

# Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Climate Change

PACC+ Gender Training  
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# What is the Mainstream?

‘The place where choices are considered and decisions made that effect the economic, social and political options of large numbers of people. It is where the action is. It is where things happen... the idea of mainstreaming women is fundamentally about equality. It is about power as much as it is about projects. It is about policies as much as programmes.’

**Mary Anderson, Focusing on Women, UNIFEM’s Experience in Mainstreaming (UNIFEM 1993)**



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# Reinforcing the Mainstream

- Mainstream ideas and practices determine who gets what
- Provide a rationale for the allocation of resources and opportunities
- Ideas and practices tend to reinforce and reflect each other
- The challenge is to break the cycle.



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# Gender Mainstreaming A Shift in Approach

- Major lesson – significant change cannot be achieved by adding separate programmes for women
- Recognition that not gender equality is not just a ‘women’s issue’ but a societal one for overall development and is central to national development
- Gender equality – Designed to bring gender equality into the core of development activities



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# Gender Mainstreaming: Pursued from the centre

- Gender equality goals influence broad or mainstream economic and social policies and programmes
- Pursued from the centre rather than the margins
- Both women and men determine values, development directions and allocation of resources
- Mainstreaming is a strategy to transform the mainstream for the benefit of women and society as a whole



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# Gender mainstreaming involves:

- Reshaping the mainstream rather than adding activities for women at the margin - the consistent incorporation of gender perspectives in situation analyses, assessments, policy development, etc.
- A focus on gender equality, rather than women as a target group, ie moving beyond 'How many women participated? To 'How can this policy or initiative reduce inequalities between women and men?'



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# Gender mainstreaming also involves:

- Efforts to ensure initiatives not only respond to gender differences but seek to reduce gender equality
- Identification of gender differences not only to improve project efficiency but also to identify inequalities that hinder women from benefiting on an equal basis with men
- More attention to men, gender relations and the role of both women and men in creating an equal society



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# Benefits of gender mainstreaming for climate adaptation projects

- Identifies and uses opportunities for improving gender equality in projects and policies that may not have otherwise considered gender
- Identifies concrete initiatives for women in strategic areas such as in policy development and decision-making
- Can also address hidden biases that lead to inequitable situations for men and women in all sectors of policy-making



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# Gender mainstreaming in climate change

**Enables policy makers and practitioners to focus on the outcomes of gender inequality, AND to identify and address the processes and circumstances that cause it**

**Aims to sustain concerns for gender equality throughout the entire project or policy cycle**



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# Gender Dimensions of International Climate Change Frameworks

Recent positive shifts in the climate change architecture - persistent lobbying by gender and climate change advocates such as the global network GenderCC and other civil society organisations

- The Bali Action Plan provides entry points for taking gender issues into account.
- In 2008 the UNFCCC Secretariat persuaded to include gender- specific recommendations in conference documents.



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# Struggling to address gender in climate change policies

- Many climate change policies and processes still largely gender blind
- When gender issues are considered they are too often an 'add on' to existing policies, and then mainly in the context of adaptation
- Policies that take a gender perspective tend to draw on assumptions and simplistic generalisations. Climate adaptation policies often consider women mainly as vulnerable beneficiaries rather than capable agents with skills and experience.



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# Gender disparity in international decision-making around climate change

- Perhaps the most significant factor in the persistent gender blindness of climate change policies
- Women accounted for 30 per cent of all delegation parties and under 15 per cent of all heads of delegations at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in 2010 (COP 16).
- In the Pacific?



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# Gender Dimensions of Adaptation

Women and men adapt differently

- Might be obvious but often overlooked and invisible when policies are developed and adaptation initiatives are planned

Both women and men can be key agents of adaptation

- Community leaders, role in natural resource management, different perspectives, valuable skills and essential knowledge

Gender roles change across age and over time

- Assumptions may be made on stereotypical perceptions of women's and men's roles which influences design of climate change initiatives and their subsequent participation



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# Gender Dimensions of Adaptation

- Men and women bring different issues to the table.
- Women and men often highlight different concerns and bring different perspectives, experiences and solutions to issues.
- Different roles and experiences of men and women in areas such as farming, fishing, water resources, result in different knowledge and skills relating to natural resource use and management.



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# Why bother with gender?

Use of a 'gender lens' can help people better understand social processes

- If gender is overlooked in the planning of an adaptation intervention and women are not consulted, the measures may not be appropriate or sustainable.
- Do not inadvertently perpetuate inequality or increase women's vulnerability to climate change
- Relieve any disproportionately high burden resulting from the adverse effects of climate change



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# Promoting Gender Equality in Climate Change

- Climate change policies and interventions should actively promote women's rights and gender equality in order to bring about change.
- Gender equality should be both a **potential end goal** and an **important factor and precondition for effective responses to climate change**.



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# Work towards a situation where:

- Women and men have an equal voice in decision-making on climate change and broader governance
- There is equal access to resources necessary to respond to negative effects of climate change
- Both women's and men's needs and knowledge are taken into account
- Broad social constraints that limit women's access to practical resources and strategic resources no longer exist



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# Actions to Support Gender Mainstreaming within PACC

Challenges and Successes (for example):

- Efforts to create real participation and ownership among women
- Strategies to ensure that women play a key role in decision-making
- Changing perceptions about female and male roles, responsibilities and rights, in workshops, meetings, training, etc..
- Use of women's knowledge and experience to define issues and explore solutions



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# Challenges to Gender Mainstreaming within PACC

- Gender blind: simply don't see the issues or think that they aren't important.
- Women forgotten in initial assessments, then lose out when it's considered too late, 'no more assessments', people fed up
- Lack of motivation, commitment: 'Not our responsibility', Not enough time, Not the right time, Not enough money
- Lack of capacity within government, local organisations, PACC
- Aspects of climate change may be male-dominated, seen as a technical area – considered masculine in many countries.



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