

## MODULE 3

# Gender-based Climate Action & Policy



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# Gender-based Climate Action & Policy

Climate change disproportionately impacts women, especially women in vulnerable positions or who belong to marginalised groups. [Source](#)

Therefore, in Module 3, we want to highlight the importance of taking gender related issues into consideration when discussing climate change, policy and actions.

- 01 Climate change impacts on women
- 02 Gender-responsive climate policies
- 03 Women and climate mitigation & adaptation
- 04 Women's empowerment & climate action
- 05 Gender mainstreaming in climate policies

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# 01

## Climate Change Impacts on Women



# Three Links Between Gender & Climate Change

- **Environmental degradation** can influence men and women differently due to different gender roles. This is particularly the case in rural societies that rely on the direct use of natural resources of survival and where gender roles are strict regarding tasks and activities.
- **The responsibility** for greenhouse emissions and environmental pressures are not evenly distributed between genders. Men, on average, have a larger carbon footprint, and are also more likely to be in leadership positions in big businesses responsible for large shares of emissions, or in government institutions responsible for economic policy. [Source](#)
- **Different roles in society**, and different values, highlight the importance of engaging all genders in the decision-making processes. Both when shaping policies and designing solutions. Increasing diversity in collective decision-making is more likely to result in a broader pool of ideas and generate better solutions than if decisions are only being made by one gender. [Source](#)





## Women's rights and climate change ([OHCHR report 2019](#))

The report recommends *"a gender-responsive, rights-based approach to climate action and emphasised the need to recognise the role of women as agents of change"*. Furthermore, that *"the full, equal and meaningful participation of all women in decision-making on climate change be made a priority"*.

It is also recognised that the environmental knowledge and skills that women possess are crucial for successful climate action. Their voices should inform and guide climate change policies and actions.

Source



# Further resources on Gender & Climate Change

To reflect further on the links between gender and climate change, here are some links to interesting discussions/articles surrounding these issues:

- [„Gender & Climate“ on Apple Podcasts](#)
- [Why the Climate Crisis is a Crisis for Women – YouTube](#)
- [Climate change is not gender neutral feat. @OurChangingClimate – YouTube](#)
- [Gender equality and climate change | European Institute for Gender Equality \(europa.eu\)](#)
- [Gender and Climate Change: An Introduction | CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform](#)





# 02

## Gender- Responsive Climate Policies



# What are gender-responsive climate policies?

- Recognising that climate change is a gendered issue
- Involving all genders in the decision-making and implementation on an equal basis
- Women can provide other viewpoints, contexts, and experiences to the discussion that ensure that the decisions and actions taken are meeting and responding to the different needs of women and men – both in national and local contexts.

*“Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn’t be that women are the exception.”*

Ruth Bader Ginsburg





# Policies that offer real and sustainable solutions

Empowering women to take part in finding solutions to the challenges climate change brings is therefore of the utmost importance.

Women have their own areas of expertise and ways to communicate and pass on that knowledge. This knowledge is often vital for sustaining community, livelihoods, values, and the well-being of said communities.

**The knowledge and world view that the different genders bring to the table should be viewed as complimentary and equally important when looking for sustainable solutions to climate change.**



# Importance of local knowledge in climate policies

When we are talking about local knowledge, we are often referring to the **traditional knowledge, values and skills that have developed within communities** through having interacted with their natural and cultural environments for a long time.

The diverse and varied knowledge the different genders have, through their lived experiences within those communities, has great significance and value. Local knowledge is an important aspect to consider, especially once climate policies are to be adapted and put into action within said communities.

Local knowledge is also important in relation to tourism practices within regions and how climate policies can be incorporated into local tourism practices.



# Gender considerations in making climate policies



**Technological  
related processes  
and mechanisms**

**Climate financing**



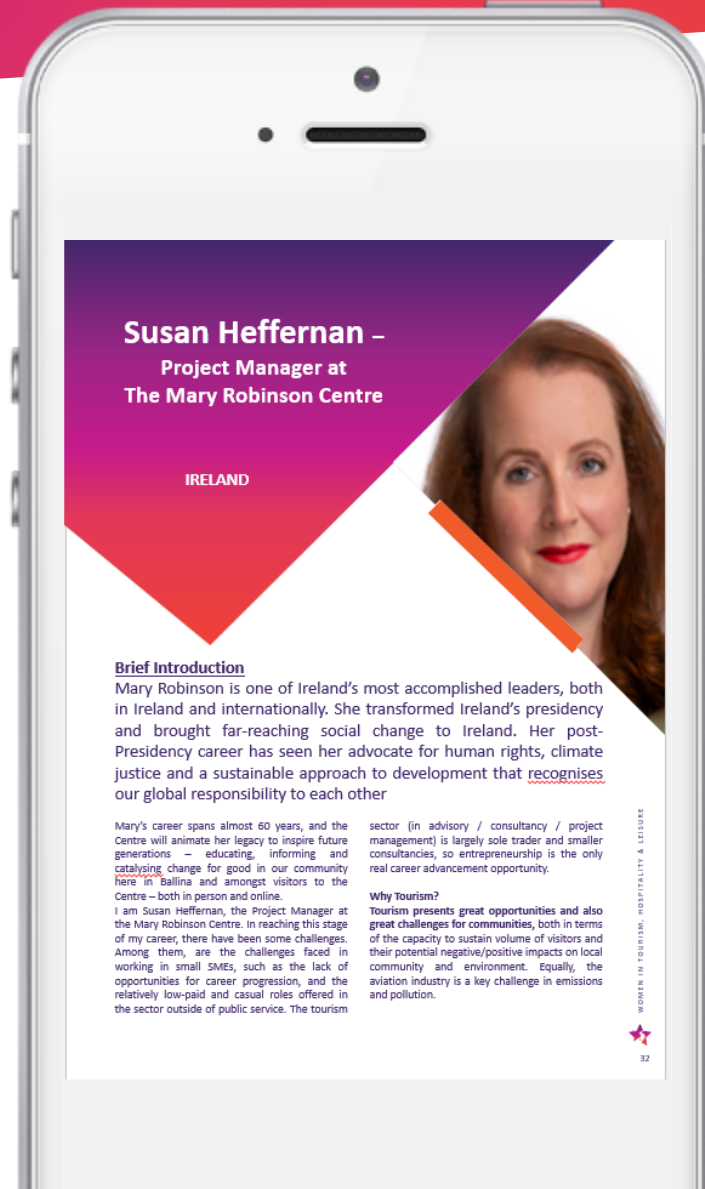
**Gender disparity  
in leadership roles**

**Lack of Gender focused  
data on the impacts of  
Climate Change**

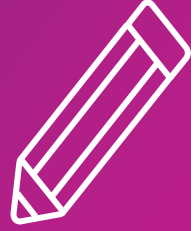


# Be Inspired ...

In the [We Lead Good Practice Compendium](#) one of our case studies; is Susan Heffernan and her role in creating a link between gender balance/ human rights and climate action. She does this through her advocacy work at The Mary Robinson Centre in Ballina Ireland.



# Learner Exercise



How can these climate policies influence men and women differently?

## Please Reflect

- Incentives to increase the share of electric cars
- Educational material to highlight the climate benefits of plant-based foods
- Implementation of a new recycling programme for households





# Why gender matters for effective adaptation to climate change

This short video highlights why it is important for people with different backgrounds, genders, and socio-economic realities to play a key role in the decision-making when we are talking about climate policies, solutions and implementations – as the impacts of climate change is not felt the same across the board.



[Why Gender Matters for Effective Adaptation to Climate Change \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



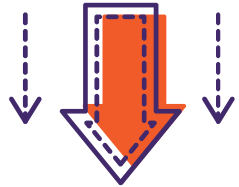


# 03

## Women and Climate Mitigation & Adaptation

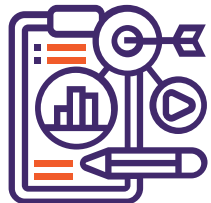


# What is Mitigation and Adaptation?



## Mitigation:

Measures taken to **reduce the impacts of climate change** by lowering the emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere or by enhancing the storage of these gases.



## Adaptation:

Foresee adverse effects of climate change and take **steps to prevent or minimise the damage** they can cause. In other words, adjusting to the current and future effects of climate change.



# Gender and Mitigation - Food

According to several research results (e.g. [FULLTEXT02.pdf \(diva-portal.org\)](#) and [Eye Opener Report - We Lead Project](#), women tend to have a lighter carbon footprint than men

## Example:

Research from the Netherlands, Switzerland and Finland all reached the same conclusion: Men's food is more carbon intensive than what women eat, mostly due to males eating more meat.



## Quick Exercise:

Use any of the available Apps to calculate your 'foodprint' - Carbon footprint of your last meal

In many cultures, meat eating is associated with masculinity!



# Gender and Mitigation - Transport

Big, **energy-intensive** cars are often associated with **masculinity**

Women are more likely to choose energy-efficient cars or modes of transport...[Source](#)

[An Interesting read](#)





*When we plant trees,  
we plant the seeds of  
peace and seeds of  
hope*

Wangari Maathai

## Gender and Adaptation

Most research about gender and adaptation has been conducted in the developing world.

The impacts of climate change have been shown to magnify existing inequalities.

This means in places where women are discriminated against, climate change can make this discrimination even worse.

Gender roles differ from one place to the next. Thus, **analysis of climate impacts and the appropriate adaptation strategies must be gender sensitive.** [Source](#)





# 04

## Women's Empowerment & Climate action





# Importance

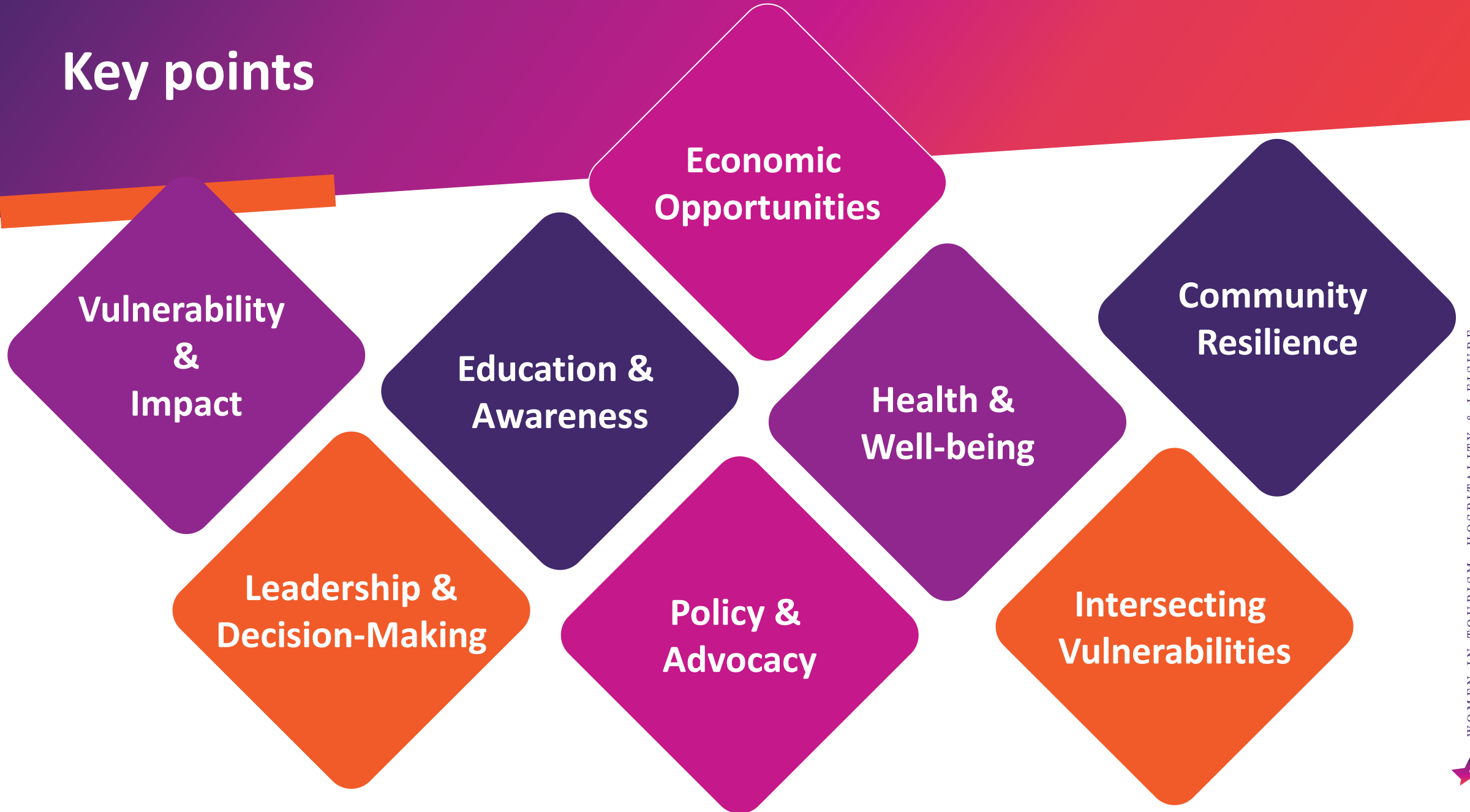
**Women's empowerment & climate action** are interconnected agendas that require integrated approaches to:

- address gender inequalities,
- enhance resilience, and
- achieve sustainable development goals.

Empowering women not only contributes to climate resilience but also fosters more inclusive and equitable societies capable of addressing the complex challenges posed by climate change.



# Key points



# Impact & Leadership

## ➤ **Vulnerability & Impact:**

Women are often disproportionately affected by climate change due to social, economic, and cultural factors. In many societies, women are primarily responsible for tasks that are impacted by climate change-induced phenomena.

## ➤ **Leadership & Decision-Making:**

Equal participation and representation in decision-making processes related to climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. Women are more likely to address the needs of the entire community, including vulnerable groups.





**EDUCATION IS THE  
MOST POWERFUL  
WEAPON WHICH YOU  
CAN USE TO CHANGE  
THE WORLD**

Nelson Mandela



## Education

**Education and Awareness** efforts can:

- enhance women's understanding of climate change issues
- equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Educated women are typically more likely to adopt sustainable practices that contribute to climate action.

- [Educating women and girls, key to achieving SDGs | WONDER Foundation](#)
- [Girls' education for climate action - CAMFED](#)



# Economic Opportunities & Policy

Providing **economic opportunities** enables women to participate in green industries, renewable energy projects, sustainable agriculture, and other climate-friendly sectors.

This helps:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- enhance economic resilience
- foster inclusive growth.

By **amplifying women's voices** and addressing gender inequalities in policy frameworks, governments and international organisations can better address the intersecting challenges of gender inequality and climate change.



## Health

Climate change affects various aspects of health, including reproductive health, maternal health, and access to healthcare services. Women need to make informed decisions about their health and well-being, including access to family planning and reproductive healthcare.

[A good read](#)

## Community

Women often serve as key agents of change within their communities, by mobilising resources, building networks, and implementing grassroots initiatives for climate resilience. Women leadership roles in community-based adaptation and mitigation efforts can strengthen overall resilience to climate change impacts. [Source](#)

## Vulnerabilities

Women in marginalised and disadvantaged communities face intersecting vulnerabilities due to gender, socio-economic status, and environmental factors. Empowering these women requires addressing structural inequalities and ensuring their meaningful participation in climate action.

# Organisations & Networks

**Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF):** WECF is a network of women's and environmental organisations working on gender and sustainable development issues, including climate change, in Europe and beyond. [www.wecf.org/](http://www.wecf.org/)

**European Women's Lobby (EWL):** EWL is an umbrella organisation that promotes women's rights and gender equality in Europe. [womenlobby.org](http://womenlobby.org)

**Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO):** Although based in the United States, WEDO has a presence in Europe and works on advancing gender equality and women's rights in environmental and climate policy processes globally. [wedo.org/](http://wedo.org/)



# Initiatives & Campaigns

**Women for Climate** initiative by the Barcelona City Council: This initiative brings together women leaders, experts, and activists to promote women's leadership in climate action. It includes mentoring programmes, capacity-building workshops, and public awareness campaigns.

[c40.org/women4climate/mentorship-programme/barcelona-2023](https://c40.org/women4climate/mentorship-programme/barcelona-2023)

**Women Powering Climate Solutions** by the European Climate Foundation: This initiative supports women entrepreneurs and innovators in Europe who are developing climate solutions. It provides funding, networking opportunities, and mentorship to support women-led climate projects.

[europeanclimate.org](https://europeanclimate.org)





# Delve Deeper – Additional Reading

- [Welcome | UN Women – Headquarters](#)
- [Home | Climate & Development Knowledge Network \(cdkn.org\)](#)
- [The Gender Action Plan | UNFCCC](#)
- [Gender-Responsive Strategies on Climate Change \(wedo.org\)](#)
- [Gender and Climate Finance: Double Mainstreaming for Sustainable Development \(boell.org\)](#)
- [Advancing Gender-Responsive Climate Action: Policy Brief Reveals Progress and Challenges | UNFCCC](#)
- [Gender and Climate Change: Impacts, Science, Policy - 1st Edition - Jo \(routledge.com\)](#)
- [A Green Feminist Foreign Policy for the EU | Heinrich Böll Stiftung | Brussels office - European Union \(boell.org\)](#)





# 05

## Gender Mainstreaming in Climate Policies





**Gender mainstreaming in climate policies** is an approach that integrates gender considerations throughout all stages of climate-related policy-making, planning, and implementation. It aims to address the interconnected challenges of climate change and gender inequality by ensuring that climate actions are **equitable and inclusive**, considering the different impacts of climate change on men and women, as well as their unique roles, needs, and capacities in climate adaptation and mitigation.







"Climate change is the single biggest threat humanity faces. With women making up around half of the world's population as well as having unique perspectives, knowledge, and experiences regarding their local environments, it would be illogical to leave 3.6 billion solutions out of the discourse, policies, and actions on climate change adaptation and mitigation if we're to ensure a sustainable future for all."

- Lorena Aguilar.



# Integrating Gender Perspectives in Climate Action: Analysis and Tools

- **Comprehensive Gender Analysis:** This involves deploying gender analyses and gender-disaggregated information systems to discern the impacts of climate change on different genders. Such analysis is crucial for tailoring climate actions that effectively address the specific needs and harness the potential contributions of both men and women.
- **Application of Gender-sensitive Tools:** Employing gender-sensitive methodologies ensures that climate adaptation and mitigation measures are designed with an acute awareness of gender dynamics. This holistic approach spans the entire project cycle, from planning and design to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, promoting gender sensitivity at every step.





# Addressing Gender Stereotypes and Discrimination:

- **Empowerment and Inclusion in Decision-making:** Advancing women's empowerment and ensuring their representation in decision-making processes are fundamental to fostering innovative and sustainable solutions to climate challenges. As Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren (Director of External Affairs of Green Climate Fund, World Economic Forum) aptly noted, "When both men and women are part of the discussion and the decision-making on climate change, the results will be better." This inclusivity is essential for crafting policies that are not only effective but also equitable and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.
- **Capacity Building:** Strengthening women's access to knowledge and skills in areas critical to climate resilience, such as agroecology, agroforestry, and renewable energies, is vital. Enhancing women's capacities in these fields empowers them to play a more active role in climate action, contributing to sustainable solutions that benefit the broader community.



# Summary

Gender mainstreaming in climate policies is thus not merely a strategy for enhancing gender equality; it is a fundamental aspect of creating more resilient, effective, and sustainable climate responses.

By integrating gender perspectives into climate action, we can leverage the full spectrum of human potential, driving forward towards a more equitable and sustainable future for all.



[www.welead.eu](http://www.welead.eu)



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