

VI FORUM

Gender Inequalities in Health and Environment

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Tackling Gender Inequalities in Health and the Environment

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Inequity, Gender Inequality and Poverty: A Continuous Challenge in the Americas

- ✓ Latin America and the Caribbean is the most unequal region in the world with regards to income levels
- ✓ A study carried out by the World Bank, demonstrates that nearly 25% of the region's population lives on less than US\$2 a day. (World Bank, 2009)
- ✓ Social exclusion is the principal obstacle to inclusive human development, a barrier to poverty reduction strategies and hinders social unity and health conditions of women and men within the region



The Most Unequal Region in the World

The richest one tenth of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean earn 48% of the total income, while the poorest tenth earn 1.6 percent



BY CONTRAST

In industrialized countries, the top tenth receive 29.1 percent while the bottom tenth earn 2.5 percent

LAC is the most iniquitous region in the world with the largest '*Gini Co-efficient*'. The distribution of income, wealth and resources is polarised more than any other region.

Region	Average Gini Coefficient
LAC	49.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	46.1
Middle East & North Africa	40.5
East Asia & Pacific	38.8
South Asia	35.1
Industrial & High Income Countries	34.3
Eastern Europe	26.6



The Relationship Between Inequity and Poverty

“The Poverty Trap”

The future of a child is determined by the household in which he/she is born, the region, the educational level of his/her parents, its nutrition and its initial health

There is a strong statistical correlation between the **GINI coefficient and school performance therefore...****

Schools
20% do not have drinking water,
33% do not have sufficient sanitary facilities,
47% do not have libraries,
63% do not have computer rooms

Greater inequity means worse scholastic performance

The richest 10% receive
7 more years of schooling
than the poorest 30%

The Impact of the Crisis in LAC

Drop

Exports, investments, remittances & tourism

Gross domestic product in 2009; only 1.9% after growth of 4.7% between 2004-08

Greatest Impact on:

The Young

Unemployment rate generally doubles

Women

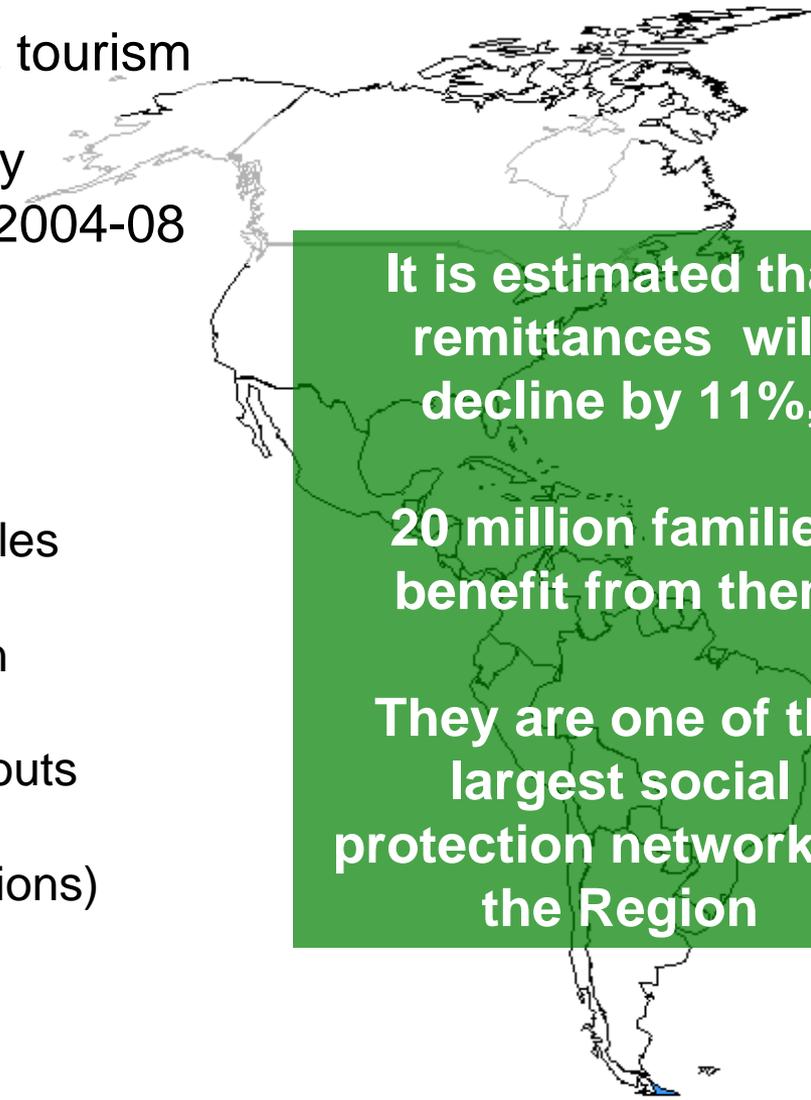
Greater Employment Discrimination

Children

Infant Mortality, Malnutrition, Drop-outs

Minorities

Increased Inequity (Afro – First Nations)

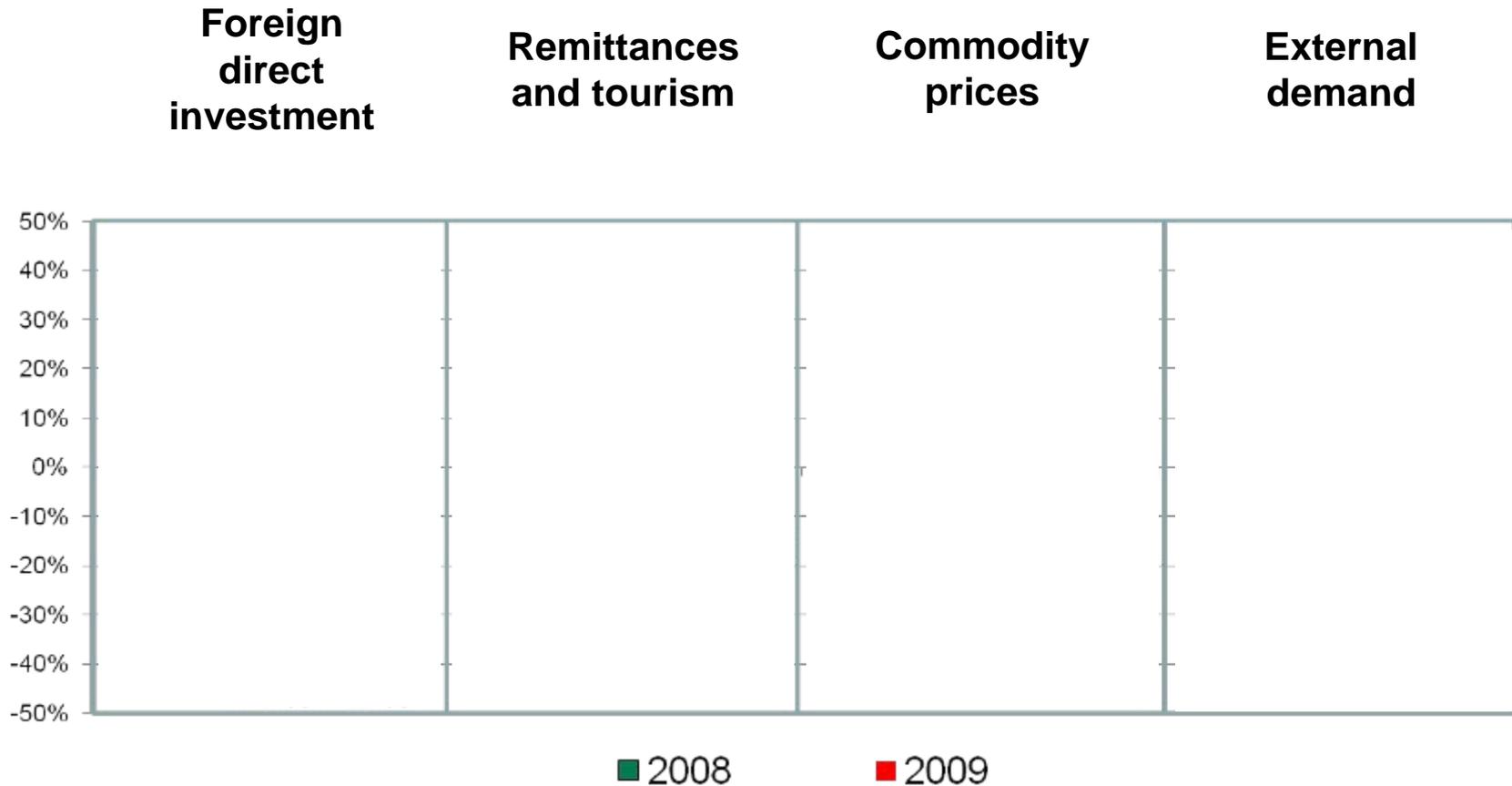


It is estimated that remittances will decline by 11%,

20 million families benefit from them

They are one of the largest social protection networks in the Region

Impact of the Global Economic Crisis in LAC



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official data.

The Impact of the Crisis

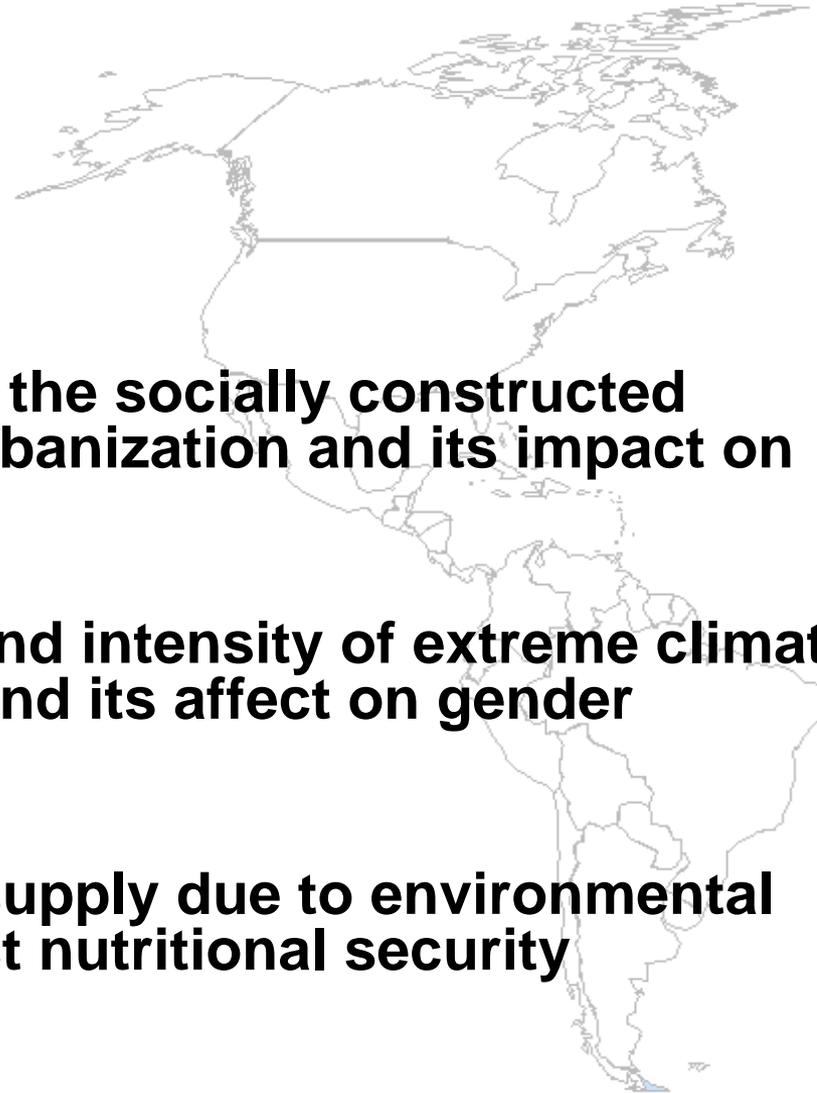
The Global Financial Crisis is affecting the well-being and putting millions of people at risk throughout the region

- ✓ According to the World Bank, 45 million people will fall under extreme poverty and as a result 400,000 children will die in 2009
- ✓ This comes on top of the vulnerability created by the food and energy crisis, which pushed more than 130 million people into poverty in 2008
- ✓ It is expected that urban slums will triple, and 50% of men and women globally will remain below the US\$2 a day poverty line in 2009

- ✓ The food crisis, energy crisis, financial crisis, a global recession and the looming climate crisis are all interconnected and can potentially further deepen existing gender inequities
- ✓ Integrated solutions are needed to ensure that policy responses to the financial and economic crisis take into account the differential priorities and needs of women, men, girls and boys and do not undermine the policies and plans that promote gender equality and women's empowerment

Tackling Gender Inequalities in Health and the Environment

- 1. The continuing challenge of the socially constructed environment: The case of urbanization and its impact on gender inequity**
- 2. Increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme climate events including disasters and its affect on gender inequities**
- 3. Changes in food and water supply due to environmental changes, which in turn affect nutritional security**



The continuing challenge of the socially constructed environment: The case of urbanization and its impact on gender inequity

- ✓ In Latin America and the Caribbean the urbanization process has been particularly rapid
- ✓ Between 1970 and 2000, the region's urban population grew by 240% while the rural population only increased by 6.5% (ECLAC, 2005).
- ✓ Latin America and the Caribbean has the highest urbanization level in the developing world; 77% of the population (433 Million people) lives in cities and the projections show that the figure will rise to 81% by 2030



Increases in the Frequency and Intensity of Extreme Climate Events and its Affect on Gender Inequities

- ✓ Disasters do not strike evenly by social class nor gender
- ✓ Yet it is well established that the poor are more exposed to environmental and other disasters, and also more vulnerable to such disasters
- ✓ Differential impacts of disasters on different groups of women and men within the region in the immediate and long-term aftermath of disasters



Changes in Food and Water Supply, which in Change Affect Nutritional Security

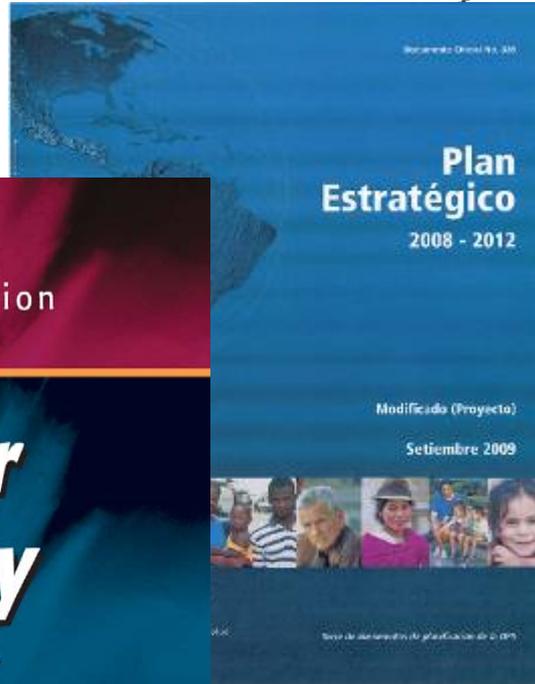
- ✓ Only about 2.5 percent of the world's water is fresh and suitable for drinking
- ✓ Climate change, pollution, and the unsustainable use of water for industry and factory farming are depleting this limited supply
- ✓ In Peru, nearly all drinking water comes from glaciers that are melting fast and may be completely gone by 2015
- ✓ Today, women across the globe find that they must walk farther to fetch water as it becomes increasingly scarce
- ✓ Evidence suggests that in some countries women and girls miss out on educational opportunities due to their responsibilities to collect water and wood for fuel



Mission in Action



Health Agenda
for the Americas
2008-2017



Pan American
Health Organization

Presented
of the Am

Gender Equality Policy



PAHO's Mainstreaming Themes

Primary
Health Care

Ethnicity

Health
Promotion

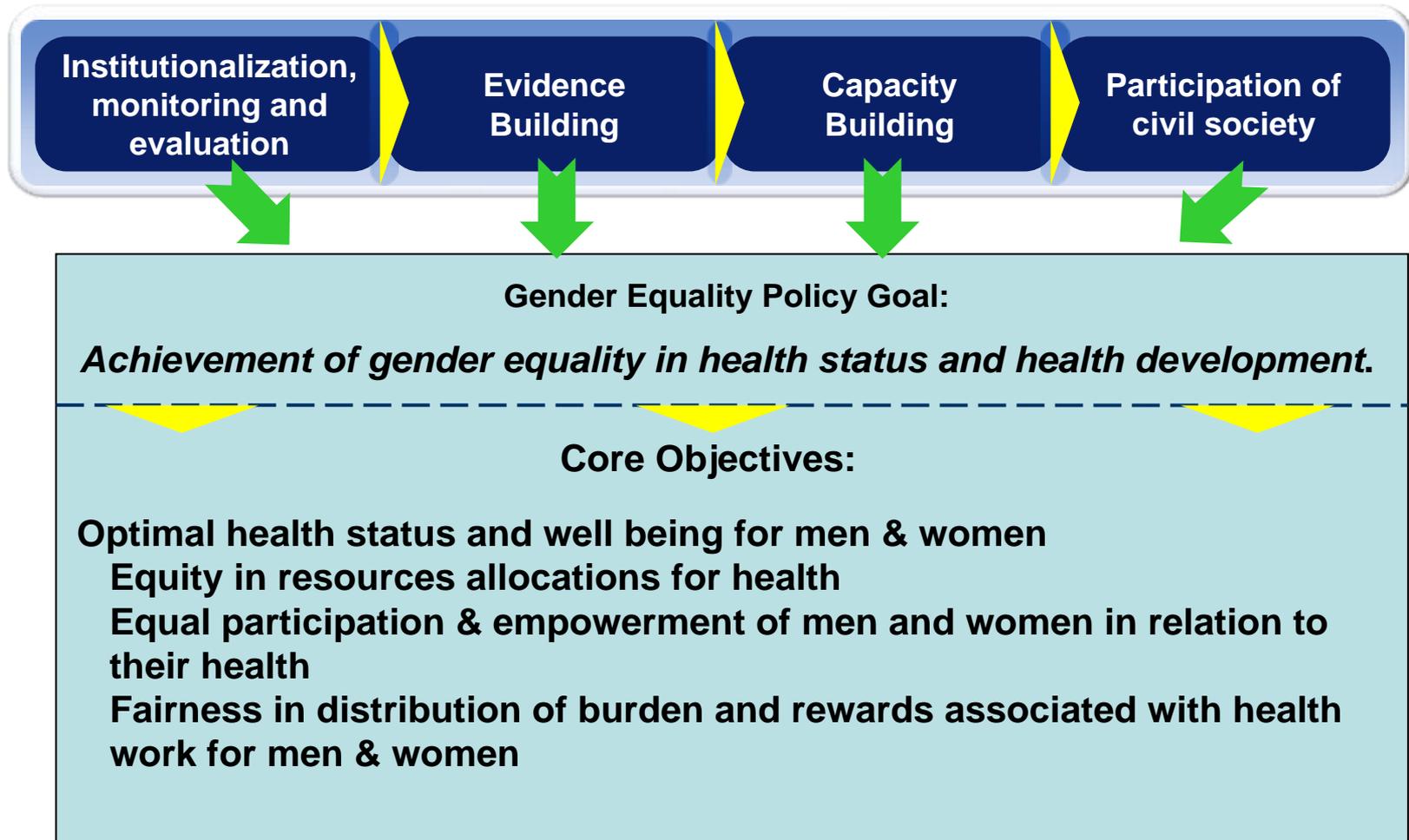
Human
Rights

Social Protection

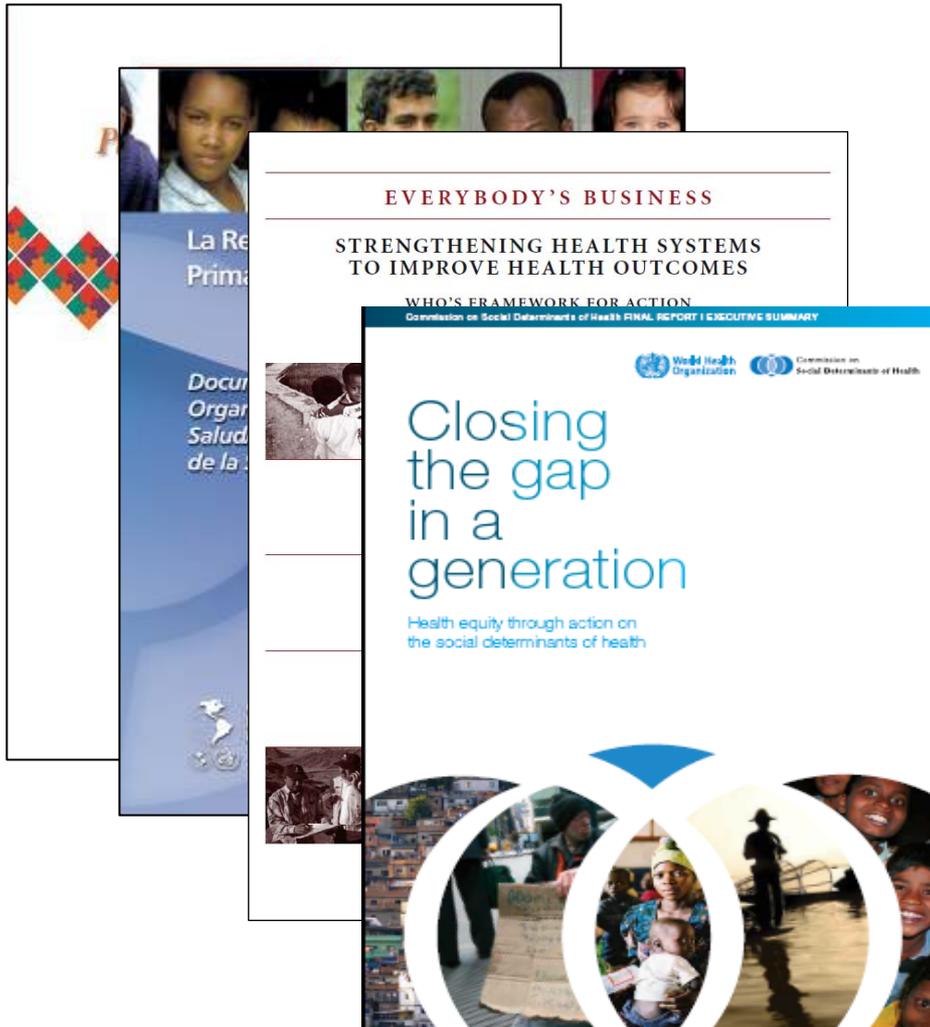
Gender

Priorities
Areas for
achieving
EQUITY

Contextualising PAHO's Gender Equality Policy



Addressing the Causes...



PAHO is strongly committed to **putting equity** firmly on the agenda

Involving **other social sectors other than the health sector** in addressing the social determinants of health is one of the recommendation of the Commission. This is at the heart of PAHO's work

A key example of inter-sectoral good practice in health care is that of the **Healthy Municipalities** initiative, based upon a strategy that has been identified by many countries as a practical way of bringing different forces together

Translating Gender Equity into Practice

Participatory Planning

Women in CARICOM involved in civil society organizations addressing environment. Ministries/ Departments of gender affairs play a core role in supporting these initiatives

Faces, Voices and Places

Faces, Voices and Places strives to build inter-sectoral and Interagency collaboration that unites efforts and Commitment toward the achievement of the MDGs in the Americas. PAHO advocates for the most Vulnerable communities in the Americas, working to build Citizenship with a focus on shared rights and responsibilities

Integrating Gender in Disaster Risk Reduction

One key challenge taken on board by PAHO has been integrating gender issues into disaster risk reduction in the Caribbean. This was initiated as a response to the lack of evidence showing the differential impacts of disasters on different groups of women and men within the region in the immediate and long-term aftermath of disasters. Reports demonstrates that women who experienced sexual violence following a disaster access medical care much later. Following a disaster men exhibited the largest number of injuries, and made up the majority of hospital patients.

Sustainable Development and Environmental Health

Tackling Gender Inequalities in Health and Environment



Whilst gender is an important cross cutting issue, it is still perceived as a substitute for 'women'

Lack of data on gender, health and the environment



DATA

Women and girls assume greater responsibilities for environmental management, yet may not be included in decision making

RESOURCES

Current Challenges

PRIORITY

INTEGRATION



Integrating poverty, gender and environment remains a challenge



Moving Forward

- Social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions must be integrated when examining the causes and consequences of environmental change in general, and when analyzing gender relations
- Information should be gathered and the differentiated impact of the environment on the quality of life of women and men should be documented thoroughly
- Investment in the environment must be directed at distributing information and building capacities. It is imperative to design appropriate mechanisms for disseminating information to women and other marginalized members of society



Translating the Agenda into Action

The Global Crisis is affecting the well being and putting millions of people at risk through out the region

Theoretical knowledge and practical evidence clearly demonstrates the need to link gender equality with environmental health in any comprehensive, viable approach to the challenges posed by climate change, urban growth and nutritional security

Concrete and gender-responsive steps must be taken so that we can address these increasingly urgent challenges with more than words

Lets learn from
past
experiences and
make sure that
we do not
deepen existing
gender
inequities