

Mitigating Climate Change Impact on Women: Role of Agricultural Extension Advisory

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The climate change is not “gender neutral”. Women and girls experience the greatest impacts of climate change, which amplifies existing gender inequalities and poses unique threats to their livelihoods, health, and safety.

Climate change significantly impacts women, particularly those involved in agriculture, by reducing crop productivity and leading to food insecurity. As crop failures and declining yields become more common, women’s income and ability to provide for their families are severely compromised. Additionally, the loss of livestock due to extreme weather events further diminishes their economic stability and access to essential nutrition, making it increasingly difficult to maintain a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle. The burden of water scarcity also falls heavily on women, forcing them to travel longer distances to collect water,

which reduces the time available for education, income-generating activities, and self-care.

The increasing workload due to climate change places additional stress on women, who must work harder to secure food, water, and fuel for their families.



This relentless effort often comes at the expense of their physical and mental health, as well as their participation in community activities. Moreover, climate change disrupts healthcare infrastructure,

making it harder for women to access medical care, which further exacerbates health problems and increases vulnerability to illness. The erosion of traditional knowledge, essential for adapting to environmental changes, further weakens women’s ability to cope with the effects of climate change, making them more susceptible to the challenges it brings.

Gender inequality amplifies the negative effects of climate change on women by limiting their decision-making power and access to resources. As a result, women are often excluded from discussions and strategies that could help mitigate the impacts of climate change, leaving them without the tools needed to adapt effectively. This lack of agency, combined with increased responsibilities, often forces girls to drop out of school, curtailing their education and perpetuating cycles of poverty and gender inequality. The intersection of these challenges highlights the urgent need for a gender-sensitive approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation, ensuring that women's voices and needs are central to the development of sustainable solutions.

Role Of Extension Advisory Services In Mitigating Impact Of Climate Change On Women

Extension services play a crucial role in mitigating the impacts of climate change on women, by providing education, resources, and support to help women adapt to changing climate conditions and to improve their resilience. Here are some ways extension services can help:

- 1. Climate-Smart Agriculture:** Train women in practices like drought-resistant crops, efficient water use, and soil conservation, disaster preparedness and risk reduction strategies.
- 2. Awareness Programs:** Conduct programs about climate change impacts and sustainable practices.
- 3. Improved Seeds and Tools:** Provide access to better seeds, tools, and technologies to enhance productivity and resilience.
- 4. Microfinance and Credit:** Facilitate access to microfinance, credit, and insurance services for women's climate adaptation.
- 5. Savings Groups:** Encourage the formation of savings and credit groups for financial security and investment in resilient practices.
- 6. Skills Development:** Offer training in sustainable farming, alternative livelihoods, and business management.
- 7. Leadership Training:** Promote leadership training to empower women in community decision-making for climate adaptation.
- 8. Policy Advocacy:** Advocate for policies addressing women's specific needs and vulnerabilities related to climate change.
- 9. Community Engagement:** Involve women in planning and implementing community adaptation projects.
- 10. Healthcare Access:** Improve access to healthcare services, including reproductive health, maternal care, and nutrition programs.
- 11. Nutrition Programs:** Implement programs to enhance nutrition and food security for women and their families.
- 12. Early Warning Systems:** Develop and share early warning systems for extreme weather, ensuring women receive timely information.
- 13. Women's Groups and Cooperatives:** Support the formation of women's groups, cooperatives, and networks for sharing knowledge and resources.
- 14. Partnerships:** Foster partnerships with NGOs, government agencies, and international organizations to support women's adaptation efforts.

15. **Gender-Sensitive Research:** Conduct research to understand climate change impacts on women and develop targeted interventions.
16. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implement systems to assess the effectiveness of services addressing women's climate change needs.

Conclusion

Climate change impacts women more severely, worsening existing gender inequalities and threatening

their lives and well-being. Extension advisory services are key to helping women cope with these challenges by teaching them climate-smart farming methods, providing access to resources, and supporting their leadership in their communities. By involving women in decision-making and advocating for their needs, these services help build their resilience to climate change. Ensuring that women are included in climate solutions is crucial for creating fair and lasting change.

References

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