

International Women's NEWS NOUVELLES Feministes Internationales

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climate

change

In a world in which gender inequality persists, women are disproportionately affected by climate change. In the fight for a sustainable future, their knowledge and expertise can no longer be sidelined or ignored.

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Greta Thunberg *by Holly Herbert*

Front Cover

A child's hand denotes the struggle for change by the new generation. It is holding a protest sign emphasising CLIMATE CHANGE together with an olive branch, the symbol of peace.

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Holly Herbert is IAW's new Assistant Membership Secretary. Joining IAW last year, she attended the Board meeting in Berlin as a proxy for her grandmother Pat Richardson. This inspired a keen interest in the Alliance and she volunteered to assist Lene Pind with the membership process.

Holly is from Sydney, Australia. She is a High School Music Teacher, currently undertaking her Masters in Special Education. She has a passion for education and believes in equality of education: "All children have the right to learn, Special Education allows students with disabilities and learning difficulties to have their needs cared for, which empowers and encourages them to continue learning". Holly volunteers her time for a charity in Australia called 'Share the Dignity' which supports women who are homeless, at-risk and those experiencing domestic violence through the distribution of sanitary items.



Lea Börgerding

I am a PhD student in Global History and a research assistant at Freie University Berlin, focusing on transnational women's movements during the Cold War period. After completing a BA in Politics with International Relations at the University of York (UK) and an MPhil in International Relations at the University of Oxford (UK), I worked in international development and political communications for two consecutive years. Whenever I am not in the archive or library, I also contribute to a German politics podcast and volunteer as social media & communications officer for the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP).



Jessica Orban

After completing a BA in Politics with International Relations at the University of York (UK) and an MA in Geography, local land planning and water resource management at the University of Nanterre (France), I currently work as a project officer for the French Water Partnership, an association which serves as a platform for French water stakeholders operating at international level and advocates for the crucial importance of water in sustainable development policies worldwide. Born in Brussels, I grew up in London, Toulouse and Paris in a bilingual and multicultural background and am particularly sensitive to issues surrounding multiculturalism and identity, and its intersections with feminism in today's politics.



The theme of this edition of *International Women's News* is **Women and Climate Change** and the articles focus on Gender. We plan to present articles on other topics relating to Climate Change in future editions. As well, we applaud Greta Thunberg and the massive numbers of children she inspired to skip school to attend **Youth Strike 4 Climate** on March 15 this year in some 125 countries across every continent.

We are introducing a new segment **News and Updates from Feminists around the Globe** compiled by Holly Herbert, Jessica Orban, and Lea Börgerding who are also assisting with the production of *IWN*ews.

WEDO News and Views (extract from The WEDO Team)



WEDO and feminist allies attending CSW63 in New York joined youth in solidarity for the global climate strike on March 15. www.wedo.org

This past March, WEDO joined hundreds of feminist leaders, NGO representatives and changemakers for the sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York to advocate for women's rights, human rights, and climate and environmental justice.

Along with co-hosting two CSW side events that focused on building smarter feminist cities and gender-inclusive climate finance, WEDO supported a call for feminist activists to join the global youth climate strike on Friday, March 15 outside of the United Nations headquarters. Joined by leaders from Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF), 350org, the Women's March, and many more, we fiercely marched and rallied with students in solidarity for environmental justice.

In response to feminists' demands for gender-just strategies to confront the multiple impacts of climate change and related ecological damage, the Commission recognized the imperative of a just transition of the workforce toward low-carbon economies that deliver for women and the planet.

"Now is the time for the strongest possible action toward a climate just planet, and this requires actions like a global moratorium on coal and keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius. This must be carried forward through a gender just and equitable and safe transition toward a low-carbon economy."

-Noelene Nabulivou of Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, Fiji.

The final Agreed Conclusions include women and girls as users, producers, and leaders across sectors and at all scales, from community energy systems and water and sanitation facilities to larger infrastructure projects. Governments additionally pledged to improve health care infrastructure and acknowledged its role in addressing maternal mortality - however, the conclusions do not reflect the urgency of just transitions from fossil fuels to renewable safe energy.

The reality of climate change and unjust structural inequities demand a stronger focus on social services, social protection, and infrastructure that is designed for, implemented and monitored by women and grassroots communities. We won't stop advocating for our earth and pushing for improved representation and inclusivity in these spaces and beyond.

The Paris Agreement adopted in 2015 has the central goal of keeping global average temperature rise this century to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to as close as

possible to 1.5 degrees Celsius. This was a historic turning point. World leaders from across the globe clinched a new, universal agreement under the umbrella of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. As of November 2018, 184 states and the European Union had joined the Agreement.

At the UN Climate Change Conference **COP24** in Poland (December 2018), governments set to agree the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement, thereby unleashing its full potential.

Cop25 is expected to take place in early 2020 or possibly December 2019. It will be held in Santiago, Chile and, in late January 2019 the Chilean Government nominated **Environment Minister Carolina Schmidt** as president-designate. Out of 24 climate conferences, 7 have been led by women, the last being eight years ago.

Chile volunteered to hold the 25th UN climate conference in Santiago, after Brazil's new president Jair Bolsonaro* withdrew as host. In January, Schmidt told the daily *La Tercera* that she had doggedly fought for Chile to take the role. Previously head of the National Office for Women, **Schmidt has a record of seeking to incorporate gender issues into the climate debate.** She has pushed for a greater focus on women's vulnerability at the UN and at a regional meeting of ministers of the environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, according to a profile posted by the UN.

**One of Mr Bolsonaro's key election promises was that he would deny new land claims by Indigenous tribes and wanted to open their land to commercial mining and farming. Funai, the department established in 1967 to protect the rights of Brazil's Indigenous people, has been effectively broken up, with one of its biggest responsibilities — to identify and draw boundaries of Indigenous land across the country — handed over to the Ministry of Agriculture. The rest of Funai will be transferred to the Ministry of Human Rights, which is led by evangelical pastor Damare Alves.*



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will convene a summit (New York September 23 2019) **to mobilize political and economic actors at the highest levels to advance climate action that will enable implementation of many of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.** The theme of the summit is: 'A Race We Can Win. A Race We Must Win'. It will seek to challenge states, regions, cities, companies, investors and citizens to step up action in six areas: energy transition, climate finance and carbon pricing, industry transition, nature-based solutions, cities and local action, and resilience.

The Summit will build on the outcomes of the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS), the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 73) and the 24th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 24) to the UNFCCC, among others. This Climate Summit will take place in parallel to the 2019 High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development (FfD). These events on 23 September are taking place the day before the first HLPF meeting under UNGA auspices opens.

Quotes attributed to David Attenborough, surely the most wellknown naturalist in the world:

'What we do in the next 20 years will determine the future for all life on Earth.'

'We need to move beyond guilt or blame and get on with the practical tasks at hand.'

He told the UN Climate Summit in Katowice, Poland (December 2018):

'If we don't take action, the collapse of our civilization and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon.'

One of our contributors, **Dorothy Nalubega**, was among the many protestors outside the Katowice Summit. She said that greed was the cause of Africa's environmental devastation - from industrial-scale sand mining degrading the Lake Victoria ecosystem to the vanishing Mabira forest, logged excessively by sugar cane planters. 'So we are here today to tell our leaders to stop the greed and think about the generation to come.'

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM FEMINISTS AROUND THE GLOBE

compiled by Holly Herbert, Jessica Orban and Lea Börgerding

Forging networks between feminists in Asia

The *Regional Feminism project in Asia*, initiated by the *German Friedrich Ebert Foundation*, forms an Asian-wide network of progressive male and female feminists and political economists. The alliance aims to shape regional and global debates and agendas on economic equality and the division of labour while challenging the arguments about capitalism and neoliberalism. Aside from publishing written and visual contents on the state of feminist and women's movements in Asia, the initiative also organizes the *Future Lab* which, over the course of three years, brings together 21 feminists from seven countries who will jointly discuss lessons learned and remaining challenges, along with economists and gender and human rights experts from Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore.

To find out more, visit www.fes-asia.org/feminism-in-asia/.

FES IN ASIA REGIONAL PROJECT

FEMINISM IN ASIA

#FeministAsia

Developing a feminist consciousness among the youth in India

Feminism in India is a young award-winning digital intersectional feminist platform to learn, educate and develop a feminist consciousness among the youth in India. The media outlet amplifies the voices of women and marginalized communities using tools of art, media, culture, technology and community. *Feminism in India* publishes articles in both English and Hindi on a wide range of topics e.g. the long history of the Indian women's movement, upcoming Indian women's writers and feminist film directors, or current socio-political concerns such as sexual harassment on India's university campuses:

<https://feminisminindia.com>.



Tackling Climate Change with Feminism

Mothers of Invention Podcast

In 2018, former president of Ireland and UN high commissioner Mary Robinson, together with Irish comedian Maeve Higgins, created a podcast highlighting the role of women around the world who are leading the fight against climate damage. Called *Mothers of Invention*, the initiative showcases the work of female grassroots climate activists at a local level as well as globally operating initiatives focusing on numerous jurisdictions to force governments to adhere to the Paris agreement goals. The podcast includes interviews with scientists, politicians, farmers and indigenous groups and can be accessed here: www.mothersofinvention.online



Committing to Feminist Approach to Foreign Policy-Making

Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (London/Berlin)

In September 2018, the *Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy* (CFFP) opened a new office in Berlin. Founded by Marissa Conway in London in 2016, CFFP is a membership-based research and advocacy organization which aims to make foreign policy more feminist, more transparent, and more intersectional. In a recent interview with tbd*, CFFP Co-Founder and Director Germany Kristina Lunz explained that CFFP is “working on creating a network of women working in the field, based on female solidarity and in the spirit of lifting each other up - as diplomacy and foreign policy remain very male spheres. Germany for example has never had a female foreign minister (the UK only one so far in its history) and only 16% of the diplomats of the 50 wealthiest nations are female.” Kristina Lunz also presented her work at the seminar organized by Deutscher Frauenring in October 2018 in Berlin - “Squaring the circle for Women, Peace and Security”. To find out more about CFFP, visit their website or read the tbd* article cited here: www.tbd.community/en/a/seatable-gender-discrimination-foreign-policy

CFFP

Abolishing the tax on Sanitary Products in Australia

Axe the tax - movement led by SHARE THE DIGNITY

Up until the 1st January 2019, women's sanitary items in Australia have been taxed. Sanitary items are a necessity for all women, therefore it has been the fight of many Australian women's groups to have the tax abolished. One of these groups who rallied in the campaign is *Share the Dignity*, a charity that provides sanitary items to women in Australia who are experiencing homelessness and poverty. The charity gathered more than 100,000 signatures on its petition in 2018. After over 10 years of petitions and protests, State and Federal Governments listened to the women of Australia and agreed to abolish the tax on sanitary items as of January 1st 2019.

The items made exempt of tax include tampons, pads, menstrual cups, maternity pads and leak-proof underwear. Founder Rochelle Courtenay of *Share the dignity* commented on the decision saying “I don't think it's even about the money. It's about equality. Why are condoms, lubricants and nicotine patches untaxed, yet female items that we don't have a choice in are taxed”. This Australian government's decision to axe the tax is a great step forward in creating a more equal society. To find out more, visit: www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-03/tampon-tax-to-go-states-and-territories-agree-to-remove-gst/10332490





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Building a 620 km chain for equality

Kerala state's coalition government

The human chain formed by millions of Indian women on New Year's day makes for a powerful statement: In September 2018 the Indian Supreme Court ruled that the Sabarimala temple would open its doors to women for the first time in 800 years. This decision came with controversy and right-wing protestors attacked and prevented female visitors from entering the shrine. On January 1 2019, 5 million women in the Southern Indian state of Kerala lined up to form a 'women's wall' 630km (385 miles) long. The wall signified solidarity and was a statement of gender equality. It was a call to end the violent protests against women trying to enter Kerala's Sabarimala temple which is a pilgrimage site for Hindus. The wall also highlights that the abuse of women trying to enter the temple is just one small fraction of the much larger gender violence problem in India. The wall of women is a powerful show of unity, it lets the world know that the women of India are done putting up with gender based violence, it is time for change.

www.upworthy.com/5-million-indian-women-just-made-a-385-mile-human-chain-for-equality?c=ufb1&fbclid=IwAR0eGLWyKt7RZ98cfEi2wYGTW1OpLDcYrvjJd6Epk8mv3x0Z5bQwy01MIFw

209 Women - An exhibition at the Portcullis House in Westminster, London honours today's female MPs in the UK, 100 years after women could be elected to Parliament

21 November 2018 marked the centenary since the 'Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 2018', which gave women over the age of 21 the right to stand for election as an MP. Founded by photographer Hilary Wood, the exhibition *209 Women* features photographic portraits of 209 women currently standing as MPs in the UK, by 209 female photographers. While this sheds light on a success story in the fight for gender equality and increased representation on women in male-dominated fields, let it be noted that today women make up only 32% of the House of Commons.

For an overview of some of the portraits featured at the 209 Women exhibition, visit: www.positive.news/uk/exhibition-marks-100-years-since-women-could-be-elected-to-uk-parliament/

And to access the official exhibition page: www.parliament.uk/209-women

© Parliament UK





New Zealand approves paid leave for survivors of domestic violence

In July 2018, the Domestic Violence - Victims' Protection Act was passed with 63 votes for and 57 against. This new legislation will come into effect in April 2019. New Zealand has a particularly high level of domestic violence, "with police responding to a family violence incident every four minutes". This legislation will grant victims 10 days paid leave to allow them to flee their partners and to start finding a safer living situation for themselves and their children. In addition, victims will be entitled to flexible working arrangements. This battle was led by Green MP Jan Logie, who worked in a women's refuge before her career in politics.

For further information: www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/26/new-zealand-paid-domestic-violence-leave-jan-logie

"Textiles are the books that the colony was not able to burn": Mayan women in Guatemala are campaigning for their intellectual property rights

Mayan textile designs are often mass produced and copied by foreign designers. In Guatemala, a country that has long marginalised Mayan people, the Asociación femenina para la Desarrollo de Sacatepequez (AFEDES - or the Women's Association for the Development of Sacatepequez) is fighting for weavers' rights by taking to the Guatemalan government as well as to international organizations. In 2018, the constitutional court in Guatemala recommended that a comprehensive law be developed to protect Mayan intellectual property, recognising indigenous communities as collective owners of their textiles and thus preventing foreign patents of their own designs. It has yet to be presented in congress. In 2018, AFEDES also took the case to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to attract broader attention from the international community.

For the full article visit:

www.positive.news/world/designs-for-life-the-guatemalan-women-fighting-for-rights-to-their-textiles/

And in addition:

Read the women of AFEDES' collective open statement here (2017): <https://thousandcurrents.org/textiles-are-the-books-that-the-colony-was-not-able-to-burn/>

For more information about AFEDES in Spanish: <http://afedes.blogspot.com/> and in English: <https://thousandcurrents.org/partners/afedes/>





In 2019, the international water community will be focusing on the overarching theme of the Sustainable Development Goals: 'Leave no one behind'

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were set by the United Nations in 2015 with an aim to achieve them by 2030. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, UN Member States pledged to ensure “no one be left behind”. 2019 is the year international water events from around the world will shed light and raise awareness on what this means for the water sector. This is particularly important for global gender equality. At a time when the global water crisis is worsening, it must be reminded that water poverty is inevitably a gender issue too. The lack of basic sanitation, good hygiene and safe water affects women the most and women thus bear a disproportionate amount of the burden linked to water inequality. In 2019, feminist and water organizations will hopefully encourage further exploration of the links between gender roles and uneven access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in order for all women to be included in the fight to end poverty worldwide.

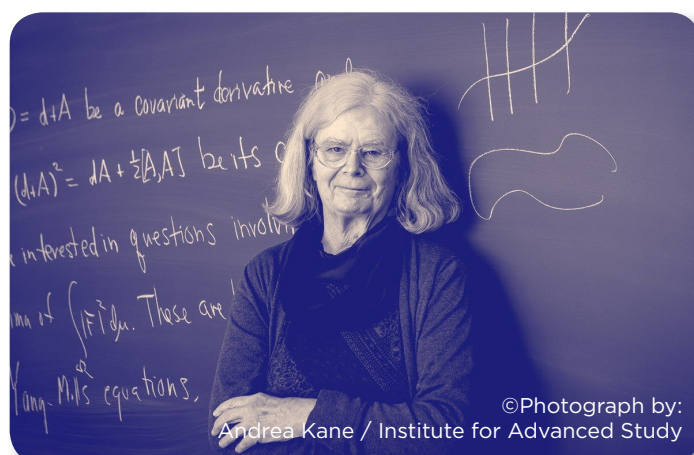
For more information about ‘Leave no one behind’ and its links with gender equality: www.globalgoals.org/leave-no-woman-or-girl-behind

For more information about gender and WASH, visit WaterAid’s ‘WASH matters’ blog: <https://washmatters.wateraid.org/blog/gender>

Female mathematician Karen Uhlenbeck makes History as the first woman to win Abel prize

In March 2019, the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters awarded a woman with the Abel prize in mathematics for the first time. Karen Uhlenbeck was acclaimed for her outstanding work in geometric analysis and gauge theory and for making “revolutionary advances at the intersection of mathematics and physics”, as stated by Paul Goldbart, dean of the College of Natural Sciences and a professor at the University of Texas at Austin, where Uhlenbeck is a professor emerita. At a time when only 3% of Nobel prizes in the sciences have been awarded to female researchers, and as this general under representation is particularly flagrant in the field of mathematics, such a celebration of Karen Uhlenbeck’s work is an important and positive step towards gender equality in science.

For an interview with Karen Uhlenbeck by The New Yorker magazine: www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/groundbreaking-mathematician-karen-uhlenbeck-on-the-politics-of-her-field



©Photograph by:
Andrea Kane / Institute for Advanced Study



Double Exposure: The Role of Gender in Climate Migration

by Jonas Bergmann

Climatic risks alongside other stressors such as pollution are already driving people to leave their homes. Beyond doubt, in the future, climate migrants will become the human face of climate change. Although often overlooked, gender plays a central role in administering opportunities and challenges associated with climate migration: Gender norms shape both vulnerabilities to climate change, as well as patterns of migration, resulting in double exposure with often detrimental—and sometimes counterintuitive—implications for the wellbeing of affected people.

Throughout history, environmental risks like rainfall variability, storms, flooding, and drought have affected patterns of migration (1, 2). Due to climate change, such environmental risks and pressures on human development and people's wellbeing are now multiplying (3, 4). Simultaneously, these risks increasingly drive migration, while resources to move under humane circumstances decline (5, 6). Migration can be one important strategy to diversify livelihoods, to reduce poverty, and to move out of harm's way; but it can also erode coping capacities (7). For instance, migrants may be worse off when they end up in destinations that are increasingly threatened by climate change themselves, such as coastal cities, or when they face informal living situations, discrimination, insecurity, and exploitation (8). Knowledge on the total wellbeing-impacts of migration—for migrants, their families, sending and receiving communities—is still very limited. However, even where migration allows for successful adaptation to climate change, moving can have far-reaching social costs and risks (9). Indeed, the fact that climate risks will induce rising pressures on people's livelihoods is a call to action to immediately reduce emissions and invest in adaptation. Action is not only a rational, but also an ethical imperative: **Climate change is probably the greatest challenge to justice that human beings have ever faced.** Indeed, the justice dimension in climate migration is highly visible at all levels—from countries to communities and subgroups within society:

To start with, climate change disproportionately harms poorer countries and regions (3). Despite the fact that they have contributed least to the emissions triggering climate change, they will bear the brunt of the

burden. Along the same lines, the past can give an indication of the probable locations of future challenges around climate migration: about 97 percent of global disaster displacement from rapid onset hazards from 2008-13 has been in low and middle income countries (10).

In addition, climate change impacts are not only unevenly distributed across countries, but also across population subgroups. For one, within countries worldwide, poorer communities and poorer people will be hardest hit (11). Poor people's resources to confront hazards are scarce and many of their livelihoods depend on increasingly threatened ecosystems (12). Their vulnerabilities to climate risks—a function of exposure, sensitivity, and capacity to adapt to hazards—are often highest. Without highly ambitious efforts, climate change could push another 100 million people into poverty by 2030 (13). Failure to mitigate climate change as much as possible now would greatly diminish future options for adapting in place or migrating under humane conditions.

What is more, social groups in vulnerable situations—such as disabled persons, the elderly and children—are frequently the most severely affected by climate change impacts (14). These subgroups are generally less able to cope with and respond to hazards or shocks because of their disadvantaged position: socially because of their marginalized status; economically because they are poorer; and politically because they lack of independence, decision-making power, and underrepresentation (15). When disadvantaged people migrate, their disadvantaged status can lead to high risks of “embodied” vulnerabilities during their migrations. But “situational” vulnerabilities such as exploitation and trafficking linger throughout the migration journey for all migrants, particularly in lengthy and fragmented journeys.

Gender also plays a central role in shaping both vulnerabilities to climate change and patterns of migration. Gender is more than the dichotomy between male and female sex—rather, it refers to identities, attributes and practices that come with biological gender, gender identity and gender expression of boys, intersex persons, girls, men, trans persons, and women. Because identities and norms are socially constructed and



can change over time, there is no universal truth on gender and climate migration: Any gender analysis of climate migration always depends on its specific local and temporal context (16). That said, the lessons from existing work show the centrality of gender in climate migrations. They constitute an urgent call to action to increase their gender-sensitivity when planning for and addressing climate migration.

On the one side, gendered norms influence the exposure and sensitivity to natural hazards as well as the capacity to adapt (17). For example, structural inequalities often disadvantage women, trans, and intersex persons in terms of access to, and control of, resources. When disasters hit, such discrimination can translate into higher casualties. For instance, gendered norms around who is allowed to learn how to swim or gendered clothing can raise risks and hinder efforts at self-rescue. People suffering from gender discrimination are also often less likely to be reached by early warning systems. The good news is that this is not set in stone. Achieving greater socio-economic gender equality can help to raise the resilience of disadvantaged groups.

Gender inequalities are, however, not only key before and during, but also after disasters: Women, trans and intersex persons often have less access to relief, and can also find themselves at high risk of sexual and physical violence, as well as mental health problems. Women in particular tend to suffer under additional workloads and care giving burdens after disasters. Yet masculine gender norms can also raise vulnerability for men, for instance when they shape risk-taking behavior and risk perception during and after disasters.

On the other side, the social phenomenon of migration itself is highly gendered (18). Gender is key throughout the migration life cycle: related norms can influence the migration decision, the preparation and implementation of this decision, the actual journey, as well as integration or return. Unsurprisingly, migration shows wide regional variation by gender. Gender norms strongly influence who is considered responsible to migrate when climate risks overwhelm households. It is frequently men, for instance, who are sent by their families from climate-stressed countries on life-threatening passages over the Mediterranean to Europe. It is also important to understand that gender norms often influence the division of labor in agriculture and other livelihoods that depend on ecosystems, like fishing; this gendered division of labor in

turn influences climate migration patterns. For instance, when men are generally responsible for gathering wood, as in rural Nepal, environmental changes that makes wood collection more time-intensive are associated with local male migration. Gendered patterns of climate migration can already be observed in many regions of the world.

The fact of moving away from climate pressures can also have strong impacts on traditional gender ideas. As climate change drives more people into migration, gender roles can be both reproduced (as described in the paragraph above) or changed. For example, in some countries like Vietnam, rising women's migration to cities has partially shifted gender roles and division of labor. While some women are now employed in urban areas, some of their husbands staying behind engage more in child care, housework, and agriculture. As another example, male out-migration in agricultural livelihoods can turn women into the head of household, with more responsibility for finances and maintaining food production for the family. At the same time, however, such male out-migration can increase food insecurity for those left behind, and factually "entrap" them in vulnerable places.

In summary, migration in the context of climate change presents both opportunities and challenges for people, but special attention is required on how these chances are distributed unevenly across subgroups of the population.

Unfortunately, "research on gender in relation to the migration and environmental change nexus is still in its infancy" (16); both empirical and theoretical limitations persist. It is an imperative to entrench nuanced gender views more deeply into research, advocacy, planning, and policy on climate migration. Gender considerations are key when assisting populations to adapt in their homes as well as when helping them to move under humane conditions. For example, much can be done to fight discrimination and unequal status in the first place. To improve the knowledge base we act upon, more sophisticated data on migration and the environment must be collected and, whenever possible, be disaggregated by gender. Research must also move beyond simple victimizing narratives that only focus on vulnerabilities associated with gender, but also shed light on the leadership role that many migrants take despite experiencing gender discrimination. The complexity of the issue requires context-specific and nuanced analysis; simple conclusions and one-size-fit-all recommendations should be avoided. Finally,

gender is of course only one variable that shapes the opportunities and challenges associated with climate change and migration. In any discussion of the topic, it is key to expose the structural inequalities that pertain to other individual factors as well, such as socioeconomic status and ethnicity, and to criticize how they are reproduced, modified, or changed through migration.

Note: This text draws in part on the following publication, which I co-authored:

K. K. Rigaud et al., “Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration.”. (World Bank, 2018).

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Getting gender on the radar: Why gender analyses in climate change adaptation are so important

by Luise Richter

Climate change adaptation can be defined in many different ways. Usually, it refers to processes through which people who are particularly exposed to changing climatic conditions are enabled to better deal and live with these changes. Over the last years, the fact that gender analyses are crucial for the sustainability of climate change adaptation projects has been widely accepted in the field of international development. Nonetheless, women's voices remain all too often unheard.

The fact that gender plays a crucial role in climate change adaptation is being acknowledged by a growing number of practitioners and academics alike. The importance of gender for adaptation stems from a variety of factors, one of them being that changing climatic conditions affect men and women differently. Women in developing countries are for instance more likely to suffer from extreme weather events and disasters. This is because their access to central resources of all kinds (natural, financial, institutional and social) is often limited. Simultaneously, women often possess indigenous knowledge on climate change and adaptation mechanisms. Their expertise is of great value when identifying and developing coping strategies for changing climatic conditions, as the provided information is normally extremely context-specific and oriented towards low-cost models of solution. Yet, despite the established reality that gender differentiated data is so utterly important, it still constitutes an all too rare place in the field of climate change adaptation.

The consequences of lacking gender in adaptation

Poor or entirely missing gender analyses can not only profoundly limit the sustainability and effectiveness of adaptation projects, but also negatively affect women as (assumed) key stakeholders in adaptation processes. For example, the belief that women's roles in households automatically make them critical agents of change can be misleading and create wrong expectations or even conflict among household members. This is because „[...] many women do not have decision-making power within the home or over all household resources, and may not be able to keep or manage their own earnings.“¹ Simultaneously,

deficiencies in gender assessments can result in researchers and practitioners strongly relying on women as key figures in adaptation strategies, without sufficiently considering how and to what extent such roles present an additional burden in the women's already laborious lives. In order to avoid such pitfalls, it is crucial to provide as many examples of the integration of gender in climate change-related analyses as possible.

Experiences from Vietnam

After a master's degree in International Development Studies, I worked in a climate change adaptation project in Vietnam. Together with my Vietnamese colleagues and with the help of data they had gathered through gender-separated group discussions, I conducted a gender analysis on a rural community's perceived importance of surrounding ecosystems², and the vulnerabilities and hazards affecting these. Some of the experiences from this analysis will be shared here as they underline the significance that gender analysis has for adaptation.

As has been pointed out in previous issues of the International Women's News, Vietnamese culture is continuously dominated by a highly complex and contradictory discourse on gender, in which women have to take on traditional caretaking roles in families whilst at the same time being encouraged by the Vietnamese Government to more actively participate in office work and the economic development of the Vietnamese society. This has resulted in a double burden for many Vietnamese women.

When I worked with rural Vietnamese populations on adaptation, this dual responsibility became highly visible, as the women were just as involved in adaptation activities as their male counterparts, whilst also having to manage the household and family life.

Women's understanding of the surrounding environments, however, were very different from what the men presented. This provided us for instance with useful information on which ecosystems were particularly important for their everyday lives. As the women must ensure the daily

1. Care International (2015) Gender dynamics in a changing climate: how gender and adaptive capacity affect resilience. Kenya: Care International.

2. "Ecosystem" means a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit" (Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 2)



food supply for their families, they have a different understanding of the importance of paddy rice or other crop fields close to the village than their male counterparts. Such information can be crucial for adaptation and development initiatives, for instance when one has to decide which ecosystems to choose for improvement and sustainable management, as is often done in adaptation approaches.

Another reason why gender needs to play a central role in analyses related to climate change and environmental protection is that if these fields do not sufficiently take gender roles into consideration, they can reinforce rather than reduce already existing divisions of tasks, placing an extra burden on women's shoulders.

For instance, as part of our analysis in the climate change adaption program, it became clear that the women attached a lot less cultural values, such as spiritual or recreational values, to their surroundings than men. This phenomenon might be linked to the men having more spare time as well as more time away from the household at their disposal because they were in charge of hunting or gathering tasks – a hypothesis which has been confirmed in other studies. The lack of thorough and forward-looking gender assessments can then result in men having even more spare time, whilst the women's workload continuously increases.

In a 2016 article in the Women's Studies International Forum, the authors for instance discuss how conservation activities have limited traditionally male spheres of contribution to Vietnamese households such as hunting, which in turn has increased the workload for female villagers. Through these shifts, already complex power dimensions and hierarchy structures within households became even more intricate, as "[...] men's status as head of household started conflicting with their reduced voice and interest in the family's livelihood."¹

Finally, our analysis also revealed that women often did not engage in village meetings where maps and the outlines of (farm) land were discussed, which made it harder for them to assess the size of a plot of land and thus to contribute to other ongoing analyses related to the adaptation project. This example feeds into the argument that the limited incorporation and impact of

gender-sensitive information in adaptation debates is partly due to women's restrained access to additional sources of knowledge and communication channels.

Conclusion

Albeit only providing a small insight into a highly context-specific gender-segregated analysis, the above examples already show why gender is highly important for climate adaptation practice and policies. It therefore needs to be included in all adaptation assessments, from project development to evaluation. The examples also demonstrate why gender equality eventually does not concern women alone but constitutes "[...] an issue that is critical for the advancement of everyone in society"²: Women and men can contribute distinct knowledge and distinct capabilities to appraisal processes and the selection of adaptation measures. Overlooking male or female perspectives – with the latter still constituting the more common case – can make adaptation interventions unsustainable or even entirely unsuccessful.

A changing climate and the measures taken to adapt to it create shifts in power relations and responsibilities, yet they also bring about opportunities for both women and men – and as such, require closer cooperation between all members of a household. Former typical divisions of labor within households need to be reassessed. Having the foresight to include all these elements in adaptation planning and implementation will remain challenging, yet aiming to do so is what is needed if we are to create effective adaptation options with and for communities around the world. Best-practice examples of highly gender-sensitive projects and programs already exist and continue to grow in numbers. The initiative Mangroves for the Future for instance officially incorporated gender analysis in all steps of its work, from project proposals to monitoring and evaluation, and established a strategic framework and action plan for gender integration. Such activities give hope and motivation that one day, gender-sensitive adaptation analyses will become the rule rather than the exception.

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The effects of climate change on women, children, and other vulnerable groups in Uganda / East Africa

by Dorothy Nalubega

Uganda – like any other country in the world – has experienced climate change and its consequences. Although the impacts of climate change are felt by everyone, it affects gender differently; hence it is very important that we put on 'gender glasses' and see how the effects of climate change put a heavier burden on women, children, and vulnerable groups than on others. This article presents an overview of the ways in which these groups are affected by climate change, what the Ugandan Green Party does to increase climate justice, and what cooperation between different women's groups at the international level looks like. In my summary, I will also outline what the way forward should look like if we want to start taking gender-just climate solutions seriously.

Ways in which women, children, and vulnerable groups are affected by climate change

Under-representation: When it comes to climate change, women are often under-represented in political forums. Because of pervasive gender inequality and gender roles attributed to women in Uganda, they are the ones who are primarily responsible for all the home chores, including cooking, taking care of family members, fetching water, and collecting firewood. These responsibilities leave them limited time to concentrate on politics, making it in turn very difficult to compete with their male counterparts and resulting in under-representation for women in both local and national level politics.

Poverty: Most women in Uganda and East Africa more generally are dependent on agriculture for their income – in Uganda for example 68.96% of women are employed in the agricultural sector. At the same time, climate change has already strongly impacted Uganda's agriculture with unpredictable rains, prolonged droughts, change of planting seasons – all of which have lowered productivity. These early effects of climate change – such as specifically the droughts in North Eastern Uganda and floods in Western Uganda – have already made women poor and vulnerable.

Effects on children's performance at school: Aside from under representation of women and the effects of poverty on their families and communities, climate change also impacts children's performance at school. For example, the overflow of the Mayanja River in Uganda in November 2018 will obviously lead to poor performance since children, especially girls and people with disabilities (PWDs) could not cross the river in order to attend school or to sit for their exams which normally take place in November.

Hunger: Prolonged droughts in Uganda affect the entire population. Yet the impacts are felt more strongly by children and women. When children are not well-fed, they can suffer from Kwashiorkor disease due to malnutrition; their performance at school becomes poorer during droughts because they cannot get enough food and water. What is more, women, who are usually the food managers at home, cannot concentrate on any other developmental work when the people they care about the most don't have enough food. For them, phases of drought and hunger are akin to psychological torture.

Death: When climate change hits hard, it is mostly women, children and vulnerable groups who die from its consequences. For instance, when landslides hit Bududa in Eastern Uganda, it was mostly women, children and people with disabilities who died because they could not defend themselves – they could not hold on, could not run fast enough. HIV AIDS patients who cannot afford food and cannot take strong ARVs on an empty stomach are most often women and children. Climate change is even more dangerous for LGBTI communities who are vulnerable because of their minority status and even worse off because of the double burden of being both a woman and LGBTI: when food is scarce due to climate change, and even your family and society exclude you for being who you are, risks of death are augmented because they might not have any access to food and drugs.

Measures the Ugandan Green Party takes to increase rights, participation and climate justice

Participation in COPs: The Ecological Party of Uganda supports women to attend international Climate Change Conferences like COP23 and COP24¹ through recommending them for accreditation and fundraising for them. This has, for example, enabled Dorothy Nalubega to attend COP23 in Bonn Germany and COP24 in Katowice Poland, thus strengthening her capacity with regard to gender-just climate solutions.

Gender and Energy Workshop, Kampala 2018: This workshop was another positive action when the Party supported the Women Greens to organize the East African Greens Federation Gender and Energy workshop. At this event, representatives from four East African countries (Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi) gathered in Kampala, Uganda, in April 2018 to learn more about climate change, find solutions, and learn about practical alternatives. These included for instance the use of clean energy to save mother nature as well as empowering women politically, socially and economically. The workshop was funded by Sweden's Green Forum.

Uganda Women Greens alternative energy practical training: In this era where charcoal is not only too expensive but also a big threat to the environment since it entail cutting down trees, the Chairperson of the Ugandan Women Greens, Dorothy Nalubega, in cooperation with the office of EPU Women's league, launched an exercise to train women how to make briquettes (an alternative to charcoal) as a climate change mitigation measure.



Cooperation with other women's groups in the region

Cooperation at the international and regional level plays an important role for Ugandan Women Greens and feminist activists who care about climate change: **The East African Greens Federation** is one of the many cooperations that the regional Greens set up. Uganda Women Greens are also part of the **East African Greens Women's network**, consisting of Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi. It is through this umbrella network that Uganda managed to host the East African Greens Gender and Energy workshop in Kampala in 2018.

Uganda Greens are also partnering with the **Westminster Foundation for Democracy** which – through the Green Party of England and Wales – has supported many gender workshops that have enabled women Greens in Uganda and East Africa to improve their communication skills as well as other capacities. This has motivated and empowered women to participate more actively and frequently in decision-making forums, including international climate change negotiations. Uganda Women Greens are also in cooperation with **Kona Women's** agriculture and environmental **group**, working together for climate change mitigation and adaptation measures activities. Uganda Women Greens also cooperate with the **Institute of Environmental Justice (Germany)** with whom they jointly campaign for gender-just climate change solutions.



Time to act!
Ways forward

Time to act! Ways forward

We have had enough talk, it is time to act if we are to realize the IPCC Goal of 1.5 degrees! The time is as soon as yesterday; we need to involve women in climate change negotiations. Women contribute 76% of the workforce in agriculture yet they are mostly excluded from political decision making. We need to translate into action the COP23 Gender Action Plan; ensure women's rights to land so that they can be motivated to keep it fertile, plant trees with the sense of ownership; promote women's rights to education right from schools and monitor women's rights commitments, e.g CEDAW. Awareness about the effects of climate change on women, children and other vulnerable groups should start with policy-makers and key players like church leaders (in Uganda, church leaders are respected and listened to). Donors should support and encourage environmental and women's NGOs so that they can enhance gender sensitive approaches to climate justice. Feminist groups should include climate justice on their


agenda because climate change indirectly results in Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Conclusion

Women are the engines and caretakers of humanity – we cannot realize the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals without tackling climate change and we cannot tackle climate change without considering gender issues. Climate justice in all its spheres – including policy and adaptation – should take into consideration the gender perspective, it should ensure protection of women and children who contribute the least to climate change, yet when it comes to the effects they are hit the hardest.

1. The United Nations Climate Change Conferences are yearly conferences held in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They are the formal meeting of the UNFCCC Parties (Conference of the Parties, COP) and they investigate progress in dealing with climate change. Beginning in the mid-1990s, they were also responsible to negotiate the Kyoto Protocol, establishing legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Written by Holly Herbert



Skipping School
to Fight
Climate Change

16-year-old Swedish climate change activist, Greta Thunberg, has inspired kids in more than 125 countries to skip school.

Photograph by:
Anders Hellberg



Greta Thunberg is a young Swedish political activist fighting for climate change. Her passion and concerns for climate change started when she learnt about it in class when she was 8 years old. She could not understand why climate change was not a worldwide priority and felt she had to do something to create change.

Her inspiration for striking came from the students at the Parkland School in the US who walked out on classes to protest against the US gun laws that have enabled school massacres to keep occurring.

Since last year, she has been missing school and striking every Friday outside the Swedish Parliament, accusing lawmakers of failing to uphold their commitments to fight climate change as agreed to under the Paris climate accord. When Thunberg is not protesting, she travels widely promoting her stance of climate change; avoiding flights to save on greenhouse emissions. Since rising in prominence as

an activist internationally, she has spoken at events like TEDx Stockholm, the United Nation Climate Change Conference, the World Economic Forum in Davos and the European Union in Brussels. Thunberg's strikes successfully put pressure on the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, whereby he committed to spending 1 trillion Euros on mitigating climate change between 2021 and 2027. However, she will continue striking outside the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm until Sweden strengthens its own climate commitments.

Her school strikes have turned into a large movement, Greta has inspired children around the world to get involved, take action and make their voices heard; they want a solution to the existential crisis of climate change. "We are the voiceless future of humanity," activists wrote in a letter published March 1 by the Guardian. "Now we will make our voices heard. On 15 March, we will protest on every continent."

On Friday 15th of March 2019, putting their collective voices together in a coordinated global school walkout, called **Youth Strike 4 Climate**, well **over 1.5 million students went on strike for the climate, in 2083 places, in 125 countries, on all**



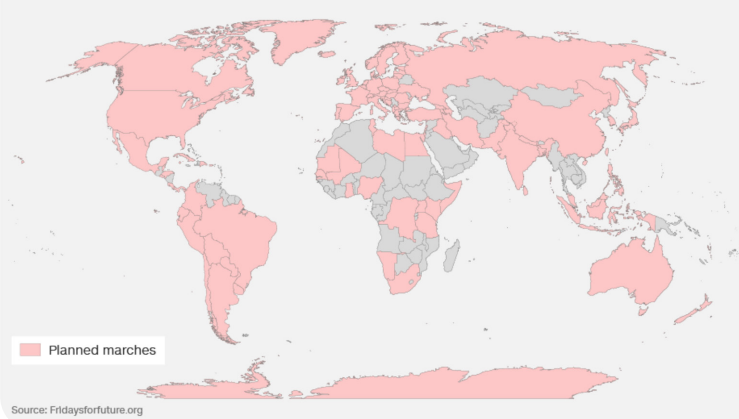
Photograph by:
Greta Thunberg
Facebook page



continents. This particular strike marked 42 days of Thunberg's school boycotts since she started striking last year. The strikers around the world have slightly different demands on their own governments, but the common theme is that they want their governments to aggressively cut greenhouse gas emissions in their countries.

Global Climate Strike, March 15, 2019

Total **2,052** events in **123** countries



Thunberg has managed to both channel and elevate the frustration and fear that many young people feel about people in power of policy and their resistance to take climate change seriously. People under the age of 20 will be on this earth to see 2080 come around. If we are not to make changes now, these children will face the prospect of living on a planet where the temperature has increased by 2 to 4 degrees Celsius in average in their lifetime.

In Australia there were around 55 separate protests attended by about 40,000 students as part of the Youth Strike 4 Climate Campaign. An attendee at the Sydney event told us, "It was so amazing to see so many young people passionate about Climate Change; it's good to know the next generation is ready to fight for change."

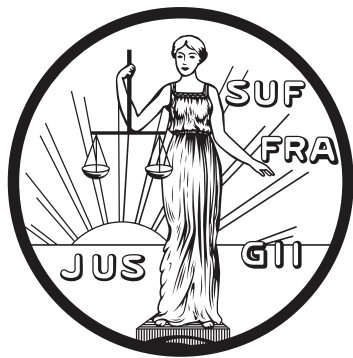


There were thousands of us there, it was a struggle to get close enough to the stage to hear the event speakers". (Rani Mathews, 22 years old from Sydney, Australia.)

On the 17th March, Thunberg released a reflective statement about the success of Youth Strike 4 Climate, "...The favorite argument here in Sweden (and everywhere else...) is that it doesn't matter what we do because we are all too small to make a difference. Friday's manifestation was the biggest day of global climate action ever, according to 350.org. It happened because a few schoolchildren from small countries like Sweden, Belgium and Switzerland decided not to go to school because nothing was being done about the climate crisis. We proved that it does matter what you do and that no one is too small to make a difference...."

For the rest of the statement click [here](#).





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