

BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY TO MEASURE THE GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT NEXUS IN AFRICA

Context

Understanding and addressing the gender-environment nexus is crucial for promoting sustainable development and resilience amid the triple planetary crisis (climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution). In Africa, women and men often experience the impacts of this triple planetary crisis differently due to existing gender roles and inequalities, with the intersection of gender and environmental issues either exacerbate vulnerabilities or presenting opportunities for sustainable and equitable solutions.

In most African countries, there is a need to document the connection between gender and the environment, so as to provide evidence that can support the implementation of sustainable and equitable solutions. Because environment statistics have not traditionally been collected at the individual level, much of the available data is not suitable to examine the interactions between women, men and the environment. Now this can be done by collecting data with the new Gender and Environment Survey¹, developed by UN Women in close consultation with FAO, ILO, IUCN, SPC, UNEP, UNDRR and UNESCAP.

The survey collects information at both household and individual levels. While data on housing characteristics, location, energy use, water and sanitation are collected from a single person in each household, data on areas such as exposure to and experience of disasters and other

hazards, the impact of climate change, agriculture and land-use, and environment-related livelihoods is collected at the individual level, by interviewing both a man and a woman in each household, in order to capture intra-household inequalities and distribution of roles. Data can be disaggregated by sex, age, location, level of education or level of poverty among others or by any combination of those variables, allowing to get information on intersecting inequalities.

The indicators produced by this survey follow international recommendations and standards. Therefore, the data and indicators produced can be used with absolute confidence to report progress on global frameworks (SDGs, Sendai Framework, Kunming-Montreal framework, Global Set of Climate Change Statistics and Indicators, etc).

¹ <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/gender-and-environment-survey-report-kingdom-tonga>

The Gender and Environment Survey

The Gender and Environment Survey addresses the triple planetary crisis, including how gender differentiated roles contribute to different levels of preparedness, coping capacity and exposure to disasters, and other effects of climate change. It also examines the differentiated actions of men and women through their livelihoods and individual behaviors, and how these result in varied contributions to climate change. Furthermore, the survey includes questions to assess changes in biodiversity as perceived by individuals, and the impact of human activities on ecosystems.

Results of such survey reflect on women’s and men’s differentiated vulnerability to frequent disaster events, the long-term impacts of climate change on their livelihoods, health and nutrition, and their experiences participating in environmental decision making, conservation and degradation.

UN Women conducted the first of these surveys in the Pacific Island Kingdom of Tonga. Although the questionnaire was adapted to the situation in that country, most of the questions asked relate to issues that also affect Africa. For this reason, we use the results of this survey to present some of the findings below.

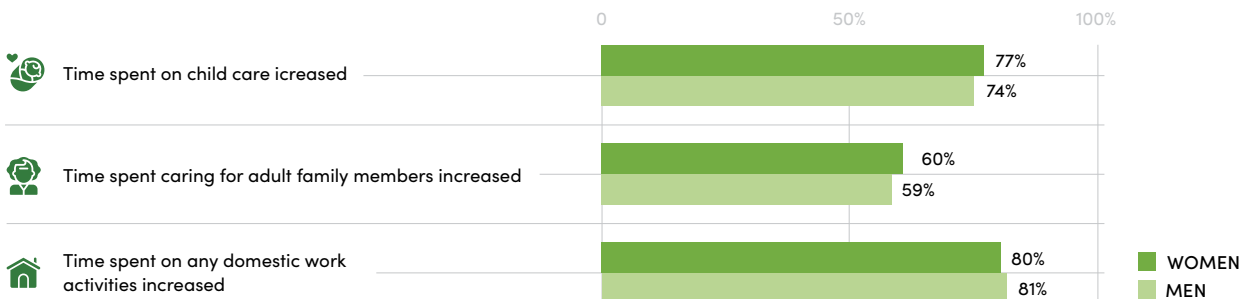
I. Disaster exposure, preparedness and consequences

Women in Africa face greater challenges in coping with hazards due to limited ownership of assets, restricted access to financing, and fewer high-income job opportunities. Enhancing women’s resilience requires addressing geographic and gender-specific factors, emphasizing the need for inclusive early warning systems to ensure widespread access and preparedness across diverse African communities.

Example Indicators:

- Proportion of population exposed to hazards in the past 12 months who put precautionary measures in place for disaster preparedness and measures to protect seeds, crops or livestock, by sex and type of measure.
- Proportion of population exposed to hazards in the past 12 months
- whose time spent on unpaid care work increased as a result, by sex and type of care.
- Proportion of population exposed to hazards in the past 12 months who noted that crime or violence have worsened as a result, by sex and type of event (crime/violence).
- Proportion of population engaged in decision-making groups on disaster/hazard response, by sex.

FIGURE 1: Proportion of population exposed to hazards in the past 12 months whose time spent on unpaid care work increased as a result, by sex and type of care (Reference from Kingdom of Tonga G&E Survey Report).





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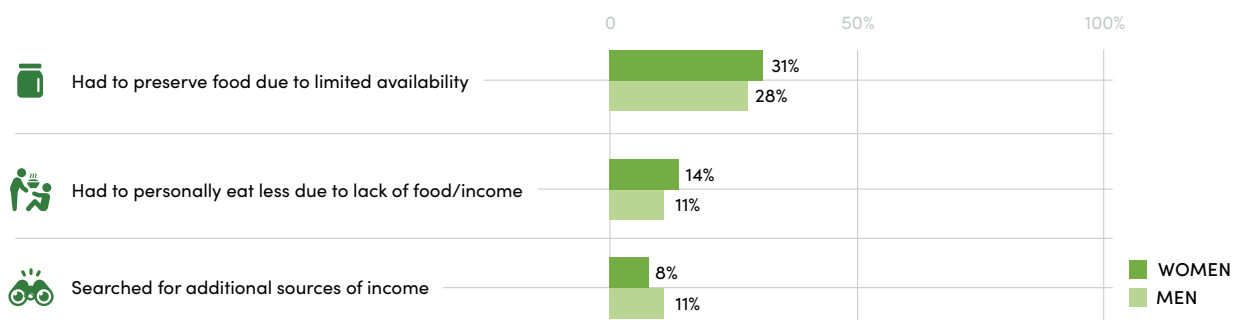
II. Exposure and coping strategies to deal with the effects of climate change.

Climate change in Africa has widespread consequences, including economic instability, food insecurity, migration, and safety concerns, affecting mental health, crime, and violence. Coping strategies vary among individuals, revealing gender-specific differences, emphasizing the need for diverse approaches that address the unique needs and roles of both women and men in adapting to climate-related challenges.

Example Indicators:

- Proportion of population with access to information on the effects of climate change, by sex and source.
- Proportion of population who experienced (income and/or food) insecurity as a result of climate change, by sex and type of effect.
- Proportion of population whose dwellings were affected by climate change, by sex and location near high environmental risk areas.
- Proportion of population whose time spent on domestic work increased as a result of climate change, by sex.
- Proportion of women in climate-related committees and management bodies, by ethnicity

FIGURE 2: Proportion of the population who experienced (income and/or food) shortages as a result of climate change, by sex and type (Reference from Kingdom of Tonga G&E Survey Report).



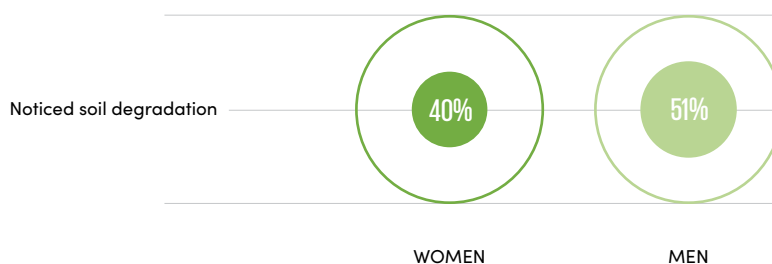
III. Natural resources, biodiversity loss and environment-related livelihoods

On the continent, women's vulnerability is exacerbated by environmental degradation. Given that women are more likely than men to depend on natural resources as their main sources of income, and to lack ownership of productive assets, the increasing degradation of the environment affects their resilience disproportionately. And yet, their lack of agency limits their contributions to natural resource management, for instance, in deciding how to manage agricultural land, marine biodiversity, or forest ecosystems. This often means that women are unable to apply their skills, including traditional ecological knowledge, towards better conservation practices.

Example Indicators:

- Proportion of employed population engaged in green jobs, by sex.
- Proportion of population utilizing land for agriculture or livestock grazing who experienced soil degradation, by sex and type of land (developed vs. wild).
- Proportion of population operating land for agriculture or livestock that applied measures to mitigate environmental-related risks, by sex.
- Proportion of population whose main source of income is environment-related, by sex.

FIGURE 3: Proportion of population utilizing land for agriculture or livestock grazing who experienced soil degradation, by sex. (Reference from Kingdom of Tonga G&E Survey Report).



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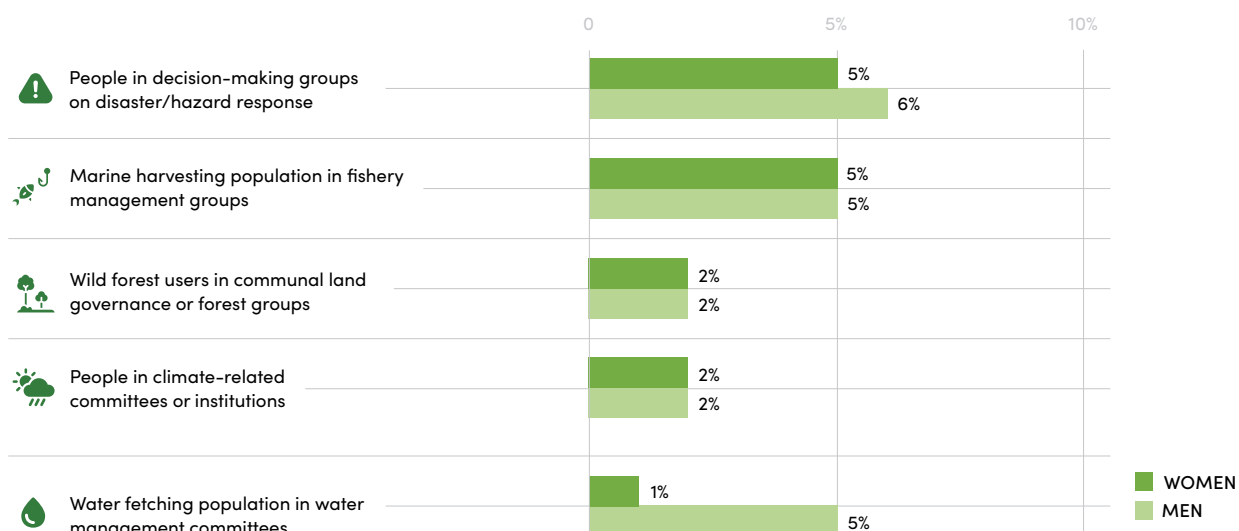
IV. Environmental conservation, degradation and decision-making

Understanding the distinct interactions between men and women and the environment is crucial for recognizing their roles in environmental degradation and conservation. In Africa, addressing gender disparities in environmental decision-making is essential for developing effective strategies and policies to promote sustainable practices and mitigate negative impacts on natural resources.

Example Indicators:

- Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure.
- Proportion of population who usually decide, alone or jointly, regarding purchases and sales of farming products and animals, by sex.
- Proportion of population engaged in decision-making groups on disaster/hazard response, by sex

FIGURE 4: Proportion of the population engaging in environmental decision-making, by sex (Reference from Kingdom of Tonga G&E Survey Report).



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Call to action

UN Women urges key stakeholders and parties to join forces to produce data through the Gender and Environment Survey (GES) and to build evidence on the interactions between gender and the environment. Specifically,

1. It is urgent to address gender inequalities as a fundamental component of disaster resilience efforts. By championing equal opportunities and resources for women and men, communities grow more resilient and better capable of effectively confronting and recovering from disasters and other hazards.
2. Targeted strategies are needed to build resilience to the multifaceted impacts of climate change, as well as recognize and mitigate gender-specific challenges.
3. Ensuring women are afforded equal opportunities for natural resource management, is critical for building a more resilient and equitable future where women play a central role in promoting sustainable environmental practices and community well-being.
4. Creating a more inclusive, informed, and effective approach to environmental decision-making is key to, which ultimately fostering sustainable practices and mitigating biodiversity loss and other forms of environmental degradation in West Africa.

To effectively measure the gender-environment nexus, through the implementation of GES in Africa, a variety of stakeholders should be engaged:

- **National Statistic Offices (NSO)**

Collaborate with experts, stakeholders and local community to develop, contextualize and adapt the Model Questionnaire; Build the capacity of supervisors and enumerators on the survey; Implement the data collection and provide quality results and indicators.

- **Policy and decisions makers**

Facilitate collaboration among government entities, agencies, and NGOs involved in the survey; Advocate for support from stakeholders, including government bodies, international organizations, and NGOs; contribute to the development and refinement of the model questionnaire to align with national policy priorities and decision-making needs. Use survey data to inform national policies, strategies and development programs.

- **Donors and funding agencies**

Provide financial and technical resources for the survey's implementation, analysis and dissemination; Support the capacity-building initiatives for NSO and stakeholders; Ensure alignment with global agendas related to gender equality, environmental sustainability, and broader development goals; Raise awareness about the survey's objectives and potential impact on policies and programs. Use data in national policies, strategies and development programs.

- **NGOs and Civil society organizations**

Facilitate community participation, including for identification of information needs; Provide training and support to community members, especially those involved in data collection or serving as survey respondents; ensure inclusivity, awareness, and the translation of survey findings into actionable initiatives that benefit local communities and advance the goals of gender equality and environmental sustainability. Advocate for gender and environment based on the survey results.

- **UN agencies**

Facilitate resource mobilization efforts to secure funding for the survey from international donors and funding agencies; Coordinate with various national stakeholders to ensure a collective and comprehensive approach to resource mobilization; Provide technical expertise in the development and refinement of the model questionnaire to ensure alignment with international standards and best practices. Use data in national policies, strategies and development programs.

UN Women Africa can support and provide capacity to build and strengthen partnerships for the production and use of data on gender and the environment

This support and capacity are rooted in UN Women's mandate and specialized knowledge and research expertise regarding the intersections between gender and the environment. This knowledge is informed by ongoing research initiatives, reports, and collaborations with NSO and research institutions. UN Women coordination, mobilization and partnership expertise ensures a holistic and collaborative approach in ensuring there is adequate production and use of data on gender and environment.

UN Women Africa advocates for the effective use of gender- environment data in policy-making, as these statistics contribute to a broader understanding of how gender considerations can affect environmental conservation and degradation, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and resilience to disasters and the effects of climate change. UN Women Africa expertise in resource mobilization will ensure adequate funding is secured for the successful implementation of the survey.

Methodological aspects

The Model Questionnaire for Measuring the Nexus between Gender and Environment will be contextualized to the context of Africa where new data will be collected and analysed to produce a Gender and Environment Survey for countries of the continent. The methodological aspects will highlight:

- The Geographical scope with a primary goal to have a wide representation of mostly remote areas to better understand the frequency and long-lasting effects of disasters and climate change.
- The Sampling procedure will be conducted as a three-stage probability sample design whereby census units will be selected as the first stage, ... households in these units will be randomly selected for the second stage and as the third stage, one adult woman, and one adult man (age 18 years or older) will be randomly selected from the household roster to respond to the survey.

- Data collection is done by CAPI to allow for faster and better-quality data that will be processed in R and STATA/or SPSS statistical software. Analysis will be done following a standard tabulation plan and list of the survey indicators; report will be issued few months after data collection is completed.

For further information on this survey, please contact :

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