

Climate Policy in India through a Gender and Equity Lens

India's climate policy

Recognizing the importance of addressing climate change, on 30 June 2008, the Prime Minister released India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). The NAPCC identified measures to promote understanding of climate change, adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation. Towards this the national action plan set out eight national subsidiary missions¹. The NAPCC, it is argued, was initiated primarily in response to developments at the international level, the eight missions, however, focus on India's domestic development needs.² The NAPCC aims to achieve a sustainable development, meeting economic as well as environmental objectives, protecting the poor and vulnerable sections, among other things. In the 12th plan, additionally, various stakeholders, including the State government is expected to be involved in the implementing NAPCC. The states are required to prepare State Level Action Plan for Climate Change.

Need for addressing gender and equity

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change impacts different regions, generations, age groups, income groups, occupations and genders differently. Climate change impacts women's life differently than men's, hence, climate adaptation policies and measures need to be gender sensitive. Most consequences of climate change, in terms of access to clean water and fuel, agricultural productivity, risk of famine, are strongly connected to gender equality. The NAPCC also recognizes that impact of climate change could prove particularly severe for women. Shortage of water, forest biomass and food grains as well as increased risk to health, would render women the most vulnerable along with children and the elderly. Women's workload shall increase and re-enforce traditional roles. However, it is important to note that women are not just victims of climate change, they also offer adaptation and mitigation strategies to cope with climate change. Women's responsibilities in the household, community and as stewards of natural resources position them well to develop strategies for adapting to changing environmental realities.³ It is thus very important that women participate in all and at all levels of climate policy decisions.

Today's forum – The Politics and Economics of FDI through a Gender lens – shall address these debates.

¹ National Solar Mission; National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency; National Mission on Sustainable Habitat; National Water Mission; National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem; National Mission for a Green India; National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture and National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change.

² Atteridge, Aaron, Manish Kumar Shrivastava, Neha Pahuja and Himani Upadhyay, "Climate Policy in India: What Shapes International, National and State Policy?" <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3357885/>

³ Quoted in Parikh, Jyoti, "Gender and Climate Change Framework for Analysis, Policy & Action".