



CLIMATE CHANGE AND DIFFERENTIATED IMPACTS ON WOMEN

Presented by

Saadia Bobtoya Owusu-Amofah

Project Coordinator

IUCN Ghana Project Office





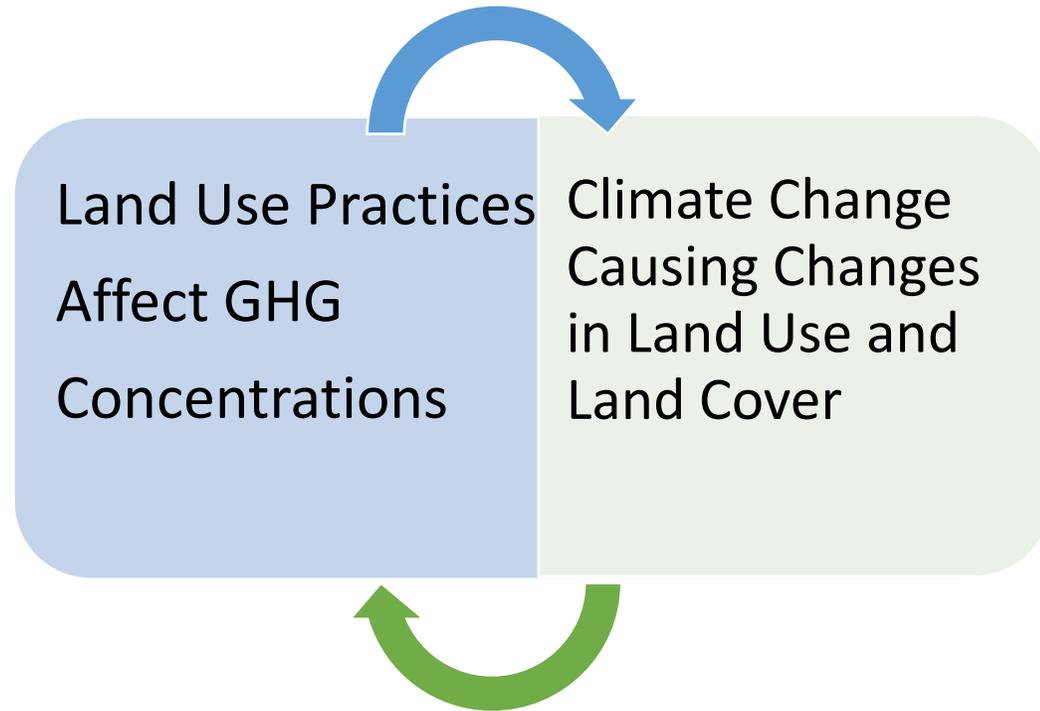
OUTLINE

- ❖ Climate and Land Use Nexus
- ❖ Climate Impacts
- ❖ Differentiated Impacts
- ❖ Why women are more vulnerable
- ❖ Opportunities/ The way forward





Climate Change and Land Use Nexus



E.g

- Farmers shifting from their traditional crops to higher value crops
- Higher temperatures affect vegetation cover and water needed for irrigation





Climate Impacts

- Climate change is one of the greatest global challenges of the world (Covid... Not even close!)
- The impacts of climate change are not only evident from physical phenomena (e.g., sea level rise, stronger storms, droughts, floods, heat waves etc).
-
- Also from the national and local actions taken to combat and adapt (e.g., conversion to clean energy sources, changes in agricultural or fishing practices, investments in policy and regulatory frameworks, etc).
- Since climate change does not occur in a vacuum, causes and impacts are interlinked across sectors, regions, ecosystems, and sociocultural and economic systems.





Impacts Not the Same for Everyone!

- Although impacts are affecting all countries, they are distributed differently—regions, generations, age classes, income groups, occupations and genders.
- Socio-cultural norms and structures are playing a key role in how climate change impacts are felt.
- According to IPCC, people who are already most vulnerable and marginalized are expected to be disproportionately affected by climate change impacts – i.e. the poor, primarily in developing countries.
- Even though both women and men working in natural resource sectors, such as agriculture, are being directly affected, there are significant gender differences in the experiences of men and women, influenced by existing gender inequalities.
- Women and men have differentiated contributions and access to the benefits derived from climate action.





Differentiated Impacts Contd.

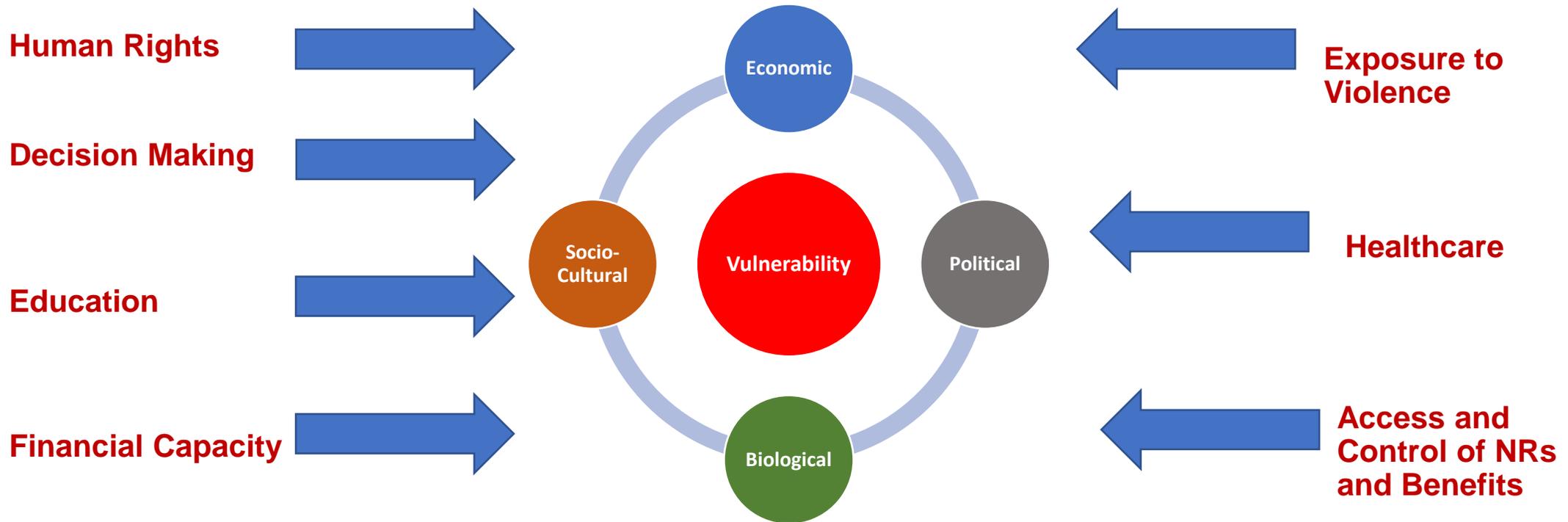
- In other words, **Climate change is not gender neutral!**
- Thus, successful long-term solutions require the contributions of both men and women, as decision-makers, experts, change-maker and stakeholders,—across the various sectors and at different governance levels.
- Global actions are pushing towards gender equity, social justice and overall wellbeing of people and planet.





Why Women Are More Vulnerable?

- Women's vulnerability to climate change stems from a number of different factors...amplified by exiting inequalities.





- **Resource Access and Control:** Generally, women tend to have less access and control of resources/ benefits such as land, credit, agricultural inputs, decision-making structures, technology, training and extension services that would have enhanced their capacity to adapt to climate change.
- **Poverty:** Majority of the world's poor are women and proportionally more dependent on threatened natural resources for livelihoods. According to the UN, 70% of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty are women. In urban areas, 40% of the poorest households are headed by women.
- **Dependent on NRs:** Women are the main producers of the world's staple crops, particularly in developing countries (50-80%), but they own less than 10% of the land.





- **Workload and Time Poverty:** Women are usually responsible for time-consuming tasks such as household water supply and energy for cooking and heating, as well as subsistence farming for home consumption.
- The significant workload on women leaves less time for them to access training and education, develop skills or earn income. Additionally, female illiteracy rates are generally high, especially in Africa.
- **Disaster Response/Impacts:** 80% of people displaced by climate related disasters are women and girls. During disasters, socio-cultural norms and childcare responsibilities prevent women from migrating or seeking refuge in other places or working. They are likely to suffer more from shortages of food and other resources.





- **Health:** Linkages between climate and vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and Zika virus.
- Women impacted more because they have less access to medical services than men (fewer economic resources).
- Women experience increasing risks related to maternal and child health.
- Women's workload also increases as they spend time caring for the sick.
- Women and children are also more vulnerable to nutritional problems such as anaemia.
- Climate change may also amplify gender-based violence, child marriages and worsen sexual and reproductive health.



Ghanaweb.com





But.....there are opportunities!

- Women can be more than just victims of climate change. They are effective agents and promoters of adaptation and mitigation.
- We need to harness and strengthen the important contribution of women by empowering them and enabling their effective participation in decision making.
- Over the years, women have developed knowledge and skills that are helping to enhance local adaptive capacity and sustain community's livelihood. E.g. water harvesting and storage, food preservation, traditional medicines, etc.
- Adaptation initiatives should identify and address gender-specific impacts of climate change as well as take into consideration inequalities in access to resources, including credit, extension and training services, ICT, etc.





- Women's priorities and needs must be reflected in the development planning and funding.
- To help ensure this, women should be given a seat at the decision making table at national and local levels in order to influence allocation of resources and benefits.
- Funding agencies should also take into account economic, social and cultural barriers that could constraint women from benefiting when developing and introducing technologies and put in place measures to help bridge these gaps





Some Questions to Ponder

1. How has Climate Change Affected your field of work?
2. What do you think could have been done to reduce the impact you felt?
3. What role can you play in this solution?
4. What do you need to make this contribution?
5. Where can you find these resources?





THANK YOU

For more information on our work:

www.iucn.org

