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GENDER LENS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

A gender-sensitive approach to climate change



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Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand how climate change differentially affects women, men and people of other gender identities, and how these differences influence vulnerability and adaptive capacity.
2. Identify and analyse factors contributing to gender inequality in the context of climate change, as well as specific impacts on diverse communities.
3. Develop youth work strategies and practices that integrate a gender perspective into climate action, promoting equitable participation and inclusive leadership.
4. Apply international frameworks (UN, EU) to design climate interventions and policies that address gender needs and strengthen the resilience of affected communities.
5. Encourage critical reflection on how youth and youth workers can actively contribute to climate justice from a gender perspective.



About Session

The purpose of this session is to teach participants about on the gender perspective in the field of climate change

Materials Needed

1. Flip charts and markers
2. Sticky notes
3. Printed case studies (enough copies for each work group)
4. Laptop/projector for presentations
5. Timer



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Session Steps

- A. Introduction and Aim (10 min)**
- B. Theoretical Information (50 mins)**
- C. Group Work (120 min)**
- D. Summarizing and Closure (60 min)**



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Session Step 1

A. Introduction and Aim

The purpose of this session is to teach participants about on the gender perspective in the field of climate change

Objectives: At the end of the session, participants will learn how to look at climate change from a gender perspective.

Gender inequality coupled with the climate crisis is one of the greatest challenges of our time. It poses threats to ways of life, livelihoods, health, safety and security for women and girls around the world.

Session Step 1

A. Introduction and Aim

Objectives:

- To provide participants with fundamental knowledge about climate change and its impacts.

Explain the basic concepts of climate change, including the natural and anthropogenic (human) causes that contribute to global warming and other related phenomena.

- To engage participants in interactive and practical activities to deepen their understanding of climate change concepts.

Facilitate dynamic activities such as simulations, case studies and debates, which enable participants to apply theoretical knowledge to real situations and develop practical skills.

- To make participants understand impact of climate change on youth work and gender domain.

Identify and develop strategies to empower young people, especially women and girls, to actively participate in climate action and decision-making related to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Session Step 2

B. Theoretical Information

The climate crisis disproportionately affects women and girls, exacerbating pre-existing **gender inequalities** and posing unique threats to their livelihoods, health and security.

Around the world, women are more dependent on natural resources but have less access to them. In many regions, women bear disproportionate responsibility for food, water and fuel. **Agriculture** is the most important sector of employment for women in low- and middle-income countries, and during periods of **drought and erratic rainfall**, they work harder to secure income and resources for their families, putting pressure on girls to drop out of school to help their mothers.

Climate change acts as a "**threat multiplier**", exacerbating social, political and economic tensions in fragile and conflict-affected environments. Women and girls face additional **vulnerabilities to all forms of gender-based** violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, trafficking, child marriage and other forms of violence.

Session Step 2

B. Theoretical Information

When disasters strike, women are less likely to survive and more likely to be injured due to entrenched gender inequalities that create disparities in information, mobility, decision-making and access to resources and training. After the disaster, women and girls have less access to aid and assistance, which further threatens their livelihoods, well-being and recovery, creating a cycle of vulnerability to future disasters.

The health of women and girls is threatened by climate change and disasters by limiting access to services and medical care, as well as increasing risks related to maternal and child health. Research indicates that extreme heat increases the incidence of stillbirths, and climate change is increasing the spread of vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue and Zika virus, which are linked to poorer maternal and neonatal outcomes.



Definitions:

- Gender

The term "gender" refers to a set of roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a society considers appropriate for men and women. It is important to note that gender is a social construct, meaning that it goes beyond biological differences between the sexes. These social constructions can vary widely across cultures and contexts, and are influenced by factors such as history, religion, politics and social norms. Rather than being innate or biologically determined, gender is learned and internalised through socialisation and interaction with the environment.

By understanding gender as a social construct, we can recognise that gender roles and expectations can be fluid and change over time and place. Furthermore, this understanding allows us to question and challenge gender norms that can perpetuate inequality and discrimination. Integrating a gender perspective into various areas, including public policy, education and health, is critical to addressing gender inequalities and promoting equal opportunities for all people, regardless of their gender identity.

- **Climate Change**

Climate change is defined as a significant and lasting change in global or regional weather patterns over time. This change can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including variations in average temperatures, precipitation patterns, frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, among others.

Climate change is widely **attributed to human activities that increase concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere**. These gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O), act like a blanket around the Earth, trapping heat from the sun and increasing the global temperature in a phenomenon known as the greenhouse effect. Human activities that contribute to this increase in greenhouse gases include the burning of fossil fuels (such as coal, oil and natural gas) for energy and transport, deforestation and intensive agriculture.

Importantly, climate change has profound implications for the environment, the economy and society as a whole.

The impacts of climate change may vary from region to region and may include phenomena such as sea level rise, ocean acidification, loss of biodiversity, water scarcity and altered cropping and food production patterns.

Addressing climate change requires action at local, national and international levels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to already unavoidable impacts and promote the resilience of vulnerable communities. A clear understanding of the nature and causes of climate change is fundamental to designing effective mitigation and adaptation strategies that protect both the environment and human well-being.

Session Step 2

B. Theoretical Information

Why is it important to address climate change from a gender perspective?

1. Pre-existing inequalities in access to resources and decision-making power

Gender disparities can exacerbate climate change impacts due to structural inequalities that exist in access to resources and decision-making power. For example, women often have less access to land, water, technology and credit compared to men, limiting their ability to adapt to climate change impacts and manage natural resources sustainably.

2.. Disproportionate impacts on vulnerable communities

Women, especially in vulnerable communities, often disproportionately face climate change impacts due to their direct dependence on natural resources and their limited access to economic and social resources. For example, women may face increased risks to food security, climate-related diseases and displacement due to extreme weather events such as droughts, floods and storms.

Why is it important to address climate change from a gender perspective?

3. Promoting an equitable and effective climate response

Addressing climate change from a gender perspective is crucial to ensure a more equitable and effective climate response. By considering gender differences in vulnerability and adaptive capacity, we can design policies and programmes that address the specific needs and priorities of women and men in a fair and equitable manner. This can include measures such as promoting women's meaningful participation in environmental decision-making, strengthening the resilience of vulnerable communities, and removing gender barriers that impede access to resources and opportunities.

4. Promoting social justice and human rights

Addressing climate change from a gender perspective is also critical to promoting social justice and human rights. By recognising and addressing gender inequalities that contribute to vulnerability to climate change, we can work towards a more just and equitable world where all people, regardless of gender, have the opportunity to thrive and live in a safe and sustain

Session Step 3 Group Work (60 min)

Group Dynamics: Discussion on Climate Change Adaptation Strategies from a Gender Perspective

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective: To explore different perspectives on how to address climate change from a gender perspective and to encourage critical reflection and exchange of ideas among participants.

Steps:

Preparation:

- Divide participants into two groups: Group A and Group B.
- Provide each group with a set of cards with different climate change adaptation strategies.

Research and Preparation:

- Assign each group a set of climate change adaptation strategies.
- Groups have time to research and discuss how these strategies might address the specific needs of women and men in different contexts affected by climate change.
- Encourage groups to consider how these strategies might impact on resource distribution, participation in decision-making and gender relations.

Discussion:

- Once the groups have researched and prepared their arguments, organise a debate between Group A and Group B.
- Group A presents their arguments in favour of the assigned adaptation strategies, highlighting how these strategies can benefit women and men equally or address gender inequalities.
- Group B presents their arguments against the assigned strategies, pointing out possible limitations or negative effects on gender disparities.
- After the presentations, facilitate a discussion between the two groups, allowing participants to exchange views and refute each other's arguments.

Reflection and Conclusions:

- After the discussion, invite participants to reflect on what they have learned and identify areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Facilitate a discussion on how the different perspectives presented can inform future climate action and the integration of a gender perspective into climate change related policies and programmes.
- Encourages participants to share ideas for concrete actions they can take to promote gender equality in the context of climate change, based on lessons learned from the discussion.

This activity provides participants with the opportunity to delve deeper into the issue of climate change from a gender perspective, encouraging critical thinking and the exchange of ideas. It also promotes collaboration and teamwork, which enriches the participants' learning experience.

Session Step 3 Group Work (60 min)

Case Study: Impact of Climate Change on Women Farmers in North-Eastern Ghana

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective: To explore different perspectives on how to address climate change from a gender perspective and to encourage critical reflection and exchange of ideas among participants.

Steps:

Preparation:

- Briefly explain the context of the case study. Highlight how women in northeastern Ghana face specific challenges due to extreme weather events such as droughts and floods, and how their role in subsistence agriculture makes them particularly vulnerable.



Aim of the activity:

- Indicates that the objective is to analyse how climate change affects women and men differentially and discuss how to integrate a gender perspective into adaptation strategies.

Formulation of Discussion Questions:

- Pose the following questions to guide the discussion:
- Differential Impacts: How does climate change affect women differently than men in this region of Ghana?
- Barriers and Challenges: What barriers do women farmers face in adapting to the impacts of climate change?
- Gender Mainstreaming: Why is it important to include women's voices and experiences in climate policy making?
- Support and Resources: What types of support (political, social, economic) would be most effective in helping women farmers in situations like this?
- Local Knowledge and Adaptation: How can women's traditional knowledge be used to enhance climate change adaptation strategies?

Reflection and Conclusions:

- After the discussion, invite participants to reflect on what they have learned and identify areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Facilitate a discussion on how the different perspectives presented can inform future climate action and the integration of a gender perspective into climate change related policies and programmes.
- Encourages participants to share ideas for concrete actions they can take to promote gender equality in the context of climate change, based on lessons learned from the discussion.

This activity provides participants with the opportunity to delve deeper into the issue of climate change from a gender perspective, encouraging critical thinking and the exchange of ideas. It also promotes collaboration and teamwork, which enriches the participants' learning experience.



Session Step 4

D. Evaluation & Discussion

- Questionnaire:
3 concepts that you have learnt at this session.
- Group discussion

See **Annex 5** for the details and explanations.