

SRHR AND GOAL 13:

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13.2 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

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Achievement of Goal 13's mission requires that all climate action recognises the importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as an essential element of climate change adaptation and resilience.

Climate change directly affects SRHR by contributing to reduced or unavailable health services, harmful effects on pregnant women and reduced access to safe and clean water.



SRHR and climate change are intrinsically linked and yet the impacts of climate change on SRHR are often hidden or overlooked. It is important to recognise that the communities that have historically contributed least to accelerating the climate crisis are suffering the most, with women and girls in low- and middle-income countries bearing the brunt of the consequences of global warming.

There are a number of ways that climate change will directly impact on SRHR, including:

- Reduced or unavailable health services in areas affected by climate change, meaning access to services like contraception, safe abortion care and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections are unavailable
- Harmful effects on pregnant women and newborns due to increased heat exposure and other adverse exposures, such as smoke from bushfires
- Reduced access to safe and clean water during pregnancy and childbirth

Climate change is causing a slowly unfolding humanitarian crisis across the globe. During humanitarian crises or displacement, we typically see:

- Increases in sexual and gender based violence
- Increases in child, early and forced marriages
- Further neglect of the health and rights needs of people who typically face marginalization during non-crisis times, such as those with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics.

To solve the climate crisis, we need to ensure that all climate action takes gender inequalities into account and that women and girls are central to solutions and decision making. Supporting women and girls in their reproductive choices empowers them to plan their families in a way that works for them. This helps them to have a seat at the table and to be actively involved in adaptation and resilience-building efforts in their local communities and to become local, national or international leaders and decision makers.

Actions

- Encourage enhanced collaboration between climate change, health, and gender sectors
- Advocate for targeted funding for SRHR programmes as part of climate change resilience and mitigation strategies
- Support investment in research to address evidence gaps and integrate the analysis of SRHR and climate data into effective interventions to achieve co-benefits in SRHR and climate change action



FURTHER INFORMATION

[Family Planning NSW's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals Reports](#)

[Women Deliver: The link between climate change and sexual and reproductive health and rights](#)

[IPPF: The climate crisis and sexual and reproductive health and rights position paper](#)

[United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 13 Factsheet](#)