

Gender, climate change, and adaptive capacity are intricately linked. Unequal distribution of resources and power imbalances are both root causes of poverty which also impact a person's capacity to adapt to climate change.

WHAT ARE THE LINKAGES BETWEEN GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION?

The impacts of climate change are not merely the results of natural phenomena, but are also affected by the socio-economic context. Gender relations play a major role in structuring this context; therefore, they are important for understanding vulnerability, risk construction, and the effects of climate change by providing opportunities for reducing its negative impacts.

Gender inequalities shape adaptive capacity: In many contexts in Asia and the Pacific, women are considered to be more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than men. As women represent two thirds of the poor in the region, their economic insecurity is part of a cycle of disadvantage often caused by discrimination in employment and ownership of land and more limited access to resources. This results in women's limited resources when it comes to climate resilient development. In addition, women tend to have less access to climate change information and enabling technologies due to informal employment, and are more dependent on natural resources that are threatened by climate change.

Climate change shapes gender roles: Gender inequalities are made more distinct as the Asia Pacific region is one of the most vulnerable to climate change and disasters. In addition, climate change may affect the capacity of women to carry out the specific roles they have within their communities and households which in turn affect the overall resilience of the system.

Women and men in Asia and the Pacific rely heavily on agriculture for their livelihoods and food production: Restrictions on women's land ownership mean that many women do not have access to productive land on which they can farm. In addition, a lack of financial capital and access to technologies mean they cannot easily diversify their livelihoods. The lack of control over the land and property they depend on can affect their ability to change to more suitable crops or switch to alternate sources of income generation.

Climate change related migration is a result of gendered adaptive measures: As environmental conditions worsen in Asia and the Pacific, more men migrate for longer periods, sometimes even permanently, to urban areas or overseas. Meanwhile, as men migrate, they contribute less and less to their family's income. Thus, women are trying to expand their productive role by adapting techniques to increase yields to earn an income and ensure that their living standards are above mere survival for their households.

TOWARDS A GENDER-RESPONSIVE CLIMATE ACTION

The integration of gender considerations throughout climate change related actions is crucial for the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of such actions for both developing and developed countries. Measures taken to address gender-based vulnerability can strengthen adaptive capacity of the society at large. At the same time, channeling both men's and women's skills and knowledge will improve adaptation efforts.

Technologies for adaptation: Women, like men, are primary users of technologies which aid in the adaption to and reduction of the impacts of climate change. A gender-responsive approach can support in removing the misconstrued perception of technology as either a gender-neutral or a male-dominated arena, which can enable the advancement of more climate-smart technologies to a wider population in Asia and the Pacific.

Women can often lead the way in adapting to climate change impacts, for example through small scale entrepreneurship and business as well as through other valuable insights and experiences of innovative adaptation measures at the household level, including through traditional knowledges and practices.

UN ENVIRONMENT'S ROLE

UN Environment recognizes gender as a cross-cutting priority and is working to promote the importance of women's participation in achieving sustainable development. UN Environment will demonstrate an understanding of gender dynamics and differentiation in each region, country, and context where interventions are implemented. Specifically, UN Environment supports countries with technical guidance on National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), including guidelines and lessons-learned on gender integration.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE CLIMATE ADAPTATION

- Raise awareness on the gendered dimension of climate change adaptation.
- Ensure equal access to natural resources and land ownership.
- Develop policy makers' capacity in gender-responsive climate action.
- Ensure equal participation of men and women in climate adaptation training and capacity development programmes.
- Ensure equal access to enabling technologies.
- Set gender-specific targets in climate change policy goals and action points.
- Promote women in environmental decision-making positions and as agents of change within their communities.
- Ensure capacity to implement gender specific activities.
- Mainstream gender in project and programme design.
- Implement gender-responsive climate financing.
- Ensure knowledge of climate change impacts and adaptation measures can be shared through a medium accessible to women and men alike.

GENDER AND UNFCCC.

Recent gender-related decisions by the Conference of Parties (COP) have given a clear mandate to address gender considerations in climate policy and action.

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| 2014 | Two-year Plan of Action on gender and climate change, in Lima COP20; important milestone to advance the issue of gender equality in relation to addressing climate change. |
| 2015 | COP21 partially reflect the importance of gender equality. |
| 2016 | UNFCCC Guidelines or other tools for integrating gender considerations into climate change related activities under the Convention |
| 2016 | Integrating Gender into the LDC Group Climate Change Agenda LDC Group event, supported by UNDP & UN Environment |

GENDER IN NATIONAL ADAPTATION POLICIES AND PLANS

Gender brings increased efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of climate change efforts and lead to better adaptation and more resilient communities.

1. **Gender assessment:** Analyze how women and men are affected by climate change: vulnerabilities, capacities. Look at sex disaggregated data on land ownership, employment, heads of household, and access to natural resources.
2. **Policy/plan preparation and design:** Build on the analysis; develop objectives and priorities specifically related to gender; and ensure a holistic gender dimension with specific gender components in outcomes, outputs, and activities. Include stakeholders (policy makers, ministries, community level practitioners) and experts (academia, NGOs) with knowledge on gender and climate change.
3. **Gender-responsive budgeting:** Allocate necessary resources to achieve gender equality and to carry out planned activities. Ensure equal distribution of resources among men and women.
4. **Implementation:** Ensure there is sufficient resource capacity to implement gender specific activities, coordinate with national and regional stakeholders working on gender equality.
5. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Develop indicators to ensure monitoring and track process related to gender specific components.

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS), GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE.

Apart from SDG-5 on gender equality, SDG-13 on combating climate change and its impact calls specifically for the promotion of "mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries, including focusing on women".

To know more about our gender initiatives and UN Environment Asia Pacific, contact:

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