

CLIMATE EMERGENCY & GENDER EQUALITY



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CONTENT



Introduction



The climate crisis



What is it?



What are the causes?



Possible solutions



Climate change and gender equality



Drought



Agriculture



Pregnancy



Hot weather



Migration and forced displacement



Environmental disaster



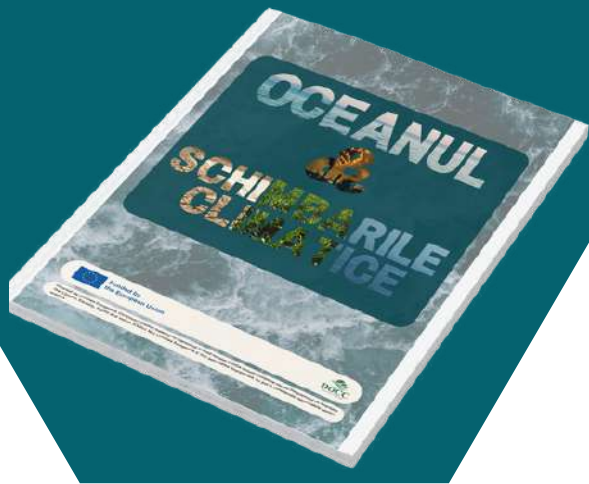
Bibliography



What does our organization do?



Final note



INTRODUCTION

This material has been created to be given to young people before attending the Ocean & Climate Change workshop to facilitate better understanding and engagement.

It is important that young people are aware of climate change because the future of the planet also depends on their actions.

Engaging young people is important because they have the energy, creativity and determination to bring about meaningful change.

The workshop is carried out as part of the Don't call it change (DOCC) project, in partnership with Mare Nostrum (Romania), Organosi Gi (Greece), European Association World - Our Home (Latvia) and Dolnoslaska Federacja Organizacji Pozarządowych (Poland).

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What is the climate crisis?

Climate crisis is a term that describes global warming, climate change, and its consequences.

The term has been used to describe the threat of global warming to the planet and to advocate for accelerating efforts to mitigate climate change.

The effects of climate change are sometimes described in terms similar to climate CHANGE, such as:

- **"climate catastrophe"** (used in reference to a documentary made by David Attenborough in 2019 and the 2019–2020 Australian bushfire season)
- **"climate emergency"** (11,000 warning letters from scientists in BioScience, and The Guardian, both 2019)
- **"global warming"** (Richard A. Betts, Met Office UK, 2018)





Climate change has a direct impact on the younger generation and can affect the environment, economy and quality of life. And yet...how can young people get involved?



- **Education and awareness** – a first step is to learn about climate change and share the knowledge with family, friends and the communities where they come from.



- **Civic engagement** – participation in movements promoting action to combat climate change.



- **Influence through social media** – young people can use their voice on social media platforms to draw attention to climate change and the need for immediate action.



- **Responsible consumption** – people can opt for sustainable, recyclable products and support brands and companies that have sustainable practices.

What are the causes? climate change?

The main causes of climate change are related to human activities and their impact on the global climate system. Among the most important causes are:

Greenhouse gas emissions: One of the main causes of climate change is the excessive emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere. The most common GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrogen oxide (NO_x) and perfluorinated hydrocarbons (HFCs). These gases form a "blanket" in the atmosphere, which absorbs heat and prevents it from dissipating, thus leading to global warming and major climate change.

Deforestation and land-use changes: Deforestation and land-use changes, such as the conversion of forests to agricultural or urban land, lead to the release of carbon stocks accumulated in vegetation and soil. These changes exacerbate the climate crisis, as forests play a crucial role in absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere.

Plastic production and management: Plastic production, especially from petrochemical sources, is energy-intensive and can release greenhouse gases in the process. Also, improper management of plastic waste leads to its accumulation in the environment, which can affect ecosystems and biodiversity.

Industrial and transport pollution: Pollutant emissions from industry, power plants and road transport contribute to air quality deterioration and global warming.



Climate
CHANGE



POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- Combating climate change requires coordinated and sustained action at global, national, community and individual levels.
- Here are some key solutions to address this complex issue:



THE TRANSITION TO RENEWABLE ENERGIES



PROTECTING FORESTS AND RESTORING ECOSYSTEMS



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT



RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

ENGAGING IN AWARENESS AND ACTION ACTIVITIES



PROMOTING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

CLIMATE CHANGE AND GENDER EQUALITY



DROUGHT



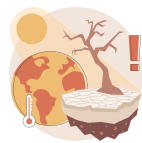
AGRICULTURE



PREGNANCY



HOT WEATHER



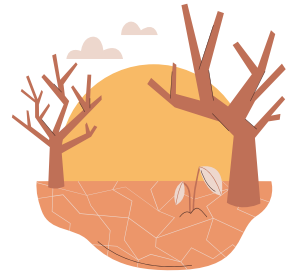
ENVIROMENTAL DISASTER



MIGRATION AND FORCED
DISPLACEMENT

1

DROUGHT



There are a lot of challenges that women, especially in low- and middle-income countries, face due to the intersection of gender inequality and climate change. This situation highlights the intricate relationship between environmental issues and social disparities, particularly with regards to women's roles, education, health and well-being.

Women in many societies are responsible for securing essential resources like food, water, and energy for their families. Their livelihoods are closely tied to natural resources, making them particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as drought, uncertain rainfall, and deforestation.

WATER SCARCITY AND DAILY STRUGGLES Droughts and water scarcity exacerbate the challenges women face in securing water for their households. The need to travel long distances, on foot, to collect water multiple times a day is not only physically demanding but also time-consuming, limiting their participation in other activities and opportunities.

IMPACT ON EDUCATION The climate crisis further compounds the education gap for girls. The increased burden of resource collection and household responsibilities leaves less time for education. Climate-related disruptions may also lead to early marriages and forced pregnancies, impacting girls' educational attainment. The need to collect water and fulfill other household responsibilities can result in girls being forced to forgo attending school.

As resources become scarcer due to climate change, families may prioritize boys' education over girls', leading to unequal access to education and early dropouts for girls.

By 2025 the Malala Fund's projection of climate change preventing **12.5 million** of girls from completing their education underscores the urgency of addressing these issues to ensure gender equality and sustainable development.

Educating women can lead to improved economic outcomes by giving them access to better job opportunities, skills, and knowledge. This, in turn, can contribute to greater upward mobility and economic development.

Educating women and providing access to voluntary family planning services can have far-reaching positive effects, including improved economic opportunities, better health outcomes, reduced carbon emissions and empowerment of women to make informed choices about their reproductive health.

When women are educated, they are more likely to make informed decisions about their health, leading to decreased maternal mortality, infant mortality, and disease risks.

Insufficient sexual health education in schools can contribute to unintended pregnancies.

By providing comprehensive sexual health education, we can empower young people to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, reducing the number of unintended pregnancies.

HEALTH RISKS Lack of access to clean water and proper hygiene facilities poses significant health risks.

Insufficient access to clean water can contribute to malnutrition, contaminated water can lead to waterborne diseases and unhygienic conditions during childbirth can result in infections and maternal mortality.



HEALTH



2

AGRICULTURE

Women's representation among landholders remains disproportionately low.

They often encounter greater difficulties than men in accessing cash and credit to procure essential tools, fertilizers, and seeds.

Coupled with limited opportunities for education, external financial support, and cooperative associations, women find themselves more susceptible than men to the impacts of environmental and climatic shifts.

For instance, in situations where land ownership is absent or immediate funds are unavailable, droughts can severely devastate women farmers. Consequences might encompass losing the land they cultivate, being unable to sow crops for the current or upcoming seasons, and encountering challenges in recovery.

Enhancing the livelihoods of women engaged in farming and bridging the prevalent "agriculture gender gap" holds the potential to offer indispensable backing to women and could additionally contribute to emission reduction.

Women constitute around **43%** of the **agricultural labor force** in developing nations, yet their yield per unit of land tends to be lower than that of men.

This discrepancy doesn't arise from any lack of farming competence on the part of women. Ensuring equitable resource access for women farmers would lead to a yield increase of 20% to 30%, consequently supplying food to as many as **150 million** people grappling with hunger.

This is where the prospect of emissions reduction becomes relevant. Presently, with a significant portion of the population underfunded or actively marginalized, regions endowed with ample resources, such as food, often fall short in meeting their potential.

This dynamic exerts pressure for expanded land development, prompting people to seek new farming areas.

This can ultimately lead to deforestation, a major contributor to emissions.



Climate change and environmental factors can impact pregnancy and maternal health. It's clear that shifts in temperature, air pollution, and extreme weather events can have significant consequences for both maternal well-being and fetal development.

COLD SPELLS Cold spells can lead to decreased fetal length, potentially impacting fetal development.

SUMMER HEAT High temperatures during summer can increase the risk of dehydration for pregnant women, which can then contribute to urinary tract infections. Dehydration may disrupt the maternal-fetal balance and contribute to adverse outcomes.

Heat waves can lead to dehydration, triggering the release of oxytocin, a hormone that may induce contractions and potentially lead to premature births. Air pollution and high temperatures in urban areas can further exacerbate this risk.

AIR POLLUTION Excessive exposure to air pollution, including PM 2.5 and ozone, has been associated with premature birth, low birth weight, and stillbirth. These pollutants, which can be exacerbated by climate change, have been linked to adverse pregnancy outcomes.

Air pollution has been shown to impact fertility. Studies suggest that exposure to pollutants like PM 10 and nitrogen dioxide can increase the risk of infertility and reduce women's chances of conceiving a child. Also increased exposure to air pollutants like ozone and PM 2.5 during the last trimester of pregnancy has been linked to a higher risk of infant mortality.



VIOLENCE

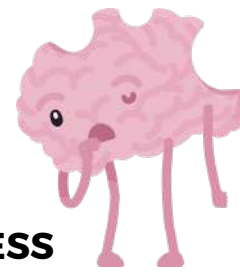


Exposure to heat can have several physiological impacts, affecting people's comfort, emotional stability and general well-being. Hot and unpleasant environmental conditions appear to generate irritability and aggressive thoughts, as well as reduce positive emotions. These factors have a particularly significant impact on women, as significantly higher levels of physical and sexual violence were reported during hot days.

EPIDEMIC DISEAS



Climate change has the potential to impact the way vector-borne diseases like malaria, dengue fever, and Lyme disease spread across different regions and throughout the year. The changing climate can create more suitable environments for disease-carrying vectors such as mosquitoes, warmer and more humid conditions can encourage their proliferation, allowing them to thrive and spread these diseases more effectively. Moreover, the impact of these diseases can disproportionately affect women. The roles that women typically fulfill can place them in closer proximity to environments where these vectors thrive, making them more susceptible to infection. This is often due to their involvement in activities like household chores, agriculture, and childcare, which can increase their exposure to disease-carrying vectors.



DEPRESSION, SUICIDE, MENTAL ILLNESS

The impact of climate change extends beyond just environmental concerns. There is growing evidence of a connection between climate change-related air pollution and adverse birth outcomes. These adverse outcomes can have not only physical but also psychological consequences. Exposure to air pollution linked to climate change has been associated with negative birth outcomes and developmental problems in children. These issues can subsequently increase mental distress for women, potentially leading to higher risks of conditions such as depression, suicide, and even dementia.

ECO Anxiety

The concept of "eco-anxiety" has emerged, particularly affecting women's mental well-being.

As women often bear the responsibilities of childbirth and raising children, concerns about the effects of climate change on their offspring's health and future can trigger psychological distress. The uncertain environmental landscape and potential risks posed by climate change can lead to heightened anxieties about the world in which their children will grow up.



5

ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER

Data reports show that **80%** of those displaced by climate change are women.

Women and children are also **14 times** more likely than men to die during a disaster.

This is because women make up a high percentage within communities, particularly in rural areas where they are responsible for providing water and food for the entire household, often walking miles and miles every day.

Despite the fact that the majority of smallholder farmers worldwide are women (50-80%), they own less than 10% of the plots they work and have no legal rights to the land they cultivate.

In fact, the laws of many countries prevent women from inheriting wealth, owning land, accessing credit and having parental authority over their children.

In addition, according to research conducted by the United Nations, they have less access to employment and various economic opportunities, and therefore have less chance of escaping poverty.

When disasters strike, women are less likely to survive and more likely to be injured due to long-standing gender inequalities that have created disparities in information, mobility, decision-making and access to resources and training.

The traditional role of women in some societies may also mean that women have not had the opportunity to learn to swim or that the clothes they must wear prevent them from moving in the event of escape from immediate danger.



6

MIGRATION AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Climate change can cause forced migration and displacement due to extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, floods and droughts.

Women may be particularly vulnerable during these emergencies, as they face specific risks related to their health and safety.

Pregnant women and lactating mothers may find it difficult to access adequate medical care and reproductive health services during a period of crisis.

This can lead to complications related to childbirth and maternal health.

Women in many societies often have roles that are closely tied to natural resources and agriculture, which are directly impacted by climate change.

Disruptions in these sectors can affect their income and livelihoods.

In some societies, traditional gender roles and norms can limit women's mobility and decision-making power, making it even harder for them to cope with the impacts of climate-related events.

Women may have less access to resources such as education and land ownership, which can hinder their ability to adapt and recover from climate-related shocks.

Displacement and migration due to climate change can expose women to higher risks of violence, exploitation, and trafficking.



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MATERIAL ON GENDER EQUALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY WAS PREPARED FOR YOU BY YOUNET APS (ITALY).

WE ARE A THIRD SECTOR ENTITY, FOUNDED IN MAY 2010, WORKING IN THE FIELD OF VOLUNTEERING AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION.





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OUR MAIN OBJECTIVES

- PROMOTING LEARNING MOBILITY; THAT IS, OFFERING TO EUROPEAN CITIZENS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN SUPPORT OF THEIR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
- PROMOTING INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE THROUGH OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS FROM DIFFERENT EUROPEAN NATIONS TO MEET**
- PROMOTING AWARENESS OF EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE, STARTING WITH THE RIGHTS/DUTIES DERIVING FROM MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**
- ENCOURAGING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AND THE COMMITMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOCIETY**
- PROMOTING TRAINING, COOPERATION, AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS**
- SUPPORTING THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES**

Final note

Dear participant,

The information in this material is only a small part of what the problems that climate change is causing our planet really mean.

The material has been created to give you only some essential information about the climate crisis, but the key point of this workshop will be your contribution, yours and the other participants. We want to hear your views, understand your fears and dreams about our collective future. In the debates that will take place, we will explore diverse ideas and look for creative solutions to protect the environment.

We were delighted to hear that you are interested in taking part in our workshop on this important topic. Each of us plays an important role in the fight to protect the planet and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

We encourage you to be open, prepare your arguments and express your thoughts freely. Until then... we look forward to meeting you at the workshop and starting a positive change.

With love and enthusiasm,
YouNet APS

