

THE STRATEGIC COLLABORATIVE FUND PHASE II

2022 CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

Theme

Rethinking climate adaptation and mitigation through gender transformative approaches and amplifying local agency

About the Strategic Collaborative Fund

SEI Asia, with support from the Swedish government (SIDA), launched the Strategic Collaborative Fund Phase 2 (SCF2) programme in 2018 to enhance the current 2030 Agenda efforts in Asia. SCF2 aims to foster regional cooperation and policy dialogue for sustainable development and environmental sustainability through capacity building, knowledge sharing, and increased collaboration.

Human rights and gender equality are central to SCF2, as it champions regional and inter-regional collaboration for transboundary environmental policy development. To this end, the [Guidance Note on Integrating Gender and Human Rights-Based Approaches](#) in SCF2 supports the inclusion of gender equality and human rights into the SCF2 programme. We strongly encourage the potential partner organisations to use the note as a guide for developing the concept notes.

Learn more about the SCF2 programme and details for concept note submissions [here](#).

Specific Focus and Priority

This call seeks proposals to design and lead a multistakeholder policy dialogue event(s) (hereafter the event(s)) that **develop pathways to inclusive and equitable climate adaptation and mitigation policies, strategies and interventions through gender transformative approaches and amplifying local agency¹ in Asia.**

The applicants should be led by or include organizations that engage directly with populations whose lives and livelihoods depend on their environment, but who are excluded from or negatively affected by climate adaptation and mitigation decision-making, policies and interventions, such as women and youth from Indigenous communities and marginalized groups.

The nature of this evidence and experience-based event(s) should be one that encourages these diverse stakeholders to jointly re-think the connections between climate (and more broadly) environmental and social issues at multiple scales. In doing so, and through the dual pathways of

¹ Gender transformative approaches here refer to strategies that address *underlying barriers in societies and development systems*, including constraining gender norms, gender-blind data systems, and social or gender bias in policies or their implementation. Amplifying local agency here refers to strategies that *enhance the capacities of individual people or local groups to make decisions and act on them*.

gender transformative approaches and amplifying local agency, the event(s) should contribute to:

- Addressing deeply rooted, often unrecognized, underlying social and barriers (including constraining norms) in climate policies, programs and decision-making in that limit adaptation and mitigation outcomes; and
- Creating greater equity in whose voices are present and heard in decision-making processes of climate policies, strategies and interventions.

By fostering collaboration and shared critical reflection and learning between these populations, civil society, researchers, private sector and/or policy actors at multiple levels, the proposed event(s) should contribute to momentum and crystalize ways forward to progress climate, gender, and equity commitments outlined by the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women as well as regional frameworks such as ASEAN Forum on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction.

Rationale

Unless climate adaptation and mitigation strategies are designed and implemented with and for the populations most vulnerable to climate changes, they may both exacerbate gender and social inequalities and be limited in their effectiveness.² These shortcomings emerge as common approaches to mitigate and adapt to climate change may: (i) prioritize environmental over social dimensions and outcomes and factors; (ii) focus on changes (such as uptake of technologies) by individuals or households, or on 'targeting women', rather than addressing underlying structural barriers (such as constraining norms, gender blind systems, or policies that sustain inequities) that shape the socioenvironmental outcomes; (iii) exclude those people most climate-vulnerable from climate decision-making and planning; (iv) include local representation, yet embody top-down and gendered power relations that do not take into account the capacities, needs and lived experiences of diverse local actors, especially the most climate-vulnerable and marginalized.

This call seeks to support the event(s) that address these limitations by identifying and enabling approaches that combine social and environmental dimensions including gender and social equity, addressing the underlying barriers that perpetuate inequalities and meaningfully engaging diverse local women and men in designing climate policies, strategies and interventions in ways that both recognize and build their agency.

Who is most affected?

Indigenous peoples, peasants and rural populations, especially rural women, in Asia rely more significantly and directly on their environment for their livelihoods than wealthier and urban

² Resurrección, B. P., Bee, B. A., Dankelman, I., Park, C. M. Y., Haldar, M., & McMullen, C. P. (2019). Gender-transformative climate change adaptation: advancing social equity. *Paper commissioned by the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA)*.

populations. These people are first and most affected by climate and environmental change.³ Moreover, they often experience multiple dimensions of poverty, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, systematic and persistent structural barriers (e.g., policies, norms) exacerbate unequal access and distributions of resources and benefits to individuals, especially to the most vulnerable. These barriers create and re-create exclusions and inequities in climate decision-making processes. The barriers and their consequential inequities are even greater for those experiencing multiple and compounding forms of marginalization from their intersecting gender and socioeconomic identities, such as Indigenous women.

How can we address the gaps?

Rethinking climate mitigation and adaptation through a gender transformative lens entails moving beyond climate strategies that only *target* vulnerable groups (e.g., benefit rural women) and to pro-actively engaging a variety of stakeholders at multiple scales to transform the very *systems* causing climate change and making some social groups more vulnerable than others. This involves identifying and shifting the *underlying* formal (e.g., policy), semi-formal (e.g., governance, data or financial systems), and informal (e.g., norms) intersectional gender barriers and power imbalances that reproduce inequalities in the context of climate change. Such efforts may include:

- analysing and improving climate and related policies and their implementation to remove underlying barriers to equitable adaptive capacities, such as women's land tenure;
- identifying and facilitating strategies to engage men and women together in challenging constraining norms that limit social and gender equity and human rights from household through to national levels;
- improving climate governance processes and mechanisms to create effective and gender-balanced influence of the most affected groups, contributing their lived experience and knowledge to climate solutions; and
- strengthening transparency and accountability mechanisms so that emitters and policymakers have clear responsibilities towards populations and that affected communities can access compensation and justice in case of conflicts.

Complementing these with agency-building approaches involves continuing and increasing investments in individuals, household and collectives in ways that enables them to recognize and build their capacities. This includes investments that increase abilities of the actors to access, interpret and apply information, technologies or financing and to strengthen a platform for collective identification and voicing of needs e.g., Indigenous or women's networks.

The Regional Strategic Collaboration

The objective of the event(s) organized under this call is to convene grassroots communities, the civil society, researchers, policymakers, and the private sector at multiple scales to rethink climate adaptation and mitigation by gender transformative approaches and strategies and

³ Sultana, F. (2014). Gendering climate change: Geographical insights. *The Professional Geographer*, 66(3), 372-381.

amplifying local agency. As such, the focus, design and implementation of the event(s) itself should include an analysis of the root causes of environmental issues and social inequalities that are relevant to the context in which they operate. These enablers should be embedded in an intersectional human-rights based approach, ensuring equal access and fulfilment of substantive rights (such as life, health etc.) across gender and social groups, while emphasizing on facilitating the exercise of procedural rights such as meaningful participation in decision-making or access to justice and remedies. The event(s)' design should enable diverse women and men to share their challenges and needs and to highlight their strengths. The event(s) should catalyse dialogue and on promising practices and enablers and elicit entry-points and strategies for transformation of underlying barriers, which can be taken up by the various stakeholders from the local to the regional scale.

The focus-themes of the event(s) include but are not limited to:

- **Discuss how social and gender norms at all scales produce and reproduce inequities in climate decision-making and distribution of burdens and opportunities, as well as what works to shift these constraining norms and structures.** For example:
 - Adaptation strategies that challenge gendered unpaid work burdens while engaging with men to prevent gender-based violence;
 - Discussions on the impacts of land enclosure on local and indigenous populations and rethinking land and water tenure systems to enable a more level playing field as the foundation for climate strategies;
 - Root causes and solutions to environmental conflicts and (gender-based) violence in the context of climate adaptation and mitigation measures (e.g., REDD+, 'clean' energy, climate-smart agriculture);
 - Environmental defenders denouncing environmentally and socially harmful practices, and ways to support their local mobilizations to enable systemic change
- **Propose promising climate strategies at the local level that can enable a recognition of plural knowledges and transform gender norms and power relations and what lessons can be learned or adopted at various scales.** For example:
 - Equitable and effective engagement of local and Indigenous peoples in natural resource management and conservation policy and interventions efforts, including recognizing plural knowledges and shifting in discourses and strategies from top-down to collaborative;
 - Identification of critical gender data gaps and their consequences on climate decision-making, and ways to address it to enable local experience and knowledges to inform climate policies;
 - Plural knowledges taken up by climate action and disaster risk reduction efforts, bridging empirical knowledge and technical approaches

Theme-Specific Criteria

- Focus on addressing structural gender and social inequalities through innovative and participative approaches to climate action.
- Direct involvement of local and marginalized communities, from the concept design to the implementation and evaluation.
- Creative methods to facilitate the meaningful participation of all groups during the event, including small group discussions, plenaries, translation to local languages and accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Mainstream gender equality and human rights goals throughout the event planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Communications outputs and results that are designed for diverse target groups, including grassroots organizations, development practitioners, and policymakers
- Promotion of local agency in different programmes and context to inform policy making in addressing climate change.
- Build upon the efforts by [the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women](#) (March 2022, a priority theme on climate change, environment, and disaster risk reduction).
- Discuss the interface of gender equality and climate change and its contribution to the SDGs.

Expected Results and Outcomes

We expect proposals for the event(s) that contribute to shifting discourses and policies on climate adaptation and mitigation. The applicants will develop their own theory of change based on the focus chosen, but the key results and desired outcomes are as follows:

- Increased understanding of the need and potential pathways for local communities and marginalized groups to engage meaningfully in climate decision making and action, accompanied by an analysis on the root causes of inequities that shape the socioenvironmental outcomes.
- Sharing of positive and negative experiences of climate action in terms of gender and social (in)equality to incorporate lessons learned in future policies, programmes, interventions, and strategies to shift these constraining norms and structures and amplify local agency.
- Entry-points and recommendations for transformative climate adaptation and mitigation policies at multiple scales including ASEAN and national and/or local governments of the respective contexts.
- Develop and strengthen regional collaboration to mainstream an intersectional and human rights-based approach to climate mitigation and adaptation.

Theory of change			
Outputs	Output 1	Output 2	Output 3
	A regional-scale event or a series of events with multiple, gender-balanced and diverse stakeholders (can also include preliminary/side events).	An actionable report outlining key messages of the event and next steps for policy influence.	Communications and/or policy products about the events and highlighting key messages, in various formats to target diverse groups of stakeholders (e.g., local and sign language translation, infographics, podcasts, briefs, blogs, declarations)
Potential Target Participants/ Stakeholders/ Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse women and men of local communities, in particular marginalized groups, and those who are most climate-vulnerable • Grassroots organizations and local CSOs • NGOs and development practitioners • Researchers • Policymakers at the local, national and regional levels • Private sector as relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs/ advocacy groups • Policymakers • Researchers • Private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local communities and marginalized groups • Policymakers • Civil society • Private sector
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced understanding of the multi-scalar nature of climate decision-making and related impacts • Strengthened networks of environmental and social justice 	Shift in climate discourses and policies towards measures that transform gender and social inequalities	Strengthened decision making and action on gender, social equity and poverty reduction in critical environment and development contexts.

	professionals able to advocate for transformative climate action in the region		
Relevant Policy Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sustainable Development Goals • The Paris Agreement • The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction • The Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discriminations and Violence Against Women (CEDAW), particularly recommendation #37 • The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples • The Human Rights Council’s Resolution 48/13 on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment 		
Impacts/ Goals	Climate mitigation and adaptation policies that place gender and social equity concerns at the very heart of their objectives in order to achieve both environmental and social well-being.	Research and policies that are charting alternatives to growth-led economies and unsustainable forms of production and consumption.	Empowerment of local communities and marginalized groups against top-down decisions that undermine both local and global sustainability.