POLICY BRIEF

Cultivating Climate and Gender Justice with Men and Boys



MenEngage Alliance
working with men and boys for gender equality

MenEngage Alliance
Climate & Environmental Justice
WORKING GROUP

WECF
WOMEN ENGAGE FOR A COMMON FUTURE

D E S I G N A N D L A Y O U T

STUDIO notyourchibi

P U B L I S H E D

NOVEMBER, 2026

POLICY BRIEF

Cultivating Climate and Gender Justice with Men and Boys

MenEngage Alliance
working with men and boys for gender equality

MenEngage Alliance
Climate & Environmental Justice
WORKING GROUP

WECF
WOMEN ENGAGE FOR A COMMON FUTURE

What is this resource?

This policy brief provides an accessible overview of research on the relationship between men, masculinities and the climate crisis-and how to engage men and boys in fostering gender and environmental justice. It seeks to make this research easily translatable into policy change. It is therefore particularly aimed at policymakers at international, national and local levels, but should also be useful for practitioners, activists, and researchers. It begins with a concise executive summary and 10 overarching policy recommendations particularly aimed at states.

Author

Dr Stephen R Burrell (he/him) is a Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Melbourne (Australia), and an Honorary Fellow at Durham University (UK). His research focuses on men, masculinities, and violence–especially the prevention of gender-based violence and harms against the planet. He is a member of MenEngage's Climate Justice Working Group, and co-hosts a podcast called Now and Men: Changing Masculinities, Challenging Norms (www.nowandmen.net).

Hanna Gunnarsson (she/her) is a gender expert. Hanna has more than 10 years advocacy and campaigning experience on gender equality and human rights issues. She works with an intersectional feminist approach around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Paris Agreement, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, mobilising feminists and allies in WECF's network. Hanna provides capacity strengthening and facilitates meaningful participation of partners in regional and global decision-making processes.

Publishers

Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF International - www.wecf.org**)** is a non-profit ecofeminist organisation working towards a just and healthy world for all. Founded by women in the lead-up to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, WECF has more than 30 years of experience strengthening ecofeminist organisations in Europe and around the world. Its mission is to serve as a bridge: from local to global, from policy to reality, and from paper to practice. Together with its 250 partners in over 50 countries. WECF works on gender and rights, climate and energy, and toxic-free and health through action, advocacy and awareness.

The **MenEngage Global Alliance (**www.menengage.org**)** is the world's largest collective for calling men and boys into the work of women's rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, climate and gender justice for all, while supporting men and boys to break free of stereotypes of what it means to be a man. Together, we are 1,000+ groups in 90+ countries coming together around shared values and standards for how to work with men and boys for gender equality.

The **MenEngage Climate Justice Working Group** was formalised in 2021 through collective dialogue among grassroots activists, scholars, and practitioners committed to addressing the gendered dimensions of environmental destruction and climate breakdown. This member-led group has regional representatives from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, South Asia, North America, the Middle East and Oceania.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the Earth for sustaining us. Thank you to the animals that live with us, and the plants that heal us. Thank you to all of the people who provided their insightful expertise and feedback in the development of this policy brief: Muhammad Khurram (MenEngage), Sohanur Rahman (YouthNet Global), Kayinga Muddu (COTFONE), Vidar Vetterfalk (MÄN), Tom Hornbrook (MenEngage), Prof Bob Pease, and all members of the MenEngage Climate Justice Working Group.

This report was written on the traditional, stolen, and unceded territories of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation; and, the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh), q̓íc̓əy̓ (Katzie), kʷikʷəƛ̓əm (Kwikwetlem), Qayqayt, Kwantlen, Semiahmoo and Tsawwassen peoples. We pay our respects to the Elders, past, present, and future.

Lastly, a special thank you to the MenEngage Youth Reference Group (YRG) for their support in developing the visual feel and direction of this policy brief. Thank you to Šejla Bratić for designing it.

Suggested citation

Burrell, S. R. & Gunnarsson, H. (2026). *Cultivating climate and gender justice with men and boys: Policy brief.* WECF International & MenEngage Alliance.

This policy brief was co-funded by the European Union through WomenPower2030: Feminist Accelerate Action for Sustainable Development. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission.

Table of Contents

8 Executive summary

11 Ten key policy recommendations for gender just climate action

13 Climate change: A gendered crisis

15 The role of men in global heating

18 Men's unequal contributions to ecological destruction

21 Community Transformation Foundation Network (COTFONE)

23 Masculinities and the domination of nature

25 Industries profiting from harmful gender norms

27 MÄN

28 Paving paths forward through care

31 YouthNet Global

32 Social change for climate and gender justice

36 References

36 Unequal impacts of environmental destruction

37 Climate change and gender norms

38 Masculinity and the environment

40 Gender-based violence

41 Relationships with other animals

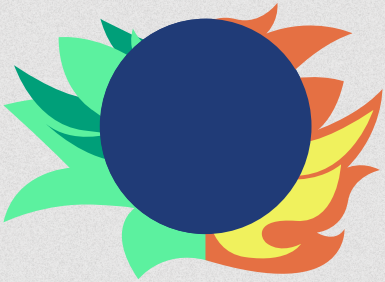
42 War, militarism, and authoritarianism

43 Ecofeminism

44 Men and masculinities

44 Engaging with men and boys

45 Responding to the climate and nature crisis



Executive

SUMMARY

- The gendered nature of the climate crisis remains under-recognised within policymaking. When it is, it is usually framed as something that happens to women. **Far less attention goes to its root causes in men and patriarchal ideas about masculinity.**
- Historically and currently, **men dominate the institutions, from governments to big business, that have allowed global heating to cross 1.5°C as of 2026**, despite alternative forms of energy production and governance being available. For instance, only 19% of oil and gas executives and 15% of environment ministers are women.
- Women and First Peoples are **underrepresented and systemically locked out of institutions and political decision-making roles** concerning the planet. For example, women made up just 38% of the party delegates at COP30.
- The harms of the climate crisis fall hardest on women, girls, LGBTIQ+ people, communities in the Global Majority, and First Peoples, who **have been naming this crisis and its solutions for decades** while those in power chose not to listen.
- In order to get to the roots of the climate crisis, we must therefore **address the patriarchal, capitalist, colonialist social structures** which have created it.

- Individual men tend to express **lower levels of concern** about climate change than women.
- There is evidence that, on average, **men's carbon emissions** are higher than women's, due to factors such as eating more meat and driving more as proof of being masculine.
- Men are more likely to work in **extractive industries,** from fossil fuels to militaries.
- An **intersectional lens** is vital however, as some men bear more responsibility than others, particularly those who are in the Minority World, white, wealthy, and in positions of power.
- **These patterns are by no means inevitable.** Ecofeminists reject the notion that men are 'inherently' more destructive towards nature.

- Ecofeminists have drawn attention to how patriarchal Western capitalist societies have constructed humans as **separate from and superior to nature and other animals,** associating masculinity with humanity and culture and femininity with nature.
- These ways of thinking are used to **justify both 'man's' entitlement to exploit nature and *social* hierarchies,** with women and people of colour constructed as emotional and embodied and (white) men portrayed as rational and dispassionate.
- In this context, men attempt to prove their masculinity by **exerting dominance over nature** and things associated with it; from driving fast cars and hunting, to objectifying women.
- However, these expectations–such as suppressing one's emotions–are **deeply harmful for men and boys themselves,** as well as for the people and the ecology around them.
- Furthermore, the climate crisis is causing **devastation to the lives of people of all genders,** including men and boys. Men struggle to deal with the trauma of disasters in uniquely gendered ways, and one way they may respond is through increased violence.

- Some men resist climate action because they feel it threatens their masculine identities as 'providers'. This highlights the need for a **gender-transformative just transition**; investing in good quality alternative jobs at the same time as challenging rigid gender norms.
- The economic and political uncertainties that societies are experiencing globally are being **exploited by anti-gender and anti-climate movements**, who offer simplistic scapegoats and easy solutions to men and boys, such as 'strongman' authoritarian politics, which is only exacerbating their problems.
- **Care and connection** for people and the planet offers boys and men a positive alternative to these damaging expectations. This demonstrates the need to engage with them about being allies, beneficiaries, and agents of change for climate and gender justice.
- **Men and boys can work to recognise their role as co-strugglers for a gender just and sustainable world.**
- To be genuinely transformative, it is crucial that this work is **accountable** to ecofeminist and Indigenous movements, and that it focuses on **changing systems** as well as individual behaviours.
- Despite facing state and corporate repression, environmental movements, particularly in the Majority World, are demonstrating that **more sustainable ways of relating to nature and each other are possible**.

TEN KEY POLICY

Recommendations

FOR GENDER JUST CLIMATE ACTION

These recommendations are addressed primarily to states, as the main duty-bearers under international human rights law, including in their roles as Parties to the UNFCCC and as donors.

1. **States** must take urgent action to phase out fossil fuels and extractive industries as the foundations of national and global economies, and uphold the right of all people to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, as well as the rights of nature.
2. **States and employers**, working with trade unions and affected communities, must deliver a gender-transformative just transition to green economies. This means providing quality alternative jobs and training for people working in and reliant upon extractive industries, including informal and unpaid workers; prioritising local circular economies; and investing in low-carbon social infrastructure such as care and education.
3. **States, donors and international financial institutions** should rapidly invest in climate adaptation infrastructure (which will save resources in the long term) and disaster preparedness and response, with gender and other social inequalities addressed at every stage of implementation, so that protection reaches everyone and not only those with more resources.
4. **States and multilateral bodies** must guarantee the rights of women and girls in all their diversity, gender-diverse people, First Peoples, local communities, youth and disabled people to participate in environmental decision-making at every level, from local to international, as rights-holders and decision-makers with real influence over outcomes. This includes ensuring at least equal representation of women; upholding First Peoples'

right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent for any project affecting their lands, territories and resources, in line with UNDRIP; and guaranteeing access to information, participation and justice in environmental matters, as set out in the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement.

5. **States** must end the criminalisation and repression of environmental defenders and activists and protect them from violence, including gender-based violence. **Corporations** must respect defenders' rights throughout their operations. Both should draw on defenders' experience and expertise to shape responses to the climate crisis from the grassroots up.
6. **States** should redirect budgets from war and militarisation towards gender just climate finance and compensation for loss and damage, and cooperate internationally to reach shared agreements to this end.
7. **States and donors** should fund and support gender-transformative prevention work in education, workplaces and communities, including work with men and boys that is accountable to feminist movements. This work should address the gendered root causes of violence and abuse and poor health and wellbeing, including in the context of environmental breakdown, and make the links with care and connection with nature.
8. **States** should promote caring and connected ways of being for men and boys, for example encouraging active fatherhood through parental leave policies. **Men in positions of power** have a particular responsibility to speak out for climate and gender justice.
9. **States and regulators** must strengthen regulation of industries that spread and profit from harmful gender norms, such as social media platforms and weapons manufacturers, and introduce progressive environmental taxation based on the polluter-pays principle to help fund gender just climate finance.
10. **States, donors and philanthropic funders** must provide flexible, long-term core funding to feminist civil society organisations so they can carry out their vital work, including gender-based violence prevention and support during disasters, and support their leadership in environmental policy dialogues.

Climate change: A gendered crisis

The role of men, and social expectations about 'being a man', are considerably under-recognised within discussions about the climate crisis–both in terms of how they are contributing to the problem, and the part of men and boys play in addressing it. The monumental, ever-expanding impacts of global heating across the globe necessitate that governments use all methods available to address it, and ensure that the whole of society is engaged in this effort. However, a significant gap remains that the gendered nature of climate change is not being considered nearly enough, and when it is, it usually centres on how women are impacted as a group without agency. Advancing women's rights is essential, but this narrow framing leaves the gendered power relations driving the crisis unexamined. It also gives decision-makers an easy way out: once gender is labelled a 'women's issue', it can be deprioritised and left off the core agenda. That something concerning women is so readily treated as secondary is itself a symptom of the inequality in question.

Ecological destruction is magnifying such inequalities–and it is also driven by them. This means we must address both simultaneously. Treating these as separate problems has already failed. Climate policy that ignores gender deepens inequality, and gender equality work that ignores ecological breakdown is building on collapsing ground. It is therefore essential to take action on the multitude of ways in which the climate crisis is particularly harming women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ people, especially in the Global Majority (Pearse, 2017; Goldsmith & Bell, 2021). **Groups with greater power and privilege have more resources to protect themselves**. For instance, women are often worse affected by 'natural' disasters, which disproportionately reduce their life expectancies as a result of factors such as having to stay behind due to caregiving responsibilities, being less likely than men to be taught skills such as swimming, or having less access to emergency information (Anjum & Aziz, 2025; Neumeyer & Plümper, 2008). Additionally, men's violence against women and children, such as domestic abuse and sexual violence, often worsens, as they seek

to compensate for the loss of control that extreme weather events cause (Thurston et al., 2021; Rezwana & Pain, 2022; Parkinson, 2019).

Disasters can reverse progress made in women's economic positions, with men and boys' employment, food, and resources often prioritised, including within relief efforts, whilst women and girls' education and livelihoods are seen as more expendable (Fruttero et al., 2024; Le Masson et al., 2016). For example, just transition policies are typically designed around formal, male-dominated fossil fuel jobs. Women are concentrated in the most precarious informal work, in unpaid care, and in the economies that grow around extractive sites, and transition planning routinely fails to count, consult or compensate them (Heffernan et al., 2021). In many parts of the globe, gender norms lead to women bearing primary responsibility for collecting food, water, and fuel, and comprising much of the agricultural workforce. The effects of climate and biodiversity loss on these resources is making this work more fraught with danger (Nagel, 2025; Roy, 2018).

However, we must avoid perpetuating stereotypes of women as passive victims of ecological breakdown. Such a view downplays the multitude of ways in which women are actively responding to the climate crisis and forging solutions to it. Furthermore, taking account of gender also necessitates addressing men's relationships with climate change–**including the ways in which it is impacting them, and their disproportionate contribution to it.** Global heating is causing devastating consequences for people of all genders, including men and boys (especially those who are rural, working-class, and in the Global Majority). There has been a growth in discussion about men's health and wellbeing in recent years–but little recognition of how this is affected by environmental degradation, such as air pollution (Clougherty, 2010).

Furthermore, these material harms are only part of the picture. Men's emotional lives are significantly impacted by climate breakdown too, and the expectations that govern how men experience crises also influence how they react to them. For instance, **many men and boys experience climate anxiety, even if fear of appearing 'unmanly' stops them from expressing it in a healthy manner** (Hickman et al., 2021).

As Edwick Madzimure, Founding Director at WILPF Zimbabwe, says, "In a world where patriarchy teaches boys to disconnect from emotion and where many men carry trauma they've never been taught to name, how do we integrate healing into this work? How do we hold both challenge and compassion, calling men in, while still calling out the harm?" (Madzimure, 2025).

Like women, many **men's livelihoods are also damaged by extreme weather events-with ensuing effects on their mental health**. Research in Bangladesh and South Africa found that climate change was generating feelings of powerlessness as men struggled to keep their identities as 'providers' and 'protectors' intact, leading to increased stress, social dislocation, and in some cases, violence as a means of reclaiming lost authority (Khan et al., 2023). Opening up restrictive norms of masculinity, such as expectations about being 'providers' and 'protectors', is therefore pivotal to help men deal with these struggles-and to addressing the causes of the climate crisis.

The role of men in global heating

Shifting patriarchal ideas of manhood is crucial to getting to the roots of climate change. **Male-dominated institutions have presided over this crisis, such as governments, fossil fuel corporations, and the banks and investors that finance extractive industries.** For instance, men dominate the decision-making bodies responding to environmental breakdown. Whilst the representation of women at crucial global conferences such as COP has improved, their experiences continue to be relatively marginalised in these processes, together with voices from the Majority World and First Nations communities (WEDO, 2024). This absence is starkly illustrated by the photos of predominantly male world leaders taken at the COP summit each year. At COP30 in 2025, women still only made up 38% of party delegates and 32% of delegation heads and deputy heads (UNFCCC Secretariat, 2025). In 2020, only 15% of environment ministers worldwide were women (IUCN, 2021).

MacGregor (2009) has discussed how, as climate change has come to be defined as a problem for the male-dominated industries of science and technology to solve (rather than one of broader social change), this has led to the 'masculinisation of environmentalism'. In other words, despite women often leading the way in advocating for more sustainable ways of being, **it is predominantly men who have come to be seen as 'experts' on environmental issues**. As a result, women in the Majority World already putting into practice solutions to environmental destruction are being ignored (Barre et al., 2025). This can be understood as a form of epistemic violence, in which only certain forms of knowledge (e.g. western science) are seen as useful, and only certain groups (such as white men) are viewed as 'objective', while the expertise of women and people of colour is regularly dismissed as being too 'emotional' or 'biased' (Spivak, 1988).

The dominance of men in leadership positions becomes even more noteworthy when we consider that **men tend to report lower levels of concern about climate change than women** (Zinober, 2026). Research indicates that men are more likely to express climate scepticism and denial (Anshelm & Hultman, 2014; Pearson et al., 2017), whilst women are more likely to endorse changes in their lifestyles than men (Pearson et al., 2017). The gap here is often not massive–many men are undoubtedly also worried about global heating. These differences are also greater in wealthier countries (Bush & Clayton, 2023). However, they illustrate the necessity of a gender-responsive approach to be able to effectively engage all members of the public in climate action. For instance, dominant ideals of masculinity which suggest it is a 'weak' to show emotionality can leave men reluctant to acknowledge their anxieties about the future in a changing climate, or as mentioned previously, act violently to reassert their domination.

In politics, **hypermasculine, authoritarian, autocratic 'strongman' leadership is becoming more and more widespread**, and this often includes a dismissiveness towards environmental issues (Agius et al., 2020). Increasingly mainstream politicians and parties are antagonising men's insecurities, feelings of alienation, and fears about the future, and offering scapegoats to blame, including migrants, feminists, LGBTIQ+ people, and climate policies. They then propose easy answers, such

as 'tough' leadership and nationalistic, divisive, militaristic policies which can supposedly 'protect' us from these uncertainties (Kaul, 2021). To take one example, in the US, Daggett (2018) has discussed the centrality of fossil fuels to the construction of white American 'petro-masculinity', with fears that this identity is under threat leading to yearnings for the supposed security of authoritarianism.

Another highly masculinist response to the climate crisis is expressed by eco-fascist groups, who wish to take societies back to a more ecologically and socially 'pure' and 'unpolluted' time. Darwish and Gottzén (2025) have found that such groups co-opt environmental concern and imagery close to the climate justice movement, combined with tapping into 'positive masculine affect' through emotionality and connection, to draw young men into racist, exclusionary and anti-gender ideas.

The rise in masculinist authoritarianism intertwines with the growth in reach of the manosphere. A major way in which online 'manfluencers' attempt to demonstrate masculine bravado–and pressure other boys and men to do the same–is through disregard for nature and climate (Davidson et al., 2026). Meanwhile, women and LGBTIQ+ environmental activists have been subjected to high levels of misogynistic abuse online (White, 2021).

Anti-gender and climate obstruction movements closely overlap. They often involve the same actors, funders and networks, from oligarchs and tech billionaires to far-right parties and thinktanks, and they share narratives: both 'gender ideology' and climate action are framed as foreign, elite impositions that threaten national sovereignty, the family and the 'natural order'; i.e. men's patriarchal dominance (Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez et al., 2026). The same tactics, including strategic lawsuits, foreign agent laws and attacks on funding, are used against feminist, LGBTQIA+ and environmental activists alike (Human Rights Compass 2026).

# Men's unequal contributions to ecological destruction

Research suggests that, **on average, men contribute higher greenhouse gas emissions than women**. For instance, studies have shown that men tend to drive and fly more, especially for longer distances, whilst women are more likely to use public transport (Goel et al., 2023; Räty & Carlsson Kanyama, 2010). As a result of gender inequality, men on average have higher incomes and more resources to consume than women (Ergas & York, 2012). However, this alone does not explain these gendered disparities; in a Swedish study of differences in expenditure patterns in single-person households, Carlsson Kanyama et al. (2021) found men spent only 2% more money than women, but still emitted 16% more greenhouse gases with the products and services they bought. Behaviours such as driving and flying–especially in large, fast, 'gas-guzzling' vehicles–are often seen as symbols of manhood. Men usually eat more meat (especially red meat) than women (Meier & Christen, 2012), which is more carbon-intensive, and another influential symbol of masculine strength and virility (Adams, 1990). Women are more likely to be vegan or vegetarian, which can be denigrated as emasculating for men (Aavik, 2023). For example, the epithet 'soy boy' is used to mock vegan men and stigmatise femininity, with the racialised notion that consuming plant-based foods, associated with Asian and other non-European cultures, makes you effeminate (Gambert & Linné, 2018).

Gender must therefore not be considered in isolation. An intersectional approach to climate justice is vital, as has long been articulated by the ecofeminist movement (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2014). For instance, consider the case of Greta Thunberg, an environmental youth activist who has gained global attention, especially in the Western media sphere, for her climate activism since the age of 15 (receiving attention which, notably, has not been given to other women activists from the Majority World). For many years this global popularity continued even as she spoke up in support of Indian farmers in 2020; criticised US president Joe Biden and British prime minister Boris Johnson

in 2021; spoke up for Ukraine against Russia's invasion in 2022; and so on, until she expressed solidarity with the Palestinians in 2023. Her uncompromising solidarity with the Palestinians against their genocide–that started in 1948–led to severe backlash and her being dropped from major news coverage and political spaces. However, Thunberg has continued to maintain her support for the Palestinians because "the climate justice movement must be a decolonial, anti-capitalist, antifascist movement that fights against genocide as well as ecocide, that demands liberation and justice for all, and a system that puts people and planet over profit" (Thunberg, 2024).

Thus, from an intersectional lens, **some men have a much greater role in the problem than others**. Those who live in the Minority World, are middle or upper-class, white, non-disabled, cisgender and heterosexual generally have more wealth and are consuming and emitting much more, as societies tend to be shaped around their needs, they face fewer challenges, and receive more opportunities (Zheng et al., 2023). Meanwhile, people in the Majority World are much worse affected by global heating, despite having contributed the least to it, due to centuries of colonial extraction draining wealth and resources northwards. This pattern continues through debt, unequal trade and corporate resource extraction (Abi Deivanayagam et al., 2023; Ashamole, 2019). Of course, it is not only men contributing to environmental harms or reproducing patriarchal norms. Women can take on 'strongman' politics and reproduce extractive logics within corporate leadership too. *Everyone* is shaped and harmed by these gendered expectations. However, this is in the context of patriarchal, capitalist, white supremacist societies predominantly run by and for (some groups of) men.

Men are also more likely to work in carbon-intensive professions than women (Cohen, 2014). Many of the most extractive industries, such as fossil fuels and mining, have highly masculinised cultures. The oil and gas industry estimates that 77% of its workforce globally are men, with only 19% of people at executive level being women (Hughes-Plummer et al., 2023). This is another reason why men might be more resistant to climate action; because their incomes are more closely tied to fossil fuel-based economies. Hultman and Pulé (2018) devised the

concept of 'industrial/breadwinner' masculinities to understand the role of industrial capitalism in defining men's identities as 'providers', against which climate action may be perceived as a threat. Furthermore, upholding these gender norms has become a political narrative used to obstruct it (Daggett, 2018). This makes a just transition to green economies crucial. After all, men working in extractive industries still have relatively little power compared to those in the boardrooms. And the leaderships of the biggest corporations across the globe continue to be dominated by men, for whom attempts to regulate their profit-making may be perceived as a threat to their masculine 'freedom'. In the 2024 Fortune 500 list of biggest US companies, women made up only 9% of CEOs and held 33% of board seats (Catalyst, 2025). Thus, the question is not just how does a masculinist culture develop in extractive industries such as coal-mining, but why is coal-mining still taking place when we have alternatives that are more sustainable and less dangerous?

Another significant sector contributing to the environmental crisis is that of the military and arms industry. War and weapons are devastating to nonhuman animals and the environment as well as to human life (Closmann, 2009). The first 14 days of the US–Israel war on Iran in 2026 generated over 5 million tonnes of CO_2-equivalent emissions (Bigger et al., 2026; Gayle, 2026). **Militaries are estimated to create between 3.3-7.5% of all greenhouse gas emissions globally** (Parkinson & Cottrell, 2022) through the hardware, technology, and vehicles they use (Clark & Jorgenson, 2012).

Again, these are highly male-dominated institutions central to idealised images of masculinity as dominant and controlling. As Ocean Vuong, a prominent poet and educator, says, "How can we not ask masculinity to change when, within it, we have become so wounded? [When] masculinity, or what we have allowed it to be in America, is often realized through violence" (Vuong, 2019). Unlike climate financing, expenditure on militaries around the globe is rapidly increasing under the guise of keeping populations 'safe', even though climate change poses massive threats to our security (Pike, 2026). Indeed, it is predicted to increase risks of future conflict due to economic shocks and scarcer natural resources (Mach et al., 2019).

There is evidence too that rising temperatures contribute to higher levels of violence and conflict in society, including homicide (Amin, 2025). **Addressing climate change can therefore also help to *prevent* violence and conflict.**

Ironically, there is also an overlap between anti-climate and anti-migration politics, even though global heating is contributing to forced displacement as increasing parts of the globe become uninhabitable due to environmental degradation, extractivism and war (Lama et al., 2021). In many countries in the Global Minority world, these masculinist voices are instead warning about declines in birthrates, advancing heteronormative pronatalist policies that place the burden on women to 'uphold the nation', whilst often slipping into anti-LGBTIQ+ measures (Deegodage, 2026). This is another paradoxical example of how **the same political formations weakening environmental action are exploiting the uncertainty that the climate crisis is creating**. Meanwhile, discourses about human over-population implicitly scapegoat people in the Majority World (and, again, particularly mothers), rather than the Minority World countries actually contributing the most to the climate crisis (Hendrixson et al., 2020).

Community Transformation Foundation Network (COTFONE)

In South-Western Uganda, COTFONE's 20-year history of building community networks highlights that challenging masculine norms cannot take place in a silo-it must be integrated into day-to-day community survival mechanisms. Most of COTFONE's work is carried out in climate-vulnerable rural settings, where the primary livelihoods are cultivation and farming. This includes partnering with local village health teams to embed eco-literacy dialogues into rural health promotion programmes and water sanitation and hygiene campaigns. They actively call men into these spaces to deconstruct notions that they should be invulnerable and in control, reframing public health and environmental resilience as community stewardship. They also engage with boys and young men through a network of community libraries and youth empowerment clubs, where they host intergenerational dialogues inviting young people

to reflect on the links between colonial ecological destruction, violence, and gender inequality, as well as unpacking issues such as sexual and reproductive health and rights and period stigma. By normalising emotional vulnerability for men and boys, eco-literacy, and radical listening from an early age, they seek to cultivate a new generation of male allies dedicated to working in partnership with women for climate justice.

COTFONE have also been campaigning against the construction of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) by the French company Total and the Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation. This is set to be the world's longest heated oil pipeline, with catastrophic impacts on 2,000km^2 of protected habitats and vital water sources utilised by 40 million people in the Lake Victoria basin. Environmental defenders and community advocates speaking out about this development face severe surveillance, corporate profiling, and physical intimidation by securitised police networks. In response, COTFONE's Human Rights Protection framework has trained rural community monitors in legal literacy, land acquisition rights, and corporate accountability. EACOP has led to agricultural restrictions dispossessing over 13,000 households, leading to an abrupt loss of financial capability. This has contributed to mental distress and identity crises among rural men, as well as spikes in gender-based violence. To counter this 'breadwinner backlash', in which men who can no longer fulfil the 'provider' role try to reassert authority in other ways, including through violence, COTFONE have organised community actors into local cooperations and Village Savings and Loan Associations to create clean energy, zero-waste alternative livelihoods. These are structured to encourage men to collaborate in financial management alongside women and support their economic independence.

Masculinities and the domination of nature

Men's central role in environmental harm is not because they are 'inherently' more violent or because women are 'innately' more caring. **It is because of how boys are *taught* to 'be a man' in patriarchal societies.** Examining men's part in the climate crisis can help us to make sense of the central role of gender inequality in *driving* ecological destruction. Ecofeminist and decolonial thinkers have shed light on how patriarchal Western capitalist logics, exported around the globe, are built on the idea that humans are *separate* from the environment and other animals (Mies & Shiva, 2014). That 'man' is 'rational' and thus superior to 'primitive' nature (Plumwood, 1993; Gaard, 2017). It is important to push back on the idea that ecofeminists view these binaries, produced by society, as being 'natural' (Gaard, 2017). These ideologies have come to be seen as 'common sense', cultivating a sense of entitlement to own and exploit the environment and nonhuman animals endlessly, as if these are expendable 'resources' which exist for us to use as we wish. Yet this worldview is eminently unsustainable–humans are animals too; we are part of the ecology, and dependent on it for our survival. Viewing humans 'above' the rest of nature is therefore not in our own interests, let alone those of the rest of the planet (Coetser, 2025).

However, acknowledging this means recognising our own fragility, our interdependence with others, and this is incompatible with patriarchal ways of thinking. The most culturally valorised human traits, such as reason, strength, and independence, are also those which society associates with (white, upper-class) masculinity–with men deemed to be the 'default', the pinnacle of humanity (Pease, 2019). By contrast, women and people of colour have been culturally constructed as closer to nature and other animals, and therefore as inferior. They may be viewed, for example, as emotional, bodily, uncultured, 'savage' (Chemhuru, 2018). In other words, the same **anthropocentric ideas used to justify human domination of nature, are used to legitimise hierarchies of power among humans** (Ko, 2019). Even among men, only some are really viewed as 'rational' (those who are

white, Western, and middle/upper-class), whilst others (such as those who are Black or working-class) are more likely to be seen as 'angry' and 'violent' (hooks, 2004). Ecofeminists call on us to reject these socially constructed dualisms and embrace our full selves, interconnected with the rest of nature (Plumwood, 1993).

In order to live up to patriarchal ideals of manhood–what Raewyn Connell (2005) calls 'hegemonic masculinity'–within capitalist and colonialist societies, men are pressured to separate themselves from things associated with nature, such as their own emotions. **They are expected to be 'in control' of the world around them.** Expressing love or concern for the environment and nonhuman animals is frequently portrayed as effeminate (as observed in the denigration of environmentalists as 'hippies' and 'tree-huggers' in Global Minority countries), to the extent that even acts such as recycling can be seen as 'unmanly' (Brough et al., 2016). To prove their masculinity, men may engage in acts of dominance over nature or people associated with it, such as women and children (Blenkinsop et al., 2018). The severing of one's own emotions makes this easier, reducing the obstacles posed by feelings of empathy and guilt. Driving fast cars or sailing large yachts, for example, can be interpreted as ways of 'conquering' the environment. There are parallels here with the colonisation of lands in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania by European powers, symbolised by male soldiers conquering the 'frontier' and the First Peoples living there (Ratele, 2021). These colonial masculine aspirations live on for example in the determination of Western corporations to mine as many natural 'resources' lying in the ground as possible, particularly in the Majority World (Hofmann & Duarte, 2021).

Industries profiting from harmful gender norms

These expectations of masculine domination can be observed in different forms of violence against other animals. For instance, trophy hunting–often enacted by white men in the Majority World as a form of extractive tourism–provides a means for men to compete to show bravado and demonstrate their prowess over animals (Nurse, 2013). This can apply to forms of wildlife crime too, such as trafficking, trading, and collecting rare items such as ivory and taxidermied animals to demonstrate one's ability to capture and 'tame' animals (Sollund, 2020). Activities such as poaching within local communities are also driven by factors such as poverty, economic survival, and the desperation to be the 'provider' for one's family (Massé et al., 2021). Ironically, authorities often respond to wildlife crimes such as poaching in masculinised, militaristic ways, in what has been described as 'fortress conservation' (Bossert et al., 2024).

It is also important to consider the gendered dynamics of more everyday harms against nonhuman animals (Burrell & Pedersen, 2025). As has been mentioned, **the consumption of meat is particularly associated with manhood,** social status, and economic success. This bolsters demand for fossil-fuel-intensive animal agriculture reliant on petrochemical inputs, long supply chains, and industrial feed production, in an animal-industrial complex predominantly controlled by men (Aavik, 2026). These gendered notions are utilised in the marketing of meat products, often overlapping with the objectification of women (Adams, 1990). Dietary narratives promoted through media, wellness industries, and social platforms portray meat and high-protein consumption as markers of strength and productivity (WECF et al., 2026). In an extreme form, this has led some 'manfluencers' to espouse the 'carnivore diet', for instance (Camilleri et al., 2024).

Research demonstrates that violence against other humans, animals and the environment regularly overlaps (Hunnicutt, 2020). For instance, there is evidence that levels of violence are higher in neighbourhoods surrounding

slaughterhouses (Fitzgerald et al., 2009), whilst violence against companion animals often comprises part of domestic abuse against women and children (Cleary et al., 2021). This corresponds with what has long been understood by the feminist movement– that **different forms of men's violence are mutually reinforcing** (Kaufman, 1987).

Given the levels of harm, greenhouse emissions and pollution these forms of agribusiness cause, there is an urgent need to **support people to reduce our meat and dairy intake**. Some companies selling plant-based food appeal to constructs of masculinity in their marketing, claiming that vegan men are 'stronger', more 'virile' or 'logical' (Aavik, 2023). However, this risks reproducing the very norms which are part of the problem. Plant-based diets can also be mobilised for exclusion; for example, Hindu nationalist politics in India has drawn on the symbolism of the sacred cow to promote cow protection accompanied by violence against Muslims and Dalits (Parikh & Miller, 2019). Promoting lower meat consumption therefore requires attention to how dietary choices are framed and potentially stigmatised, rather than reproducing ideas of purity that have historically been used to rank people as well as food (Nath, 2026). Whilst individual consumer choices are important, focusing purely on these risks obscuring the structural drivers underlying them, such as the corporate, trade, and subsidy regimes that lock food systems into fossil fuel dependence (WECF et al., 2026).

This highlights that ecological harms are systemic, and it is therefore unhelpful to hold individual men responsible for the climate crisis. **Restrictive gendered expectations are reproduced across the structures and institutions of society**. What messages do institutions such as media and entertainment, religion and sport teach boys and young men about masculinity and how they should relate to nature, for example? The climate crisis is being driven by highly profitable industries–from meat and dairy, to mining, to automobiles, to firearms, to fossil fuels–which effectively utilise tools such as lobbying and advertising to make their products cheap and enticing, including through marketing which exploits gender norms. This is why climate action at *every level* of society is so necessary–such as stringently regulating the companies causing the most harm.

MÄN

MÄN is a Swedish feminist civil society organisation established in 1993 to provide a platform for men to take action against men's violence against women. In recent years, they have been involved in training environmental organisations on issues of gender, power and masculinity. They have also invited environmental organisations to train gender equality activists, which has created new entry points for reaching and talking with men about issues of caregiving and violence prevention. They have co-developed a conversation guide called Men in the Climate Crisis (2018), influenced by the work of Hultman and Pulé (2018) on ecological masculinities and Macy (2011) on active hope. This has provided the basis for reflective groups running over eight sessions, which ask participants to engage in radical listening and learning together about the impact of masculine norms on the planet. These are based around four stages: gratitude, honouring our pain for the world, seeing with fresh eyes, and going forth. The programme is built around confronting, rather than ignoring, the difficult emotions evoked by climate change, connecting with these to help find the will to confront the existential challenges we face, and engaging in love and care for the world around us no matter how great these challenges may be.

Paving paths forward through care

These huge challenges demonstrate the need to provide alternative paths forward for men and boys, based around more interconnected, equitable ways of relating to people and planet (Hultman & Pulé, 2018; Pease, 2019). **Rigid ideas of masculinity are not working for men and boys themselves, for the women and gender diverse people around them, or for the ecologies in which they live**. For instance, notions that they should be separate from and superior to others leave many men and boys feeling isolated and alienated, contributing to high levels of mental health problems, as well as high rates of violence both experienced and perpetrated by men (Heilman et al., 2017). In this context, in a world more uncertain than ever, care and connection with the environment and other animals can offer a positive sense of identity and purpose, as well as a means of forging community with other people. This is mutually beneficial. There is plentiful evidence of the positive impacts for our own health and wellbeing of being better connected to nature (Martin et al., 2020). This is obvious to many First Nations communities who understand the wider ecological world as kin, as family. For them, relationality and interdependence is often fundamental to their world-views, even as such ways of being have been subjugated by colonialism (Meissner & Smith, 2024).

This highlights the importance of developing and supporting work with men and boys to address the climate crisis in gender-transformative ways. This means challenging norms that equate masculinity with control and dominance; making care for people, other animals and the environment a shared responsibility and redistributing work that has fallen disproportionately on women. Ecofeminist analysis has long shown that the exploitation of nature and the devaluing of care work stem from the same patriarchal and extractive systems, and that human and ecological wellbeing depend on each other. Environmental education must therefore address how gender norms shape our practices and worldviews, and existing work with men and boys, such as violence prevention, should take up the links between gender inequality and environmental harm. For example, men and boys

can be invited to reflect critically on the pressures of masculinity at the same time as building connections with their local community, their environment, and other animals (Burrell & Pedersen, 2025).

There are innovative initiatives already working towards this end, particularly in the Majority World, demonstrated by members of the MenEngage Climate Justice Working Group. Research conducted by the group has identified some key principles to help guide these efforts, akin to those found in profeminist work with men and boys more broadly (Burrell et al., 2026). At its heart, **engaging men and boys in climate and gender justice is about fostering relationships and dialogue**; showing men and boys the care we wish to see them embrace, and creating 'brave spaces' in which they feel able to share, listen, and be challenged, rather than simply 'lectured' at (Arao & Clemens, 2013). For example, we should be wary of language such as 'toxic masculinity', which can feel accusatory and individualising, as if it is just one version of masculinity rather than patriarchal systems which are the problem. These challenging but rewarding dialogues take time, demonstrating the need for ongoing, in-depth initiatives rather than 'one-off' interventions (Flood, 2019).

It is vital to explore the difficult emotions that the climate crisis makes us feel, such as anxiety, uncertainty, and guilt-as well as nurturing possibilities for love and hope-and using these as motivators to become agents of change, as opposed to simply focusing on rational facts about the science of global heating (Pease, 2019). There is much attention towards men's backlash to feminism and environmentalism, however there is also a significant, largely untapped 'moveable middle' of men who have the potential to be mobilised for climate and gender justice. In this regard, men's existing relationships can have a particularly powerful influence on them-such as care for their children and families, and their futures. For instance, the now closed Center Anna in Russia instigated a powerful photo exhibition tour around these themes, focused on fathers and their children looking after their local environment together (Van der Heyden, 2021).

Engaging men in care for the planet can help to bring into question patriarchal norms in and of itself; however, for this to be genuinely

transformative, it is crucial to also bring into question the sense of entitlement to dominate over both nature and women that society teaches men from a young age. This means not shying away from discomfort, and **supporting men and boys to critically reflect on their own power, privilege, and complicity in a sexist society**. Taking up climate action is not enough; Hultman and Pulé (2018) discuss the performance of 'ecomodern' masculinities as a common response to global heating, in which men focus predominantly on technological solutions, whilst leaving the social relations that have led us to this point unquestioned.

This demonstrates the importance of **listening to and elevating the voices of the women, LGBTIQ+ people, and youth** who have been leading the environmental movement for decades. Without this, a common risk in work with and by men is that patriarchal dynamics can re-emerge and men can 'take over' the conversation, or the attention becomes limited to men's struggles and not their role in the problem. This emphasises the importance of proactively seeking feedback and being accountable to Indigenous, (eco) feminist and LGBTIQ+ movements, to ensure work with men for climate justice is living up to its goals.

Similarly vital is understanding power differences among men, through intersectional approaches which recognise that many have their own experiences of inequality and oppression (Djoudi et al., 2016). For example, this means recognising the heteronormativity and neocolonial power relations which can manifest within gender equality and environmentalist advocacy, and being willing to learn with humility from communities in the Majority World and First Peoples at the forefront of responding to the climate and nature emergency (Diaz-Diaz & Royo Letelier, 2025). Highlighting the mutually reinforcing connections between different forms of injustice can help this work to resonate with men and boys' complex lived realities. It also underscores the particular **responsibility of men in positions of power and leadership to speak out**– to use their power and privilege as positive levers for climate and gender justice.

YouthNet Global

YouthNet are a youth-led alliance based in Bangladesh who, for over ten years, have been addressing the interconnecting crises of climate change, gender inequality, child marriage, and sexual and reproductive health and rights in regions affected by climate disaster. Working alongside women-led initiatives, their EcoMen programme mobilises young men in climate-vulnerable communities to critically examine how patriarchal norms and unequal power relations intersect with environmental degradation, and how climate adaptation and just transitions must be interwoven with gender equality to be sustainable.

YouthNet's 'Father's Dialogue' initiative engages fathers in conversations about gender roles, girls' rights, and child marriage, and the part they can play in dismantling gender stereotypes in the family. This is particularly important because the devastation caused by climate-induced disasters in Bangladesh is directly linked to increases in child marriage, as economically desperate families feel they can no longer support their daughters (Nipun, 2026). YouthNet also runs a 'Couple's Dialogue' to encourage more equitable relationships, enabling women to voice their experiences and supporting men to take on more household responsibilities. They also play a leading role in campaigning and engaging with policymakers locally, nationally, and internationally, including in forums such as COP, to advocate for climate action which simultaneously addresses gender inequalities. They model the importance of community and youth leadership and accountability to the ecofeminist movement as being central to climate justice.

Social change for climate and gender justice

We must also work to change the **patriarchal social structures and cultures that shape men and boys' lives and practices**. This system-wide approach can help to reduce defensiveness, in recognition that both the climate crisis and gender inequality are *social* problems. One example is the need for just transitions away from fossil fuel-based economies. Moving away from extractive industries without investing in alternative, good quality, sustainable jobs and services for people of all genders will exacerbate inequality and feed a sense of being 'left behind', especially for working-class communities.

To live up to its name, **a gender-transformative approach to the just transition is needed.** This means reducing the obstacles to women's socioeconomic freedom, for example by improving the accessibility of climate funding (including grants, not just loans) for local women-led groups and entrepreneurs (Barre et al., 2025). It should also include helping men deal with rapid socioeconomic change, recognising that their identities are often strongly linked to (particular kinds of) work and being the 'provider', whilst challenging expectations that this should be solely their responsibility and encouraging them to support women's economic independence. For example, in Colombia the NGO IMPACT supported the Coocampo dairy cooperative in Boyacá to create spaces to question harmful gender norms through educational outreach and public participation at the same time as improving economic opportunities, which helped men to embrace care and cooperation in their relationships and communities (WECF et al., 2026). There are calls for a feminist Green New Deal (Bauhardt, 2014; Heffernan et al., 2021; Muchhala, 2021), which includes investing in crucial low-carbon social infrastructure such as care and education (MacGregor et al., 2022), and challenging stereotypes that these are 'feminine' occupations. When communities see that gender-informed climate action can benefit their lives as well as the planet, and are actively involved rather than it being imposed from above, this is likely to reduce backlash (Parsons et al., 2025).

These are not requirements for a distant future–the climate crisis is already here. Many communities across the world are already seeing their homes, livelihoods, cultures, food, family and friends lost to the disasters caused by ecological breakdown. In places such as the Pacific, entire islands and nations are sinking into the ocean. **Gender norms and inequalities must therefore be rapidly taken into account within climate adaptation and disaster response planning** (Gonda, 2017; Prakash et al., 2025). For instance, being prepared for the increases in domestic and sexual violence that often occur in the midst of extreme weather events, and recognising violence support services as essential (Zaidi & Fordham, 2021). Among men, maladaptive coping mechanisms such as alcohol and drug use and even suicide are frequently turned to, as they struggle to deal with the trauma and loss incurred (Enarson & Pease, 2016). Others may be reluctant to leave their homes in the face of impending calamity due to expectations of masculine bravado often depicted in cultural representations of disasters (McKinnon, 2022). These issues are particularly pertinent for emergency workers, who are predominantly men, and are witnessing firsthand the horror of climate catastrophe (Nagel & Lies, 2022).

There is thus a need for governments, in consultation with local communities, to step up their efforts to prevent violence and abuse and shift restrictive gender norms, as these issues are only becoming more urgent in this time of polycrisis. This paper demonstrates that there are many overlaps between this work and the destruction of the planet. These harms are not inevitable or separate, and there is so much more we could be doing to prevent them. This is to all our benefit–including men and boys. As such, men and boys have a central role to play in climate and gender justice **not just as allies to women, but as beneficiaries and thus agents of change in their own right** (Burrell et al., 2026).

We all win from creating more equitable and caring societies, which exist interdependently with, rather than detached from, the rest of nature. Ecofeminist and environmental justice movements have for decades organised against extractive projects, fought for land rights and self-determination, and challenged patriarchal norms within and beyond their own ranks, often through democratic, community-

based and horizontal forms of organising (Sharma et al., 2026; Kwaymullina, 2018; Sempértegui, 2021). Many are led by young people, women and First Nations land defenders. For men, the task is to support these struggles, follow their leadership and embrace accountability to them. Sadly, many governments and corporations are responding in highly repressive ways to these environmental defenders with masculinised, militaristic police and security forces (Castañeda Camey et al., 2020). However, **there are also many men and boys involved in these movements for change, demonstrating that it is entirely possible for them to take up more caring, connected ways of being in the world**–and that we all gain when they do so (Connell, 1990).

References

Unequal impacts of environmental destruction

- Abi Deivanayagam, T., English, S., Hickel, J., Bonifacio, J., Guinto, R. R., Hill, K. X., Huq, M., Issa, R., Mulindwa, H., Nagginda, H. P., Sato, P. d. M., Selvarajah, S., Sharma, C., & Devakumar, D. (2023). Envisioning environmental equity: Climate change, health, and racial justice. *The Lancet*, 402(10395), 64-78.
- Anjum, G., & Aziz, M. (2025). Climate change and gendered vulnerability: A systematic review of women's health. *Women's Health*, 21.
- Clougherty, J. E. (2010). A growing role for gender analysis in air pollution epidemiology. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 118(2):167-176.
- Enarson, E., & Pease, B. (2016). The gendered terrain of disaster. In Enarson, E. & Pease, B. (Eds.), *Men, masculinities and disaster* (pp. 3-20). Routledge.
- Fruttero, A., Halim, D., Broccolini, C., Coelho, B., Gninafon, H., & Muller, N. (2024). Gendered impacts of climate change: Evidence from weather shocks. *Environmental Research: Climate,* 3(4), 045018.
- Goldsmith, L., & Bell, M. L. (2021). Queering environmental justice: Unequal environmental health burden on the LGBTQ+ community. *American Journal of Public Health*, 112, 79-87.
- Hickman, C., Marks, E., Pihkala, P., Clayton, S., Lewandowski, R. E., Mayall, E. E., Wray, B., Mellor, C., & Van Susteren, L. (2021). Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: A global survey. *The Lancet Planetary Health*, 5(12), e863-e873.
- Lama, P., Hamza, M., & Wester, M. (2021). Gendered dimensions of migration in relation to climate change. *Climate and Development*, 13(4), 326-336.
- Kaijser, A., & Kronsell, A. (2014). Climate change through the lens of intersectionality. *Environmental Politics*, 23(3), 417-433.
- Nagel, J. (2025). *Gender and climate change: Impacts, science, policy*, 2nd edn. Routledge.

- Neumayer, E., & Plümper, T. (2008). The gendered nature of natural disasters: The impact of catastrophic events on the gender gap in life expectancy, 1981–2002. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(3), 551–566.
- Roy, S. S. (2018). *Linking gender to climate change impacts in the Global South*. Springer.
- Zheng, H., Wood, R., Moran, D., Feng, K., Tisserant, A., Jiang, M., & Hertwich, E. G. (2023). Rising carbon inequality and its driving factors from 2005 to 2015. *Global Environmental Change*, 82, 102704.

Climate change and gender norms

- Bush, S. S., Clayton, A. (2023). Facing change: Gender and climate change attitudes worldwide. *American Political Science Review*, 117(2), 591-608.
- Carlsson Kanyama, A., Nässén, J. and Benders, R. (2021). Shifting expenditure on food, holidays, and furnishings could lower greenhouse gas emissions by almost 40%. *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, 25(6), 1602-1616.
- Catalyst (2025). *Reaching new heights: Catalyst CEO Champions for Change*. Catalyst Inc.
- Cohen, M. G. (2014). Gendered emissions: Counting greenhouse gas emissions by gender and why it matters. *Alternate Routes: A Journal of Critical Social Research*, 25, 55-80.
- Deegodage, M. M. (2026). The demographic squeeze: Sexual and reproductive health and rights at the intersection of the climate crisis and ageing societies. *ReproSex: International Journal on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2(1), 125-131.
- Djoudi, H., Locatelli, B., Vaast, C., Asher, K., Brockhaus, M., & Basnett Sijapati, B. (2016). Beyond dichotomies: Gender and intersecting inequalities in climate change studies. *Ambio*, 45(Suppl 3), 248-262.
- Ergas, C., & York, R. (2012). Women's status and carbon dioxide emissions: A quantitative cross-national analysis. *Social Science Research*, 41(4), 965-976.
- Goel, R., Oyebode, O., Foley, L., Tatah, L., Millett, C., & Woodcock, J. (2023). Gender differences in active travel in major cities across the world. *Transportation*, 50, 733-749.

- Hendrixson, A., Ojeda, D., Sasser, J. S., Nadimpally, S., Foley, E. E., & Bhatia, R. (2020). Confronting populationism: Feminist challenges to population control in an era of climate change. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 27(3), 307-315.
- Hughes-Plummer, W., Syth, A., Belkov, N., Wood, A., Miras, P., Riemer, P., & Beattie, S. (2023). *Untapped reserves 3.0: Advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the energy sector.* Boston Consulting Group and WPC Energy.
- IUCN (2021). New data reveals slow progress in achieving gender equality in environmental decision making. https://iucn.org/news/gender/202103/new-data-reveals-slow-progress-achieving-gender-equality-environmental-decision-making
- Pearse, R. (2017). Gender and climate change. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 8(2), e451.
- Pearson, A. R., Ballew, M. T., Naiman, S., & Schuldt, J. P. (2017). Race, class, gender and climate change communication. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.412
- Räty, R., & Carlsson-Kanyama, A. (2010). Energy consumption by gender in some European countries. *Energy Policy*, 38(1), 646-649.
- UNFCCC Secretariat (2025). *Gender composition: Report by the secretariat*. FCCC/CP/2025/4. UNFCCC.
- WEDO (2024). New data shows 34% women's participation on party delegations at COP28, the same percentage as 10 years ago. https://wedo.org/resources/release-new-data-shows-34-womens-participation-on-party-delegations-at-cop28-the-same-percentage-as-10-years-ago
- Zinober, I. (2026). The green gender gap: Environmental attitudes and pro-environmental vote choice across Europe. *Electoral Studies*, 101, 103062.

Masculinity and the environment

- Agius, C., Rosamond, A. B., & Kinnvall, C. (2020). Populism, ontological insecurity and gendered nationalism: Masculinity, climate denial and Covid-19. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 21(4), 432-450.
- Anshelm, J., & Hultman, M. (2014). A green fatwā? Climate change as a threat to the masculinity of industrial modernity. *NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies*, 9(2), 84-96.

- Ashamole, D. C. (2019). Extractive industry and the politics of manhood in Nigeria's Niger Delta: A masculinity perspective of gender implication of resource extractivism. *NORMA*, 14(4), 255-270.
- Blenkinsop, S., Piersol, L., & Sitka-Sage, M. D. D. (2018). Boys being boys: Eco-double consciousness, splash violence, and environmental education. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 49(4), 350-356.
- Brough, A. R., Wilkie, J. E., Ma, J., Isaac, M. S., & Gal, D. (2016). Is eco-friendly unmanly? The green-feminine stereotype and its effect on sustainable consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43(4), 567-582.
- Daggett, C. (2018). Petro-masculinity: Fossil fuels and authoritarian desire. *Millennium*, 47(1), 25-44.
- Darwish, M., & Gottzén, L. (2025). The contemplative man: 'Positive' affect and masculinity in ecofascist visual communication. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2025.2479797
- Davidson, D.J., Letourneau, A., Karsgaard, C., & Ivanova, D. (2026). The symptoms of climate denial: Tracing the intersections of denial, right-wing extremism and masculinity. *Climatic Change*, 179(126), 1-22.
- Gonda, N. (2017). Rural masculinities in tension: Barriers to climate change adaptation in Nicaragua. *RCC perspectives*, 4, 69-76.
- Hofmann, S., & Duarte, M. C. (2021). Gender and natural resource extraction in Latin America: Feminist engagements with geopolitical positionality. *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 111, 39-63.
- Hultman, M., & Pulé, P. M. (2018). *Ecological masculinities: Theoretical foundations and practical guidance*. Routledge.
- Kato-Wallace, J. (2018). *Men, masculinities and climate change: A discussion paper*. MenEngage Alliance.
- Kaul, N. (2021). The misogyny of authoritarians in contemporary democracies. *International Studies Review*, 23(4), 1619-1645.
- Khan, A. R., Ratele, K., Dery, I., & Khandaker, S. (2023). Men and climate change: Some thoughts on South Africa and Bangladesh. *NORMA*, 18(2), 137-153.
- McKinnon, S. (2022). Masculinities and disaster. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Natural Hazard Science*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199389407.013.387

- Nagel, J., & Lies, T. S. (2022). Re-gendering climate change: Men and masculinity in climate research, policy, and practice. *Frontiers in Climate*, 4, 856869.
- Pease, B. (2019). Recreating men's relationship with nature: Toward a profeminist environmentalism. *Men and Masculinities*, 22(1), 113-123.

Gender-based violence

- Amin, S. (2025). Climate change and lethal violence: A global analysis. *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management*, 17(1), 218-247.
- Burrell, S. R., & Pedersen, C. (2025). From men's violence to an ethic of care: Ecofeminist contributions to green criminology. *Journal of Criminology*, 58(3), 372-388.
- Castañeda Camey, I., Sabater, L., Owren, C., & Boyer, A. E. (2020) *Gender-based violence and environment linkages: The violence of inequality*. IUCN.
- Fitzgerald, A. J., Kalof, L., & Dietz, T. (2009). Slaughterhouses and increased crime rates: An empirical analysis of the spillover from "The Jungle" into the surrounding community. *Organization and Environment*, 22(2), 158-184.
- Le Masson, V., Lim, S., Budimir, M., & Podboj, J. S. (2016). Disasters and violence against women and girls: Can disasters shake social norms and power relations? ODI.
- Nipun, S. K. (2026). A scoping review of the nexus between child marriage and climate change in Bangladesh. *Discover Global Society*, 4, 113.
- Parkinson, D. (2019). Investigating the increase in domestic violence post-disaster: An Australian case study. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 34(11), 2333-2362.
- Rezwana, N., & Pain, R. (2022) *Gender-based violence and layered disasters: Place, culture and survival*. Routledge.
- Thurston, A. M., Stöckl, H., & Ranganathan, M. (2021). Natural hazards, disasters and violence against women and girls: A global mixed-methods systematic review. *BMJ Global Health*, 6(4), e004377.
- White, M. (2021). Greta Thunberg is 'giving a face' to climate activism: Confronting anti-feminist, anti-environmentalist, and ableist memes. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 36(110), 396-413.

Relationships with other animals

- Aavik, K. (2023). *Contesting anthropocentric masculinities through veganism: Lived experiences of vegan men*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Aavik, K. (2026). Linking men, masculinities and non-human animals in the Capitalocene: Implications for critical studies on men and masculinities. *Men and Masculinities*, 29(3), 394-415.
- Adams, C. J. (1990). *The sexual politics of meat: A feminist-vegetarian critical theory*. Bloomsbury.
- Camilleri, L., Kirkovski, M., Scarfo, J., Jago, A., & Gill, P. R. (2024). Understanding the meat-masculinity link: Traditional and non-traditional masculine norms predicting men's meat consumption. *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, 63(4), 355-386.
- Cleary, M., Thapa, D. K., West, S., Westman, M., & Kornhaber, R. (2021). Animal abuse in the context of adult intimate partner violence: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 61, 101676.
- Gambert, I. & Linné, T., (2018). From rice eaters to soy boys: Race, gender, and tropes of 'plant food masculinity'. *Animal Studies Journal*, 7(2), 129-179.
- Ko, A. (2019). *Racism as zoological witchcraft: A guide to getting out*. Lantern Books.
- Massé, F., Givá, N., & Lunstrum, E. (2021). A feminist political ecology of wildlife crime: The gendered dimensions of a poaching economy and its impacts in Southern Africa. *Geoforum*, 126, 205-214.
- Meier, T., & Christen, O. (2012). Gender as a factor in an environmental assessment of the consumption of animal and plant-based foods in Germany. *The International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment*, 17(5), 550-564.
- Nath, K. (2026). From plate to protest: Youth movements against the "Hindutva diet" and the politics of eating in India. *International Quarterly for Asian Studies*, 57(2), 217-237.
- Nurse, A. (2013). *Animal harm: Perspectives on why people harm and kill animals*. Routledge.
- Parikh, A., & Miller, C. (2019). Holy cow! Beef ban, political technologies, and Brahmanical supremacy in Modi's India. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 18(4), 835–874.

- Sathyamala, C. (2019). Meat-eating in India: Whose food, whose politics, and whose rights? *Policy Futures in Education*, 17(7), 878-891.
- Sollund, R. (2020). Wildlife crime: A crime of hegemonic masculinity? *Social Sciences*, 9(6), 1-16.

War, militarism, and authoritarianism

- Bigger, P., Neimark, B., & Otu-Larbi, F (2026). *Two weeks of war in Iran unleashed more carbon pollution than Iceland does in a year.* Climate and Community Institute. https://climateandcommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Research-Snapshot_Iran-Emissions-Methodology.pdf
- Clark, B., & Jorgenson, A. K. (2012). The treadmill of destruction and the environmental impacts of militaries. *Sociology Compass*, 6(7), 557-569.
- Closmann, C. E. (Ed.) (2009). *War and the environment: Military destruction in the modern age*. Texas A&M University Press.
- Gayle, D. (2026). *5m tonnes of CO2 emitted in just 14 days of US war on Iran, analysis finds*. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/mar/21/middle-east-iran-conflict-environment-climate
- Jiménez Thomas Rodriguez, D., George, R., & Khan, A. (2026). *Anti-gender and anti-climate politics: Exploring converging agendas in Global Majority countries*. ODI Global.
- Mach, K. J., Kraan, C. M., Adger, W. N. et al. (2019). Climate as a risk factor for armed conflict. *Nature*, 571, 193-197.
- Parkinson, S., & Cottrell, L. (2022). *Estimating the military's global greenhouse gas emissions*. Scientists for Global Responsibility and the Conflict and Environment Observatory.
- Pike, C. (2026). *The double dividend: How reducing military spending can finance a just transition the fossil fuel treaty as a tool for justice and peace*. Fossil Fuel Treaty.
- Thunberg, G. [@GretaThunberg]. (2024, October 11). *Week 318. Today I joined @FFF_Milano in their school strike for the climate, against genocide and ecocide*. X. https://x.com/GretaThunberg/status/1844795881284895112

Ecofeminism

- Barre, A., Gabizon, S., Cardona, V. P., Stock, A., Frey, L. M. (2025). *Climate justice starts at the roots.* WECF International.
- Chemhuru, M. (2018). Interpreting ecofeminist environmentalism in African communitarian philosophy and Ubuntu: An alternative to anthropocentrism. *Philosophical Papers*, 48(2), 241-264.
- Coetser, Y. M. (2025). Undoing the dualisms: Towards an ecofeminist, postcolonial environmental justice. In Terblanché-Greeff, A. C., Alm, E., & Ahrens, J. (Eds.), *Climate change and the postcolonial* (pp. 47-65). Springer VS.
- Diaz-Diaz, C., & Royo Letelier, M. (2025). Decolonial provocations through ecofeminist pedagogies: Imagination in times of ecological precarity. *The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education*, 37(1), 25-37.
- Gaard, G. (2017). *Critical ecofeminism*. Bloomsbury.
- Hunnicutt, G. (2020). *Gender violence in ecofeminist perspective: Intersections of animal oppression, patriarchy and domination of the Earth.* Routledge.
- Kwaymullina, A. (2018). You are on Indigenous land: Ecofeminism, Indigenous peoples and land justice. In Stevens, L., Tait, P., Varney, D. (Eds.), *Feminist Ecologies* (pp. 193-208). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Macy, J., & Johnstone, C. (2011). *Active hope: How to face the mess we're in without going crazy*. New World Library.
- Meissner, S. N., & Smith, A. F. (2024). Climate crisis as relational crisis: Centering Indigenous feminist conceptions of responsibility in environmental discourse. *Feminist Philosophy Quarterly*, 10(1/2), 1-30.
- Sempértegui, A. (2021). Indigenous women's activism, ecofeminism, and extractivism: Partial connections in the Ecuadorian Amazon. *Politics & Gender*, 17(1), 197-224.
- Sharma, B. B., Minnick, D., Coard, E., & Carbajal, J. (2026). Critical feminist ecology: A systematic review of knowledge curated by indigenous, women, queer, ethnic, and racial communities who have been at the forefront of climate research, advocacy, and praxis. *Journal of Community Practice*, 34(2-3), 343-387.
- Shiva, V., & Mies, M. (2014). *Ecofeminism*, 2nd ed. Bloomsbury Publishing.

- Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In Nelson, C. & Grossberg, L. (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. University of Illinois Press.
- MacGregor, S. (2009). A stranger silence still: The need for feminist social research on climate change. *The Sociological Review*, 57(2_suppl), 124-140.
- Plumwood, V. (1993). *Feminism and the mastery of nature*. Routledge.

Men and masculinities

- Gottzén, L. (2025). Vulnerability, sovereign masculinity and male identity politics in the manosphere. *Gender and Justice*, 1(1), 13-31.
- Heilman, B., Barker, G., & Harrison, A. (2017). *The Man Box: A study on being a young man in the US, UK, and Mexico*. Equimundo.
- Connell, R. W. (2005). *Masculinities*, 2nd edn. Routledge.
- hooks, b. (2004). The will to change: Men, masculinity, and love. Atria Books. Kaufman, M. (1987). The construction of masculinity and the triad of men's violence. In Kaufman, M. (Ed.), *Beyond patriarchy: Essays by men on pleasure, power, and change* (pp. 1-29). Oxford University Press.
- Pease, B. (2019). *Facing patriarchy: From a violent gender order to a culture of peace*. Bloomsbury.
- Ratele, K. (2021). An invitation to decoloniality in work on (African) men and masculinities. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 28(6), 769-785.
- Vuong, O. (2019, June 10). *No homo*. The Paris Review. https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2019/06/10/no-homo/

Engaging with men and boys

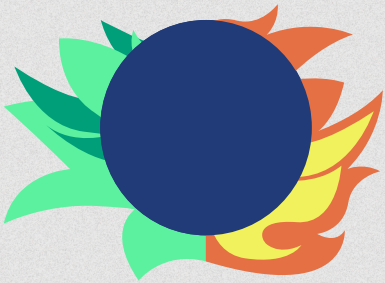
- Arao, B., & Clemens, K. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces: A new way to frame dialogue around diversity and social justice. In Landreman, L. M. (Ed.), *The art of effective facilitation* (pp. 135-150). Stylus.
- Burrell, S. R., Kamiyama, S., Belbase, L., Khurram, M., & MenEngage Alliance Climate Justice Working Group. (2026). 'Care is not only the goal, it's the way': Working with men and boys for climate and gender justice. NORMA, 21(1), 71-89.
- Flood, M. (2019). *Engaging men and boys in violence prevention*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Madzimure, E. (2025, April 24). Engaging men is not about blame, but about responsibility and possibility. MenEngage Alliance. https://menengage.org/stories/engaging-men-is-not-about-blame-but-about-responsibility-and-possibility
- MÄN (2018). *Men in the climate crisis: A guide for reflective groups among men, with a focus on masculinity norms' impact on the environment and climate*. MÄN. https://mfj.se/en/areas-of-work/connecting-gender-and-environment
- Van der Heyden, K. (2021). *Men, masculinities and climate justice: A discussion paper of the Ubuntu Symposium*. MenEngage Alliance.
- WECF International, YouthNet Global, MenEngage Global Alliance, ZAMSOF, Feminist Diplomacy Lab, Peña, D. E. R., Abdulrahman, S., Kauchu, A. B., & Sims, L. (2026). *Food systems, climate and human rights: Addressing patriarchal masculinities structures and norms to advance care and justice*. WECF International.

Responding to the climate and nature crisis

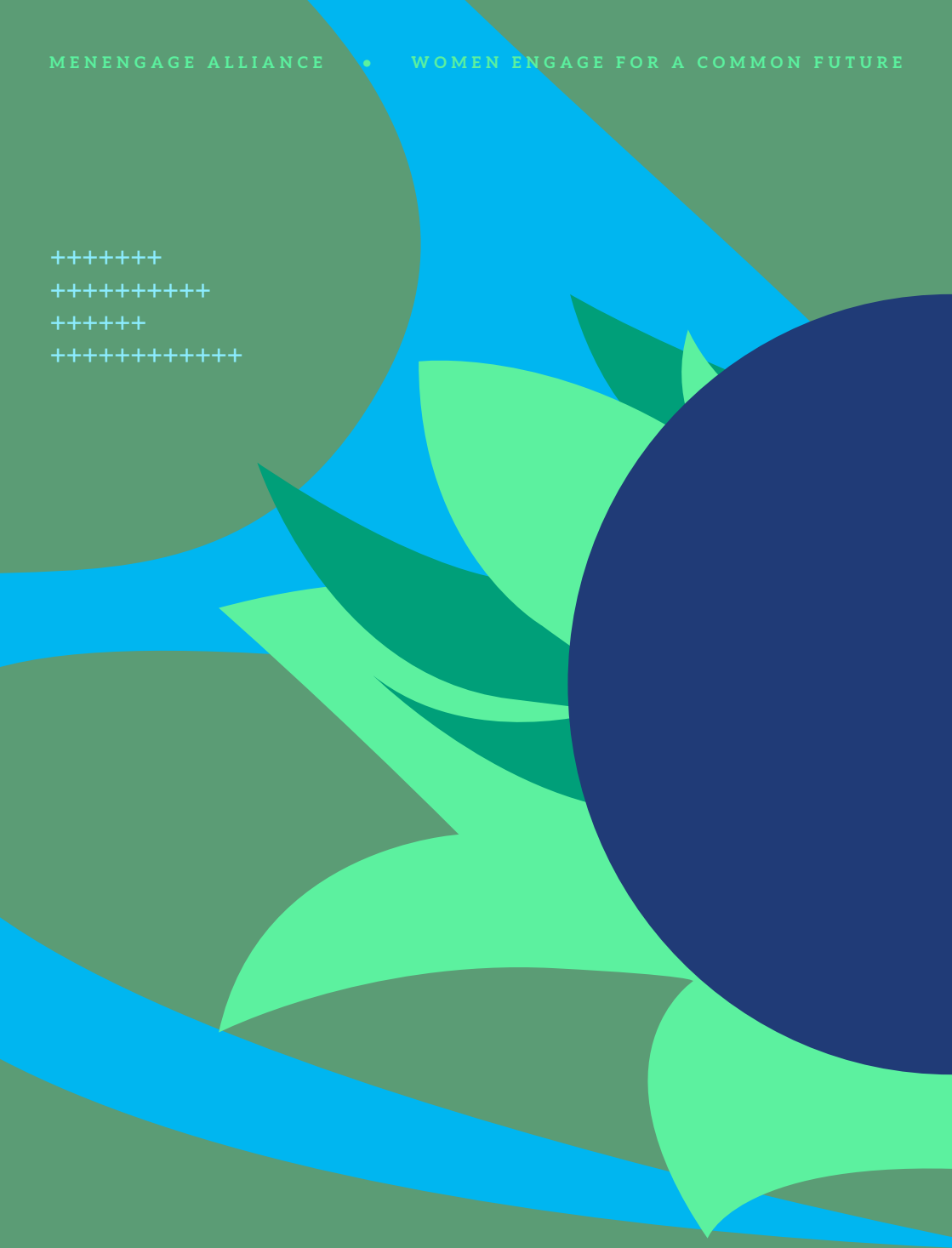
- Bauhardt, C. (2014). Solutions to the crisis? The Green New Deal, degrowth, and the solidarity economy: Alternatives to the capitalist growth economy from an ecofeminist economics perspective. *Ecological Economics*, 102, 60-68.
- Bossert, L., Crompton, T., Dutta, A., & Seager, J. (2024). Mapping the patriarchy in conservation. *npj Biodiversity*, 3, 38.
- Connell, R. W. (1990). A whole new world: Remaking masculinity in the context of the environmental movement. *Gender & Society*, 4(4), 452-478.
- Heffernan, R., Heidegger, P., Köhler, G., Stock, A., & Wiese, K. (2021). *A feminist European green deal: Towards an ecological and gender just transition*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stifting, WECF International, & European Environmental Bureau.
- Human Rights Compass. (2026, June). *Our rights, our planet: Recommendations to reinforce human rights through planetary justice* (Policy Brief No. 8). https://progresschange.org/data/files/ourrightsourplanetrecommendationstoreinforcehumanrightsthroughplanetaryjustice.pdf
- MacGregor, S., Arora-Jonsson, S., Cohen, M., & Morrissey, J. (2022). *Caring in a changing climate: Centering care work in climate action*. Oxfam.

- Martin, L., White, M. P., Hunt, A., Richardson, M., Pahl, S., & Burt, J. (2020). Nature contact, nature connectedness and associations with health, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviours. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 68, 101389.
- Muchhala, B. (2021). *A feminist and decolonial global green new deal: Principles, paradigms and systemic transformations*. WEDO.
- Parsons, M., Godden, N. J., Henrique, K. P., Tschakert, P., Gonda, N., Atkins, E., Steen, K. & Crease, R. P. (2025). Participatory approaches to climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation: A systematic review. *Ambio*, 54(12), 2005-2020.
- Prakash, A., Totin, E., Kemp, G., Kerr, R. B., Roberts, D. (2025). Bridging the gap: Promoting gender equity in climate change adaptation in the Global South. *PLOS Climate*, 4(6), e0000556.
- Zaidi, R. Z., & Fordham, M. (2021). The missing half of the Sendai framework: Gender and women in the implementation of global disaster risk reduction policy. *Progress in Disaster Science*, 10, 100170.



MENENGAGE ALLIANCE • WOMEN ENGAGE FOR A COMMON FUTURE

+++++++
++++++++++
++++++
++++++++++++



POLICY BRIEF