



Call for Nominations

UNCCD Women Delegates Fund (WDF) for COP 17

Background

Gender equality is essential to achieving sustainable and effective action to combat land degradation. Under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) [Gender Action Plan](#) (GAP), Parties committed to strengthening the participation and leadership of women at all levels of UNCCD decision-making and implementation, with the aim of reaching gender parity by 2030. This ambition is further supported by the [UNCCD Gender Roadmap](#) and decisions adopted at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) and the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16), which encourage Parties to increase women's representation in delegations and support women's meaningful participation in UNCCD processes.

At COP16,¹ Parties requested the secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM), in consultation with partners, to facilitate the capacity-building and effective participation of women delegates, including through voluntary earmarked funding mechanisms under the UNCCD Special Trust Fund.

In 2025, the first voluntary contribution specifically earmarked to advance gender parity was provided by Germany via the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), enabling the participation of women delegates in the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 23) through the UNCCD Women Delegates Fund (WDF). Under the WDF, 14 women delegates participated in a two-day negotiation training in Panama City prior to CRIC 23. Building on a prior virtual briefing by the secretariat, the training strengthened participants' capacity to engage effectively in UNCCD negotiations through practical exercises on coalition-building, facilitation, and negotiation strategies. Participants emphasized the importance of sustaining the WDF as a continuous platform for women's participation and leadership in multilateral processes.²

Women Delegates Fund at COP 17

The UNCCD secretariat is currently establishing a WDF for COP17 with contributions from several donors, and is pleased to announce a second round of the WDF in the lead-up to COP17. The initiative aims to further strengthen the participation and effective engagement of women negotiators throughout the COP17 process.

¹ Decision 25/COP.16. <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2025-03/25-cop16.pdf>

² ICCD/COP(17)/9 p.4-5. <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2026-05/cop9-advance.pdf>



Selection criteria

As these earmarked funds are linked to the UNCCD Special Trust Fund for the Participation of Representatives of Eligible Parties in the Sessions of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, their use must be aligned with the disbursement criteria of that Special Trust Fund. Accordingly, and in line with the established mandate, eligible countries are developing countries, with priority given to Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The selection criteria are as follows:

- Under countries covered by the Special Trust Fund for Participation, all women designated as official delegates are eligible
- Parties may give special consideration to supporting women delegates from Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and civil society organizations
- Each Party may nominate one woman applicant
- Selection will be made on a “first come, first served” basis per Annex
- All Regional Implementation Annexes are expected to benefit equally from this opportunity

Application process

Governments from all Regional Implementation Annexes are cordially invited to nominate qualified women, who will be members of their official delegation, for consideration under this funding opportunity.

To make a nomination, **please send a letter on Ministry letterhead signed by the National Focal Point (NFP) to gender@unccd.int with copy to your respective Regional Liaison Officer (RLO) in the secretariat and attaching the CV or short biography of the woman delegate proposed.**

Please note that the deadline for nomination applications is 8 June 2026.