



GENDER- TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE ACTION:

Best Practice Case Studies

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Lam Anh Nguyet, a 15 years old girl, wants all Vietnamese people to be conscious of planting lots of trees to make the living environment better.

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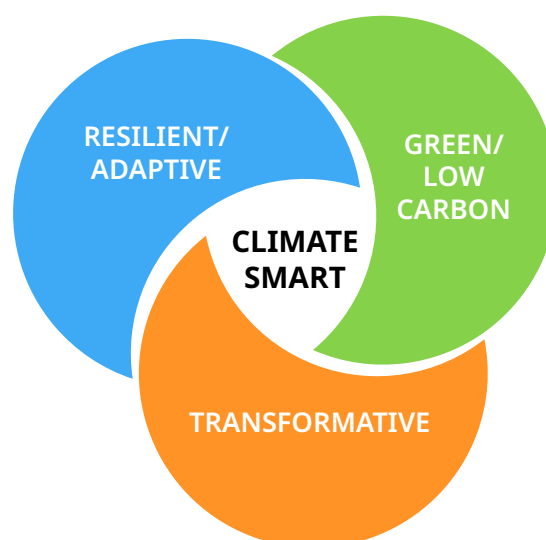
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Addressing climate change and gender inequality is paramount to achieving the SDGs

Global targets for climate change and gender equality are not on track¹. Gender inequalities and their expression through violence and discrimination against women and girls remain among the most persistent human rights violations in the world. Climate change exacerbates these inequalities, as women and girls are often the most marginalized by its impacts, which include: reduced access to health, education, nutrition, energy and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), aid and relief, as well as safety, protection, participation and self-realization. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change and disaster risks due to structural inequalities and discriminatory practices such as lower access, use and control of both natural and economic resources as well as restricted physical mobility and decision-

making power. Furthermore, girls and women can often find it more challenging to adapt to and mitigate climate change due to limited access to services, resources and decision-making.

Figure 1: Three dimensions of climate smart programming



¹ United Nations Climate Change, 'Technical Dialogue of the First Global Stocktake. Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue', accessed 14th June 2024; United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, 'The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special edition', accessed 14th June 2024

Figure 2: Gender Continuum for Climate Smart Programming

Applying a gender-transformative approach to climate smart programming (Figure 1) provides an opportunity to address the root causes of gender inequality and climate vulnerability, build resilience

and promote green, low carbon development through actions that strengthen individual and collective agency (see Figure 2).



A new agenda for UNICEF programming

UNICEF is committed to ensuring that girls and women in all their diversity are supported to be heard and to become leaders in climate and environmental action. UNICEF's Gender Action

Plan 2022-25 (GAP) focuses on the expansion of transformative approaches in programming, as well as in institutional policies, partnerships and capacities. Specific emphasis is placed on supporting adolescent girls' leadership and wellbeing in climate and environmental action (see Box below).

Spotlight on CEED in UNICEF's 2025 Gender Action Plan

"UNICEF recognizes that children and adolescents experience conflict, displacement, climate change and complex emergencies in different ways based on their gender, age and other status. They must be included in disaster preparedness, humanitarian response and peacebuilding, and supported in providing their unique contributions in those areas. UNICEF will implement the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, including ending gender-based violence, strengthening community engagement with and accountability to girls and women, and promoting gender equality in all humanitarian action, including data collection, analysis and reporting."

"An important new priority in the present Global Advocacy Priorities (GAP) is support for adolescent and youth leadership in climate and environmental action, including girls' leadership. Specifically, UNICEF will seek to build the resilience and adaptive capacity of girls and women to the effects of climate change by promoting their access to and control over natural resources and centring their participation as change agents for more environmentally sustainable socioeconomic models and approaches. UNICEF will also seek to scale up successful models of community decision-making that promote the equitable participation of women and young people and that recognize their potential as leaders and entrepreneurs in market-based approaches to WASH systems."



Case studies and promising approaches

This compendium showcases a sample of projects and programmes that are working on or towards gender-transformative climate smart development. The selection focuses on interventions implemented in the East Asia and Pacific region and includes case studies from further afield.

The case studies represent a mix of promising early initiatives and maturing approaches. A cross-section of goals was sought to reflect UNICEF programming areas (Figure 3). It is hoped that the case studies will ignite interest, the exchange of practice and learning, and inspire action.

Figure 3: Case study selection

Case study	UNICEF Goal Area					
	Health & Nutrition	Education	CP	WASH	Social Protection	GBV
Spotless Dame - combating menstrual hygienic poverty while reducing plastic waste in India through Merapad Implemented by: Praveen Lata Sansthan Foundation in partnership with Giveindia, Milap and Donatekart	X	X		X	X	
Empowering Gypsy Women & Young Girls in Pakistan for the Advancement and Protection of their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights during Climate Crises Implemented by: The Centre for Social Policy Development	X	X	X		X	X
Creative filmmaking boosts solidarity between refugee, migrant and marginalized women and girls in calling for climate justice and gender equality Implemented by: ARTconnects	X	X			X	X
My Body My Future: applying a climate justice lens to girls' rights to SRH in Lao PDR, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Mozambique Implemented by: Plan International Finland	X	X	X	X		
Extreme Heat Income Insurance supports Working Women in India Implemented by: The Self Employed Women's Association, Blue Marble and the Adrienne Arsht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center	X				X	
The Benazir Income Support Programme in Pakistan: Challenging gender norms and empowering women in times of climate crisis Implemented by: The Government of Pakistan			X		X	

Case study	UNICEF Goal Area					
	Health & Nutrition	Education	CP	WASH	Social Protection	GBV
Climate Resilient Health Systems for Gender Equity in Kiribati Implemented by: The Asian Development Bank	X					X
Baguio City's Gender-transformative Flood Early Warning System Implemented by: The Asian Development Bank ASEAN Australia Smart Cities Trust Fund with support from Ramboll and Practical Action Consulting	X				X	
Strengthening Rural Women's Recovery and Resilience in the Pacific Islands Implemented by: FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women	X				X	
Transformative Leadership for Climate Resilient WASH in Bhutan, Nepal and Lao PDR Implemented by: SNV and the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney				X		
Mobilising the collective power and leadership of Ni-Vanuatu women in response to climate change and disasters Implemented by: ActionAid				X	X	X
Empowering girls and young women to tackle climate-related issues with mobile and AI technologies Implemented by: Technovation		X				
Safe Schools in South East Asia: Realising new possibilities for girls to lead DRR Implemented by: Plan International		X	X		X	

Initiatives were shortlisted if they demonstrated at least 2 dimensions of climate-smart programming and at least 3 of the following elements:

- Identify and measure the ways that climate change exacerbates existing gender inequalities
- Work to challenge the structural barriers that uphold gender inequality
- Build the agency of women, girls and people with non-binary gender identities
- Work with men and boys to engage and embrace gender equality
- Work intersectionally
- Embed women's, girls' and gender-diverse people's perspectives at all stages
- Takes a life course and intergenerational perspective
- Work at multiple levels (Figure 4) and across sectors
- Partner with women's and girls' rights organizations

Figure 4: Socio-ecological model and opportunities for gender-transformative climate action



Individual (boys, girls, men and women in all their diversity) by strengthening the knowledge, education, skills and attitudes that lead to agency and empowerment for climate smart action, particularly among adolescent girls and women. Equally important is increasing support for gender equality in climate action among boys and men.

Interpersonal (families, friends and social networks) through behaviour and social change communication that influences shifts in gender norms. For example, more gender equitable dynamics within households can mean girls and women are able to take a more proactive role in climate adaptation and mitigation measures that have a direct impact on the exercise of their rights, such as access to education and WASH.

Community (community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, community leaders, influencers, women's groups, girls' clubs, safe spaces and youth groups or movements) ensuring that communities, systems and social networks are aware and demonstrate investments in girls and positive gender norms that enable children and youth to live in a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Communities should play an active

role in the planning and implementation of climate smart action and take measures to ensure women, men, girls and boys can all participate equally.

Systems/institutions (service systems and social institutions), employing "whole government" approaches to climate smart development and gender equality with greater capacity for gender-transformative climate change response, including mobilizing the maximum available financial, human, and political resources, and prioritizing groups of women and girls with heightened climate vulnerability.

Policies/legislative (national, subnational and local) ensuring national plans, legal structures and sector policies strengthen attention to gender equality as a core component of climate action, with greater funding for gender-transformative climate smart programming. Women and girls are given a seat in environmental decision-making bodies and processes, with men and boys engaged as allies at all levels.

Case 1.

Spotless Dame - combating menstrual hygienic poverty while reducing plastic waste in India through Merapad (Praveen Lata Sansthan Foundation in partnership with Giveindia, Milap and Donatekart)

Sectors: ● WASH, ● Health, ● Education, ● Social Protection

Implementing organization/s: Praveen Lata Sansthan Foundation in partnership with Giveindia, Milap and Donatekart

The gender-related impacts of climate change

Climate change exacerbates environmental challenges, including water scarcity and extreme weather events, which can impact access to clean water and sanitation facilities especially among women and girls. At the same time, sanitary waste often contains plastics and chemicals that are harmful to the environment and can represent a serious health risk to waste pickers. Menstruation is often stigmatized, contributing to gender inequalities and limiting women's access to information, resources, and opportunities.

The solution

Initiated in 2016 by Praveen Lata Sansthan Foundation in partnership with Giveindia, Milap and Donatekart, the Spotless Dame project aims to empower women by providing education, employment, and access to sustainable menstrual hygiene products, thereby challenging gender norms, promoting gender equality and contributing to mitigating negative environmental and climate impacts. The project addresses the environmental impact of disposable sanitary products by promoting eco-friendly alternatives to mitigate plastic waste and reduce carbon emissions associated with production and disposal.

The target populations for the project were women and girls in rural and urban areas aged around 10 years and above. In particular the project aimed

to reach marginalized communities who often face greater barriers to accessing menstrual health resources and education, including tribal groups, Mangrega workers, and those living in remote or underserved areas. The initiative also aimed to be inclusive and accessible to women and girls from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The project collaborates with a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, healthcare providers, and community leaders, to leverage collective expertise and resources. By fostering partnerships, the project maximizes its impact and sustainability.

Impacts and results

This innovative solution is increasing climate resilience, empowering women and transforming lives in various ways:

- **Improved Menstrual Hygiene Practices:** The project led to a notable increase in the adoption of sustainable menstrual hygiene practices, with a substantial number of women and girls switching from disposable sanitary products to reusable cloth pads. Testimonials from beneficiaries highlighted the comfort, reliability, and affordability of the MeraPads:

“*Testimonial from Rani, a beneficiary: "Using MeraPads has been life-changing for me. They are comfortable, easy to use, and have made managing my periods much more convenient. I no longer worry about leaks or discomfort."*

- **Empowerment Through Employment:** The establishment of production units for MeraPads created employment opportunities for women in underserved communities, leading to increased economic independence and empowerment. Testimonials from women involved in the production process underscored the positive impact on their lives:



“*Testimonial from Sita, a production unit worker: "Working with the MeraPad project has given me a sense of pride and financial stability. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to my family's income while also promoting women's health."*

- **Health Impact:** The project contributed to improved health outcomes among women and girls, including a reduction in infections, increased school attendance, and enhanced overall well-being. Testimonials from healthcare providers and community members highlighted the positive changes observed:

“*Testimonial from Dr. Medhavi, a local healthcare provider: "Since the introduction of MeraPads, we have seen a significant decrease in menstrual-related infections among women in our community. This has had a positive impact on their overall health and well-being."*

- **Environmental Sustainability:** By promoting the use of eco-friendly alternatives to disposable sanitary products, the project contributed to reducing plastic waste and textile waste in the environment. Testimonials from environmental advocates and community members emphasized the importance of sustainable menstrual hygiene practices:

“*Testimonial from Akshara, an environmental activist: "The MeraPad project has been instrumental in raising awareness about the environmental impact of disposable sanitary products. By choosing reusable options like MeraPads, we can reduce our carbon footprint and protect the planet"*

Case 2.

Empowering Gypsy Women & Young Girls for the Advancement and Protection of their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights during Climate Crises (The Centre for Social Policy Development)

Sector: ● Health & nutrition, ● Education, ● WASH, ● Social Protection, ● Gender-based violence

Implementing organization/s: The Centre for Social Policy Development

The gender-related impacts of climate change

In Pakistan, climate change has increased the vulnerability of women due to pre-existing gender inequalities alongside serious threats to their health and survival. Between June and September 2022, Pakistan experienced devastating floods which affected and displaced 1.6 million women of reproductive age, especially women and girls in rural areas. Women constituted around 80% of the total number of people displaced in the floods, while access to contraceptives, prenatal and post-partum care became more difficult because of damages to road network and health facilities.

Around 650,000 pregnant women were unable to access any prenatal healthcare facility for safe deliveries. Moreover, relief camps, hospitals and health workers were focusing on waterborne diseases and other ailments while the SRHR and menstrual hygiene needs of women and young girls were unmet. Menstrual hygiene is a highly stigmatized aspect of relief campaigns during climate crises meaning few aid agencies and charity organizations took the need for menstrual hygiene products into consideration in the provision of relief to women and girl victims of the floods. Currently Pakistan does not have a comprehensive plan or roadmap for mainstreaming SRHR protection into its climate change plans or disaster response protocols.



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The solution

The project was initially designed by the Centre for Social Policy Development (CSPD) to empower gypsy and nomad women and young girls in the Punjab province to exercise their SRHR, particularly during climate crises. Gypsy and nomad women and young girls are more vulnerable, socially alienated, marginalized and deprived of basic rights and identity, because of their nomadic lifestyle. The project aimed to tackle social taboos and stigmas alongside the challenges of ensuring access to information and education around sexual and reproductive health rights, particularly during climate crises.

During the first phase of the project in 2021, a sensitization campaign was launched for gypsy women and young girls and also targeting policymakers and government officials, to promote a right-based approach to SRHR with the aim of eliminating social taboos, customs and stigmas. The campaign covered the issues of antenatal, post-partum care, contraception, unintended pregnancies, bodily autonomy, child marriages, STIs/ STDs and safe abortion and involved the broadcasting of an educational video through different digital and social media as well as puppetry. A series of advocacy meetings was convened to engage relevant government departments and ministries, calling for an end to the exclusion of gypsy women and young girls from public sector SRHR services. A cadre of

gypsy women was trained in SRHR counseling and facilitation skills. In the second phase of the project, the interventions were upscaled to advocate for inclusion of SRHR within climate change policies, as well as in disaster response protocols and disaster risk management.

After the flooding in 2022, and with support from ARROW, CSPD initiated the distribution of menstrual hygiene kits among women and adolescent girls. In 2024, the project was replicated within 10 flood-prone villages of Rajanpur District with the support from WEDO (Women Environment & Development Organization) and GJCS Scale Fund. CSPD equipped a group of women and girls with advocacy skills to create an enabling environment for identifying solutions to climate change. Simultaneously, CSPD engaged mainstream print and electronic media to amplify messaging around the significance of SRHR in climate crises. Now the women and young girls of flood-prone villages, including gypsy women, are leading an advocacy campaign to engage the relevant government department and ministries for the integration of SRHR into climate change discourse, agendas and public policy.

Impacts and results

The interventions and strategy of the project have equipped and empowered a marginalized and poverty-stricken segment of society to make informed choices, and advocate for the safeguarding of their rights and physical wellbeing, especially during climate crises.

- Over 11,000 nomad, gypsy and rural women and young girls, between 12 and 45 years of age, have directly been involved in project activities to date. They have been able to access knowledge, information, counselling and facilities for the advancement and protection of their SRHR free of cost. The project has also prepared a cadre of women activists who are now directly engaged in dialogue, advocacy and lobbying with stakeholders, for policy reforms to ensure gender just climate solutions.
- Menstrual hygiene kits have been distributed among flood-affected women and adolescent girls of Fazilpur of District Rajanpur.
- Increased awareness among government departments and ministries, women's parliamentary caucus, women parliamentarians, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, women's rights defenders, feminist organizations, relief agencies, humanitarian organizations and women of the need to integrate SRHR into disaster response protocols, disaster risk management and climate adaptation.

“The medium of puppetry has created an enabling environment, to break the silence about SRHR beside sparking a debate against the stigmatization of sexual rights. Otherwise, in our type of patriarchal society, one cannot openly talk about sexuality and bodily autonomy.” Shamim Bibi, a 29-year old gypsy woman



Case 3.

Creative filmmaking boosts solidarity between marginalized women and girls in calling for climate justice and gender equality (ARTconnects)

Sector: ● Health & nutrition; ● Education; ● Social Protection; ● Gender-based violence

Implementing organization/s: ARTconnects

The gendered-impacts of climate change

As climate change continues to displace communities globally, many women and girls, especially those in situations of vulnerability, migrate in search of safety, livelihoods and employment opportunities. When women and girls are displaced, their exposure to gender-based violence, human trafficking, and other forms of modern-day slavery increases. In situations where the male family members migrate, domestic workload increases for women and girls, putting additional burdens on female family members in already climate-stressed conditions. Women and girls may also be more vulnerable to physical and sexual violence – such as transactional sex and child marriage – because of the irregular flow of income. This underscores how climate-related displacement can perpetuate gender inequalities.

The solution

This innovative Migration Blanket - Climate Solidarity film project created by ARTconnects involved 150 young women aged 10 to 25, to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and girls. Refugee, migrant and marginalized women and girls from African, Arab, South Asian, South East Asian and Central Asian backgrounds created artwork for the film, highlighting their personal experiences, improving their awareness of climate change and boosting their mental health.

The gender-transformative approach focused on fostering critical examination of inequalities and gender roles, norms and dynamics recognizing and strengthening positive norms that support equality

and an enabling environment; promoting the relative position of women, girls and marginalized groups; and transforming the underlying social structures, policies, systems and broadly held social norms that perpetuate and legitimize gender inequalities.

The objectives were to:

- educate marginalized young women and girls on climate change and gender equality, including gender-based violence
- assist them in having a voice through art on the issue of climate justice as they are the most affected persons
- influence the public in having solidarity with these groups who are most affected.

Impacts and results

Collaborating with a dozen local and international organizations, including UNFPA and UN Women, the project empowered participants and garnered positive feedback. Reactions from screening events shows that the work has had the desired effect, having reached over 150,000 people directly and 50 million online through various events including the Venice Biennale, the Commonwealth Games and university screening events. The screenings included engagement with policy makers in the UK, US, and Europe which furthered discussions on women's rights in the context of climate change and migration, with plans for events in the UK Parliament this year.

By 2022, 96% of participants had become more informed about climate change and its impact on women and awareness of women rights, 98% emphasized the importance of social cohesion, and 95% felt less stressed. Viewers reported learning why they need to increase their efforts to protect the environment and learn about the links between climate change, diversity and humanitarian issues.

The film is also being utilized as a tool by organizations to educate the groups they work with to prevent violence against women and promote climate action. These results highlight the importance of creative initiatives in addressing climate justice and empowering women globally and prevention of gender-based violence.

Case 4.

My Body My Future: applying a climate justice lens to girls' rights to SRH (Plan International Finland)

Sector: ● Health & nutrition; ● Education; ● Child protection; ● WASH

Implementing organization/s: Plan International Finland

The gendered-impacts of climate change

Lack of adequate reproductive health and outreach services is exacerbated by climate change and related disasters. Associated health risks for women and girls include unplanned pregnancies, SRHR problems, and negative impacts on their psychosocial and well-being.

The solution

The My Body My Future Programme was initiated in 2018 by Plan International Finland with support from the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, with the aim of advancing girls' rights and gender equality, especially through promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). In addition, the programme promoted the innovation and entrepreneurial skills of youth with the aim of improving resilience towards the effects of climate change within participating communities in Lao PDR, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Mozambique.

Plan International Finland applied a climate resilience and climate justice lens to SRHR interventions across the programme. Each country deployed strategies to promote climate and economic resilience to meet community needs and secure their engagement in transformative SRHR and gender equality strategies. All strategies in the programme were designed and implemented using a gender-transformative approach that tackles the root causes of gender inequality and reshapes unequal power relations. Throughout the global programme, special efforts were made to reach adolescents with disabilities and support their participation.

Impacts and results

Results from Phase 1 (2018-2021) include:

- The proportion of youth who reported positive attitudes and practices on SRHR and gender equality went up from 24% at the beginning of the programme to 53% by 2020
- The proportion of youth who reported having taken action together with peers related to SRHR issues increased from 25% in 2018 to 69% in 2020
- The proportion of community members who value gender equality increased from 38% at the beginning of the programme to 63% in 2020.
- 92% of SRH service providers reported in 2020 they recognise and respect the diversity of youth and their specific needs, compared to 50% at the beginning of the programme.
- Climate change visibility increased among target communities.
- The project provided extensive support through income generating activities focusing on girls at risk and the most vulnerable families, selected with a criterion defined with local governments to identify poor households
- Adolescents and youth's adaptive capacity was increased through economic empowerment.

Expected results for phase 2 (2022-2025) are:

- Equip children, adolescents and youth with risk knowledge and information on how climate change impacts their rights and enhance capacities and opportunities for youth-led advocacy and participation in decision-making on issues that affect their lives such as SRHR, gender and climate
- Improve basic employability capabilities and increased links to economic opportunities among women and girls, including alternative and green livelihood opportunities, and a space for their economic empowerment
- Strengthen positive coping strategies of and ensure parents, caregivers, communities to have capacities and safety nets in place to support their children, adolescents and youth, create an enabling environment for realization of SRHR and to cope with the effects for climate change as well as in times of crisis, disasters or shocks

Case 5.

Extreme Heat Income Insurance Supports Working Women in India (The Self Employed Women's Association, Blue Marble and the Adrienne Arscht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center)

Sector: ● Health & nutrition; ● Social Protection

Implementing organization/s: The Self Employed Women's Association, Blue Marble and the Adrienne Arscht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center

The gendered-impacts of climate change

Climate-driven extreme heat events are becoming more frequent in India where women are more susceptible to high temperature conditions compared to men. In India's informal sector, women work for prolonged periods of time in dangerously hot conditions which leads to preventable pain and suffering and illnesses, ranging from lingering rashes, dizziness and burns to chronic heart, kidney disease and miscarriage. Extreme heat can also lead to loss of crops or merchandise that results in economic disaster at a household level.

The solution

The Extreme Heat Income Insurance, a new, parametric insurance, was created to help women in India recover wages lost due to climate-driven extreme heat events. This initiative aims to create and implement solutions that not only enable adaptation to climate change but also contribute to breaking cycles of poverty among the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)'s members. The initiative is being implemented by SEWA alongside Blue Marble and the Adrienne Arscht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center (Arscht-Rock).

The core of this initiative is an integrated approach, combining several key strategies: risk transfer through an Extreme Heat Income Microinsurance product, risk reduction measures, heat early warning systems, and financial inclusion. While the parametric insurance offers payouts during unsafe working conditions due to heat, the initiative also focuses on providing everyday safety tools and resources, such as concrete water tanks and protective gear. The Extreme Heat Income Insurance is activated when specific extreme heat conditions that are expected to result in negative health outcomes are met. At this point, a payment





to SEWA members' bank accounts is generated to compensate for projected lost income due to unsafe working conditions created by extreme heat.

This type of social insurance is gender-responsive as it directly addresses identified economic constraints and health risks faced by informal sector working women, resulting from climate-related shocks. The initiative shows potential to become gender-transformative if it can show over time that it contributes to breaking poverty cycles among women.

Impacts and results

Beginning in April 2023, as the hottest season and frequent heat waves begin to arrive in India, the pilot program lasted approximately two months and targeted 21,000 women in five districts of the state Gujarat, where SEWA has a large membership base. During this initial pilot, women from 7 different occupations, such as waste pickers, salt pan workers, street vendors, and home-based workers,

participated in the program. Although the 2023 heat season proved to be mild and no triggering events took place, women greatly appreciated the heat safety tools and education provided to them. Women's increased awareness of the health risks associated with extreme heat and financial incentives, such as insurance, to prevent their exposure on the most dangerous days is a critical component of building a more heat-resilient future for the world's most vulnerable populations.

The implementing organizations are working to distill the lessons learned from the pilot and plan to make adjustments in line with the learnings to scale-up sustainably the product.

“We signed up for the insurance for our benefit. When we are given a solar light, we save on electricity, when there is no electricity we use the solar light, if we go to fields we take it with us, and we can educate our kids when there is no electricity. For all these types of work, the solar light is useful. If we get any sickness in this type of heat, then the money can be used for medicines or we can choose to stay inside. In these situations, the insurance is helpful.” – SEWA member

“The money from the program has allowed me to pay for my medical expenses and to buy food for my family,” SEWA Member

To complement the income replacement payout, Arsht-Rock, SEWA, and Blue Marble are exploring the addition of personal accident, maternity care, and disability products over time, intended to improve health and build more secure household finances, in addition to an early warning mechanism and trainings based on forecasted heat conditions on the health of participants. These additional covers will be informed by market research during the product design phase.

Case 6.

The Benazir Income Support Programme: Challenging gender norms and empowering women in times of climate crisis (The Government of Pakistan)

Sector: ● Social Protection

Implementing organization/s: The Government of Pakistan

The gendered-impacts of climate change

Disaster events, such as flooding, can often push families into more vulnerable positions. Women in particular often find it more challenging to respond due to existing gender norms that limit their access to resources and assets. Often women face higher workloads after extreme weather events, due to gendered roles in fetching water, cleaning, cooking and caring, plus the additional burden of finding extra resources for household recovery. This increased workload at home can disrupt children's access to education immediately after a disaster, with girls in particular more likely to be withdrawn from school and engaged in day labour instead.

The solution

Initiated in 2008 by the Government of Pakistan, the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) is a targeted unconditional cash transfer program which is implemented by focusing on poor women. The cash transfers provided by the BISP have been designed and are structured so as to challenge entrenched gender norms, making it a truly gender-transformative initiative. It is helping women to manage and build financial resources, helping them to realise their rights as well as those of their daughters and wider families, and strengthening women's representation in both the community and the workforce.

Since its inception, registration of household data has been the preserve of women. Only women can provide the information about their household members and, when the household is deemed eligible to receive assistance, it is the women who receive the cash. In addition to the

main (unconditional) cash transfers, BISP also provides conditional cash transfers which support poor families to access mother and infant health and nutrition services and education. The design of these conditional transfers also addresses the specific vulnerabilities of women and girls in Pakistan, for example, by paying a higher amount to families for keeping girls in school compared with boys at all grades, as well as a graduation bonus when girls complete their primary education.

With the support of German Development Cooperation, BISP is also challenging traditional gender norms in more substantive ways. The incorporation of the female supervisors and ushers at all of the BISP centres not only enables the rapid expansion of the Registry, it is also contributing to the empowerment of women from poor and vulnerable communities. Many of the new female employees have themselves been beneficiaries of BISP cash transfers, giving them particularly useful insight into the situation of the women coming to register. Through their work, these women are helping to transform their own, their families' and their communities' image of what women like them are capable of. This lifts the intervention to a different level because it treats women not as passive recipients of support but as agents of change, as well as challenging social norms around women's employment outside the home.

In 2022, floods hit Pakistan and quickly pushed many households into poverty, which urgently required different types of assistance, including cash. This presented BISP with the highly complex challenge of identifying and providing rapid financial support to newly vulnerable families. Two years later in May 2024, the Government of Pakistan decided to release immediate aid of 25 thousand rupees per household through the BISP to help families affected by heavy rains and landslides.

Impacts and results

A 2016 impact report found that the BISP has continued to influence a change in the way women are viewed in the household and in the community with most beneficiary women noting



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that they are now given an elevated status within the household as a direct result of the BISP. In addition, a statistically significant effect on the mobility of beneficiary women, with more women being allowed to freely travel to various locales in their community alone. The study also found that the BISP is related to increasing proportions of beneficiary women voting.

In the aftermath of the 2022 floods, BISP provided one-time emergency transfers to 1.76 million families. The flooding meant the system had to pivot and evolve. The BISP needed to make payments fast in order to avoid greater disaster, but the system could not identify people or disburse funds fast enough. In response, BISP embarked on a process to transfer the static registration system to a dynamic one, capable of registering and updating household data on an on-going basis, essential for adapting social assistance to households' changing circumstances and to enable a rapid response to shocks and crises as they arise. To identify beneficiaries, BISP used both data from the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) and big data analysis. By triangulating data from the NSER—for example, using GPS data from the NSER in combination with flood exposure data from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research

(UNITAR) - BISP was able to precisely target those areas where families were most vulnerable to floods². Other fundamental components of this strategy involved defining the digital inputs required to move towards a more integrated and interoperable system to link up Pakistan's many social protection programmes, improving the payments system, and a rapid expansion of registration centres to bring BISP services closer to people's homes.

Also after the 2022 floods, the World Food Programme supported the BISP's Nashonuma program (BNP)- a pregnant woman and child-linked CCT program - to deliver support in regions where floods have intensified food insecurity and economic distress. Under BNP, WFP provided support through 513 facilitation centres, including 35 mobile sites, in 158 out of 170 districts in Pakistan, to over 280,000 beneficiaries (including 139,000 children and 141,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women). These beneficiaries received specialized nutritious food, counseling, health services, and stipends³.

² Ibid.

³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/wfp-pakistan-floods-situation-report-november-2023>

Case 7.

Climate-Resilient Health Systems for Gender Equity in Kiribati (The Asian Development Bank)

Sector: ● Health & nutrition, ● Gender-based violence
Implementing organization/s: The Asian Development Bank

The gendered-impacts of climate change

In Kiribati, inadequate access to and use of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services - including maternal health, contraception and gender-based violence (GBV) referral networks and response mechanisms - adds to the vulnerabilities of women and girls to health issues. At the same time, health infrastructure in Kiribati is subject to adverse weather events like destructive storms and sea-level rise which cause damage to buildings, fittings, and equipment, impacting health care provision.

Of particular concern in Kiribati is the potential for climate change to exacerbate overcrowding, bring about shortages in potable water and add to the risk of infectious disease transmission. More frequent diseases and other health issues are increasing the burden of care work for women and girls. During and after disasters, women and girls are at greater risk of GBV, including rape, sexual exploitation, and assault. Unless effective mechanisms to address SRH services are put in place, an increase in climate-related impacts in Kiribati will put women at greater risk of health issues and GBV.

The solution

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is leading a \$29 million project to improve access to climate-resilient and quality health services for more than half of Kiribati's population by improving health facilities, service delivery, infection control, and SRH. The beneficiaries include all residents of South Tarawa (about 63,000 people). The project will tackle the urgent need for a disaster-resilient and decarbonized health system that meets the needs of women and other vulnerable groups. Health infrastructure upgrades will be delivered through the proposed new

Betio Hospital which is to be constructed at a higher elevation and further from the coast than the original hospital, providing it with greater climate resilience.

The project will directly contribute to the gender-transformative agenda by adopting a holistic approach that considers gender barriers at both the supply and demand levels. The project integrates issues such as lack of women's participation in SRH-related informed decision-making, behavioral change and communication campaigns to promote access and use of SRH services while engaging with men and boys, and prevention of GBV. It will also help in improving the responsiveness of the health sector toward GBV and related health issues. Improved awareness on communicable and infection control practices will have a positive impact on women's time spent on care work.

Impacts and results

The project was initiated during late 2023 and is intended to run until 2031. Although there are no results to report at date, it is worth pointing towards the anticipated impacts set out in the project's Gender Action plan. These include:

- a target to reduce maternal mortality rate
- the creation of new health worker positions of which 50% will be for women
- the development of National Health Service Standards with gender considerations
- the construction of the new Betio Hospital which will be equipped with specific features for women, older people, and persons with disabilities
- upskilling of nurses working at the primary health care level in emergency obstetrics and essential obstetrics care
- capacity building on improving the availability and use of sex and age disaggregated data of patients including trends of diseases, access, and use of health services, SRH products and services, emergency and accidents and GBV
- learning events conducted on infectious diseases including related gender
- issues such as increased burden of care work for women during outbreak of infections
- at least one study undertaken to assess women's time use in care activities during
- outbreak of infections and communicable diseases.

Case 8.

Baguio City's Gender-transformative Flood Early Warning System (the Asian Development Bank, ASEAN, Australia Smart Cities Trust Fund with support from Ramboll and Practical Action Consulting)

Sector: ● Health & nutrition, ● Social Protection

Implementing organization/s: The Asian Development Bank, ASEAN, Australia Smart Cities Trust Fund with support from Ramboll and Practical Action Consulting

The gendered-impacts of climate change

Baguio is a city on the Northern Philippine Island of Luzon. The regular occurrence of flooding and landslides threaten Baguio's sustained and long-term economic development as well as the health and safety of its inhabitants. Due to the city's high vulnerability to climate hazards, combined with the expansion of impervious paved areas, Baguio experiences increasing runoff volumes and flood damages each year that jeopardize the well-being of its communities and disproportionately affect vulnerable and marginalized groups like women, widows, and people living with a disability.

The solution

Between 2020 and 2022, the Asian Development Bank ASEAN Australia Smart Cities Trust Fund (AASCTF) with support from Ramboll and Practical Action Consulting, assisted Baguio to improve the city's flood early warning system, responses, and mitigation measures. The FEWS was developed with Baguio Local Government Unit (LGU) and other key stakeholders to improve community disaster preparedness, raise awareness, and ensure ownership. To ensure that appropriate, applicable, and timely early warning reaches the last mile, the project conducted a gender and inclusion study to identify the missing voices that often go unheard in disaster risk reduction planning, and provide a deeper understanding and analysis of the relevance of gender and inequality to flood risk and flood early warnings. Based on the findings of this study, a number of policy and practical recommendations were developed to ensure inclusivity in the design of the FEWS in relation to the following areas:

- Gender- and Inequality- Informed EWS, for example, considering the experiences of minority and vulnerable groups in ongoing data collection activities and in post-flood After Action Reviews.



- Improving Understanding of Risk by enhancing public understanding of flood risk and how the FEWS works through public communication and education activities;
- Preparing for Safe Evacuation, including treating individuals with evacuation support needs with respect and autonomy, considering their specific preferences in emergency planning; and developing preparedness plans for supporting vulnerable groups who may be left behind without resources;
- Developing Forecasts, Alerts, and Warnings that meet different people's needs, such as flood location, severity, and safe evacuation windows, as well as evacuation instructions and warnings for those who need more time;
- Disseminating Forecasts, Alerts, and Warnings through formal and informal channels that ensure no one is left behind, especially those people with limited social connections;
- Communicating Forecasts, Alerts, and Warnings in content that is pre-tested with majority and marginalized audiences to ensure understanding and effectiveness;
- Person-Centered Evacuation, including identifying individuals or groups with evacuation needs and times that differ from the majority; and
- Safety and Dignity in Temporary Shelters, for example address barriers to using evacuation centers, particularly for marginalized individuals, understanding the well-documented inequalities in centralized shelters and the reasons for alternative arrangements and emphasizing respect for safety, dignity, and autonomy in the EWS by recognizing vulnerable individuals' needs.

Impacts and results

Based on these recommendations, specific actions towards a gender transformative FEWS were co-developed with Baguio's key FEWS stakeholders, including the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO), the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO), the Public Information Office (PIO), as well the project team's technical workstream leads. The resulting Action Plan outlines short-term and longer-term actions, thus providing strategic direction and a "roadmap" towards achieving a truly gender-transformative FEWS. This has laid the groundwork for further actions and opportunities in development of the FEWS in a collaborative manner with a wider group of local stakeholders beyond the project's consolidation phase.



Case 9.

Strengthening Rural Women's Recovery and Resilience in the Pacific Islands (FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women)

Sector: ● Health & nutrition, ● Social Protection
Implementing organization/s: FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women

The gendered-impacts of climate change

The Pacific Islands face increasingly serious impacts of climate change, such as growing water scarcity, rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and increasing water and soil salinity. The Pacific context is also characterized by limited economic opportunities for rural women, the majority of whom work within the agricultural sector which is highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change.

Despite the vital roles of women in agriculture, they continue to face barriers to accessing agricultural resources, most importantly in relation to land ownership, access to finance, training and resources, and infrastructure. Coupled with the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events, these persistent gender inequalities are negatively affecting the food and nutrition security of households and communities, including growing levels of malnutrition and alarmingly high rates of diet-related non-communicable diseases.

The solution

The second phase⁴ of the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE) - co-implemented by FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women and financed by Norway, Sweden, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation - aims to contribute to national efforts to strengthen the recovery and resilience of 14,400 women and 200 men in Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tonga, to adverse climate changes and natural calamities.

The overarching strategy is characterised by (i) acknowledging and supporting the important roles and contributions of rural women within agriculture, the economy, and to social wellbeing; (ii) addressing the urgent need for resilient climate-smart food systems to improve nutrition and food security; (iii) supporting action learning and institutionalising gender-responsive reforms within relevant decision-making structures, (iv) strengthening women's interpersonal skills for leadership through an inclusive household approach, and (v) supporting gender-transformational change through strengthening the collection, assessment, and sharing of quality data for effective evidence-based policy making and programming. Prioritized groups include (i) women-headed households, (ii) lactating mothers, (iii) women with disabilities, and (iv) those households most vulnerable to nutrition insecurity, and whose members have become unemployed due to COVID-19.

The programme incorporates a resilience lens to enable rural women and their households to anticipate, adapt and respond to climate change, hazards and other shocks. The programme also integrates a gender-transformative lens to address unequal power dynamics and discriminatory social norms and contribute to transformative and structural change. Gender-transformative approaches, such as the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) and Dimitra Clubs (voluntary, informal groups of women, men and youth who analyse common problems, and identify and implement solutions by acting together using only local resources) will be used to ensure priorities are designed to meet women's needs and to engage men as partners for change. FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women will collaborate on strengthening institutional technical capacities.

⁴ A first phase of the programme was implemented in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda from 2014 to 2021, reaching 64,447 rural women and 15,382 rural men and their families.

Impacts and results

Activities in the Pacific Islands are recently underway. Key achievements and lessons from Phase 1 include:

- Involving men, boys and traditional leaders in understanding the causes of malnutrition is needed to trigger transformative change in food consumption practices and nutritional intake for women and children. The use of the participatory, community based, dialogue-centred Dimitra Clubs model enables community members to strategically approach the problem of malnutrition and take a harmonised approach to improving nutritional outcomes for women and children. Enhancing opportunities for women to meaningfully participate in community dialogue and decision-making processes is also key for achieving improved food security and nutrition for family members.
- The use of the GALS methodology generated results for improved gender equality and women's empowerment, improved nutrition and stronger capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Both men and women were taking decisions on the use of household income, the use of land for good nutrition and environmental protection, and both were involved in household chores such as water collection and cooking.
- Building a multi-actor partnership for gender-transformative climate smart agriculture enabled results at multiple levels. Women's knowledge and skills in the use of climate-smart agriculture practices and technologies were improved, along with their access to climate-smart information, services and technologies. Women were observed to have greater confidence and assertiveness in approaching government extension services; productivity and income reportedly increased.



Case 10.

Transformative Leadership for Climate Resilient WASH in Bhutan, Nepal and Lao PDR (SNV and the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney)

Sector: ● WASH

Implementing organization/s: SNV and the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney

The gendered-impacts of climate change

The climate crisis and the scale of the challenges it poses is elevating the urgency to preserve and protect water quality and promote safe sanitation practices. Water scarcity, destruction of WASH services and poor WASH provision due to climate change and disaster events can lead to increased water-related diseases such as Tuberculosis, respiratory infections, cholera, diarrhea and malaria. Women and girls are disproportionately exposed to these diseases due to gendered roles. In order to build climate resilience, WASH leaders must listen and respond to the diverse needs of rights-holders, including women, girls, people with disabilities and vulnerable groups. Now more than ever leadership in the WASH sector needs to be inclusive and gender-transformative.

The solution

As part of an ongoing multi-country programme in partnership with the Government of Australia's Water for Women Fund in Lao PDR, Bhutan and Nepal, SNV together with the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney (ISF-UTS) undertook a project to transform leadership at multiple levels within government institutions and CSOs to advocate for, plan and implement WASH service delivery that is resilient to climate change impacts and advances gender equality. In particular, the project deployed specific strategies to engage women with disabilities from within the CSO sector.

Networks supported by a community of practice sought to increase participants' understanding of transformative change, assist men in understanding the significance of gender, inclusion, and power relations in the development of women's leadership, including that of women with disabilities, and foster a shared understanding of various organizational leadership models and barriers facing women in leadership.

Impacts and results

In Bhutan by 2023, transformative leadership initiatives had engaged 99 leaders, 56 health workers, 30 different leaders from local government, health and education sectors, legal representatives, and CSOs through training. In Nepal and Lao PDR, initiatives are currently underway supporting broader transformative leadership in 2023/24.

A short-term evaluation showed the biggest shifts across three outcomes: 1) an improvement in participants' leadership skills and strategies; 2) a better understanding of GESI issues and a strengthened belief in their ability to effect change; and 3) a significant level of participation in group action, advocacy, and mutual support that has an impact on society and the participants' own communities of employment.

“We have sensitised and also provided the community with the need for toilets. However, there are those who have not been able to build them – they are the ones who are poor, single-headed households, people with disabilities or are old. To this my administration has decided to mobilise resources to complete and reach 100% coverage keeping in mind the lessons learnt from this workshop. We are also aware that women participation and leadership is limited, we don't have women representatives in a few of our sub-districts.” Local Leader, Zhemgang District, Bhutan.

Case 11.

Mobilising the collective power and leadership of Ni-Vanuatu women in response to climate change and disasters (ActionAid)

Sector: ● WASH; ● Social Protection; ● Gender-based violence

Implementing organization/s: ActionAid

The gendered-impacts of climate change

Vanuatu is one of the most at-risk countries in the world for climate disasters, and for Ni Vanuatu women, the climate crisis will only deepen and intensify existing inequalities. In 2015, when Cyclone Pam swept through Vanuatu, leaving a trail of devastation in its path, communities were unprepared, and the needs and experiences of women – particularly women with disability – were overlooked in the national response to the disaster.

In a country that faces significant challenges in relation to gender equality and women's leadership, while being among the most disaster prone globally, supporting women's organising and collective power in Vanuatu is a critical priority.

The solution

ActionAid supports Ni-Vanuatu women through the Women I TokTok Tugeta (WITTT) Network. The locally-led and driven women's forum now brings together over 9,000 women from five islands (Erromango, Eton, Tanna, Malekula and Malo) to discuss how to mitigate the impact of natural disasters and strengthen the resilience of women. The WITTT Network supports diverse women to prepare for disasters, strengthen their understanding of their rights, and engage with provincial and national stakeholders to ensure that their needs are being heard and reflected in decision-making on disaster planning and response. As a women's collective, WITTT creates a safe space





for women to define priorities for their safety with dignity, and build a movement that is inclusive of young women and women with disabilities. In 2019, the network expanded to include the WITTT Sunshine Chapter, specifically aimed at addressing the unique challenges faced by women with disabilities and enhancing their participation and leadership in humanitarian actions. In 2022, with support from the Australian Aid Programme, WITTT Sunshine established an economic hub. This hub provides a safe and accessible space for women with disabilities to organise, strategise, and develop their small businesses, further expanding their initiatives and developing their economic resilience. WITTT also facilitates Women Wetem Weta (Women's Weather Watch), a women-led communications platform that provides early disaster warning, health and violence prevention messages, and other practical information through SMS. It reaches over a quarter of the population. Underpinning ActionAid's approach in Vanuatu is a theory of change that sees crisis as a moment of

societal upheaval that creates an opening to drive gender transformative change over the longer term, building back better in ways that work for women.

Impacts and results

- Women have increased capacity and knowledge to prepare and respond to gender related risks of climate change and related crises.
- Women take collective action to influence and engage in national and international policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises.
- Women's voice and leadership in climate change and related crises is enhanced through the establishment of a gender responsive framework on gender, climate and security.
- The collective is relieving women from the burden of accessing clean drinking water - by installing water tanks in homes meaning they no longer have to walk up to 3 kilometers to fetch water from springs or underground wells near coastal areas. This is especially important for women with caring responsibilities, disabilities or low mobility.
- Mothers, widows, single women, young girls and women with disabilities have also been able to access loans and resources to help them decrease financial dependence, and thus their vulnerability to violence.

“I am a mother and when we have cyclones it destroys and contaminates all water sources,” said Rurael Andrew, another woman who benefitted from the programme. “Having a water tank will decrease my stress and allow me to access clean, safe water at my house, no need to walk the distance.”

Case 12.

Empowering girls and young women to tackle climate-related issues with mobile and AI technologies (Technovation)

Sector: ● Education

Implementing organization/s: Technovation

The gendered-impacts of climate change

Climate change disproportionately affects girls, including their ability to get an education. During periods of environmental crisis like drought or flooding women must work harder to secure income and resources. This increased burden is also borne by daughters who leave school to help their mothers. Girls drop out of school at higher rates than boys during climate-related social disruption and forced migration. Girls leaving school prematurely is a double blow to climate resilient communities—educating girls can reduce carbon emissions and enable the world to better adapt to the climate crisis. Closing the digital divide takes on new urgency as climate change worsens, creating new vulnerabilities for women and girls. As long as they remain excluded from opportunities and solutions, the consequences will be devastating.

The solution

Technovation is a global technology education nonprofit that has a three-pronged approach to empowering problem solvers:

- Providing underserved communities, especially girls, an opportunity to participate in a global competition through which they develop complex-systems thinking skills.
- Training participants to leverage and use the most cutting-edge technologies (such as mobile and AI) to tackle local problems
- Engaging employees from industry partners to mentor participants, thereby providing mentors with upskilling opportunities.

The combination of these three strategies results in a powerful force-multiplier effect for tackling the climate crisis for the following reasons:

- Educating girls and women is an effective strategy to reduce global warming.
- Educating girls to tackle climate change with cutting-edge technologies accelerates solution-making and amplifies impact.
- Providing employees from local industry with upskilling opportunities, while building new bridges into the local communities results in diverse and innovative solutions.



The main objective of Technovation's climate-focused unit has been to help teams of girls who want to focus on a climate problem and solution at every step of the way: to identify "power" solutions, to access scientists' work, to get inspired by other girls' and women's solutions, and to get more advanced and tailored technical help. Technovation is also developing a new climate curriculum that will focus on three UN Sustainable Development Goals: Clean Water and Sanitation and Sustainable Consumption and Production and Climate Action.

The climate curriculum will include:

- a guide to help girls to identify which problem to solve around climate that is meaningful in their area, and that could really be helped by individual actions through mobile or AI technologies—that is more impactful than some common solutions like sorting recycling
- educational videos featuring scientists sharing their expertise on climate change and its effects
- examples of accessible technical solutions to help achieve these climate-related goals
- streamlined resources to direct focus around these complex issues

Impacts and results

Over the past 18 years, Technovation has engaged over 400,000 participants across 120+ countries in tackling real-world problems with cutting-edge technologies. Before releasing specific climate-focused units, around 18% of Technovation Girls projects focused on climate. That number has risen steadily and is now at 23% for the 2024 season. The initiative is also seeing more girls branch out from only focusing on easily accessible climate topics like recycling to dive into some more diverse and compelling climate-related solutions. Teams from across Asia are submitting projects addressing a variety of climate challenges, for example:

- A team from the Philippines is working to help users decrease their household energy usage
- A project from China aims to make wind energy more affordable by increasing the accuracy of wind farm production with AI
- A team from Indonesia (and California) assists small-scale farmers in Southeast Asia to select

the best crops for their soil, and

- A team from Cambodia created an app that helps locals to connect and organize climate activism events and use carbon calculators

“In the words of one team member from the Philippines: “As students, joining Technovation Girls was not easy as we also had many other things to do. Making an app is something that was new to all of us, it was something that we were unfamiliar with as we only managed to learn how to make a website. We had troubles with our internet connections, bugs in our app, how to use the MIT app inventor, and how to make our blocks work, however, despite all the challenges, we managed to actually enjoy and learn something from this. As we joined Technovation Girls, we learned how to value teamwork, how to make an app, how to compromise, and make solutions when things get tough. When we worked with our app we managed to get an idea of how to make our app work using YouTube and websites where we can see tutorials about it. With the help of our mentors, we managed to learn and achieve what we desired for our app. Joining Technovation Girls is a journey we will never forget.”

Case 13.

Safe Schools in South East Asia: Realising new possibilities for girls to lead DRR (Plan International)

Sector: ● Education; ● Child protection; ● Social Protection

Implementing organization/s: Plan International

The gendered-impacts of climate change

Around 80% of deaths due to disaster happen in Asia alone and children are the most affected population. Globally, women, girls and boys are 14 times more likely to die during extreme weather events than men. In South East Asia, 9 in every 10 children spend half of their waking hours in school and oftentimes, school facilities are not capable of withstanding disasters. Children's access to education is often disrupted immediately after a disaster due to destruction or damage to school buildings, use of schools as temporary shelters, or displacement of children. Household responsibilities, intensified by climate-induced disasters, mean that girls have less time to attend school or complete their studies. Girls may be more likely to be withdrawn from school and engaged in day labour and/or increased workload and caring responsibilities at home to support household recovery efforts.

The Solution

Safe Schools in East Asia is a programme implemented by Plan International in Cambodia, Thailand and the Philippines as part of the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative (ASSI). ASSI is a partnership among ASEAN Member States and non-government organizations to scale up a regional safe school model in order to reach millions of school children across the ASEAN Region. Safe Schools in East Asia focuses on 3 pillars:

- Pillar 1: Safe Learning Facilities
- Pillar 2: School Disaster Management
- Pillar 3: Risk Reduction and Resilience Education

The project provides opportunities for girls to cultivate their interest and leadership in Safe Schools, paving the way to promote gender equality and eliminate barriers to girls' participation and leadership in local disaster preparedness and risk reduction efforts.

Impacts and results

The Safe Schools programme in East Asia is raising girls' voices and instills their leading roles across all three pillars. Over 130 primary and secondary schools in Cambodia, the Philippines and Thailand successfully built education resilience by improving school safety and disaster risk reduction management, as well as enhancing teachers' and students' knowledge of disaster prevention. With the support from the local governments and schools, the programme has reached over 23,000 students during the 3 years implementation period.

In the flood- and tropical storm-prone Samar province in the Philippines, Plan International works with girls and boys to conduct the Student-led School Watching and Hazard Mapping (SWERT) to improve students' level of awareness of the potential hazards of climate change and disaster risks, and how to address them. It includes life-saving capacity and gender-transformative approach training and provides equal opportunity for girls and boys to join SWERT. This initiative challenges the male-dominated sector of hazard mapping and promotes girls' leadership in an emergency context. Girls have undergone capacity building activities and have become peer educators, taking the lead in facilitating other students to learn the basic concepts of DRR and comprehensive school safety knowledge. "By being a peer educator, I gained self-confidence and developed social and leadership skills. It also strengthened camaraderie, trust, and confidence among the members of our team," girl student in Samar province.

Women teachers have also undergone a series of trainings on basic DRRM concepts, risk assessment, organization of school DRRM team, and development of school contingency and DRRM

plans. Teacher Janet shares that the project has empowered her to become a leader in DRRM not only in her school but also in other schools up to the district level. “The Safe Schools 2 Project is one of a kind experience for me. It gave me opportunities to grow both in personal and professional aspects, and brought out the best that I can offer to our school, students, and community. It developed me to become the leader I am now. Most importantly, it changed my values and perspectives in life – to be more mindful in protecting the environment as destruction exacerbates impacts of hazards, and to always prepare for the worst—may it be in the community, home, or school setting.” Janet, teacher in Samar.

“ In Thailand, the disaster education course has been integrated into STEM lessons and has given girls a chance to cultivate their interest in this area. View, a girl secondary school student, said *“I want to be an engineer”*. Having attended Micro:Bit workshop and participated in safe school activities for two years, she wanted to invent something: *“My aspiration is to invent something new and innovative. I want to somehow solve problems we are facing... like in our school”*.



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