



EnGenDER

Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery,
Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean

Gender Inequality of Climate Change and Disaster Risk in the Social Protection Sector

March 2022

Gender & Climate Change Resilience Series

12 of 18



Natural hazards and climate change impact women and men differently due to differences in societal expectations of their roles and responsibilities in families and communities, and the means by which they earn their livelihoods. Women generally have lower

incomes, less access to credit and decision-making authority, and limited control over resources, which increases their vulnerabilities to many natural hazards and climate change impacts. The impacts of climate change and disasters often magnify existing gender inequalities between women and men; thus, the approach to policy development and service delivery by institutions needs to take into consideration gendered differences. In particular, climate change and disaster risk preparation and response demand initiatives that identify and address existing gendered differences to ensure that women and girls, and men and boys have equal access to disaster risk resilience and climate change and environmental solutions.



CLIMATE CHANGE

a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time period.



DISASTER

a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts.



HAZARD

a process, phenomenon or human activity that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impact, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. Hazards maybe natural, anthropogenic or socionatural in origin.

Through a series of comprehensive studies, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women) under the Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) Project has identified gender inequality of climate change and disaster risk impacts across the social protection sector. The social protection sector directs its efforts to reduce socio-economic insecurity, and aims to enhance

and extend social security and social protection schemes (e.g., cash or in-kind transfers, food and nutrition assistance, unemployment benefits, pensions, skills training programmes). More specifically, social protection systems help the poor and vulnerable to cope with crises and shocks, to find jobs and to invest in the health and education of their children, and these systems also protect the aging and disabled populations.

Why a Gender Lens (Analysis)?

Gender biases perpetuate gender inequalities. Across the Caribbean, a proportion of the population lives below the poverty line. Women and children are more likely to live in poverty than men; in part, because women are more likely than men to be unemployed and to work in jobs that earn low wages. Women are also more likely to perform unpaid domestic and care work. Thus, the need for gender-responsive approaches to administering social security, social protection and safety nets services. Safety net services are comprised of both governmental and nongovernmental programmes that provide assistance with financial support, health care, child care and maintenance, and household material hardships (e.g., food, energy and household insecurity), which are critical to persons living in poverty.

In post-disaster contexts, other social protection issues emerge and households that were previously not defined as vulnerable, find themselves vulnerable and in need of social protection services. In the post-disaster context, anyone can become vulnerable, but those most vulnerable tend to include women and children, as well as persons with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ+ community who often face increased discrimination and challenges integrating into their communities and earning a livelihood.



Climate Change and Disaster Risks

Across the Caribbean, an analysis of gender inequality due to the impacts of climate change, hazards and disasters revealed impacts on the social protection sector, including:



As it relates to the general protection of displaced persons and prevention of GBV, women and children are more vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence post-disaster, and those risks increase the longer they stay in mixed-sex emergency shelters where security is inadequate.



Elderly women and men may experience delays in social security payments and income support.



Members of the LGBTQ+ community may face discrimination in accessing emergency and social protection services, and in emergency shelters.



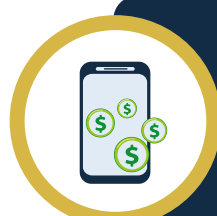
Disaster impacts can result in poor working conditions for women and men, persons with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ+ community. Disruptions related to climate change events and disasters can also lead to unemployment, should businesses become non-operational.

Coping Mechanisms Identified

In the Caribbean, women and men who have been impacted by climate change events and disasters have adapted and coped in the following ways:



Utilized savings and accessed loans.



Relied on remittances.



Accessed cash transfers programmes.



Pursued temporary labour swaps and/or jobs in other sectors.

Opportunities for Gender-Responsive Disaster Resilience

What can be done to ensure that climate change policies and strategies are gender-responsive? What can be done to reduce the gendered risks for vulnerable populations?



Policymakers can:



Implement gender-sensitive resettlement policies.



Integrate shock-responsive measures to minimize post-disaster impacts.



Prioritize collection and use of standardized sex-disaggregated data and data on gender issues related to climate change and hazard events and disasters, and across groups and sectors.



Include NGOs and CSOs in decision-making to amplify and represent the voices and specific needs of women, persons with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ+ community.



Address psychosocial support after large disaster events.

This *Gender & Climate Change Resilience Series* is a UN Women publication under the EnGenDER Project. The EnGenDER Project is funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (UKFCDO). Led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the EnGenDER Project is also jointly implemented by the United Nations Entity

for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women), World Food Programme (WFP) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). Nine Caribbean countries are beneficiaries of the EnGenDER Project – Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname.