

2-HOURS VIRTUAL PROGRAM
ON
“ROLE OF WOMEN IN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION”

Date: 28th November 2024

Time: 14:30hrs – 16:30hrs

1. BACKGROUND

Climate change, stemming from the greenhouse effect triggered by rising global temperatures, poses significant challenges for the state of Gujarat. The region experiences a multitude of climate-related impacts, including the rapid increase in average temperatures, alterations in cloud cover and precipitation patterns, extreme climatic conditions, rising ocean temperatures and sea-levels. These climate change concerns exert continuous pressures in the entire state, especially in the coastal areas, aggravating existing vulnerabilities and necessitating urgent action to integrate adaptation measures and mitigation strategies. Given the substantial population residing near the coastlines, particularly evident in Gujarat, the need for proactive adaptation efforts to address climate change impacts is utmost need of the hour.

Many recognize climate change as one of the foremost challenges of the 21st century, underscoring the importance of swift action by governmental bodies responsible for monitoring such regions. Incorporating climate adaptation into coastal management practices is essential to mitigate the impacts of climate change and safeguard the well-being of communities and ecosystems in the state of Gujarat.

Impact of Extreme Weather on Gujarat

Gujarat, boasting a coastline stretching 1,663 kilometres and home to 9.9 million residents across 40 coastal talukas, holds the distinction of India's longest coastline (Census, 2011). The region's susceptibility to sea level rise, cyclones, saline intrusion, and shifts in fish spawning patterns portends potential future migration and displacement of communities due to climate change, as highlighted in the UN's World Migration Report (2020). Climate change-induced temperature shifts are anticipated to exacerbate, with the World Bank projecting a 2-2.5°C temperature rise in 19 of Gujarat's 26 districts by 2050, rendering them climate change hotspots.

Key climate change hazards in Gujarat encompass extremes in temperature, precipitation, and sea level, each exerting diverse impacts on infrastructure, population demographics, various economic sectors, and agriculture. Agriculture, engaging 50% of the working population and contributing 9.5% to the nation's GDP, faces heightened vulnerabilities, with heat stress and diminishing grasslands potentially curtailing livestock and animal husbandry output, affecting the region's 26.9 million livestock population. Additionally, forest access remains crucial for a significant portion of the populace's daily needs.

Gujarat's distinctive ecosystems, particularly in the environmentally fragile Kutch and Saurashtra regions, face escalating risks from climate change, desertification, and habitat loss, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive adaptation and mitigation strategies.

2. WHY IS CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IS IMPORTANT?

Climate change adaptation is vital in addressing the disproportionate impacts on women, particularly in the context of disaster risk and resilience. Women often bear the brunt of climate-induced disasters due to existing social, economic, and cultural inequalities that make them more vulnerable. Here's why adaptation is crucial from a female-centered perspective:

Increased Vulnerability: In many societies, women have fewer resources, less access to information, and limited decision-making power, which directly influences their capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters. Climate change exacerbates these inequalities, making it harder for women to recover from extreme events like droughts, floods, and storms. As caregivers, women are responsible for looking after children, the elderly, and the sick, which further complicates their ability to flee or access relief resources in emergencies.

Livelihood Disruption: Many women in developing regions rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, and climate change-induced hazards, such as droughts and floods, directly affect food production and water access. Reduced water and food availability put pressure on women, who are often tasked with ensuring household food security. When crops fail, the burden of seeking alternative income falls heavily on women, limiting their economic empowerment.

Health Risks: Climate change can intensify health risks for women, especially during heatwaves or disasters when access to healthcare becomes strained. In addition, pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition and diseases linked to food scarcity or poor water quality caused by climate change.

Social Inequity in Adaptation: Adaptation strategies that do not account for gender dynamics risk deepening social inequities. Women often lack formal education or access to climate adaptation knowledge and resources, leaving them side-lined from crucial decision-making processes. By ensuring women's participation in adaptation planning and policy, communities can foster more inclusive and effective solutions that benefit all members.

Climate Leadership: Women play an essential role as agents of change in building climate resilience at the grassroots level. They are key in managing natural resources like water, which is critical in adapting to climate change. Empowering women with the knowledge, tools, and leadership opportunities to contribute to climate adaptation strategies will enhance the community's overall ability to withstand disasters.

3. TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Sr. No.	Department/Organizations	Level of Participants
1.	Women & Child Development Department	L1, L2
2.	Panchayat, Rural Housing & Rural Development Department	L1, L2
3.	Climate Change Department	L1, L2
4.	Forest & Environment Department	L1, L2

5.	Health & Family Welfare Department	L1, L2
6.	Local NGO's and CBO's	L1, L2

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

- i. To raise awareness of how women, particularly in rural and vulnerable communities, are essential contributors to sustainable climate adaptation strategies through their roles in agriculture, water management, and resource conservation.
- ii. To encourage the development and implementation of gender-responsive climate adaptation policies at the state and local levels, ensuring that women's unique challenges and contributions are recognized in government climate strategies.
- iii. To provide a platform to showcase successful examples of women-led initiatives in climate change adaptation, and to inspire the inclusion of more women in leadership positions related to climate action and disaster management.
- iv. To equip government officials, community leaders, and stakeholders with practical knowledge and tools to integrate women's participation in climate resilience programs, promoting community-based adaptation strategies.
