

PRESS RELEASE



“Gender is for Everybody”

“Climate Needs Equality - Climate Change Cannot Be Solved Without Women” – was the content of the Online Expert Discussion of the initiative for coffee&climate (c&c) on May 31. The four panelists Fortunate Paska, Gender Consultant in Uganda, Eutropia Ngido, Rural Economist in Tanzania, Karina Orellana, Project Technician at Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung in Honduras, and Frida Rodhe, Programme Specialist at the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), shared personal insights and experiences of their work with climate and gender and pointed out possible ways towards solving the challenges.

Many women in rural areas walk long distances to collect water and firewood for cooking. Even more, as rising temperatures and droughts cause more water scarcity, and as forest cover reduces. The collection of firewood furthermore contributes to deforestation and exacerbates the effects of climate change.

Climate Change Impacts Women more than Men

“When I was a child, I had to carry water together with my mother and sister for 30 minutes every day”, remembers Karina Orellana. “This has given me a deep appreciation for the challenges that women in these communities face, and a strong motivation to work towards finding solutions that promote social equity and environmental sustainability.”

The high workload keeps women from participating in trainings, engaging in community groups, schooling, and income-generating activities. They are often not involved in decision-making – also in decisions that im-

prove climate resilience of the community. They have less control over money and less access to technology or inputs that could improve their responsiveness to climate change impacts, such as seeds of drought-resistant plants. All this makes it harder for them to manage the impacts of climate change.

Gender Inequality Inhibits Climate Action from Reaching its Full Potential

Approaches to respond to climate change that don't include the gender aspect, are unlikely to reach their full potential. "The social norms that provide a firm basis for patriarchy often set limits to approaches that shall improve climate change resilience and mitigation", states Fortunate Paska. "We need gender transformative approaches to overcome harmful gender norms and enable equal distribution of power, resources, and services."

Intersectionality Makes the Situation Even More Complex

At the same time, it is important to not only focus on women as a general group with different challenges than men but to acknowledge disparities among women as well. There are differences between women in urban and rural areas, whether they are well-educated or less educated, employed or not employed. Employed women in cities, for example, have more access to information than unemployed women living in the countryside and they receive warnings about climate-related events earlier. "Analyses and solutions are oftentimes too superficial", reports Eutopia Ngido. "We as practitioners need to look at intersectionalities and at the challenges of the specific groups of women to address them properly. That takes more time than is often provided."

Gender Equality Needs to be Addressed Holistically

Frida Rodhe points out that organizations should implement gender aspects throughout all activities to achieve resilience for everybody. Additionally, there should be specific gender and climate projects. Both were needed to move forward in a direction of sustainable development. She says it was crucial for organizations to monitor their activities and learn continuously from their experiences to constantly adjust their approach to the reality they meet.

Frida Rodhe also emphasizes the importance of addressing all members of society: "We need to include the whole of society in tackling gender inequality. It should not be just women sort of fighting for their empowerment, but we need to have everybody – also men and youth – understand the importance of equality. So that everybody is on board." All this needs time and patience to change behaviors and deep structures. Karina Orellana confirms this view with her experiences in Honduras: "We must see a coffee farm as a family business and work with all members towards gender equality. In my country, many say: Gender is for women. That is not true. Gender is for everybody."

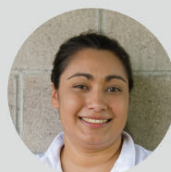
The full Online Expert Discussion can be watched here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_t87wVmu6Hs



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ABOUT THE INITIATIVE FOR COFFEE&CLIMATE

The initiative for coffee&climate (c&c) is a pre-competitive partnership of private and public actors. Together they strive to support smallholder coffee farming families and their communities to effectively respond to climate change, increase their resilience and improve their livelihoods.

Since its founding in 2010, c&c has been working in seven regions worldwide: Following a five-step participatory and inclusive approach, smallholder families get access to practical tools and knowledge, allowing them to adapt their farms to climate change, minimize carbon emissions and enhance the carbon storage potential in coffee landscapes. 103,000 coffee farming households have been trained on climate-smart techniques to date.

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