

Article Title: **“Climate change and women”**

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This article argues that the Climate change disproportionately affects women, especially in developing countries, due to their roles in agriculture and caregiving. Rising temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and increased disasters exacerbate their vulnerability, threatening their health, livelihoods, and well-being.

Empowering women through education, inclusion, and climate-resilient practices is essential to mitigate these impacts and promote a more equitable response to climate change. Climate change has disrupted seasonal events, altered rainfall patterns, increased sea levels and caused droughts, all of which have affected both flora and fauna for a long time. In particular, humans have been faced with this natural disaster on a large scale. Heatstroke, one of the effects, results in a body temperature exceeding 40°C and includes symptoms such as dizziness, red skin and headaches. According to scientists, climate change is mainly caused by human activities such as burning fossil fuels and the release of carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere - resulting in the greenhouse effect and warming. Deforestation also contributes significantly to global warming due to the excessive amounts of carbon left in the atmosphere.

The implications of climate change are severe, covering the entire planet in a blanket of heat. Women, particularly in developing countries, are among the most affected. Agriculture occupies 32% of the world's land area and is used for cultivating crops, raising livestock and growing plants and trees. Globally, women make up approximately 43% of the agricultural labor force — about two out of every five workers in the sector. In rural areas, these women sustain their families alongside their partners. They lead flocks, work in the fields and provide food, water and fuel - often traveling long distances to fetch water.

In rural regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America, women are responsible for 60-80% of food production. When agricultural systems fail, these women and their families suffer the most — facing hunger and seeking alternative sources of

sustenance. Historically, women have been more vulnerable to climate-related disasters than men.

For instance, during the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, approximately 40,000 to 45,000 women perished — more than men - partly because they stayed behind to care for children and relatives. Areas such as Cuddalore and Nagapattinam in India experienced higher female casualties. Women bear the brunt of climate change. They are disproportionately affected by heatwaves in summer and heavy rains in winter, due to the responsibilities placed upon them. Sadly, this leads to both physical and mental health repercussions — particularly in reproductive health. Pregnant women working in fields sometimes face such extreme conditions that they give birth on cultivated land. Furthermore, in the face of climate disruption, gender-based violence increases, and women are often left at the mercy of men. Overall, resource scarcity caused by climate change places a heavier burden on women. Despite their crucial role in agriculture and their contribution to economic development during the climate crisis, women often remain unrecognised, marginalised and excluded from decision-making. Their role should not be undermined — they must be included in climate action plans and empowered to lead.

The climate crisis poses a serious threat to humanity's progress, displacing and disturbing many lives and raising particular concern for women. As its effects intensify, it widens the gender gap and worsens livelihoods, safety, and human relations.

To tackle this challenge, the international community and public-private partnerships must come forward. Women can play a leadership role if given the opportunity. Developed countries prioritise their representation in parliaments and decision-making. Hence, women educators and activists can raise awareness about climate change and teach strategies to mitigate its impacts.

Above all, women should be empowered with resources and training to adopt climate-smart practices that protect the environment. Climate Action Plans are the need of the hour, as we are the last generation that can make a real difference.

As President Obama once said, "We are the first generation to feel the impact of climate change, and the last generation that can do something about it."