

Gender sensitive study on heating consumption patterns: sharing experience from North Macedonia

Tuesday, August 25th 13:00h (Tashkent time)

Key messages:

- The webinar was organized by UNDP/UNEP GSP programme as part of a series of trainings hold on the topic of integrating gender into climate policies and reporting in Central Asia. The first [introductory webinar for Central Asia](#) was organized on May 20, 2020 with the aim to provide general outlines and requirements on mainstreaming gender into climate reporting and introduce the concept of gender analysis and gender action plan.
- The main objective of the webinar is to further support knowledge sharing on the integration of gender and climate policy and reporting by introducing concrete and practical examples from other countries. This time, the countries of Central Asia heard about North Macedonia's experience in performing a *gender sensitive study on heating consumption patterns*.
- Around 30 people, including the team from the North Macedonia and UNDP GSP participated at the webinar. Participants from Central Asian countries were represented by experts and practitioners from government and non-government institutions, international organizations and universities, who deal with climate change and gender equality.
- The key speaker of the webinar was Olgica Apostolova, gender consultant from the North Macedonia, who introduced the main findings of the study on heat consumption patterns in major cities of the country. According to the study, *single mothers, as well as women over 65 years old*, living alone and with low income generation, are one of **the most vulnerable groups** of the population who have to consume inefficient type of fuel to heat their homes. It is known that coal and wood, which are used by over 40% of vulnerable women in Macedonia, directly contribute to air pollution and GHG emissions.
- The findings of the study helped to revisit policy mechanisms to the current state support programs. If earlier the subsidies had been provided to replace inefficient heating devices with more environmentally friendly ones, or connecting the households to central heating on a “first come, first served” principle, with the new findings of the research and data, the subsidy criteria were revised. In the 2019/2020 heating season, up to 10,000 most vulnerable households in the main cities of the country will be receiving assistance.
- Olgica also told the participants about their experience in promoting gender and climate policy in Macedonia. Nowadays, a new National Strategy for Gender Equality is being developed. One of its sections is dedicated to “Gender and climate change”, with the key stakeholder institutions and partners to be closely cooperating by mainstreaming gender in climate related dimensions as well as by collecting data and statistics on each area related to climate change.

- Ожидается, что разрабатываемый Закон о действиях в области изменения климата, также будет гендерно-ориентирован. Идет работа по его формулированию. С другой стороны, разрабатываемый новый Закон о равных возможностях включит в себя вопросы окружающей среды и изменения климата. К нему будут закреплены механизмы по сбору данных в области изменения климата с разбивкой по полу.
- The forthcoming Climate Action Law is also expected to be gender-sensitive: at present it is being drafted. On the other hand, the new Law on Equal Opportunities, which is also under development, expects to include environment and climate change issues. The adequate mechanisms will be determined to collect gender sensitive and sex-disaggregated climate change data and statistics.
- **Key questions raised by the participants from Central Asia:**
- Является ли Македония стороной Конвенции по изменению климата и, если да, то проводятся ли исследования по гендерной проблематике в рамках Конвенции ООН по изменению климата?
- Is Macedonia a Party to the UNFCCC and, if so, is there gender mainstreaming process takes place in accordance with the UN Climate Change Convention?
 - North Macedonia is a Party to the UNFCCC. According to the mandate and requirements of the Convention, Macedonia has appointed a [national focal point on gender and climate change to the UNFCCC](#), which is represented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.
- Which agency coordinates the process of gender mainstreaming in climate policy?
 - The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of the North Macedonia is the authorized government agency to deal with gender equality agenda. Climate change is handled by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. The Ministry is also the [National Focal Point in the UNFCCC](#). In order to coordinate efforts of both topics, an inter-ministerial group has been established, which is working on the process of integrating gender aspects into climate policy at the national level.
- Have gender indicators been identified in North Macedonian updated NDCs?
 - The North Macedonia follows an integrated approach. Gender-sensitive indicators (adaptation, mitigation, MRV) are being developed in almost all areas of climate change. In parallel, the teams conduct regular capacity building exercises among civil servants and perform gender and climate related surveys. This approach will allow the government to overwhelmingly reflect gender-sensitive information in the updated NDCs, which are being developed to date.

- Which organizations are conducting specific research on gender? Are they carried out within the framework of separate projects or upon the request from the Government?
 - There is no specialized organization conducting research only on gender. Namely, the Sector on Equal Opportunities within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is a body responsible for the overall management of the national policies, but, in the frames of the UNDP's programmes on Climate Change two separate studies were developed on: "[Gender and Climate Change in Macedonia Applying a Gender Lens to the Third National Communication on Climate Change](#)" and [Recommendations for strengthening the implementation of the Action Plan on Gender and Climate Change](#) as well as [Training manual - Gender and Climate Change](#). These documents and assessments were developed by individual consultants. The documents were not developed upon the request of the Government, they were developed within UNDP's projects: "Macedonia's Fourth National Communication and Third Biennial Update Report on Climate Change under the UNFCCC".
 - "Strengthening institutional and technical Macedonian capacities to enhance transparency in the framework of the Paris Agreement" (CBIT Project) in close consultation process with the Sector on Equal Opportunities to meet their needs on including the gender perspective into the climate actions and vice versa, as well as to meet the reporting criteria to UNFCCC.
 - On the UNDP Study on gender sensitive heat consumption patterns – PowerBI developed applications and tools: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MZ6uNNvseWObDuWCWTszEMqZ9VI6h-Qs/view?usp=sharing>
- (Cont.) Who is the user of the information and data, and how are these results used in policy planning and budgeting?
 - As it was presented, the research results triggered a revision of the current governmental subsidy policy in the field of energy (district heating) for the most vulnerable segments of the population (single mothers and older women over 65).
- How is gender planning related to climate change performed at the national level?
 - As it was mentioned earlier, the North Macedonia is currently developing a new National Strategy for Gender Equality. It is expected that the theme "Gender and Climate Change" will be fully reflected in an operational action plan, which will involve all stakeholders.
- What methods exist and are tested for integrating gender aspects into climate related thematic sections. For example, in the section on adaptation or mitigation, energy efficiency, etc.
 - On the one hand, open method of coordination, meaning to involve representatives of the gender machinery into the process of developing climate action strategies. That is what we are doing now. On the other hand, by developing a separate Chapter on

Gender and Climate Change within the Strategy on Equal Opportunities, all the institutions (among which those responsible for climate change actions) assigned as implementing bodies will be responsible for considering the gender concept in their activities.

- Have you conducted any studies that navigate through the differentiated approach of women (as opposed to men) in the use of natural resources (for example, energy conservation, adaptation, etc.).
 - Yes, [“Gender and Climate Change in Macedonia Applying a Gender Lens to the Third National Communication on Climate Change”](#) gives a description based on available statistic data on different roles of women and men in different sectors (agriculture for example). At the moment we are developing a set of gender indicators (defining them) to be integrated into the National Communications to UNFCCC, which will provide more detailed insight into the different gender roles. I have also developed a study on Intersecting gender and climate change that provides an insight into different roles of women and men in the frames of climate change in 4 sectors: Transport, Agriculture, Energy and ICT (not available in English).
- Can you please, share the links to the resources on gender and climate topics which would be useful for the countries of Central Asia?
 - **Training Manual: "Gender Equality and Climate Change" (Introductory training):** https://www.un-gsp.org/sites/default/files/documentos/training_module_gender_and_climate_north_macedonia.pdf
 - **Gender mainstreaming into climate transparency and measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) 2017-2020 Results of GSP Pilot in Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) and Lebanon:** https://www.un-gsp.org/sites/default/files/documentos/gender_mainstreaming_climate_transparency_mrv_gsp_pilot_western_balkan.pdf
 - **Article:** What's gender got to do with climate change? – A lot more than you might think: <https://klimatskipromeni.mk/article/96#/index/main>
 - **Article:** Older women suffer greater impact of climate change: Human activities, especially the use of fossil fuels, are the main reasons for the increase of the global temperature and for the increasing rainfall <https://klimatskipromeni.mk/article/203#/index/main>
 - **Gender and climate change blog series:** Macedonian women paving the way for climate change and... <https://klimatskipromeni.mk/article/303#/index/main>
 - **See some links above in the text**

- Summing up the webinar, it is worth noting that the Central Asian countries were highly satisfied with the discussion and experience that colleagues from the North Macedonia shared. Moreover, it was agreed that in case of additional questions, they will be able to directly approach the experts who were present from the side of Macedonia.