WORLD SURVEY ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT 2014

GENDER EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UN WOMEN

The World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, on the theme of "gender equality and sustainable development", was first issued by the United Nations in 2014 as a report of the Secretary-General (A/69/156).

ABOUT THE COVER

The cover depicts the three dimensions of sustainability - environmental, economic and social, as three separate sections of a braid that interweave and intersect, becoming one. The braid is a symbol of strength and interconnections, and thus alludes to a comprehensive approach to sustainable development. The cover image, taken as a whole, is a representation of a woman, reminding us that a commitment to gender equality and the realization of women and girls' human rights is fundamental to achieving sustainable development.

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UN WOMEN
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

CONTENTS

PREFACE

The immense social, economic and environmental consequences of climate change and loss of essential ecosystems are becoming clear. Their effects are already being felt in floods, droughts, and devastated landscapes and livelihoods. Among those most affected are the women and girls, given the precariousness of their livelihoods, the burden of securing shelter, food, water and fuel that largely falls on them, and the constraints on their access to land and natural resources. As the global community grapples with the challenges of sustainable development and the definition of the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2014 *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* asserts the central role of gender equality. It charts the rationale and the actions necessary to achieve sustainable development.

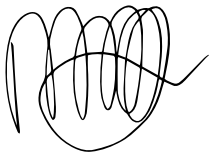
Linking gender equality with sustainable development is important for several reasons. It is a moral and ethical imperative. Efforts to achieve a just and sustainable future cannot ignore the rights, dignity and capabilities of half the world's population. To be effective, policy actions for sustainability must redress the disproportionate impact on women and girls of economic, social and environmental shocks and stresses. Finally, women's knowledge, agency and collective action has huge potential to improve resource productivity, enhance ecosystem conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, and to create more sustainable, low-carbon food, energy, water and health systems. Failure to capitalize on this would be a missed opportunity. Women should not be viewed as victims, but as central actors in moving towards sustainability.

The *World Survey* does not attempt to cover the exceedingly wide range of aspects of sustainable development. It identifies a select range of issues that are fundamental to women's lives and are strategic for achieving gender equality and sustainability. It analyses patterns of growth, employment generation and the role of public goods; food production, distribution and consumption; population dynamics and women's bodily integrity; and water, sanitation and energy.

Three criteria are employed to assess the likelihood of policy actions achieving gender equality. Do they support women's capabilities and their enjoyment of rights? Do they reduce, rather than increase, women's unpaid care work? And do they embrace women's equal and meaningful participation as actors, leaders and decision-makers?

The *World Survey* 2014 is a serious and thoughtful contribution to our understanding of how gender equality relates to sustainable development. This is a resource that strengthens the hands of policy actors in different parts of the world – whether in government, civil society, international agencies, or the private sector. It is my firm hope that it will lead to policies and actions that enhance gender equality and the full enjoyment by women and girls of their human rights.

The *World Survey* will be presented to the General Assembly in October 2014.



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UN Women would like to thank a number of experts and representatives across the United Nations System for their inputs into *The World Survey on the Role of Women in Development 2014: Gender Equality and Sustainable Development*.

The contributing authors who developed background papers that formed the basis of the chapters of the publication include: Melissa Leach and Lyla Mehta, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (United Kingdom); Elissa Braunstein, Colorado State University (United States); Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, The New School (United States); Elizabeth Hartmann, Anne Hendrixson and Jade Sasser, the Population and Development Program, Hampshire College (United States), and Isha Ray, Energy and Resources Group, University of California at Berkeley (United States).

In order to ensure that the report reflected a balanced range of experiences and the diversity of policy, advocacy and research activities around gender and sustainable development, UN Women organized several consultations to receive guidance and input on the content of the report.

An initial brainstorm on the key issues in gender and sustainable development was organized jointly with the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) in Geneva in May 2013 with a small group of experts. The attendees were Bina Agarwal, Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi and The University of Manchester (United Kingdom); Sarah Cook, UNRISD; Wendy Harcourt, International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University (the Netherlands); Melissa Leach; and Anita Nayar, The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (formerly, United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service).

Subsequently, a two-day concepts and methods workshop was organized at UN Women headquarters in New York with presentations by experts on various key topics identified at the brainstorm. Participants at this workshop included Andrew Fischer, International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University (the Netherlands); Sakiko Fukuda-Parr; Elizabeth Hartmann; Anne Hendrixson; Melissa Leach; Michael Levien, John Hopkins University (United States); Anita Nayar; Isha Ray; Dianne Rocheleau, Clark University (United States); and Margarita Velasquez, Regional Centre for Multidisciplinary Research (Mexico).

An expert group meeting was organized jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome in late February 2014, to review and discuss the first drafts of the background papers, on the basis of which the authors made revisions for a second draft. Apart from the authors, the attendees included researchers and practitioners with expertise and experience on the different thematic areas covered: Denisse Cordova, FIAN International (Germany); Wendy Harcourt; Marjorie Mbilinyi, Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (Tanzania); Mohan Rao, Jawaharlal Nehru University (India); Liane Schalatek, Heinrich Böll Foundation North America (United States); Stephanie Seguino, University of Vermont (United States); and Simon Thuo, Global Water Partnership Eastern Africa (Uganda). Representatives from the United Nations system included Martina Otto, United Nations Environment Programme; Patricia Colbert and Jennifer Nyberg, World Food Programme; Solomon Asfaw, Chiara Brunelli, Ida Christensen, Chiara Cirulli, Francesca Di Stefano, Carol Djeddah, Susan Kaaria, Eric Jesper Karlsson, Regina Laub, Leslie Lipper, Dominique Mortera, Ana Paula de la

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At UN Women, the substantive work on the World Survey was coordinated by Shahrashoub Razavi and Seemin Qayum under the guidance of Saraswathi Menon and John Hendra. Somali Cerise and Laura Turquet made valuable contributions to finalize the text; Sophie Browne and Norberto Rodrigues undertook fact-checking and research assistance; and Talita Mattos provided administrative support. Comments on the chapters were provided by Ginette Azcona, Christine Brautigam, Sylvia Hordosch, Papa Seck and Silke Staab. The design and production was coordinated by Mika Mansukhani and Carlotta Aiello.

CHAPTER /1

ABOUT THE WORLD SURVEY ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

The twin challenges of building pathways to sustainable development and achieving gender equality have never been more pressing. As the world moves towards the post-2015 development agenda, the present *World Survey* not only shows why each challenge is so important, but also why both challenges must be addressed together, in ways that fully realize the human rights of women and girls and help countries to make the transition to sustainable development.

Dominant patterns of production, consumption and distribution are heading in deeply unsustainable directions (see A/CONF.216/PC/7). Humanity has become a key driver of earth system processes and the overexploitation of natural resources, the loss of key habitats and biodiversity and the pollution of land, seas and the atmosphere are becoming increasingly evident. Scientific understandings are clarifying the huge economic, social and environmental challenges posed by such threats as climate change and the loss of essential ecosystem services, as humanity approaches or exceeds so-called "planetary boundaries" (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2013; Rockström and others, 2009). Already, human interactions with the environment are producing unprecedented shocks and stresses, felt in floods, droughts and devastated urban and rural landscapes and livelihoods, while many people and places have suffered from a nexus of food, energy, environmental and financial crises. These unsustainable patterns add to poverty and inequality today, especially for the third of the world's population directly dependent on natural resources for their well-being, and create deep threats for future generations (Unmüßig, Sachs and Fatheuer, 2012).

The causes and underlying drivers of unsustainability and of gender inequality are deeply interlocked

The effects of unsustainable patterns of development intensify gender inequality because women and girls are often disproportionately affected by economic, social and environmental shocks and stresses (Neumayer and Plümper, 2007). The causes and underlying drivers of unsustainability and of gender inequality are deeply interlocked. Both are produced by development models that support particular types of underregulated market-led growth and the persistence of unequal power relations between women and men (Wichterich, 2012). Such development patterns rely on and reproduce gender inequalities, exploiting women's labour and unpaid care work. The same development trajectories also produce environmental problems, as market actors seek and secure profit in ways that rely on the overexploitation of natural resources and the pollution of climates, land and oceans. Such market-led pathways are leading in directions that are unsustainable in social and ecological terms, and ultimately in economic ones too, undermining the conditions for future progress.

Growing international debate now highlights the need to move economies and societies onto more sustainable paths, whether to avert crisis and catastrophe, or enable prosperity through "green economies". Policy responses to date have not always emphasized that the realization of human rights must guide such efforts, or prioritized the need to address gender inequality. Also frequently missing in such debates is a sense of the trade-offs involved. Sustainability is often presented as if policy solutions were clear-cut. Yet many dilemmas arise: for instance between finance for different kinds of low-carbon energy; between prioritizing food or biofuels in land use; and between preserving forests to mitigate global climate change or to meet local livelihood needs, to name a few. In many instances, policy approaches that seek to promote sustainability or "green economy" goals can undermine women's rights and gender equality. How such dilemmas are addressed has profound implications for who gains and loses, both among social groups and between local, national and global interests.

Yet this is also a time of opportunity. There are many examples around the world of alternative development pathways that move towards sustainability with gender equality. Gender equality and sustainable development can reinforce each other in powerful ways (Agarwal, 2002; Buckingham-Hatfield, 2002; Cela, Dankelman and Stern, 2013; Johnsson-Latham, 2007).

A/ GENDER EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: SYNERGIES AND TENSIONS

The centrality of gender equality, women's empowerment and the realization of women's rights in achieving sustainable development has been increasingly recognized in recent decades. This recognition is evident in a number of international norms and agreements, including principle 20 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[1] adopted in 1992, in its statement regarding the full participation of women being essential to achieving sustainable development. In the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[2] adopted by Member States in 1995, governments were called upon to integrate gender concerns and perspectives into policies and programmes for sustainable development. The centrality of gender equality has also been articulated in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", adopted in 2012, which included recognition of the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment across the three pillars of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental, and resolve to promote gender equality and women's full participation in sustainable development policies, programmes and decision-making at all levels (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex).

Linking gender equality and sustainable development is important for several reasons. First, it is a moral and ethical imperative: achieving gender equality and realizing the human rights, dignity and capabilities of diverse groups of women is a central requirement of a just and sustainable world. Second, it is critical to redress the disproportionate impact of economic, social and environmental shocks and stresses on women and girls, which undermine the enjoyment of their human rights and their vital roles in sustaining their families and communities. Third, and most significantly, it is important to build up women's agency and capabilities to create better synergies between gender equality and sustainable development outcomes.

There is growing evidence of the synergies between gender equality, on the one hand, and economic, social and environmental sustainability, on the other. For example, when women have greater voice and participation in public administration, public resources are more likely to be allocated towards investments

in human development priorities, including child health, nutrition and access to employment (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004). Ensuring women's access to and control over agricultural assets and productive resources is important for achieving food security and sustainable livelihoods (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2011). Women's knowledge, agency and collective action are central to finding, demonstrating and building more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable pathways to manage local landscapes; adapt to climate change; produce and access food; and secure sustainable water, sanitation and energy services.

premised on maintaining gender inequalities, such as through maintaining gender wage gaps and entrenching gender discriminatory norms, values and institutions (Seguino, 2000; Kabeer and Natali, 2013).

Further, as governments and donor agencies increasingly target women as critical agents for community adaptation to climate change; in their role as smallholders as the mainstay of sustainable food production; and through limiting their reproductive rights as the answer to population-environment problems; there is a danger of entrenching gender stereotypes and inequalities.

Achieving gender equality and realizing the human rights, dignity and capabilities of diverse groups of women is a central requirement of a just and sustainable world

Increasingly, women's full participation is recognized as central to policymaking. For example, their decisive involvement in community forest management bodies yields positive outcomes for both forest sustainability and gender equality (Agarwal, 2010). Further, certain aspects of gender equality, such as female education and women's share of employment, can have a positive impact on economic growth, although this impact is dependent on the nature of growth strategies, the structure of the economy, the sectoral composition of women's employment and labour market segregation, among other factors (Kabeer and Natali, 2013).

However, while gender equality can have a catalytic effect on achieving economic, social and environmental sustainability, the reverse does not always hold true. Hence, a simple "win-win" relationship between gender equality and sustainability cannot be assumed. Indeed, some patterns of economic growth are

Policy responses that view women as "sustainability saviours" draw upon and reinforce stereotypes regarding women's roles in relation to the family, the community and the environment. Such responses often add to women's already heavy unpaid work burdens without conferring rights, resources and benefits. Power imbalances in gender relations determine whether women's actions and work translate into the realization of their rights and capabilities. While the participation of women is vital, their involvement in policy interventions aimed at sustainability does not automatically mean greater gender equality, particularly when the structural foundations of gender inequality remain unchanged.

There are, however, alternative approaches that move towards sustainability and gender equality synergistically. Some are rooted in the everyday practices through which women and men access, control, use and manage natural resources in ways that sustain livelihoods and

well-being. Joint initiatives between the State and the community in the Amazon Basin, for example, have the potential to conserve forest biodiversity and address climate change mitigation while providing for local sustainable livelihoods of women and men (Rival, 2012). Others are evident in movements and collectivities, many of them led by women, to build food and resource sovereignty and sustainable communities and cities. For example, in South Asia, a network of grass-roots women leaders are working to scale up capacity to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to climate change in their communities and build a culture of resilience.[3]

B/ MESSAGES OF THIS WORLD SURVEY

The aims of the present *World Survey* are to chart why and how gender equality must be at the centre of sustainable development and the actions necessary to achieve sustainable development with gender equality. The overall messages of the report are:

(a) Forging any sustainable development pathway must include an explicit commitment to gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights in its conceptualization and implementation;

(b) Achieving sustainable development means recognizing the synergies between gender equality and sustainability and engaging with the tensions and trade-offs that inevitably arise between the three dimensions of sustainability and with the integration of gender equality;

(c) Addressing the trade-offs and negotiating the policy dilemmas to achieve sustainable development and gender equality requires inclusive deliberation processes and ways to monitor exclusions and trade-offs. The active participation, leadership and creativity of civil society and women's organizations, communities and concerned individuals are critical to such deliberations.

The survey does not attempt to cover the exceedingly wide range of important and necessary aspects of sustainable development with gender equality. Rather, it delves into a selected set of topics that are fundamental to women's lives, strategic for achieving gender equality and closely intertwined with the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability: patterns of growth, employment generation and "public goods"[4] provisioning; food production, distribution and consumption; population and women's bodily integrity; and water, sanitation and energy. The chapters thus discuss different tangible elements of sustainable livelihoods for women within the overarching frame of gender-responsive economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Chapter II articulates what sustainable development with gender equality means for policymaking purposes: economic, social and environmental development that ensures human well-being and dignity, ecological integrity, gender equality and social justice, now and in the future. Recognizing that governments will need to assess complex policy options, in which there will inevitably be tensions and trade-offs, the survey proposes criteria for policymakers, in order to enable them to

evaluate policies for sustainable development and gender equality.

Each chapter thereafter shows how unsustainable development patterns and gender inequality reinforce each other. Chapter III, on the green economy, gender equality and care, elaborates on the interactions between growth trajectories and rising inequalities, underscoring the exploitation of women's labour through low wages and reliance on extensive and unpaid care work.

Chapter IV, on food security and gender equality, illustrates how systemic dynamics in the global economy and markets are intersecting with gender relations to have deleterious consequences for both household food security and gender equality. Yet dominant perspectives, in this case the productionist focus that has dominated much international thinking and policy since the 1980s, marginalize the question of the right to food. The chapter shows how the volatility of world cereal markets, low wages and precarious livelihoods interact with gender-specific constraints around resource rights, access and control. The effects of climate change and of large-scale land investments for export crops and biofuels are adding to such constraints. Women farmers are central in producing food for their families and in sustaining the ecologies that enable this, but must often do so under increasingly constrained conditions.

Chapter V, on population, sustainable development and gender equality, shows the continued and indeed, renewed, dominance of policy perspectives that attribute environmental degradation and ecological threats to growing populations. These perspectives distract attention from and thus support the continuation of unsustainable consumption and production patterns and inequities that are actually far more significant in producing environmental problems than are sheer numbers of people. The chapter discusses the dangers of narrowly focused population policies that view women's fertility as a cause of and solution for environmental degradation and that can be coercive and punitive, without providing support for — and in fact, often undermining — women's rights, dignity and control over their bodies.

Each chapter also shows that alternative pathways that move in sustainable directions, economically, socially and environmentally, are possible. They are underpinned by alternative visions and values that emphasize not just profit and growth, but the importance of sustainability, gender equality, inclusivity and social justice. Typically, they involve different combinations of public, private and civil society institutions and require strong state action. States play central roles as duty bearers in delivering on commitments to gender equality, providing appropriate policy contexts, setting standards and regulating resource use, holding private actors to account and, crucially, providing public services and investments for social and ecological sustainability. Social movements are key in initiating and demanding such alternatives and in shaping forms of collective action that maintain them.

Thus, in relation to paid work and public goods (see chap. III), new public and private alliances pushing for and building green economies and green transformations are highlighted. Here, pathways are emerging that link financing, technologies and investments in areas such as low-carbon and renewable energy towards modes of growth that respect ecological limits. Building on existing practices and policy proposals, the chapter underscores the economic, social and environmental pay-offs and benefits for gender equality of improved earnings and employment conditions for workers providing such environmental services as waste-picking and recycling, and also for those providing care-related personal services. In relation to food (see chap. IV), the survey emphasizes a strong focus on securing the right to food. This includes policy and public support for smallholder farming, particularly for women smallholders, enabling them to secure ecologically-sound cultivation, maintain soil

fertility and ensure their livelihoods. Successful examples often incorporate local knowledge of ecological conditions, soils and seeds; cooperatives for production and marketing; and support, such as credit to enable poorer farmers to access appropriate inputs. State interventions, for instance in setting minimum wages and price regulation, and international negotiations around such issues as export subsidies and the maintenance of reserve stocks to offset price volatility, also support access and rights to food.

The chapter on investments for gender-responsive sustainable development (see chap. VI) highlights the ways in which the poorest women and girls can secure rights to products and services that meet essential everyday needs for water, sanitation, clean cooking and electricity. These investments bring essential benefits both in terms of environmental sustainability and in enhancing people's capabilities, dignity and health. Public investment is key to such initiatives, but so too is innovation to find appropriate technologies and attune them to local social and ecological conditions. The role of local knowledge and grass-roots innovation and action therefore prove to be critical in this context too. The challenge is then to scale up equitably while maintaining a focus on gender equality and sustainability.

Each chapter emphasizes that women's agency is central to many of these sustainable development pathways. They are often at the forefront of social movements, resisting unsustainable models and demanding alternatives. Their knowledge, innovation, action and agency is central to finding, demonstrating and building more economically, socially and ecologically sustainable ways to manage local ecologies, adapt to climate change, produce and access food and secure sustainable and appropriate water, sanitation and energy services. For pathways to be truly sustainable and advance gender equality and the rights and capabilities of women and girls, those whose lives and well-being are at stake must be involved in decision-making and leading the way, through community groups, women's organizations and other forms of collective action and engagement.

The survey concludes with recommendations for concrete policy actions to move towards sustainable development and gender equality. Given the diversity of contexts within which policymakers operate, rather than being prescriptive, the survey identifies three criteria for assessing if policies, programmes and actions taken in the name of sustainability are likely to achieve gender equality and women's rights, especially the rights of marginalized groups, who are likely to bear a disproportionate share of the costs of economic, social and environmental unsustainability. The overall message of the *World Survey* is one of optimism and hope, that the world can forge a more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future, in which women and girls, men and boys can enjoy their human rights to the full.

For pathways to be truly sustainable and advance gender equality and the rights and capabilities of women and girls, those whose lives and well-being are at stake must be involved in decision-making and leading the way

CHAPTER /2

GENDER EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A/ INTRODUCTION

The imperatives of achieving gender equality and attaining sustainable development were clearly acknowledged in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development:

We recognize that gender equality and women's empowerment are important for sustainable development and our common future. We reaffirm our commitments to ensure women's equal rights, access and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, society and political decision-making. … We underscore that women have a vital role to play in achieving sustainable development. We recognize the leadership role of women, and we resolve to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and to ensure their full and effective participation in sustainable development policies, programmes and decision-making at all levels.
(General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, paras. 31 and 45).

The *World Survey* articulates what sustainable development with gender equality could mean for policies, programmes and decision-making at all levels in the current global juncture. In doing so it reflects on the early twenty-first century global context, when entrenched poverty and hunger, rising inequalities, ecosystem destruction and climate change, all of which are consequences, in large part, of prevailing economic models and paradigms, pose unprecedented challenges for the realization of women's rights and risk undermining further the sustainability of their households, communities and societies. Dominant development patterns have both entrenched gender inequalities and proved unsustainable as regards many issues covered in the *World Survey,* including economic growth and work; population and reproduction; food and agriculture; and water, sanitation and energy. Yet the overall message of the *World Survey* is one of hope in the possibilities of constructing, through vigorous democratic deliberation that involves states, women and men, civil society organizations, the private sector and global institutions, alternative development trajectories within which gender equality and sustainability can powerfully reinforce each other.

International norms and standards on women's and girls' human rights and gender equality provide a solid basis for advancing action to strengthen the vital role of women in achieving sustainable development. Discrimination on the basis of sex is prohibited under all major international human rights instruments. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[5] obligates States parties to take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development and advancement

International norms and standards on women's and girls' human rights and gender equality provide a solid basis for advancing action to strengthen the vital role of women in achieving sustainable development

of women. International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions have continuously enhanced women's rights to and at work, including, most recently, those of domestic workers.

The series of United Nations conferences convened during the 1990s advanced international norms and agreements on sustainable development and gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in 1992, provided a landmark forum to advance the global policy framework on sustainable development. It launched Agenda 21, a commitment to sustainable development and three global environmental conventions — the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[6] the Convention on Biological Diversity[7] and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.[8] Principle 20 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[1] states that the full participation of women is essential to achieving sustainable development. The Convention on Biological Diversity recognizes that the integration of women's rights and gender equality in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use is not only intrinsically important, but can also improve the efficacy of interventions, programmes and resources.

In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, affirmed, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, that the "human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights" (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III).

The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[9] adopted in 1994, marked the beginning of a new chapter on the interrelationship between population, human rights and sustainable development. The outcome positioned gender equality and the empowerment of women as global priorities and emphasized the well-being of individuals as the key focus of the global agenda on population and sustainable development. The Programme of Action highlights a number of critical areas for advancing gender equality, including universal access to family planning and sexual and reproductive health services and reproductive rights; equal access to education for girls; and equal sharing of responsibilities for care and housework between women and men.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[2] adopted in 1995, set a landmark global agenda for women's human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Declaration provides that "the advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and … are the only way to build a sustainable, just and developed society". The Platform for Action calls on governments to integrate gender concerns and perspectives into policies and programmes for sustainable development. The upcoming 20-year global review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action provides an important opportunity for renewed commitments for accelerated action.

The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action[10] adopted in 1996, urged governments to "ensure an enabling political, social, and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all".

The United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000, built upon the outcomes of the major summits and world conferences

The upcoming 20-year global review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action provides an important opportunity for renewed commitments for accelerated action

of the 1990s. In the Millennium Declaration, Member States affirmed six fundamental principles essential to international relations, namely freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility, and called for action in key areas, including development and poverty eradication, peace and security, and democracy and human rights. Governments also confirmed their resolve to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to promote sustainable development (General Assembly resolution 55/2).

More recently, the importance of women's participation in decision-making regarding climate change has been recognized at the global level. The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, at its eighteenth session, in 2012, adopted a decision to promote the goal of gender balance in the bodies of and delegations to the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and to include gender and climate change as a standing item on the agenda of the Conference (See FCCC/CP/2012/8/ADD.3, decision 23/CP.18).

Recent resolutions adopted by the General Assembly have further reaffirmed the centrality of gender equality to sustainable development. In General Assembly resolution 68/139 on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas, adopted at its sixty-eighth session, the Assembly urged Member States to mainstream gender considerations in the governance of natural resources and to leverage the participation and influence of women in managing the sustainable use of natural resources. The resolution also called upon governments to support women smallholder farmers by facilitating their access to extension and financial services, agricultural inputs and land, water sanitation and irrigation, markets and innovative technologies. In resolution 68/227 on women in development, adopted at the same session, the Assembly encouraged governments to take measures to ensure equal access to full and productive employment and decent work.

Similarly, the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women have advanced the global policy framework on gender equality and sustainable development. At its fifty-eighth session, the Commission urged governments to promote the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centred sustainable development (see E/2014/27). The Commission also emphasized the need for governments to value, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work by prioritizing social protection policies, accessible and affordable social services and the development of infrastructure, including access to environmentally sound time- and energy-saving technologies.

B/ A TIME OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

It is increasingly clear that dominant patterns of development and growth are unsustainable in economic, social and environmental terms (ILO, 2012; A/CONF.216/PC/7). They have led to increasingly precarious livelihoods, with 1.2 billion people living in extreme poverty (United Nations, 2013a) and many more without access to basic services and social protections. Current patterns of growth have coincided with rising inequalities in wealth, income and capabilities worldwide, across and between nations (United Nations, 2013b; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2013a). Although some developing countries with rising incomes are catching up with developed countries, incomes in the latter are still much higher than those in the converging countries. The poorest 5 per cent of the population in a high-income developed country tends to be richer than two thirds of the population in a low-income developing country. Income still "depends on citizenship and location" (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), 2012a). In this context, gender inequalities across economic, social and environmental dimensions remain widespread and persistent.

Human activities have become key drivers of earth system processes and are manifested in the depletion and degradation of natural resources; the loss of key ecosystems, habitats and biodiversity; the pollution of land, oceans and the atmosphere; and in climate change, with concomitant severe and unpredictable weather effects as humanity approaches or exceeds what have been referred to as "planetary boundaries" (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2013; Rockström and others, 2009). In recent years such processes have produced unprecedented shocks and stresses, reflected in floods, droughts, devastated urban and rural landscapes and livelihoods, with many people and places suffering from a confluence of food, climate and financial crises. These crises of unsustainability potentially affect all and carry profound risks for future generations, as described in 1987 in the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, "Our common future" (A/42/427, annex).

1. Patterns of unsustainable development and gender inequality

The underlying causes and consequences of unsustainability and gender inequality are deeply intertwined and rooted in the dominant economic models (Fukuda-Parr, Heintz and Seguino, 2013). These involve economic liberalization and the concentration of productive and financial activity geared to short-term profits; unrestrained material consumption; unparalleled levels of militarism; and the privatization of public goods and services, all at the expense of state regulation and redistribution. Such processes have caused, in many places, crises of care, which means the breakdown in the abilities of individuals, families, communities and societies to sustain, care for and educate themselves and future generations, thereby undermining people's rights and dignity (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), 2014).

Financial crises and recessions, which have taken hold in many countries with severe repercussions across the world, have brought to the fore the risks and vulnerabilities inherent to liberalized and financialized market models. These risks and vulnerabilities undermine the viability of market models even on their own terms. The fruits of economic growth have also been unequally divided. Over the past three decades, economic disparities between and within countries and regions have increased. The richest 1 per cent of

the world's population owns some 40 per cent of all assets while the poorer half of the population owns just 1 per cent of global assets (UNDP, 2013a). The world's most rapidly growing economies, including those of Asia, Southern Africa and Latin America, have also seen rapid rises in inequality. Inequality itself threatens economic sustainability, fuelling unrest and conflict and undermining the stability, level playing field and consumer demand on which growth relies (Stiglitz, 2012).

The dominant economic models are unsustainable, not only in economic terms but also in social and environmental terms, perpetuating gender and other inequalities and damaging ecosystems and biodiversity (ILO, 2012; A/CONF.216/PC/7). Export-oriented models of growth in many areas of industry and agriculture have contributed to the rising labour force participation of women, as discussed in the 1999 *World Survey* (A/54/227).[11] Yet gender-based discrimination and segregation in labour markets, as well as the weak regulation of those markets, have served to confine women to jobs that are low-paid and of poor quality in terms of working conditions and access to social protection. They reinforce the status of women as secondary earners within their households (Chen and others, 2005).

Moreover, markets can continue to function as they do because of their reliance on the unpaid work that is allocated to caring for children, the sick and the elderly and the domestic work that sustains households and communities (UNRISD, 2010). Economic growth could not take place without this unpaid and often invisible work. Dominant growth models also rely on the exploitation of natural resources as if these were unlimited. The environmental costs of production, such as pollution, toxic waste and greenhouse gas emissions are externalized. That is, "climate change, like other environmental problems, involves an externality: the emission of greenhouse gases damages others at no cost to the agent responsible for the emissions" (Stern, 2006). Such patterns of development create profits at environmental expense, whether through the entrenched fossil fuel systems that supply industry, energy and automobiles, or through industrial agriculture that generates short-term gain by mining soils and depleting water resources. Such patterns are unsustainable, compromising future production and consumption and threatening the integrity and resilience of ecosystems and biodiversity (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

Economic growth cannot take place without unpaid work

Declines in ecosystem services and productive capacity destabilize people's livelihoods and health, both in the present and for future generations. In the pursuit of profit, the social and environmental costs of production are shifted onto the state, private households and local communities, or onto the natural environment. The costs and consequences of socio-environmental change are manifested in different forms of gender inequality. National disasters, including those related to climate change, disproportionately affect poor women (Neumayer and Plümper, 2007). Women often bear the brunt of coping with climate-related shocks and stresses or the health effects of indoor and urban pollution, which add to their care burdens. As land, forest and water resources once held in common are increasingly enclosed, privatized or "grabbed" for commercial investment, local communities and indigenous peoples, particularly women, whose livelihoods depend on them, are marginalized and displaced (White and White, 2012; Levien, 2012; FAO, 2012). In this process, sustainable livelihoods, health, rights and dignity are jeopardized (Unmüßig, 2014).

2. Responding to the challenges

Growing international attention and debate has recognized the clear need to move economies and societies onto more sustainable paths, whether to avert crisis and catastrophe, or enable prosperity through green economies. In an attempt to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, carbon emissions have been monetized and traded on world markets. Biodiversity offset

schemes posit that the destruction of biodiversity can be compensated by creating similar habitats elsewhere. Payments for ecosystem services compensate communities and individuals for conserving and protecting such essential natural goods as water sources and forests. Such schemes aim to assign value to natural capital so it can be internalized in economic calculations. However, the resulting transactions and markets have often militated against equal access to and benefit from natural resources for women and men because of power differentials and the lack of participation in decision-making and negotiations (McAfee, 2012; UNRISD, 2012b) (see box 1). They have also further intensified pressures on natural resources through land, water and green "grabs" (Unmüßig, 2014; Fairhead, Leach and Scoones, 2012; Mehta, Veldwisch and Franco, 2012).

Women's knowledge, agency and collective action are central to finding, demonstrating and building more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable pathways to manage local landscapes; adapt to climate change; produce and access food; and secure sustainable water, sanitation and energy services. For example women's decisive involvement in community forest management bodies yields positive outcomes for both forest sustainability and gender equality (Agarwal, 2010) (see box I). Thus governments and donor agencies target women as critical agents for community adaptation to climate change; in their role as smallholder farmers, the mainstay of sustainable food production; and through limiting their reproductive rights, as the answer to population-environment problems. Indeed, perspectives that view women narrowly as "sustainability saviours" are evident in many areas, from the conservation of biodiversity, water and soils to building socially and environmentally sustainable services.

Yet viewing women as sustainability saviours carries dangers. Such approaches are based on the assumption that women's time is an "infinitely elastic" (Elson, 1996) and unlimited resource that can be drawn upon to sustain people and environments, without due consideration for women's own health and well-being and the competing demands on their time. Policies that are based on stereotypical assumptions regarding women's caring role in the family, community and environment treat women as a homogeneous category. They ignore the vital intersections with other inequalities that shape women's interests, knowledge, values, opportunities and capabilities. Power imbalances in gender relations, in the exercise of rights, access to and control of resources, or participation in decision-making, determine whether women's actions and work translate into enhanced rights and capabilities, dignity and bodily integrity. Thus women's involvement in policy interventions ostensibly aimed at sustainability does not automatically mean greater gender equality; on the contrary, intensifying women's workloads to benefit the community and the environment can entrench and worsen gender inequalities.

Despite some of the shortcomings in the ways in which policy actors have responded to sustainability challenges, this is also a time of opportunity. There are many concrete examples from around the world of alternative pathways that move towards sustainability and gender equality. Some of these are emerging from women's and men's everyday practices of accessing, controlling, using and managing forests, soils, water and urban landscapes in ways that sustain their livelihoods and enhance their well-being.

Women have been and can be central actors in pathways to sustainability and green transformation. However, crucially, this must not mean adding environmental conservation to women's unpaid care work. It means recognition and respect for their knowledge, rights, capabilities and bodily integrity, and ensuring that roles are matched with rights, control over resources and decision-making power. Gender equality and sustainable development can reinforce each other in powerful ways and charting such pathways and concrete areas for policy action is a central aim of the *World Survey*.

Box I

Sustainable forest management and gender equality

Forest landscapes illustrate well the interaction between economic, social and ecological processes in shaping change. Vegetation cover and quality reflect the dynamic interaction of ecologies with people's livelihoods. The same forests and trees may be valued by different people for their timber and gathered products, for their services in shade and ecosystem protection, or for their cultural values.

Forests have been subject to policies and interventions, with varying outcomes for gender equality. From colonial times onwards, successive state, donor-led and non-governmental programmes have focused on goals ranging from sustaining supplies of timber and non forest products to protecting watersheds and biodiversity. The latest round of interventions focuses on mitigating climate change. The objective is to manage forests in order to protect and enhance carbon stocks as a means of offsetting emissions produced in industrialized settings. The many schemes that have emerged, associated variously with the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD process), the Clean Development Mechanism, the Verified Carbon Standard or unaccredited private deals, all re-value forests as a source of a carbon commodity to be exchanged in emerging markets. As these forest carbon projects play out on the ground, they have tried to meet global sustainability needs but have often excluded local forest users and undermined their livelihoods, thereby contributing to dispossession (Corbera and Brown, 2008; Corbera and Schroeder, 2010). The result is often greater inequality and injustice for local users vis-à-vis external agencies and global actors. A recent study on REDD+* concludes that women are not "key stakeholders or beneficiaries of REDD+ because of their invisibility in the forest sector — largely viewed as a masculine domain" (Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management and others, 2013).

Alternatives have focused on community-based and joint forest management. Such approaches have the potential to foster and support local rights and capabilities, including those of women. Yet the outcomes of community forest management for gender equality have varied considerably. In many cases, gendered interests and values in forest management have been subordinated to a generalized notion of "the community", through institutions dominated by men and community leaders. However, work in Nepal and in Gujarat, India, provides evidence to show that gender equality in joint forest management processes is associated with positive outcomes both for forest ecology and for gender equality (Agarwal, 2010). Gender-related inequality (unless mitigated by specific measures) is often associated with low or failed cooperation within forest management committees. Where women are full participants, with a voice and power in committee structures, their equal access to resources is enabled along with a more equitable sharing of benefits and improved forest sustainability.

* The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD) is an effort to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, offering incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development. REDD+ goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, the sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. See www.un-redd.org (accessed 29 June 2014).

C/ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITH GENDER EQUALITY: DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

The understanding of sustainable development for the present survey is in line with the definition proposed, in 1987, in the landmark report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: sustainable development should "meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (A/42/427, annex), which involves integrating the three pillars of sustainability: economic, social and environmental.

Sustainable development is economic, social and environmental development that ensures human well-being and dignity, ecological integrity, gender equality and social justice, now and in the future

The *World Survey* builds on this broad definition in several important respects that contribute to the on-going deliberations on the post-2015 development framework. It re emphasizes normative values, anchoring its policy analysis within a human rights and human capabilities framework, as elaborated below, and underlines that questions of equality and justice are important for present as well as future generations. In both aspects, gender equality is central.

Sustainable development, therefore, is economic, social and environmental development that ensures human well-being and dignity, ecological integrity, gender equality and social justice, now and in the future.

The understanding of gender equality for the purpose of the *World Survey* is that elaborated by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which clarified that: "... a purely formal legal or programmatic approach is not sufficient to achieve women's de facto equality with men, which the Committee interprets as substantive equality. In addition, the Convention requires that women be given an equal start and that they be empowered by an enabling environment to achieve equality of results" (see A/59/38, part one, annex I, General Recommendation No. 25). Substantive or de facto equality therefore entails women's equal enjoyment of their rights, especially in regard to results and outcomes. To ensure this, States must not only eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, including structural and historic discrimination, by building on the foundations of formal or legal equality, but ensure the realization of their rights.

This concept of substantive gender equality resonates strongly with the capabilities framework, which draws attention to the substantive freedoms that people have "to lead the kinds of lives they value — and have reason to value" (Sen, 1999). The human rights and capabilities frameworks share a common motivation, which is the freedom and dignity of the individual, and both stand in sharp contrast to dominant economic approaches that emphasize the expansion of gross domestic product (GDP) as their principal goals (Vizard, Fukuda-Parr and Elson, 2011). Deprivation of elementary capabilities, which may be reflected in premature mortality, significant undernourishment and widespread illiteracy (Sen, 1999, p. 20),

continues to mark the lives of millions of people around the world, even in countries with high rates of economic growth. Such deprivation in rights and capabilities can also be experienced by women and girls who are members of households that may not be considered poor or deprived at an aggregate level, underlining the need to always look behind averages and aggregates. While the removal of such inequalities in basic well-being is of utmost importance, the capabilities framework, like the human rights approach, also draws attention to the significance of the agency of women because of its intrinsic value and because the "limited role of women's active agency seriously afflicts the lives of all people — men as well as women, children as well as adults" (Sen 1999, 191). Both human rights and capabilities frameworks underscore the potential synergy between women's agency and well-being outcomes, and the indivisibility of their rights.

The issue of intergenerational justice, which is a key component of the definition of sustainability in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, remains an important concern today, especially in a post-crisis context when the prospect of realizing the rights to decent and sustainable livelihoods for younger and future generations looks dim (United Nations, 2013b). The issue of intergenerational justice demands that the actions of the present generation do not compromise the ability of future generations to live fulfilling lives. As Anand and Sen (2000) remark "there would, however, be something distinctly odd if we were deeply concerned for the well-being of the future — and as yet unborn — generations while ignoring the plight of the poor today". This concern directs attention to inequalities now. The depth and scale of multiple inequalities that characterize the bulk of countries today, both developing and developed, demand action. Inequality harms economic dynamism and poverty reduction, can trigger economic crises, creates social exclusion and feeds into political tensions and conflicts. Redistributive measures that address inequalities and realize human rights and capabilities need to be prioritized as central to sustainable development. The participation and voice of marginalized groups in decision-making at multiple levels is also essential (UNDP, 2013a).

D/ LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD: LEARNING FROM ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

From the early 1970s, social and environmental movements in Asian, Latin American and African settings mainly focused on the negative impacts of economic development on the livelihoods, rights and well-being of local and indigenous peoples. Examples include movements resisting large dams and accompanying displacements, and mining and forest destruction (Doyle, 2005). The Chipko movement that resisted industrial logging in the Himalayas was primarily motivated by forest and livelihood protection. It went on to

become a celebrated symbol for non-violent environmental protest and the significance of women's participation. Similar symbolism is associated with Kenya's Green Belt Movement, founded by Wangari Maathai in 1977, which encouraged rural women to collectively plant trees for sustainable livelihoods and forest conservation.

In developed countries, movements have focused on combating pollution, resource depletion and habitat loss as well as militarism and nuclear power, and on promoting peace. Together with cornerstone publications such as *Silent Spring* (Carson, 1962) and *The Limits to Growth: A Report to the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind* (Meadows and others, 1972), they fuelled a growing public and political consciousness of the environmental and social downsides of prevailing models.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, provided a landmark forum where diverse approaches to sustainable development were debated by governments, civil society and social movements. The "local Agenda 21" initiative envisaged sustainability being built from the bottom up through initiatives by local governments, community groups and women and men. It stimulated a plethora of community-based and joint state-local sustainable development projects and programmes across the world, around sustainable agriculture and land use, water, fisheries, forests, wildlife, urban environments and other issues. These initiatives embodied important recognition of local resource rights and collective action. Yet many suffered from an overly homogeneous view of "the community" that failed to account for socially- and gender-differentiated perspectives and priorities (Dressler and others, 2010; Leach, Mearns and Scoones, 1999), or involved women only in a tokenistic manner in project management committees. The lack of attention to gender inequalities and other inequalities has continued, to the present day, in many initiatives for community-based sustainable development (Harcourt, 2012).

In the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, a wide coalition of non-governmental organizations and social movements, including the Women's Environment and Development Organization, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era and others, advocated to integrate gender concerns into emerging sustainable development debates. Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, along with other groups, called for the transformation of growth-based development models towards gender-responsive development (Wiltshire, 1992). Women's Action Agenda 21, a platform of various groups, critiqued existing development pathways and free market thinking, instead embracing the concept of sustainable livelihoods and highlighting the need to link everyday practices of care with resource justice (Wichterich, 2012). Yet many of the alternatives put forward by women's groups and networks in the global women's lobby at the Conference were overshadowed by the prevailing optimism about economic efficiency, technology and markets.

Agenda 21 and debates from 1992 onwards recognized women as important actors in environmental protection and poverty alleviation, but tended to treat women in an instrumentalist way. Women were considered the primary users and effective managers and conservers of the environment at the local level (see, for example, Dankelman and Davidson, 1988; Rodda, 1991). This underpinned the view that women should be harnessed as sustainability saviours, based on the assumption that women are especially close to nature. Women-environment connections, especially in domestic and subsistence activities such as collecting fuelwood, hauling water and cultivating food, were often presented as if they were natural and universal, rather than as the product of particular social and cultural norms and expectations. Ensuing projects and policies often mobilized and instrumentalized women's labour, skills and knowledge, thereby adding to

Policies should ensure women's effective participation in and equal benefit from sustainable development projects and actively address entrenched discriminatory stereotypes and inequalities

their unpaid work without addressing whether they had the rights, voice and power to control project benefits.

A number of useful lessons emerge from this history for policymaking. First, policymakers should avoid making broad and stereotypical assumptions about women's and men's relationships with the environment. Rather, policies should respond to the specific social context and gender power relations. For instance, women's close involvement in gathering wild foods and other forest products might reflect labour and land tenure relations and their lack of access to income with which to purchase food, rather than reflecting their closeness to nature (Rocheleau, 1988; Agarwal, 1992). Second, policies should be responsive to differences in how diverse groups of women and men engage with land, trees, water and other resources. Third, policies should pay special attention to women's rights in regard to tenure and property, as well as control over labour, resources, products and decisions within both the household and the community. Finally, policies should ensure women's effective participation in and equal benefit from sustainable development projects and actively address entrenched discriminatory stereotypes and inequalities.

United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development: three important policy debates

In the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in 2012, the potential pathways to sustainable development were the subject of deliberation in the context of climate, food and finance crises. In that context, many policy and business actors embraced positive alignments between economic growth and environmental concerns through such notions as the green economy, in the name of sustainable development. Social movements, on the other hand, proposed alternative perspectives on issues such as climate change, water privatization, genetically modified organisms, biodiversity and "land grabbing", and advocated pathways that link sustainable development firmly with questions of social justice. In this context, debates have continued between key actors on the topics of climate change, planetary boundaries and the green economy, which are elaborated upon below, with a focus on their gender dimensions.

Since the 1990s, climate change has become one of the defining challenges of the modern world. The relative successes and setbacks of global climate change frameworks and negotiations, difficulties in implementing the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in mitigating far-reaching threats, and the plight and coping strategies of people who must adapt to climate-related shocks and stresses have galvanized public reaction.[12] This has taken the form of renewed and globalized social and environmental movements and campaigns, stretching across local and global scales. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was weak on gender equality, and despite the sustained engagement and efforts of gender equality advocates, subsequent efforts to mainstream gender issues into climate change debates have been piecemeal (UN-Women and Mary Robinson Foundation — Climate Justice, 2013).

Responses to climate change that address gender issues tend to view women as victims of climate impacts, or entrench stereotypes and roles of women as natural carers keeping their communities resilient or adopting low-carbon options. Yet gender and class relations, rights and inequalities shape differences in women's and men's vulnerabilities to climate change and their opportunities to be agents in mitigation and adaptation (Agarwal, 2002). In contexts of entrenched discrimination, where women's active participation and decision-making power is constrained, women's formal inclusion in technical committees for low-carbon technologies can be a first step, but women's participation can only be effective and meaningful when underlying gender power relations are transformed and when attention and support are given to women's specific knowledge and capacities (Wong, 2009; Otzelberger, 2011).

Much of the debate on gender and climate change has focused on adaptation and local-level vulnerabilities. Only recently, more limited attention has been given to gender perspectives in discussions involving large-scale technology, market initiatives and climate finance (Schalatek, 2013; World Bank, 2011). Commitments to achieve gender equality, such as those contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, are insufficiently reflected in national adaptation or low-carbon development plans (Otzelberger, 2011). This poor integration is a reflection of and in turn, reinforces, the tendency for policy to focus on simplistic solutions, rather than the more structural political and economic changes needed to redirect pathways of climate unsustainability and gender inequality.

A second contemporary debate centres on notions of planetary boundaries. A series of nine planetary boundaries has been identified, referring to the biophysical processes in the Earth's system on which human life depends (Rockström and others, 2009). These boundaries, together, serve to keep the planet within a so-called "safe operating space" for humanity. Influential scientific analyses suggest that the world has entered the Anthropocene, a new epoch in which human activities have become the dominant driver of many earth system processes including the climate, biogeochemical cycles, ecosystems and biodiversity. Potentially catastrophic thresholds are in prospect, it is argued, providing a new urgency and authority to arguments that growth and development pathways must reconnect with the biosphere's capacity to sustain them (Folke and others, 2011).

While the science is still developing, the concept of planetary boundaries has become influential within policy debates. But the concept is also critiqued, with some actors interpreting it as anti-growth and development, while others suggest that "planetary boundaries" thinking privileges universal global environmental concerns over diverse local ones, justifying top-down interventions that protect the environment at the expense of people and their livelihoods. The renewed visions of impending scarcity and catastrophe implied by some interpretations of planetary boundaries could justify policies that limit people's rights and freedoms, as the present *World Survey* shows in relation to population. Steering development within planetary boundaries should not compromise inclusive development that respects human rights, as proposed by Raworth (2012)

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