

Inception Report

**Framework for Integrating Women Entrepreneurs in
National Development Planning Processes**

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Contents

I.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Background and Context	5
3.0 Purpose and Scope of the Assignment	8
4.0 Methodology for the Assignment	9
5.0 Expected Deliverables (Outputs)	122
6.0 The Work Plan for the Assignment	133
7.0 Conclusion	144
Annex 1	15

I.0 Introduction

This Inception Report provides the roadmap for the execution of the assignment with the Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of the Technology, Climate Change, and Natural Resources Management Division (TCND) of the of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The assignment focuses on the design of a robust framework for enhancing the role and participation of women entrepreneurs in national development plans, processes in the context of Economic Social and Governance (ESG) and actions that can be replicated in all member states of Africa. The African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is a centre for knowledge generation and delivery on climate change. It seeks to strengthen, influence, and enable the transition to climate-resilient, inclusive, and sustainable development through responsive policies, plans, and programmes towards transformed economies, healthy ecosystems, and human well-being. The African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) has the dual mandate to provide climate policy guidance to member countries and to serve as the secretariat of the Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) programme.¹

The interest in the interrelationships of climate change, gender and entrepreneurship and ESG, is growing within discussions of the mandate of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).² This is the result of the realization of the urgent need to address human-induced climate change in an inclusive, bottom-up approach, that fills in gaps and accelerate adaptation and mitigation responses. Climate change refers to the long-term alteration of temperature and typical weather patterns in a particular place. The impacts of climate change are sectoral, ranging from droughts, floods, sea level rise, and other extreme events to reduction in crop yields in the agriculture sectors. It also causes erosion, heat, poor sanitation, natural disasters and diseases in the water and health sectors. The impacts of climate change are gendered, and women are increasingly being noted as more vulnerable than their male counterparts. A clear understanding of the mechanisms causing gender differentials in vulnerability to climate change therefore helps to identify comprehensive policy options for addressing both climate change and gender inequality ³(Schwerhoff and Konte, 2020). Relatedly, gender equality is integral to all development decisions.⁴ Gender inequality arises between and among men and women due to the structural patriarchal system of society and its differential impacts especially on venerable groups. The promotion of gender equality is therefore about the rights, responsibilities and opportunities that must be realized whether one is born female or male. For gender equality to be attained, there is a need to recognize inequalities and discriminatory practices which usually work to disadvantage

¹The Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) came into operation in 2010. The ClimDev-Africa programme, a 10-year initiative to support the integration of climate change into development policy on the continent, was also launched that year and became operational in 2011, with the ACPC as its secretariat. The first phase of the ClimDev-Africa programme was supported financially by the European Union, France, Norway, Sweden, the Department for International Development, the Nordic Development Fund and the United States Agency for International Development. Funding focused on supporting investments in physical infrastructure and the human capacity for the generation and packaging of climate information and the development of climate information services, research and analysis to support policymaking on the continent and climate governance processes. This phase came to an end in 2016. Extension and expansion of the programme to address the changing landscape of climate change and development contexts on the continent, within the overall post-2015 regional and global development agendas are underway. Building on the progress achieved during the first phase of the ClimDev-Africa, ACPC developed a new strategy to guide the implementation of its activities from 2017 to 2021.

² The UNFCCC entered into force on 21 March 1994. The 198 countries that have ratified the Convention are called Parties to the Convention. It was established as an international environment treaty to combat “dangerous human interference with the climate system” in part by stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. See <https://www.unfccc.int> for an elaboration.

³ https://econpapers.repec.org/bookchap/palgdechp/978-3-030-14935-2_5f4.htm

⁴ Goal 5 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is “Gender Equality”: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. See: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

women more than their male counterparts. Through the promotion of gender equity principles and actions, fairness of treatment for women and men according to their needs, interests and concerns can enable us to achieve gender equality. Therefore, gender equality concerns the composition of participants, procedures, and culture of development organizations as well as their programmes; and it is the responsibility of both men and women. The changes required for gender equality are not only to address why women and (some) men lack resources but also why they may not even access and utilize resources targeted towards them. Aguilar, (2021) and also Gaynor and Jennings (2004) note that effective gender equality requires major changes at institutional, policy, organizational and resource allocation levels.

Based on that understanding, transformational change towards gender equality draws upon a definition of gender differences as socially constructed and aims at assessing and revising the 'system of oppressive relations reproduced in and by social practices' in organizations (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). This system involves gendered norms and work practices that prescribe the most appropriate and effective ways to define and accomplish work, recognize and reward 'talent', and how to interpret behaviour. It appears to be gender neutral, but in reality (re)produces a gendered social order in which (men and) particular forms of masculinity dominate and gender inequalities persist. Traditional gender equality interventions that focus on 'fixing the women', 'celebrating differences' or 'creating equal opportunities' (Ely & Meyerson, 2000) often fail to change these gendered norms and work practices (Benschop et al., 2015; Eriksson-Zetterquist & Styhre, 2008; Meyerson & Kolb, 2000).

Transformational change thus targets these gendered norms and work practices, which necessarily involves the transformative learning of individuals and groups through a process of critical reflection (Henderson, 2002). Transformational change is thus an ongoing change process away from the *status quo* (means), involving different individuals and groups. They continuously identify and revise gendered organizational norms and work practices, and ultimately become more reflective about their assumptions, attitudes and behaviours and act upon those. The objective then is to realize that gender is no longer in alliance with unequal power relations in organizations and that it is rather a system that has to be challenged. This approach is directly related to discussions about how climate change could intersect with gender and entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial process provides opportunities to understand new products, services and markets for less carbon-intensive forms of production and reproduction.⁵ Thus for example, providing access to both women and men with consistent and clean energy is a significant path to addressing climate change taking gendered interests, needs and concerns into account.

Many countries of the Global South have committed to gender equality in their plans to manage the impacts of climate change while simultaneously ensuring women's empowerment. An important aspect of the foregoing is giving women more space to express their needs and to contribute to decisions affecting them and the whole society. Through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement (2015)⁶, African states have an opportunity to

⁵ Many entrepreneurs have begun to address this opportunity by increasing alternative available energy options such as solar, wind and other renewable energy sources (York et al., 2016a)

⁶ The Paris Agreement is a legally binding document treaty on climate change with the overall goal of limiting global warming below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, adopted at COP 21 in Paris.

draft and implement nationally appropriate policies through international commitments including the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)⁷. This is an opportunity for the member states to mainstream gender into the core pillars of their national climate and development plans, at all levels and in all sectors.⁸ This Inception Report therefore sets out the roadmap for the execution of the assignment. Once the Report is submitted and accepted there will be an initial consultation meeting between the consultant, the ACPC focal point for the project, and other related institutions. The meeting would be a platform to further deliberate on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the successful execution of the assignment.

After this introduction, the background and context of the study is provided in section 2. Under the section, the interrelationships of climate change, gender and entrepreneurship is discussed and its implication for realizing the objectives of the study is teased out. The third section, 3, then presents the purpose of the assignment as outlined in the TOR. In section 4, the conceptual and methodological approaches to be used to realise the objectives of the study are presented. It consists of a summary of discussions issues relating to climate change, gender and entrepreneurship and the selection of key elements that will serve as the basis for the data needed for the delivery of the expected outcomes of the study. Section 5 is specific in listing the expected deliverables of the study as provided for in the TOR followed by section 6, where the timeline/work plan for the execution of the various aspects of the assignment is presented. Finally, some concluding remarks are made in section 7.

When it comes to ESG, it is opportune to know that there has been a longstanding perception in the investment industry that investing in at least some of the negatively impactful sectors (such as the extractive industries, corporations with poor human rights records, as well as those with an outsized impact on climate change) is a requirement for generating massive profits. Over time, that perception is gradually being dispelled and part of what has supported that shift toward sustainable investing strategies is Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investing. ESG, or **Environmental, Social, Governance**, are factors in measuring a company's sustainability and ethical impact. ESG measures the overall impact a company holds, from its environmental responsibilities, social impact, and legal. More than an investment, ESG looks to ensure a net-positive impact on the environment, gendered individuals and groups, the community, and the private sector. When assessing ESG, companies are ranked on the sustainability of their business in terms of their use of resources, waste, and carbon-emissions foot-print regarding the environmental aspects. On the social aspects, companies are ranked on the involvement of human rights, women's rights, consumer privacy, animal welfare, and diversity. The governance aspects of companies are ranked on items like clarity, organizational and institutional policies and practices, manager compensation, employee engagement, and management formation. Though ESG investing has been around for some time, a shift in attitudes about corporate social responsibility and the emergence of shareholder activism have brought it closer to the mainstream.

⁷ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are at the heart of the Paris Agreement and the achievement of these long-term goals. NDCs embody efforts by each country to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

⁸ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at COP 20, (Decision 18/CP.20), established the Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG) to advance gender balance and integrate gender considerations into the work of Parties and the secretariat, in implementing the Convention and the Paris Agreement so as to achieve gender responsive climate policy and action. At COP 22, parties decided on a three-year extension of the LWPG, with a review at COP25 (Decision 21/CP.22), and the first Gender Action Plan (GAP) under the UNFCCC was established at COP 23.

Thus environmental, social and governance factors have become critical as a framework for examining industry practices that impact on success beyond profits. A key driver in the growth of ESG investing is that, evidence has been provided to demonstrate how it pays off eventually. A Harvard study that spanned 18 years found that companies that adopted environmental, social and governance policies performed better than those that did not. Nordea Equity Research's 2017 study showed that, over a three-year period, the companies with ESG ratings at the top of the scale outperformed those at the bottom by up to 40 per cent.⁹

Different categories of investors are seeking out sustainable investment strategies. They include retail investors and pension funds interested in responding to questions about balancing fiduciary duty with how their investments will affect the very future they are meant to finance. With climate change accelerating extreme weather events, and increasing evidence that energy companies bear some responsibility for this acceleration, the very definition of fiduciary duty is changing. High-net-worth individuals who also want to leave a legacy for the human condition are also seeking out investments that make the world a better place. Another factor propelling ESG investing to the forefront is a change in workplace demographics. Young women and men working in investment companies, expect their organisations to be interested in the company's environmental, social and governance factors before investing. This is particularly so if such companies have an interest in operating in the global south especially sub-Saharan Africa.

2.0 Background and Context

The United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 75/280 convened an international meeting in Stockholm on 2 and 3 June 2022 to commemorate the 50-year anniversary of the holding of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. The General Assembly agreed on the theme of “Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity” and decided to organize collaborative and multi-stakeholder leadership dialogues to address the following themes:

- *Leadership dialogue 1*: Reflecting on the urgent need for action to achieve a healthy planet and prosperity for all.
- *Leadership dialogue 2*: Achieving a sustainable and inclusive recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.
- *Leadership dialogue 3*: Accelerating the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.

These dialogues were expected to contribute to the international meeting by yielding clear and concrete recommendations for action at all levels, including through strengthened cooperation and it was in conformity with the General Assembly resolution 75/326 of 10 September 2021, on modalities for the Stockholm+50 international meeting. The Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment under the Theme “a healthy planet for the prosperity of all”, or Stockholm Declaration, was adopted on 16 June 1972 by the United Nations Conference

⁹ For more information on this subject visit: <https://genuscap.com/contact-us/>

on the Human Environment. The Stockholm Declaration was the first document *to recognize the interconnections between development, poverty, and the environment*.¹⁰

Fifty years after the Stockholm conference, some key challenges remain. First of all, there have been increasing environmental challenges and growing inequality which is affecting development and well-being. The global community is therefore reflecting on the urgent need for action to address these interconnections. Climate instability, biodiversity loss, chemical pollution, plastic waste, nitrogen overload, anti-microbial resistance, and rising toxicity through reduced and altered ecosystem goods and services are unprecedented challenges for humanity. By harming health, eroding capabilities, and limiting present and future development opportunities, these challenges are increasing human insecurity. Secondly, there have been challenges linked to social impact. Inequality and imbalance are also evident in the use of natural resources, where economic benefits and environmental and social burdens are asymmetrically distributed across countries, regions and populations. Adjusted for planetary pressures, few if any countries can deliver high levels of human well-being in a way compatible with sustainable development. Economic and Social Governance become unavoidable to parallel with development, otherwise there will be unsustainable use of natural resources to fulfil human needs and resulting in inflicting more harm not only to the environment but to human themselves. During the period 1990–2014, for example, produce capital grew at an average annual rate of 3.8 per cent, while health- and education-induced human capital grew at a rate of 2.1 percent. Meanwhile, natural capital decreased at an average annual rate of 0.7 percent.¹¹

A third area of concern is related to the challenge of governance. Science points to the urgent need for a system-wide transformation of socioeconomic systems through policies that change economic and social signaling (such as measures of progress and well-being, true costs of economic products, targeted pro-poor subsidies, sustainable production and sustainable consumption that addresses both under- and over-consumption/production, a circular production practices, investment in education, gender equality and women’s rights. To this end, sustainable development policies are required to enable countries to increase fiscal space, invest in sustainable infrastructure, energy, to rebuild key sectors, and strengthened induced value chains, grow green and decent jobs, and align finance and investment in the pandemic recovery with longer-term sustainable and equitable development.

Calling for action to achieve a healthy planet and prosperity for all and accelerating the implementation of the environmental dimensions of sustainable development in the context of the decade of action, cut across most of the SDGs from 1 to 15¹²:

¹⁰The 1972 United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm was the first world conference to make environment a major issue. The participants adopted a series of principles for sound management of the environment including the Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan for the Human Environment and several resolutions. For more details, visit <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/stockholm1972>.

¹¹ A useful example of how this has played out in Ivory Coast can be found at the website:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265336414_Natural_Resources_and_Economic_Growth_in_Cote_D'Ivoire
¹² SDGS 1 to 15: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequality; Sustainable Cities and Communities; Responsible Consumption and Production; Climate Action; Life Below Water; and Life on Land

The recommendations of the Stockholm +50 reflect the resolve of the participants to urgently accelerate the implementation of commitments for a healthy planet for the prosperity of all, in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development – including a sustainable recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic – and taking into account the outcomes from the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme(UNEP)and from the special session of the Environment Assembly to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme, held in Nairobi on 3 and 4 March 2022.

Since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, the global community has adopted a wealth of multilateral environmental agreements, as well as other commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. Fulfilment of the objectives and commitments of all those agreements would take us a long way towards securing a healthy planet for all. Stockholm+50 has emphasized the global interconnectedness of the environment and the need to collectively address the triple crisis of our common environment – climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution – for present and future generations. Stockholm+50 has also underlined the urgent need for bold and deliberate actions, as well as clear political will to accelerate action on these commitments, strengthen the multilateral system, increase ambition and solidarity, and set us on a credible path towards a healthy planet for all, leaving no one behind.

The discussions during Stockholm+50 reaffirmed the importance Economic and Social Governance in the context of local realities and national implementation, and the need for a combination of incentives and policies, finance and capacity support to achieve sustainable development. Considering all the above, the following recommendations for actions to accelerate implementation are in order: On the basis of the foregoing, and through the existence of international and regional commitments, Africa has a window of opportunity to make their development more resilient to environmental pressures and reduce environmental and social inequalities. Operating in a demand-driven context and within the scope of global financing in environmental management, African countries through studies like this one initiated by ACPC can help address the sustainability and climate resilience of some of their investment needs by focusing on the nexus of climate change, gender and entrepreneurship and environment.

Gender inequalities that limit women’s entrepreneurship options such as access to financial resources, land, education, health and other rights and opportunities also limit their capacity for coping with and adapting to climate change impacts. Therefore, if climate change policies, projects/programmes and frameworks are developed and implemented without the meaningful participation of women entrepreneurs, it can increase existing inequalities and decrease effectiveness. Hence, climate change policies, regulations and frameworks at all levels of the environment, social and governance (ESG) systems of African member states, must recognize, correspond and contribute to the central role that women play in building resilience, supporting low-carbon development and economic development by recognizing the structural gender inequalities that undermines progress for women and sustainable development in Africa. More importantly, the integration of gender and entrepreneurial considerations throughout climate change related actions is crucial for the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of such actions for both developing and developed countries. Ensuring the full and effective participation of women in decision - making processes enables women to act as agents of change in all

circumstances, with climate change related actions subsequently benefiting from the insights, knowledge and other resources that women bring to bear in pushing effective and sustainable solutions for adapting to and mitigating climate change impacts.

The climate and sustainable development agendas are no longer distinct challenges to be addressed in isolation, but rather integral components to achieve a low-carbon, climate-resilient future. Recognizing the extent of alignment that exists between the two agendas (Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda), the first step will be the need in understanding the benefits of approaching national and sub-national implementation in an integrated manner. Therefore, the joint implementation of the SDGs and the NDCs in African countries will create further opportunities to address gender inequalities in relevant sectors including agriculture, industries, services, energy, water as well as in the management of natural resources. In 2015, ACPC developed a framework to support Africa countries in formulating their INDCs for submission to the UNFCCC. And in 2021, ACPC help to review the NDCs of selected countries.

In this context, the Centre provided direct support to countries like Malawi, Cameroun and Liberia to engage climate sensitive sectors, policy makers and other stakeholders, and to apply the ECA developed framework to develop NDCs. Almost all African countries (53 out of 54, Libya being the exception) submitted their NDCs. Subsequent to the December 2015 Paris conference, the submitted INDCs transition into the baseline NDCs for each country. The ECA has also provided guidance and support for the revision of country NDCs. In a workshop of NDC national focal points in Africa convened by ACPC in March 2018, the overwhelming takeaway and outcome as communicated by participants was that INDCs submitted to the UNFCCC were overly ambitious, and that sufficient consultations with all stakeholders did not take place in most countries. Therefore, since 2019, ACPC in collaboration with regional institutions, the NDC hub and the NDC partnerships, has embarked on a structured process for assisting member states in revising their NDCs. The ongoing support has been demand led and includes revision of NDCs for Liberia, Zimbabwe, Togo, Burkina Faso and Cameroun. Although the specific areas of support vary from country to country, the cross-cutting thread has been consultations among stakeholder groups such as climate sensitive sectors (agriculture, energy, water, transport), policy makers, academics, youth and women, and alignment of NDCs with national development plans. This study moves the process further by seeking to develop a framework that integrates gender and women's entrepreneurial issues into national development processes in alignment with country NDCs.

3.0 Purpose and Scope of the Assignment

The main objective of the consultancy is to design a framework for enhancing the role and participation of women entrepreneurs in the environment, social, and governance (ESG). The specific objectives are to:

- Develop a framework that aims at enhancing the role of women entrepreneurs to address interconnections between development, poverty, and the environment.
- Create awareness about the framework for women and the role of women in development in Africa with interconnection to green investment/climate-smart investment in agriculture, industry, and social sectors.¹³

¹³ See the TOR for the assignment.

The hope is that the study will establish a clear need for inclusive and social entrepreneurship to address the gendered impacts of climate change. This will ensure that policies and programmes on the NDCs will institutionalise a clear role for women in the area of entrepreneurship as engagements and investments on issues of climate change become the sources of responses to current adaptation and mitigation challenges in Africa.

4.0 Conceptual and Methodological Aspects of the Assignment

African countries are currently facing many different environmental pressures. This is set to continue in the coming decades if serious attention is not paid to implementing actions that enable them to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts in a gender sensitive way. Even as African countries have developed and revised their NDC targets towards the realization of the objectives of the Paris Agreement, uncertainties of existing and projected climate trends and their impacts on local communities remain. The legacies of environmental mismanagement and underinvestment, and of rapid urbanisation, putting heavy pressure on existing infrastructure and affecting first and foremost marginalised population groups particularly women, children and persons with disability.

Protecting vulnerable populations, whether it is from climate change, rapid urbanisation or other environmental pressures, must therefore be key in developing entrepreneurial action. With the development of a framework targeting women enterprises, the ECA can amplify its continuing support to its 54 Member States to address some of their investment needs by focusing on the areas such as environmental protection: upgrading infrastructure (solid waste, water and wastewater management), climate change mitigation, (energy efficiency in buildings, cleaner and renewable energy, and sustainable public transport), climate change adaptation including strengthening resilience to (extreme) climate events (urban and rural adaptation, disaster risk management, and action to address potential risks from climate-driven migration). In addition to continuing to address environmental investment needs with a gender, social and entrepreneurial focus, African countries could further enhance its contribution by mainstreaming environment and climate change considerations across all investment projects. To this end, Africa could implement systematic tracking of environmental benefits. It could also conduct more thorough screening at project inception to identify climate change vulnerabilities and the potential for increasing environmental co-benefits from a gender and entrepreneurial standpoint.

As stated earlier, this assignment is to design a framework for integrating women entrepreneurs in national development plan processes which can also be applied /replicated by all member states. Given that enhancing the role and participation of women entrepreneurs is being centralized in the environment, social, and governance (ESG) systems and processes of member states of Africa, this assignment will focus on the three core elements of ESG as it relates to women in business. These three elements, namely, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) aspects, are based on the idea that organizations should not only focus on profits but also on people and the planet for long-term term profitability and sustainability. In effect, this model considers people (different women, men) and the environment they work in. The methods below would be used to execute the assignment:

4.1 First Phase: Desk Review

A desk study of relevant documentation will be undertaken. The desk study will seek to review available information and data for the assignment. This will specifically include a review of relevant climate and gender-related policies, instruments, mechanisms, institutional structures, and capacity, development policies and environment and social governance documentation and directive when it comes to women entrepreneurs. The desk review would also include information on climate change, gender and entrepreneurial examples from Africa country reports on policies, programmes and implementation efforts. These will serve as best practice of efforts being made by the target member states in their implementation of their NDCs. In that respect, it is expected that the ACPC will provide support in terms of helping to define the criteria for selecting the target countries. It is expected that through that effort, an assessment of a consistent body of information about the status of women's entrepreneurship development, the roles of women in business, the extent of their involvement in decision-making processes could be identified. The development of the framework and recommendations for targeted measures to improve the ecosystem for women in business can then be developed from such sources. The key research questions as already been suggested by some of the partners of the ECA will include the following:

- An assessment of UN tools including the Stockholm Declaration, to empower women from a social perspective. They include 2030 agenda and UNFCCC just to name a few. For each of these tools, linkages between ESG have to be highlighted and elaborated.
- An assessment of the impact of climate change in women-led entrepreneurial activities will be identified and assessed and how to address the negative impact of those activities or better yet design resilience and adaptation measures in them so to reduce or eliminate negative impact on environment and society.
- An examination of how climate change impacts women and women-led enterprises.
- An identification of the risks and vulnerabilities faced by women resulting from climate change.
- An assessment of the ways in which women raise their resources from agriculture and trade, as a means of reducing their experience of gender inequality and the implications for their entrepreneurial efforts in the wake of extreme weather conditions, in meeting their objectives and aspirations in aspiring to be autonomous.
- An examination of the impact of climate change on agriculture, trade and regional value chains for women and the constrains of cross-border trade.
- The development of a draft framework and guidelines for enhancing the role of women entrepreneurs to address interconnections between development, poverty, and the environment. This aspect of the study will comply with the NDC Quality Assurance Checklist with its three (3) dimensions of Country ownership and inclusiveness; Robustness and ambition; and Feasibility.¹⁴

¹⁴ The quality assurance checklist is designed to support governments, civil society, and other stakeholders to reflect on the revision processes and outcomes of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The guiding questions are derived from the Paris Agreement, the IPCC Special Report on Warming of 1.5C, and the WRI-UNDP Guidance on the NDC revision process, as well as UNDP's experience supporting countries on NDC design, revision and implementation. This checklist outlines three dimensions that UNDP considers essential for ambitious and robust NDCs. They are: 1) Country ownership and inclusiveness: the engagement of society and political stakeholders at all levels during the revision process, and the inclusion of engagement outcomes in the NDC. 2) Robustness and ambition: the clarity, transparency, and understanding of mitigation and/or adaptation components, cross-cutting issues communicated, and the enhancement of key targets and measures in the enhanced NDC. And 3) Feasibility: key enabling conditions for implementing NDCs i.e. finance mobilization, technology transfer and institutional capacity building.

- An outline of clear recommendations on how women entrepreneurs can contribute to the gendered National Development Plan / NDCs and deliver a climate-resilient development policy in Africa.

To summarize, the above issues can be framed as follows: What do women-led enterprises say about climate change? How are they affected? How do they overcome the challenges? What do they need to adapt to these challenges? What is the state of the regulation? What is still to be done? How can governments, institutional and development partners mainstream climate-smart gender policies to foster women participation in trade and development?¹⁵ Once the assessment/analysis has been undertaken, a draft report will be produced and shared with the ECA for the process of validation to start with the partners from the selected member countries.

The report will be developed in five sections.¹⁶ Section one will be the Introduction. It will begin with some background information on the topic of climate change, women's entrepreneurship and planning processes in the context of Africa. Following from the background and context, there will be some discussion of the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda with its strong emphasis on investments in women and girls and the need to prioritise gender equality in the wake of the climate emergency. The next subsection will provide a justification for the integration of issues of women's entrepreneurship in national planning processes in the context of climate change. The section will end with a discussion on the purpose and scope for the assignment. The focus of section Two will be the literature review on the subject of the study. Elements of the literature review will consist of concepts and features of women's entrepreneurship, climate change and development planning, gender issues, contributions and challenges of women's entrepreneurship and its intersections with climate change and development planning.

Section Three will contain the theoretical, conceptual and methodological aspects relevant for the report. Explanations of the processes of gathering the information, including decisions about the agreed target countries, and specific secondary data on gender issues, case studies on women's entrepreneurship, climate change and development planning will be outlined. The next section which will be section Four will present the framework. The standard five pillars for integrating gender and women's entrepreneurial issues in the wake of climate change with reference to planning processes in the context of Africa will be presented followed by a description of the framework, its relevance for the integration processes on women's entrepreneurship and the strategy for its implementation. Finally, conclusions and recommendations will be provided in Section 5. The conclusions will relate directly to the aims of the report to ensure practical application of the information contained in the report. The recommendations will also be specific and will be derived from the information contained in the report on gender issues, women's entrepreneurship, climate change and national planning and development. There will be a reference section where sources cited in the text will be included. A number of annexes will also follow to provide additional information that may be useful to refer to.

4.2 Second Phase: Validation Meetings and Workshop

¹⁵ These research questions have been informed by comments received from partners in the Cameroon Shippers' Council.

¹⁶ See Annex 1 to this Inception Report.

After the draft final report is submitted, a validation Expert Group Meeting will be organised with a dozen of partners and interested parties to comment and validate the report. Providing ongoing and meaningful opportunities for communication and input allows stakeholders to contribute as experts in their field, have their issues heard, and contribute to the soundness of the study. It is therefore proposed that there will be a core group of partners and stakeholders on the study. The goal of this core group is to maximize the relevance and impact of this research and facilitate connections between the investigator and stakeholders for network-supported investigation, and through stakeholder messaging and interaction. A guiding principle will be to involve stakeholders and partners both with the research itself and in developing African-centered messages to address concerns and misconceptions on climate change, gender, entrepreneurship in the context of ESG.

Activities under the second phase would be done through a physical presence Expert Group Meeting (EGM) and the location of the meeting will have been decided before the draft report is submitted. During that one-day meeting partners and stakeholders whom will receive the draft report, will discuss the findings of the assignment. They will submit their comments/inputs ahead of the EGM and thereafter the consultant will consolidate all comments/inputs in the final draft. This will help in:

- The development of recommendations on how women entrepreneurs can contribute to the gendered National Development Plan / NDCs and deliver a climate-resilient development policy in Africa.
- The development of recommendations of how the environment, social and governance (ESG) criteria can be applied to support, monitor, and evaluate the integration of women entrepreneurs in national Development Plans and NDC implementation in Africa
- Development of a draft framework and guidelines for enhancing the role of women entrepreneurs to address the interconnections between development, poverty, and the environment.
- Preparation of a 4 pager policy brief that summarizes the findings of the study as a final product
- The preparation of a power point presentation and the conduct of a workshop to share the findings of the study and obtain comments and inputs from partners and stakeholders.

4.3 Third Phase: (completion stage)

Based on the outcomes of Phase two (2) of the study, this third phase will consist of finalizing the report using the comments, suggestions and inputs made by partners and stakeholders throughout the period of the study and specifically from the workshop conducted. Once finalized, the report and related documents will be presented to the ECA for onward utilization as a policy document for use among its member states.

5.0 Expected Deliverables (Outputs)

The following deliverables are expected:

- A robust framework on integrating women entrepreneurs in national development plans processes, which can be applied/replicated in all member states. The framework will comply with the trend of the revised NDCs and National Adaptation Plan of Action and

Quality Assurance Checklist with its 3 dimensions e.g. Country ownership and inclusiveness, Robustness and ambition and feasibility. The document should provide clear recommendations on how women entrepreneurs can contribute to the gendered National Development Plan / NDCs and deliver climate-resilient development policies in Africa.

- Recommendations of how Environment, social and governance criteria can be applied to support, monitor, and evaluate the integration of women entrepreneurs in NDC implementation in Africa
- A 4 pager policy brief that summarizes the findings of the study as a final product

6.0 The Work Plan for the Assignment

Below, a work plan designed to streamline the process of undertaking the study is presented. The purpose is to create a visual reference for the goal, objectives, tasks and timelines for each aspect of the work.

TABLE I: DETAILED WORKPLAN FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Activity	March, 2023				April, 2023				May, 2023			
	Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4	Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4	Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4
Development of Inception Report												
Desk Study: Desk Reviews												
Analysis of Data Collected												
Virtual Meetings for Updates												
Development of Framework and Guidelines on women entrepreneurs in national development plans processes												
Validation Workshop with stakeholders (- Physical))												
Incorporate comments into draft Framework and Guideline												
Submit Final Framework and Guideline												

7.0 Conclusion

It is hoped that the conduct of this study will affirm the importance of local realities and national implementation in developing frameworks on climate change, gender and entrepreneurship in the context of Africa. The need for a combination of incentives and policies, finance and capacity to support women entrepreneurs in their efforts towards realizing the objectives of the NDCs for the achievement of sustainable development is also envisaged through the use of the deliverables of the study.

Framework for Integrating Women Entrepreneurs in National Development Planning Processes

A FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESSES

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Section One: Introduction

- 1.1 Background and Context
- 1.2 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda
- 1.3 Gender Issues, Women's Entrepreneurship and National Development Planning
- 1.4 Rationale for Integrating Women Entrepreneurs in National Development Planning Processes
- 1.5 Purpose and Scope of the Assignment

Section Two: Literature Review

- 2.1 Entrepreneurship, Gender, Climate Change and Development
- 2.2 Features of Women's Entrepreneurship in the context of climate change
- 2.3 Contributions of women entrepreneurs and relevance to the NDCs and National
- 2.4 Challenges and Prospects of Entrepreneurship for women, the NDCs and National Development Planning

Section Three: Theoretical, Conceptual and Methodological Issues

- 3.1 Main theories of entrepreneurship
- 3.2 The feminist entrepreneurship approach
- 3.3 Conceptual basis for Integrating Women Entrepreneurship issues in the NDCs for Development
- 3.4 Methodological Approach for developing the framework

Section Four: The Proposed Framework

- 4.1 The Framework
- 4.2 The Framework in Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship in Planning
- 4.3 The Implementation Strategy of the Framework

Section Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 Conclusions
- 5.2 Recommendations

References

Annexes