

Women and climate change

Time to change for good

Gender should be at the heart of climate policies and programmes

Among developing country decision-makers, there is little argument that the impacts of climate change are causing harm now. The effects are widely felt, from small island nations on the frontline of climate change, to densely populated deltas affected by sea level rise, from melting glaciers in mountain regions to drought- and storm-affected territories inland.

Dozens of developing countries are taking action to adapt to the impacts of climate change and to embrace low carbon development paths, recognising the benefits of green growth for economic competitiveness and stability. As climate finance begins to flow—and more is promised for the future—developing countries are challenged to design robust institutions and programmes for use of these funds.

From all of these dimensions, climate change has particular implications for women. Women's wellbeing and life choices are profoundly influenced by social institutions: even without climate change impacts, they face gender inequalities which typically lead to higher rates of poverty and a deeper experience of poverty than among men.

Climate change imposes resource scarcity that affects women deeply, especially in those areas where they are the primary farmers and managers of fuelwood and water.

Gender considerations should be at the heart of climate change policies and programmes in developing countries because:

- women are differentially affected by climate change;
- differences between male and female roles and responsibilities may affect individuals' capacity for climate action;

- differences in voice and power mean that women's priorities may not be recognised—from local to global level;
- gender-sensitive adaptation programmes are likely to be far more effective in safeguarding lives and livelihoods: when women are more empowered they are generally less vulnerable to disaster impacts;
- women have the potential to contribute as equal partners to the low carbon transition.

Will we ensure that adaptation and mitigation do not leave women relatively worse off? Will we take this chance to protect and enhance women's and girls' life choices, making a better future for all?

This publication outlines some of the initial steps the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) is taking to ensure that development is both climate compatible and fair to women and men. We invite you to partner with us in this vital endeavour.



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Climate and Development Knowledge Network

Helping developing countries to design and deliver climate compatible development

Gender and energy access in West Africa

In Cameroon and Togo, CDKN has been supporting HELIO International to work with decision-makers on energy policies and measures that meet objectives for sustainable and equitable development, using a tool called TIPEE.

HELIO's approach and the TIPEE framework are based on gender equality. Three of the TIPEE indicators directly address women's involvement: informed consultation—public hearings on the impact of proposed energy projects; citizen participation—active participation of civil society (particularly women) in the energy sector; and balanced governance—balanced representation of stakeholders and transparency in decision-making. Other indicators, such as pollutant exposure and lack of electricity, also have a deep bearing on women's wellbeing.

HELIO aims to achieve an even balance of men and women at its workshops in West Africa. However, this can be a challenge, with fewer women in senior government and civil society positions, due in part to the energy sector being a male-dominated field.

CDKN's gender focus

SUPPORTING GENDER IN INDIAN CLIMATE POLICY

In India, CDKN is supporting a pilot project to influence at least four State-level governments to mainstream gender and inclusiveness in their draft State-level Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs), through which India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) is to be implemented.

The NAPCC identifies poor women as the most climate-affected group. This project, led by Alternative Futures, will analyse adaptation-related public policies, programmes and schemes, including best practices, and assess delivery of these programmes from a gender perspective. The team will also research six emerging adaptation models in three vulnerable agro-climatic zones (flood, drought and cyclone-prone zones) in depth from a gender perspective. The research is timely because the plans are soon to be delivered, and discussion is underway about which activities should be prioritised.



This action research project will actively involve civil servants and elected legislators. Alternative Futures has already been asked by the Union Environment

Ministry and the state governments of Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh to incorporate gender dimensions in official climate policy documents.

The recommendations will be specific to policy and programme implementation at State, district and village (Panchayat Raj) levels. They will be disseminated widely through meetings, policy briefs, journal articles, popular media and an advocacy-focused, interactive website.

THE CLIMATE AND GENDER GAME

The Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre has been piloting the use of games in the humanitarian sector, to raise awareness of climate-related disaster risk management. The team has found that games engage people in ways that other presentations cannot, because they plunge participants into active decision-making. CDKN is among several donors to support this innovative approach. Recently the Climate Centre had the opportunity to participate in a Climate Resilience Lab* in Kenya which supported developing a game to illustrate women and girl's differential vulnerabilities to climate-related disasters.

Each round of the game is a planting season, and the roll of a die determines the rains: 1 is too little rain, 6 is too much rain, and any roll from 2-5 represents good rain and a fine harvest. In the game, if players want to protect against drought, they must invest in planting cassava; if more concerned about floods, players can choose to invest in planting flood-tolerant rice. If they prefer, instead, to take their chances and hope for good rains, players can plant maize at no cost. The message is that choosing correctly to be prepared can guarantee you a crop even if disaster strikes, but it requires taking the risk of investment.

*http://poptech.org/climate_lab

Vulnerability research on islands

CDKN is supporting the Global Islands' Vulnerability Research, Adaptation, Policy and Development (GIVRAPD) project, which is led by CARIBSAVE. It aims to integrate scientific and local knowledge from learning sites in the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean, using a common community-based vulnerability assessment framework. The aim is to understand the multi-scale socioeconomic, governance and environmental conditions that shape vulnerability and the capacity to adapt to climate change, within and between small and medium sized coastal communities.

Research questions include:

- How does the degree of exposure and sensitivity to climate events differ among social groups and households (according to gender and livelihood type)?
- How have the predominant types of adaptation varied by social groups and gender within the community? What has been the distribution of benefits and burdens associated with adaptation actions, according to gender and livelihood type?

Research results are expected in 2013.



Gender could take a higher profile in global climate talks

Belynda Petrie of OneWorld works with the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN) to present a common African position in the global climate talks. She said: "The AGN intends to ensure that gender and equality issues have a stronger place in the development of negotiation positions. In addition to the recognised vulnerability of gender differentiated groups, such as women, there are opportunities in promoting climate change investments that are women-led or facilitated."



After a few rounds, once players have begun to figure out the probabilities, climate change is introduced. A truncated cone replaces the die, and it is difficult to interpret the probability of how it will land. It may land on the small base to indicate drought, or on the large base for floods, or roll on its side for good rains. This represents quite well the uncertainty of rainfall under current, changing conditions. After a couple of rounds, when players are comfortable with the mechanics of the game, to even better represent reality, a new twist is introduced: gender inequality.

The designers infused this planting decisions game with the 'broken' element of gender differences by randomly assigning fictional gender roles. Those given a brightly coloured bracelet to wear play as 'men', all those with no bracelet play 'women' and find themselves starting the game with fewer beans—the currency of the game. As the game plays out, women reap a smaller harvest than the fictional men.

After a couple of rounds, teenage pregnancy is introduced via random distribution of a handful of necklaces. Players of either sex wearing a necklace discover they 'have just become a grandparent'. Now if planting decisions do not match the roll of the rains, players with a grandchild have to pay one additional bean to feed their family that round. At the end of the game, players talk about how they felt about the gender roles, if the game revealed anything surprising or concerning, and what they see as the root causes and possible paths to solving their specific, climate-related problems.

The Kenya Red Cross now plans to train facilitators to use this game in rural communities. The game should deepen understanding within affected communities about climate risk strategies to cope with the changing weather patterns affecting agriculture. With luck, it will help open deep discussion about the differential implications of climate change for women and girls, compared to men and boys, and what these additional pressures mean for their life choices.



Women's participation in Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes

In the Andean region of Latin America, Rare Conservation is assessing which components of national and local level PES schemes have worked, and how such schemes could be more effective drivers of climate compatible development. The team is assessing whether reciprocal watershed agreements—known by the Spanish acronym 'ARA'—have changed the distribution of resources in society, including women's access to natural resources. They aim to improve the design of ARA-PES schemes in the 20 municipalities where Rare Conservation already works, and ensure best practice in the 12 municipalities where such schemes are due to begin. By doing so, this research should strengthen livelihoods in some of the poorest Andean communities.

Many of the women in these communities own land but struggle to maximise its benefits. The reciprocal watershed agreements can benefit women landowners by turning land into a revenue-generating asset.

Gender and REDD+ dialogue in Asia and the Pacific

REDD-net Asia Pacific focuses on knowledge sharing and exchange among civil society groups across the region. CDKN supported improved policy-level outreach and dialogue on REDD+ issues, including a strong gender component. With CDKN support, REDD-net produced a Gender and REDD+ bulletin which was one of its most popular to date, and has been widely disseminated and presented internationally. See www.recoftc.org

The Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) supports decision-makers in developing countries to design and deliver climate compatible development. We do this by combining research and advisory services and knowledge sharing, and support to negotiators from climate-vulnerable countries. CDKN works in partnership with decision-makers in the public, private and non-governmental sectors nationally, regionally and globally. CDKN is managed by an alliance of organisations that brings together a wide range of expertise and experience: PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano, SouthSouthNorth, LEAD International, LEAD Pakistan and INTRAC.

CDKN recognises the deep impacts climate change can have on women and girls and the possibility that climate action could improve their lives or disadvantage them significantly. That's why addressing the gender dimensions of climate change—and climate compatible development—is a priority for CDKN.

WORK WITH US

CDKN is looking to increase the integration of gender in our existing projects and programmes and to support new initiatives focusing on gender.

We will expand our work to:

- increase decision-makers' access to state-of-the-art knowledge about gender and climate change issues;
- increase the gender sensitivity of climate compatible development policies and programmes in developing countries and particularly in CDKN's focal countries (see right);
- increase the capacity, and participation, of female negotiators in the international climate talks.

CDKN accesses the best national and international expertise to deliver its work, and obtains most of this expertise through competitive tender. We advertise these tender opportunities regularly via our website and newsletter.

We invite you to:

- register on our Roster of Experts (experts.cdkn.org) if you are a gender and development specialist, so that you can hear about the latest project opportunities;
- sign up for CDKN's newsletter and check our website frequently to access our latest resources on women and climate change;
- contact our staff to speak about gender-related needs and opportunities in CDKN's focal countries.



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CDKN Global

7 More London
Riverside
London
SE1 2RT
+44 (0) 207 212 4111
www.cdkn.org
enquiries@cdkn.org

Regional contacts

africa@cdkn.org
asia@cdkn.org
lac@cdkn.org

Written by: Mairi Dupar with Andrew Norton and Philip Lewis, ODI
Design by: Green Ink
Layout by: Scriptoria
Photo credits:
Atul Loke/Panos Pictures
Andy Johnstone/Panos Pictures
Abbie Trayler-Smith/Panos Pictures
Pietro Cenini/Panos Pictures

