Gender, Climate Change and Development Nexus in Africa

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Outline

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• Climate Change Threats to Attainment of Regional and Global Commitments
• Impact of Climate Change on Women and girls
• Current Policy Environment
• Gender Responsive Measures
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Introduction........

• Climate and Weather Information- Not accessed and used by all; not optimally and efficiently used;
  • How is it generated?
  • How is it disseminated?
  • In its dissemination are gender concerns taken into account?

• 4th Industrial revolution is Upon Us- Information is literally on our fingertips... Africa has a potential late comer advantage. Are we fully utilizing this? Are we dealing with technical divide? STEM
Introduction...

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Climate Change Threats ……

• Impacts of climate change threaten attainment of Regional and Global Frameworks:-
  • A drop in agricultural yields in some countries, with the consequent adverse effects on agricultural output, food security and nutrition;
  • An increase in the number of people at risk from water stress;
  • Rising sea levels that could severely affect mangrove forests as well as coastal fisheries, and lead to severe flooding;
  • Increase in waterborne diseases and diseases spread by mosquitoes, which will significantly impact human health.
Gender Climate Change Threats …..

- Climate change - significant impact of climate change on women and girls

- Lima Work program on Gender, COP20 (gender balance in negotiations) and COP21 outlining gender considerations as a standard

- SDG 5 and Inspiration 6 of AU A63- promote gender equality and women’s empowerment

- Gender equality:-
  - precondition for sustainable, holistic and equitable development
  - fundamental for the full enjoyment of human rights by women and men.

- Failing to address gender issues in climate change:  
  - impedes the effectiveness of mitigation and adaptation policies and programmes
  - significantly hampers Africa’s sustainable development prospects
Impact of Climate Change on Women

• Gendered division of labour
• Unequal access to resources of production, including land, technology and credit
• Limited involvement in decision-making processes
• Direct dependence on natural resources
• Cultural and social discrimination

→ makes women disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change
Impact of Climate Change on Women contd.

• Women responsible for providing food to household
• Comprise estimated 48% of the economically active population in agriculture in Africa
• However, women tend to own less than 15 percent of agricultural land in Africa
• Limited access to and control over the resources required
• Climate-induced crop failure affects food security of household and population
• Women responsible for household water supply as well as energy for cooking and heating.

• With the onset of water shortages and the depletion of forests:
  - increased workload
  - decreased time available to women for food production and preparation as well as participation in income-generating activities
  - adverse effect on overall household food security, nutritional well-being and economic status
Impact of Climate Change on Women contd.

• During and after a climate-induced disaster, women face various challenges:
  - Disproportionate vulnerability;
  - heavier workload involving clean-up work, subsistence activities and care-giving;
  - run the risk of being exploited – e.g. may be refused their rights to land and property or exposed to violence and abuse;
  - adverse weather conditions – higher incidence of disease:
    • deterioration in health status of women exponentially increases since they are frequently discriminated against in the distribution of resources, food or medicine.
Current Policy Environment

• Current trend to frame climate change as a problem that needs technical solutions (Climate Change language needs to be demystified) Emphasis on technical and scientific solutions and insufficient attention human Rights and Multi sectoral solutions;

• Paradigm Shift needed:-
  • Multi-sectoral perspective needed
  • Human rights approach is also key.
  • makes it difficult to find an entry point to introduce gender-equality issues into the discourse

• Existing gender-sensitive policies related to climate change:-
  • Minimal
  • Not implemented
  • Created in isolation from other key development sectors
Gender-Responsive Measures

- Gender mainstreaming in national climate change policies
  - carry out systematic gender analysis
  - collect and utilize sex-disaggregated data
  - establish gender-sensitive indicators and benchmarks
  - develop practical tools to support increased attention to gender issues
  - consultation with and participation of women in climate change initiatives, including a strengthened role for women’s groups and networks
Gender-Responsive Measures contd.

• Harnessing women’s local knowledge and expertise in mitigation and adaptation
  • African women - valuable knowledge as well as experience regarding several adaptation mechanisms to environmental stressors
• Unique position to curb the consequences of climate change
• Makes them repositories of indigenous knowledge on sustainable practices and coping strategies
Gender-Responsive Measures contd.

- Financing for gender-sensitive climate change responses
  - Financing mechanisms - flexible enough to reflect women’s priorities and needs
  - active participation of women in the development of funding criteria and allocation of resources for climate change initiatives - particularly at local levels
  - gender analysis of all budget lines and financial instruments for climate change needed to ensure gender-sensitive investments in programmes for adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and capacity building.
• Technological developments related to climate change
  • should take into account women’s specific priorities and needs and make full use of their knowledge and expertise, including traditional practices
  • women’s involvement in development of new technologies can ensure that they are user-friendly, effective and sustainable.
  • women should have equal access to training, credit and skills-development programmes to ensure their full participation in addressing climate change.
Climate Information Dissemination...Key Steps

- Skills and Knowledge transfer and sharing (capacity) to respond to CC is critical and package information in a way that it is accessible to the beneficiaries (avoid talking to ourselves)... Climate change impacts should be managed in such a way that there is minimal or no erosion of cultural heritage and loss of livelihoods;
- Weather information (information in general seems to be skipping a cross section of our population),
- Collaboration, partnerships and networks are critical, regional and continental collaborations are key.
- Gender responsive Climate- smart agriculture information sharing,
- Aggressive movements for policy interventions are needed to avoid catastrophes of food, water, energy shortages and public health threats.
ECA’s Programme on Gender and Climate Change

• ACG and ACPC – joint programme on Gender and Climate Change

• Objectives:-
  • 1. Build a concrete body of knowledge on gender and climate change in order to promote a greater understanding of the gendered dimensions of climate change;
  • 2. Inform national policies and regional initiatives on how to address the gendered dimensions of climate change in Africa;
  • 3. Contribute to capacity-building initiatives on addressing gender and climate change; and
  • 4. Enhance the participation of African women in regional and global discussions on climate change.
Thank You