GENDER, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

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Outline

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• Gender and Climate Change Adaptation
• The Link between Gender, Climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction
• Mainstreaming gender—some practical experiences from the APP
Introduction

- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has a two-pronged mandate for working towards gender equality:
  1. gender mainstreaming and
  2. women’s empowerment
- Women’s empowerment is often necessary as an explicit form of affirmative action, since many women find themselves in a condition of inequality and require specific and targeted attention to enable them to participate fully in gender mainstreaming.
Introduction

• Just as climate change will affect regions very differently, it is also clear that climate change impacts will affect men and women differently, given the different roles and responsibilities they have at the household and community levels.
Introduction

- In many communities in Africa, women will be disproportionately impacted by climate change, since they are often poorer, receive less education, and are excluded from political and household decision-making processes that affect their lives.
- Additionally, women tend to possess fewer assets and depend more on natural resources for their livelihoods.
- All of these factors increase women’s vulnerability to climate change impacts relative to men.
Evidence of Women’s subordination relative to Men

- According to the best available data approximately 60% of those who live on less than a dollar a day are women
- Women work two-thirds of the world’s working hours yet receive only 10% of the world income
- Women own only 1% of the world’s property
- Women predominate in world food production (50-80%), but own less than 10% of land.
- Globally, only 8% of cabinet members are women
- 75% of the world’s 876 million illiterate adults are women
Gender and climate change adaptation

• Given the status of gender inequality in Africa, climate change is likely to magnify existing patterns of gender disadvantage.
However, it is important to note that women are not just victims of adverse climate impacts due to their vulnerability; they are also key active agents of adaptation.

This is due to their often deep understanding of their direct environment, their experience in managing natural resources (water, forests, biodiversity and soil), and their active role in climate-sensitive activities such as farming, forestry and fisheries.
Gender and climate change Adaptation

• Therefore, women’s inclusion in the Africa Adaptation Programme is essential not only because of their specific vulnerabilities, which need to be addressed by the AAP, but also because of their ability to be valuable contributors to adaptation work.
• Women can play a role in climate change adaptation, and are often natural resource managers who can help develop strategies to cope with climate-related risks.
• Including women in AAP adds their valuable knowledge and skills to adaptation efforts.
Gender in the AAP

- Gender within the AAP is used to refer to socially constructed roles, responsibilities and opportunities associated with men and women, as well as hidden power structures that govern the relationship between them.
- Gender is in essence used to emphasise that sex inequality is not caused by factors of biology but is determined by the learnt, unequal and inequitable treatment socially accorded to women.
Gender in the AAP

- For that reason, a gender lens is used to understand social processes relating to adaptation thereby ensuring that the AAP considers gendered differences and does not inadvertently contribute to the reinforcement of inequality.
- An integrated gender approach in the AAP is intended to facilitate equitable participation of both men and women, so as to adequately address the strategic
Gender in the AAP

• It is clear that gender-blind adaptation programmes are potentially harmful to development as they tend to exacerbate existing inequality.

• In terms of vulnerability to climate change, this means that men’s vulnerability may decrease whilst women’s stays the same (or even increases).
THE LINK BETWEEN GENDER, CC AND DRR
Why is gender important and what is its link to CC and DDR

- Natural disasters, when they strike, do not discriminate between people. Disasters have no mind. Anyone and everyone in the disaster zone is affected.
- However, whereas disasters do not discriminate against people, humans most certainly do.
- In the aftermath of disasters, humans perpetuate social patterns of discrimination, and these entrenched patterns of discrimination cause certain groups of people to suffer more.
Why is gender important and what is its link to CC and DRR

- The Goal is to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience
- The Root causes of gender disparity in vulnerability are generally:
  - Human, economic, social, environmental & physical factors
- From a UNDP perspective, DRR & CC adaptation are cross-cutting development issues AND THEY SHOULD THEREFORE INTEGRATE GENDER
Disasters pose a major obstacle to Africa's efforts to achieve effective adaptation because of:

- insufficient capacity to predict,
- Monitor
- Deal with and mitigate disaster
- Generally low adaptive capacity
• Reducing vulnerability to hazards (including those induced by climate change) is a necessary element of poverty reduction strategies including efforts to protect past development gains especially in relation to the MDGs.
Making gender-sensitive DRR a tool for climate change adaptation is a win-win option for countries to achieve resilience to disasters and climate change.

For example, CC adaptation can immediately benefit from the existing disaster risk reduction tools and approaches:

- Hyogo Framework for Action
- Flood management guidelines
- Guidelines on national platforms for disaster risk reduction
- Drought management framework
- Risk and vulnerability assessments approaches
- Early warning
Mainstreaming Gender in CC and DRR: Tools and methodologies

- Gender tools are not isolated entities.
- They are not viewed as specific products but as part of a process.
- They are flexible, and build on, and strengthen existing local knowledge, structures and institutions.
- Enhance socio-economic benefits, gender equality/equity, and improve livelihoods.
- Continually promote learning and innovation.
Adopting Gender Approach for CC and DDR

- The Gender Approach is a working tool that should be integrated in the entire programming process, including:
  - Gender Analysis
  - Disaggregate all data by gender.
  - Gender responsive indicators to measure results, benefits and impact.
  - Build up and strengthen sustainable development strategies and institutional frameworks.
  - Document and disseminate best practices to continually promote learning and innovation.
Examples of what the AAP is doing

- Supporting training for mainstreaming gender in climate change adaptation
- Documenting best practice case studies for mainstreaming gender in climate change adaptation (in partnership with the UNDP regional Bureau for Eastern and Southern Africa in Johannesburg
- Developing indicators for reporting on climate change adaptation at national level
- Including gender component in the Leadership and capacity development of the AAP
- Supporting countries to mainstream gender in national climate change response strategies – Kenya, Mauritius, Tanzania
- Developing guidelines for mainstreaming gender in climate change adaptation policies, programmes and projects – Kenya as pilot starting May - June