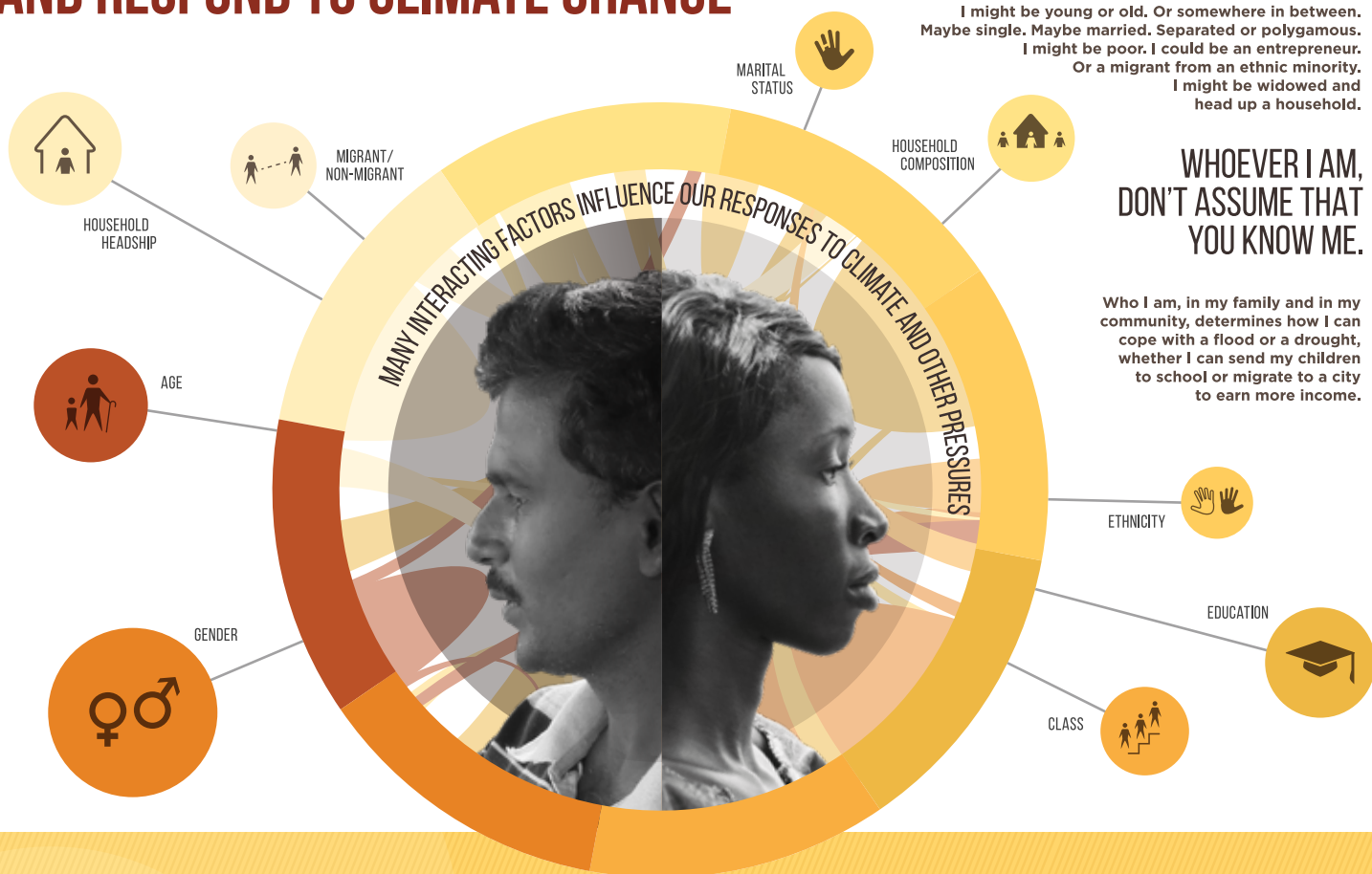


GENDER IS ONE OF MANY FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE HOW WE ARE IMPACTED BY AND RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE

WE ARE ALL VULNERABLE IN DIFFERENT WAYS. WE DON'T FIT NEATLY INTO CATEGORIES.



I might be young or old. Or somewhere in between. Maybe single. Maybe married. Separated or polygamous. I might be poor. I could be an entrepreneur. Or a migrant from an ethnic minority. I might be widowed and head up a household.

WHOEVER I AM, DON'T ASSUME THAT YOU KNOW ME.

Who I am, in my family and in my community, determines how I can cope with a flood or a drought, whether I can send my children to school or migrate to a city to earn more income.

MEN AND WOMEN ARE NOT HOMOGENEOUS CATEGORIES

Rather, my experiences are shaped by the way that social norms and laws intersect with the different dimensions of who I am.

My vulnerability to the impacts of climate change depends on whether I am a man or a woman, young or old, and on my social and cultural status.

RECOMMENDATIONS

01



Gender and other socio-cultural factors influence people's vulnerability and their ability to respond to climate change and other pressures. Policies need to be more sensitive to the gendered nature of everyday realities and experiences.

02

The vulnerable may not be who we think, so the approach to building resilience should be contextual and socially differentiated.



03



Many analyses, policies and plans stop at sex-disaggregated data or considerations. To address the underlying causes of women's vulnerability and to promote more effective adaptation responses, we need to consider the interaction of many other intersecting factors.

04

To change norms that have persisted for too long our legal systems need to address systematic discrimination entrenched by patriarchy. For this, we also need to engage men and boys.



05



As women join the workforce in larger numbers, it is important to put in place systems that strengthen their technical capacity, and improve their confidence and literacy.



CASE STUDY 01



FACTORS LIKE GENDER, MARITAL STATUS, HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION AND HOUSEHOLD HEADSHIP CAN HAVE WIDE-REACHING EFFECTS ON MANAGING RISK.

Ayah is 50 years old and from Isiolo in Kenya. At 18, she became the second wife of a curio seller. The first wife, Hasana took her in like a sister. Their children grew up together and they shared farming work and domestic chores until Hasana died. Things then became more difficult as Ayah struggled to provide for her children whilst keeping up with her farming duties. Although her husband is well off and owns 300 goats, he stopped looking after her and her four children once they were old enough to marry. He is closer to Hasana's children and has refused to treat all his children equally or to give Ayah a share of the property. After a series of disagreements Ayah requested a divorce, which he refused to allow as this would mean paying a divorce settlement. Today they are separated and the land she once farmed is lying idle. Ayah now lives with her daughter and helps to look after her grandchildren. In the future Ayah would like to start a clothing business but knows she will need capital for this.

CASE STUDY 03



IN MANY CASES, YOUNG MEN WHO ARE POORLY EDUCATED AND LANDLESS OR MARGINAL LANDHOLDERS, ARE AMONG THE MOST VULNERABLE.

Laxman is a 28-year-old marginal landholder and seasonal migrant from Karnataka in India. He has worked at a hotel as a cleaner, part-time as an agricultural wage labourer, and as construction labourer. None of these jobs paid enough. He moved to Bangalore and found work as a painter but soon fell ill and had to return to his village since he had no ties in the city and city hospitals are expensive. However, to help his family pay for his sister's dowry, he went back to the city to work again as a painter. He is now in heavy debt and has to continue to work despite poor health. He says, "I am worried about repaying the debt taken for the wedding. I only know how to paint and it won't be enough."



CASE STUDY 02



VULNERABILITY CAN BE AFFECTED IN MORE THAN ONE WAY BY THE INTERACTION OF CULTURAL NORMS, WHO MIGRATES, MARITAL STATUS AND EDUCATION LEVELS.

Joyce, originally from Nandom in northern Ghana, moved to a smaller village to marry. When she had only daughters, her husband married again. Although she is more educated than both her husband and his second wife, whom she calls her rival, she has no decision-making authority or capacity to adapt in her household. The situation is especially hard during the dry season, when food shortages are experienced. She says, "I can't make any decisions. It is only my husband who makes decisions." Joyce regrets marrying someone from another village as men in her own village are monogamous. Joyce worries about her children and has tried to farm on her own, hiding the profits so that she can pay for their education.



CASE STUDY 04



SOMETIMES, THE ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS IS MORE GREATLY INFLUENCED BY MARITAL DYNAMICS THAN BY EDUCATION OR CLASS.

From Namibia, Ndatala is a 59-year-old health professional with a tertiary-level education. In some ways, because of her knowledge and income, she has some agency and power. Her family own the only mahangu (pearl millet) thrasher in her community, and she has used her income to pay university allowances for her nieces and nephews. Ndatala also serves as the main advisor to the village headman. She feels that her knowledge and abilities are recognised outside of the household. However, this same power is not reflected within her household. Ndatala is part of a minority ethnic group that has moderate levels of patriarchy, and in her village, men dominate the decision making. Her 62-year-old traditional husband - who has primary-level education and does not understand modern farming - prohibits her from making decisions. Because of this, she has not been able to adopt new farming technologies or ideas to increase her yields.

GENDER IS ONE OF MANY FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE HOW WE ARE IMPACTED BY AND RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE



The five-year ASSAR project (Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions, 2014-2018) uses insights from multi-scale, interdisciplinary work to inform and transform climate adaptation policy and practice in ways that promote the long-term wellbeing of the most vulnerable and those with the least agency.