

# Gender and Climate Justice

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News out of the international climate talks (COP 29) in Azerbaijan last month focused on disappointing levels of financial commitments from wealthy nations to assist countries struggling with the worst harms from a warming planet. But advocates for women also expressed frustration with a lack of progress on addressing gendered impacts of climate change.

The Women's Environment & Development Organization (WEDO), for instance, [went into COP 29 prioritizing](#) a gender-just transition away from fossil fuels that includes attention to care and demilitarization; feminist climate finance that includes alternative forms of funding; collection of data on how women are particularly harmed by climate change and its impacts; and a shift in power and representation toward women and other non-traditional voices in these negotiating spaces to achieve true climate justice.

Countries did adopt a ten-year work program on gender, encourage mainstreaming of gender- and age-disaggregated data, and provide a clear roadmap for a gender action plan by next year's COP. However, [negotiations were marred by hours of pushback](#) on language addressing human rights and equality, according to the Women & Gender Constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which organizes the annual COPs. This constituency consists of 54 civil society organizations, including WEDO.

Advocates also had been pressing governments for at least \$1.3 trillion annually in direct public grants to assist the most climate-vulnerable nations. But in the end, the negotiations resulted in \$300 billion, mostly made up of loans and private sector funding.

Civil society organizations and the [United Nations itself](#) recognize the particular threats that climate change poses to women's livelihoods, health and safety.

Women are responsible for securing food and water in many cultures and thus disproportionately experience the stress of erratic rainfall and drought. This, in turn, can put more pressure on girls to leave school and help with these essential tasks. As climate change drives conflict across the world, women and girls also become more vulnerable to human trafficking, child marriage and other forms of violence.

[Contributors to a book of essays and poems](#) written entirely by women detail some of these particular gender harms while also claiming that more female leadership would result in better outcomes for climate policy, reducing emissions and protecting land. They name actress Jane Fonda, activist Greta Thunberg, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and former UNFCCC head Christiana Figueres as among those who have had great influence.

Authors in the anthology cited four characteristics these leaders share: prioritizing change over being in charge, a deep commitment to justice and equality, emotional intelligence, and recognizing that building community is critical to building a better world.