

# Gender & Development

**Call for contribution: Volume 34, Issue 2**

**Theme: Community-led resistances and responses to climate crises**

## **About the journal**

Gender & Development (G&D) is a unique journal that offers a forum to share experiences and analysis among feminist activists, scholars, and women leaders across the globe working in research, policy, and practice. For its July 2026 Issue, the Journal will focus on community-led resistances and responses to climate crises.

## **The context**

The effects of the climate crisis and ecological degradation such as rising ocean levels, extreme weather events, unusual shifts in seasons, and depletion of vital resources are felt most by women, Indigenous people, rural communities, and the urban poor. These groups often inhabit ecologically sensitive areas that are disaster prone and/or marked by violence, conflict, and war. These intersect with other global crises such as growing political instability, geopolitical insecurity, and economic crises, which have compounding effects. Additionally, ongoing transition to renewable energy has meant an increase in demand for critical minerals, which in turn is feeding global conflict and inequality (Global Witness 2025). Neoliberal policies and climate change adaptation strategies often neglect the needs of the most oppressed leading those who most depend on land, water, forests and traditional and local practices for their livelihoods to experience the loss of vital resources (Hernando-Arrese & Ibarra 2025), ancestral lands, spiritual beliefs, and cultural practices (Amaya et al. 2025). Further, they experience dispossession, displacement (Matanzima 2024; Jayawardhan 2017), erosion of their food systems (Amaya et al. 2025), financial insecurity, and increase in care responsibilities for women (Bachina et al. 2025) which have serious implications on their physical and mental health (Kammerer et al. 2025).

Those in rural and urban settings feel the effects of climate crisis with particular groups experiencing higher levels of risk and vulnerability. For instance, rural communities, globally, were 2.5 times more exposed to climate-change induced compound drought and heatwave events than their urban counterparts over the last century (Li et al. 2025). Further, among the rural demographic, women farmers and women-headed households tend to experience exacerbated losses from climate shocks compared to men (FAO 2024). While urbanisation and infrastructure projects contribute significantly to climate change (UN et al. 2019), climate change in turn increases vulnerabilities of cities and its poorest dwellers due to droughts, floods, and storms. Within the urban context, socio-economic inequities render those living in low-income neighbourhoods at more risk due to higher exposure to climate hazards (Das et al. 2024), which affects housing, livelihoods, incomes, and health. Poverty exacerbates vulnerabilities for minorities, Indigenous groups, and Dalits (Baird 2024). People with disabilities also experience exacerbated vulnerabilities due to climate crises with decreasing food security, disrupted access to clean water, public services, and infrastructure, and increasing

emergencies (Lewis & Ballard n.d.). Climate crises also results in forced migration and, displacement with migrants, refugees, internally displaced, and stateless people left exposed to risk and danger.

Climate change and gender inequalities are deeply intertwined. Compared to 142 million boys and men, climate change is likely to push 158 million women and girls into poverty by 2025 (cited in UN 2025). In addition to increasing economic precarity, climate change has also been linked to higher levels of gender-based violence such as feminicides, child marriage, and conflict related sexual violence. It is important to note that the impacts are not the same or equal for all women; “it is clear that climate change risks are acute for Indigenous and Afro-descendent women and girls, older women, LGBTIQ+ people, women and girls with disabilities, migrant women, and those living in rural, remote, conflict and disaster-prone areas” (ibid.)

### **Climate Change Adaptation Strategies**

The disproportionate contribution of industrialised countries to the climate crisis cannot be overlooked in conversations about climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. The United States, China, the European Union region, and Russia have the highest historical emissions, in that order (CCPI 2024). Globally, the richest 10 per cent are responsible for 50 per cent of the emissions while the poorest for a mere 8 per cent (Khalfan et al. 2023). While these countries and groups contribute disproportionately to the climate crisis, it is countries in the global South and those living in poverty that bear the worst of its effects. Against this backdrop, transformative climate action and just transition is the only equitable way ahead to ensure no one is left behind.

As countries around the world develop national adaptation plans (NAP), it is critical that those historically and socially marginalised and excluded have a seat at the table and that mitigation and adaptation plans draw from the rich knowledge and practices of these groups. Refugees and internally displaced people are often overlooked in NAPs whilst being one of most vulnerable groups due to limited access to resources (Ober, Huckstep & Miller 2023). Similarly, LGBTIQ+ groups are often missing from NAPs, their experiences and agency invisibilised (Carthy 2023). While women are included in 85 per cent of NAPs as a vulnerable group, only 16 per cent position them as agents (Dazé & Hunter 2024). When those at the margins are not included as contributors to NAPs, their rich knowledge and experiences are excluded, leaving NAPs poorer for it. For instance, research shows that Indigenous Peoples and local communities report environmental change through holistic, place-based, and culturally grounded understandings. These reports highlight how climate change intensifies the historical effects of marginalisation. Further, drawing on intergenerational knowledge, communities develop local responses grounded in local resources (Reyes-Garcia et al. 2024).

### ***Centring the voices and concerns of those at the frontlines in climate policy making***

While marginalised communities all over the world have collectively led resistances and solutions to preserve their ecosystems and ways of life (McQuaid and Pirmasari 2023), their voices are not meaningfully included in critical climate policy discussions and advocacy spaces that are largely led and designed by Northern countries, institutions, and organisations. Additionally, several environmental defenders face violence and persecution on multiple fronts – from community

members, corporations, and the state (Vargas and Oviedo 2023; Smith and Allen 2023). Unfortunately and ironically, green solutions and projects are greenlit without consultation and/or consent of Indigenous People who are the ones directly impacted by these decisions- decisions that often end up reproducing inequitable, colonial and unjust systems, while creating new environmental problems, resulting in further disenfranchisement of marginalised communities (Quinones 2025).

Nonetheless, these groups are at the forefront of climate action and climate justice movements. According to the State of the Indigenous Peoples Climate Crisis(2025), “Although Indigenous Peoples account for only around 5 per cent of the world’s population, they effectively manage and protect an estimated 80 per cent of the Earth’s biodiversity and about 40 per cent of protected areas and ecologically intact landscapes” (p. 1). The same report asserts the need to recognise and value Indigenous People’s ancestral knowledge and practices as scientific and technical, a departure from the conventional approach that often regarded indigenous knowledge as “traditional” or folkloric (Quinones 2025). These are historical, time tested, and adaptive strategies by rural and Indigenous groups - of harvesting, sowing, soil conservation, seed management, and preservation- and offer deep insights into fragile ecosystems while presenting a nuanced understanding of climate mitigation and adaptation. Indigenous people are innovating solutions for adaptation. For instance, Baira cultivation in Bangladesh has been revived by the Indigenous Peoples, which affords food security in the context of rising water levels (UNFCCC 2024). The Indigenous Peoples of Niyamgiri, Odisha, India, have revived several varieties of millets and paddy that are climate resilient (Khambete 2024). The need to decolonise climate policy and centre Indigenous led solutions and responses are more important than ever.

Women are taking the lead in community-based solutions to the climate crisis. In Sub-Saharan Africa, women are creating practical, community-based solutions that draw on local knowledge and help address long-standing structural challenges to adapt to climate change (Nortey, Boateng, Richards 2025). Indigenous women in Guatemala are involved in the El Astor anti-mining struggle as they are worse affected than men (Deonandan, Tatham & Field 2019).The Kurdish women in Rojava are challenging patriarchy and rebuilding society, rooted in principles of ecological balance in the aftermath of war (Omar 2022). For decades, feminist and grassroots organisations in the Pacific Islands have organised and advocated for climate change, increasing awareness for island nations worldwide and providing practical solutions (Global- Fund for Women 2025).

### ***Need for gender just and equitable climate finance***

For just energy transitions and transformative climate action, climate finance plays a critical role. Although climate justice initiatives and projects receive resources globally, less than 1 per cent reaches Indigenous Peoples directly (ibid). Similarly, there appears to be a significant climate finance gap when it comes to small-scale agri-food systems (CPI 2023) with only 1.7 per cent of the global climate finance routed to smallholder agriculture (Hefferon 2024). One scholar estimates there is a USD 75 billion gap in climate finance, when one takes into account that small-scale farmers incur differential and higher costs (as a proportion of their resources) in areas of mitigation and adaptation (IFAD 2024). Even as rural women face exacerbated losses from climate shocks (FAO 2024), they are affected in gender-specific ways by financing plans and programmes (Grantham Institute 2024). Climate financing also

needs to account and address care services and infrastructure, social safety nets and agricultural adaptation that speak to the needs of women farmers (ibid). Further, the decolonisation of climate policy means not just a seat at the table but also access and control over funds and resources so that Indigenous Peoples can assert their sovereignty and self-determination over their territories, land resources, and knowledge systems (Indigenous Climate Action 2024).

Beyond availability of funds, accountability within funding and governance processes are important to ensure equitable progress. For instance, the Devolved Climate Funding Mechanism is an innovative model rooted in funding local-level and locally-led adaptations for sustainable and climate-resilient livelihoods (DCF Alliance 2019). It provides a framework for how such investments can be made. Further, the devolved climate funding mechanisms have the potential to reach the communities that most need it, build local and sustainable local financing mechanisms, and redirect financing flows (Wright et al. 2024). Additionally, this allows for collaborations between governments, the private sector, and communities (ibid). Evidence from Kenya, Mali, Senegal, and Tanzania demonstrate how this approach has led to better collaborations between governments and local communities (IIED 2017). In terms of governance, Browne (2022) offers alternative framings of climate finance itself, guided by the principles “it is restitution not aid, (2) that recipient countries should control resource allocation, and (3) that funding should support mitigation and adaptation.”

### **Building collective resilience through knowledge generation and community action**

The knowledges and leadership of local communities and especially women can enable appropriate climate change responses, adaptation strategies, just energy transitions, and offer insights into tackling energy poverty. Given the lack of systematic data on climate solutions, including land, and particularly ancestral land in many regions, we need to rely more on self-reporting and grounded research undertaken and led by those who live and live off these lands, territories, and resources, ensuring data ownership and sovereignty over the knowledge they generate, document, share, and manage (Diviacchi 2023). This would help in decolonising climate knowledge production and preserve Indigenous, local, and rural ways of knowing, doing, and being.

Indigenous People are also increasingly deploying constitutional and human rights laws based on ‘solid jurisprudence of Indigenous protection’ to become important stakeholders in climate litigation (Tigre 2022, 218). Similarly, local communities in several countries, including Colombia, China, Ethiopia, and Myanmar, are resisting large-scale land acquisitions (Dell'Angelo et al. 2021). Overall, global climate and environmental policy formulation and implementation needs to recognise, respect, and include the voices and practices of Indigenous People, rural and urban communities, and marginalised women while ensuring sustainable economic solutions for communities.

Thus, this special issue seeks to explore the crucial role and contributions of local communities in building climate justice solutions while challenging and resisting exclusionary climate policies, exploitative systems, and inequitable funding.

### **Objectives:**

- Recognising the role of women, Indigenous People, rural and urban communities, people with disabilities, and Queer communities in climate justice by ensuring their meaningful inclusion in climate policy and action and recognising and respecting local knowledge systems.
- Challenging the exclusionary, colonial, and technocratic policy discourse of climate change and environmental degradation.
- Identifying community-led and women-led solutions to climate crises at local levels, in rural, Indigenous, and urban contexts.
- Sharing knowledge and building coalitions.

#### **Questions:**

1. What is the role of women, Indigenous people, rural communities, and the urban poor in carving climate solutions and building resistances? What strategies do they use?
2. What are the ways in which they are excluded from mainstream climate and environmental policies and why? How do they resist these exclusions?
3. What are the ways in which these communities are resisting exploitative and extractive state policies, industries, and big corporations?
4. What do community-led actions teach us about the climate crisis itself? (Such as intersectional climate justice and the urgent need for embodied, holistic, experiential and inclusive approaches to climate action.)
5. How do community-led actions build new solidarities at multiple scales from the grassroots to transnational level, from physical to digital?
6. How can their voices, knowledge, and the solutions they develop be centred in climate policy-making at all levels (local, regional, national, and trans-regional)? How can climate knowledge production be decolonised and inform institutions; shape and lead diverse, inclusive climate actions?
7. What are the creative and innovative activisms, research methodologies, and collaborations (physical and digital) being deployed by local groups to understand and address climate crises? How are they funded?
8. What are the gaps in climate finance and funding? How do these groups navigate these financial inequities?

**Our guest editors:** This special issue will be co-guest edited by Dr. Katie McQuaid, Dr. Dewi Candraningrum, Dr. Seema Arora-Jonsson, and Dr. Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt.

#### **Submissions**

We invite Indigenous scholars and practitioners; rural and urban grassroots leaders; women's rights and human rights activists; civil society organisations and networks; researchers, academics, and policymakers; and human rights and environmental defenders to contribute to this critical theme. We especially invite contributions that share case studies and practice-based recommendations on climate justice and solutions.

Please submit your abstract or proposal using the google form link here: <https://forms.gle/77vMVwm36PNo8JR98>

**Deadline:** 22 October 2025, 11:59pm UTC

### Guidelines for content

- Full research articles should be no more than 7,000 words excluding references and abstract and annexures. The annexures can include photographs, maps, images, graphs, etc. Multi-media content can be embedded within the article and should be kept below 500MB file size.
- Shorter essays should be 4000 words, and these can include photographs, maps, images, graphs. Multi-media content should be kept below 500MB file size.
- Photo essay and illustrations can be uploaded on Flickr or any other image sharing platforms and then shared with the editorial team.
- All content must be original and previously unpublished, and authors are responsible for obtaining necessary consent and permission for the use of any third-party material.

For more information on the journal, visit: [www.genderanddevelopment.org](http://www.genderanddevelopment.org)

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