



A feminist approach to climate policy

The need for a feminist development policy to address the climate crisis

CHALLENGES AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

The impacts of the climate crisis are not gender neutral, but deepen and reproduce existing inequalities. Climate change has devastating effects on those who are already disadvantaged due to intersecting factors such as gender, age, race, class, or income. **Women and girls** in all their diversity¹ are often impaired by **discriminating power structures** which express themselves in the gender-specific distribution of **resources, representation, and rights**.

A **lack of resources** often limits adaptation options and the ability to recover from climate-related disasters. Women make up 55 % of the world's unbanked population, meaning they have no access to banking or insurance products. On top of that, only nearly 15 % of all landowners are women.

In addition, women are **mostly insufficiently or not at all represented in decision-making processes** at local and (inter-)national levels. Within the UN climate negotiations, women, youth and marginalised groups such as Indigenous Peoples and local communities are significantly underrepresented.

People with disabilities are at a disproportionately higher risk of dying in a disaster. At the same time, **structural discrimination** denies people with disabilities a position as powerful and knowledgeable agents of change. Due to **restricted rights and discrimination, LGBTQI+ persons** are particularly affected by the impacts of climate change. In the context of disasters, access to shelter is often limited for example. Thus, discriminating structures not only lead to a particular high risk, but also to a lack of resilience and missing involvement in solutions.

OPPORTUNITIES OF A FEMINIST CLIMATE POLICY

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has announced a **feminist development policy**. The policy acknowledges social inequalities as a product of discriminatory power structures and pursues a human rights-based, intersectional and gender-transformative approach. A **feminist perspective on climate policy** recognises the climate crisis as a societal challenge and focuses on discriminatory structures.

Gender justice is key to an effective climate policy. In fact, **gender equitable** structures prove to be a **crucial factor in reducing** a country's **greenhouse gas emissions** and **building resilience**.

Due to the widespread, gender-specific distribution of everyday tasks and care work, women have specific knowledge and skills as providers, educators, energy and transport users, and land managers. Moreover, women often work in agriculture and fishing. Therefore, they have important knowledge to deal with the **climate-related risks to water and food security**. As the main users of public transportation, women can also play a key role in (re-)shaping the transport sector, for instance, with the aim to reduce emissions.



¹ This includes all persons who identify as women. The addition "in all their diversity" refers to their multiple identities and life realities.

Indigenous Peoples, especially indigenous women, are crucial knowledge carriers for biodiversity conservation and climate action. Their transformative potential can only unfold if their rights are respected and they are participating in political processes.

The Paris Agreement declares gender equality as a principle in addressing climate change.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda requires a **just transition of our societies**. In the process, discriminatory structures must be removed and an empowering environment for women and disadvantaged groups must be created.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE BMZ: PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

By 2025, Germany aims to use 93% of newly commissioned development cooperation project funding for measures that have gender equality as a principal or significant objective.

- While 77.6 % of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) address gender as a cross-cutting issue, only 18 % consider mitigation and 37 % adaptation in the context of gender equality. To anchor gender equality more firmly in the NDCs, BMZ is committed to implementing the **gender strategy of the NDC Partnership**. For example, in Burkina Faso, BMZ supported together with the Ministry of Women's Affairs the first official NDC investment plan from a francophone region in Africa that takes gender equality into account.
- As part of the **InsuResilience Global Partnership**, the **BMZ co-finances the InsuResilience Centre of Excellence (CoE) on gender-smart solutions**.

The knowledge-sharing platform plays a key role in developing and promoting gender-responsive approaches to climate and disaster-risk financing and insurance.

- As a member of the **Global Alliance for Care (GAC)**, Germany and Mexico hosted a side event at the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women on 'The relevance of care work for gender equality'. Sustainable care systems are essential for strengthening societal resilience in the face of climate change.
- In the BMZ funded project "**Energy Systems of the Future**", Brazil has developed a campaign to encourage women to start training or studying in the field of renewable energies.
- Materials have been produced for the international conference "**Women Mobilize Women**" (WMW), including a **handbook on women friendly urban transport**, to provide a comprehensive basis for gender-equitable mitigation measures in the transport sector.
- BMZ cooperates with **Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF International)** to empower civil society organisations to effectively engage in gender-transformative climate action, and to increase the representation of women (and their networks) in central decision-making bodies.

A feminist approach to climate policy not only addresses injustices and barriers that keep people from participating in sustainable change but encourages all people to work together toward climate-resilient and sustainable development.



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