

A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean



CARICOM Strategy: Climate Resilience

Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) K. Women and the Environment

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) GR 34 Rural Women

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 37 Gender-Related Dimensions of Risk

IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL DISASTERS ON WOMEN

The Bahamas

47. The Committee notes with appreciation that women occupy senior positions at the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and that a gender assessment following Hurricane Matthew was conducted. The Committee, however, recalls the vulnerability of the State party to serious environmental and climate change and natural disasters. In that regard, it is concerned that climate change and other climate-related disasters affect women disproportionately and that more could be done to include the special needs of women, particularly vulnerable groups of women, in disaster risk reduction preparedness, response and recovery.

48. In line with its General Recommendation No. 37 (2018) on gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Ensure that women are represented in decision-making processes at all levels with regard to the development and implementation of policies on disaster risk reduction, post-disaster management and climate change;**

(b) **Ensure that the results of the gender assessment following recent Hurricanes are used in the development and implementation of future policies and programmes on disaster risk reduction and climate change, in addition to other emergencies; and that all policies and programmes are based on a comprehensive gender analysis and that they take into account special needs of women, including vulnerable groups of women.**

Barbados

47. The Committee notes with appreciation that women occupy leadership positions in the Department of Emergency Management and in district organizations in the State party. Nevertheless, it is concerned that the State party has not explicitly incorporated a gender perspective into its disaster risk reduction strategies.

48. The Committee recommends that the State party include an explicit gender perspective in national policies and actions plans on climate change and disaster response and risk reduction, targeting women not only as those disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change and disasters but also as active participants in the formulation and implementation of such policies.

Grenada

Rural women

35. While welcoming the efforts of the State party to reduce rural poverty, the Committee notes with concern that rural women are disproportionately affected by poverty, unemployment and gender-based violence. Rural women of all ages, including women with disabilities who are doubly disadvantaged, have limited access to health and social services, to skill-development and training opportunities, and to justice and legal aid, and have low rates of participation in decision-making. The Committee is also concerned about the high prevalence of female-headed households that also suffer from undue disadvantage. The Committee is further concerned that rural women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters, as evidenced in the cases of Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Emily.

36. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(b) Ensure that the development and implementation of policies and programmes on disaster preparedness, response to natural disasters and impacts of climate change, as well as other emergencies, are based on a comprehensive gender analysis, and mainstream the concerns of women, particularly those of rural women.

Haiti

39. The Committee recalls the vulnerability of the State party to serious environmental and climate change and natural disasters. In that regard, it is concerned that the impact of climate change and other climate-related disasters affect rural women disproportionately, given that they rely heavily on access to natural resources for their daily survival. The Committee is further concerned that women are not informed of or given opportunities to participate in policymaking and decision-making processes on climate change and disaster risk reduction initiatives.

40. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that women are included and may actively participate in planning, decision-making and implementation processes concerning disaster risk reduction, post-disaster management and climate change policies.**

St Kitts and Nevis

92. The Committee notes that one of the main obstacles to the full implementation of the Convention in Saint Kitts and Nevis has been the hurricanes which frequently devastate the country, and which in 1998 destroyed 85 per cent of the housing stock.

Suriname

42. The Committee commends the State party for its commitment to addressing climate change through risk reduction strategies. However, it is concerned that the State party has not explicitly incorporated a gender perspective into those strategies. The Committee also regrets that the second national communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, submitted in 2016, failed to take into account the specific vulnerability of women to natural disasters and their ability as agents of change.

43. **Drawing attention to its general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure the effective participation of women, in particular rural women, Maroon women and indigenous women, in the formulation and implementation of policies and action plans on disaster risk reduction and climate change, not only because they are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change and disasters but also as agents of change. It also recommends that such policies and plans, including the third national communication, explicitly include a gender perspective and take into account the specific needs of women.**

Trinidad and Tobago

Rural women and natural disasters

36. The Committee notes the State party's efforts to eradicate poverty in rural areas, including through the introduction of a community development fund and an agricultural incentive programme. It notes the

delegation's response that disaster risk reduction and climate change are addressed in the draft national policy on gender and development. The Committee is concerned, however, at the lack of information on the overall situation of rural women and their participation in the development of policies and strategies in all matters having an impact on their life, in particular with regard to disaster risk reduction and climate change considering that the State party lies in the hurricane belt.

37. **The Committee recommends that the State party provide, in the next periodic report, information on the overall situation of rural women and the results of the study aimed at gathering national agricultural data, disaggregated by sex, to identify the gender differential with regard to ownership, earnings, marketing and other aspects of agriculture, as well as access to other services such as education, health and employment. It also recommends that the State party ensure that the development and implementation of policies and programmes on disaster risk reduction and climate change, in addition to other emergencies, are based on a comprehensive gender analysis and that such policies and programmes take into account vulnerable but productive groups of women, such as rural women. It further recommends that the State party ensure the participation of women at the decision-making level in the design and implementation of policies and programmes, including those relating to climate change and disasters**