



# *Why is climate change a gender issue?*

*Dr Liza Debevec –  
Senior Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist GWPO*

**2nd Technical Workshop on  
Green Climate Fund Project Preparation  
for Transformational Climate Resilience Water Projects  
in the Mediterranean:  
Special Focus on Gender**

- Climate change will affect different people in different ways.
- Women and men do not experience climate change equally.
- Most often, those living through its most adverse effects will have contributed least to the problem and have fewer resources to adapt to its impacts.

- In many developing countries economic constraints and cultural norms that restrict women's access to paid jobs mean that their livelihoods are particularly dependent on climate-sensitive sectors.
- Yet gender inequalities in the distribution of assets and opportunities mean their choices are severely constrained in the face of climate change.
- For example, limited land ownership among rural women means they may not have access to productive land to farm, and lack of financial capital means they cannot easily diversify their livelihoods.

- The fact that women and girls are often responsible for most of the unpaid care tasks around the household also means their lives are directly affected by the changes brought about by climate change.
- They often walk further to find increasingly scarce food, fuel and water, as well as caring for family members who are susceptible to the health risks linked to climate change.
- As a result, women and girls find themselves with less time for education, income-generating activities or participation in community decision-making processes, further cementing unequal gender relations.

- Men are also negatively affected by climate change, particularly when they are poor.
- For example, men may experience deep anxiety and stress when their rural livelihoods are undermined as a result of climate change and they are no longer able to fulfil their socially expected roles as providers.
- Research also indicates that men may feel pressured into taking „heroic“ actions, which places them at a higher risk than women and children.
- For example, after Hurricane Mitch hit Central America in October 2000, a higher proportion of men than women were killed due to risk-taking behaviour.

# What works:

- With its 2017 Policy on Gender Equality, the Global Climate Fund (GCF) has committed to gender-responsive financing, accountability for gender, and equitable allocation of resources.
- The GCF places climate investment in the context of sustainable development and seeks a 50/50 allocation between mitigation and adaptation, with a focus on the most vulnerable countries and people.
- The guidelines on gender mainstreaming indicate the need for a detailed gender analysis, action plan, and monitoring and evaluation framework for all projects in full consultation with and participation of local women and men.