

2021 Economic and Social Committee Humanitarian Affairs Segment

Side-Event Title: Preventing, anticipating and reducing risks of climate induced disasters: Why do locally led gender transformative actions matter?

Co-organized by: CARE International, Oxfam International, International Rescue Committee, supported by the UK Permanent Mission in Geneva and the World Food Programme.

Includes panelists: Liberia Munduru, Deputy Manager Operations at RICE-West Nile based in Uganda; Viko Bianca, Uriama sub-county chief in Uganda; and Lena Schubmann, Programme & Policy Officer at WFP in Guatemala; all invited by Oxfam, CARE, and IRC.

Location & Date: Virtual, 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. CET on June 24th, 2021

This is one of the virtual side events to be convened on the margins of the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS), which builds on this year's HAS theme: *"Humanitarian action and climate change: advancing anticipatory approaches, strengthening resilience and enhancing collaboration in response to the climate crisis"*.

Background and Objectives of Event:

Objectives: This multi-stakeholder event aims at:

- Inspiring more investments in locally led gender transformative climate action and resilience, emergency preparedness and anticipatory action in conflict and displacement settings that also face the impacts of climate change;
- Sharing promising models that apply a gender transformative and feminist bottom-up approach that, if taken to scale, can have significant positive impacts on reducing humanitarian needs, including on impacts on food and nutrition security, and on strengthening crisis-affected communities' climate resilience.

Background: Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by climate change, conflict, and forced displacement, because prevailing gender inequality, often coupled with gender based violence, limits their ability to engage and influence the humanitarian response and resilience efforts in crisis settings, including in protracted crises. They are often excluded from processes and platforms where decisions are made about disaster preparedness, climate adaptation, environmental governance, local food systems, and crisis management in response to the growing number and intensity of natural disasters, often caused by climate change.

Despite the various structural barriers crisis-affected, displaced, and host community women face, they remain best placed to reduce climate risks and drive solutions regarding climate resilience due to their multiple roles as carers, activists, food growers and producers, peacebuilders in their communities but also, and most critically, because they know best what women and girls need. Strategies on climate resilience in fragile and conflict-affected states must therefore be guided by a gender transformative approach that centres on the participation and leadership of women and girls. This requires changes to take place at individual, household,

community, and society level that improve crisis-affected women's access to key resources and opportunities, and increases their individual agency.

Various actors have key roles to play. The roles of Governments and of the private sector are paramount but these actors are often gender unaware and their ways of working, policies and products are often designed for and with women. Transformative interventions should be locally-led, multi-sector and multi-year, reducing communities' risks to climate change while harnessing their own capacity, knowledge and expertise. This is particularly critical at a time where the world faces an unprecedented food crisis, induced in part by the effects of climate change and compounded by a GBV Shadow Pandemic. Gender unaware and top-down approaches to address climate risks in conflict and displacement settings, where women and girls already face grave protection risks, may aggravate the magnitude of abuse and exploitation they already face and exacerbate communal tensions.

This event will share lessons learnt on bottom up participatory joint community and government led climate action planning in Uganda on the one hand¹ and on an innovative climate risk insurance product in Guatemala² that in both cases deliberately include women and are informed by gender analysis.

Discussion Points or Guiding Questions:

Drawing from the above two specific country case studies and recent documented experience³, the event will specifically elevate attention to:

- the need to address the combined effects of climate change and gender inequality to prevent and respond to humanitarian crisis;
- the danger and risks of "climate inaction" from a local perspective, zooming in on specific gendered impacts, including on food and nutrition security and women and girls' protection;
- the importance of government policies and schemes that support local solutions and local actors', including women's, leadership in climate resilience, emergency preparedness and anticipatory action, even in displacement settings;
- The untapped potential of innovative solutions such as insurances and the importance of the private sector in contributing to disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action;
- The critical roles women and girls play in the fight against climate change and in preventing climate induced disasters, including hunger, benefitting their entire communities, when supported to do so.

Key Concrete Action Points and Recommendations/Take Away Messages:

Expected key take-aways:

Policy matters: importance of policies to support *locally led gender transformative climate resilience, emergency preparedness and anticipatory action;*

¹ [CARE Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis Handbook](#)

² [Gender and Risk Finance: The Transformative Power of Women](#)

³ [Evicted by Climate Change : Confronting the gendered impacts of climate-induced displacement, CARE 2020](#)

Local actors must lead: CBOs, women's organizations at the grassroots, local governments must lead the design and implementation of solutions and must be supported to work together;

Leverage the power of the private sector: the potential of the private sector to contribute to reducing risks facing crisis affected populations is yet untapped; They are a critical partner in scaling up reducing and financing risks reduction strategies;

Gender and women matter: gender inequality is a risk multiplier; climate action and preventing and responding to crises, including to the climate and hunger crisis, cannot be done without half of the affected population, women and girls, at the table; and without tackling the various gender barriers they face. At the same time, if supported to seat at the table, women will contribute to solutions that work better for them but also for the wider community;

Time for scaling up what works: gender transformative climate resilience, emergency preparedness and anticipatory action models already exist; They benefit entire communities and need to be urgently scaled up.

Format of the Side Event:

This event will include opening and closing remarks from keynote speakers, including from the Member State(s) co-hosting the event (the UK Mission to the UN in Geneva). The majority of the 1.5 hour period will be given to the panel presented below. Each panelist (all women) will share their experience with a bottom-up gender transformative solution aiming at reducing climate risks in a humanitarian context. A brief video on one of the models will be presented. More specifically, panelists will share:

- Their experiences and lessons learnt in applying a specific locally rooted gender transformative good and / or promising model;
- Critical reflections on effectively integrating social and gender norms change in these models, zooming in on what works, what does not and why;
- The support they need from- and expectations they have of- global actors to support gender transformative locally led action;

Panelists will subsequently engage in an open discussion with participants. After their interventions, the moderator will open the floor to attendees to ask questions to panelists. This will be followed by a discussion and, with support from the moderator, key recommendations will be formulated as the event will conclude.

Chair and Moderator:

This event will be moderated by Ms Fatima Yamin, the Programme Development Specialist at Strengthening Participatory Organization⁴. Mr Dylan Winder, the Humanitarian and Protracted Crises Counsellor and Team Leader from the UK Mission to Geneva, will be the keynote speaker⁵.

Panel Composition:

These panelists include:

⁴ [Fatima Yamin's Profile](#)

⁵ [Dylan Winder's Profile](#)

- **Ms Liberia Munduru, Deputy Manager Operations at the organization, Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment (RICE) -West Nile based in Uganda.** She will focus on sharing the experience of rolling out one of CARE's climate risks reducing and climate action planning tools called the [“Gender sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments”](#) (G-CVCA, already referenced in EOI) in the refugee hosting district of Terego in Northwest Uganda. Ms Munduru will focus on presenting and reflecting on the role of a local NGO in the process of conducting the G-CVCA and of developing gender transformative climate action plans. She will describe the training process beforehand and why trainings on gender were foundational, the roll out of the process and how to keep gender as a priority throughout. She will describe how women from both the refugee and the host communities were engaged and gained in confidence in the process, speaking as well to the challenges and benefits associated with that process. She will present the results of the process, a gendered local climate action plan, owned by women and supported by local authorities.
- **Ms Viko Bianca, Uriama sub-county chief in the Terego District of Uganda.** She led the G-CVCA and the gendered climate action plan development that followed, as the local leader in charge of the process. As a representative from a local government, Ms Viko will share reflections on the role of these local government authorities in supporting gender transformative climate analysis and action and how this empowers women to take on more substantial roles in local territorial administrations, how it also enhances social cohesion between refugees and host communities leading to reduced climate risks and humanitarian needs for all.
- **Ms Lena Schubmann (Programme & Policy Officer - WFP Guatemala).** She will focus on the resilience building programmes in Guatemala, with a special focus on the parametric microinsurance product recently launched in May 2021. The product is offered in 9 Associations in five highly exposed departments/states of Guatemala (Alta Verapaz, Baja Verapaz, El Progreso, Zacapa and Chiquimula). The key effects of this product include:
 - One key approach for building women’s resilience to a range of compounding shocks is increasing their access to risk management strategies. Gender equality is a fundamental human right, with women’s empowerment a cornerstone for achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development. An ambitious goal at WFP is to seek ways to apply a gender-transformative approach to our work, that addresses the underlying causes of gender inequalities and transform gender relations;
 - The product is offered with Aseguradora Rural, a local insurance company and covers smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs against drought and excess rain;
 - Since May 2021, the product is covering **1,296 persons (69% women).**

Background Material (feel free to share links to relevant documents)

- CARE July 2019, [“CARE Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis Handbook”](#)
- CARE November 2020, [“Sometimes We Don’t Even Eat: How Conflict and COVID-19 Are Pushing Millions of People to the Brink”](#)

- CARE July 2020, [“Evicted by Climate Change : Confronting the gendered impacts of climate-induced displacement”](#)
- IRC May 2021, [Ending the hunger crisis: Response, recovery and resilience.](#)
- InsuResilience Annual Report 2020, [“WFP Guatemala: Building resilience of the most vulnerable and food insecure populations in Guatemala through a holistic and risk-layered approach”](#)
- WFP 2021, [Gender and Risk Finance: The Transformative Power of Women](#)
- WFP Guatemala 2021, [“Educación Financiera Empodera a Mujeres Indígenas”](#)

Connection Details to Join the Event:

Zoom Registration link:

https://rescue.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MnW9eTJrQCGDx7Um4ojcYA

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