Gender and Climate: How Gender Finance Fosters Climate Finance

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On November 11, the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) commenced in Baku, Azerbaijan's capital. The event brought together leaders from governments, businesses, and civil society to accelerate global efforts in addressing the climate crisis. The conference places significant emphasis on the needs of developing countries, particularly in climate finance, including the establishment of new funding targets. Incorporating gender perspectives into climate mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage efforts is essential for advancing sustainable strategies and fostering broader sustainable development. This article explores the intersection of gender and climate, highlighting the interconnected realms of gender finance and climate finance. It further examines how the development of gender finance, alongside the integration of gender-responsive tools and policies, aligns synergistically with the climate agenda, potentially increasing climate finance and significantly contributing to the realization of the Paris Agreement's objectives.

Ahead of COP 29, the UNFCCC Secretariat published a synthesis report in September analyzing the progress made by Parties in implementing gender-responsive climate policies, plans, strategies, and actions [1]. The report assesses the extent to which Parties have incorporated gender considerations across their climate-related documentation, comparing recent submissions to the baseline established in the 2022 synthesis report. Findings indicate a growing commitment to gender integration, with 85.2% of Parties now referencing gender in their latest submissions, underscoring a positive trend toward embedding gender considerations within climate policy frameworks. Specifically, gender considerations appeared in 81.5% of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), 95% of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), 93.8% of National Communications (NCs), and 54.9% of Long-term Low-emission Development Strategies (LT-LEDS). As Parties increasingly view gender integration as essential for elevating climate ambition and effectiveness, COP 29 will feature sessions aimed at advancing the gender-climate agenda, including a review of the enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan, as well as a high-level event on gender and transparency.

2001	COP7, decision 36/CP.7 [2]: affirms for the first time the need to enhance women's equal participation and representation in bodies formed under the UNFCCC or Kyoto Protocol.
2010	COP16, decision 1/CP.16 [3]: recognizes that gender equality and the effective participation of women and indigenous peoples are important for effective action on all aspects of climate change.
2011	COP 17: decisions on finance and technology that incorporate gender considerations, specifically regarding the Green Climate Fund and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) [4].
2012	COP18, decision 23/CP.18: calls for enhancing women's participation in UNFCCC negotiations and ensuring their equal representation in bodies established under the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol "to create more effective climate change policies that address the needs of both women and men equally."
2013	COP 19: the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts: mandates the collection of gender-disaggregated data [5].
2014	COP20, decision 18/CP.20 [6]: The "Lima Work Programme on Gender" (2014) encourages Parties to strengthen efforts to increase women's participation in the Convention process, promote gender sensitivity in the development and implementation of climate policies, and collaborate on a two-year work programme focused on gender. Additionally, it aims to clarify the definition of "gender-responsive climate policy" to enhance its effective implementation.
2015	COP 21: The Paris Agreement includes gender equality in its preamble and makes references to it in the contexts of adaptation and capacity building.
2016	COP 22: COP 22 decided on a three-year extension of the LWPG, with a review at COP 25 (Decision 21/CP. 22) [7] + The Green Climate Fund starts funding operations with a gender policy and initial gender action plan [8].
2017	COP 23: the adoption of the first-ever Gender Action Plan for the UNFCCC [9].
2018	COP 24: #ActOnTheGap firt capacity-building workshop for National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points [10].
2019	COP 25: Parties agreed a 5-year enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan (Decision 3/CP.25) [11].
2021	COP 26: The leaders of Estonia, Tanzania, and Bangladesh were the first to endorse the Glasgow Women's Leadership Statement, which urges countries to promote the leadership of women and girls in climate action across all levels of society and politics [12]. Decision 20/CP.26: includes, among other things, an assessment of the implementation of the Gender Action Plan.
2022	COP 27: Parties completed the intermediate review of the Gender Action Plan implementation initiated at SB 56 in June 2022. This review resulted in amendments to certain deliverables and the introduction of three new activities in priority areas C and E (Decision 24/CP.27). Additionally, the Green Climate Fund approved an updated gender policy and a new Gender Action Plan.
2023	At COP 28 Parties agreed that the final review of the implementation of the enhanced Lima work programme and its GAP will be initiated at the sixtieth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, in June 2024 - identifying progress, challenges, gaps and priorities in implementing the GAP, and further work to be undertaken – and conclude at its SBI 61 in November 2024 (Decision 15/CP.28).

Table 1. Gender and Climate Finance Decisions under the UNFCCC

On November 11, the opening day of COP29, a side event titled "The Power of Women in Sustainable Development" took place at the China Pavilion in the Blue Zone. During the event, the report "Gender Equality for a Low-Carbon Future: Observations on Corporate Efforts to Empower Women in Tackling Climate Change (2024)" was officially launched. The report highlighted the connection between gender equality and climate change, urging businesses to incorporate gender perspectives into their climate strategies to improve both the effectiveness and sustainability of climate action [44].

INTEGRATING GENDER INTO CLIMATE POLICY

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) was the first international declaration to highlight the connection between gender equality and climate change, identifying women and the environment as one of twelve key areas of focus. Later, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has consistently addressed the gender dimension of climate change (Table 1).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders in September 2015, emphasizes the essential role of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in achieving sustainable development. Various climate-related SDGs feature gender-specific targets, such as land ownership and access to new technology (SDG 1), support for women small-scale food producers (SDG 2), and water and sanitation (SDG 6). SDG 13 specifically calls for promoting "mechanisms for enhancing capacity for effective climate change planning and management in least developed countries, with a focus on women." Collectively, these agreements establish a mandate for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in all aspects of climate change action.

Although there are commitments to incorporate gender in climate finance, no enforcement mechanism exists to ensure this is implemented. Although a UNFCCC synthesis report released ahead of COP29 noted an increasing trend of gender integration in most updated nationally determined contributions, there were few mentions of the need for gender-responsive climate finance.

Effectively leveraging climate finance necessitates incorporating climate change considerations into development policies and planning, with a pivotal focus on integrating gender considerations to foster sustainable and equitable outcomes. Mainstreaming gender in climate finance requires a thorough understanding of the interconnectedness of gender and climate change. Addressing one issue without considering the other diminishes the effectiveness of policy interventions. Conducting a comprehensive gender analysis is essential to ensure that gender issues are integrated into climate actions, informing the creation of climate financing frameworks and resource mobilization strategies. Neglecting the integration of gender considerations in climate finance can hinder gender mainstreaming and exacerbate existing inequalities. Prioritizing gender in climate finance not only advances gender equality but also enhances climate action, facilitating the achievement of SDGs while improving financial returns and mitigating investment risks. Research indicates that nations with higher representation of women in legislative roles are more likely to ratify environmental agreements [13] and exhibit lower per capita CO_2 emissions [14]. Gender balance is linked to reduced climate footprints and more effective policies across both developed and developing countries [15]. Even with gender quotas, evidence shows that projects are more effective and benefits are more equitably distributed [16]. To effectively integrate gender considerations into climate actions, stakeholders must possess a thorough understanding of gender-responsive finance tools. This knowledge is crucial for developing climate financing frameworks, mobilizing resources, applying gender-sensitive financial instruments, and ensuring effective resource allocation. Without a comprehensive grasp of gender-responsive financial mechanisms, existing inequalities may be perpetuated. Thus, adopting this approach is essential for fostering the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of gender-equitable adaptation and mitigation financing.

CLIMATE FINANCE AND EXISTING GAPS

Climate finance, as defined by UNFCCC, refers to the local, national, or transnational financing drawn from public, private, and alternative sources (blended finance) that aims to support mitigation and adaptation actions addressing climate change. Climate finance can be sourced from public or private sectors, either nationally or internationally, and can involve bilateral or multilateral agreements. It employs diverse instruments such as grants, donations, green bonds, equities, debt swaps, guarantees, and concessional loans. These funds are allocated for various purposes, including mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage.

Additionally, climate finance aids capacity building by enhancing the skills and capabilities of individuals and institutions to plan and sustain effective climate actions through training and education. At COP28 last year, the Global Capacity Building Coalition was established to enhance climate-related technical assistance for financial institutions in emerging markets and developing economies [17]. In addition, climate finance also facilitates technology transfer, ensuring that developing countries can access and implement advanced climate-friendly technologies, thereby increasing their production capacity and technological capabilities. The limitations of climate finance are mainly evident in three key areas.

IDENTIFYING CLIMATE FINANCE GAPS

Funding Shortfalls and the Complexities of Blended Finance

Despite the growth observed in 2021/2022, current climate finance represents only 1% of global GDP. Looking ahead, projected annual climate finance needs are set to rise steadily, reaching between $8.1 trillion and $9 trillion by 2030. Beyond that, estimates indicate a substantial increase to over $10 trillion annually from 2031 to 2050. This underscores the urgent necessity for a rapid and substantial annual five-fold increase in climate finance to effectively mitigate the most severe impacts of climate change [18].

Blended finance, which integrates public and private sector funds to address climate finance gaps, holds promise but **faces significant challenges.** Aligning the diverse objectives and risk profiles of public and private investors to create mutually beneficial projects is complex. In Zambia, exemplified by the Scaling Solar program, subsidies intended to attract private investment ultimately inflated project costs for the public, raising doubts about the efficiency of such initiatives [19]. Private investors, especially in developing countries, are hesitant due to perceived risks such as political instability and regulatory uncertainties. Furthermore, the lack of institutional capacity in many developing nations complicates the design and implementation of blended finance mechanisms. India's ambitious climate targets, including a 45% reduction in emissions intensity by 2030, require substantial investments estimated at $170 billion annually, prompting the proposal of blended finance solutions. However, regulatory

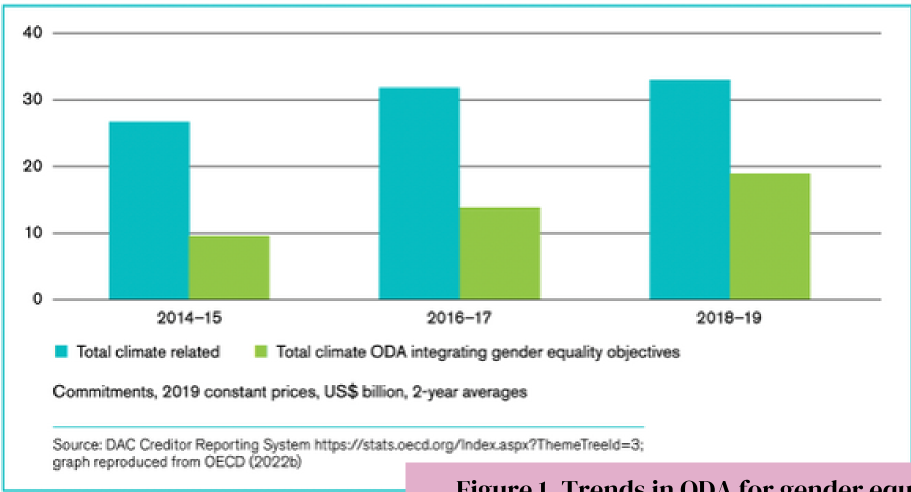

Figure 1. Trends in ODA for gender equality and climate change

barriers, capacity limitations, and uncertainties regarding scalability and impact on climate resilience present significant obstacles to mobilizing private-sector investment effectively [20]. These examples highlight the intricate challenges involved in deploying blended finance strategies on a global scale.

Funding Disparity in Climate Adaptation Efforts

At the same time there exists a significant **imbalance between funding for climate mitigation and adaptation efforts**, with mitigation often receiving more financial support despite growing attention to adaptation in recent years. Still, this funding falls far short of the estimated needs of USD 212 billion per year by 2030 for developing countries alone [21]. Current adaptation finance remains insufficient, particularly for developing countries, which are estimated to require between $215 billion and $387 billion annually this decade, according to the UN Environment Programme's Adaptation Gap Report 2023 [22]. This underscores the heightened vulnerability of these countries to climate impacts. Despite this gap, the flow of public financing is significantly lower than required, with developing countries needing 10 to 18 times more financial support than what is currently provided [22].This disparity highlights the urgent need to increase funding for adaptation measures to effectively address the escalating climate challenges faced by vulnerable regions globally.

Risk Aversion Among Private Investors

The private sector plays a pivotal role in advancing climate change mitigation efforts, managing a substantial portfolio of over $210 trillion in assets. Its involvement is crucial for driving investments that foster innovation and cultivate robust markets in various climate sectors, including clean energy, sustainable transport, green infrastructure, and climate-resilient agriculture [23].

However, a significant hurdle in mobilizing climate finance is addressing the **risk aversion among private investors.** Investors like pension fund managers typically prioritize lower-risk investments, leading to hesitation in financing climate-related projects perceived as riskier [24]. Overcoming this challenge involves bolstering confidence in the profitability and viability of climate initiatives, creating innovative financial tools to mitigate risks, and establishing stable regulatory frameworks that incentivize private investment in climate solutions.

Addressing climate finance gaps requires a multifaceted approach that includes scaling up overall funding to meet escalating needs, improving the efficiency and transparency of financial flows, and overcoming barriers to private sector engagement. Gender finance has the potential to contribute to bridging the climate finance gap.

GENDER FINANCE FOSTER CLIMATE FINANCE?

Gender finance is the integration of gender perspectives into financial activities and decision-making and the provision of funding for initiatives focused on advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE). Despite the increasing recognition of integrating gender equality perspectives across various sectors, gender finance initiatives remain scarce compared to climate finance initiatives. A report by the UNDP on gender and climate change reveals that only 0.01% of global funding supports projects addressing both climate change and women's rights. The OECD analysis shows that approximately 57% (US$18.9 billion) of bilateral public climate finance in 2018/19 included some form of gender equality objective, marking a considerable portion. Additionally, during the same period, only US$778 million (2.4%) of all climate-related Official Development Assistance (ODA) prioritized gender equality as its principal objective (Figure 1) [25].

The issue of gender intersectionality remains insufficiently addressed within some current climate finance mechanisms.Between 2020 and 2021, only $469 million, or 2% of bilateral aid, was allocated to initiatives targeting women's economic empowerment. This highlights the significant need for gender-responsive climate finance to ensure a fair, sustainable, and climate-resilient future [26].

Gender Finance Initiatives Close the Access Gap

Gender finance plays a crucial role in closing the access gap in climate finance, particularly through micro-finance and support for women-led businesses focused on clean energy or sustainable practices. Gender finance initiatives enhance access to micro-finance for women entrepreneurs engaged in clean energy and sustainable practices. By providing tailored financial products and services, these initiatives enable women to invest in renewable energy projects, energy-efficient technologies, and environmentally sustainable enterprises. This access empowers women economically while advancing climate goals at the same time.

Empower Generation's initiative in Nepal empowers women to become entrepreneurs in the clean energy sector by providing them with micro-loans and training in solar product sales, highlighting the significant role gender finance can play in bridging the financial gap in climate finance. Supported by clean energy suppliers and impact investors through its Clean Energy Fund and Women's Entrepreneur Fund, the program equips women with the financial resources and mentorship needed to establish their own businesses. These initiatives not only facilitate access to clean energy solutions within local communities but also stimulate economic activity by creating markets for these products. By reinvesting loan repayments into new enterprises or extending credit to underserved areas, Empower Generation contributes to sustainable development and promotes renewable energy adoption in Nepal [27]. This gender finance initiative shows how empowering women entrepreneurs in the clean energy sector can effectively foster climate finance by mobilizing investment, promoting environmental sustainability, and driving economic growth at the grassroots level.

Another case involves Garanti BBVA, a Turkish financial services company, which provided a $44 million 'gender equality loan' to Polat Energy for the construction of Turkey's largest wind farm, Soma 4. This innovative financing initiative ties loan terms to gender equality criteria, including employment practices and women's participation in decision-making. As Polat Energy improves its gender inclusivity, it receives better loan terms, such as reduced interest rates and commissions [28]. This approach not only supports climate mitigation efforts through renewable energy projects but also advances gender equality by incentivizing companies to adopt inclusive practices.

In 2010 WWF initiatives in China led to positive gender-responsive impacts in climate finance. Specifically, 4150 households in giant panda areas adopted fuel-efficient wood stoves and biogas systems, 550 households-initiated bee-keeping operations, and 750 households planted Sichuan pepper orchards. Participating communities received training on sustainable harvesting of wild medicinal plants. WWF support also enabled 150 women of the Qiang nationality to establish embroidery collectives, 80 households in panda areas to start a home-stay program for tourists, and over 50 households to create small artificial wetlands in their courtyards. Furthermore, more than 10,000 villagers in giant panda areas participated in training workshops to enhance awareness of giant panda issues and the importance of sustainable development in their habitats [29]. By empowering local communities through sustainable practices, training, and economic opportunities, particularly benefiting women and promoting environmental conservation, this case is another example of the important role gender finance can play in narrowing the access gap in climate finance.

According to a 2021 report by Convergence Finance on blended finance for climate, more than 60 transactions combining public and private funds, totaling over USD 6 billion, have been implemented at the intersection of gender and climate change. A significant portion, approximately 25% of these transactions, has been directed towards the agriculture sector. Globally, women play a crucial role in agriculture, with the FAO estimating that they constitute 43% of the agricultural workforce. This figure rises to over 60% in the least developed countries [30]. Addressing gender inequalities in access to productive resources and services could boost yields on women's farms by 20% to 30%, potentially increasing agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5% to 4% [31].

Launched in 2018, the CA$250 million IFC Blended Climate Finance Program, supported by a USD 200 million commitment from the Government of Canada, provides concessional co-financing to projects that enhance private sector engagement in climate mitigation and adaptation, and promote market transformation towards low-emissions and climate-resilient pathways. With a focus on the poorest and most vulnerable countries, the program emphasizes gender-lens climate investing, recognizing the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and girls. By aligning public and private sector goals, mitigating investment risks, and building institutional capacity, the program makes projects more appealing to private investors, particularly in agriculture, thereby addressing key challenges in blended finance. This strategy has effectively mobilized private capital and empowered women entrepreneurs, showcasing the potential of blended finance to promote sustainable development and meet global climate goals [32], while also addressing the access gap in climate finance.

Addressing the Adaptation and Mitigation Imbalance in Climate Finance

Incorporating a gender perspective into climate finance initiatives is crucial for effectively tackling both adaptation and mitigation efforts against climate change. According to Ampaire et al. (2020), financial mechanisms must adopt a gender-sensitive approach in allocating resources for climate projects. This approach ensures that the unique needs and vulnerabilities of different genders are taken into account, thereby enhancing the efficacy and sustainability of these initiatives. Women frequently find themselves at the forefront of climate impacts, playing pivotal roles in managing water resources, ensuring food security, and caring for families. Gender-responsive climate finance can prioritize adaptation projects spearheaded by women, thereby addressing their specific challenges and requirements directly.

Root Capital, a non-profit impact fund, focuses on investing in agricultural enterprises that support smallholder farmers across various regions globally. Since launching its Women in Agriculture strategy in 2012 and qualifying as a 2X investee [43], Root Capital has embedded gender equity principles throughout its portfolio. Partnering with Value for Women, Root Capital piloted gender-inclusive agroforestry cooperatives in Central America to enhance climate resilience and women's livelihoods. By providing loans and non-financial services to enterprises in environmental vulnerability hotspots, Root Capital supports sustainable agricultural practices and economic growth [33]. This approach not only fills financing gaps for small to medium-sized enterprises but also integrates climate resilience and gender considerations, demonstrating how gender finance can effectively contribute to bridging the gap between adaptation and mitigation in climate finance.

In Bangladesh, the Coastal Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project (CCRIP) [34] incorporates gender considerations by ensuring women's participation in decision-making and benefiting from infrastructure improvements like flood protection and water management systems. This not only strengthens community resilience to climate impacts but also empowers women economically and socially.

From 2015 to 2020, the Strengthening Qinghai Women Farmers' Income Security and Resilience in a Changing Climate initiative engaged over 69,000 women farmers to confront climate risks by tackling underlying vulnerabilities. Through collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, both domestic and international, UN Women China devised integrated approaches aimed at poverty reduction, women's empowerment, and climate adaptation. For instance, the project assisted Guanglin Cooperative in diversifying their agricultural activities, minimizing waste, and strengthening local economic integration despite disruptions caused by the pandemic. This not only bolstered community food security during the crisis but also enhanced the climate resilience of livelihoods, resulting in a 60% increase in income within a year. By providing access to information, technology, and finance, and challenging entrenched gender norms, the initiative facilitated entrepreneurship among participants, with 75% of women trained in entrepreneurship ultimately establishing their own businesses [35].

Gender Finance De-Risk Climate Investments

Neglecting gender considerations can pose market, operational, and reputational risks for companies or funds, as it may result in failure to address the gendered needs of employees, suppliers, customers, and other stakeholders. A 2023 analysis by McKinsey reveals that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity in their executive teams are 39% more likely to achieve above-average profitability compared to those in the bottom quartile. This marks an increase from 25% in 2020, 21% in 2018, and 15% in 2015 [36]. Recent research from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) confirms that gender-diverse teams in private equity (PE) and venture capital (VC) funds yield superior business returns. Funds led by gender-balanced senior teams achieve 10-20% higher returns compared to those dominated by either male or female leadership. Similarly, companies within these portfolios, where leadership teams are gender-balanced, experience median valuation increases up to 25% higher than their non-diverse counterparts [37]. Moreover, women borrowers typically exhibit lower default rates ranging from 1% to 3% across various loan product categories compared to men [38].

The UNDP highlights the crucial importance of incorporating a gender lens into climate finance initiatives to ensure project success. It states that **gender mainstreaming, supported by the systematic collection of socially disaggregated data, is essential for achieving effective outcomes**. Moreover, the recognition of economic and social co-benefits for both genders plays a key role in garnering widespread community support, thereby **enhancing the long-term viability of climate activities.** By integrating gender equality issues, projects ranging from large-scale infrastructure to small-scale initiatives can significantly improve their efficacy. Additionally, the development of gender-sensitive policies is paramount for formulating inclusive climate mitigation measures and investments [39].

The Kenya Climate Venture Ltd. case study illustrates the effectiveness of integrating gender-focused investing and financial management to mitigate risks and expand climate investments. By supporting early-stage climate smart enterprises, particularly in underserved rural, peri-urban, and humanitarian markets, the initiative has successfully de-risked ventures that gained market traction and achieved commercial success. This approach ensures sustainable transformative impact while promoting youth and women entrepreneurship. Kenya Climate Venture Ltd. applies a gender lens throughout its investment process, aiming to accelerate the growth of climate-smart solutions and highlighting the contributions of women and youth. Aligning with the 2X challenge criteria, the initiative has achieved a portfolio with 47% women-owned and 20% youth-owned enterprises, generating and sustaining 11,500 jobs, with over half benefiting women and youth [40]. This case illustrates that integrating gender-focused investment strategies and financial management can mitigate risks and improve the effectiveness of climate investments.

Solar Sister, a social enterprise operating in sub-Saharan Africa, focuses on promoting access to clean energy solutions through a women-centered distribution network. The organization recruits and trains women entrepreneurs, known as Solar Sister Entrepreneurs, to sell solar lamps, clean cookstoves, and other sustainable energy products within their communities [41]. By targeting women, Solar Sister taps into an underserved market segment and empowers women economically. This approach significantly contributes to de-risking climate investment in several ways. Firstly, women entrepreneurs possess deep local knowledge, enabling them to effectively penetrate hard-to-reach rural areas where traditional distribution channels may struggle to reach. Secondly, their higher levels of trust within communities facilitate greater acceptance and adoption of clean energy products, thereby reducing market resistance. Moreover, research indicates that loans provided to female entrepreneurs, including those supported by Solar Sister, tend to have lower default rates—ranging from 1% to 3%—in comparison to loans given to male entrepreneurs. This is attributed to women's generally more responsible financial management practices and repayment behavior.Solar Sister's impact has been substantial, scaling its operations across multiple African countries and positively affecting thousands of households with clean energy solutions. By leveraging gender-focused finance to empower women entrepreneurs, Solar Sister plays a crucial role in de-risking climate investments within the clean energy sector in Africa.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mainstreaming gender in climate finance should start with a solid understanding of the connection between gender and climate change, along with the key concepts behind it. Several initiatives are being introduced to mainstream gender through climate actions at COP 29 and beyond. The Baku Harmoniya Climate Initiative for Farmers seeks to enhance women's roles in climate solutions by ensuring their participation in decision-making, facilitating access to gender-responsive climate finance, promoting education in green technologies, addressing gender disparities in green jobs, and collecting gender-disaggregated data to inform policy. Similarly, the Baku Initiative for Climate Finance, Investment, and Trade (BICFIT) emphasizes integrating gender considerations into trade and climate finance policies to ensure equitable access for all while addressing the specific challenges women face in accessing capital and markets.

The Water for Climate Action initiative underscores the need to incorporate the perspectives of women and indigenous communities in water management and climate strategies to enhance resilience. Lastly, the Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience promotes integrated, age- and gender-responsive actions to prioritize the protection and inclusion of vulnerable groups, especially women, in climate initiatives [42]. Collectively, these initiatives highlight the essential role of gender integration in achieving effective climate action and resilience, paving the way for a more equitable and sustainable future.

Gender and climate change are deeply interconnected, and addressing one without considering the other limits policy effectiveness. Research consistently shows that including women in decision-making and promoting their rights lead to stronger environmental outcomes. Moreover, integrating a gender lens into climate finance is imperative for addressing climate change effectively and promoting GEWE. Collaboration between governments, financial institutions, and civil society is essential to mainstreaming gender considerations and realizing the full potential of climate investments for both environmental and social goals.

Building on the above analysis, several recommendations can help drive gender-responsive climate finance initiatives and support the achievement of SDGs and inclusive climate solutions.

Gender-responsive climate initiatives should be tailored to regional needs and policies. A comprehensive strategy for local climate negotiations should integrate gender perspectives into decision-making, recognizing how climate change uniquely impacts different genders.

Conducting comprehensive gender analyses requires collecting gender-specific data across key sectors like energy, transport, forestry, and agriculture, establishing gender-sensitive indicators, and developing relevant standards. Collaboration between climate and gender research institutes is crucial to ensure the systematic inclusion of gender perspectives in policy frameworks, fostering inclusive climate action.

Thirdly, enhancing policy coordination is crucial. Establishing efficient communication pathways between government bodies overseeing climate and gender-related matters will facilitate the alignment of policies and the development of climate strategies that are more attuned to gender considerations.

Capacity-building in climate institutions is necessary to strengthen understanding and skills for gender-responsive policy integration. Climate projects, including Belt and Road initiatives, should adopt gender considerations across all stages—from design to evaluation—while ensuring budget allocations for gender action plans. Gender-sensitive monitoring and prioritizing women's participation will create a more inclusive approach to climate action.

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