

SRHR & CJ COALITION

Submission on the views on the format and scope of the in-session technical workshop to be held at the sixty-second session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, to facilitate the design of gender action plan activities with a view to informing the development of the new gender action plan.

Mandate: UNFCCC/COP29/2024/ para. 15

Submitted by: *Women Deliver on behalf of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Climate Justice Coalition, March 2025.*

Women Deliver makes this submission working in collaboration with the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Climate Justice Coalition, a coalition of more than 100 organizations from over 50 countries. The Coalition is also aligned with the submission from the Women and Gender Constituency.

1. Introduction

We recognize the vital contribution of the newly adopted Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender (ELWPG) and its Gender Action Plan (GAP) to advancing gender equality and achieving gender-responsive climate policy and action. Some progress has been made in recent years, but major gaps exist, and the GAP activities to-date have not collectively made marked progress in addressing root causes of gender inequality, in reducing gender inequities in climate action and impacts, or in advancing full, equal and meaningful participation of women and girls in all their diversities in and beyond UNFCCC processes. With the new ELWPG and the development of a new GAP we have a unique opportunity to advance the agenda and create a foundation for human rights based, transformative and sustainable development and climate action.

Fundamentally, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and bodily autonomy are an integral part of achieving gender equality and a necessity for building resilience and improving the adaptive capacity of marginalized people and communities who are already experiencing the disproportionate impacts of climate change. The realisation of SRHR reduces barriers to education and livelihood opportunities and supports people to exercise their agency and engage in climate action and policy making.

According to the [Lancet](#) Commission, SRHR are the rights that all people inherently possess to make decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. SRHR are an important element of the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. SRHR include an individual's right to access the information needed to decide freely and responsibly on all matters related to their sexuality without facing coercion, discrimination, or violence. SRHR include, but are not limited to, the ability to decide on the number, spacing, and timing of one's

children — and whether to have children at all. Comprehensive SRH services consist of accurate information, education, and counseling, including comprehensive sexuality education (CSE); access to range of contraceptive methods; care related to sexual function; services for sexual and gender-based violence; antenatal, childbirth, and postnatal care; safe abortion care; and the prevention and treatment of infertility, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and reproductive cancers. SRH services should meet established human rights standards of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality.

2. Why health and in particular SRHR are key in climate action and the GAP

Climate change has a negative impact on health and well-being, which was highlighted at COP28 in the [UAE Declaration on Climate and Health](#) and in related discussions. The impacts are far-reaching, including death and disease from extreme weather events, cardiovascular issues and inadequate nutrition. While health overall is under-addressed in relation to climate change and gender equality, the linkage of SRHR and climate justice is even more so; however, the evidence continues to grow:

- Restricted access to SRHR reduces the adaptive capacity of women and girls, including environmental human rights defenders, creating barriers to their climate resilience.
- The climate crisis is worsening maternal and neonatal health outcomes as extreme heat is linked to prematurity, low birthweight, stillbirth and neonatal stress.
- Climate-related loss of livelihoods and inadequate emergency shelters are linked to increased sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).
- Child, early and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU) have been observed to increase in some contexts as households cope with climate disasters and economic impacts of climate change. This can lead to early pregnancy, which is one of the leading causes of death for adolescent girls.
 - For example, Pakistan is home to nearly 19 million child brides ([UNICEF](#)). The threats have exacerbated due to the climate crisis, especially monsoon rains and torrential flooding, triggering a phenomenon called [“monsoon brides”](#).
- Increased SGBV connected to climate impacts increases the need for health services and counseling for survivors.
 - For example, [ipas](#) recorded increases in SGBV in Mozambique and Bangladesh; women in both countries reported experiencing sexual harassment and abuse while collecting disaster relief after cyclones, linking economic instability and stress in the aftermath of extreme weather events to increases in intimate partner violence, dowry and in-law abuse, transactional sex, sexual harassment, and early or child marriage.
- Climate-related emergencies disrupt life-saving health services and supplies, including safe delivery, contraception and safe abortion.
 - For example, 42 percent of women in [a study in Yemen](#) reported a lack of access to reproductive health services because of flood-damaged roads, and many rural women give birth at home in unsafe conditions due to damaged infrastructure and

lack of medical facilities, in conditions lacking sufficient clean water which leads to complications.

- In [Guatemala](#), during flooding, study respondents reported a perceived shift toward reliance on natural pregnancy prevention methods when facilities were inaccessible.
- Water scarcity can reduce the ability to access and maintain menstrual health, hygiene and dignity, which has health implications and also leads to loss of education as girls stay home from school.
 - For example, a [review of evidence](#) from Africa finds that crossing flooded rivers puts girls' and adolescents' sanitary pads or other menstrual products at risk of deteriorating, and heavy rainfalls make it difficult for women, girls and people who menstruate to dry reusable sanitary pads.
- Saline contamination of drinking water as a result of saltwater intrusion from rising sea levels can also have a negative impact on maternal health resulting in premature deliveries, risk of (pre)eclampsia and gestational hypertension, adverse fetal outcomes and the potential for maternal death.
 - For example, [research from Bangladesh](#) highlights that the mean sodium intake in pregnant women is well above WHO/FAO–recommended levels and above those of many other countries. The study hypothesized that increasing salt intake during the dry season might contribute to the seasonal pattern of hypertension in pregnancy in coastal Bangladesh, and the problem may be exacerbated by future sea-level rise and environmental change.
- Household economic hardship can lead to families withdrawing girls from school and limits opportunities for comprehensive sexuality education while also often increasing girls' care responsibilities, as well as outmigration to cities by community members.
 - [In Bolivia, as recorded by Ipas](#), young men are migrating to cities for work, and consequently, young women are contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

These and other climate impacts exacerbate inequalities and make achieving global commitments to universal access to SRHR even more challenging. The SRHR and Climate Justice Coalition has reviewed the evidence, including recent publications by [Y-Labs](#) and others, as part of its [brief launched at COP29](#), detailing connections between health, climate, and SRHR for understanding and advocacy. For further examples, see Annex I, containing a summary of SRHR and climate linkages from a 2024 study in Yemen.

Health, particularly sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), is a fundamental pillar of gender equality and climate resilience. The GAP aims to integrate gender-responsive approaches into climate policies, yet health remains an overlooked aspect. SRHR are directly impacted by climate change, particularly for women and marginalized communities; it is crucial to include SRHR in the activities of the new GAP, as well as in climate adaptation strategies overall.

3. Recommended GAP Activities

We recommend explicitly incorporating health as a cross-cutting issue for gender and climate change, with specific inclusion of SRHR and SGBV, in terms of topics, activities, and goals within the next iteration of the gender action plan. Ideas for GAP activities are as follows:

Hold an Expert Dialogue: Create space to explore and address gender-differentiated aspects of SRHR, including SGBV, and climate change impacts and actions through a dedicated expert dialogue.

- This dialogue can serve to share experience and best practices, successful initiatives, challenges and learnings, capacity-building, tools and resources, among all relevant actors, including non-Party stakeholders.
- Key discussions could include reviewing and analyzing how SRHR is incorporated in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) (e.g. UNFPA's [Taking Stock: SRHR in Climate Commitments: A Global Review](#)) and NAPs (e.g. NAP Global Network's [SRHR in National Adaptation Plan \(NAP\) Processes](#) and Y-Labs' [SRHR in NAPs and Health NAPs](#)) to support Parties in further integrating SRHR into their national plans and policies.
- The dialogue will support Parties to center human rights, bodily autonomy, menstrual dignity and intersectionality in communications and programming on SRHR and the climate crisis. These approaches must recognize and reference the impacts, needs, and/or experiences in relation to climate change and SRHR based on people's intersecting identities such as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual and expression and characteristics, education, disability, and Indigeneity, among others .

Ensure SRHR and Health Capacity for NGCCFPs, with activities including:

- Parties provide support for their National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points (NGCCFPs), and appoint NGCCFPs if they have not already, to develop and apply thematic knowledge of SRHR.
- Parties facilitate NGCCFP's role as a connector and convener, enabling NGCCFPs to promote collaboration between government entities working on climate change, gender, health, and SRHR, so that SRHR considerations are integrated in country-level climate policy and programs, including NDCs and NAPs.
- The Secretariat provides learning and sharing opportunities for Parties and NGCCFPs to share tools and resources to other Parties and NGCCFPs that they find useful in strengthening SRHR knowledge and related skills.

Develop, gather and share evidence on interlinkages between SRHR, gender equality and climate change through information sharing channels of the UNFCCC:

- Parties, relevant organizations and the research community must contribute in strengthening the evidence base on the intersections between climate change and SRHR, including how the violation and realization of the full range of SRHR impacts women's and girls' opportunities to engage in climate solutions and their role as agents of change.

- Parties should ensure their data is shared throughout their reporting functions to the UNFCCC; communicated and translated for different knowledge-sharing platforms, including those under development and yet to emerge; and in response to new decisions, requests for submissions, calls for evidence, etc.

Host a Roundtable for direct access funding:

- Host a roundtable for representatives of women's funds, grassroots groups, and other gender, youth, adolescent, Indigenous organizations alongside representatives of operating entities of the UNFCCC financial mechanism and the Adaptation Fund.
- This roundtable will explore how to operationalize locally-led climate action and reimagine decolonized funding, ensuring direct access to funding by enhancing and innovating with current and emerging modalities within the funds; for example, the Fund for responding to loss and damage (FRLD) is considering models for community access. By linking existing parallel financing modalities, such as regional and national women's funds, to partner in implementing gender-responsive climate action, direct access can be achieved and measured within the timeframe of this GAP.
- Ensure roundtable representatives reflect the diversity of linked work on SRHR and climate.
- Design the roundtable to ensure structured outcomes for taking the work forward, including the potential for creating a technical expert group for continuing dialogue, sharing of best practices, updates on operationalizing new modalities, etc.

Fund SRHR in climate action:

- Parties and relevant organizations should include funding for SRHR components in climate adaptation and resilience action in climate policies and plans, including operationalizing gender-responsive budgeting. Furthermore, the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, FRLD, private sector, philanthropic financial institutions, and other relevant organizations must ensure that climate finance for adaptation and resilience includes support for gender equality, SRHR, and health components.

Collect data on the full range of SRHR impacts:

- Parties and relevant organizations must integrate the full range of SRHR in the collection and consolidation of information on gender and climate change.
- Parties and relevant organizations should invest in collecting and sharing gender-disaggregated data related to SRHR to inform national frameworks for monitoring and evaluation of climate change policies, plans, strategies and action.

Host regular hybrid events to share knowledge:

- Experts and advocates across stakeholder groups on SRHR and the intersection between climate change, SRHR, and gender equality will identify and present their research, best practices, and promising practices and connect during regular intervals to share their insights.

Integrate SRHR in climate policy and implementation:

- As in the EU submission, Parties should integrate SRHR-considerations into climate policies, gender-responsive financing, programming and implementation, including clear indicators and mechanisms/structures for follow-up and monitoring.
- As in the WGC submission, commit to establish and ensure robust protection mechanisms for those most at risk, particularly women environmental human rights defenders (WEHRDs), persons with disabilities and Indigenous women, who face threats and violence for their climate activism in relation to SRHR.

4. Overall recommendations for a new GAP

Ensure the GAP provides flexibility over the course of its 10 years to incorporate decisions, mechanisms, and other developments yet to emerge from the UNFCCC, and to adapt activities in response to new decisions, submissions, and evidence. A GAP that does not include mechanisms for updates and incorporation of new developments will become obsolete and not fit for purpose.

The below recommendations are drawn from the [WGC's 2022 GAP submission](#).

- To advance SRHR, gender equality interventions must address the structural barriers embedded in norms, laws, and policies that contribute to inequality and injustice. This is in addition to addressing the structural and systemic factors including repealing and abolishing discriminatory practices and policies, that exacerbate gender inequality.
- The priority should be on climate-resilient health systems that are more likely to support and ensure SRH services in times of crisis or disaster. We therefore need strong, accessible, and resilient health systems that serve the specific SRH needs of all women and girls and gender-diverse people, whether for contraception, antenatal care, or safe abortion, that are required to fulfil the right to health and to build adaptive capacity and strengthen resilience to direct and indirect climate impacts.
- Climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programs must be developed and implemented with an intersectional, equitable lens, and a human rights- based approach. This also means applying human rights, gender and a social-justice based approach to climate action that includes the full range of SRHR and to commit robust and feminist financing for the climate and SRHR intersection.
- Our governments should fulfill their commitments. This includes upholding human rights including sexual and reproductive health and rights of all people, and acknowledge its co-benefits in contributing to climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience.
- Ensure that national policies, programming and budget related to climate change and disaster risk reduction incorporate gender mainstreaming and SRHR and include gender-differentiated impact analysis of climate change disasters and gender equality. SRHR must be incorporated as a key component of environmental, climate change, and disaster risk reduction policies and programs, to ensure their success.

5. Recommendations for the format and scope of the Technical Workshop

Focus on concrete activities, indicators, and deliverables

- A well-planned, content-rich and context-informed workshop will lead to a GAP fit for purpose, and the preparation should build from, as well as learn from, previous workshops. Rather than a brainstorm of activities, which has been conducted at the SB60 workshop, the workshop sessions should be informed by the latest review of the ELWP and its GAP, as well as evidence and science, and facilitated in a way that leads to identification of concrete targets and indicators for GAP activities. The sessions should ensure meaningful participation of local and grassroots representatives who will address diverse contexts.

Informed by experts on SRHR

- The Secretariat should invite experts on SRHR, gender equality and climate action to contribute to the technical workshop during SB62 to support an intersectoral and intersectional approach. Experts include those holding knowledge through their experiences at the local level and/or Indigenous knowledge and cannot be limited to academic or institutional representatives. Experts on adaptation and resilience, loss and damage, capacity building, as well as on thematic areas such as agriculture and oceans, will support further exploration and awareness of the gender-differentiated impacts on SRHR.

Clarity on objectives and outcomes

- For each session, there should be a clear objective and expected outcome. For example, a presentation from experts on the interlinkages between gender equality, SRHR and climate resilience – which is a necessary topic for the GAP to be comprehensive and achieve its aims – should catalyze discussion of the formulation of related activities, indicators, and deliverables. The workshop should focus on Party-level, regional, and international data, trends (such as health linkages in NDCs, NAPs, etc.), and potential activities.

ANNEX I.

Concrete evidence of the interlinkage between gender equality and SRHR and climate change:

According to a [recent study](#) conducted in Yemen -Taiz governorate indicated how clearly sexual and reproductive health is impacted by climate change. Some key findings include:

1. Increased Maternal Health Risks Due to Climate Change

- Miscarriages and Premature Births: The study found that 66.67% of healthcare workers reported an increase in miscarriage cases, and 60% observed a rise in premature births due to the impacts of climate change.
- Weakened Immunity & Malnutrition: 46.67% of women reported weakened immunity, increasing vulnerability to infectious diseases, while 58% cited high food prices and limited access to nutritious food, raising risks during pregnancy and childbirth.

2. Water Scarcity and its gendered Impact

- 68% of families struggle to access clean water, Climate change affects access to water, a responsibility often borne by women and girls.
- The rapid decline in groundwater levels due to irregular rainfall makes it increasingly difficult for women and girls to access clean water for drinking and sanitation.
- Fetching water is time-intensive and, given the distance to water sources, often forces young girls to drop out of school.
- Long journeys to access water also increase women's and girls' vulnerability to gender-based violence.
- Carrying water over long distances can lead to miscarriages, bleeding, and premature births.
- Insufficient water for hygiene directly affects menstrual health and reproductive health.

3. Gender-Based Violence & Climate Stress

- The study highlights an increase in domestic violence and early marriage as families resort to negative coping mechanisms in response to economic hardship caused by climate change.
- Water and food scarcity force women into unsafe environments, increasing their risk of harassment and violence.

4. Lack of Access to Reproductive Health Services

- 42% of women reported a lack of access to reproductive health services because of flood-damaged roads. Many rural women give birth at home in unsafe conditions due to damaged infrastructure and lack of medical facilities, in addition without enough clean water which leads to complications.