

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS: WOMEN AT THE FORE

Women are already disproportionately feeling the impacts of climate change, and the large gender gap in employment and wages makes women less able to respond. However, since many women are the primary providers of energy, water and other resources for their families, women have a central role to play in climate action. As people from around the world gather at COP23, this fact sheet presents some salient truths that reinforce why women should be at the centre of a low-carbon, climate resilient future.

IMPACTS

- Women and children are 14x more likely to die during natural disasters. Studies show that after climate disasters, it is generally harder for poor women to recover their economic positions than poor men.¹
- By 2050, the number of people fleeing the impacts of climate change could reach 150 million, 80% of which will be women and children.²
- In Sub-Saharan Africa, 71% of the burden of collecting water for households falls on women and girls.³ Changing rainfall patterns could force women to travel even farther.

SOLUTIONS

- Greater gender equality includes greater use of human capital, which leads to higher per capita GDP and increased competitiveness.⁴
- Women are more likely than men to engage in environmentally sensitive behaviours, such as recycling, conserving water and using environmentally friendly products.⁵
- Countries with more women in their parliaments are more likely to set aside protected land areas and ratify international environmental treaties.⁶
- In India and Nepal, forest conservation is improved when women participate in forest management and decision-making processes at the community level.⁷
- There is already opportunity for alignment between the development and climate agendas: 6 of the 9 targets under SDG 5 on Gender Equality were aligned with climate action in NDCs, and 40% of NDCs referenced women and/or gender.⁸

“To support economic growth and development, we need to tap the potential of all workers, giving women opportunities not just to earn, but also to lead. Women need to be empowered, and their role in the economy transformed. What better moment to achieve this than now, when the world is pursuing another economic transformation, toward a green economy?”

NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA, Co-chair of the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate, former Finance Minister of Nigeria



BARRIERS

- When gender inequality is high, forest depletion, air pollution and other measures of environmental degradation are also high.⁹
- Gender inequality costs Sub-Saharan Africa \$95 billion (or 6% of GDP) per year, on average.¹⁰
- In South Asia, only 37% of women have a bank account compared to 55 percent of men. That means women are less able to make decisions on how to respond to climate change impacts, or take advantage of solutions.¹¹

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The Global Commission on the Economy and Climate, and its flagship project The New Climate Economy, were set up to help governments, businesses and society make better-informed decisions on how to achieve economic prosperity and development while also addressing climate change.

Visit www.newclimateeconomy.com for more information. Follow us [@NewClimateEcon](https://twitter.com/NewClimateEcon).

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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