

## **Women and Climate Change Resilience in the Caribbean**



Presented by

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**It is my pleasure to present a short overview of Women and Climate Change Resilience in the Caribbean.**

## **Effects of Climate Change in the Caribbean SIDs**

- **Stronger hurricanes**
- **Severe erosion**
- **Loss of coral reefs**
- **Floods**
- **Longer dry seasons and shorter wet seasons**
- **Rising sea levels**

**The effects of climate change on the Caribbean islands include:**

- **Stronger hurricanes**
- **Severe erosion**
- **Loss of coral reefs**
- **Floods**
- **Longer dry seasons and shorter wet seasons and**
- **Rising sea levels.**

**Women are more greatly impacted because of gender inequalities in societies.**

## **Key impacts of Climate Change effects**

- **Agriculture**
- **Fisheries**
- **Tourism**

**The impacts of climate change are felt particularly in areas such as Agriculture, Fisheries and Tourism. These are key areas on which Caribbean economies depend and in which women play a crucial role.**

## Agriculture

- **Lack of access to climate-related information**
- **Lack of access to assets**
- **Food insecurity due to water scarcity**



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### In terms of agriculture:

- **Women may not have access to climate-related information which in turn will impact crop yields**
- **Lack of access to assets, limits available coping mechanisms to deal with the impacts of drought**
- **Food insecurity resulting from water scarcity has been linked to a disproportionate and negative impact on women and girls**

## Fisheries

- **Women focus on near-shore activities**
- **Men focus on off-shore boat fishing**



**In terms of Fisheries:**

**Women tend to focus on near-shore activities (e.g. gleaning for invertebrates) and men in offshore boat fishing, leaving women with few options if climate change leads to reduced near-shore supplies of fish or other animals.**

## **Tourism**

- **Mainstay of many Caribbean economies**
- **Employs predominantly women**
- **Affected by degradation of beaches, coral reefs etc**

**In terms of Tourism:**

**Women make up a large percentage of workers in the tourism sector albeit generally at lower levels in the industry. Climate change impacts on beaches, coral reefs and coastal activities, therefore impact women negatively.**

**But these are in the longer term. What happens immediately after a climate event such as a hurricane?**

## Short term impacts of natural disasters on women

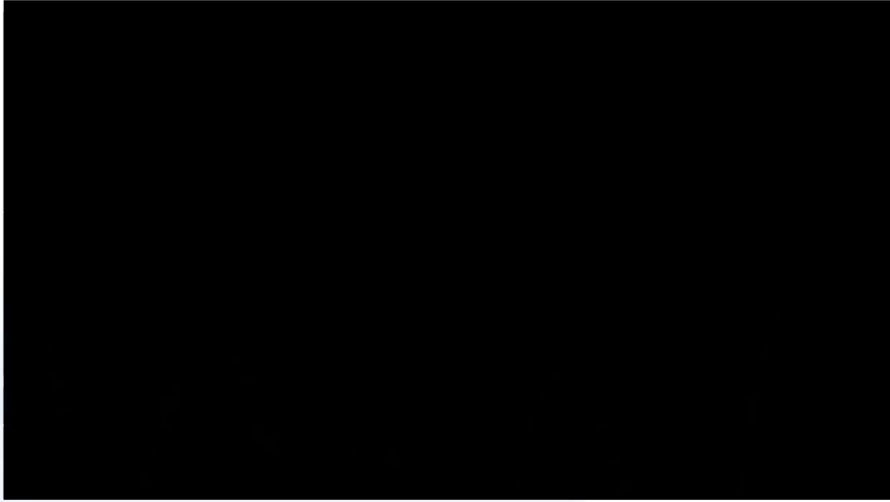
- Limited resources further diminished
- Limited jobs often earmarked for men
- Social services slow to restart
- Water scarcity
- Increased GBV
- Inability to reach informal women entrepreneurs or vulnerable women

### In such situations women are particularly vulnerable due to:

- Limited resources being further diminished
- Limited jobs — such as clearing roads and restoring power — are often earmarked for men
- Social services, such as child care, are slow to restart, preventing women from returning to work as swiftly as their male counterparts
- Water scarcity increases women's labour burden
- There is increased gender based violence following a disaster  
...and
- Disaster preparation and recovery efforts and grant mechanisms may not reach vulnerable women.

However, the same factors that make women vulnerable — their connection to nature and ties to community — are also the strengths that make women critical and competent leaders in times of crisis..

The following video is instructive.....





## **Key Recommendations for all climate resilience projects**

- **Committing to promoting gender equality within climate resilience projects**
- **Increasing the visibility of women leading the way on climate resilience**
- **Giving women a voice and engaging them as agents of climate resilience**
- **Thinking gender when communicating climate change messages and information**

The muffled but mighty voices of women are being heard. In the Caribbean, climate experts are increasingly looking not only at how they can include female perspectives to alleviate inequalities, but how they can empower women to lead the way toward resilience.

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## Recommendations cont'd

- **Collecting, analysing, and using sex-disaggregated data**
- **Ensuring gender-related elements in design are carried on to implementation**
- **Engaging and supporting women's organisations**

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- **Ensuring gender-related elements in design are carried on to implementation...and**
- **Engaging and supporting women's organisations**

**Women are:**

- **Resilient**
- **Community driven**
- **Goal oriented**



Advocates argue that women are accustomed to being resilient, community-driven and goal oriented — especially when it comes to the goal of feeding their families.

## Lobby your Governments! 1.5 °C



**As Caribbean people we bear the brunt of the effects of climate change and as Caribbean Soroptimists we recognise the vulnerability of not just our islands but of our women and girls. We need all our Soroptimist sisters to lobby their Govts to take the necessary measures so as not to surpass a 1.5 degrees C increase in temperature.**

# Thank You!



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**Thank you.**

## Credits

**A study of the Impacts of Climate Change on the Women and Men of the Caribbean by the Inter American Development Bank (IADB) and Value for Women..... 2020**

**Women are essential to climate resilience in the Caribbean — here's why  
- Lucienne Cross – 2019**

**PANOS Caribbean – Video (Women and Climate Change)**