

Promoting Transformative and Impactful Research on Gender and Social Equity in the Context of Climate Change

Implemented in
Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal, and Nigeria

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Final Technical Report

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Team Members:

David Kelleher

davidkelleherca@gmail.com

Sylvie Desautels

sylviedesautelsmaputo@gmail.com

Kalyani Menon-Sen

kmenonsen@gmail.com

Nkechi Odinukwe

nkyodinukwe@gmail.com

Tania Principe

taniaprincipe@bell.net

Carol Miller

carol@genderatwork.org



123 Slater Street, Ottawa, ON K1P 5H2

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1. Summary

Promoting Transformative and Impactful Research on Gender and Social Equity in the Context of Climate Change was a three-year Gender Action Learning and mentoring project to support IDRC's Climate Change Program staff and researchers from research institutions in six countries who are implementing research projects under IDRC's research program *Accelerating Climate Action: Social Equity and Empowerment of Women and Girls*.

The project with Gender at Work was specifically designed to build the capacity of IDRC staff and the country research teams to develop and implement socially transformative research that contributes to effective and long-term climate action.

The overall objective of the project was to enhance the effectiveness of IDRC's climate adaptation research programming to reduce social inequality, strengthen climate resilience and enhance livelihoods of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in the global South.

The project was originally implemented with research teams from six countries—Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Nepal, and Nigeria. However, the team from Bangladesh opted not to work with Gender at Work on the gender action learning project, although they continued to participate in the peer learning meetings throughout the project period.

This final technical report summarizes the results of the project measured against the four goals agreed for the project (described in section 3) and concludes that the project goals were met. The project also made progress in supporting five country research teams to develop and implement gender responsive or gender transformative research approaches. A key step in this process was building understanding of what it means to integrate gender into research and encouraging reflection on the spectrum of ways that gender can be integrated in research questions, methods and outcomes that are less or more transformative of gender and power relations.

The report begins with an overview of the research problem, objectives, and methodology, noting that this project was conceived to provide capacity building support on gender and research rather than as a research project. The set of five project activities implemented by Gender at Work over each of the 3 years are described in Section 5, along with reflections on implementation challenges. Sections 6 and 7 summarize project outputs and outcomes. The latter section draws on climate change project-specific outcomes emerging in a learning review (still underway) that assesses outcomes of all IDRC projects with which Gender at Work has been engaged since 2016. The final section provides Gender at Work's overall assessment of its work with the climate change project along with specific recommendations for future initiatives.

2. Research problem

While climate change has an impact on everyone, its negative consequences affect women, girls, and socially excluded and marginalized groups most profoundly and directly. Women are more vulnerable to

the effects of climate change than men—primarily as they constitute the majority of the world’s poor and are more dependent for their livelihood on natural resources that are threatened by climate change. They also face social, economic, and political barriers that limit their coping capacity. Despite this, they are often excluded from research and policy making processes related to climate change.

To increase resilience to climate change, develop effective climate change policy, and implement effective climate adaptation strategies, therefore, it is important for research on climate change to address gender and other social inequities and the norms and power structures that perpetuate them.

To this end, the project was designed to build the capacities of researchers from research institutions in six countries, along with IDRC Climate Change Program staff, to develop and implement research that leads to effective, sustainable, and gender and socially equitable climate action in the global South.

As the project unfolded, greater emphasis was also placed on exploring the different and nuanced ways that gender can be integrated into research on climate change along a continuum of concepts, practices and outcomes associated with gender responsive, gender transformative and feminist research. In line with other developments at IDRC, there was also greater attention paid to the theme of ‘gender and inclusion’ in the final years of the project.

3. Objectives

Promoting Transformative and Impactful Research on Gender and Social Equity in the Context of Climate Change was a three-year Gender Action Learning and mentoring project to support IDRC’s Climate Change Program staff and researchers from research institutions in six countries who are implementing research projects under IDRC’s research program *Accelerating Climate Action: Social Equity and Empowerment of Women and Girls*.

The participating institutions were:

Centre for Population and Environmental Development (CPED), Nigeria
Centre de Recherche et d’Expertise pour le Développement Local (CREDEL), Benin
Centre de Recherche en Eau du Bassin du Congo (CRREBaC), DRC
Migrantas En Reconquista and UNSAM, Argentina
Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies with three partners, the University of Manitoba,
International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCAD) and the Government of
Bangladesh, Department for Women’s Affairs
Nepal Water Conservation Foundation, International Water Management Institute and Policy
Entrepreneurs Incorporated

The project was specifically designed to build the capacity of IDRC Program staff and the country research teams to develop and implement transformative research that contributes to effective and long-term climate action.

The overall objective of the project was to enhance the effectiveness of IDRC’s climate adaptation research programming to reduce gender and social inequality, strengthen climate resilience, and enhance livelihoods of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in the global South.

Although, the original proposal committed to objectives¹, we did an assessment after Year 1, and developed the following, more specific, objectives in consultation with our Project Officer (PO).

- To respond to each of the teams in a way that recognizes their particular situation and supports the advancement of a gender-responsive approach in terms that are meaningful and context-appropriate.
- To include the POs in the learning process and build a mutually supportive relationship between G@W, the research teams and the IDRC POs.
- To maintain strong reporting and co-ordination to eliminate information asymmetries and ensure that both IDRC staff and the G@W team are able to learn from each other’s experience.
- To ensure the francophone teams are full participants in the project. Apart from working with a francophone facilitator, all peer meetings and reports will be fully bilingual, with high-quality translation and interpretation.

It is these objectives that we are reporting against.

4. Methodology

The original methodology for the project was Gender at Work’s Gender Action Learning (GAL) methodology, which combines action learning with peer learning. This is Gender at Work’s trademark approach to supporting learning and capacity building on gender equality which was devised in response to limitations of standard gender training approaches.²

¹**Original project Objectives: Objective 1:** Climate Change Program staff capacities increased, enabling effective management and support for climate change adaptation research projects and programming that promotes gender transformation and social equity. **Objective 2:** Research partners’ capacities increased, enabling them to strengthen the quality and outcomes of the climate change adaptation research projects selected through the call for proposals to advance gender equality and social equity. **Objective 3:** Learning on implementing gender transformative research shared with other Climate Change Program-supported research grantees. **Objective 4:** Improve visibility of the Climate Change Program-supported research to address gender and social equity through a series of communications and outreach efforts, including at least one peer-reviewed article submitted for publication.

² See [Gender Action Learning – Gender at Work](#) , also [Organizational Transformation for Equality](#) and A [Holistic Approach to Gender Equality](#)

Typically, the Gender at Work action learning begins with a negotiation process between Gender at Work and the participating organizations for an engagement involving 3 to 6 organizations over an eighteen month to two-year period. Each organization selects a “change team” of three to four people to lead the organisation in a change project that relates to a specific issue or problem they face related to gender. Change team members are thus organizational ‘change agents’. Over the 18 months to 2-year period, the change teams come together two to three times in peer learning meetings to reflect and share what they are learning from their change projects. Gender at Work facilitators work most directly with the change team members, but in some cases, facilitators might also work with the whole organisation or significant parts of it.

For the Climate Change project, the intention was for each of the participating grantee research teams, a significant “change project” would be identified to strengthen, enhance, and/or advance their research project in terms of gender and inclusion.

The pandemic, the global lockdown and the personal and professional ups and downs of the last two years derailed the original intention of intensive face-to-face engagements with each research team in their own locations. Gender at Work was confronted with the challenge of designing online learning spaces and learning processes that would allow teams to build the perspectives and acquire the tools for implementing gender-transformative approaches in their research work. Despite these constraints, this project has led to some significant methodological innovations and conceptual breakthroughs for all those involved.

In addition to shifting the annual peer learning meetings online, Gender at Work team members used an adaptive approach to work directly with each of the research grantee partners in response to their individual needs. G@W facilitators provided intensive mentoring to each team and created structured spaces for critical reflections on the findings and insights from the field. This included adopting a range of methods, including team and individual mentoring and coaching, training and research capacity building sessions, and commenting on research documents. In keeping with the Gender at Work adult learning pedagogical style, team members as much as possible used dialogic approaches that encouraged research grantee partners to reflect on the specific issue they were facing and to come up with their own solutions.

In Year 3, Outcome Harvesting (OH)³ was introduced as an additional project methodology to document outcomes to which the project had contributed. An “outcome,” is defined as “an observable, verifiable change in the behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, agendas, policies, or practices that can be seen in the individual, group, community, organization, or institution.”⁴ The Climate Change project was included in a wider OH exercise being conducted by Gender at Work under the auspices of former IDRC Networked Economies Program, with the support of a well-known outcome harvesting expert, Barbara Klugman. This wider OH exercise will be completed in May 2022. The Climate Change project served as a pilot to test the methodology and some of the preliminary results of the exercise are included in this report.

³ Outcome Harvesting emerged out of the IDRC innovation, Outcome Mapping.

⁴ <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Outcome-harvesting.pdf>

5. Project Activities

In agreement with IDRC, the project had five main activity areas: 1) annual peer learning meetings; 2) mentoring of research partners; 3) regular check-in meetings with IDRC; 4) learning sessions with the POs; and 5) documentation and dissemination. Highlights of each set of activities are outlined below along with reflections on implementation and management of these project activities.

Activity 1: Peer learning meetings

Peer-to-peer learning and exchange is a critical element of G@W's approach. Peer learning meetings are opportunities for partners to come together to share experiences and engage in a collective process of generating insights and lessons. This process of collective learning can enrich and expand theoretical horizons as well as daily practice for research partners, IDRC Program Officers and the G@W team. Teams shared their experiences and insights and honed their approaches at annual peer learning meetings – starting with a face-to-face workshop in Nairobi (November 2019), an online event in December 2020 and a final gathering (again online), December 2021.

The OH exercise identified the Nairobi workshop, where Gender at Work, POs, and the research grantee partners came together for the first time, as making a significant contribution to increasing understanding among research grantee partners on the relevance of bringing a gender lens to climate change research. Feedback from IDRC suggested that the first peer learning workshop in Nairobi was essential for IDRC to better understand G@W's approach and build momentum for G@W and IDRC to work closely together turning the planning period. This meeting introduced research teams to new approaches to learning and reflection, including the integration of mind-body and movement. The teams all developed a vision and strategy for their work on gender and developed preliminary plans for action learning projects or experiments. Although the teams were in different locations both geographically and in terms of their research, they built connections to the Gender at Work mentors and commitment on working together.

After the success of the face to face working in November 2019, it was difficult to imagine hosting the second peer learning meeting as a virtual event. There was considerable interest among research partners in participating in another peer learning event and as a result Gender at Work worked to adapt its usual peer learning methodology the new realities of the pandemic. The workshop was re-designed as a sequence of three Zoom meetings of three hours each over three consecutive days, from 1 to 3rd December, 2020. Timing was adjusted to suit multiple time zones and simultaneous translation was provided in French, Spanish and English.

Participants included the six country research teams (six members per country), IDRC POs and Gender at Work facilitators. The guiding question for the workshop was: *What will it take to strengthen the gender-responsiveness of research teams as they work with communities, policy makers and others to advance the linked goals of gender equality, social inclusion and transformative climate action?*

A presentation from an external (to the IDRC project) expert, Sophia Huyer, author of [Emerging Directions Gender and Climate Change](#), provided successful examples of gendered research initiatives on climate change through the “four dimensions of climate resilience”. Each team presented the new learning and insights emerging from their work. After questions and discussion in plenary, participants met in mixed groups for deep-dive discussions to critically review the presentations, identify similarities and differences between the approaches, and flag ideas and innovations that could be applied and tested in their own contexts.

The final peer learning event was held 7 to 9 December 2021, with 52 participants. It had a similar design to the December 2020 peer learning meeting, including a mix of presentations and discussion and an expert panel. There were also a few adjustments: First, the workshop integrated an outcome harvesting component into the design, which involved the Gender at Work mentors doing work prior to the event with the research teams to identify, from their perspectives, significant project outcomes which they presented during the learning event. Second, the event integrated write shop component, facilitated by an external writing consultant.⁵ We also engaged a graphic designer to capture the meeting visually.

As noted above, the Gender at Work team had to significantly adapt its approach to deliver the second and third the peer learning meetings and the Gender Action Learning methodology, overall. We benefited greatly from training and support to make this shift through this project funding. For example, in September 2020, we were able to learn some new approaches to virtual facilitation during a training session offered by Nancy White from Full Circle Associates. We also benefited from the technical support of Andrea Fluck von Planta who accompanied us with the back end support of our first online peer meeting in December 2020.

As a team, and with the POs, we reflected on the impact of shifting the peer learning meetings online. One of the advantages was that, with the reduction of travel costs, we were able to open participation to a much larger group than originally planned. Overall, the online workshops were deemed successful by participants for exchanging across country projects, exposing them to new ideas and consolidating their learning on gender and climate change research (verified through workshop evaluations). At the same time, the online format has its limitations in relation to building human connections that are critical to learning and deep reflection. A learning product, describing the shift to virtual spaces, is listed in the Outputs Section below.

Another key learning from the implementation of these peer learning events is the importance of building in a project budget line specifically for interpretation and translation, which we had not accounted for in the original budget. The ability to engage in the language of one’s choice is central to building an inclusive environment. This was considered in relation the criteria for the selection of Gender at Work mentors for each individual research grantee partner. As the project progressed, Gender at Work made every effort to provide interpretation and translation into French and in some cases Spanish to ensure more effective engagement in workshops and meetings.

⁵For more information about our experience with writeshops see the peer event report and the results of the Think Tank Initiative/Gender at Work Write Shop: [walking the talk – Gender at Work](#)

Also worth noting are the steps that were taken to ensure the global digital divide which intensified during the pandemic did not affect the ability of research grantee partners to participate in learning events. The project travel budget supported some research grantee partners to meet in locations where they could access reliable internet.

Activity 2: Mentoring with research partners

Throughout the 3-year project, ongoing support by Gender at Work mentors was provided in a responsive manner to each of the research grantee teams in between the peer learning meetings. Mentoring work focused on building relationships, sharing resources, and providing tailored mentoring support. Central to this approach was ensuring that Gender at Work mentors took time at the beginning of the project to understand each research grantee partners' specific needs, interests, and context. A key moment was the initial peer learning meeting that happened in Nairobi in November 2019. This event was the first opportunity for the six research teams to meet, learn about each others' work, articulate their transformative goals, and collectively explore the possibilities opened up by the partnership with G@W. This workshop also provided Gender at Work an opportunity to build a common understanding of its action-learning approach and feminist methodologies, and collectively explore their relevance for the IDRC Climate Change research projects.

Interim Technical Reports have provided detailed information on the support provided by mentors for each six-month period as well as on the specific activities that each grantee research partner undertook to integrate gender analysis in their research on climate change. This section provides an overview of the nature of the mentoring work and a few highlights of key activities. The outputs and outcomes associated with these activities receive greater attention in the sections that follow.

From March 2020, when the global lockdown began, Gender at Work mentors conducted regular online video meetings with their respective research partners. Mentoring support was tailored to meet the specific needs and interests of the research teams in each country. In addition to routine meetings, mentors responded to specific requests for support.

In Benin, for example, this involved developing guidelines for CREDEL to integrate gender into the elaboration of 8 community-based adaptation plans which influenced the quality of plans for 8 communes in Benin. In DRC, the Gender at Work mentor provided an in-depth review of and comments on CCREBaC's research report. She also supported a meeting in April 2021 between IDRC, CCREBaC, and Gender at Work to share the experience of the CCREBaC/Gender at Work collaboration and present the research project to Canadian Embassy in Kinshasa. In Nigeria, the G@W mentor worked with the team to develop community-specific training exercises for work with community project implementation committees (CPICs) to advance the inclusion of men in climate change and disaster risk actions. In response to the team's request, these exercises aimed at strengthening the capacity of men in families and communities, particularly their advocacy skills, in a way that builds strong support for women around climate change adaptation.

Critical to the success of this mentoring was the structure of an on-going conversation between the mentor and the teams, along with the openness of teams to receive support.

As noted, at the end of Year 1, Gender at Work realised the need to be more intentional at including the POs in the learning process and build a mutually supportive relationship between G@W, the research teams and the IDRC POs. The Gender at Work project coordinator, advisor, and facilitators continued to find opportunities to engage and exchange with their IDRC counterparts. In some cases, POs collaborated with research teams primarily through attendance at planning and review meetings. In Year 2, the Benin research project, for example, the PO was included in two online meetings with CREDEL and Gender at Work. In DRC, the PO participated in the planning meeting held in March, as well as in a meeting to present the research project and share the collaboration experience with the Canadian embassy in Kinshasa. The PO also provided feedback on the content and progress of the research report. In the Nepal research project, the PO attended the core team strategy meeting in February. The PO for the Nigeria research project worked closely with the facilitator to support activities with the research team. The outcome harvest exercise revealed just how important the support of POs has been as a contributing factor to outcomes achieved.

Activity 3: Coordination with IDRC

In addition to periodic Gender at Work team meetings, the project coordinator and the project advisor met regularly with the IDRC project PO. These meetings included progress updates, activity planning and guidance on preparation of the technical reports. G@W found these meetings extremely helpful not just for co-ordination but for the thoughtful development of the program. In addition, the Project Officer was our link to the other POs and contributed to the understanding of the program within the IDRC Climate Change team.

Activity 4: Learning sessions with IDRC POs

Along with the start-up meeting held in the spring of 2019, G@W held two substantive meetings with the Climate Change POs intended to share learning and build capacity in both the Climate Change team and in G@W. At the end of April 2021, a meeting was held with Gender at Work and IDRC climate change POs to update on project progress and to reflect on the project considering the new IDRC strategy on gender and inclusion. There was a good discussion about the need to pay more attention to the “front end” of projects and how the call and selection process, for example, could be structured differently to contribute to improve outcomes on gender. The Gender at Work team also shared their reflections on blockages to better uptake of gender in research and research institutions; these include characteristics of the research partner, research team dynamics, the donor-grantee relationship, and dynamics within the larger scientific community.

In February 2021, the meeting included an outcome harvest with the POs led by the OH consultant and a reflection on emerging learning from the project.

- The importance of personal learning and yet it is not always possible—increasingly we are realizing that internalizing the importance of gender at a personal level is important to

positive outcomes yet, participants do not sign up for that. They, quite reasonably want help with their research.

- Time and the importance of regular on-going reflection—it is clear that learning did not happen in a workshop or two but as a result of sustained discussions over time.
- The importance of PO's role—POs are important in ensuring attention to gender issues on the part of partners and working with the G@W consultant to develop approaches to change that would work in that particular context.
- The flexibility to respond to learning—an important strength of this project is that as partners learned more about integrating gender and inclusion considerations into the research, they were able to change in response to what they were learning.
- Starting points, the learning trajectory—each of the partners were in different places on a trajectory toward gender responsive or transformative research capacity. It is clear that expectations and strategies need to take this into account. It is also helpful to think about trajectories when designing calls for proposals. It may not necessarily be best to only fund research teams that are well along the trajectory.

Activity 5: Documentation and dissemination

The project has produced regular mentor's project updates, the 6 technical reports to IDRC and the peer learning workshop reports (listed as outputs below). Gender at Work mentors have created or supported opportunities to share project results to wider audiences. The outcomes from the Climate Change project will be included in two learning products under the project "Mentorship and Capacity Building for Gender Responsive Research Outcomes: An Action Research Project with Networked Economies, Phase 2" (IDRC Project Number: 109501-001) to be published in summer 2022. However, a blog series, briefing note and newsletters envisaged for Year 3 did not come to fruition. One lesson learned for Gender at Work in this regard is the importance of allocating sufficient budget to project coordination and to project knowledge synthesis, beyond the specific work and activities carried out by the Gender at Work mentors.

Implementation challenges

As noted in interim technical reports, the pandemic, lockdowns, including the second wave of COVID-19 in some countries, dramatically affected the implementation of project activities. Gender at Work was required to quickly adapt its Gender Action Learning approach from face-to-face peer learning and mentoring activities to almost exclusively virtual spaces. Our reflections on the challenges associated with this shift, and acknowledgement of IDRC's support for us to make this shift as effect as possible, are described below. Similarly, research partners were greatly constrained in the implementation of their research agendas, which in turn had implications for the relevance and timeliness of the support offered by Gender at Work.

Moreover, members of the core team in Nepal were infected and hospitalized with severe symptoms, while others across the six project countries had to take time off to recover from COVID or to care for family members who were ill.

Another implementation challenge was the uneven uptake by the six research grantee partners of the support offered by Gender at Work through IDRC. The Climate Change project is not the only project where Gender at Work has experienced this situation and as part of our Outcome Harvesting learning review we are exploring what difference, if any, having an open call among research grantee partners to participate in gender action learning (or similar gender support services) makes to their uptake and active engagement.

Despite these implementation challenges, much was still achieved.

6. Project Outputs

This project was essentially framed as a capacity building project, using Gender at Work's process -and learning-orientated methodology, to strengthen research grantee teams' capacity on gender responsive / gender transformative research. In the framing of project outcomes through the outcome harvesting exercise and in consultation with our OH expert, we have elected to include changes in capacity as outcomes rather than outputs. This means that milestones and changes in capacity are covered in the next section.

Over the three-year period, the Gender at Work team supported ongoing capacity building and mentoring to approximately 60 people who were members of the core research teams from each of the six country research institutes. This does not include training and webinars that reached a wider group of participants outside of the core research teams and IDRC POs.

At the same time, the project produced several tangible outputs. Three detailed peer learning workshop reports were produced and shared widely with project stakeholders. For the final peer learning meeting, we engaged a graphic illustrator who produce a fabulous visual representation of the event which was shared in English, French and Spanish with the research teams (ANNEX 1). The peer learning workshop reports from December 2020 and December 2021 were also circulated in French and English.

Gender at Work produced a resource, *Building an android heart: Learning for gender justice, equality and diversity in an online world*, which reflects on the challenges COVID-19 has presented to embodied learning and proposes a set of good practices and recommendations. Although this report was prepared under another IDRC project,⁶ it drew heavily on learning from the second Climate Change peer learning meeting.

The webinar *Troubling Gender: Voices from Feminist Political Ecology* was held in April 2021, co-sponsored by Gender at Work and the three project partners from Nepal. The webinar featured a conversation with Bernadette P Resurreccion and Rebecca Elmhirst that reflected on their book *Negotiating Gender Expertise in Environment and Development: Voices from Feminist Political Ecology*

⁶ Mentorship and Capacity Building for Gender Responsive Research Outcomes: An Action Research Project with Networked Economies, Phase 2

and the experiences of attendees as researchers. A video of the event is available on Gender at Work's YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/N-ms5g1B0do>.

In addition, Gender at Work mentors produced several training sessions on gender and research and feminist research in relation to climate change. One member of the Bangladesh research team attended the *Troubling Gender* webinar and soon after contacted the facilitator to express interest in reviving the GAL process. This was followed by a request to join an orientation workshop for field researchers under the IDRC project who are pursuing their Master's degree at the University of Manitoba (UoM), which is also a member of the project consortium. UoM's Professor C Emdad Haque led the workshop and, at his request, the Gender at Work facilitator made a presentation on feminist research methodology, followed by a discussion on practical and "how to" aspects in response to questions from the researchers.

7. Project Outcomes

Gender at Work has been observing and reporting on project-level outcomes in relation to changes of the research teams and their research since the end of Year 1.

Project-level outcomes

As part of the learning review currently underway (to be completed in June 2022), project outcomes are being observed at multiple levels. These different types of outcomes are listed below with a few examples drawn from the grantee research partners. Further analysis of the outcomes will be part of the learning review but are presented here as illustrations. These outcomes are significant because they demonstrate shifts in how research grantee partners are applying new knowledge and consciousness on the value of gender to research in their own organizations and research approaches.

- Changes in individual researchers' consciousness/perspectives/learning and knowledge on gender

Between September 2019 and December 2021, a core group of 12 members of the CRREBaC research team for the project *Addressing climate- and water-driven migration and conflict interlinkages to build Community Resilience in the Congo Basin, DRC* deepened their knowledge and understanding of gender analysis, gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, and links between gender-based inequalities and climate change adaptation strategies. Acquiring a common language and analysis, the researchers could then replenish these reflections and deepen them in the data analysis work that was underway in their project.

- Shifts in the research team

In March 2020, the CRREBaC Gender Consultant developed, at the request of the Principal Investigator, a Guidance Note for Gender Mainstreaming in CEMIC Research, outlining concepts, analytical frameworks and tools for gender mainstreaming, reference content for the next steps.

In one of the country partners, the members of the Core team having previously been silent, started questioning internal dynamics within and between the partner organizations, highlighting the need for gender policies, and asserting their own agency in taking decisions on the research. This created some turbulence but ultimately expanded the democratic space within their institutions. They also successfully advocated for regular coordination meetings between the three institutions as a necessary mechanism in a joint project.

- Shifts in the research approach

By January 2022, the “Development of inclusive resilience to climate change and disasters in Benin” (DERICC) team had adapted the Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA) tools to better capture gender, thereby reflecting its improved understanding of the gender perspective and analysis contained in the tools of the CVCA methodology, which will subsequently facilitate the integration, in the Community Adaptation Action Plan (PACA) of measures that meet the needs and interests of women and vulnerable groups (the elderly, person living with a disability, etc.) (gender and intersectional approach).

For *Migrantes en Reconquista*, a new innovation made during the project was using art as a research approach to transform social awareness about local environmental problems from the perspective of migrant women, which led to the production of books with stories of migrant women, cultural events from the networks built between migrant women, audiovisual tools reflecting links between community, university and state; and social media messages translating the knowledge generated for general public.

- Shifts in the research dissemination

At a workshop in Kinshasa, from 26-29 July 2021, CRREBaC built capacity and provided gender-specific tools to 48 DCR-based institutions (public administration, private sector, civil society, higher education and academic-research institutions, specialized state services) to strengthen their strategies and programs for natural resource management and the fight against gender-based discrimination.

The Nepal Core Team researchers began to speak about their gendered experiences as women researchers during an international webinar to launch a book on experiences of “doing gender” in climate research. The authors of the book [Troubling Gender: Voices from Feminist Political Ecology](#) spoke honestly about the power dynamics within research institutions. Although these issues were not being raised for the first time, the webinar opened the space for Core Team members to bring their experiences and reflections to a wider platform.

In November 2021, the CRREBaC contributed the first ever African Summit of Heads of State and Government on Positive Masculinity to End Violence against Women and Girls, led and hosted by DRC’s president through the production and transmission of a *Note to decision-makers on cross-cutting gender issues*.

- Shifts in others (communities who participated in the researcher, other research stakeholders)

In Nepal, the municipality of Hetauda ward level representatives agreed to and welcomed the role of the research team in bringing a gender and inclusion focus to their DRRM (Disaster Risk Reduction and Management) Plan.

In Nigeria, men in two communities of Amajemata and Alifekede have given women more access to land and have begun to consult women before taking decisions that could likely affect them. For example a man and one of the leaders of the community shared that after CPED training they consulted women on where they felt it was appropriate to locate a public toilet meant for the market square (shared in a video clip produced by CPED).

Perspectives from the research teams at final peer learning meeting in December 2021 on outcomes to which the project had contributed was particularly valuable for the insights shared. Some common themes emerged.

1. A broader and more nuanced understanding of gender concepts and strengthened ability to translate concepts into actions in the field. As one person put it, *“This project showed us the how women and climate change are connected. Inequality is a brake on resilience.”*
2. Greater voice and visibility for women in the research teams and in the community. Many of the women in the group shared their experiences of claiming their space in the team, speaking up and expressing their views, and becoming pro-active in shaping the research process. These journeys were often mirrored in the communities who participated in the research. This also led to greater collegiality and trust within teams.
3. Increased familiarity with gender tools and methodologies for gender-responsive / transformative research. Participants acknowledged the role of G@W facilitators in introducing them to new tools and providing support for testing and adapting them to local situations. Participants spoke of ways in which these tools brought “invisible exclusions” sharply to the fore. To quote one participant, *“The process awakened us to the tools we use and opened our attention to “the other”: women, indigenous people, migrants...”* (ANNEX 2 includes information on tools shared with research partners and the suite of G@W tools available at <https://genderatwork.org/>)
4. Each of the teams cited significant expansion in access to policy spaces, and changes in their relationships with policymakers. Participants spoke of having deeper and more transformative engagements with institutions of local governance. In several instances, interactions with local leaders and implementers on gender questions have opened the door to the transformative possibilities of women’s empowerment.
5. Members of all the research teams shared stories of personal epiphanies and transformation in their ways of engaging with gender questions in their personal and professional lives. Several

people spoke of significant changes in the sharing of care responsibilities between women and men in their families and in the communities where they work.

One of the main outcomes evident at the final peer learning workshop was the shared understanding of what it meant to undertake gender transformative research. Participants agreed that while “gender responsive research” addresses the manifestations of inequality, “gender transformative research” digs deeper to address root causes and structural factors that create and sustain inequality, including how research is carried out. As a result, the process of gender transformative research is itself transformative.

Dr Sophia Huyer, a long-time gender advisor to the Climate Change program, shared her impressions of how partners have moved from gender-responsive to gender-transformative in their approach since the start of the project.

“Projects are not only talking about relations between women and men, but the wider structures that are influencing opportunities and equalities for women and men. Engaging with women’s leadership, development of collective action in the communities (important for women to get more agency, stronger sense of confidence, ability and agency), their connection with the policy level around these issues...that is for me the really transformative aspect of what these projects have been doing.”

Other outcomes

Key outcomes for Gender at Work include new knowledge and skills for providing safe, engaging virtual spaces through which to support our gender action learning processes. IDRC supported this by allowing Gender at Work to use some of the project funds to hire IT expertise and run training on virtual facilitation for Gender at Work facilitators.

We also took the opportunity to reflect on what we were learning from our experiences with the climate change project, summarized in the briefing note mentioned above. On one hand, working online helps to overcome the financial, political and logistical issues that bar people with less privilege from travelling to meetings or conferences. Online events tend to be less formal, and they can have a levelling effect where power-down participants feel freer to speak and participate (because everyone gets the same black box on the screen).

On the other, participants need appropriate bandwidth, hardware and skills to be able to fully participate in online sessions – assets that many marginalised people do not have. This lack of assets has replaced ticket costs or citizenship status as barriers to workshop participation. Again, IDRC responded to this reality by allowing us to reallocate travel budget to IT support to ensure accessibility for research partners.

In addition, while there is a potential to include more people in online workshops, it is more difficult to facilitate meaningful events with deep interpersonal connections with large groups. It is also difficult to understand what underlying power dynamics are at play in workshops held online, and easy to

unwittingly reproduce power hierarchies because facilitators do not know enough about the dynamics among participants.

Face-to-face workshops (Hearing our Stories in Nairobi) allowed facilitators and research teams to form genuine connections, trust and friendship as the first stage of the learning journey. Creating meaningful and trusting interpersonal relationships is the area where Gender at Work is engaged in the highest degree of experimentation to test what practices work. Going forward, we are aware that we need to find an appropriate balance of face to face sessions and virtual accompaniment. We are applying this learning to new projects at IDRC as we move to more hybrid options for running gender action learning processes.

8. Overall Assessment and Recommendations

- We believe that important progress toward gender responsive and in some cases, transformative research was made by the research partners.
 - The examples shared above highlight examples of what progress looked like for each of the research teams and their organizations. Significantly, the outcomes harvest exercise (and outcomes highlighted above) indicates that progress towards gender responsive and gender transformative research happens at different, reinforcing levels (individual researchers, research team, research methods, research results). It also suggests that there are contextual factors that support or constrain progress towards gender responsive or transformative research such as the buy-in of senior researchers/management, existence of gender champions, and the environment in which research is being conducted.
 - At the same time, key factors related to the gender action learning process supported by IDRC and Gender at Work, contributed to progress in integrating gender in research: the learning by doing approach that embeds awareness raising and knowledge building on gender and research in research teams real life issues/problems (rather than one off gender training sessions); sustained collaboration between Gender at Work facilitators and research teams through coaching and mentoring between peer learning meetings; trust and relationships established between research partners, Gender at Work facilitators, and IDRC. The learning review will support Gender at Work and IDRC to deepen insights into what contributed to the changes described in the harvest of outcomes.
- POs participation and buy-in to this type of capacity building process is essential. POs are heavily invested in their partners' success, understand the research context in which each research team is working, and have insights into the broader climate change landscape. After Year 1 we tried harder to engage POs.
- Research partners and POs have varying levels of capacity around gender and social inclusion, different levels of need, and research partners have varying levels commitment to this process.

Some research partners required more support than originally anticipated. Other partners were simply not interested in receiving support from Gender at Work.

- Gender at Work’s non-intrusive, flexible methods have helped to strengthen the team’s work with communities and build trust among learners. Flexible learning approaches that adapt to the context and interests of the research team are not only enhancing learning, but also changing team working cultures and encouraging members to act as agents of change for gender equality.
- Gender at Work’s approach adapts to the context, capacity, and interests of each team to create peer-learning communities that challenge, engage, and learn from one another. Thus, the strategies, approaches, and methods used differed to some extent in each country. We learned that more thought should have been given to the introduction of G@W to the partners by IDRC. This could have included more clarity regarding IDRC’s expectations of research partners, the process that G@W would employ and the hopes of the partners.
- Project management issues—This project was highly emergent and adaptive, especially given the COVID-19 context, but that required more time for project leadership discussions and flexibility in adapting the budget to new realities. We are grateful to IDRC for their flexibility in this regard.
 - We learned that we underestimated the time required to maintain communication and meet the needs of both IDRC and G@W teams.
 - In retrospect, we wished we had retained more of the budget for consolidation of learning and writing products beyond the workshop reports.
 - In the interest of encouraging inclusive spaces, we paid more attention to interpretation and translation as the project unfolded and recommend this becomes a regular practice.
- We learned that gender transformative research is not simply a matter of applying different research methods. The research teams demonstrated that along with different research questions and methods other factors are important: more equitable team functioning, more women’s voices in the research team and in the research samples, more learning in communities to allow for diverse women’s participation in decision-making, in policy discussions and personal learning of research team and community members. The outcomes and stories collected by the end of the project provide evidence to suggest that research teams have expanded their understanding of gender transformative research.

We are grateful to the research partners and IDRC for the opportunity to have been part of this learning journey which saw the research partners make important contributions to how gender transformative climate research is understood and practiced and POs increase their understanding of how teams might be supported to pursue impactful gender-integrated research.