aims at informing Parties and other key stakeholders about the successes and challenges in the GAP implementation and results. Building on its findings, the evaluation makes recommendations to further improve performance for advancing gender equality in the context of the UNCCD.

The UNCCD appreciates the evaluation's generally positive findings about the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of the GAP, as well as the concerns noted about its sustainability and resource limitations.

The evaluation found that the GAP is well aligned with the approaches, priorities and needs of countries, on-the-ground communities and other partners. In general, stakeholders considered that the following activities implemented to achieve the GAP's goals were particularly effective: technical support and capacity development; knowledge products and publications; and advocacy, awareness-raising and women's participation.

Furthermore, it found that the efforts made by the secretariat and the GM resulted in progress in mainstreaming gender into the UNCCD activities and towards the GAP objectives in the following dimensions: improved understanding and awareness (85% of the respondents gave a positive rating); capacity to integrate gender equality into national/local policies and strategies (78% of respondents) or projects and programmes (92% of respondents); improved responsiveness of the project proposals to donors' requirements (61% of the respondents); and increased national commitment to gender equality (90% of the respondents).

The full evaluation report is on the UNCCD website at this location:

<https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/GAP%20Evaluation%20final%20June%202024.pdf>

The full report by the Inter-Governmental Working Group (IWG) on the Mid-Term Evaluation of UNCCD's Strategic Framework can be found at this location: <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2024-07/cop2-midterm%20evaluation%20advanced%20copy%20.pdf>

X. Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the progress made to fulfil the requests contained in the decisions referenced in this note and in the implementation of the GAP and its Roadmap, the following general conclusions are made:

- a) The secretariat and the GM have taken important steps toward addressing the gender-related issues that impact the implementation of the Convention, from reporting to research and capacity building. Successful initiatives such as the Gender Caucus and Gender-Sensitive Green Employment Creation should be continued and taken to scale.
- b) Several gaps are apparent in the Convention's ongoing work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership. These gaps include shortcomings in gender parity across the Convention and in particular in the national delegates attending CRICs and COPs; and the need for more robust gender-responsive data and indicators to effectively assess the different ways in which women and men are exposed to and affected by drought in countries, taking into account intersectionality. Consequently, suitable measures should be taken to close these gaps.
- c) To date, UNCCD has been reliant on short term donor funding for the work to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in keeping with the mandate from Parties under the GAP. To ensure the continuity and maintain the momentum of this work programme over a longer-term horizon with a view to sustainability, there is a need to secure dedicated resources under UNCCD core funding.
- d) The mid-term evaluation of the UNCCD Strategic Framework noted that women's economic empowerment and equal land use rights are shortcuts towards land degradation neutrality, and accordingly recommends that the secretariat and the GM set as priorities for advancing gender equality under the UNCCD the economic empowerment of women and equal land use rights. For further details, please refer to section E of ICCD/COP(16)/2.

Accordingly, Parties may wish to consider the proposed draft decisions, as contained in document ICCD/COP(16)/22, at the sixteenth session of the COP.