



**TECHNICAL NOTE  
AND PRACTICAL TIPS**

**for Gender-Transformative  
Climate Smart Programming  
in East Asia and Pacific**

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## Acknowledgements

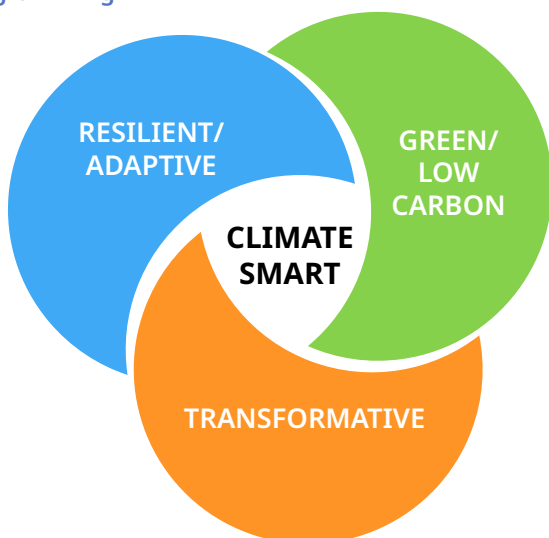
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## Background and Purpose

Climate and disaster impacts, environmental degradation, and limited access to sustainable energy threaten to reverse gains made towards gender equality. UNICEF is responding in its multisectoral programming and is committed to ensuring that girls and women in all their diversity are supported to be heard, to access the resources they need and to become leaders in climate and environmental action.

This Technical Note and Practical Tips has been developed to support UNICEF Country Offices (COs) in East Asia and Pacific (EAP) and beyond to plan and implement climate smart programming that create opportunities for individuals to actively challenge gender norms, promote positions of social and political influence for girls and women in communities, and address power inequities between persons of different genders.

**Figure 1: Three dimensions of climate smart programming**



This Technical Note and Practical Tips is aligned with UNICEF’s Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2030, UNICEF’s Strategy-at-a-glance for CEED 2022-2030, UNICEF Pacific’s CEED Strategy 2023-2027, UNICEF’s Gender Action Plan 2022-2025, UNICEF’s Gender-Transformative Programming Background Paper, the 2021 Over the Tipping Point Report and the Climate Smart Social Services Programme Guidance for the East Asia and Pacific Region (currently under development) which between them set forth a range of evidence, approaches and priority areas to meet UNICEF’s commitments to strengthening climate resilience, low carbon development and gender equality. The purpose of this document is to support COs to embrace a gender-transformative approach to climate smart programming in order to accelerate progress towards these twin goals. The document includes:

- An overview of the gender-climate linkages;
- Key elements of a gender-transformative approach to climate smart programming;
- Ideas for gender-transformative climate smart actions in health, education, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), social protection and humanitarian emergencies; and
- Checklists of practical considerations COs can consider at different stages of the programming cycle.

The target audience for this Technical Note and Practical Tips is UNICEF programme colleagues at regional and country levels who are currently working on or are interested in working at the intersection of gender and climate change development and humanitarian interventions.

# Climate change has disproportionate impacts on girls and women

**Climate change is impacting on the realization of a wide range of girls and women's rights,** including equitable access to health, education, nutrition, energy and WASH services, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), aid and relief, as well as safety, protection, participation and self-realization.

If current trends continue, by 2025 climate change will be a contributing factor in preventing at least 12.5 million girls from completing their education each year. Displacement increases their vulnerability to exploitation, gender-based violence, and human trafficking<sup>1</sup>.

**Women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change and disaster risks due to structural inequalities and discriminatory practices** such as less access, use and control of natural resources and restricted physical mobility and decision-making power.

Up to 80% of people displaced by climate change are girls and women<sup>2</sup> and disasters in developing countries result in higher death tolls and injuries for women than men.<sup>3</sup> During the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, for example, up to 70% of the fatalities in some villages were women.<sup>4</sup> Testimonies of child survivors indicate that women were often more vulnerable due to entrenched gender norms and because women were less aware of how to protect themselves.<sup>5</sup>



**While women and girls experience disproportionate impacts from climate change, the effects are not uniform.** Climate change risks are more acute for indigenous women and girls, older women, LGBTIQ+ people, women and girls with disabilities, migrant women and girls, and those living in rural, remote, conflict and disaster-prone areas, among others.

1 Malala Faund "A greener, fairer future: Why leaders need to invest in climate and girls' education" 2021

2 The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index. UNICEF, 2021 pp.60

3 Neumayer, E., & Plümpner, T. (2007). The Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters: The Impact of Catastrophic Events on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy, 1981–2002. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(3), 551–566. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.2007.00563>.

4 Rahiem, M.D.H., Husni Rahim, H., Ersing, R. Why did so many women die in the 2004 Aceh Tsunami? Child survivor accounts of the disaster, *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, Volume 55, 2021.

5 Ibid

**Since the impacts of climate change are not gender-neutral, climate change can actually worsen gender inequality** by increasing the gender gap in access to basic services, the burden of household responsibilities, the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV), and other forms of deep-rooted gender-based discrimination . Furthermore, girls and women can often find it more challenging to adapt to and mitigate climate change due to limited access to services, resources and decision-making.

**By changing what programmes deliver and how they operate, a gender-transformative and climate smart approach creates a paradigm shift and brings about multiple benefits to society** by contributing to community resilience and promoting equality and sustainability at scale.

Businesses with more gender-diverse boards have been found 60% more likely to reduce energy consumption, 39% more likely to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and 40% more likely to reduce water use.<sup>7</sup>

Educating young women may be one of the best climate change disaster prevention investments in addition to high social rates of return in overall sustainable development goals. For example, countries that have invested in girls' education have suffered far fewer losses from droughts and floods.<sup>8</sup>

Useful resources on the gender-climate linkages can be found on UNICEF's Sharepoint site: [Gender - Climate, Environment, Energy & DRR](#)



## What is a gender-transformative approach to climate-smart programming?

Gender-transformative approaches promote gender equality – including shared control over resources, power and decision-making – and are grounded in girls' and women's agency and empowerment. These approaches examine, question and change rigid gender norms and imbalances of power that disadvantage marginalized groups, such as those between men/boys and women/girls. Applying a gender-transformative approach to climate smart programming provides an opportunity to address the root causes of climate vulnerability, build resilience and promote green, low carbon development through actions that challenge

fundamental societal structures and gender norms to strengthen individuals' agency to decide and take climate action (see Figure 2 below). Programme designers can map pathways of change for climate smart action from 'gender-unaware' to 'gender-sensitive to 'gender-responsive' with the ultimate goal of achieving transformative change.

<sup>7</sup> Schmidt, N. Panel Parity. UNIDO, 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Blankespoor, B., Dasgupta, S., Laplante, B. & Wheeler, D. (2010). Adaptation to climate extremes in developing countries: the role of education. The World Bank, Policy Research Working Paper Series.

Figure 2: Gender Continuum for Climate Smart Programming



No one climate-smart action alone can bring about gender-transformative change, hence the need for holistic and multisectoral interventions which work across the socioecological model based on the principle that achieving change requires a combination of interventions at:

- **individual level** (boys, girls, men and women in all their diversity) by strengthening the knowledge, education, skills and attitudes that lead to agency and empowerment for climate smart action, particularly among adolescent girls and women. Equally important is increasing support for gender equality in climate action among boys and men.
- **interpersonal level** (families, friends and social networks) through behaviour and social change communication that influences shifts in gender norms. For example, more gender equitable dynamics within households can mean girls and women are able to take a more proactive role in climate adaptation and mitigation measures that have a direct impact on the exercise of their rights, such as access to education and WASH.
- **community level** (community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, community leaders, influencers, women's groups, girls' clubs, safe spaces and youth groups or movements) ensuring that communities, systems and social networks are aware and demonstrate investments in girls and positive gender norms that enable children and youth to live in a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Communities should play an active role in the planning and implementation of climate smart action and take measures to ensure women, men, girls and boys can all participate equally.
- **systems/institutions level** (service systems and social institutions), employing "whole government" approaches to climate smart development and gender equality with greater capacity for gender-transformative climate change response, including mobilizing the maximum available financial, human, and political resources, and prioritizing groups of women and girls with heightened climate vulnerability.
- **policies/legislative level** (national, subnational and local) ensuring national plans, legal structures and sector policies strengthen attention to gender equality as a core component of climate action, with greater funding for gender-transformative climate smart programming. Women and girls are given a seat in environmental decision-making bodies and processes, with men and boys engaged as allies at all levels.

### Useful resources:

- [UNFPA and UNICEF's Gender-Transformative Accelerator Tool](#)
- [Gender-Transformative Programming, A UNICEF background paper](#)
- [Plan International's Gender Transformative Climate Change Action in the Pacific Framework and Guidance Tool](#)
- [How to Use Gender Approaches to Build Climate Resilience, Asian Development Bank](#)



# Examples of Gender-transformative Climate Action Across Sectors

SECTOR: **HEALTH**<sup>10</sup>

GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP	ILLUSTRATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HEALTH	IDEAS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SMART ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor reproductive health for girls</li> <li>High and unshifting rates of adolescent pregnancy</li> <li>Undernutrition, as evidenced by stunting prevalence</li> <li>High rates of adolescent maternal mortality</li> <li>Lack of access to SRHR information</li> <li>Acceptability of child marriage</li> <li>Barriers to contraceptive access and use</li> <li>Girls' restricted agency and decision-making ability</li> <li>Barriers to education which limit girls' life choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of adequate reproductive health and outreach services is exacerbated by climate change and related disasters. Associated health risks for women and children include unplanned pregnancies, SRHR problems, and negative impacts on their psychosocial and well-being.</li> <li>Climate hazards, including extreme heat and rising exposure to vector-borne diseases, are associated with increased risks of adverse maternal and perinatal outcomes. These may include multiple causes of maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality such as gestational diabetes, hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, preterm birth, low birth weight and stillbirth. In addition, exposure to climate hazards may increase stress, anxiety and depression – known risk factors for adverse perinatal outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In parenting programmes, include information on climate-sensitive communicable and infectious diseases and environmental health threats, as well as possible control strategies, and encourage male caregivers to engage in child feeding and care.</li> <li>Train community health workers to detect and refer climate-sensitive diseases and malnutrition that specifically affect women (such as during pregnancies) and children to relevant surveillance mechanisms.</li> <li>Educate and train women and men on how to grow climate-resilient, nutrition-rich plant-based diet which will not only ensure better health during pregnancy but also help fight malnutrition and stunted growth in children.</li> <li>Advocate for fully inclusive maternal and child nutrition, as well as SRHR, to be at the heart of climate change agendas.</li> </ul>

10 Evidence collated from: United Nations Children's Fund. [Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in East and Southeast Asia](#).

UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019; and United Nations Children's Fund. [Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in the Pacific](#). UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019.

United Nations Children's Fund. [Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in the Pacific](#). UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019; United Nations Children's Fund. [Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in East and Southeast Asia](#). UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019; Government of Vanuatu (2015). [Vanuatu Post-Disaster Needs Assessment: Tropical Cyclone Pam March 2015](#). Government of Vanuatu; Government of Samoa (2013). [Samoa Post Disaster Needs Assessment Cyclone Evan 2012](#). Government of Samoa; 'Taking Stock: Sexual and Reproductive and Health and Rights in Climate Commitments: A Global Review', p. 11; 'Caribbean Children Facing the Climate Crisis', pp. 31-32; Datar, A. [Climate Change Implications on Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Japan and Southeast Asia: A Comparative Scoping Review](#). GHAR | Vol 1 | Issue 6 | September 2021; World Health Organization. Protecting maternal, newborn and child health from the impacts of climate change: A call for action. 2023; Women Deliver. [THE LINK BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS](#). 2021; UNICEF, [Undernourished and Overlooked: A Global Nutrition Crisis in Adolescent Girls and Women](#), UNICEF, New York, March 2023, pp. 15, 17, 30, 56; 'The Climate-Care Nexus', pp. 13-14; '5 ways climate change is disrupting girls' lives'; Women Deliver. [THE LINK BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS](#). 2021.



GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP	ILLUSTRATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HEALTH	IDEAS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SMART ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In poor households, women and girls are often disadvantaged in their access to household resources, including food and nutrition.</li> <li>• Girls experience an excess burden of communicable, maternal and nutritional disease.</li> <li>• Rates of anaemia among older adolescent girls are high in many countries. Girls with disabilities may be particularly disadvantaged in their access to essential medical and SRHR services, assistive devices and educational opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls and women can be more susceptible to health issues when the distribution of food within households is gender-biased, which gets exacerbated during food scarcity. During food shortages caused by climate change, girls are more likely to go hungry and will often eat least and last, leading to hunger and malnutrition.</li> <li>• Macro- and micronutrient deficiencies caused by food insecurity and undernutrition among pregnant women can affect pregnancy, nursing, and newborn outcomes and lead to low-weight births, miscarriages, and perinatal mortality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale-up gender inclusive digital or mobile delivery solutions for essential services that expand awareness among women and girls of how climate change impacts their health and nutrition, taking into account the gender digital divide.</li> <li>• Incorporate information on the gendered impacts of climate change into adolescent focused health websites.</li> <li>• Support disability inclusive adolescent citizenry centres to engage with local authorities to address health, nutrition, SRHR and the impacts of climate change.</li> <li>• When improving the climate resilience of health facilities, leverage purchasing and sourcing of renewable energy technologies, energy efficient building and sustainable waste management systems to promote gender equality and support women’s social and economic progress, for example by inviting suppliers to become signatories of the Women’s Empowerment Principles.<sup>11</sup></li> </ul>



11 UN Women. Gender-responsive procurement. Accessed online 22nd August 2024: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/procurement/gender-responsive-procurement>

**SECTOR: EDUCATION<sup>12</sup>**

<b>GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP</b>	<b>ILLUSTRATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON EDUCATION</b>	<b>IDEAS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SMART ACTION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some countries, girls and young women (aged 15-24 years) are more likely than males of the same age to not be in education, training and employment.</li> <li>• Girls are more likely to be unemployed in most countries across the Pacific region.</li> <li>• Girls and women are underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields across the ASEAN region.</li> <li>• Girls frequently leave school for marriage, pregnancy or to help the family in unpaid domestic or care work.</li> <li>• Highly differentiated gender roles allocate unpaid domestic and care work to women, and paid work to men</li> <li>• Girls are more likely to be unemployed in most countries across the Pacific region. This is particularly the case for the most vulnerable and excluded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change and climate-induced disasters exacerbate the challenges girls already face in accessing education. Extreme weather events disrupt their daily lives, sometimes making the journey to school dangerous, or causing their schools to close.</li> <li>• Household responsibilities, intensified by climate-induced disasters, mean that girls have less time to attend school or complete their studies.</li> <li>• Girls may be more likely to be withdrawn from school and engaged in day labour instead after a disaster or in situations of chronic environmental degradation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure girls' involvement in environmental education and build girls' green skills both in and outside the classroom. This should include reaching girls who are not in the formal education system. Education materials should be made available in accessible formats and include building knowledge around the gendered and differential impacts of climate change and the structural causes of inequality.</li> <li>• Through ministries of education support teacher training colleges to teach green skills, with a focus on addressing barriers to access for women teachers.</li> <li>• Through parenting programmes, increase awareness of the impact of climate change on girls' time and promote equal distribution of household chores including engaging fathers, boys and religious groups.</li> <li>• Create links with private sector partners in the green economy to provide traineeship, mentorship and internship opportunities for girls to become "ecopreneurs". Wherever feasible these opportunities should be disability inclusive.</li> <li>• Incentivize parents to return girls to schools after a disruption due to climate-related disaster.</li> <li>• Give opportunities for girls to cultivate their interest and leadership in disaster preparedness and climate initiatives in their schools and communities .</li> <li>• Support girl-led advocacy efforts to build public will for concerted climate action and to influence decision-makers to shape gender transformative climate policies.</li> <li>• Ensure sustainable school transport options consider girls' safety concerns and accessibility barriers, for example through ensuring a regular service and investing in training for women drivers.</li> </ul>

12 Evidence compiled from: <https://plan-international.org/news/2023/12/04/climate-change-impact-girls-education-asia-pacific/>, CLAC Viet Nam; United Nations Children's Fund. Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in the Pacific. UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019; United Nations Children's Fund. Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in East and Southeast Asia. UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019.

SECTOR: CHILD PROTECTION<sup>13</sup>

GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP	ILLUSTRATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON CHILD PROTECTION	IDEAS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SMART ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of violence against women and girls</li> <li>• Girls at greater risk of child marriage and trafficking</li> <li>• Girls spend more hours on household chores and caring for family members (or care work) than boys</li> <li>• Boys may be expected to leave school early to take on paid and unpaid work outside of the household.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During and after extreme weather events and in the context of longer-term climate change, girls are at increased risk of violence and exploitation, including sexual and physical abuse, child marriage and trafficking.</li> <li>• Sex work among women may increase as a coping mechanism.</li> <li>• When families' income and ability to survive are put at risk, child marriage can be seen as a way to reduce the financial burden of taking care of girls. This puts millions of girls at risk of sexual and physical abuse, early pregnancy and maternal death.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the development of legal frameworks and policies that facilitate girls' and women's ability to claim environmental rights.</li> <li>• Conduct studies to understand the gendered impacts of climate change and extreme weather events on harmful practices (such as child marriage, child labour and trafficking) and on the provision of gender responsive child protection systems.</li> <li>• Ensure child protection systems are climate shock and gender-responsive by linking them with gender inclusive early warning and climate information services.</li> <li>• Strengthen government capacities to ensure that violence against girls and boys is systematically addressed following weather-related disasters, for example, by developing a standard operating procedure for gender-based violence in climate emergencies.</li> <li>• Guarantee the participation of women on child protection committees that discuss the gendered aspects of climate risk and possible response mechanisms.</li> <li>• Build the capacity of social workers to understand the gendered impacts of climate change on child protection systems, ensuring that women have access to these training opportunities.</li> <li>• Work with religious and community leaders to engage boys and men in dialogues that promote positive masculinities and gender equality, especially around child marriage and climate change.</li> <li>• Work with women-led media platforms and local feminist networks to raise awareness on the root causes of gender-based violence during climate emergencies.</li> </ul>

13 Evidence compiled from United Nations Children's Fund. [Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in the Pacific](#). UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019; United Nations Children's Fund. [Gender Counts: A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on girls and boys in East and Southeast Asia](#). UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2019; Plan International "Gender and Climate Change"; ESCAP. Social Development Division, Policy Paper. 2023. [Advancing Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific in the Context of Climate Change](#); CARE. [Rapid Gender Analysis Cyclone Pam Vanuatu](#), 2015; McLoed, E. et al. [Raising the voices of Pacific Island women to inform climate adaptation policies in Marine Policy](#), Volume 93, July 2018, Pages 178-185;; Women Deliver. [THE LINK BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS](#). 2021; 'Gender and Climate Change'; 'Is An End To Child Marriage Within Reach' p. 18; Plan International, '5 ways climate change is disrupting girls' lives', Plan International, Working, <<https://plan-international.org/case-studies/5-ways-climate-change-is-disrupting-girls-lives>>, accessed 19th November 2023; Baschieri, A. et al [Child Marriage and Environmental Crises: An Evidence Brief](#). UNFPA, 2021. Johannesburg; IFRC. [The responsibility to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence in disasters and crises](#). Kuala Lumpur, 2022.

**SECTOR: WASH<sup>14</sup>**

GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP	ILLUSTRATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WASH	IDEAS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SMART ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The burden of fetching it falls disproportionately on women and children, especially girls.</li> <li>• Lack of handwashing facilities disproportionately impacts adolescent girls and women who are primarily responsible for child care and domestic chores.</li> <li>• Inadequate WASH services limit the ability of adolescent girls, women and other persons who menstruate, to safely and privately manage their hygiene and promote their dignity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water scarcity, destruction of WASH services and poor WASH provision due to climate change and disaster events can lead to increased water-related diseases such as Tuberculosis, respiratory infections, cholera, diarrhea and malaria. Women and girls are disproportionately exposed to these diseases due to gendered roles.</li> <li>• In coastal areas facing increased salinity in drinking water sources, pregnant women are at higher risk of hypertension and preeclampsia which could also negatively affect fetal health.</li> <li>• Water scarcity can make it difficult for girls to manage their periods safely and with dignity and in an environmentally-friendly way whilst at school meaning they may miss out on education. In emergency situations, the lack of privacy and access to basic menstrual supplies can lead to a range of health problems including urinary and reproductive tract infections.<sup>15</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create spaces for dialogue and exchange with senior WASH leaders and government officials about gender equality and climate-resilient WASH service provision, ensuring women and girls' leadership in these processes.</li> <li>• Provide training for young women as leaders and entrepreneurs in WASH systems, for example, by training them to install and maintain disability inclusive WASH infrastructure or engaging them in designing WASH products that reduce household burden, eco-friendly menstrual hygiene products, or supporting gender-transformative WASH business models, workforces and workplaces.</li> <li>• Extend water pipelines and install tanks and fully accessible drinking water points in communities to reduce the time spent by women and girls fetching water. Ensure women and girls are consulted for climate risk mapping and WASH infrastructure design, thereby reducing their burden of water collection and improving their safety.</li> <li>• Ensure WASH systems are designed taking adolescent girls' needs and climate risk perceptions into account, for example, provision of ecological menstrual hygiene packs and access to options for hygienic cleaning and sustainable disposal. Work with women-led businesses to accelerate access to these products and expand opportunities for women's economic empowerment.</li> </ul>

14 Evidence compiled from: [Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000–2022: special focus on gender](#). New York: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO), 2023; Brown, S. et al. Gender and Age Inequality of Disaster Risk, pp. 23-24; 'The Climate-Care Nexus', p. 11; CLAC Viet Nam; Risha Solutions. [Gender and Climate Change induced Impacts on Women's and Girls' Psychosocial, Socio-economic and Nutrition Security Condition in Asia Region](#). Action Contre La Faim. 2023; [Menstrual Health and the Climate Crisis](#). UNFPA Press Release, 2023; WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme, 2023 [Data Snapshot on Adolescent Girls' WASH & Recommendations for Gender-Responsive Climate Action](#).

SECTOR: SOCIAL PROTECTION<sup>16</sup>

GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP	ILLUSTRATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WASH	IDEAS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SMART ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women represent two-thirds of the poor in Asia</li> <li>• Existing gender poverty gaps in the Asia-Pacific region have widened.</li> <li>• Social norms frame care as a private matter provided by female family members notably to children and the elderly, but also to sick and disabled relatives.</li> <li>• The time women spend on paid and unpaid care and domestic work is the highest among all regions in the world.</li> <li>• Younger girls often have to leave school prematurely in order to shoulder care work responsibilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and girls are affected the most when traditional crops begin to fail, as they are responsible for the majority of household food production; this increases their poverty and social inequalities that affect them.</li> <li>• Climate change and environmental degradation increase and intensify women's and girls' unpaid care, domestic and communal work.</li> <li>• Gender inequalities and discriminatory social and cultural norms can limit women's opportunities to migrate and increase their risks at all stages of migration, especially to GBV and other human rights violations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train staff working on social protection programmes on the gendered impacts of climate change.</li> <li>• Advocate for the integration of social protection and gender equality issues into national climate change agendas</li> <li>• Advocate for the development of frameworks and mechanisms to manage safe and regular climate-related migration for women, girls and boys.</li> <li>• Design social protection programs that encourage green jobs among women so that they can contribute to a low-carbon economy</li> <li>• Ensure social protection systems are climate shock-responsive and gender-transformative by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• linking them with gender inclusive early warning and climate information services</li> <li>• incorporating women and girls' perceptions into climate risk analysis, contingency planning, and financial decision-making models.</li> <li>• employing local women to help run the system, thereby increasing opportunities for their leadership and economic empowerment.</li> <li>• combining cash transfers with information on climate-resilient nutrition to strengthen parents' (especially mothers') ability to reduce child malnutrition.</li> <li>• ensuring the continuation of GBV case management mechanisms during climate emergencies.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

16 Evidence compiled from: [Economic empowerment](#). UN Women Asia and the Pacific; [Polycrisis are pushing more women into poverty: How we can help halt the trend](#). Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). 2024; <https://www.oecd.org/development/gender-development/invest-in-care-economy-empower-women-build-resilient-societies-southeast-asia.htm>; ESCAP. Social Development Division, Policy Paper. 2023. [Advancing Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific in the Context of Climate Change](#); <https://www.unescap.org/story/giving-care-work-value-it-deserves>; ESCAP. Social Development Division, Policy Paper. 2023. [Advancing Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific in the Context of Climate Change](#); Aguilar, L. Working Paper, *The Climate-Care Nexus: Addressing the linkages between climate change and women's and girls' unpaid care, domestic, and communal work*. UN Women, New York, November 2023, p. 8.

17 Evidence compiled from: Integrating Gender in Humanitarian Response, UNICEF ROSE, September 2018; Clements, R., et al., *Gender Inclusive Disaster Risk Financing*, START Network, n.p., 2021; Brown, Sarah, et al. *Gender and Age Inequality of Disaster Risk*, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, United Nations Children's Fund, New York, October 2019; Brown, Sarah. et al., *Gender Transformative Early Warning Systems: Experiences from Nepal and Peru*, Practical Action, Rugby, United Kingdom, 2019; Gender Responsive Disaster Risk Management UNICEF and IFRC, 2021.

**SECTOR: EMERGENCIES<sup>17</sup>**

<b>GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP</b>	<b>GENDER NORMS AND INEQUALITY IN EAP ILLUSTRATIVE IMPACTS OF EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS</b>	<b>IDEAS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SMART ACTION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrenched gender discrimination and disparities across health, education, WASH, child protection and social protection heighten vulnerability pre and post disaster</li> <li>• Limited awareness and education among women and girls about extreme weather events and potential response mechanisms</li> <li>• Exclusion from disaster preparedness               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning and coordination</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lack of financial and social independence and resources to be able to decide and act in case of a disaster event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women, boys and girls are 14 times more likely to die during extreme weather events than men. For people with disabilities this figure is even higher.</li> <li>• Women and girls face higher workloads in camps, due to gendered roles in fetching water, cleaning, cooking and caring. These roles also mean that women and girls are disproportionately exposed to water-related diseases which increase as a result of the destruction of WASH services, overcrowding, and poor WASH provision in camps.</li> <li>• Women's lower levels of access to resources such as insurance or loans, and difficulty accessing any government assistance for reconstruction, may mean that they are more likely to remain in camps for a longer period of time.</li> <li>• GBV (including trafficking, domestic abuse, harassment, violence and early marriage) increases after a disaster. This is related to safety and security issues in camps, such as a lack of separate hygiene facilities, lack of safe spaces for women and lack of lighting, as well as a breakdown or absence of reporting mechanisms, an increase in men's alcohol abuse, and negative survival strategies.</li> <li>• Typically, camps are insufficiently equipped to deal with pregnant and/or birthing mothers, newborns, and pediatric patients. This leads to higher risk to mothers, newborns, infants and children after a disaster.</li> <li>• Disasters can exacerbate malnutrition and stunting by destroying food stores and restricting an individual's ability to provide their own sustainable food sources.</li> <li>• Children's access to education is often disrupted immediately after a disaster due to destruction or damage to school buildings, use of school buildings as temporary shelters, displacement of children, increased workload at home or pressure to find employment or be married.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop mechanisms to enable the experiences of women, girls and other marginalized groups to inform disaster risk reduction and emergency response actions, such as participatory disaster risk assessments, gender analysis in emergency contexts, inclusive community preparedness plans and Early Warning Systems as well as camp design, management and logistics</li> <li>• Consider provision of breastfeeding spaces, ecological menstrual hygiene kits, obstetric and pediatric services, segregated toilets, adequate lighting, psychosocial support and confidential spaces for reporting GBV and other complaints or feedback</li> <li>• Consult women and girls to understand their needs and preferences for aid and relief packages, ensure aid and relief is distributed equally between men and women, and involve women in distribution to reduce risk of GBV</li> <li>• Build the capacity of camp teams to identify and address risks of child marriage, trafficking and GBV</li> <li>• Support women, feminist and girl-focused organizations to advocate for inclusion of gender and explicit references to children and (adolescent) girls in particular in disaster preparedness and recovery policies and plans</li> <li>• Promote awareness among men and boys of safety and dignity issues affecting women and girls in climate emergency situations, for example by including information and signage in camps</li> </ul>

# Checklists for integrating a gender-transformative approach into climate smart programming

The following checklists can be applied to climate smart programming in order to work towards the goal of achieving gender-transformative change. The

checklists follow the programming cycle and provide a set of specific questions tailored for each step.<sup>18</sup>

ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVES &  
RESULTS

DESIGN &  
IMPLEMENTATION

MONITORING  
& REPORTING

01.

## Identify and measure the ways that existing gender inequalities exacerbate vulnerability to climate change and environmental degradation

Before programme design and implementation, there is a need to identify and understand how underlying structural inequalities and gender norms contribute to the climate impacts experienced by girls, boys, women and men in all their diversity.

Does the climate and gender analysis identify...	Yes	No
The different impacts of climate change on girls, boys, women and men on key aspects of their lives - such as menstrual health, family nutrition, education, as well as their safety and physical integrity, well-being, assets etc.? Have their home life, daily activities and responsibilities changed due to climate change?		
The different ways girls, boys, women and men contribute to environmental degradation and GHG emissions – such as through their daily tasks, resource use, livelihood activities and consumption choices?		
Which groups are most at risk /disadvantaged in your country context? (sex, age, education, economic group, ethnic background, disability) and how is climate change affecting their rights?		
Whether the identified climate and environmental risks are due to existing gender norms or discriminatory practices and what the gendered differences are? Consider how limited access to services, training, resources and decision-making may affect different people's ability to adapt to and mitigate climate change, for example household division of tasks (e.g. income-generation, care, water collection etc.) and decision-making around how resources are spent (e.g. on child education, on medical or hygiene needs etc.). Who usually participates in climate action (e.g. risk mapping, meetings, information sharing and decision-making spaces) at community level? What barriers exist?		
Where are the high-risk hotspots for malnutrition/displacement/GBV/environmental degradation etc.?		
How are girls, boys, men and women already adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change (e.g. building resilience in their communities, diversifying or greening skills/livelihoods, migrating in pursuit of better opportunities elsewhere, sourcing household energy)? What support and resources do they need to act and make sustainable choices, and what barriers do they face?		
Where climate response systems (policies, plans etc.) and services sit on the gender continuum? Including whether current systems acknowledge and respond to the differentiated and gendered impacts of climate change? Whether the system is working for those groups with less power or influence? What additional skills and services are needed among the workforce and policymakers?		

02.

## Work to challenge the structures and barriers that uphold gender inequality, climate vulnerability and environmental degradation

During programme design, ensure the incorporation of gender-transformative objectives and results. Transforming underlying cultural norms and gender discriminatory practices often takes time, however immediate and intermediate results can be achieved along the way.

Do your programme objectives and results...	Yes	No
Respond to the needs of the most vulnerable groups to climate change? Including sex, age and disability disaggregated targets?		
Aim to reduce key gender inequalities and gaps affected by climate change, including engaging men and boys?		
Address inequalities in access to and control of resources; discriminatory laws and policies, and unequal power relating to climate action?		
Promote the equitable participation of women and young people and recognize their potential as leaders and ecopreneurs?		
Identify opportunities to promote more sustainable practices at society, household and individual levels?		
Include targets at two or more levels of the socio-ecological model, or across sectors (policies and laws, systems, services, communities, families and individual)?		
Include a clear Theory of Change which identifies the types of shifts in climate action which would constitute progress towards a gender-transformative outcome? (refer to the Gender Continuum)		

03.

## Promote equitable participation and benefits in climate smart programme design and implementation

Applying a gender-transformative approach to climate smart programming is as much about how a programme is designed and implemented as what it aims to do. By promoting the equitable participation of women and girls and working with men and boys as allies, programmes can start to transform gender norms and practices at different levels.

Does your programme design and implementation...	Yes	No
Use a participatory approach in which a range of stakeholders, including girls, identify what would constitute transformative change in climate action?		
Center empowerment of women and girls, including considering how to strengthen their climate knowledge, confidence, green skills, decision-making capacities, and access to and control over resources, as well as cultivate their agency and leadership in climate action?		
Respond to the differential and gendered needs and barriers (physical, security, capacity, human resources) identified in the gender and climate change analysis? Will climate smart service provision ensure safety, dignity and privacy measures? Will climate smart facilities and services be situated in accessible and culturally acceptable locations which do not increase climate or gender-related risk?		



Does your programme design and implementation...	Yes	No
Does the programme include measures to advocate for gender equality in climate change and sectoral policies and laws?		
Encourage dialogue and communication between girls and boys, men and women and between generations to address discriminatory practices/ norms and encourage gender role shifts (e.g. engaging men and boys in WASH and care responsibilities, ensuring continuity of education for girls) for lasting change?		
Consider existing spaces, approaches, flagship programmes and projects where the issues of climate change and gender equality can be integrated (e.g. peer support groups, counseling spaces, adolescent-focused programmes, community-driven social and behaviour change interventions, safe spaces for women and girls, national networks and platforms, dignity kits etc.)		
Develop partnerships with women, feminist and girl-led or focused organizations?		
Ensure necessary climate skills among communities, programme staff, public workforce and policy makers, especially among women and girls?		
Ensure benefits are distributed directly to women and girls, as well as other vulnerable groups?		
Focus on developing a new product? Then ensure the product is environmentally friendly e.g. powered by renewable energy or biodegradable, where possible. Where the product is mainly used or needed by girls and women, it should be designed and produced by them. Create opportunities for women and girls to innovate (as “ecopreneurs”) and create new, marketable products, in collaboration with the private sector. Maximize women's employment opportunities in relation to product design, manufacture, sale, distribution, and customer service, through training and skill building programmes, business support, mentoring etc.		
Aim to make a service more climate smart? Then analyze the impacts on women and girls and ensure the service responds to these; educate the workforce and families around these impacts and potential response and adaptation strategies. Strengthen the shock-responsiveness of services by linking them to early warning and climate information systems to be able to anticipate emerging needs. Where the service is mainly used or needed by girls and women, maximize their involvement in service design and provision.		
Aim to make infrastructure fully accessible and more climate smart? Then ensure the facility is powered by renewable energy and that energy provision and maintenance services maximize opportunities for women's involvement (e.g. as operators and technicians), ensure the infrastructure choices take into account women and girls' needs and experiences, and are able to reach the last mile.		
Include specific actions to reduce the risks of occurrence of GBV and displacement?		
Include effective cross-sectoral coordination with other sectors, agencies and organizations?		

### Useful resources:

- [UNICEF guidance for conducting a Climate Landscape Analysis for Children \(CLAC\)](#)
- [The Children's Climate Risk Index \(CCRI\)](#)
- [Working with women and girls to centre gender equality in climate resilience](#)



## 04.

## Monitoring and Reporting systems

Ensuring gender-transformative climate smart programmes effectively monitor and report results is critical for tracking and assessing progress towards climate smart and gender equality goals. This information can generate useful data and evidence when testing innovative approaches, for demonstrating impact pathways that can be transferred and scaled-up, and for providing lessons for consideration by colleagues working across UNICEF.

Does the monitoring and reporting system...	Yes	No
Include indicators to measure immediate, intermediate and ultimate results? (see Table 1 below for ideas)		
Collect disaggregated data using a combination of quantitative and qualitative information?  Quantitative data: At a minimum, data should be disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic origin, disability, and location, as well as any other relevant differences identified during the gender and climate change analysis.  Qualitative data: For example, opinions and perceptions expressed in discussions, interviews and other evaluation processes such as human stories of change, with a focus on those groups most vulnerable to climate change.		
Include participatory feedback and reporting mechanisms, as well as regular reviews from beneficiaries, especially women, girls and other marginalized groups?		



## Ideas for gender-transformative indicators in climate smart programmes

Timeframe	Example indicators of gender-transformative change in climate smart action
<b>Immediate (output)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge among girls of the impacts of climate change on their rights</li> <li>• Increased participation of women and girls in risk analysis for climate change projects and programmes or in the identification of priorities for the Nationally Determined Contribution update</li> <li>• Increased green skills among girls for innovative climate product or service design</li> <li>• Increased decision-making power among women and girls relating to climate action</li> <li>• Increased social and financial capital, for example, the amount of budget spent by local government on providing access to climate smart health services targeting girls and other marginalized groups</li> </ul>
<b>Intermediate (outcome)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced impacts of climate change experienced by target groups, services or infrastructure e.g. reduced incidence of waterborne disease among women and girls, improved continuity of service delivery targeting pregnant women after a disaster event, or reduced exposure to environmental risks reduced among girls and other marginalized groups</li> <li>• Improved agency of women and girls to exercise decisions regarding climate action</li> <li>• Strengthened organizational capacity (e.g. among women, feminist and girl-led and focused organizations) to respond to climate change, for example number local organizations advocating for gender-transformative climate action</li> <li>• Systemic/institutional outcomes:</li> <li>• sector service delivery, including gender parity in the workforce and in reaching last-mile communities</li> <li>• governance and public policy, for example, gender equality is included in key government policy and plans (climate change, education, health, procurement etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Ultimate (impact)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased gender equality (closing the gender gaps identified in the gender and climate analysis, shifts in gender roles)</li> <li>• Increased resilience to climate change (reducing the impacts on people, services and infrastructure identified in the gender and climate analysis, increased capacity among women and girls for adaptation and mitigation measures, increased institutional capacity for planning and response)</li> <li>• Reduced environmental degradation (reducing unsustainable practices, environmental pollution and GHG emissions, strengthened systems for green, low carbon development)</li> </ul>

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