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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL
Ninety-eighth Meeting
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Item 15 of the provisional agenda¹

**ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MULTILATERAL FUND GENDER
MAINSTREAMING POLICY (DECISION 95/92(b))****Introduction**

1. At the 92nd meeting, the Executive Committee requested bilateral and implementing agencies to include the gender mandatory requirements and performance indicators, contained in annex XXII to the final report of the meeting,² when submitting stages of multi-year agreement (MYA) projects, for consideration by the Committee at its 94th and subsequent meetings (decision 92/40(b)).
2. At the 95th meeting, the Committee requested the Secretariat to review the implementation of the gender policy of the Multilateral Fund, covering the inclusion of the mandatory requirements and performance indicators in stages of MYA projects from the 94th meeting onwards, and to provide, for consideration at the 98th meeting, a detailed assessment of implementation (decision 95/92). This document is prepared in response to this decision.

Scope of the review

3. This review analyzed 74 submissions from 68 countries and one region for new stages of Kigali HFC implementation plans (KIPs) or HCFC phase-out management plans (HPMPs), and 31 submissions from 29 countries for project preparation, all submitted since the 94th meeting. The objective was to assess the application of the mandatory indicators in annex XXII of document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/92/56.
4. Documents reviewed included project preparation requests, new stage proposals (KIPs and HPMPs), and Executive Committee meeting documents. Their narratives were assessed against the mandatory indicators. Across submissions, gender-related activities were reflected through women's participation in technical and enforcement training, consultations and decision-making; employment in national ozone units

¹ UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/98/1

² UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/92/56

(NOUs) and projects; assessments of barriers and related recommendations; targeted awareness-raising to attract women to the refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) sector; provision of incentives; development of communication materials; and initiatives such as role models and mentorship programmes. Reference to indicators was considered only when linked to concrete activities or results.

5. The assessment covered all mandatory requirements and indicators under decision 92/40 across the project cycle phases, i.e., preparation, planning and formulation, implementation, and monitoring and reporting.

Review of data on mandatory requirements and indicators

Project preparation

6. Thirty-one project preparation requests from 29 countries for the preparation of new stages of KIPs or HPMPs, submitted since the 94th meeting, were reviewed. As of the 97th meeting, only five of these requests had resulted in the submission of a full project proposal, four of which were approved by the Executive Committee and are included among the 74 projects assessed for indicators in the subsequent project stages.³ Table 1 presents the key findings and observations by the Secretariat on the project preparation mandatory requirement and indicator.

Table 1. Project preparation mandatory requirement and indicator

Mandatory requirement and indicator	Fully met	Partially met	Not met	Key findings	Observations
<i>Requirement</i> Narrative/form includes a specific paragraph on gender <i>Indicator</i> A specific paragraph on gender is added to the project preparation request	23 (74 per cent)	5 (16 per cent)	3 (10 per cent)	• 28 of 31 requests (90 per cent) met or partially met the indicator • 23 (74 per cent) fully met - detailed planned activities included • 5 (16 per cent) partially met - brief references only • 3 (10 per cent) did not meet the indicator	The 5 “partially met” submissions followed the appropriate Secretariat format and expressed a general commitment to incorporating the policy and indicators but did not provide information on how this would be operationalized or how specific activities would be undertaken.

Project planning and formulation

7. For the project planning and formulation stage, data was collected from 74 project submissions for new stages of a KIP and a HPMP, which were approved since the 94th meeting. Table 2 presents the key findings and observations by the Secretariat on the project planning and formulation mandatory requirement and indicator.

³ Twenty-seven of the approved project preparation requests are to be submitted or resubmitted as a full project proposal to a future meeting.

Table 2. Project planning and formulation mandatory requirement and indicator

Requirement and mandatory indicator	Fully met	Partially met	Not met	Key findings	Observations
<i>Requirement</i> Conducting initial gender assessment and preparation of a report <i>Indicator</i> Gender assessment undertaken and included in the final project proposal	18 (24 per cent)	26 (35 per cent)	30 (41 per cent)	• 44 submissions (59 per cent) indicated an assessment was undertaken or planned • 18 (24 per cent) had already conducted an assessment • 26 (35 per cent) planned assessment to be carried out during implementation • 30 (41 per cent) did not mention an assessment	Among the 30 submissions that did not mention an assessment, some provided contextual data on the number of women in the RAC field. However, it was not clear that a full assessment, identifying barriers and making recommendations, had been completed.

Project implementation

8. With respect to project implementation, it should be noted that assessing whether mandatory requirements and indicators have been met might be considered premature at the project submission stage. Such information is to be appropriately reflected in tranche, progress, and completion reports. Of the 74 MYA projects approved since the 94th meeting, none have yet submitted reporting on the first tranche. Reporting associated with second-tranche requests is expected to commence from the 98th meeting onwards, beginning with four projects, with most submissions scheduled for 2027. In the absence of implementation-level reporting, the present review draws on the 74 MYAs project submissions approved since the 94th meeting to determine whether the relevant mandatory requirements and indicators were explicitly addressed in the project proposals. Table 3 presents the key findings and observations by the Secretariat on the project implementation mandatory requirements and indicators.

Table 3. Project implementation mandatory requirements and indicators

Requirements and mandatory indicators	Fully met	Partially met	Not met	Key findings	Observations
<i>Requirement</i> Efforts are undertaken to achieve gender parity among project staff <i>Indicator</i> Number/percentage of women and men employed through the project	34 (46 per cent)	N/A	40 (54 per cent)	• 34 projects (46 per cent) specifically mentioned tracking this indicator during implementation • 40 projects (54 per cent) did not mention it	No partial category applies. Submissions either mentioned tracking this indicator or did not.

Requirements and mandatory indicators	Fully met	Partially met	Not met	Key findings	Observations
<i>Requirement</i> Implement gender assessment recommendations and adjust activities as the project evolves <i>Indicator</i> Implementation of gender assessment recommendations is on track	20 (27 per cent)	17 (23 per cent)	37 (50 per cent)	• 20 projects⁴ (27 per cent) clearly linked activities to assessment recommendations • 17 projects⁵ (23 per cent) planned an assessment but did not mention implementing its recommendations • 7 projects⁶ (9 per cent) completed assessments but did not link activities to recommendations • 30 projects (41 per cent) included no information on assessments or recommendations	The 17 projects that planned assessments but had not yet conducted them, cannot be assessed for implementation of the recommendations of the assessments until these are completed. The 7 projects that completed assessments without linking activities to specific recommendations represent an issue worth considering.

Monitoring and reporting

9. As it is the case with project implementation, it should also be noted that with respect to monitoring and reporting, assessing whether mandatory requirements and indicators have been met might be considered premature. Table 4 presents the key findings and observations by the Secretariat on the project monitoring and reporting mandatory requirement and indicators.

Table 4. Project monitoring and reporting mandatory requirements and indicators

Requirements and mandatory indicators	Fully met	Partially met	Not met	Key findings	Observations
<i>Requirement</i> Prepare gender-responsive project implementation reports <i>Indicator</i> Quantitative data collected for reporting is disaggregated by sex where applicable	74 (100 per cent)	N/A	N/A	• All 74 projects (100 per cent) provided sex-disaggregated data • All 74 confirmed data collection would continue during implementation	Full compliance with all projects reviewed. No gaps identified for this indicator.
<i>Requirement</i> Prepare gender-responsive project implementation reports	74 (100 per cent)	N/A	N/A	• All 74 projects (100 per cent) committed to reporting • 23 projects (31 per cent) provided sex-	While all 74 projects committed to reporting, actual delivery of sex-disaggregated data, collected as part of the customs and

⁴ These are 20 of the 44 projects with completed or planned assessments. This represents 59 per cent of those 44 projects.

⁵ These are 17 of the 44 of projects with completed or planned assessments. This represents 39 per cent of those 44 projects.

⁶ These are 7 of the 44 of projects with completed or planned assessments. This represents 16 per cent of those 44 projects.

Requirements and mandatory indicators	Fully met	Partially met	Not met	Key findings	Observations
<i>Indicator</i> Gender reporting includes activities undertaken, knowledge products, good practices, lessons learned, and financial resource allocation for gender activities, where applicable				disaggregated training data for all activities in progress reports • Across the 16 projects that reported women technicians trained: 1,699 of a total of 34,027 trainees, were trained (5 per cent) • Across the 15 projects that reported women customs officers trained: 1,015 of a total of 3,279 trainees, were trained (31 per cent) • Across the 9 projects that reported women technician-trainers trained: 41 of a total of 278 trainer trainees, were trained (15 per cent) • Across the 6 projects that reported women customs - trainers trained: 82 of a total of 158 trainer trainees, were trained (52 per cent)	technician training activities implemented, was limited to 23 projects (31 per cent) in progress reports submitted up to the 97 th meeting ⁷ . The share of women technicians trained across the 16 projects, ranged from 1 to 46 per cent across projects. The share of women customs officers trained ranged from 10 to 49 per cent across the 15 projects. The share of women technician-trainers trained ranged from 0 to 26 per cent across the 9 projects. The share of women customs -trainers trained ranged from 12 to 46 per cent across the 6 projects.

Other data collected, and details on other activities undertaken or planned in MYA project submissions

10. The review of the 74 MYA project submissions provided an opportunity to examine data and activities related to the implementation of the policy beyond the mandatory requirements and indicators. Two categories of information were identified and are presented below. The first covers baseline data voluntarily reported by countries on women's current participation in the RAC sector, spanning employment, instruction, training, and study, which provides important context for project design and for assessing progress over time. The second covers activities planned by agencies and countries to advance equality and women's empowerment throughout project implementation, reflecting the breadth of commitments undertaken.

11. Table 5 presents baseline data voluntarily reported by countries on women's current participation in the RAC sector across six categories. The range indicates the spread between the lowest and highest values reported across submissions within a given category, reflecting the considerable variation in women's representation across countries and contexts. The median represents the midpoint of all reported values, such that half of the reporting countries fell below and half above that figure.⁸ Together, the range and median

⁷ Progress reports referring to previous tranches/stages of HPMPs that were provided with the submissions for the subsequent tranche/stage, and progress reports referring to the last HPMP tranche/stage implementation that were provided in KIP stage submissions.

⁸ The median is used here in preference to a mean, as it is less susceptible to the influence of extreme values that could otherwise distort the overall picture.

provide a more accurate understanding of the baseline conditions from which projects are designed and from which progress may be measured.

Table 5. Baseline data on women's participation in the RAC sector

Category	Submissions reporting	Range	Median	Notes
Women employed through the project (NOU and consultants)	5 (7 per cent)	—	—	Data in the five submissions provided the number of women and men employed in the NOU; one of them also included the number of consultants. One submission provided the overall number of women employed under stage II of the HPMP across the NOU, consultants, experts, and trainers. Two submissions included targets for women's employment in the project (30 and 40 per cent respectively).
Women in customs and enforcement	5 (7 per cent)	30 - 41 per cent of workforce	37 per cent	Data on the overall number or percentage of women working in customs and enforcement in the country.
Women RAC instructors	11 (15 per cent)	0 - 70 per cent of instructors	21 per cent	Data on women instructors involved in the project, including master trainers and women instructing in technical and vocational education and training institutions.
Women studying in the RAC sector	22 (30 per cent)	0 - 45 per cent of RAC students	10 per cent	Data on women enrolled in RAC programmes in recent years. One country set a target of 50 per cent women in RAC studies by a given year.
Women RAC technicians	53 (72 per cent)	0 - 27 per cent of technicians	2 per cent	Data on the overall number or percentage of women working in the RAC sector. Across the 53 reporting countries, women accounted for 34,045 of 986,454 technicians (3.45 per cent). Some submissions indicated "a few" or "negligible" numbers of women, this was treated as 0 per cent.
Women in other RAC roles	7 (9 per cent)	—	—	Data on the proportion of women involved in other areas of the RAC sector, including sales/equipment vendors, management and administration in RAC enterprises, design companies, RAC associations, workshop owners, importers, and end users.

12. Table 6 presents the planned activities described in the 74 project submissions, organized by activity type. It captures both the breadth of commitments made spanning training, awareness-raising, communication, recruitment, and systemic changes such as updates to codes of practice and the proportion of submissions that included each activity, providing a sense of how widely shared these commitments are across the projects.

Table 6. Planned activities in project submissions

Activity	Submissions	Details
Encouraging women's participation in training	74 (100 per cent)	All submissions mentioned that women would be encouraged to participate in training programmes.
Participation targets in customs and enforcement training	15 (20 per cent)	Targets ranged from 1 to 50 per cent, with a median target of 25 per cent.
Participation targets in technician training	16 (22 per cent)	Targets ranged from 6 to 50 per cent, with a median target of 20 per cent.
Targets for certification of women technicians	6 (8 per cent)	Targets ranged from 10 to 40 per cent, with a median target of 20 per cent.
Gender-mainstreaming training for stakeholders	40 (54 per cent)	Planned training for relevant stakeholders at various levels.
Women-only technician training workshops	10 (14 per cent)	8 submissions planned and 2 considered organizing separate technician training workshops exclusively for women.
Awareness-raising for women's participation	71 (96 per cent)	Planned campaigns to encourage women to pursue studies and careers in the RAC sector.
Highlighting women role models and recognition programmes	26 (35 per cent)	Includes featuring women role models and trainers and establishing award or recognition programmes.
Featuring women in communication products	51 (69 per cent)	Specifically mentioned featuring women in all communication materials; some planned to hire a specialist to that end.
Equipment and tools distribution targets for women	11 (15 per cent)	Targets set for the distribution of tools and equipment specifically to women technicians.
Scholarship programmes for women	6 (8 per cent)	Planned scholarship programmes for a defined number of women pursuing RAC studies.
Updating technician codes of practice	10 (14 per cent)	Planned updates to remove misconceptions about women as servicing technicians.
Gender-responsive recruitment and job descriptions	18 (25 per cent)	Planned specific actions in recruitment processes and job descriptions to attract women candidates.

Note: Percentages are calculated against a base of 74 MYA project submissions, unless otherwise indicated.

Observations

13. The review indicates a positive trend in the implementation of the policy across the project cycle, with compliance strongest at the project preparation stage. The introduction of the mandatory indicator at this stage has demonstrably influenced submission practices, suggesting that clear and enforceable requirements, embedded in standard submission formats, are effective instruments for advancing policy implementation. This finding underscores the value of the approach adopted by the Executive Committee in formalizing these requirements.

14. At the planning and formulation stage, a gap is observed between the intention to conduct an initial assessment and its completion prior to submission. Where assessments were deferred to the implementation

phase, it cannot be ascertained at the submission stage whether their findings will substantively inform project design and activity planning. Early completion of assessments is to be prioritized, so that their recommendations can be meaningfully integrated into project structures from the outset, rather than being addressed retrospectively.

15. At the implementation stage, the review identifies a need for agencies to more explicitly demonstrate the link between assessment findings and the activities planned under the project. Where assessments have been completed, submissions do not always clearly articulate how recommendations have been translated into concrete activities. Strengthening this connection would enhance both the quality of submissions and the effectiveness of the policy on the ground.

16. With respect to monitoring and reporting, universal commitment to the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data is noted. This represents an important baseline. However, the review of progress reports from previously implemented tranches and stages indicates that actual delivery of such data has not yet been consistent across all activities. Continued attention to systematic data collection and reporting will be necessary to ensure that commitments made at the submission stage are fully reflected in implementation and reporting practices. However, the Secretariat notes that the systematic collection of this data will be done in the online bilateral and implementing agencies portal of the knowledge management system in all stages from the project submission, and to project completion reports.

17. Overall, the review finds that the mandatory requirements and indicators have had a positive and measurable effect on how countries and agencies engage with the policy. The range and variety of activities planned across submissions, encompassing training, awareness-raising, communication, recruitment practices, and structural adjustments to professional frameworks, reflect a broadening ownership of the policy's objectives at the country and agency level. This trend is encouraging and demonstrates the shared commitment of the Executive Committee, the Secretariat, bilateral and implementing agencies, and National Ozone Units to advancing the policy's core objectives of equality and women's empowerment in the refrigeration and air-conditioning sector.

Recommendation

18. The Executive Committee may wish:

- (a) To note the assessment of the implementation of the gender mainstreaming policy of the Multilateral Fund, covering the inclusion of the mandatory requirements and performance indicators in stages of multi-year agreement (MYA) projects submitted from the 94th meeting onwards, contained in document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/98/62;
- (b) To request bilateral and implementing agencies to continue ensuring the inclusion of the mandatory requirements and performance indicators contained in annex XXII of document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/92/56 when submitting new stages of MYA projects; and
- (c) To request the Secretariat to continue monitoring the implementation of the policy and the inclusion of the mandatory requirements and performance indicators, in compliance with the decisions of the Executive Committee, and to provide a review of its implementation at the first meeting of the Executive Committee in 2030, once stage I of the Kigali HFC implementation plans have been completed for most countries.