



Summary Report of the Wikigender Online Discussion

How can gender equality be better integrated into climate change policies and programmes in order to ensure sustainable development?

29 May-8 June 2012

Organised by Wikigender and the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality

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Summary

How can gender equality be better integrated into climate change policies and programmes in order to ensure sustainable development?

The online discussion allowed a rich exchange of views and examples on the interlinkages between gender equality and climate change and identified some proposals to better integrate the gender dimension into climate change policies and programmes in order to ensure sustainable development.

A total of twenty-two lengthy and detailed responses provided an interesting input for the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (Gendernet) 14 June workshop on gender equality, climate change and green growth.

“Although the impacts of climate change on women have been recognised, gender equality advocates seem to have been reluctant to tackle issues related to climate change and green growth. (...) As a result gender equality and women’s rights dimensions are often lacking in the global political debates and inadequately addressed in agencies’ programming efforts. That’s why members of the DAC Network on Gender Equality decided that it was timely to come to grips with the key issues in the days immediately prior to the Rio+20 Conference.”

Patti O’Neill, OECD

At the 14 June workshop, Gendernet members will share innovative policy and programming and take this learning back to their own agencies so that they can more effectively address the challenges and opportunities of integrating gender equality and women’s empowerment in their agencies’ responses at the local, national and global levels.

Key highlights

The key emerging themes were:

1. **A growing body of evidence:** there are many studies and reports addressing the gender and climate dimensions together, highlighting the need for a gender perspective to inform climate change responses.
2. **The gendered impact of disasters:** the impact of disasters related to climate change disproportionately affects women and they are more likely to be the victims than men.
3. **Embedding a gender equality perspective in climate change responses:** simply adding “women” to existing policies is not enough: we need a gender equality perspective throughout the green economy debates.
4. **Linking gender equality to Rio+20:** gender equality and climate change are best addressed in the context of sustainable development and country examples should be used to influence Rio+20 processes.
5. **Drawing on women’s expert knowledge of ecosystems:** women’s knowledge and leadership should be harnessed in responses to climate change at local, national and global levels.
6. **Connecting the local to the global:** we need to adopt a pragmatic approach by scaling up to the global level the innovative women-led projects that work at local level.

7. **Addressing underlying discriminatory social norms:** persistent discriminatory social norms that affect women's social and economic status need to be addressed in order to empower women in mitigating and adapting to the negative effects of climate change.
8. **Women's access to resources:** improving access to and control over productive resources for women is a key aspect to empower women and mitigate the negative aspects of climate change.
9. **Unpaid work, time poverty and associated consequences:** women's burden of unpaid work and time poverty is exacerbated in the context of climate change.

This summary report only highlights the key emerging themes from the discussion. Please find a detailed summary for each of these themes in the main body of the report below.

The full comment thread is attached as an appendix and the full transcript of the online discussion is available from the [discussion page](#).

Background and Purpose

"Climate change is increasingly being recognised as a global crisis, but responses to it have so far been overly focused on scientific and economic solutions, rather than on the significant human and gender dimensions. As weather patterns become increasingly unpredictable and extreme events such as floods, heat waves or natural disasters become more common, the poorest women and men in the global South – who have contributed the least to the problem – find their livelihoods most threatened yet have the weakest voice and least influence on climate policy."

BRIDGE, Gender and Climate Change,
Supporting Resources Collection (2011)

Responding to the issue of climate change is central to sustainable development. In the lead-up to Rio+20, it is essential to draw attention to and reinforce the linkages between climate change, sustainable development and gender equality issues. Indeed, progress in these areas will depend upon joint approaches to addressing climate change and gender equality.

Climate change impacts men and women differently, yet both men and women can harness their respective capacities to act as active agents of change in response to this issue. In the rural areas of developing countries, it is often the woman's role to collect water, secure energy for the household and to undertake subsistence farming activities. Women are also the primary producers of food. Consequently, when the repercussions of climate change hit rural areas, it increases the burden on women's responsibilities, meaning women must bear the brunt of most of these challenges. It is therefore vital to include a gender perspective in all climate change policies and programming and to ensure that both women and men can contribute their knowledge to solutions.

This online discussion is an opportunity to gather the views of the Wikigender community on how we can work together to ensure that gender equality is better integrated into climate change policies and programming, since this is key to a sustainable future.

The discussion was organised in the lead up to the upcoming Rio+20 Summit and in particular as input to the 14 June workshop on gender equality, climate change and green growth of the 10th OECD [DAC Network on Gender Equality](#) (Gendernet) meeting on 14 June 2012. Gendernet is the only international forum where gender experts from development co-operation agencies meet to share best practices and to define common approaches in support of gender equality.

The primary objective of the Gendernet workshop in Paris is to increase Gendernet members' understanding of issues related to climate change and green growth in developing countries so that they can better advise on the gender equality/women's empowerment dimensions of agency approaches to these issues.

This Wikigender discussion therefore provided an opportunity for researchers, donors, civil society, Wikigender partners and interested public to provide their insights into this issue.

Organisation of the discussion

The online discussion, which ran from 29 May until 8 June 2012, was co-organised by Wikigender and the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality and was hosted on the Wikigender platform. Participants were invited to comment on:

How can gender equality be better integrated into climate change policies and programmes in order to ensure sustainable development?

With the following guiding questions:

- Discrimination against women in terms of access to and control over resources such as land significantly hampers their ability to tackle the negative effects of climate change. What are some other challenges that women face in this regard? Are there examples of successful approaches to ensuring that women and men have an equal voice in decision-making processes on climate change and in broader governance processes?
- What are the priority issues related to gender and climate change: access to land and resources; food security and sustainable agriculture; access to energy; water policies? Can you provide examples of innovative and transformative local and grassroots-level initiatives that address these priority issues?
- What can be done to better influence global processes such as Rio+20 and to effectively integrate gender equality dimensions into Rio+20 and related discussions?
- What actions could governments, donors, UN bodies and civil society take to better incorporate gender equality and women's empowerment into policies, programmes and financing for climate change?

Key themes emerging from the discussion

1. A growing body of evidence

“The new BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Climate Change (...) takes as its starting point the fact that, while there are some promising signs that gender is being taken into account in climate change policy and programmes, much more needs to happen.”

Alyson Brody

Many participants pointed to various studies and reports that address the gender and climate dimensions together and highlight the need for a gender perspective to inform climate change responses. For example, the Climate Change and Gender Justice book from the “Working in Gender and Development” series (Oxfam and Practical Action Publishing) presents many case studies of women and men in developing countries adapting their lifestyles to ensure survival when facing climate change. The book also examines how gender-equality concerns should be integrated into international negotiations and agreements on climate change mitigation and adaptation to ensure that poor women are not further disadvantaged. A new report on Gender Equality and Climate Change by the European Institute for Gender Equality was also noted. The report stresses the need for all policies to include gender-sensitive indicators and reviews the progress made by European Union Member States in implementing the “Women and the Environment” area of concern from the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace. The novelty is that

“it is the first EU-wide report on gender equality and climate change which provides comparable data at the EU level. Furthermore it introduces the first indicators to support policy makers in measuring progress in climate.”

Beatriz CampMa

2. The gendered impact of disasters

“Women and men experience different vulnerabilities and cope with natural disasters differently; therefore, an increase in the magnitude and frequency of natural disasters will have different implications for men and women.”

Rekha Pande

Participants referred to the impact of disasters in South Asia, Latin America and the Pacific and how they have disproportionately affected women. High-density populations living in low-lying coastal areas are particularly at risk, and affected populations include the poor, young and the elderly. However, women are estimated to constitute 80 per cent of climate refugees, and the number of displaced people as a consequence of climate change continues to increase, both at domestic and international levels. Participants pointed out to the fact that women are more affected by this phenomenon:

“Women (...) comprise 20 million of the 26 million people estimated to have been displaced due to climate change.”

Mahfuja Parven

Another consequence of climate-related disasters is male-out migration in South Asia, which increases the burden of work for women. Also,

“crop and livestock production changes could affect the gendered division of labour and possibly have negative effects on both men’s and women’s incomes.”

Rekha Pande

Finally, one example showed why, in some regions of the world, women are more likely to be victims than men in climate-related disasters: in the 1991 flood of Bangladesh, there were 5 times more female than male victims because women could not swim due to restrictive clothing or could not leave their home unless a male relative was accompanying them, whereas men knew about the danger as they met in public spaces. This highlights the role of discriminatory social norms. The Pacific is located in the “Ring of Fire”, a region highly exposed to natural disasters such as floods, tropical cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis and storm surges, and agricultural production is a fundamental component of the economy in many countries such as Papua New Guinea, mainly undertaken by women. However, women in the region are excluded from decision-making processes when it comes to developing measures that prevent and minimise the impacts of climate change, despite being the ones most affected by the phenomenon. In this context, there is a need to also engage men to allow for women’s expression of their rights and needs. In this respect,

“collecting data on resilience and vulnerability post disaster would be very helpful in the policy realm”.

Angela Hariche

3. Embedding a gender equality perspective in climate change responses

One participant stressed that gender equality should be included in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreements, in alignment with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action.

“At the heart of this is the need for global policy on climate change, particularly the UNFCCC, to integrate a gender perspective throughout and not simply add 'women' to existing policies.”

Alyson Brody, BRIDGE

“In Zambia increasing water levels in a local river restrict access of women to fishing thus depriving them from an important source of income and affecting the quality of the women’s lives. Therefore integrating gender sensitivity into national and international environmental policies is of great importance to ensure more sustainable development.”

Anna Eliseeva

Another participant referred to a study from Sweden which found different consumption patterns amongst men and women, commenting that

“climate change can constitute an opportunity to improve the quality of life of people globally. Nevertheless, in order for this to happen we need to bring gender equality to the development agenda and bring out female perceptions of well-being.”

Francesca Francavilla

A few participants mentioned the links between gender equality, climate change and population dynamics, drawing attention to the need for climate change responses to address women’s reproductive rights including universal access to reproductive health, family planning and the empowerment of women and young people.

“Developing forward-looking plans that take into consideration projected population dynamics will be crucial to achieve sustainable development as well as to mitigate and adapt to climate change and natural disasters.”

Janet Jensen, UNFPA

4. Linking gender equality to Rio+20

“One way to influence RIO+20 and others is to point out countries like Uganda where women and men are being affected. In this case deforestation is the issue and women are particularly on the front line because they are the ones who are collecting the wood. Energy efficient stoves are being introduced.”

Angela Hariche

Several participants highlighted that there is already consensus on the impacts of climate change on women and that gender equality should be a top priority for sustainable development.

“Social equity, gender equality and environmental justice must form the heart of sustainable development and of the outcomes of the Rio+20 UN conference in 2012. Twenty years after the first Rio conference, great social and economic inequities still remain. These inequities especially affect women and children, who make up the majority of those living in poverty.”

Sylvie Fanta

Another participant stated that while climate change is a global issue, it is affecting communities locally and we should use country examples to influence Rio+20 processes. For example in Uganda, deforestation is an issue and women are on the frontline as they are the ones collecting the wood. In this case, energy-efficient stoves are being introduced. Other actions that could be taken are a deeper gender analysis of the Kyoto Protocol mechanism and their impacts, such as the Clean Development Mechanism, and improved data collection. One participant raised some concern that while Rio+20 is particularly focused on a greener world, there is a danger that gender dimensions will only be mentioned symbolically, with no real scope for transformation.

5. Drawing on women's expert knowledge of ecosystems

"Women and girls are not only more vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change such as forced migration, but they also hold significant knowledge and expertise to inform responses."

Somali Cerise

Participants gave some positive examples of how women's knowledge can be used to build community resilience and mitigate the urgent impacts of climate change. One example was taken from an AusAID publication: during a drought in the Federated States of Micronesia, local women used their knowledge of island hydrology to find potable water, by digging a new well that reached the freshwater lens. Another example was that women who are responsible for collecting shellfish can also significantly contribute to more efficient programmes aiming at preventing coastal erosion. Women's knowledge and leadership need to be consistently considered in responses to climate change at local, national and global levels:

"It is time to make full use of the available knowledge and leadership to mitigate the urgent impacts of climate change".

Patti O'Neill, OECD

"Women who combine opportunity & leadership with sustainable, ethical business are the solution!"

goGIRLglobal (via Twitter)

"A good example of a programme is The Green Belt Movement, a Kenyan women's NGO that began to plant trees at the grassroots level in 1977 to tackle the problems of deforestation, soil erosion and water scarcity. Trees are planted by voluntary networks of women and their families. They undergo training in food production, processing and marketing, apiculture, and the planting and care of trees — activities that aim to empower women to generate an income of their own. The programme makes an overall contribution to climate mitigation, as emissions are hindered and absorbed because existing trees are cared for and new ones planted. A contribution is also made to climate adaptation, as the communities learn about the sustainable use of scarce resources and about sustainable agricultural techniques."

Anonymous

6. Connecting the local to the global

"While climate change is a global issue, it is affecting communities locally."

Angela Hariche

Several participants gave examples of successful and sustainable grassroots initiatives, showing what is possible. In particular, one participant insisted on the need to take on a pragmatic approach and stimulate the innovative proposals for engaging women so that they can lead and show the way of what works at local level. This is all the more since despite the broad acknowledgement that women bear the highest impact of climate change and its variability, the message has not succeeded in reaching policy makers so that they allocate the necessary resources to empower women. Putting

women at the centre of the argument is clear evidence that does not suffice. We need to connect what is happening at community level with the global level, where top-level decisions are being made.

“Let us communicate this message to those in decision making so that they can support this to happen! Otherwise, what we call community interventions will remain rhetoric at the amorphous “community” level!”

Donald Kasongi

Another participant, referring to the BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Climate Change, reinforced this argument by stating that climate change responses are also an opportunity to transform gender inequalities from the local to the global level. For example, the Community Awareness Centre in the Indian Himalayas encourage women and men to adopt more environmentally sustainable ways of living, and when community members realised there was no women involved in decision-making processes for forest management, a local woman who had never been involved in politics presented herself for the role and won. This initiative at local level inspired a whole new generation of women and men to think differently about women’s roles and capabilities. The message coming from this example is that we need to learn from what is working on the ground and focus on adapting and scaling up such successful initiatives.

7. Addressing underlying discriminatory social norms

“A major challenge to implementing gender-sensitive responses to climate change is the persistence of underlying discriminatory social norms which shape women’s social and economic status.”

Somali Cerise

One participant argued that women are often most badly affected by climate change due to

“unequal power relations that place them in a disadvantaged social position. Most of the issues [mentioned throughout the online discussion] are not new – they are rooted in women’s unequal access to land, water, credit (...). Climate change exacerbates and highlights these issues in ways that remind us of the need to address their root causes and tackle social gender norms.”

Alyson Brody, BRIDGE

Many participants pointed out to the persistence of discriminatory social norms, which has a significant impact on women’s contribution to mitigating and adapting to the negative effects of climate change: women are often limited in their command over natural resources such as land, are seen as less able to lead and therefore to have their voice heard in key climate change decision-making forums.

“Women’s access to food is also shaped by their role in the household and their rights to the family’s resources – in the context of climate change resources such as income from farming or wage income used to purchase food, means that women’s access to food is at even greater risk.”

Somali Cerise

Therefore there is a great need to address these underlying drivers of gender inequality, which includes: women's unequal status in the family, violence against women, women's access to resources and women's lack of participation in decision-making. One example of successfully involving women in projects is the Hills Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project in Nepal, in which women advocated for equal opportunities in access to forest land and related production resources.

8. Women's access to resources

"In the rural areas there is an increased difficulty in accessing resources, in particular, fuel wood and water, which creates an increased workload for women."

Rekha Pande

A number of participants insisted that improving access to resources for women – such as fuel, wood and water – is a key aspect to mitigate the negative aspects of climate change, especially as it is closely linked with food security and a sustainable future for all. For example, research from the OECD Development Centre showed that in countries where women had no rights to own land or access credit, cereal yields were lower. And

"in countries where women lacked any right to own land, there are on average 60% more malnourished children, compared to countries where women have some or equal access".

Wikigender

These findings are especially true for rural women in developing countries. There was a consensus that when climate change hits, the rural poor are the most affected and agricultural production as well as food security are threatened, so there needs to be a gender perspective in all policies and programmes for climate change. This also means that discriminatory social institutions such as access to resources should be addressed in order to fully include women in the decision-making and broader governance processes on climate change.

9. Unpaid work, time poverty and associated consequences

"As the time they [women] require in order to do their home tasks increases, their chances of going to school reduce and the probability that they can perform and economic activity. This has important effects in terms of women empowerment and bargaining power inside the household."

Camila Mejia

Besides the broad consensus that women and men are affected by climate change in different ways and respond to it differently, another idea that emerged is that in the rural areas of developing countries, women are the ones spending the most time on household chores, including collecting water for the family and the community. Women's burden of unpaid work and time poverty is exacerbated in the context of climate change. For example in Uganda, due to irregular rainy seasons, women are forced to walk longer distances to fetch water.

“In some parts of Africa women have to walk as much as 10 miles every day in order to fetch water. According to Water Aid, climate change is increasing and exacerbating the dry seasons, forcing women to walk even twice this distance.”

Camila Mejia

Participants highlighted the negative consequences of women’s burden of unpaid work: while fetching water, girls and women are devoting less time to schooling and education. This has enormous implications for future generations of women in being able to address the vulnerability and limited agency that they experience, as the virtuous circle of stereotypical roles of women continues. However, if governments put more attention to this issue of time use of women, there will be more women completing their education and able to take a lead to break such cultural barriers. Also, if girls are engaged in the implications of climate change from an early age, there will also be more female representation in climate change discussions.

Bringing it all together

How can gender equality be better integrated into climate change policies and programmes in order to ensure sustainable development?

“Have we become trapped in a cycle of thinking about gender and climate change only in terms of women? Certainly women are often most badly affected by climate change but this is because of the unequal power relations that place them in a disadvantaged social position (...) One of our arguments is that climate change responses not only need to take women's and men's different needs into account; they provide opportunities to transform gender inequalities from the local to the global level. Many organisations are already doing this on the ground and we need to learn from these examples and focus on adapting and scaling up what is already working.”

Alyson Brody, BRIDGE

This online discussion was an opportunity to gather many different voices on how to ensure that gender equality is better integrated into climate change policies and programmes so as to guarantee sustainable development.

“Putting women at the centre of the argument, the linkages between women and resource ownership, decision making, space for innovation, opportunities and being agents of their own are still not given the attention in decision making (...) I tend to believe it is not too complex to understand that we need to stimulate the pragmatic and innovative proposals for engaging women so that they can lead and show us the way towards what works under varying local circumstances. Let us communicate this message to those in decision making so that they can support this to happen!”

Donald Kasongi

It is clear that gender equality matters in climate change policies, however, there are concerns that gender dimensions in the Rio+20 Conference may be tokenistic and that gender equality advocates are still often reluctant to tackle issues related to climate change financing and green growth. However some promising ideas and examples were brought to the discussion, such as making sure that women's knowledge and expertise is harnessed in situations of climate variability, ensuring that women's burden of unpaid work is not an obstacle to their economic empowerment, or paying more attention to the discriminatory social norms that hinder women's full participation in dealing, together with men, with climate change mitigation and adaptation.

“If climate change responses are truly gender-sensitive, they need to address these underlying drivers of gender inequality. This requires addressing women's unequal status in the family, addressing violence against women, ensuring women's access to resources such as land and credit, supporting women's equal participation in decision-making at all levels and ensuring women have equal access to public space.”

Somali Cerise

Annex 1: Background Reading

- [Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Climate Change](#) (BRIDGE 2011)
- [OECD DAC Policy Statement for the Rio+20 Conference](#) (OECD 2012)
- [Policy Statement from the OECD Environment Policy Committee Ministerial Meeting on 29-30 March 2012 to the Rio+20 Conference](#)
- [Climate Change Adaptation: At the Core of Development Co-operation](#) (OECD 2009)
- [Climate Change and Development: Key principles to inform climate change financing](#) (OECD Factsheet 2009)
- [Gender-responsive strategies on climate change: recent progress and ways forward for donors](#) (Otzelberger 2011)
- [State of World Population 2009: Facing a Changing World: Women, Population and Climate](#) (UNFPA 2009)
- [UNFPA and Rio+20](#) (UNFPA)
- [Population Dynamics and Sustainable Development](#) (UNFPA 2011)
- [Gender and climate change](#) (Wikigender)
- [Women and the Environment](#) (Wikigender)
- [Women and Biodiversity](#) (Wikigender)
- [Women and Disasters](#) (Wikigender)

Annex 2: Comments thread

Showing 22 of 22 comments



Donald kasongi [3 days ago](#)

While there is broad acknowledgement that women bear the highest impact of climate change and variability, communicating this message to policy makers has not succeeded to deliver the expected changes in decision making on allocation of resources, empowerment and ensuring that evidence-based gender responsive strategies are guiding future scenarios. There is perhaps more conceptual appreciation that needs to be processed to be ready to use by those in corridors of decisions about resources for development.

Women, and probably by extension women and children in most set of communities are evidently emerging as vulnerable, underserved and excluded. Putting women at the centre of the argument, the linkages between women and resource ownership, decision making, space for innovation, opportunities and being agents of their own are still not given the attention in decision making. The accelerating impacts of climate change on communities are evidently signaling the need for pragmatic approaches that should be allowed to happen as we struggle to dig for whatever evidence that makes sense to decision makers.

I tend to believe it is not too complex to understand that we need to stimulate the pragmatic and innovative proposals for engaging women so that they can lead and show us the way towards what works under varying local circumstances. Let us communicate this message to those in decision making so that they can support this to happen! Otherwise, what we call community interventions will remain rhetoric at the amorphous “community” level!



SomaliCerise [4 days ago](#)

It is clear from the contributions to this discussion so far that a gender-sensitive climate change response is critical. Women and girls are not only more vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change such as forced migration, but they also hold significant knowledge and expertise to inform responses. Why then are we getting stuck? A major challenge to implementing gender-sensitive responses to climate change is the persistence of underlying discriminatory social norms which shape women’s social and economic status. Despite women having an important role as innovators in the response to climate change, women’s command over natural resources such as land is often undermined by discriminatory social norms or practices. Perceptions of women leaders as less able or less authoritative may mean that women’s voices and

perspectives are left out of key climate change decision-making forums. Some studies have found that women's access to food is also shaped by their role in the household and their rights to the family's resources – in the context of climate change resources such as income from farming or wage income used to purchase food, means that women's access to food is at even greater risk. If climate change responses are truly gender-sensitive, they need to address these underlying drivers of gender inequality. This requires addressing women's unequal status in the family, addressing violence against women, ensuring women's access to resources such as land and credit, supporting women's equal participation in decision-making at all levels and ensuring women have equal access to public space. Tackling these deeply entrenched social norms requires a multi-pronged approach including legal reform, economic incentives, community mobilization, networks and awareness-raising activities. While change will take time, ensuring women's perspectives are included will bear results. For example, in Nepal the Hills Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project regenerated forest land with particular attention to households headed by women. As a result women formed associations advocating for equal opportunities in access to forest land and related production resources. Group meetings organized as a part of project brought to discussion the questions of domestic violence, raised awareness of equal legal rights and ensured women's greater involvement in household decision-making. Ensuring these issues were addressed as part of the project ensured that the project was able to benefit from women's participation.



Alyson Brody (Manager, BRIDGE) [4 days ago](#)

I have enjoyed reading all the comments and am looking forward to the GENDERNET workshop on gender, climate change and green growth next week. I would like to provide a few questions as food for thought.

The new BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Climate Change (see link below) takes as its starting point the fact that, while there are some promising signs that gender is being taken into account in climate change policy and programmes, much more needs to happen. Questions we raise include:

- Have we become trapped in a cycle of thinking about gender and climate change only in terms of women? Certainly women are often most badly affected by climate change but this is because of the unequal power relations that place them in a disadvantaged social position. Most of the issues we mention are not new - they are rooted in women's unequal access to land, water, credit, education and other resources, and in the expectation that they will take on the burden of care work. Climate change exacerbates and highlights these issues in ways that remind us of the need to address their root causes and tackle social gender norms.

One of our arguments is that climate change responses not only need to take women's and men's different needs into account; they provide opportunities to transform gender inequalities from the local to the global level. Many organisations are already doing this on the ground and we need to learn from these examples and focus on adapting and scaling up what is already working. For example, the Community Awareness Centre high in the Indian Himalayas is working in participatory ways with local men and women to encourage more climate smart, environmentally sustainable ways of living.

Through these processes they have raised awareness of gender inequalities and significant changes have begun to happen as a result. For example, when community members realised that no women were involved in decision-making processes for forest management, a local woman in her 50s, who had never before been involved in politics, decided to run for Panchayat head, and succeeded in winning. She has not only brought women's voices to these processes - she has inspired a new generation of men and women to think differently about women's roles and capabilities.

- Second, while climate change adaptation approaches are starting to take gender issues on board, where is the gender awareness in climate change mitigation? The market-based system that is based on trading of carbon credits will continue to exclude women unless measures are taken to make them more transparent and equitable. At the heart of this is the need for global policy on climate change, particularly the UNFCCC, to integrate a gender perspective throughout and not simply add 'women' to existing policies.

Finally, while hope for Rio + 20 are high - particularly with its focus on a greener world, there is a real danger that any gender dimensions will again be tokenistic, without any real scope for transformation.



Chadwickhannah [4 days ago](#)

Women make up a disproportionate portion of the world's poor and in many countries they carry the burden of agricultural activities as well as household domestic and reproductive duties. Women are highly affected by climate change in these respects, due to this pre-existing vulnerability that they face which is exacerbated by the negative impacts of climate change and their lack of agency in many contexts. In addition, due to the relationship of mothers' well-being, including nutrition, health, safety among other factors, to that of their children, the combination of these factors - vulnerability, limited agency and climate change - can have a flow on effect to the next generation.

This is particularly the case in the Pacific where agricultural production is a fundamental component of some economies and where in countries such as Papua New Guinea, much of this work is undertaken by women. Located in the 'Ring of Fire' however, the region is highly exposed to natural disasters including floods, tropical cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis and storm surges. Due to this existing exposure and Pacific Island countries' limited physical size, natural resources and their susceptibility to changes in sea level, they are extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Within the region, whilst the role of women in decision making from household to parliamentary levels varies, in a significant number of countries there is extreme gender inequality within these processes. This discrepancy is counterproductive when it comes to developing measures to prevent and minimise the impacts of climate change as it fails to engage the voice of those most affected and in doing so risks developing ineffective responses, allowing impacts to persist and ultimately threatening household economies and well-being.

Measures to address and mitigate the social impacts of climate change, need to be gender sensitive and they need to recognise and factor in the added vulnerability that women as a population group face as well as the flow on effects to their children. As mentioned in a previous posting, educating women of their rights is important, however it is also necessary to educate and engage men to allow for the expression of these rights and needs.



[Janet Jensen](#) 4 days ago

Clearly, people and population dynamics (including migration and urbanization as well as changes in population size and structure) are germane to any discussion of sustainability. Developing forward-looking plans that take into consideration projected population dynamics will be crucial to achieve sustainable development as well as to mitigate and adapt to climate change and natural disasters.

But population dynamics are not carved in stone. The policies we pursue today will determine whether we live in a world of 8 or 9 or 10 billion by 2050, and those numbers will have very different consequences. We need policies that ensure:

- Universal access to reproductive health, including family planning
- Empowerment of women and young people
- Investments in education
- Development strategies informed by population data and projections.



@beatrzcm [5 days ago](#)

New report on Gender Equality and Climate Change by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Text by EIGE (<http://ow.ly/boyR1>) Climate change is one of the key challenges of our times. Saving the climate for today and for the future generations belongs to one of the European Union priorities. Research shows that climate change affects women and men differently. Confronted with this challenge, women and men also have different needs, priorities and possibilities, where the voice of women is not sufficiently heard and taken into account. Therefore, to develop and maintain a sustainable and effective response to climate change, a gender approach and gender-sensitive indicators must be an integral part of all policies and actions at all levels. The report prepared by EIGE reviews the progress made by the European Union Member States in the implementation of one of the twelve areas of concern of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace (BPfA), namely of area K: Women and the Environment. It is the first EU-wide report on gender equality and climate change which provides comparable data at the EU level. Furthermore, it introduces the first indicators to support policy makers in measuring progress in climate. The report can be found here: <http://ow.ly/boKuY>



Gemmaruthblog [1 week ago](#)

[@gemmarogers1](#) : there needs to be more female representation in climate change. convos + information about implication taught from a younger age #genderclimate



Francesca Franvilla [1 week ago](#)

A recent research from the Swedish government on gender and sustainable development points out that climate change can constitute an opportunity to improve the quality of life of people globally. Nevertheless, in order for this to happen we need to bring gender equality to the development agenda and to bring out female perceptions of well-being. To this end, taking a gender equality perspective is needed in order to replace outdated carbon-intensive models of development with innovative thinking that can shift the focus (from purely economic or environmental considerations) to aspects of well-being that are more sustainable.

Evidence from Sweden shows that women and men tend to consume in ways that confirm traditional gender roles. While women tend more to purchase basic essentials in the form of less expensive but recurring consumer goods for the whole family, men buy expensive capital goods and also tend to own the family residence. Therefore, the fact that men tend to have more power,

resources and rights, gives them more freedom to choose lifestyles and consumption, thus having a greater impact in shaping a wider culture of consumption. In this sense, we need to acknowledge the role that gender plays in shaping consumption, health and well-being. These are core social dimensions of sustainable development often missing from green economy debates.

You can visit the report on gender and climate change at: <http://www.unrisd.org/news/joh...>



Wikigender ★ [1 week ago](#)

Updates from Twitter on the online discussion!

[@GaDjournal](#): check out their book on Climate Change and Gender Justice <http://t.co/m0EP9CtO> with many case studies showing how women and men in developing countries are experiencing climate change and describe their efforts to adapt their ways of making a living to ensure survival. The book also examines how gender-equality concerns should be integrated into international negotiations and agreements on climate change mitigation and adaptation to ensure that new policies do not disadvantage poor women, but rather deliver them some benefits.

[@goGIRLglobal](#): women who combine opportunity & leadership with sustainable, ethical business are the solution!

[@neBhasikoro](#): ensure women worldwide can control own reproduction - then watch overpopulation go into reverse



Patti O'Neill [1 week ago](#)

Although the impacts of climate change on women have been recognised, gender equality advocates seem to have been reluctant to tackle issues related to climate change financing and green growth. Perhaps these topics are perceived of as too technical or too caught up in the complexities of global negotiations. As a result gender equality and women's rights dimensions are often sorely lacking in the global political debates and inadequately addressed in agencies' programming efforts. That's why members of the DAC Network on Gender Equality decided that it was timely to come to grips with the key issues in the days immediately prior to the Rio+20 Conference. At the GENDERNET workshop on 14 June, members will share innovative policy and programming – and take this learning back to their own agencies so that they can more effectively address the challenges and opportunities of integrating gender equality and women's

empowerment into their agencies' responses at the local, national and global levels. Even though women and children are often thought of as the victims of climate change, an AusAID publication rightly draws attention to how women's knowledge can be used to build community resilience. It uses the example of a drought in the Federated States of Micronesia (made up of vulnerable small islands) where local women, knowledgeable about island hydrology, found potable water by digging a new well that reached the freshwater lens. Similarly, because women are often responsible for collecting shellfish close to the water's edge, women's observations could add significant value to programmes protecting against coastal erosion. It is time to make full use of the available knowledge and leadership to mitigate the urgent impacts of climate change.

Patti O'Neill



David Khoudour-Castéras [1 week ago](#)

One of the many consequences of climate change is a significant increase in the number of displaced people, either at the domestic or international level. I am wondering whether women are more likely to be affected by such phenomenon.



Camila Mejia [1 week ago](#)

In terms of gender equality and climate change one important subject to take into consideration is time-use. In most developing countries the task of collecting water falls to women. In some rural parts of Africa when have to walk as much as 10 miles every day in order to fetch water. According to Water Aid, climate change is increasing and exacerbating the dry seasons forcing women to walk even twice this distance.

This has important consequences in terms of time-use for women. As the time they require in order to do their home tasks increases, their chances of going to school reduce and the probability that they can perform and economic activity. This has important effects in terms of women empowerment and bargaining power inside the household.

As climate change progresses we can expect that this will have important consequences in terms of gender equality for future generations of women.



Rekha Pande [1 week ago](#)

Today, addressing the threat of climate change is a current global priority. There is broad consensus that climate change is best addressed in the context of sustainable development.

Unless it is effectively dealt with, climate change will have a dramatic impact on the environment and on economic and social development.

South Asia is among the world's most vulnerable regions to both natural and human made disasters. The region recorded 15 out of the 40 major disasters in the world from 1970 to 2000. Over the last 25 years, disasters have killed nearly half a million people in South Asia besides inflicting colossal financial damages. We have had earthquakes, Tsunamis, famines and floods on a regular basis. It is high time that we paid attention to Climate change and understand the connection of climate change and gender. Understanding how the different social expectations, roles, status, and economic power of men and women affect, and are affected differently by, climate change will improve actions taken to reduce vulnerability and combat climate change in the developing world. Women and men experience different vulnerabilities and cope with natural disasters differently; therefore, an increase in the magnitude and frequency of natural disasters will have different implications for men and women.

In the South Asian regions, we are already seeing an impact of climate change. In many regions, male out-migration happens due to resource shortages, generating increased work for women and due to globalization and its impact we are also seeing female out-migration. In the rural areas there is an increased difficulty in accessing resources, in particular, fuel wood and water, which creates an increased workload for women. Crop and livestock production changes could affect the gendered division of labor and possibly have negative effects on both men's and women's incomes. As sea levels rise, the livelihoods of people living in low-lying coastal zones are threatened, flooding levels increase, erosion is accelerated, wetlands and mangroves are threatened, and seawater intrudes into freshwater resources.

These impacts put further strain on limited resources and settlements. Women's informal rights to resources are decreasing and in many places have disappeared as access to land natural resources dwindles due to climate change.

We need to prioritize this issue and pay attention to it. There is a need to take up major projects that look into this issue. We need to understand how men and women in farm households perceive and experience climatic shifts and how this is linked to food security. There is a need to develop a replicable methodology for examining and assess the gender dimensions of responses to climatic variability and change in both rural and urban areas.

Rekha Pande

University of Hyderabad, India



Pedro Sousa [1 week ago](#)

I'm curious about the issue of land ownership and access to credit by women in developing countries. Particularly, given the data that Wikigender shows us regarding this issue. Perhaps most of these women are not aware of their own rights, being excluded by this system without even knowing it. One would think that these cultural barriers are seen in every part of society, also in government. So, which path is more effective to incentivize equal rights for women in these scenarios? International community pressure or NGOs work and education? both, I guess is the answer. Capable and educated women in positions of power will make a big push for those barriers to break. To have that, making sure that young women get access to education is the first step.



FANTA Sylvie [1 week ago](#)

There is no doubt that our climate is changing. Climate change is one of the most difficult challenges currently facing world, threatening lives and hindering sustainable development of the world. Social equity, gender equality and environmental justice must form the heart of sustainable development, and of the outcomes of the Rio+20 UN conference in 2012. Twenty years after the first Rio conference, great social and economic inequities still remain. These inequities especially affect women and children, who make up the majority of those living in poverty.

ATTACHED FILES



guest [1 week ago](#)

Gender equality— including equal participation of women and men as well as accounting for the differentiated impacts on women and men from climate change and its response measures— should be included in UNFCCC agreements in alignment with CEDAW and Beijing platform for action.

A good example of a programme is The Green Belt Movement, a Kenyan women's NGO that began to plant trees at the grassroots level in 1977 to tackle the problems of deforestation, soil erosion and water scarcity. Trees are planted by voluntary networks of women and their families. They undergo training in food production, processing and marketing, apiculture, and the planting and care of trees — activities that aim to empower women to generate an income of their own. The programme makes an overall contribution to climate mitigation, as emissions are hindered and absorbed because existing trees are cared for and new ones planted. A contribution is also

made to climate adaptation, as the communities learn about the sustainable use of scarce resources and about sustainable agricultural techniques.

Payments for environmental services. Project example: The Costa Rican Payments for Environmental Services Program (PESP) Environmental services such as the rehabilitation of cultivable soil or the conservation of clean water sources are rarely remunerated. The Costa Rican PESP is one of the few exceptions and pays the private owners of small and medium-sized forested areas if they help conserve the ecosystems. The programme distinguishes between four kinds of services: 1) reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; 2) hydrological services, e.g., improving water availability; 3) conservation of biodiversity; and 4) preservation of natural beauty.

Engel 2008, FONAFIFO 2010, Malavasi/Kellenberg.



Anna Eliseeva [1 week ago](#)

Climate change is one of the most defining challenges for the least developed countries affecting disproportionately women who are dependent on raw natural resources for livelihood. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization has estimated that persisting pattern of climate change will result in reduced agricultural yields with sub-Saharan Africa experiencing fall in yields between 20 and 50 percent by 2050.

Gender discriminatory social perceptions generating the different expected roles in a society impose on women a high burden of household chores including harvesting crops and fetching water and wood. Trapped by changing weather conditions, women find it difficult to get firewood or access water for their household chores. For example, recent findings show that in Uganda women responsible for fetching water are forced to walk longer distance due to increasingly erratic rainy seasons. This makes them more vulnerable to abuse and harassment. In Zambia increasing water levels in a local river restrict access of women to fishing thus depriving them from important source of income and affecting the quality of the women's lives. Therefore integrating gender sensitivity into national and international environmental policies is of great importance to ensure more sustainable development.



Camila Mejia [1 week ago in reply to Anna Eliseeva](#)

In this point I think in terms of public policies it is important that national and local governments acknowledge how climate change is changing the lives of their citizens, especially women. Women having to walk longer distances in order to get water are devoting less time to other activities like education. In this sense and taking in consideration the

negative effects this could have for future generations, it is important for governments to focus on water supply.



Angela Hariche [1 week ago](#)

There are gender based differences in poverty especially in rural areas (FAO 2012). Climate change has the potential to impact agricultural production and the rural poor will be the most affected. Men and women will be affected in different ways in terms of migration and policy development so a gender perspective should be included especially when migration is forced due to and environmental crisis.

It is well documented that in disasters, women are more impacted on than men due to cultural norms so collecting data on resilience and vulnerability post disaster would be very helpful in the policy realm.

While climate change is a global issue, it is affecting communities locally. One way to influence RIO+20 and others is to point out countries like Uganda where women and men are being affected. In this case. deforestation is the issue and women are particularly on the front line because they are the ones who are collecting the wood. Energy efficient stoves are being introduced.

Actions that can be taken include further gender analysis of the Kyoto Protocol Mechanisms (like the Clean Development Mechanism) and their impacts, as well as better data collection.



Mahfuja Parven [1 week ago](#)

Greetings.

The impacts of weather disasters are considerable and unequally distributed. For example, natural disasters have been shown to result in increased domestic violence against - and mental stress as well as lot of sufferings. In terms of deaths and populations affected, floods and tropical cyclones have the greatest impact in South Asia and Latin America. Vulnerability to weather disasters depends on the attributes of the person at risk, including where they live and their age, as well as other social and environmental factors. High-density populations in low-lying coastal regions experience a high health burden from weather disasters.

For climate change some people are particularly at risk, such as the poor, young children and the elderly. Climate change would increase the burden of diarrhoeal diseases. Childhood mortality due to diarrhoea in low-income countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. It's already well

known that climate change is not an equal-opportunity threat, with its impacts on food production, severe storms, and drought, among others, hitting the world's poorest nations the hardest. And according to a new report, global warming isn't gender-blind either: Women are especially vulnerable to its effects, making up a shocking 80 percent of climate refugees. According to a briefing released this week by the U.K.-based (WEN), more than 10,000 women die each year from weather-related disasters such as tropical storms and droughts, compared to about 4,500 men. Women also comprise 20 million of the 26 million people estimated to have been displaced by climate change.

For example, in the Bangladesh Women in 1991, almost five times more young women than men died. This was largely because women couldn't swim, had restricted mobility because of their clothing, and many women left their homes too late because they waited for a male relative to accompany them. Men were able to warn each other of the danger as they met in public spaces, but didn't always get the information back to their families.... A study of disasters in 141 countries found that, where women had equal rights, there was little or no difference in the number of women and men that died, but where women's rights were compromised, female mortality was higher.



Wikigender ★ [4 days ago in reply to Mahfuja Parven](#)

Dear Mahfuja, thank you very much for your comment! It is important to highlight the magnitude of climate-related disasters and how they affect us all. Which report do you refer to when you talk about climate refugees? Could you please share a link to the report? You also mention another study on disasters for 141 countries. We would be interested in knowing more. Thanks!



Wikigender ★ [2 weeks ago](#)

In terms of the priority issues related to gender and climate change, our focus should be on removing discriminatory social institutions preventing women from owning land or accessing credit. In a recent At Issue paper by the OECD Development Centre (<http://bit.ly/JLMGpC>), it was found that in countries where women have no rights to own land or access credit, cereal yields are lower. And in countries where women lack any right to own land there are on average 60% more malnourished children, compared to countries where women have some or equal access. In the current climate of food insecurity, financial shocks and climate variability, removing such constraints could help unlock the full potential of rural women in developing countries and contribute to a more sustainable future for all.