

Gender + Klima: Key Messages at a Glance

The following key messages provide a brief summary of the results of the transfer project GenderNETCLIM. They are based primarily on discussions had during several workshops and a conference with experts in the areas of climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and gender equality and gender research. The key messages also include findings from current research on gender and climate change.

1.

Integrating gender perspectives creates the possibility to shift the focus to the potential of social debates to address the problem of climate change. These debates link climate change to everyday life and to the interests and needs of people. This helps us to create vibrant visions of a climate-friendly world.

2.

Linking climate policies to goals related to social and gender equality helps to increase their legitimacy and acceptance with the general public. This can contribute to improved and more effective implementation.

3.

Gender justice / gender equality, as legally established objectives, can also be promoted by climate policies. Subsequently, positive or negative impacts of climate policies should be identified and addressed.

4.

Taking gender aspects into account in research and practice allows for the social dimensions of climate policies to be revealed, creating a link between technical and social solutions and strategies.

5.

The integration of gender perspectives into climate policy contributes to achieving social justice and thus, at the same time, to climate justice.

6.

When gender perspectives are taken into consideration in the process of developing and implementing mitigation and adaptation measures, then societal roles, socially-defined responsibilities and unpaid work are brought into focus. The impact of adaptation and mitigation measures should be considered not only in regards to paid employment, but also to care work. This raises the question of how all forms of work (employment and care work) can be re-valued and redistributed.

7.

Addressing gender perspectives in Germany can also direct our attention to our responsibility for our actions and the impact they have on countries in the Global South, for example by highlighting the gendered division of labor and the working conditions in global value and supply chains or by exposing the effects that our high levels of resource use can have on the livelihoods of those facing poverty in other parts of the world.

8.

Climate policy takes on an emancipatory dimension when gender relations – and the associated injustices and unequal power relations – are addressed. This promotes the notion of a fundamental and far-reaching social transformation, which in turn is the precondition for a post-fossil society.

9.

Mitigation and adaptation measures should bring a variety of benefits and pursue both quantitative goals (for example, the reduction of greenhouse gases) AND qualitative objectives (for example, improved health, quality of life, equality). Through the inclusion of gender perspectives, the one-dimensional nature of mitigation measures can be broadened, allowing for a multitude of positive social effects.

10.

The impacts of climate change and the subsequent need to adapt will result in distributional conflicts, which in turn will have social justice consequences. By including gender perspectives, these conflicts can be identified beforehand and appropriate countermeasures put into place.

11.

The exchange between experts from the field of climate change and field of gender equality makes clear that organisational structures (such as the persistent sectoral focus of policy fields) can and must be transformed. Furthermore, in order to create change, it becomes clear that new forms of cooperation and additional spaces will be required, along with a redistribution of time and money, which can also act as incentives for this mutual learning process.

12.

The critical perspective provided by gender research can problematise supposed self-evident and implicit assumptions that may otherwise remain unquestioned when mitigation and adaptation measures are designed, with the consequence that their ability to be implemented is hindered. Thus, it contributes to quality improvement.