

Climate Change Connections

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Climate Change Connections

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MICHAEL HAAS

OVERVIEW

Women at the Forefront

One of the most urgent issues of our time, climate change is already impacting populations and ecosystems around the globe, threatening to set back development efforts by decades. But the impacts are not being felt equally.

Those with the fewest resources will be most susceptible to its negative effects—particularly women, the majority of the world’s poor. In many parts of the world, women still face unequal access to decision-making, formal financial systems, land ownership, reproductive health care, and education and information, undermining their well-being in addition to that of their families and communities.

At the same time, women’s vulnerability can obscure the fact that they are an untapped resource in efforts to cope with climate change and reduce the emissions that cause it.

As innovators, organizers, leaders, educators and caregivers, women are uniquely positioned to help curb the harmful consequences of a changing climate. Incorporating a gender perspective into climate change policies, projects and funds is crucial in ensuring

What is Climate Change?

Climate change means significant differences in weather patterns over an extended period of time.¹ Scientific consensus links current climate change primarily to emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from human activity (such as the burning of fossil fuels, loss of forests, and unsustainable production and consumption in the industrialized world).² The effects include higher global temperatures, an increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and related natural disasters, and severe impacts to the sustainability of ecosystems.

that women contribute to and benefit from equitable climate solutions.

Heightened Vulnerability

“We walk for long hours to find wood. Our wells are empty. Goods for sale are hard to find. Our land becomes idle. We don’t have money. It doesn’t rain the way it used to before.”
—Senegalese Woman on Climate Change³

Although women worldwide have made strides toward social equality and gaining rights, their socio-economic status remains lower than men’s. This makes them disproportionately vulnerable to environmental changes. Whether they live in developed or developing countries, poor and disadvantaged women are unequally affected by natural disasters and are overrepresented in death tolls;⁴ the discrepancy in death rates climbs along with the strength of the disaster.⁵

Weather Extremes and Women: Numbers Reveal Risk

- Women and children are 14 times more likely to die than men during natural disasters.⁶
- The 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh killed 140,000 people—the mortality rate of women over 40 was 31 per cent.⁷
- More than 70 per cent of the dead from the 2004 Asian tsunami were women.⁸
- Hurricane Katrina, which struck New Orleans, USA, in 2005, predominantly affected African American women—already the region’s poorest, most marginalized community.
- An estimated 87 per cent of unmarried women and 100 per cent of married women lost their main source of income when Cyclone Nargis hit the Ayeyarwaddy Delta in Myanmar in 2008.⁹

Men and Gender Inequality

Gender inequalities and traditional roles don’t just affect women. In some cases men also directly suffer from their imposed gender roles. For example, more men than women died when Hurricane Mitch hit Central America in 1998 because of societal expectations that they should carry out high-risk rescue activities.¹¹ Communities lost lives unnecessarily and will therefore take much longer to recover. Men have specific vulnerabilities that affect their health and safety and that are linked to socialized gender roles, traditional norms and values, and the way in which prevailing ideas of masculinity are constructed.

“The gender inequalities that define [women’s] lives prior to a disaster are really what put them at such greatly increased risk after a disaster.”

—Kavita Ramdas, Global Fund for Women¹⁰

Population Perspective: Population dynamics, gender and climate change

The world’s population is forecast to grow from today’s 6.7 billion to between 8.0 and 10.5 billion by 2050. The majority of this growth is likely to be concentrated in areas and among populations—poor, urban and coastal—that are already highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Population growth typically means increased emissions. However, demographic factors such as household size, age structure of the population and urbanization also affect emissions patterns and energy use. Further, unsustainable consumption and per capita emissions are generally much higher in rich, industrialized countries. In this context, it’s important to remember that population is not just about numbers, it’s about people.

Many of the policies that affect population trends—such as more educational opportunities for girls, greater economic opportunities for women and expanded access to reproductive health and family planning—can also reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts and slow the growth of greenhouse gas emissions, helping to ensure adequate energy and sustainable development for all.¹²

Consequences of Climate Change

The differentiated impacts of climate change on women are numerous. An understanding of how climate change, sustainable development and population issues intersect—and the specific impacts on women—will help in the development of effective, gender-sensitive policies and programmes.

| Issue | Impacts of Climate Change | Direct and Indirect Impacts on Women |
|---|--|--|
| Natural resources: food, water, fuel & land | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought and/or flooding from temperature changes and erratic weather • Decreased soil fertility • Decreased crop yields or crop failure • Resource scarcity • Shortage of clean, potable water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased household work burden and time spent on gathering water, food and fuel such as firewood (sometimes leading to lower school enrolment rates, decreased literacy rates, or early marriage) • Increased hunger and calorie reduction for women • Exposure to contaminated water sources • In regions with restricted land rights, women potentially forced off/without access to fertile land • Loss of traditional land tenure |
| Natural disasters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warming oceans • Changing weather patterns/seasons • Erratic and more intense weather events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to education/information about weather • Restricted ability to respond (e.g., women often unable to leave house without male companion) • Lack of survival skills regularly taught to boys, such as swimming or tree climbing¹³ • Women regularly excluded from disaster recovery decision-making¹⁴ |
| Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in infectious, water-borne or vector-borne diseases, e.g., malaria, due to increased temperatures and intensified storms¹⁵ • Heat-related illness • Malnutrition • Increased air pollution, allergies and asthma • Mental disorders such as anxiety and depression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant and lactating women, along with the very young and very old, are most vulnerable to health threats • Increased lack of health-care services, immunizations, family planning, reproductive health care in disaster zones • Potential increase in maternal and infant mortality rates due to lack of care • Lack of services and hygienic supplies in relief shelters for pregnant, lactating or menstruating women |
| Population growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth expected in areas at risk to severe climatic changes and where people rely on natural resources for survival¹⁶ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition for increasingly scarce government and natural resources • Most vulnerable populations (e.g., women) continue to be under threat • High fertility rates impact women's health |
| Urbanization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural-to-urban migration increases due to environmental degradation, reduced productivity and conflict over resources • Informal shelters and communities expand | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlements—sometimes informal—may be unhealthy and dangerous, lack water and sanitation and be built on vulnerable land • Urban formal markets tend to benefit men • Poor urban women lack health services¹⁷ • Urban poverty projected to increase¹⁸ |
| Migration & displacement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster events can lead to displacement,¹⁹ temporary and permanent, internal and international • Environmental degradation and competition for resources prompts women and men to move • Forced migration due to regional vulnerability possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women comprise at least half of world migrant populations, but their needs are not prioritized in migration policies²⁰ • Women often lack resources to move, but post-disaster may lack resources to cope at home • Forced migration could exacerbate women's vulnerability and lack of access to resources and livelihood options |
| Household composition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of/change in family composition due to migration/displacement and/or fatalities from natural disasters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise in female-headed households (FHH) • Limited resources for FHH in recovery/insurance programmes or funds that prioritize access for men • Lack of land rights jeopardizing women's food and livelihood security²¹ • Gendered divisions of labour reinforced • Decreased numbers of women in some households due to female disaster mortality |
| Conflict & violence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition over limited resources can trigger conflict or displacement • Shortages in regular rainfall and overall scarcity of natural resources can increase civil war by 50 per cent²² • Increased anxiety and distress over livelihood insecurity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict amplifies existing gender inequalities • While men are more likely to be killed or injured in fighting, women suffer greatly from other consequences of conflict, such as rape, violence, anxiety and depression²³ • Higher levels of violence in the home and in post-disaster relief shelters |

Catalysts of Change

In much of the world, women play a paramount role in the management, conservation and use of natural resources. Their primary responsibility for growing food and collecting water and fuelwood has made them keenly aware of their environments and the devastating impacts of deforestation, desertification and other forms of environmental degradation.²⁴

Women are sometimes seen only as victims of climate change and natural disasters, when in fact they are well positioned to be agents of change through mitigation, management and adaptive activities in their households, workplaces, communities and countries.

Women can be effective leaders within their community when it comes to addressing the harmful effects of climate change. Where women help devise early warning systems and reconstruction efforts, communities largely fare better when natural disaster hits.²⁵ Women's innovations have been heralded in sectors such as water, energy and reforestation—all of which are climate change issues. Their efforts must be incorporated into climate change policies and promoted through capacity building.

MALI^A

Women Leading the Way

In Mali, where 90 per cent of energy comes from burning wood and charcoal, rural women have developed sustainable alternatives to the wood trade. Cutting trees for fuel has contributed to widespread deforestation and desertification, and subsequent soil erosion and erratic flooding further impacts agriculture and infrastructure. To reduce dependence on wood, the Sinsibere Project has been educating women about alternative livelihood activities and engaging them in micro-lending programmes, literacy and mathematics training. Since the Project's implementation in 2001, 80 per cent of the women have stopped or significantly reduced wood usage. The women have taught their families about preserving the environment, and their increased income allows them to send their children to school.

Source: www.malifolkcenter.org/ and International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

BRAZIL

Women as Managers of the Environment

In Pintadas, a district in the poorest region of Brazil, people rely primarily on agriculture for their livelihoods. Yet, with no dependable irrigation system and a scarcity of water, tackling poverty is a challenge. To address these problems, a collaborative partnership of organizations^B developed a small-scale irrigation project piloted by the SouthSouthNorth network.²⁶ The project was designed to help women and men work together to learn better water management and irrigation techniques harnessing solar power. Through the Association of Women of Pintadas, a woman was selected to spearhead the initiative, changing the face of decision-making. Today, women are empowered by the technical know-how to manage and adapt new agricultural systems. Both women and men in Pintadas are better able to deal with climate change and drought, while food security, water management and income generation have improved.

Source: www.pintadas-solar.org and ISDR

INDIA

Women Against Environmental Destruction

The Dasholi Gram Samaj Mandal women-led environmental movement in India, which began as a protest against deforestation, has been successfully protecting and managing the environment for 32 years. Many village women depend on the local forest for essential needs like water, fodder and firewood, all of which are threatened by climate change and natural disasters. Establishing that natural resource conservation was a matter for community concern, the women involved men as partners. The women's initiative resulted in reduced damage from floods and landslides, extensive reforestation and less drudgery for the women. The movement has also challenged government policies and traditional assumptions about gender roles, as women effectively demonstrate their leadership abilities and improve the sustainability of their environment.

Source: ISDR

^A Mali, Brazil and India case studies from, "Gender Perspectives: Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction into Climate Change Adaptation: Good Practices and Lessons Learned" (2008). Geneva: International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

^B REDEH—Network for Human Development, Rio de Janeiro (www.redeh.org.br); Centro Clima, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (www.centroclima.org.br); Municipality of Pintadas, state of Bahia (www.pintadas.ba.gov.br/index.asp); Federal Environment Agency of Germany (www.uba.de); SEED Initiative (www.seedinit.org); Secretary of Science and Technology, state of Bahia (www.secti.ba.gov.br); and technology partners.

Equality in Climate Change Policy

While gender equality is widely recognized as a prerequisite for sustainable development and as central to global initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),^c a gender perspective is, so far, missing from climate change policy.

In the critical negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—the overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change, ratified by 193 countries as of August 26, 2009—many Parties and gender advocates alike are working to secure a place for gender in the new global commitments, funds and projects. At the national and local levels, decision-making and implementation of policies and programmes must respond to vulnerabilities and capitalize on capacities of both women and men.

Some key points for policy advocacy include:

- Prevent challenging and costly adaptation through commitments to mitigation.
- Prioritize adaptation activities, particularly for vulnerable communities including women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples.
- Increase investments in mitigation and adaptation and base them on gender analysis. Investing in voluntary family planning and reproductive health access will empower women, lower fertility rates, improve maternal and child health and slow population growth—all of which will help mitigate climate change and build more resilient, adaptive communities.
- Incorporate gender and population issues into National Adaptation Programmes of Action and climate policies to effectively meet the goals.

What You Can Do

1 Stay involved: Visit any of these websites for more information on women and climate change and how to take action:

WEDO: www.wedo.org

UNFPA: www.unfpa.org

GGCA: www.gender-climate.org

ENERGIA: www.energia.org

GenderCC: www.gendercc.net

Women in Europe for a Common Future:
www.wecf.eu

Gender and Disaster Network:
www.gdonline.org

Gender and Water Alliance: www.genderandwater.org

2 Learn about climate change and the global policy framework: www.unfccc.int

3 Find out about your country's plans and commitments:

http://unfccc.int/national_reports/items/1408.php

4 Join the movement: Talk to your organization about incorporating gender and climate change issues into your current programmes and activities.

5 Take action: Contact your policy makers to see what they're doing about climate change, and review the rest of this Resource Kit for recommendations.

^c The eight MDGs are: end poverty and hunger; universal education; gender equality; child health; maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS; environmental sustainability; and global partnership.

Major Terms

Adaptation—“Actions by individuals or systems to avoid, withstand, or take advantage of current and projected climate changes and impacts.” Decreasing vulnerability or increasing resilience to impacts.²⁷

Greenhouse Gases—“Greenhouse gases absorb infrared radiation and trap the heat in the atmosphere. ... [causing] an increase in the average surface temperature of the Earth over time.”²⁸

Mitigation—“Any attempt to reduce the rate at which greenhouse gases are accumulating in the atmosphere.”²⁹

Sustainable Development—“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”³⁰

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TAI POWER SEEFF

Policy that Supports Gender Equality

It's a fact: climate change affects women and men differently. This is important information for governments across the globe as they develop policies to reduce emissions (mitigate) and cope with (adapt to) the impacts of climate change. Policies that are gender-sensitive—in other words, that consider the particular needs and capacities of both women and men—are more likely to be effective.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its 2007 Assessment Report confirmed that the impacts of climate change will vary depending on gender, age and class, with the poor most likely to suffer. Because of gender inequalities, women and girls are disproportionately vulnerable. Women are also the majority of the world's poor and are more often responsible for household food production, family health and nutrition, and management of natural

resources—sectors that are particularly sensitive to climate change.

But women are not simply victims. They are also agents of change and have unique knowledge and capabilities. Soliciting and encouraging their leadership to address climate change and inform policy is one way to ensure that a gender perspective is included; without this, climate policies could fail to be effective.

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Population Perspective: Supporting Human Rights

Advancing gender equality, eliminating violence against women and ensuring women's ability to control their fertility were acknowledged as cornerstones of population and development policies in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action. As such, it remains an extremely relevant framework when considering climate change policies. Mitigation and adaptation measures should ensure that ICPD principles—including a human rights-based approach to reproductive health and rights rather than a focus on demographic targets—remain at the centre of climate change and population policies.

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Numerous international agreements and mechanisms address human rights, population issues, sustainable development, climate change and disaster planning. Together they offer a framework of rights and commitments that support the inclusion of gender concerns in national climate change policies and legislation. Designing and implementing policies in a complementary fashion increases their efficacy as well as their funding potential.

One key agreement, the Programme of Action from the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), highlights the potential connections among policy areas. Its explicit link between sustainable development and the rights of all people and communities has direct implications for climate change-related risks and paves the way for women's full participation in all aspects of action to tackle them.

National Policy Mechanisms

National governments use the international framework to craft their own climate change policy. Integration into existing development strategies, along with additional financial support, is the key to success. Adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk management with a gender perspective will combat poverty and injustice by addressing inequities, building resilience and lowering long-term development costs.¹ The following are four mechanisms for national action.

National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) are a vehicle for least developed countries (LDCs) to identify, prioritize and fund their most immediate climate change adaptation needs through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Guidelines state that NAPAs should be participatory and involve both women and men at the grassroots level, recognizing that some climate change impacts are gender-specific. In practice, the integration of gender and reproductive

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 15)

Women, Migration and Climate Change

The scope of climate-related migration is not clear, but it's plain that women feel both positive and negative effects. Gender equality can increase, for example, and women who migrate often become more independent socially and financially. While women at home may need to rely on remittances from males, they may also experience increased autonomy in directing the household.

But equality does not always improve. Migrant women may have a higher risk of sexual exploitation and labour discrimination, or they may experience increased isolation due to cultural dependence on men. Women's burden at home may also increase.² For example, as a result of soil erosion in the Tambacounda region of Senegal, 90 per cent of men have migrated at least once, leaving many women and children to rehabilitate the land and produce food with fewer economic and human resources.³

To date, no policy adequately addresses the issue. If migration patterns on a local, regional and national level are examined, the growing numbers are likely to show a need for policy to do such things as promote rural economic development,⁴ facilitate movement,⁵ engage in proactive urban planning and address needs of both locals and migrants.⁶



CLARE SULLIVAN

International Government Commitments

Women's Rights, Human Rights

United Nations Charter (1945)

The United Nations Charter was the first global treaty that called for equality between women and men.⁷

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights strengthens the Charter's call for equality between women and men.

Articles applicable to women's ability to adapt to climate change include the right to own property, consensual marriage, freedom of movement and equal protection before the law.⁸

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966)

Article 7 calls for fair wages, equal compensation and good work conditions for all, especially women,⁹ principles that should underlie all climate change policies for technology transfer and capacity building.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (1966)

The ICCPR "ensures the equal right of women and men to the enjoyment of civil and political rights set forth by the covenant".¹⁰

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979)

Signatory governments to CEDAW—also known as the first international bill of women's rights—agree to take action to promote and protect the rights of women and to include the principle of equality in legislation and ensure it is operationalized.¹¹

CEDAW has direct implications for climate change, obliging parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure that they participate in and benefit from rural development and are involved in all levels of development planning.¹² The text also links to population issues, affirming women's maternal and reproductive rights, which enhance women's decision-making power and affirm women's rights to equal health care and to participate

fully in family, work and public life.¹³

World Conference On Human Rights, Vienna (1993)

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action reaffirm and strengthen human rights around the globe, including the right to development.¹⁴

Governments and regional and international organizations are urged to facilitate women's access to decision-making processes; monitoring bodies are urged to use gender-specific data and include the status and the human rights of women in their deliberations and findings.¹⁴ Both are vital for responsive climate change policies that recognize women as agents of change.

International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Cairo (1994)

The ICPD stands out as a pivotal moment in the history of rights-based development, asserting that individual and human rights are the centre of population and development concerns. It highlighted the linkages between the cornerstones of women's empowerment—reproductive health and rights—and other aspects of development. Conference participants agreed to a 20-year Programme of Action that focuses on people's reproductive needs, particularly women's, rather than demographic targets.¹⁵

The ICPD highlights that the health needs of women, men and children must be met and that women have the right to family planning and reproductive health services that can impact sustainable development and poverty (and thus potentially respond to climate change). The Programme of Action encourages governments to address women's lack of access to land, education, health services and reproductive rights; enhance rural development; increase the capacity of local governments to manage urban development; and "give migrants, especially females, greater access to work, credit, basic education, health services, child-care centres and vocational training".¹⁶

UN Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing (1995)

The conference resulted in the Beijing

Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), in which governments and the UN agreed to promote mainstreaming a gender perspective in policies and programmes at all levels—local, national and international—and in all developments efforts.¹⁷

The Beijing Declaration¹⁸ addresses population issues and land and credit policies and makes an explicit link to sustainable development. In the BPfA, Strategic Objectives K and C respectively address women and the environment and resources for and access to health care for women, including initiatives to address sexual and reproductive health.¹⁹

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

The Resolution and follow-up statements on women, peace and security call for equal and full participation of women in the promotion of sustainable peace and security and for the incorporation of a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations.²⁰

Climate change is likely to increase conflicts throughout the world.²¹ As women are major stakeholders in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, capacity-building and strategic inclusion of women in related activities is needed to incorporate a gender perspective.

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) (2005 and 2008)

The CSW meets annually to follow up on implementation of the BPfA, to ensure the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into UN work and to identify relevant emerging issues and trends.

Its 49th session in 2005 is known as *Beijing + 10*, and the resultant Declaration reaffirmed the BPfA, calling for all actors to intensify their efforts to implement the Millennium Declaration and fulfil obligations under CEDAW.²²

Resolution 49/8, Economic Advancement for Women, urges States to implement policies to recognize non-market labour, allow parents to choose family size and spacing, encourage men to share household duties and ensure women have a right to social security and other entitlements; recognize the contributions of migrant women and reduce the cost of remittances;

⁷ "The right to development should be fulfilled so as to meet equitably the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations." Vienna Declaration, Section I, Paragraph 11.

and enhance the income-generating power of rural women and improve **security of land tenure** and property ownership for resource mobilization and environmental management.²³

The CSW's 52nd session in 2008 selected "Gender perspectives on climate change" as its key emerging issue.

The session's report, in the agreed conclusions on Financing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (21(jj)), urges governments, agencies and financial institutions to: "Integrate a **gender perspective** in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting of national **environmental policies**, strengthen mechanisms and provide **adequate resources** to ensure women's full and equal participation in **decision-making** at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies related to **climate change** and the lives of women and girls."²⁴

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)

This non-binding statement recognizes indigenous rights to self-determination, education, institutions and political and economic development as well as the right to participate in the life of the state.²⁵

By confirming the rights of indigenous peoples, the declaration strengthens a rights-based development agenda and encourages better understanding of traditional **land tenure** and the need to recognize its validity for **women** and other vulnerable groups in the face of climate change and shifting **population dynamics**. In the development of new **climate change** mitigation mechanisms such as REDD,^B

reinforcement of indigenous rights is increasingly important.

UN Human Rights Council (2008/2009)

At its seventh session in March 2008 the UN Human Rights Council adopted by consensus Resolution 7/23 on Human Rights and Climate Change; as a result, the Office of the High Commissioner released a follow-up report in January 2009.

The report recognizes the need for more country-specific and **gender-disaggregated data** to effectively assess and address **gender-differentiated effects** of climate change. It states both that women have high exposure to climate-related risks exacerbated by unequal rights, and that women's empowerment and the reduction of discriminatory practices has been crucial to successful community **adaptation and coping capacity**.²⁶

Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Disaster Planning

Earth Summit, Rio (1992)

Officially known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the Earth Summit led to several historic outcomes related to sustainable development.

Agenda 21, the outcome document of the Summit, is a blueprint for sustainable development and among the first UN conference documents to systematically refer to women's positions and roles.

Agenda 21 builds on and recognizes

previous plans and conventions^C that advocate for **gender equality** in areas such as **land ownership, resource stewardship, education and employment**.²⁷ It is to be achieved through actions that recognize **women's** critical economic, social and environmental contributions to environmental management and **sustainable development**.²⁸ It recognizes the synergy between **demographic dynamics and sustainability**,²⁹ the chapter on women calls on governments to eliminate all obstacles to women's full involvement in sustainable development and public life.³⁰

The *UN Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)* was adopted in 1992 for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The CBD has clear **sustainable development and climate change** implications, but it mentions women only in the preamble.^D Targeting women's biodiversity knowledge is crucial because of the link to household-level food security.³¹

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), adopted in 1992, encourages governments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to address climate change. Through the related **Kyoto Protocol of 1997**, Parties commit to reduce emissions through 2012.

As of 2009, **neither the agreements nor the associated mechanisms**, such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), **address the gendered aspects of climate change** or incorporate gender equality.

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), adopted in 1994, is implemented through participatory

The Need for Disaggregated Data

While a lack of data is sometimes used as an excuse not to implement gender-responsive climate policies, it is the gender-responsive policies that are likely to provide the necessary data.³² Gender differences are location- and culture-specific. Programmes and activities should include indicators and require data collection so that access to adaptation projects, funding and capacity building of women and men can be assessed.³³ A broad range of relevant data, both quantitative (education, credit, income) and qualitative (women's household bargaining power, use of time)³⁴ is necessary to fully understand the need for and impact of policies and programmes.

^B REDD= Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

^C E.g., the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, CEDAW and conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

^D However, it recognizes women's knowledge, practices, and gender roles in food production in the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. Source: WEDO. (2008). *Gender, Climate Change and Human Security: Lessons from Bangladesh, Ghana and Senegal*. New York: WEDO.

Climate Change, the Millennium Development Goals and Women's Rights

Achievement of the eight MDGs by 2015 is in jeopardy. Climate change is reducing the likelihood of reaching a number of the Goals related to gender and sustainable development that are already at risk as a result of the deep and continued bias against women and girls.

Although the MDGs have been criticized by some women's rights advocates as "top-down", their concrete targets and timeline provide entry points to monitor the progress of both gender equality and women's empowerment. Also, with the Goals receiving international attention, active women's groups and civil society organizations have much better access to high-level officials and decision-making arenas than through previous agreements such as the BPfA.³⁵

The eight MDGs are: end poverty and hunger; universal education; gender equality; child health; maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS; environmental sustainability; and global partnership.

national action programmes to address ecosystem-specific needs.³⁶

The UNCCD recognizes the role of **women** in rural livelihoods and the importance of local **women's knowledge** in addressing issues such as **climate change**. The convention instructs national action programmes to "provide effective participation of **women** and men, particularly **resources users**, including farmers and pastoralists and their organizations."³⁷

Millennium Summit and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000)

The Summit resulted in the Millennium Declaration in which member States outlined a global partnership to address the world's most pressing development needs through the specific targets and timelines of the MDGs.

The Declaration aims "to promote **gender equality** and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly **sustainable**."³⁸ All eight MDGs are relevant to gender equality, **population dynamics** and **climate change** (see MDG box).

World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Johannesburg (2002)

The WSSD reaffirmed and strengthened commitments to Agenda 21 and recognized the adverse effects of climate change.

Gendered analysis⁵ of **climate change** will be improved through the Summit's call for more effective and accountable institutions for women's equal access to and full participation in decision-making; for **mainstreaming** a gendered perspective by enacting resource management systems that support women and men; and for improving women's access to health care, education, **land and credit**.³⁹

Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) (2005)

Developed at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, with a goal to substantially reduce disaster losses by 2015, this explicitly incorporates gendered aspects of disaster planning and response.

The HFA states that "a **gender perspective** should be integrated into all disaster risk **management** policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training."⁴⁰ It also recognizes that **climate change**, climate variability and **demographic shifts**

contribute to the vulnerability of both peoples and places.⁴¹

United Nations: High Level Focus on Climate Change (2007)

High-level sessions increasingly recognize climate change as a global issue:

- The *UN General Assembly* held an informal thematic debate on Climate Change as a Global Challenge.
- In September, the Secretary-General convened a *High-Level Event on Climate Change*. On that occasion WEDO and the Council of Women World Leaders organized a Roundtable on Gender and Climate Change with keynote speaker Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, UN Special Envoy on Climate Change.
- Consequently, the November *International Women Leaders Global Security Summit* "acknowledged that climate change poses significant security risks, particularly for women, and that women have to be included in decision-making at all levels."⁴²
- The Human Security Network, under the Hellenic Presidency for 2007–2008, concentrated on the impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations. See WEDO's *Gender, Climate Change and Human Security*⁴³ report.

⁵ Gender analysis refers to the variety of methods used to understand the relationships between men and women, their access to resources, their activities, and the constraints they face relative to each other. Source: Canadian International Development Agency www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/JUD-31194519-KBD.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

1 *Design global climate change agreements to:*

- Be flexible and responsive to varied national and regional needs
- Include new mechanisms for additional, adequate funding that explicitly addresses the most vulnerable populations and regions

2 *Design and implement climate policies and actions at local, national and international levels to:*

- Include monitoring, evaluation and flexibility⁴⁴ to allow policy adjustment when needed
- Uphold a participatory and community-based approach
- Institutionalize wide stakeholder involvement with mechanisms to ensure equitable participation of women throughout all stages of the process
- Draw on and value women's unique knowledge and coping mechanisms
- Develop gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and evaluate the processes of stakeholder inclusion and responses to their input
- Collect gender-disaggregated data to inform programme development
- Perform gender analysis to understand the different roles of women and men
- Develop climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes that use gender analysis to improve the welfare of women and girls—e.g., access to credit, capacity building and extension services, information dissemination, improved access to land and natural resources, sustainable energy and technology and access to reproductive health information and services
- Evaluate local and regional population dynamics—e.g., the variable impact of aging, household size and urbanization on climate change (and vice versa) when designing mitigation and adaptation programmes⁴⁵
- Incorporate climate change objectives into national plans
- Develop, deploy and disseminate sustainable technology that is responsive to women and men

3 *Establish coherence among the institutions responsible for climate change, gender, human rights and health policy.*

4 *Build on global goals and commitments and the solid framework of good examples of gender language from existing policies and agreements; don't start from scratch.*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10)

health issues into NAPAs has been weak (see Climate Change Connections: *Making NAPAs Work for Women*).

The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) process, designed to be country-driven and participatory, makes countries eligible for debt relief under the HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) initiative and for lending from the World Bank and IMF.⁴⁶ But the PRS process has been criticized for lacking a clear institutional framework for civil society participation, which leads to the exclusion of women, indigenous groups and rural communities. Although it offers an opportunity to integrate climate change action into country strategies via the PRS paper (PRSP), only a few countries have done so. Bangladesh and Malawi both include adaptation projects in their PRSPs,⁴⁷ while others, including Senegal, make reference to climate change.⁴⁸

National communications are required for Parties to the UNFCCC. Because the communications quantify greenhouse gas emissions, assess vulnerabilities and report on the national situation, they can aid

all governments in identifying where to incorporate gender issues into climate change action.⁴⁹ In the spirit of “common but differentiated responsibilities” only communications from Annex I^F (developed) countries must indicate policies and measures in place;⁵⁰ this makes the communication a potential vehicle to showcase the integration of climate change with gender and population issues in these countries.

National **mitigation plans**^G to reduce emissions should include activities determined by the sustainable development priorities and circumstances of each developing country.⁵¹ As of June 2009, there are no specific guidelines and thus the process is ripe for incorporating a gender perspective/analysis. Mitigation plans can incorporate agriculture, sustainable forestry and resource use, which directly impact women’s livelihoods, and can provide “co-benefits that improve agricultural productivity and resilience and thus contribute to food security, sustainable development and adaptation”.⁵²

^F Annex 1 of the UNFCCC includes the 36 industrialized countries and Economies in Transition—those with emissions reduction targets.

^G Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) are a proposed mechanism under discussion in the post-2012 climate negotiations.

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Common Ground

In Bangladesh, Ghana, Nepal, Senegal and Trinidad and Tobago

Climate change affects women in different ways across the globe, but common themes bridge their experiences. Examining the impact of climate change through a gender lens in five developing countries—Bangladesh, Ghana, Nepal, Senegal and Trinidad and Tobago—reveals a pattern. In each of these countries, women represent a large percentage of the poor, experience gender inequality and are faced with increasing vulnerabilities as the climate changes.

In 2008, the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) commissioned five partners to conduct case studies in their home countries, exploring the linkages between gender and climate change.^A Countries were selected based on regional diversity, vulnerability to climate change, least developed and developing country status and WEDO’s strong existing partnerships.

Taken together, the following snapshots offer a composite of the gender issues associated with climate change and suggest important policy points and opportunities for intervention. For example, although women play a vital

role in household and community natural disaster recovery, policies that address the impact of disasters and recovery efforts often favour the livelihoods of men. In many cases, the false policy assumption remains that this will also benefit women,¹ whereas women’s own livelihoods must also be secured.

As national governments draft and implement policies to respond to their populations’ needs, it is important that they recognize the different roles played by women and men in coping with, managing, off-setting and building resilience to climate change impacts.

^A These case studies were made possible with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Government of Greece. The full studies can be accessed at www.wedo.org.

Bangladesh^B

“During these tense moments [of disaster], women...head towards shelter with their children in one hand and household goods in the other, all of which becomes difficult to manage and, in many cases, becomes the cause of their deaths. Many children cannot run because they refuse to get down from their mother’s arms, as a result of which the mothers cannot run either. That’s why women and children suffer more.”

—Marium, 60 years old,
Char Kukri Mukri, Bangladesh³

Climate change and natural disaster in Bangladesh hit women disproportionately hard. Though women’s participation is widely supported in numerous public arenas, from politics to community organizations, they remain under-represented in the national economy and overburdened in the home. When disaster strikes, their responsibilities increase as they must work harder to complete their daily tasks. Social norms and expectations often limit their ability to react. Fewer economic opportunities, in informal and formal markets, add to the household burden when access to markets and room to negotiate prices for sellable goods decreases.

FOCUS ON Health and Physical Safety

—Women in Bangladesh still face various types of violence in their lives—and levels of physical, emotional and sexual violence often rise in the aftermath of disaster. Increased harassment and abuse both in the home and relief shelters have been widely reported. Moreover, health care and

proper hygiene are often inadequate in shelters, particularly for pregnant, lactating and menstruating women.

Although women in Bangladesh are vulnerable to climate change, they also use a number of coping strategies. They adjust dietary consumption when certain foods are scarce and preserve food and supplies—such as fuel, matches, blankets, animal fodder and medicine—in preparation for shortages or disaster. Parents teach children important skills such as swimming and impart knowledge on disaster preparedness.

Women often build elevated platforms to help protect children and elderly family members in emergency situations. They are also active participants in recovery strategies such as rebuilding homes and replacing livestock, and are increasingly being recognized as effective leaders and educators on cyclone risk reduction. Both women and men use migration to adapt to limited economic opportunities after disasters.

POLICY POINT **Women and the NAPA**—Bangladesh completed its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) in 2005 and this is in the process of implementation. Although the NAPA mentions women several times, women are generally represented not as participatory actors but as victims of climate impacts. While women are listed both as contributors to the NAPA and stakeholders in the projects, specific information on their participation as stakeholders or as leaders or agents for change is missing.⁴



Quick Facts

Environmental Threats

- Land loss
- Coastal erosion
- Rising sea level
- Reduced crop yields
- Frequent natural disasters
- High disaster mortality rate

Status of Women*

Life expectancy, 2005:
64 female, 62 male

Adult literacy rate, 2005:
40.8% female, 53.9% male

Enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education, 2005:
56% female, 56% male

Income (PPP USD), 2005:
\$1,282 female, \$2,792 male

Status of Women in Disaster

- Decreased economic opportunities
- Increased vulnerability
- Increased violence, harassment and lack of privacy
- Increased health and mortality risks
- Increased responsibilities

Sources:

WEDO. (2008). “Gender, Climate Change and Human Security: Lessons from Bangladesh, Ghana and Senegal”. New York: WEDO; UNDP. (2007). “Bangladesh”. In 2007/2008 Human Development Report. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_BGD.html>.

*Full indicators are: life expectancy at birth (years), 2005; adult literacy rate (% aged 15 and older), 2005; combined gross enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education (%), 2005; and estimated earned income (PPP USD), 2005.

Ghana^c

“I have seven children (4 boys and 3 girls)...The floods collapsed our three rooms and washed away our crops: maize and late millet. As a result, we harvested nothing. Hunger stared us straight in the face. I have been travelling long distances every morning to collect firewood for sale to feed my family. Getting firewood is now very difficult and most times I have to climb trees to check for dried branches to cut. Sometimes I do this with my 9-month-old baby on my back...”

—Atibzel Abaande, 45 years, Bawku West District, Ghana⁶

Environmental issues in Ghana are often looked at through a gender-neutral lens, even as women and men are differently affected by climate change. Because women have little access to land rights and are responsible for collecting and managing water and wood and selling fish, climate change drastically reduces their ability to perform daily tasks and increases their economic dependence and vulnerability. In addition, women are under-represented in most sectors including politics, business and public services. They have little say in risk-reduction planning, which puts them in greater physical danger in times of disaster and makes them less able to recover in the aftermath.

FOCUS ON Unpaid Labour and Household Burden—Ghanaian women spend more than twice as much time as men on household activities such as gathering water,

firewood and food. Women’s unpaid labour is vital to household security but is drastically increasing in the face of climate change as resources become scarce. The segregation of labour deepens the social divide between women and men.

Despite their vulnerabilities, women in Ghana are actively adapting to climate change. By planting long-term crops including oranges, cocoa and palm oil, joining cooperatives to collectively save money and sending family members away to work and send remittances home, women help safeguard the livelihoods of their families.

POLICY POINT High-level Support—Following the Earth Summit in 1992, the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology was established, under which the Committee on Climate Change reviews policies or projects related to climate change, emissions reductions and the improvement of carbon sinks. Ghana’s strong women’s organizations are mobilizing around climate change issues, and they have support from Ghana’s Delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations. Chief Negotiator William K. Agyemang-Bonsu recently stated, “[The] benefits of mainstreaming gender in climate change [include] increased awareness, improved capacity, sensitivity to traditional knowledge and risk reduction.”⁷



Quick Facts

Environmental Threats

- Excessive heat
- Torrential rains
- Severe dry winds
- Reduced crop yields
- Decreased natural resources

Status of Women

Life expectancy, 2005:
59.5 female, 58.7 male

Adult literacy rate, 2005:
49.8% female, 66.4% male

Enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education, 2005:
48% female, 53% male

Income (PPP USD), 2005:
\$2,056 female, \$2,893 male

Status of Women in Disaster

- More difficulty accessing resources
- Decreased economic opportunities
- Increased vulnerability
- Increased domestic violence
- Increased health and mortality risks

Sources:
WEDO (2008). Op. cit.; UNDP. (2007). “Ghana”. In Op. cit. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_GHA.html>.

^c Based on a Case Study commissioned by WEDO and conducted by Rose Mensah-Kutin from ABANTU for Development in Ghana.⁵

Nepal^D

“There is a great need to document more mountain women’s lives and the gender issues common to the Himalayas. Little research has been pursued on mountain populations, particularly how they adapt to change, and how gender-specific conditions affect their abilities to adapt.”

—International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)⁹

Women in Nepal, whether members of the Hindi majority, Dalit “untouchables” or from an indigenous ethnic group, experience major challenges when faced with climate change and natural disaster. They have less access to employment than men, are underrepresented in the political sphere, lack sufficient health-care access and are confronted with violence and discrimination in customs and laws. Fewer girls than boys have access to schools, and more women than men are illiterate.

FOCUS ON Double Discrimination for Indigenous and Dalit Women—

While indigenous women living in the Nepalese mountains have a greater degree of freedom and decision-making ability than many Hindi women, they have much less access to technical infrastructure and development efforts and are predominantly illiterate. Dalit women are some of the most underprivileged in the country, shunned for both their caste and gender status. They are highly vulnerable to changes in the climate, which increase their already heavy workload. Moreover, they have little to no access to disaster relief.

Though many barriers exist, a women’s movement is emerging throughout the country to tackle these numerous issues. Nepalese women have a vast knowledge of resource management and work long hours to care for their families and contribute to their communities. Women’s organizations are highlighting women’s important contributions, skills and knowledge, as communities must benefit from their agency and adaptive capacity.

POLICY POINT **Involving Women At the National Level**—A National Climate Change Policy is in the final draft stages, and several workshops have been held in different regions to help educate the population on climate change and to gather opinions and ideas. Many women participated in these.

Most of the consultations have highlighted that women will probably suffer more from climate change because of their role in collecting water and fuel wood and the fact that these resources are becoming more and more scarce. Women will also have more difficulty adapting to agricultural changes since the burden of agricultural production is rising, and new production practices and new crops will have to be adopted. Women’s very limited access to information and training will surely restrict their capacity to adapt as well.¹⁰



Quick Facts

Environmental Threats

- Drought
- Flooding
- Deglaciation
- Deforestation
- Intensifying monsoons
- Landslides/eroded soils

Status of Women

Life expectancy, 2005:

62.9 female, 62.1 male

Adult literacy rate, 2005:

34.9 female, 62.7 male

Enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education, 2005:

54% female, 62% male

Income (PPP USD), 2005:

\$1,038 female, \$2,072 male

Status of Women in Disaster

- More difficulty accessing resources
- Decreased economic opportunities
- Increased domestic violence
- Increased health risks and disease rates
- Limited coping strategies

Sources:

Leduc, B., Shrestha, A. and Bhattarai, B. (2008). “Gender and Climate Change in the Hindu Kush Himalayas of Nepal”. Commissioned by WEDO; UNDP. (2007). “Nepal”. In Op. cit. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_NPL.html>.

^D Based on a study commissioned by WEDO and conducted by Brigitte Leduc, Senior Gender Specialist of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), with Arun Shrestha, ICIMOD Climate Change Specialist, and Basundhara Bhattarai, ICIMOD Gender Specialist.⁸

Senegal^E

“We the women are responsible for feeding our families. The bush has now become a desert shrub in my area and there is nowhere to go to fetch wood...One day, unable to find enough wood after a long search, I used some branches to cook. Since the wood was not enough, I cut my plastic bassinette in pieces to fuel the fire...Then I took the wooden bench where I was seated and cut it to feed the fire...”

— Satou Diouf, Gadiag, Senegal¹²

While Senegal has adopted a number of policies aimed at reducing gender inequality, prohibiting gender discrimination and integrating gender considerations into sectoral development, these commitments rarely impact poor rural women, who are heavily burdened by agriculture and fishing production activities. Climate change makes work more difficult in these sectors as reduced yields and fewer buyers decrease their economic viability.

FOCUS ON Natural Resource-based Livelihood Insecurity—Reliant on natural resource collection for basic needs, women’s livelihoods are deeply threatened by climate change. Around 70 per cent of rural Senegalese women are engaged in the agriculture sector, and 90 per cent of labourers in fish processing are women. Climate change further intensifies their workloads as soil erodes on farms and along coastlines and rain patterns become increasingly unpredictable. Desertification has left wood sources scarce, and access to water is increasingly unreliable, of poor quality or costs more than

women can afford. As more men are moving to urban areas in search of employment, women are left to cope in the villages.

Despite heavy work burdens, women in Senegal have been active in climate change adaptation and mitigation. The Regroupement des Femmes de Popenguine, one of many women’s cooperative organizations, has reforested and regenerated mangroves along the Atlantic coast, increasing coastal resilience and fighting deforestation and the destruction of a diverse habitat. Women have also been active in implementing agricultural techniques that help fight soil erosion, increase water supplies and enable plant regeneration and better crop yields.

POLICY POINT Women’s Leadership in Climate Change Policy-making

A National Committee on Climate Change (COMNAC) was set up by the Direction de l’Environnement (Direction of Environment) and employs women in leadership positions. It plays an important role in helping to mainstream gender into national level climate change policy, providing a positive example of a women-led team that can promote the empowerment, inclusion and capacity building of women across the country to adapt to climate change.¹³ In preparing the country’s NAPA, women participated in public consultations organized in every region in order to collect information on adaptation solutions at the local level because indigenous knowledge is important to the search for sustainable results.¹⁴



Quick Facts

Environmental Threats

- Drought
- Flooding
- Soil erosion
- Desertification
- Rising temperatures
- Overfishing/poaching

Status of Women

Life expectancy, 2005:
64.4 female, 60.4 male

Adult literacy rate, 2005:
29.2% female, 51.1% male

Enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education, 2005:
37% female, 42% male

Income (PPP USD), 2005:
\$1,256 female, \$2,346 male

Status of Women in Disaster

- More difficulty accessing resources
- Decreased economic opportunities
- Increased health risks and disease rates
- Limited coping strategies

Sources:
WEDO. (2008). Op. cit.; UNDP. (2007). “Senegal” in Op. cit. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_SEN.html>.

^EBased on a case study commissioned by WEDO and conducted by Yacine Diagne Gueye of ENDA (Environmental Development Action in the Third World) in Senegal.¹¹

Trinidad and Tobago^F

“In spite of their higher educational qualifications, women continue to comprise the majority of the unemployed, underpaid in every sector of employment, except when employed by the State, and in every occupational group. Women’s participation rate in the labour force in 2000 stood at 38.6 per cent compared with 61.4 per cent for men.”

—Draft National Gender Policy and Action Plan¹⁶

In Trinidad and Tobago, a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) located off the Northeast coast of Venezuela, women have come close to gaining equity with men on a number of indicators. With almost 100 per cent literacy for both women and men, the school enrolment ratio for girls actually exceeds that of boys. However, the large disparity in earned income between men and women suggests that women are economically vulnerable and thus may be less able to adapt to or recover from climate change or natural disaster.

FOCUS ON Exacerbated Health Crisis—Already existing problems are further exacerbated by climate change threats. HIV and AIDS are increasingly feminized in the Caribbean context, infecting more women than men and further compromising women’s ability to cope with environmental changes

and disaster. A number of key factors continue to drive the spread of HIV and AIDS across the region, including poverty, gender inequality and lack of information—all factors that increase vulnerability to climate change impacts as well.

POLICY POINT Context-specific Priorities—On small islands, the options can sometimes be limited: According to former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, “Poverty and population pressure force growing numbers of poor people to live in harm’s way—on flood plains, in earthquake-prone zones and on unstable hillsides.”¹⁷ Trinidad and Tobago’s women and men need more information on environmental stresses, and more data—disaggregated by sex, age and other factors—is urgently needed to build more comprehensive policies.

Few—if any—of Trinidad and Tobago’s environmental policies include gender issues or prioritize mainstreaming gender. But for SIDS, the issue is urgent: climate change is not a future possibility but a real threat facing island populations now. Women’s organizations need to support the Government in finding ways to make policies more effective—and that means responding to the needs and building on the capacities of both women and men.



Quick Facts

Environmental Threats

- Flooding
- Landslides
- Windstorms
- Heavy rains
- Desertification
- Soil degradation
- Increased drought
- Intensified hurricanes
- Unsustainable forestry

Status of Women

Life expectancy, 2005:

71.2 female, 67.2 male

Adult literacy rate, 2005:

97.8 female, 98.9 male

Enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education, 2005:

66% female, 64% male

Income (PPP USD), 2005:

\$9,307 female, \$20,053 male

Status of Women in Disaster

- Decreased economic opportunities
- Increased vulnerability
- Increased health risks and disease rates

Sources:

Attzs, M. (2008). “Gender and Climate Change in Trinidad and Tobago”. Commissioned by WEDO; UNDP. (2007). “Trinidad and Tobago”. In Op. cit. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_TTO.html>.

^F Based on a study commissioned by WEDO and conducted by Marlene Attzs, PhD, of the University of the West Indies.¹⁵

Partnering on Climate Change

Developing South-South and South-North partnerships is critical. Knowledge sharing, capacity building and climate change responses initiated in the global South have real benefits for women.

The mission of **ActionAid Bangladesh** is to eradicate poverty and injustice by working with the poor to encourage participation and empowerment in sustainable development. The organization funds gender and climate change research and strongly promotes gender sensitivity and women's rights within its projects. www3.actionaid.org/bangladesh

ABANTU for Development aims to increase the decision-making capacity of women and to challenge gender inequalities and injustices throughout West Africa. In conjunction with the **Regional Office for Western Africa (ROWA)** based in Accra, **Ghana**, ABANTU-ROWA coordinates programmes with a focus on critical issues such as governance and poverty through which women are engaged in decision-making and learn effective political participation and leadership skills. www.abantu-roesa.org

Based in Kathmandu, **Nepal**, the **International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)** partners with international and regional institutions to address climate change issues in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. ICIMOD understands that climate change and poverty affect women and men differently and strives to mainstream gender into all aspects of the organization and to empower the mountain women living in these countries. www.icimod.org

Environmental Development Action in the Third World (ENDA) collaborates with grassroots organizations in various countries including **Senegal** to support activities related to environment and development, including work that incorporates gender and development into the climate change debate. www.enda.sn/english/index.htm

The **Sustainable Economic Development Unit (SEDU)** of The University of the West Indies at St. Augustine in **Trinidad and Tobago** conducts research and determines best practices on sustainable development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Core areas of research include sustainable human development and vulnerability and adaptation to climate change and natural disaster. www2.sta.uwi.edu/sedu

The **Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA)** is a network of over 30 United Nations agencies and civil society organizations working together to ensure climate change decision-making processes, policies and programmes at all levels are gender responsive. Members include WEDO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Oxfam International, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), ENERGIA and Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and National Resource Management (WOCAN). They engage in advocacy activities, trainings and capacity-building projects, resource generation and sharing, and more. www.gender-climate.org

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- ⁹ Ibid. P. 8.
- ¹⁰ Ibid. Pp. 4–5.
- ¹¹ WEDO. (2008). Op. cit.
- ¹² Ibid. P. 26.
- ¹³ Government of Senegal (2006). "Plan d'Action National Pour l'Adaption aux Changements Climatique". Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Protection de la Nature. <<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/napa/seno1f.pdf>>; and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), WEDO and Global Fund for Women (2008). "Final Report: Gender and Climate Change Workshop". Dakar, Senegal. 2–3 June. <<http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/finalreport-dakar-workshop-2008.pdf>>
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- ¹⁷ Annan, K. (2004). "Opening Remarks". Fourth Forum on the International Decade for National Disaster Reduction. Quoted in Attz, M. (2008). "Gender and Climate Change in Trinidad and Tobago". Sustainable Economic Development Unit (SEDU)/UWI for WEDO. P. 7.



WWW.UNCORNEREDMARKET.COM

Making NAPAs Work for Women

Around the world, governments are awakening to the idea that coping with climate change requires a rapid response if we are to avoid its worst consequences. Nowhere are the effects of climate change being felt as acutely as in the developing world, where it is already undermining development gains. And women, as the majority of the poor and the primary caretakers of families, are on the frontlines dealing with increased natural disasters and changes in their environment.

National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs)

In reaction to the current realities of climate change, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—the lead intergovernmental body that addresses this issue—initiated the process of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) to help countries already struggling with and/or most at risk from the effects of climate change.

A main function of the UNFCCC is to facilitate countries' reduction of greenhouse gases—a primary contributor to climate change. But the adaptation needs of the least developed countries (LDCs) are equally urgent. A delay in response could dramatically increase LDCs' vulnerability as well as the future costs of taking action.¹ NAPAs are the mechanisms by which LDCs assess their urgent climate change adaptation needs and prioritize actions to meet them.² They

contain a list of ranked priority adaptation activities and projects, with short profiles of each to assist in the development of proposals for implementation.

So why do women or gender advocates care about NAPAs? Who stands to benefit from these activities or access these funds? Whose livelihoods will improve or stabilize thanks to these programmes? NAPA activities should benefit the communities most vulnerable to the effects of a changing climate. It is therefore crucial to ensure that gender inequalities are addressed and women's priorities and concerns are included. This will keep development efforts on track and help LDCs effectively—and potentially more efficiently—deal with the impacts of climate change. What follows is a breakdown of the NAPA process and how these plans can work for women and men.

NAPA Preparation Guidelines

Guidelines for NAPA preparation, put together by the LDC Expert Group, stress that the process should be participatory.³ The team at the national level should be made up of a lead agency and representatives of stakeholders including government agencies and civil society. Women and men at the grassroots level should be involved because they can provide information on current coping strategies. They are also the most affected by climate change and hence could potentially benefit the most from NAPA activities.

The guidelines also highlight the importance of gender equality, noting that climate change has different adverse impacts on women and men and in most cases disproportionately affects women. Other guiding elements include taking a multidisciplinary approach; building on existing plans and programmes; mainstreaming NAPAs into development planning; taking a country-driven approach; emphasizing sound environmental management; and ensuring cost effectiveness and simplicity. The Expert Group notes that the guidelines are not meant to be prescriptive; procedures may be flexible based on individual country circumstances.

How NAPAs are Funded

NAPA preparation and implementation is primarily funded by the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) of the UNFCCC, which is administered by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (see box). The bulk of the funds are reserved for project implementation. After submitting a completed NAPA to the UNFCCC Secretariat, LDCs are eligible for—and will receive equal access to—implementation funding.^A The UNFCCC has estimated that USD 500 million will be needed to finance NAPA implementation; as of 7 May 2009, the GEF LDCF had collected voluntary contributions

The Global Environment Facility

The GEF was set up to provide grants to developing countries for projects that benefit the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods in local communities. It is an independent financial entity, but it relies on 10 other agencies to assist eligible



governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the development, implementation and management of the projects.

These agencies offer important entry points for gender advocacy. Each must, for example, apply criteria, indicators and other tools,

and each should collect disaggregated data. The GEF itself has initiated a number of actions to improve gender mainstreaming, and a gender focal point will aid in articulating a vision and crafting a plan of action to create a cohesive gender policy.⁹

- of about USD 176.5 million through pledges from 19
- donor countries.^{B,4}
- But all the costs of these urgent activities won't be
- met by the GEF. It is expected that countries will need
- to finance the rest from other sources such as national
- investments, existing multilateral development
- financing and, most controversially, Official
- Development Assistance (ODA).⁵ Most developing
- countries vehemently argue that this is far from fair:
- they contend that industrialized countries, due to their
- emissions histories, have an "historical responsibility"
- to pay additional amounts to cover adaptation needs.
- (Read more in *Climate Change Connections: Financing*
- *that Makes a Difference.*)

Implementation Progress

As of September 2009, 42 LDCs (out of a total of 49) had submitted NAPAs to the UNFCCC.⁶ Combined, the NAPAs have over 400 ranked adaptation projects. But any project to be implemented must go through the GEF project cycle.⁷ In total, 31 priority activities have been submitted for implementation and 28^c approved as of 22 May 2009.⁸

^A Approximately USD 3.7 million per country based on existing resources.

^B Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom

^C Of these, 5 are in the process of initial implementation and 11 are expected to begin the implementation phase before the end of 2009. Source: http://www.gefweb.org/uploadedFiles/Documents/LDCFSCCF_Council_Documents/LDCFSCCF6_June_2009/LDCFSCCF%206.Inf3.pdf

The Importance of a Gender Perspective In Adaptation Plans

“Climate impacts that lead to changes in agricultural production will have a major and direct impact on women because of their central role in agricultural production. Their work could be made much harder, leading to less time for other activities...There could be resulting social issues and health issues such as nutritional deficiency.”

– Solomon Islands NAPA, p. 32

As the NAPA guidelines recognize, some of the impacts of climate change are gender-specific and overall its effects are greater on women than men. Climate change will make the tasks of growing and preparing food, collecting fuel and water and providing care to the sick in the family and community more burdensome. Demands on women’s already limited time will increase; if girls are attending school, they may be pulled out to help. In addition, women’s lack of property rights and control over natural resources means that they have fewer choices when it comes to adaptation. Natural disasters shorten women’s life expectancy significantly more than men’s, with many women made more vulnerable by their lack of involvement in (or access to information about) disaster prevention and preparedness programmes.¹⁰

At the same time, women are often prepared to



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take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change as a means of risk aversion and resiliency building.¹¹ Women already play a key role in managing natural resources and, as many NAPAs note, are the repositories of traditional knowledge on sustainable practices and coping strategies. Provided with the necessary information and skills, they can be effective innovators and leaders in climate change adaptation and mitigation at the community level. Collective action is needed to meet growing challenges such as water scarcity and seasonal droughts. Adaptation plans and programmes simply will not work without women’s participation—from initial consultations through to all levels of decision-making and implementation—to ensure that their knowledge is utilized and that projects establish realistic goals.

Gender in the NAPAs

Almost all the NAPAs acknowledge the immediate and dangerous impacts of climate change on health, water, sanitation, food security, land security and even literacy and education rates, and many specify that women are among the most vulnerable in these situations. But few NAPAs look at how these relate specifically to women’s economic, political and social status.¹³ And even fewer incorporate women as key stakeholders or primary participants in NAPA activities.

The United Republic of Tanzania’s NAPA took a profound step in identifying an urgent concern:

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 28)

Population Perspective: Adapting in a Dynamic World

Population growth and urbanization is expected to occur mostly in developing countries that are already experiencing climate change impacts and have vulnerable populations, including women. NAPAs tend to focus on physical adaptation such as early warning systems, water systems and agricultural improvement, some of which relate to population. But adaptation can also be social, such as meeting demands for reproductive health services and ensuring education for girls, which empowers women to better negotiate the spacing and number of their pregnancies and increases gender equality.¹² NAPA activities—and indeed all adaptation and mitigation activities—must build on methodologies and commitments already made toward sustainable development and gender equality goals.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

“Women have to walk very long distances to fetch water. This consumes a lot of their time which could be spent on other productive activities. The burden is more on women and school children particularly girls who seem to be the main water courier” (p. 42).

However, the proposed activities in the NAPA do not directly include women or involve them as stakeholders. Raising awareness in the communities about the gendered division of labour, securing school fees so that girls are not denied an education, working directly with women on sustainable collection techniques or systems, or even setting up microfinance initiatives for women and men to build a fund for purchasing emergency water could have been included in the NAPA as gender-sensitive activities that would strengthen its efficacy.

In April 2009, the Gender Advisory Team at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) conducted a review of the 39 plans then available.¹⁴ It looked at whether gender-specific vulnerabilities were identified by the NAPA; whether these vulnerabilities were addressed by the projects, including through gender equality programming in general; and how women and men had participated in the formulation of the NAPA. The main findings included:

- Several of the NAPAs mentioned gender equality and women’s empowerment as principles. However, none demonstrated a clear commitment to these principles by mainstreaming gender throughout the document.
- About half the NAPAs identified gender-differentiated impacts from climate change, and most of these recognized women as a particularly vulnerable group.
- Very few NAPAs demonstrated a commitment to gender equality through their projects, despite the fact that several stated that gender equality and/or women’s empowerment guided the project.

Examples of Good Practice in Engendering NAPAs

Bangladesh lists gender equality as one of the criteria for selecting activities. Of 15 projects outlined, three include women among the beneficiaries. Indigenous women participated in the NAPA process.

Women’s groups participated in the development of the NAPA for **Eritrea**, and female-headed households are particularly targeted by one of the projects.

In **Malawi**, women’s NGOs were consulted during the preparation of the NAPA, and gender is one of eight criteria for selecting projects. Proposed interventions include the empowerment of women through access to microfinance, ensuring easier access to water and energy sources, and a rural electrification programme. Three priority activities (out of five) will disaggregate beneficiaries by age and sex.

“The most vulnerable groups are rural communities, especially women, children, female-headed households and the elderly. The proposed interventions include: (i) improved early warning systems (ii) recommended improved crop varieties, (iii) recommended improved livestock breeds, and (iv) improved crop and livestock management practices.” – Malawi NAPA, p. ix

Mauritania acknowledges that women are guardians of vital local and traditional knowledge and that they need to be recognized as key stakeholders in the consultation and decision-making processes (even though they have not been represented in great numbers).

Mauritania’s first approved project for implementation states:

“The programme’s objective is to improve the incomes and living conditions of the target group, women and young people, in a sustainable manner by developing seven agricultural value chains.”¹⁵

In the **Niger** NAPA, women are beneficiaries of three livestock/crop farming projects, one of which includes women’s land use and ownership as an activity. Women were one of the four ‘concentric circles’ of stakeholders/actors that were involved in national consultations.

A gender approach is emphasized in the **Senegal** NAPA and women were consulted in the process. An identified project on water efficiency will distribute kits based on criteria including gender. Forestry projects specifically mention women as beneficiaries.

One of the activities in the **Sierra Leone** NAPA (but not chosen as first to be implemented) is to carry out sensitization campaigns on the impacts of climate change on women and to train women in adaptation mechanisms. The NAPA says the inclusion of women (and children) will make the project sustainable.

Making Sure NAPAs are Gender-Responsive^o

Although most of the NAPAs have already been written, and some projects have been approved for funding, very few are in the implementation phase. This means that there is still a tremendous opportunity to influence that process, especially at the national level and in the implementing agencies. The fact that women have been regularly included as among the “most vulnerable”, and should hence be a primary target of NAPA projects, provides an entry point to ensure that their specific needs are taken into account.

NAPA Preparation

- Mainstream gender into NAPAs so that the beneficiaries include both women and men (and girls and boys when appropriate). Ensure gender equality is always a principle guiding the process and a criterion when selecting projects.
- Identify and note in all NAPAs the different impacts of climate change on women and men (girls and boys). Target their specific vulnerabilities in the projects and clearly outline them in the project objectives. State beneficiary population(s) of each project disaggregated by sex and age.



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- Facilitate the participation and representation of both women and men, particularly members of affected communities, in the process of developing NAPAs. This can be accomplished by establishing a quota for the participation of women and women’s groups. Where traditional barriers prevent women from speaking out, hold separate consultations with them to ensure effective participation.
- Design gender-sensitive capacity-building programmes at the community level to ensure that both women’s and men’s priorities—and roles and resources—are taken into account. NAPAs should recognize that women can be powerful agents of change and have knowledge and specialized skills that can be utilized at the all levels.

Refining Projects for Implementation Approval

- Include in projects explicit and measurable quantitative and qualitative targets that address gender concerns.
- Establish indicators to track progress toward project goals.
- Collect gender-disaggregated data to evaluate progress for each project. Monitor the impacts of climate change adaptation measures on women and men and the respective benefit they receive from those measures.
- Develop gender-sensitive criteria at the international level for use by governments in reporting on implementation.
- Examine project budgets through a gender-responsive lens to ensure that activities address not just women’s practical needs (e.g., drought-resistant crops, access to water) but also their strategic needs (e.g., land ownership, participation in decision-making, reproductive health).

^o Several of these recommendations are adapted from the OCHA paper.

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Financing that Makes a Difference

How much will it cost to adapt to and mitigate climate change in the coming years—and who will pay for it? As governments and global institutions debate these questions, one thing is clear: climate change will exact a high and uneven price.

While developed countries have contributed most to exacerbating climate change, developing countries face the overwhelming burden of coping with its effects: greater variability of rainfall, intensified and more frequent natural disasters, increased food and economic insecurity and negative health impacts. In many cases, the impact of climate change will be felt most severely by women, the majority of and poorest of the poor.

If developing countries are to cope with climate change, they must have financial resources; how those resources are allocated will determine, in part, how effective their adaptation and mitigation strategies are. Recognizing the differential impact of climate change on women and men is an important part of this.

Population Perspective: Climate Change, Women and Financial Crisis

Historically, financial crises and recessions have affected women most severely. As government revenues and budgets shrink, gender equality, health and infrastructure investments suffer. Family planning, reproductive health services and HIV prevention services are usually cut first. The result: maternal and newborn health complications rise, childhood nutrition declines and HIV/AIDS infections may increase. The reality is that maintaining funding for these services is a better fiscal policy in the long term. In fact, studies have shown that investing in women's health benefits the whole society. The same rationale is true for climate change, the negative impacts of which will be magnified if already scarce domestic financial resources have to be stretched to cope with its impacts and address health issues while developed countries reduce voluntary contributions to climate funds.

Needed Resources

What Will It Cost?

Coping with climate change will require a large financial commitment from the international community. Cost estimates for adaptation in developing countries range from USD 10–40 billion annually (World Bank) to three times that amount (Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—the lead intergovernmental body on this issue).

To finance mitigation, the Stern Review estimates the need to spend between 1-3 per cent of gross world product—which was USD 41 trillion in 2001—just to stabilize greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at between 500-550 ppm CO₂ equivalent.^A As more scientists agree that the ppm limit should be 350, the need for mitigation resources will increase.

The sums are enormous but represent an essential investment in our future that will benefit people and the environment while also reducing future costs from persistent and greater climate changes. Rajenda Pachauri, head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), has stated that the benefits to global health, energy security and employment from reducing GHG emissions could pay for the costs.¹

Who Will Pay?

The UNFCCC acknowledges that many developing countries are both more vulnerable to and have less capacity to deal with climate change than developed countries. For this reason, it expects developed country Parties to the Convention to financially assist developing countries in climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts, including in technology development and deployment and capacity building. Many argue that rich countries should pay most of the costs of adaptation and that this funding should be in addition to the promised official development assistance (ODA)^c of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Involving Women In the Process

Women’s voices are largely absent from policy discussions regarding climate change.² The prevalence of men in decision-making—often most visible in economic spheres—means that special efforts must be made to involve women in climate negotiations. Gender-balanced participation in stakeholder and consultative processes, especially on climate finance issues, is critical to ensuring that funds are responsive to differentiated needs and build on varied capacities.

Cost Estimates for Global Mitigation And Adaptation Measures^B

| Adaptation | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Source | Annual Cost (billions) | Notes |
| World Bank (2006) | \$10-40 | Costs to mainstream adaptation in development aid |
| Oxfam International (2007) | > \$50 | Costs in developing countries |
| UNFCCC Secretariat (2007a;2007b) | \$49 - 171 | Adaptation costs in 2030 (summarized in Table 65, p.198) |
| UNDP (2007) | \$86 | Adaptation costs in 2015 |
| Mitigation | | |
| UNFCCC Secretariat (2007a;2007b) | \$380 | Costs in 2030 to return emissions to 2007 levels. (summarized in Table 64, p. 196). |
| IPCC AR4 (2007) (SPM Table 7) | <3% | Costs as percentage of Gross World Product in 2030 for stabilizing in 445 - 535 ppm CO ₂ eq range. |
| Stern (2007) | 1% (±3%) | Costs as percentage of Gross World Product through the 2050 for stabilization in the 500 - 550 ppm CO ₂ eq |

“Contributions should be seen as restitution, not charity.”

– Bretton Woods Project³

^A ppm = parts per million; CO₂ equivalent is a measure of the global warming potential of GHG using carbon as the standard

^B Cost Estimates for Global Mitigation and Adaptation Measures, presentation by Sivan Kartha, Stockholm Environment Institute, March 2008, cited as Table 1 in Schalatek L. 2009. Gender and Climate Finance: Double Mainstreaming for Sustainable Development. Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Foundation North America, p. 8. <http://www.boell.org/docs/DoubleMainstreaming_Final.pdf>.

^C ODA is official financing to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries and provided to the countries directly (bilateral) or to multilateral institutions. See <<http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=6043>>.

How Much Will Each Country Pay?

Without a mechanism in place for determining each country's contribution, financial commitments are no more than voluntary promises. To overcome this hurdle, Oxfam devised an Adaptation Financing Index^D based on the tenets of responsibility, equity, capability and simplicity. This suggests that the United States and European Union should collectively be responsible for providing over 75 per cent of climate change finance, with Australia, Canada, Japan and the Republic of Korea contributing 20 per cent.⁴ The proposal builds on "polluter pays" and "common but differentiated" principles, which governments of developed nations have thus far shied away from.

Mobilizing Resources

Various financing mechanisms have recently emerged to help countries cope with climate change. Related funds, however, won't be enough to cover all the actions that require financing. And although developed countries have pledged close to USD 18 billion to these funds, less than 10 per cent has actually been distributed.⁵ The mechanisms involve a range of actors and sectors (public/private

and international/domestic) working to finance climate solutions.^E None of the mechanisms incorporate the gender dimensions of climate change, however, without which the financing is not equitable.

Where Do the Funds Come From?

Public funds^F mainly flow from developed to developing countries (North-South), through multilateral (e.g., UNFCCC, Global Environmental Facility—GEF, UN organizations, World Bank) and bilateral (e.g., direct donor country funds) channels.⁶ But they also sometimes flow through South-South and domestic channels. Governments in developed countries contribute to these international funds on a voluntary basis, without a clear and necessary differentiation from ODA.⁷

Private funds are wide-ranging and rely on the economic market. They flow through a network including carbon funds, exchanges, foundations and venture capital funds.⁸ Some are channelled through institutions such as the World Bank. Others may be raised through private investment in mitigation activities.⁹

Market Mechanisms

Carbon Trading: The idea of carbon trading emerged decades ago and was formalized globally in the Kyoto Protocol as a market-based approach to reducing GHG emissions. Countries and corporations can trade with or purchase emissions credits from each other. According to the World Bank, in 2007 carbon markets were projected to generate about USD 64 billion.¹⁰ But this approach has not proven to significantly reduce emissions, and the funds generated are in the control of corporate entities.

UNFCCC Mechanisms: The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), one of three market mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol,^G lets developed countries meet their emissions targets by financing projects that reduce emissions in developing countries.¹¹ It primarily funds large-scale projects that have—at best—a neutral impact on women and other vulnerable groups. Little effort is made to scale-up or aggregate smaller projects or make CDM more readily accessible to household- or community-level projects,¹² the ones that often most directly affect women.¹³ To fully realize its potential, the CDM must be refined so that measurable local economic, social and environmental benefits are assessed before projects are approved.

Allocating Resources

Who Has Access to the Funds?

It is not easy for developing countries—and the women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups who live in them—to access financing for climate change projects.¹⁴ Part of the reason is that few people know about all the existing funds (currently about 60 worldwide), and submitting a proposal is usually a lengthy process that requires specialized technical knowledge.¹⁵ In addition, a time lag between the start of a project and the availability of funds is common, preventing poor and vulnerable segments of the population from initiating projects.¹⁶

In the face of climate change and natural disasters, governments and institutions have the responsibility to mobilize resources and ensure they are allocated to those who need them most—often women. Most international funds do not have allocation guidelines. Countries need to determine priorities and build flexibility into their financing plans so that changing needs can be met.

^D http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/briefingpapers/bp104_climate_change_0705.

^E Mitigation receives higher levels of funding than adaptation. One study found a mere USD 600 million (1/34th of OECD expenditures on global climate projects) was spent on adaptation during 2000–2006, most for disaster risk reduction. The remainder of the \$17 billion spent in the same period was on mitigation in only a few countries. Source: Schalatek. (2009).

^F A schematic can be found at <http://www.climatefundsupdates.org>.

^G The other two are Joint Implementation and Emissions Trading.

PHILIPPINES

Case Study: Connecting Policies to Needs

Climate change is already being felt in the Philippines and is expected to intensify. The World Bank calculates that 85 per cent of the country's gross national product comes from sectors at risk from rising temperatures and weather variability. Agriculture, the primary livelihood for 35 per cent of the labour force, is one of the main economic sectors at risk. Erratic monsoons are disrupting planting seasons and adversely affecting crop yields, devastating livelihoods and economic security.

The consequences for women, who account for 70 per cent of paid and unpaid agricultural labour, are particularly harmful. Women own less land than men and thus have fewer assets to sell when crops collapse or fail. They are also more prone to debt as the main participants in micro-credit programmes. During food shortages they prioritize the food needs of male family members over their own. Women have little access to decision-making arenas that determine climate finance allocation, yet they have been leading their households and communities in developing coping strategies, such as food preservation, crop diversification, water harvesting and irrigation. They have also, in many cases, been forced to adopt less sustainable solutions: take out loans, sell off livestock, seek government financial assistance, reduce food consumption and migrate to find other sources of work and income.

Government response to climate change and its impact on women has been limited. Organizational mechanisms, such as the Presidential Taskforce on Climate Change, have so far proved inadequate in assessing and responding to mitigation and adaptation needs. Climate change policies have a disproportionate focus on mitigation, especially on the promotion of renewable energy. While land use, particularly related to agriculture, is the foremost source of GHG emissions in the country, very little has been done to ensure this is ecologically friendly, something women in particular have been doing for centuries. Adaptation measures are mainly geared towards large-scale infrastructure projects rather than protecting agricultural and coastal livelihoods, building food security and ensuring people's access to basic needs.

In short, women's organizations report that there is a broad disconnect between current government policies for climate change adaptation and the

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The Importance of Gender-sensitive Allocation

Supporting Health and Education:

Gender equality is a recognized global goal and particularly important in times of climate crisis. Investment in family planning, health services, and education for both girls and boys means fewer costs down the road in infant and maternal risk and mortality or information services for illiterate populations. Financing sustainable technology and energy, such as cleaner cookstoves, not only reduces emissions but also improves community health.

Investing in Women's Leadership:

Women's expertise and experience are key inputs into finance planning. Ensuring that women and gender experts participate at all levels of climate change decision-making, and have opportunities for meaningful input in the mobilization, allocation and review of financial resources, will result in more effective programmes and activities.

Managing Household-level Resources:

Investing in women means investing in families. Women tend to make decisions in favour of their children's and family's welfare and share resources more equitably within the household, while men are more likely to barter them for personal benefit.¹⁷

Building Resilient Communities:

Women tend to be better community organizers in times of crisis. For example, prior to a major hurricane, a community in Honduras trained women in early warning and disaster preparedness plans. As a result, the women were able to evacuate the town in time, saving many lives.¹⁸ "And women are more likely than men to use resources for social investment. Their empowerment in times of crisis increases their status as leaders, so that they can create stable communities."¹⁹

Targeting Food Security:

While men are more likely to be employed in large-scale agriculture for export, women make up the majority of the world's subsistence farmers. Ensuring that financial resources go to support small-scale farms not only protects communities from hunger, but also builds on women's traditional knowledge of seeds and crop rotation.

Realizing REDD Potential:

Investing in training and other capacity-building efforts for women will ensure wider efficacy and benefits from REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) activities. Scaling up or aggregating the small or micro-finance projects often directed to women would both reduce emissions and improve gender equality.²⁰

Recommendations

All Parties to the UNFCCC

- Review all multilateral climate financing mechanisms to assess their ability to mobilize and allocate funds to those most impacted by climate change and disaster.
- Develop innovative, non-debt creating multilateral financing mechanisms, such as a single global Climate Change Fund.
- Negotiate a global North-South deal on climate finance on the basis of “no climate justice without gender justice”.²¹
- Ensure all financial mechanisms and instruments associated with climate change mainstream a gender perspective at all stages including design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Implement gender budgets and gender accounting for climate change projects and programmes at national and international levels.
- Encourage financing mechanisms with guidelines, targets, capacity building and technology transfer that support sustainable forest practices in developing countries and make provisions for vulnerable populations and participatory decision-making, including for women.
- Situate climate change adaptation and mitigation financing within the broader context of development financing and development goals.
- Collect disaggregated socioeconomic data to ensure funds meet targets.

Developed Countries

- Implement the “polluter pays” and “common but differentiated” principles by providing compensatory and reparative finance to developing countries to fund climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.
- Commit to strong regulatory emissions-reduction targets rather than voluntary, market-based initiatives that generally exclude the poor.
- Support developing countries in building environmentally friendly and gender-sensitive adaptation and mitigation policies and programmes, and engage in the same at home.
- Cancel the external debts of poor countries to free up resources for mitigation and adaptation.

Developing Countries

- Ensure climate financing policies and resource allocations are responsive to people’s needs.
- Create mechanisms that guarantee women’s equal access to climate change financing, following a participatory approach.
- Direct foreign and domestic investments towards mitigation and adaptation through the provision of subsidies and incentives, especially in areas with strong gender equality and poverty reduction impacts, such as agriculture.

UNFCCC

- Engage in a systematic process of gender mainstreaming and invest in specialized research on gender and climate change.
- Use disaggregated indicators to monitor the impact of adaptation and mitigation funds, and conduct gender audits of all funding mechanisms.
- Ensure mitigation strategies fund new, green technologies and develop and enforce necessary GHG emission regulations.

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priorities and needs articulated by poor rural women. The government will need to take a more active role in climate change adaptation and mitigation by specifically allocating resources to women—a necessary component of any lasting and comprehensive climate change policy in the Philippines.

Source: Peralta, A. (2008). "Gender and Climate Change Finance: A Case Study from the Philippines". New York: WEDO/Heinrich Böll Stiftung.

“There can be no fair and equitable global climate agreement without a comprehensive global climate financing understanding. And this understanding can only be fair, equitable and comprehensive when it incorporates gender awareness and strives toward gender equitable financing solutions.”

— Liane Schalatek, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2009²²

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Educate and Advocate

For decades, women have been effectively mobilizing around environmental, political, economic and social issues. In their communities, in their countries and at the global level, they have demonstrated tremendous motivation and have achieved great successes in securing spaces for gender equality in policies and programmes. With climate change becoming one of the most urgent issues of our time, women and gender advocates around the world are taking action.

{ ad'-vo-ca-cy (n): The act of pleading or arguing in favour of something, such as a cause, idea or policy; active support.^A }

Women's Advocacy and the Environment

Setting the Stage

The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil—more commonly known as the “Earth Summit”—was momentous for women’s civil society environmental advocacy. While only 200 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had been accredited for the “official” portion of the 1985 Decade for Women Conference in Nairobi, an incredible 1,400 NGOs were officially welcomed to UNCED seven years later, represented by about 2,500 people.¹ Women’s organizations

made up only about 5 per cent of those granted access, but quantity had no impact on quality: an entire chapter on women and environmental issues (Chapter 24) was included in the outcome agreement, Agenda 21, with numerous cross-cutting gender issues woven throughout the whole agreement.

“Countries should take urgent measures to avert the ongoing rapid environmental and economic degradation in developing countries that generally affects the lives of women and children in rural areas suffering drought,

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^A This is a compilation of definitions, but most closely based on that from the Oxford English Dictionary.

Gender in the Rio Conventions

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity has strong language that can be used to make connections with climate change, such as:

“Encourage, subject to national legislation and consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the effective protection and use of the knowledge, innovations and practices of women of indigenous and local communities... and encourage fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovation and practices.”

The same is true of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification:

“Stressing the important role played by women in regions affected by desertification and/or drought, particularly in rural areas of developing countries... provide for effective participation at the local, national and regional levels of non-governmental organizations and local populations, both women and men, particularly resource users, including farmers and pastoralists and their representative organizations, in policy planning, decision-making, and implementation and review of national action programmes.”

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desertification and deforestation, armed hostilities, natural disasters, toxic waste and the aftermath of the use of unsuitable agro-chemical products.... In order to reach these goals, women should be fully involved in decision-making and in the implementation of sustainable development activities.”

—Excerpt from Agenda 21, Chapter 24, (a) 6 and 7

Moreover, of the three Conventions that were drafted in Rio, two include strong gender components: the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Convention to Combat Diversification (CCD) (see box).

Women Engaged in Climate Change

The third agreement from the 1992 Earth Summit—the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—didn’t include any gender aspects. Parties to the UNFCCC are negotiating a new, “post-2012” global agreement that will go beyond the terms of the UNFCCC’s Kyoto Protocol, which required developed countries to reduce emissions. It will encompass the major components of climate change policy, programmes and funds: adaptation, mitigation, technology and finance mechanisms, as well as a shared vision for long-term cooperative action between Parties. Women and gender advocates around the world are mobilized to ensure that

- the next phase of climate change agreements and plans
- incorporate gender considerations.

→ **Bold action now**

- While the gender aspects of climate change are of
- major concern to women’s advocates and activists,
- one key message is universal: *new, bold actions must*
- *be undertaken immediately by every country to combat*
- *climate change and adapt to its effects.* Climate change
- is a threat to all of us, but to those populations and
- countries most at risk, it is a matter of survival—and not
- in the distant future, but today. The principle of “common
- but differentiated responsibility” means that developing
- countries must be able to engage in “green” development
- activities and have support in adaptation efforts, while
- industrialized countries must urgently reduce emissions
- and pay their corresponding historical carbon debt.
- Women advocates must unite to push all Parties into
- urgent action.

→ **Protect those most vulnerable**

- Prioritization of the most vulnerable groups must include
- not only countries and regions but also populations:
- women must be addressed in all response measures
- to climate change (adaptation, mitigation, technology,
- capacity building and financing).^B

^B Most of the recommendations in this factsheet are quoted from or based on: WEDO/GGCA (2009). “WEDO/GGCA Position Paper”. Bonn, Germany: GGCA Advocacy Team. March-April.

Emphasizing Rights-Based Development

Another pivotal moment in women’s advocacy history came in Cairo in 1994 with the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which asserted that individual and human rights and well-being are linked to development concerns. The 20-year Programme of Action (PoA) focused on people’s health needs—particularly women’s—rather than demographic targets.

The specific link made by the ICPD between sustainable development and every person’s rights has direct implications for climate change risks and responses. For example, the PoA encourages governments to address lack of access to land, education, health services and reproductive rights; enhance rural development; and increase the capacity of local governments to manage urban development. With the review of the ICPD coming up, advocates should continue urging their governments to make these critical connections and build on commitments already made, such as those at the Earth Summit. Doing so recognizes the vulnerabilities that hinder sustainable development and response to climate change and also paves the way for women’s full participation.

The “International Bill of Rights for Women”—An Indispensable Building-Block

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the Convention of 1979 under which Party governments are legally bound to protect and promote women’s rights and prevent gender-based discrimination. The ICPD, CBD and UNCCD all built on the foundation of CEDAW to strengthen progress toward gender equality.

The Global Gender and Climate Alliance

Women advocates at the Earth Summit, who represented both NGOs and UN agencies, came together to make a tremendous impact on sustainable development policies and programmes. This alliance model of various actors was replicated in 2007 by the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) with the launching of the GGCA—the Global Gender and Climate Alliance—which now brings together over 30 UN agencies and civil society organizations to ensure that climate change decision-making, policies and programmes at all levels are gender-responsive. The member organizations are engaged in advocacy, resource generation and sharing, training and capacity-building, and much more. Find out at www.gender-climate.org.

- Advocates can use the legally binding provisions in
- CEDAW to push for gender-sensitive climate change policy
- at the national level. That’s where gender-disaggregated
- data should inform policy, women should be involved
- in making and implementing policy, economic benefits
- should be equally accessible, and health should be a
- paramount goal.

Women and Gender, Equality and Equity^c

The ideologies of women’s movements and gender advocacy have evolved over several decades. In the 1990s, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach took over from Women in Development (WID) programmes and projects because women were being pigeonholed in marginalized, often under-funded bureaus and projects, men’s roles were entirely absent, and gender disparities were not improving. GAD has tried to address gender differences and relationships more holistically, involving both women and men in development efforts.

But where are we now? The impacts of climate change demonstrate that women are still among the most vulnerable and must urgently be included as stakeholders, rights-holders and agents of change, alongside men. *Gender inequality* still exists—rights, responsibilities and opportunities vary based largely on sex and social constructs—and climate change exacerbates existing discrimination. *Gender equity*—that is, fairness of treatment between women and men—in representation, distribution of funds, prioritization of activities, etc., is needed to achieve gender equality and to effectively address climate change.

^cTerms in this box are based on those provided in Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA). (2009). “Module 1”. In Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change. http://www.generoyambiente.org/archivos-de-usuario/File/ecosistemas_especificos.pdf.

Women Are Agents of Change

While women are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts, they are not just victims. They have been adapting to climate change long before scientists gave it a name or policy makers began to draft a response: women feed their families, raise and educate children and care for their communities against all odds, and their innovations often improve the wider population's well-being. Women and women's organizations and cooperatives have demonstrated time and again that great change is possible.

→ Women and men have different experiences, expertise and knowledge

- Balanced participation of all relevant stakeholders, including women and men, is needed for effective planning and activity implementation.
- Incorporating and investing in women's capacity as change agents, innovators, educators, leaders and caretakers strengthens programmes and projects.
- Taking advantage of existing information networks means considering local and indigenous knowledge alongside scientific data.

Developing Effective Advocacy On Gender and Climate Change

What makes advocacy effective? Here are a few **key principles**:

Message: An advocacy message should be as precise and simple as possible and designed with a specific audience in mind. Different messages will resonate with different audiences. For example, some governments prioritize commitments to human and women's rights, while others may be more receptive to the argument that gender mainstreaming makes for more effective and efficient programming.

Ramifications: "if ... then." An effective strategy is to explain what the consequences will be if your issue is not taken into account. For example, if gender equality is not considered in climate change policy-making and programme implementation, then half the world's population may not be adequately equipped to cope. Moreover, if women's experiences, expertise and innovations are excluded, then policies may be only half as effective.

Recommendations: The point of advocacy is not only to

reveal a problem but also to offer a solution. You want policymakers to listen because you have an answer. The solution must be simple but comprehensive.

Delivery: While it's important to be professional, well-prepared and direct, gender advocates also need to emphasize that climate change affects people. Reminding policymakers that climate change has a human face—a woman's face—may help make the issue more personal.

Key Principles in Action

Apply the principles to an issue. For example:

Issue: How and where will climate change funds be allocated?

Message: Delivery of funds should prioritize women and vulnerable groups through appropriate guidelines and criteria.

Ramifications: If financing does not have a gender perspective, then women may miss out on invaluable life-saving resources.

Recommendations:

- Establish **funding criteria** that ensure women can participate directly as stakeholders;
- Allocate **a portion of funds** exclusively to the most vulnerable groups (which often include women);
- Apply **gender-responsive budgeting and audits** to ensure funds reach all stakeholders and that delivery of resources is measurable, reportable and verifiable;
- Use **gender indicators** to demonstrate that benchmarks and targets for access, allocation and budgeting are being met; and
- Provide **capacity-building** that enhances the ability of vulnerable groups to access and manage these funds.

Delivery: Share a story of women from your own region.

Engendering National Policy-making

Climate policies must be context specific and country-driven. Most climate change policies are written in national environmental ministries, but there is not really a common methodology—except for the national reporting due from Parties to the UNFCCC. While gender equality is widely considered a prerequisite for sustainable development, a UNEP survey of environmental ministries in 2006 found that only two countries were engaged in climate change activities from a gender perspective.²

Numerous other sectors apart from the environment—e.g., housing, tourism, agriculture, infrastructure, finance, commerce, health, water and labour—contribute to and are affected by climate change. This creates a lot of potential for gaps in policy-making and implementation, but also offers more opportunities for advocacy around gender issues.

→ **National policies, programmes and funds must consider gender and be in line with global commitments**

- Adaptation plans, including National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA), should be crafted and implemented to be responsive to both women and men to ensure optimum implementation.
- In areas and sectors where women often play an

important or central role, such as agriculture, water, forestry and management of other natural resources, actions must explicitly address gender.

- Disaster risk management and reduction strategies, including early-warning systems, should consider differentiated impacts and prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable populations, including women, in alignment with the Hyogo Framework for Action.
- Data should be gender-disaggregated for all actions and in all sectors related to climate change; they must be available to all stakeholders to make sure policies and programmes are effective and reaching targets.

Local-level Mobilization

Every project can have a gender perspective. Projects on health, migration/immigration, water, energy, land use, land tenure, urban planning, sustainable development, good governance, economic justice and employment—just to name a few—all have gender and climate change as cross-cutting issues.

Mobilization in Action: In 2009, WEDO partnered with ENDA (Environmental Development Action in the Third World), based in Dakar, Senegal, to launch a Gender and Climate Change Caravan (GCCC) in two rural communities. The GCCC has three overall objectives: awareness-raising, capacity-building and local-level advocacy. ENDA is working with the local development bureau to strengthen policies on sustainable energy access and use and on climate change adaptation and mitigation, and to ensure gender is included. Lessons learned and best practices will be documented and will inform the next phase of the project.



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Get Involved

Interested in these issues?

- Visit WEDO's website, sign on to the mailing list and join the listservs:
WEDOsustdev@googlegroups.com and WDACCUS@googlegroups.com
- Visit the GGCA website and find out how your organization can become a member:
www.gender-climate.org
- Join us at global negotiations and advocate on behalf of your constituency
- Sign up for one of our Gender and Climate Change Training of Trainers
- Visit the UNFPA Gender and Climate Change pages:
www.unfpa.org/pds/climate/index.html

At home, research your country's climate change policies and activities:

- National communications and plans are reported to the UNFCCC here:
unfccc.int/national_reports/items/1408.php
- National Adaptation Programmes of Action are here:
unfccc.int/cooperation_support/least_developed_countries_portal/submitted_napas/items/4585.php
- Visit your country's Ministry of Environment:
www.unep.org/resources/gov/MEnvironment.asp

At your organization, take a look at your own projects:

- Ask a gender question (Who is involved? Who is the target audience? Who benefits from your work? Who holds the knowledge?)
- Apply gender criteria to your budgets (Who receives the funds and how much?)
- Write your papers or proposals with a gender perspective

Learn more:

- www.unfccc.int—United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- www.energia.org—ENERGIA, International Network for Gender and Sustainable Energy
- www.gendercc.net—gendercc Network—Women for Climate Justice
- www.gdnonline.org—The Gender and Disaster Network
- www.genderandwater.org—The Gender and Water Alliance
- www.unisdr.org/eng/risk-reduction/gender/rd-gender-eng.htm—International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, gender pages



References

¹ Haney, M. P. (2005). "Women's NGOs at UN Conferences: The 1992 Rio Conference on the Environment as a Watershed Event". *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*, 27(1&2). October; and United Nations. (1997). *UN Briefing Papers/The World Conferences: Developing Priorities for the 21st Century*. UN Department of Public Information (DPI). <www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.html>.

² United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). (2006). "Gender Mainstreaming Among Environmental Ministries". *Government Survey*. December. <www.unep.org/civil_society/PDF_docs/UNEP-survey-reportJan-07.pdf>.



Notes