

AFRICAN ADAPTATION PROGRAMME REPUBLIC
OF MAURITIUS
KNOWLEDGE FAIR ON CLIMATE CHANGE



THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN COMBATING
CLIMATE CHANGE

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All women can relate to these activities



Gender: socially ascribed roles, responsibilities and opportunities associated with women and men, as well as the hidden power structures that govern relationships between them.

Gender characteristics are not natural or biological. We are not born with them.

Gender roles and characteristics affect power relations between men and women at all levels and can result in inequality in opportunities and outcomes for some groups



- Currently addressing the threat of climate change is a global priority.



- It is in this context that, debates regarding identification of gender perspectives and the equal involvement of both men women in addressing climate change have arisen.



LOOKING BACK

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) fails to recognize the gender aspects of climate change and omits the issues of gender equality and women's participation entirely. Also, its Kyoto Protocol, that outlines reductions in greenhouse gases until 2012, fails to integrate a gender perspective in its operationalization and mechanisms, such as the Clean Development Mechanism.

Women's caucuses since COP-11 in 2005 have strongly lobbied for a gender approach in all these critical areas.

Prior to the UN Climate Change Conference held in 2007 in Bali,, representatives of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**), the United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**), the United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**), and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (**WEDO**), came together to address the emerging issue of gender and climate change. These institutions recognized that global policies and strategies on climate change did not yet incorporate a gender perspective and agreed on the need for a coordinated strategy. The result was the formation of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (**GGCA**), which was publicly launched at the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP) held in Bali.

The GGCA has grown to include over 50 member organizations, including UN agencies, Inter-governmental Organizations (IGOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs).



The GGCA has built a track record for concrete action on gender and climate change in the areas of policy, finance, and capacity-building on the national, regional, and global level. These activities have contributed to the recognition of the gender implications of climate change in UN processes among governments, and in civil society activities.

The UNDP Gender Team has been supporting the efforts of AAP (African Adaptation Programme) countries to integrate gender considerations into their adaptation initiatives to ensure these address the needs of women and men equitably.

The demand for this support has grown over the course of the AAP with assistance on mainstreaming gender in national adaptation plans now having been provided in countries such as: Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, Mauritius, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Congo, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Namibia.

- Now widely acknowledged that men and women will be differently vulnerable to climate change impacts due to pre-existing inequalities such as, their role and position in society, access to resources and power relations that may affect the ability to respond to the effects of climate change

Making the case

All climate sensitive sectors are characterised by gendered dimensions. In many cases women usually bear brunt when these sectors are affected by climate



WATER SECTOR

- Majority of women in rural communities use “common property” resources, such as rivers and lakes, to access water more often than do men



- Time spent by women and girls on collecting water from these sources often prevents them from gaining an education and earning a formal wage, entrenching them in poverty.



Agriculture and food security.

women are key contributors to agriculture and food security in terms of farming production and productivity, local processing, marketing and appropriate nutrition





WOMEN HAVE A CENTRAL ROLE TO PLAY IN COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

It is important to note that women are not simply climate victims; they are also key agents, leaders and champions of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

This is due to their often deep understanding of their direct environment, their experience in managing natural resources such as water, forests, biodiversity and soil, and their active role in climate-sensitive activities such as farming, forestry and fisheries.

GENDER & CLIMATE CHANGE:

3 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW



Women need to be empowered



"To educate girls is to reduce poverty"

*Former UN Secretary-General
Kofi Annan*



and not blinded



Women have untapped potential to combat climate change.

women are also a powerful force for finding solutions to climate change across the board, including in areas such as agriculture, sustainable forest management, and energy access.

Empowerment of women is an important ingredient in building climate resilience.

There are countless examples where empowering women to exercise leadership within their communities contributes to climate resilience, ranging from disaster preparedness in Bangladesh and Indonesia, to better forest governance in India and Nepal, to coping with drought in the Horn of Africa.

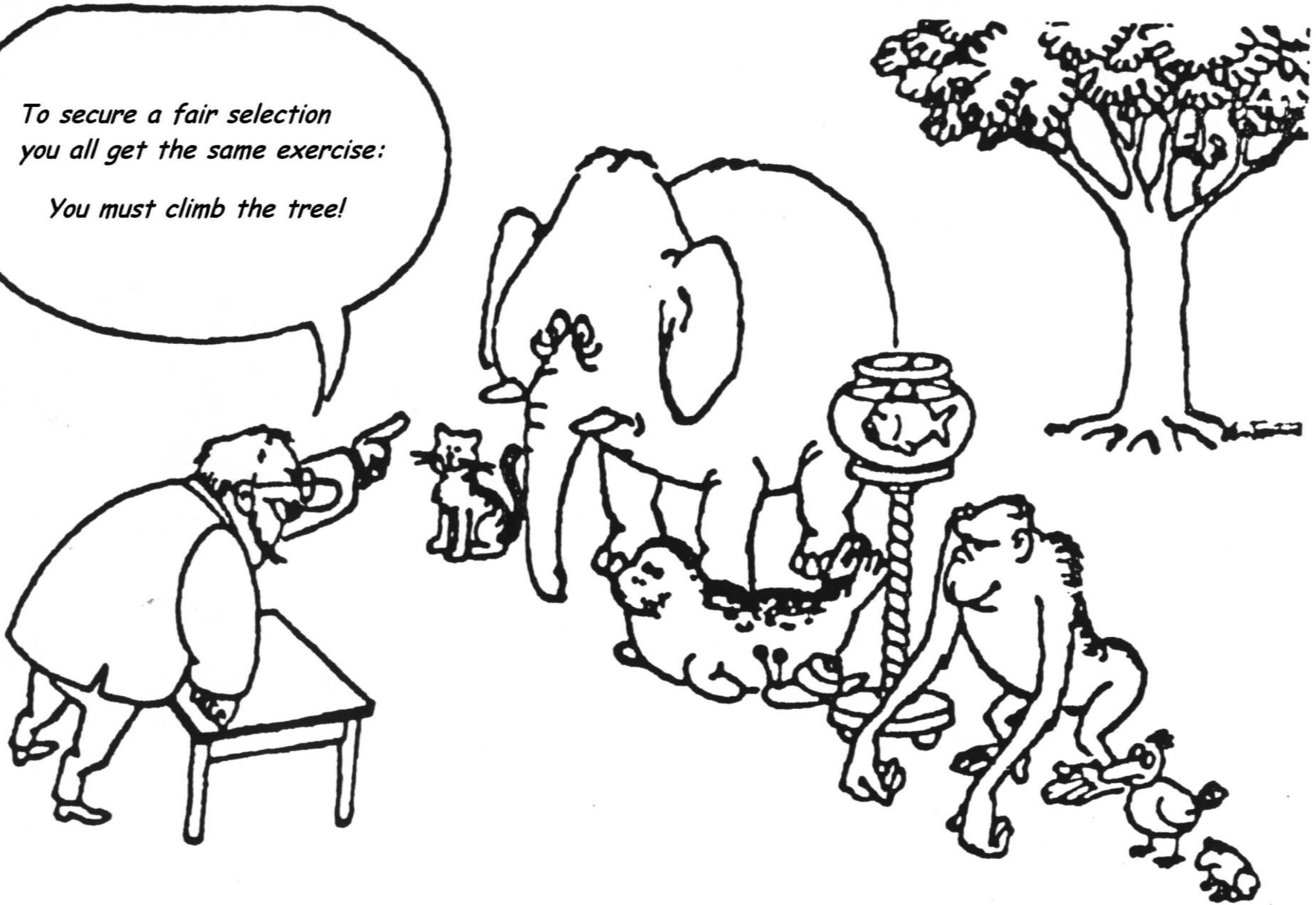




Address the cultural, social, economic and political conditions that are the basis of certain standards, values and behavioural patterns to which Gender alludes to.

Equal Opportunities

*To secure a fair selection
you all get the same exercise:
You must climb the tree!*



Greater representation and participation of women in decision making at all levels in society (International, National, regional, local/community and household level)

Greater representation and participation of women on UNFCCC bodies will make the decisions taken and resulting actions at national and international level more gender responsive and therefore more effective.

During the [67th United Nations General Assembly](#) in New York this year, twenty international leaders agreed on an action plan to secure a new agreement on women's participation at [COP18](#) to take place this November.

This commitment was made at a meeting of high level leaders Women's

Women need to take part in making decisions that affect their lives

Women with responsibilities at Ministerial, European Commission and UNFCCC levels must link with women's voices on the ground.

"We have not only an opportunity for leadership, we have the responsibility of leadership."

In March this year, when UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon announced a climate finance panel expected to mobilise \$100 billion a year to help those most affected by climate change, the 19-person panel did not include a single woman.

Not only should women be represented on a climate change finance panel. Every effort possible must also be made to ensure that women have access to the education, training, and finances needed to adopt sustainable technologies and participate in the green economy.

If the international community is serious about addressing climate change, it must recognise women as a fundamental part of the climate solution.

It's smart economics, smart business, smart planning, and smart design to look at challenges with women's realities in mind.



What women around the world are doing

The [Kenya Climate Justice Women Champions \(KCJWC\)](#) is a network of 30 women's organisations whose primary focus is advocacy on climate justice among women in Kenya. It brings women together to address the issues of climate change and gender and looks at how women can adapt to climate change.

Their mission is to unite women's voices and action on climate change towards enhanced adaptive capacities, more participation and involvement in policy processes and decision-making in relation to climate change.

Maize is the staple crop for 96% of Kenya's population and provides 40% of the population's calorie requirements. However, maize crops have been affected by changing weather patterns.

This has caused persistent food insecurity leading to hunger, poverty and dependency on relief food.

To help increase food security, KCJWC members set up a climate change adaptation project called the Mutomo Cassava Project.

The project has helped to add new foods to family's diets and surplus crops have been sold to provide an income.

Women in Bangladesh are acting as powerful agents of change “through early warning messages women are getting the message out ahead of cyclones to other women in the community, encouraging them to use cyclone shelters. This has had dramatic effect in reducing the number of women dying in cyclones and has also improved cyclone preparedness overall.”

In India where poor women in drought-prone states have improved their social and economic opportunities through self-help groups that have linked together to increase their bargaining power. These institutional platforms can be used to build climate resilience, including accessing advice for dealing with drought and building better watershed management structures.

THANK YOU