

Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment



Delivering on Gender at the UNFCCC COP17 in Durban

For successful climate change adaptation and mitigation actions, Parties at COP17 need to explicitly address gender equality and women's empowerment, building on, and ensuring the implementation of, existing gender considerations in UNFCCC decisions agreed over the past 3 years. Without appropriate efforts to reduce gender inequalities at all levels, strategies to address climate change will not be effective and sustainable. Gender-blind strategies may perpetuate or may even exacerbate these inequalities, undermining human rights and reversing achievements on vulnerability reduction and poverty eradication.

CARE Demands for COP17

- **Advance a gender-equitable Adaptation Framework** that ensures the participation and empowerment of women and girls for effective and sustainable implementation of adaptation initiatives. This includes operationalizing the **Adaptation Committee** with a gender-balanced membership and endorsement of gender considerations; agreeing **guidelines and modalities for the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)** that facilitate and encourage gender-equitable approaches to adaptation planning and implementation; agreeing activities for a Loss and Damage Work Programme that examines risk and risk reduction through a gender lens; and renewing the mandate of the **Nairobi Work Programme** with a call for review of gender-equitable approaches.

Gender Equality refers to the equal enjoyment by women, girls, boys and men of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born male or female.

- CARE International Gender Policy 2009

- **Operationalize a gender-equitable Green Climate Fund (GCF)**, adopting the Draft Governing Document of the GCF which refers to gender issues, and ensuring the consideration of gender at all levels and stages for an equitable and effective financial response to climate change.
- Advance a **gender-equitable technology mechanism** including social and environmental safeguards and processes that take into account and respond to gender differences in participation, access to, benefit from and differentiated needs and priorities, with regard to technology.
- Ensure **gender-equitable guidance on the information to be provided on the REDD+ safeguards** that protect the rights of poor and marginalised women and men and ensure their equitable participation and benefits.

CARE & climate change

www.careclimatechange.org



CARE's Perspective

Inequalities in the distribution of rights, resources and power are at the root of poverty and vulnerability and neither can be reduced effectively without taking action to understand and address these inequalities. Gender roles and relations also play a strong role in determining power relations, mostly to the detriment of women and girls. These inequalities put many poor people on the frontline of harmful climate change impacts while constraining their ability to take action on climate change.

The majority of the world's poorest people are women.¹ Women and girls tend to carry the primary responsibility for collecting water² and they produce between 60 percent and 80 percent of the food in most developing countries.³ Yet they generally have poorer access to land, agricultural inputs, extension information and credit than men,⁴ and suffer disproportionately from the consequences of nutritional deficiencies and increased workloads and distances for water collection.⁵ According to a study of disasters in a study of 141 countries between 1981 and 2002, gender inequalities in socioeconomic status account for the fact that disasters, on average, kill more women at an earlier age than men.⁶ As a result of these and other factors, women and girls are more likely than men to be amongst those worst affected by harmful climate change impacts.

Inequitable power relations restrict poor people's access to information about, benefits from and control over decisions about mechanisms to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Poor women in developing countries face higher levels of illiteracy and innumeracy than men, have diminished access to information, credit, legal support and training, and are three times less likely than men to be formally employed.⁷ Gender-blind

adaptation, financing, REDD+ and technology-oriented mechanisms risk further marginalising poor women.

Critical awareness of and effective measures to address gender inequalities are, therefore, a key element of CARE's work on community-based adaptation and pro-poor carbon finance. Empowering women as agents of change and equally recognised decision-makers, from the household to the global level, is a crucial pathway toward gender equality.



What CARE Does

- The CARE International Gender Policy commits CARE to gender equality as an explicit, internationally recognized human right.
- We are at the forefront of developing practical approaches and supporting policy solutions to community-based adaptation and pro-poor carbon finance that work for women and men, and empower women as agents of change.
- CARE International is a member of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance which includes nearly 50 UN agencies and civil society organisations working to ensure gender-equitable climate change policies, decision-making and initiatives at all levels.

More on CARE's work on gender

Gender Policy: <http://gender.care2ahre.wikispaces.net/CARE+care+international+gender+policy>

CARE, climate change and gender: www.careclimatechange.org/gender-a-womens-empowerment

¹UNFPA (2009). The State of the World Population 2009. Facing a Changing World: Women, Population and Climate.

²WHO and UNICEF (2010), Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water.

³IUCN, UNDP & GGCA (2009): Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change.

⁴Simavi, S., Manue, C., and Blackden M. (2010). Gender Dimensions of Investment Climate Reform. A Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners

⁵WHO (2011). Gender, Climate Change and Health.

⁶1981–2002. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97 (3). pp. 551-566

⁷Simavi, S., Manue, C., and Blackden M. (2010).