



EnGenDER

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

Gender Inequality of Climate Change and Disaster Risk in the Employment Sector

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Gender & Climate Change Resilience Series

5 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 employment sector.

Why a Gender Lens (Analysis)?

It has been observed in most countries that men's participation in the employment sector exceeds that of women and youth (aged 15-24). Although women are represented in the employment sector, they often hold lower-level positions and earn lower wages than men. Men are more likely to earn a higher wage, fill supervisory and management positions, and to have decision-making powers. In fact, women are also more likely to be employed in the informal economy where they work for lower or no wages, and are more likely to perform unpaid domestic and care work. Women also tend to be over-represented in service sector jobs, both governmental and commercial, which in times of financial and environmental crises are often most at-risk.

Even more so, persons with disabilities, are less likely to be employed, and the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities tends to increase in a post-disaster context and in the face of climate risk.



Climate Change and Disaster Risks

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



More women are employed in the informal sector, reducing their access to stimulus facilities and other finance and insurance solutions.



Disruptions in the hospitality and service sectors can lead to unemployment, and women are more likely to be employed in these sectors. Climate change and disaster impacts may lead to poor working conditions in these sectors.



Labour laws may not be gender-responsive because women may not be influential in policy-making decisions.

Coping Mechanisms Identified

In the Caribbean, women and men who have been impacted by climate change events and hazards have adapted and coped in one or more of the following ways:



Utilized savings and accessed loans.



Relied on remittances.



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:



Expand investments in re-tooling and re-skilling that would mitigate the drawn-out effects of future climate change and hazard impacts.



Implement gender-sensitive resettlement policies.



Prioritize collection and use of standardized sex-disaggregated data and data on gender issues related to the employment sector, and across groups and sectors of employment.



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 small, but intense disaster events and large extensive disaster events.

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