



THREE INSIGHTS

WHAT MORE CAN WE DO TO PLACE GENDER EQUITY AT THE HEART OF CLIMATE ACTION?

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We would like to thank the following lead discussants and members of the Business Fights Poverty community for their participation:

Marcela Chacon, Senior Manager International Stakeholders Relations, **Bayer**; **Franziska Deininger**, Gender and Climate Consultant, **IFC**; **Laetitia Pettinotti**, Senior Research Officer, **ODI**; **Anastasia Mbatia**, Senior Technical Manager, Agriculture, **Farm Africa**; **Beátriz Tumoine**, Global Social Impact Director, **CEMEX**; **Justin White**, Manager, Human Rights & Gender Equality, Global Sustainability, **Mars Inc**

Women are on the frontlines of climate and face unique gender-based barriers when accessing opportunities that come with a green transition. This workshop explored how to align climate and gender agendas in ways that drive action while improving gender equality. Women are disproportionately impacted by climate change, but speakers emphasised that they are also championing the fight against it.

Participants touched upon how women must be at the centre of climate-gender interventions, but involving men and boys is critical to dismantle the patriarchal prejudices and norms that have informed these issues in the first place.

INSIGHT 1: WOMEN ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE, BUT THEY ARE NOT JUST VICTIMS—THEY ARE AGENTS OF CHANGE

Women are often already at a disadvantage in a world managed predominantly by men, so it's no surprise that speakers pointed out the many ways in which women bear the brunt of climate breakdown. "Climate change is not neutral to gender," expressed Marcela Chacon, Senior Manager International Stakeholders Relations at Bayer. "Women have to face different inequalities throughout the world."

These inequalities include a great share of unpaid labour and family care, lack of access

to land and finances, fewer opportunities for education and skills development, which can limit employment, and cultural stigmas around gender norms and roles (just to name a few). "They're overexposed to various impacts, they are more dependent on natural resources, and tend to be overrepresented in household activities," said Franziska Deininger, Gender and Climate Consultant at the IFC. "So we really see just this enhanced

We ensure that both men and women are trained on gender so that they can be able to appreciate the key role that women contribute in agriculture

Anastasia Mbatia, Senior Technical Manager, Agriculture, Farm Africa

How do we uproot those very deep-seated traditions that limit women's participation in the labour market, that limit women's access to finance for businesses, that limit women's ascension into green sectors and green roles? That's where we really need to see climate and gender coming together.

Franziska Deininger, Gender and Climate Consultant, IFC

fragility that women, but not just women, other disadvantaged groups, are facing.”

Despite this, women are generally not passive players in the battle for the planet and their own futures. Speakers agreed that given the right tools and resources—particularly access to education and skills development—women will, and do, drive progress. “Women are agents of change,” said Beatriz Tumoine, Global Social Impact Director at CEMEX. “Women are the key to sustainable and resilient communities. If we educate women, if we help them and enable them, they will make more sustainable decisions for the future.”

Fortunately, numerous interventions already exist to get to the heart of the intersections between gender and climate. “This is really a reason for hope,” said Laetitia Pettinotti, Senior Research Officer, ODI. She went on to pose the questions that framed the conversation: How can women be part of climate action equally, and how can climate action support greater gender equality?

INSIGHT 2: FOCUS ON INVOLVING WOMEN EQUALLY IN CLIMATE ACTION

To effectively address the issues at the intersections of climate and gender, climate action needs to have an equal representation (at least) of women and men. One example

that was mentioned was the astounding lack of lead women negotiators at COP27—less than 30%. Yet evidence suggests that women, particularly in leadership roles, cultivate positive climate outcomes.

“Women are indeed changemakers when it comes to climate change,” expressed Franziska. “And this is not about adding to their burden of responsibility, but about elevating women in situations of decision-making. We’re actually seeing that women in leadership leads to reduced carbon emissions, better climate governance, and more climate innovation.” Yet many barriers exist for women to reach those positions of power. Laetitia pointed out three main challenges getting in the way: 1) access and control over resources such as land and finance, 2) capabilities and capacity building, 3) physical and psychological safety.

Designing climate interventions with gender quotas is one way to begin breaking down these barriers and engage women in climate action. Anastasia Mbatia, Senior Technical Manager, Agriculture at Farm Africa gave the example of how Farm Africa looks at gender in all of their programmes and makes sure that at least 30% of the people they engage with are women, particularly when it comes to training. “Training is one of the largest constraints that makes farmers not adopt new practices,” she said.

Thoughtful programme design that is responsive to women’s needs and lifestyles is also one way to ensure participation. “We look at a woman’s clock from the morning—what time does she wake up and what kind of work is that this woman would be doing,” shared Anastasia. “And then set the times [of training] to be a time that the woman is likely to be available.”

INSIGHT 3: LOOK FOR THE WAYS THAT CLIMATE ACTION CAN PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE WOMEN'S EQUALITY

Women are driving climate progress, but climate action can also address systemic issues that perpetuate gender inequality.

Participants agreed that finance and policy are key areas to leverage climate action

for improved gender outcomes, but that interventions need to break down the barriers to access that women already experience. “[Let’s think about] how women can be included and look at strategies which do not [require] heavy collateral for women to be able to be engaged in this,” said Anastasia. She also suggested adjusting policy structures within agriculture to be more sensitive to women’s needs, as this will then enable more women to participate.

Justin White, Manager, Human Rights & Gender Equality, Global Sustainability, Mars Inc., talked about how Mars uses listening tools as part of their #HeretobeHeard campaign to better understand how to channel climate finance in ways that elevate women. “[Through listening], we’re seeing connections between the risk of deforestation and investments that we can make in women’s agency, incomes, and mobility,” said Justin. Carbon markets is one evolving finance area where the interplay

of gender and climate is still in its infancy. “The voluntary carbon markets today do not have a sufficient supply of credits with meaningful co-benefits [for women],” said Justin. “How can we have a conversation about what a good carbon credit looks like, especially one that’s gender transformative, or at a minimum, gender responsive?”

Involving men and boys in climate-gender conversations is a critical part of any gender-sensitive climate intervention and gets to the core of gender inequality. “We ensure that both men and women are trained on gender so that they can be able to appreciate the key role that women contribute in agriculture,” Anastasia shared. Workshop participants also drove home this point. “Engage men so that you can reconstruct the patriarchal system that might be inhibiting women’s involvement,” expressed Kelvin Muthui, Programme Coordinator at Caritas Kitui & IIED.

RESOURCES SHARED:

- **ACTION TOOLKIT:** [Women and the Net Zero Economy](#). Business Fights Poverty with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office’s Work and Opportunities for Women Programme, PwC and the Corporate Responsibility Initiative, Harvard Kennedy School.
- **REPORT:** [Dimensions and examples of the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, the role of women as agents of change and opportunities for women. Synthesis report by the secretariat](#). UNFCC.
- **REPORT:** [From risks to rewards: overcoming the impacts of climate change on women in agricultural supply chains](#). UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office’s Work and Opportunities for Women Programme.
- **REPORT:** [Here To Be Heard: 10,000 Voices to Shape a More Inclusive Society for All Women](#). BSR.
- **REPORT:** [The Resilience Journey \(Viability\) Phase 2](#). KIT Royal Tropical Institute.
- **REPORT:** [Emissions Gap Report 2022](#). UNEP.
- **INITIATIVE:** [Intergenerational Fairness Index 2016](#). Intergenerational Foundation.
- **INITIATIVE:** [Launch of a new Livelihoods Carbon Fund](#).
- **ARTICLE:** Valodia, I, Mhlana, S, Taylor, J. [Gender, care and climate change: Why they are connected](#). Econ3x3.org
- **ARTICLE:** White, J. [Mars and CARE Impact Partners are on a journey to empower women through procurement – here’s how we’re doing it](#). Mars, Inc.