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READINESS AND PREPARATORY SUPPORT PROJECT

Enhancement of the Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement

Women's vulnerability to climate change



MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENT OF ALBANIA
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FOREWORD

This publication is an overview of the climate change gender vulnerability dimensions in Albania. It supports the Ministry of Tourism and Environment in advancing the process of gender mainstreaming in national climate change policy, as part of the process of enhancement of the Nationally Determined Contribution for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions 2021-2030, and for the qualitative fulfilment of the obligations of Albania towards the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.

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Abbreviations

COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCM	Decision of the Council of Ministers
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
IMWGCC	Interministerial Working Group on Climate Change
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NECP	National Energy and Climate Plan
NSAPGE	National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality
NSCCAP	National Strategy on Climate Change and Action Plan
TNC	Third National Communication on Climate Change
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1. INTRODUCTION

Climate change is an interconnected global issue that cuts across numerous social, cultural and economic issues and exposes or exacerbates the vulnerability of different groups of people around the world. The dimensions of this vulnerability must be considered when developing policies and measures to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to their climate impact. When considering women, existing gender inequalities - whose root causes are traditional gender roles and access to resources - interrelate with climate change impacts in a cycle of cause and effect, thereby continuously reinforcing each other. As seasons change and the frequency of extreme weather events and natural disasters rises, it is crucial to examine their effect on women's vulnerability and address the issue at the policymaking level.

This study provides an overview of the women's vulnerability to climate change in Albania based on available international and national data, with the aim of providing the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and the Ministry for Gender Equality with recommendations to promote gender integration in national climate change policy.

2. GENDER ANALYSIS IN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

2.1 International framework

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Kyoto Protocol and the Copenhagen Accord are the most important international agreements calling attention to the importance of looking at climate change through a gender lens. The international community has since then made progress in integrating gender and human rights aspects in key climate agreements. The Lima Work Programme on Gender was established at the Conference of the Parties (COP20) in 2014 to advance the incorporation of gender dimensions in the work of Parties in implementing the Convention and other international climate agreements. When the Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 in 2015, the importance of integrating gender equality in climate actions was included in the Preamble, and the implementation of gender-responsive measures was advocated. Gender issues were given centre stage at COP23, and the Parties agreed to establish a Gender Action Plan with the aim of increasing

women's participation in all UNFCCC processes and supporting the implementation of gender-responsive climate policies. It is important to note that the gender commitments in these treaties are not legally binding, hence, the signatories are only encouraged to take gender considerations into account when developing and implementing their national climate change mitigation and adaptation policies.

2.2 National framework

2.2.1 On climate change

Law No. 155/2020 "On climate change" regulates climate change in Albania, and designates the Ministry for Environment as the highest national government institution responsible for climate change, the national focal point to the UNFCCC, as well as the body responsible for the overall coordination and management of data measurement, reporting and verification for the preparation of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports, and for the preparation, implementation and reporting on NDCs. This law does not require gender integration in climate change policies, thus reflecting the non-binding nature of UNFCCC's gender analysis recommendations.

2.2.2 On gender equality

Albania has ratified several international agreements on gender equality which are binding, such as the 2011 Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Apart from its international commitments, gender equality is guaranteed in Albanian law. Law No. 9970 "On gender equality in society" regulates the foundations of gender equality, including protection from discrimination in education, employment and other areas of public life, the introduction of a minimum gender quota of 30 per cent for women's participation in policymaking, and the mandatory collection of sex-disaggregated data by all public institutions. In addition, legal amendments made to the Electoral Code in 2015 set an even stricter gender quota of 50 per cent men and 50 per cent women in candidate lists for local elections. Other gender dimensions have also been incorporated in the Code of Labour, Law No. 221 "On protection from discrimination," as well as Law No. 7703 "On social security in the Republic of Albania", as amended. More recently, Law No. 110/2018 "On

notary" has added an additional layer of protection for women's financial independence, guaranteeing women's property rights.

The first attempt to integrate gender in the national budgeting system was made in 2012, with the Council of Ministers Decision No. 465 "On gender integration in the medium-term budgetary programme." In 2016, changes were introduced with Law No. 9936 "On the management of the budget system in Albania", as amended, which declares that gender equality is one of the key principles of both local and national budgetary planning. When these legal mechanisms were adopted, a report of 2019 estimated an increase in the share of gender-responsive budgeting from 1 per cent to 6.3 per cent in total budget expenditures, as well as an expected threefold surge in the number of budget programmes that include gender-responsive budgets between 2015 and 2021.¹ Conversely, the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 592/2014 established a fund in support of women entrepreneurs and allocated ALL 26,5 million to subsidize loan interest rates for female-run micro and small and medium enterprises for a period of four years (2014–2017). The impact of this financial initiative on the improvement of improve gender equality is subject to further analysis.

It is important to note that, as is also largely the case internationally, although women are equal to men de jure, enforcement of these laws remains inadequate and reporting on gender equality is insufficient. More efforts must be undertaken to ensure de facto equality for all in all spheres of life.

Law No. 9970/2008 "On gender equality"

Law No. 9970 "On gender equality in society" lists the national institutions responsible for promoting gender equality and designates the National Council for Gender Equality (NCGE) as the body responsible for gender integration in all spheres. The NCGE is the highest advisory structure that aims to achieve gender integration in national policies and laws. It is chaired by the Minister of Health and Social Protection and includes government representatives and members of civil society organizations.

According to the law, the Minister of Health and Social Protection, in collaboration with the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) and other national institutions, is mandated to establish mechanisms to collect sex-disaggregated data, and to monitor the data collection and analysis processes. The responsibility to collect,

analyse and publicly share information also lies with the Minister, whereas public institutions at the local and national level are required to cooperate with the Minister by exchanging information. Moreover, the law mandates local government institutions to collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data. For this purpose, at least one civil servant who is in charge of gender equality issues shall be designated in each municipality, and one civil servant in every ministry. These civil servants shall promote gender equality in their institutions' procedures and legislation to ensure cross-sectoral gender integration.

Guideline No. 1220/2010

Guideline No.1220/2010 "On the definition, collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of indicators of gender equality and gender-based violence, including domestic violence" states that gender equality issues and gender-based violence (GBV) are covered by the Directorate of Equal Opportunities and Family Policies within the Ministry for gender equality. This body is tasked with the evaluation of statistical information and the drafting of reports on a number of issues relating to gender equality and GBV, including on the (i) legal and institutional mechanisms, (ii) empowerment of women through participation in decision-making, (iii) women's economic empowerment and employment opportunities, (iv) promotion of the right to quality education, (v) access to quality social services, and (vi) improvement of the health system's response to women's gender-specific needs, etc.

Local government

Attempts to enhance gender equality have also been made at the local level. Law No. 139/2015 "On local self-government" requires mayors to contribute to achieving gender equality when appointing deputy mayors and administrators of administrative units. This legal amendment, along with modifications to the Electoral Code mentioned above, has generated positive changes for women, with their representation in decision-making positions in municipalities and municipal councils increasing following the 2015 elections.

Additionally, Law No. 68/2017 "On local self-government finances" provides a foundation for the effective incorporation of gender-responsive budgeting in all phases of the local financial management process in an effort to "ensure gender equality in planning and spending of public financial resources." The law also stipulates that city mayors

¹ Ministry of Health and Social Protection and Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. 2019

have the obligation to collect, analyse and publicly share local sex-disaggregated data.

In addition, seven municipalities, namely the municipalities of Gjirokastër, Korçë, Elbasan, Shkodër, Tirana and Durrës, have reinforced their commitments to achieve gender equality by signing the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. Five of these municipalities have taken steps to prepare and approve Local Gender Equality Action Plans in a bid to boost local government mechanisms for achieving gender equality. Since then, other municipalities, namely Kamëz, Dibër, Gramsh, Bulqizë, Cërrik and Pogradec, have signed the Charter, but few have introduced actual measures to develop action plans and implement them.

National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality

The recent Draft National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2021–2030 highlights the need to support and empower girls and women, including vulnerable groups who experience overlapping discrimination, namely women who belong to ethnic minorities and the LGBTI+ community, women who live in rural areas, women with disabilities, single mothers, trafficked women, elderly women, etc., to address the needs of all women in Albania.

Furthermore, the need to change or add new dimensions to properly deal with gender inequality is communicated in the document's mission statement. Specifically, civil emergencies, natural disasters and other issues interrelated with gender, such as climate change and green economy, need to be considered. Finally, NSAPGE identifies links with several UN Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 13 on "Climate Action."

Legal basis on local governance

Law No. 139/2015 "On local self-government" requires mayors to contribute to achieving gender equality when appointing deputy mayors and administrators of administrative units. Additionally, Law No. 68/2017 "On local self-government finances" provides a foundation for the effective incorporation of gender-responsive budgeting in all phases of the local financial management process in an effort to "ensure gender equality in planning and spending of public financial resources." The law also stipulates that city mayors have the obligation to collect, analyse and publicly share local sex-disaggregated data.

2.2.3 State of implementation of the national framework

Albania is party to several treaties, yet gender issues have not received much consideration in recent national climate change laws, policies or strategies. The country's first Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, submitted in 2015, does not contain a gender analysis; the National Strategy on Climate Change and Action Plans 2019–2030 does not incorporate gender analyses or gender-responsive climate policies; the Law "On climate change" fails to consider gender-responsive policies in relation to climate change. Moreover, gender-responsive climate change policies have not been included in the 2nd and 3rd National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2017–2020, in the National Strategy for Energy 2018–2030 or in the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021–2030.

The Revised NDC 2021–2030 uses gender-responsive language and prioritizes the promotion of gender-related climate change adaptation measures. However, the ambiguity that surrounds many parts of the report—attributable perhaps to inadequate local and national gender and climate data—diminishes its weight. The report visibly reveals the pressing need for the establishment of a measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) system on climate change, as required by the UNFCCC, as well as for a legal basis for the methodology of gender integration in climate change mitigation and adaptation policies.

Attempts to enhance gender equality have also been made at the local level. In addition to the legal basis discussed above, seven municipalities, namely the municipalities of Gjirokastër, Korçë, Elbasan, Shkodër, Tirana and Durrës, have reinforced their commitments to achieve gender equality by signing the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. Five of these municipalities have taken steps to prepare and approve Local Gender Equality Action Plans in a bid to boost local government mechanisms for achieving gender equality. Since then, other municipalities, namely Kamëz, Dibër, Gramsh, Bulqizë, Cërrik and Pogradec, have signed the Charter, but few have introduced actual measures to develop action plans and implement them.

3. GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRATING GENDER IN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

International guideline: United Nations Development Programme

The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Gender Equality in National Climate Action: Planning for gender-responsive NDCs, provides a series of key entry points for the development of gender-responsive climate change action.

A. Gender vulnerability analysis

First and foremost, a thorough analysis of the national context, complete with sex-disaggregated data and gender trends, is a necessary step to fully grasp the gender-differentiated challenges men and women face in the country; an analysis of socioeconomic factors, such as gender dynamics, educational attainment and poverty levels must be conducted to identify criteria for sex-disaggregated data. This summary should include an assessment of climate risks, sociocultural dimensions and the economic status of sectors that are vulnerable to climate change, such as agriculture, energy and tourism. It can later serve to develop baselines and identify gender indicators. The report suggests that women's organizations should be included as crucial partners in the process of identifying relevant issues.

B. Assessment of institutional framework and inter-institutional cooperation

This analysis needs to be followed by an assessment of the country's institutional gender equality frameworks and an evaluation of inter-ministerial and interdepartmental cooperation on gender equality. The guideline proposes the assessment of (i) incorporating gender mechanisms into government institutions that deal with climate change issues, and (ii) including gender budgeting in climate policy mechanisms. Additionally, women's leadership in the coordination of climate change actions must also be supported by ensuring their fair and equal representation in planning and implementation processes.

C. Gender integration in climate change policy and planning instruments

The report further indicates that gender dimensions need to be integrated in climate change instruments, including international tools, such as Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action, National Adaptation Plans and various national policy and planning tools. When developing new climate change policies, existing national commitments to gender equality, namely, the Law "On Gender Equality" and the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021–2030, must also be accounted for.

D. Multi-stakeholder consultations

The report moreover emphasizes the need to enhance women's engagement in multi-stakeholder consultations at all levels of decision-making, and for the views of all relevant actors to be adequately represented. For this purpose, non-governmental actors, including civil society and the private sector, should be included in the analysis, context-setting, identification of partners and measures and planning. Women's organizations as well as civil society and community-based organizations are play a particularly important role in capacity-building efforts.

E. Capacity development

Efforts by different communities, women's organizations and government officials for capacity development need to be promoted and maintained to strengthen policy cohesion in climate change mitigation and adaptation actions. The document recommends government staff in climate change sectors to receive training on gender project design, indicators and analysis, so they can acquire a more profound understanding of the relevance of incorporating gender dimensions in their respective sector's plans and strategies, and then facilitate the integration of gender equality in climate change goals. At the community level, capacity-building can take place both formally, i.e. by providing opportunities for higher education in energy, agriculture and other climate-related sectors, and informally by means of information campaigns.

F. Monitoring and evaluation

Efforts and results need to be consistently monitored and evaluated throughout the entire development process based on sex-disaggregated data and gender indicators as part of the measurement, reporting and verification procedures.

G. Finance

Finally, the report calls attention to the importance of making climate finance mechanisms more gender-responsive through national and international climate funds and climate financing tools targeted at women entrepreneurs and women-responsive projects and businesses.

In the Third National Communication (TNC) of the Republic of Albania on Climate Change, four elements are deemed contributors to an enabling environment for gender integration in climate change policies, i.e. (i) legal framework, (ii) policies, (iii) government institutions, and (iv) finances. These elements are considered prerequisites for integrating gender in climate policies. The TNC also lists three prerequisites, namely (i) stakeholder engagement, (ii) stocktaking, and (iii) monitoring, to achieve successful gender integration in climate change programmes or plans.

1. Prerequisites for integrating gender in climate policies

1.1. Legal framework

A legal framework should ensure gender equality and address gender-based discrimination, while a more developed legal framework should also require gender integration in legal documents that regulate climate change adaptation and mitigation. In addition, a thorough assessment of the level of enforcement of the legislation at the national and local level should be conducted. This would include an evaluation of both access to justice and administrative procedures.

1.2. Policies

Sound and effective policies are another important component of the enabling environment. Gender policies are considered to be indicators of gender awareness at the national level and as parameters of how to deal with gender issues at the local level. To be effective, these policies must be built on a methodical collection of sex-disaggregated data across various sectors, and the process of policymaking, especially environmental, energy, industrial policy, etc., should be informed by gender dimensions.

1.3. Government institutions

The successful implementation of laws and policies also depends on government officials' well-grounded awareness of gender issues. As they play a key role in adequate gender integration at the national and local levels, ministries and other government bodies should possess a sound understanding of gender dimensions. This can be achieved by increasing women's representation in the relevant ministries and departments, as well as by providing their staff with sufficient training on gender issues.

1.4. Finances

Lastly, successful gender integration cannot occur without proper budgeting policies. Public finance,

especially public finance for climate change mitigation and adaptation, must ensure gender equitability and support gender equality. An enabling environment ensures proper implementation and effective enforcement, which includes making available adequate financial means for gender-related activities.

2. Steps to consider for gender integration in climate change programmes or plans

2.1. Stakeholders

Stakeholders must ensure that the policy development team (i) reflects a gender balance, (ii) is highly aware of gender issues, (iii) incorporates external expertise from gender experts, and (iv) builds its own gender capacity. The process of stakeholder engagement should extend beyond the initial planning phase. The aim is to encourage and support long-lasting partnerships among all relevant stakeholders and to stimulate cooperation across sectors and policy areas.

2.2. Stocktaking

Stocktaking consists of the collection and documentation of information related to the planned climate programme. A gender analysis is necessary when developing climate change policies, hence stocktaking should integrate the gender dimension. Data availability and reliability is key in this stage of the process, so it is crucial to intensify efforts to collect sex-disaggregated data, share these with relevant institutions and to make them publicly available.

2.3. Monitoring and evaluation

Finally, progress on the implementation of gender integration commitments needs to be monitored. Gender-sensitive indicators should be used to track changes during and after the programme's implementation period. Moreover, women's participation in the monitoring process needs to be encouraged.

4. PROCESS OF INTEGRATING GENDER IN NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Based on the UNDP and TNC guidelines, the following section describes the process of gender integration in national climate change policy, in line with the existing legal foundation.

4.1. Climate change gender vulnerability analysis

4.1.1. International dimensions

Climate change cuts across a number of social, cultural and economic issues. Its impacts interact with gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background and other elements of human society, and contribute to social inequality and systemic injustice. Studies show that the severity of climate change impacts on men and women is determined by a number of vulnerability dimensions.

Traditional gender roles create significant disparities in how women and men are affected by and how they adapt to a changing climate, exposing women around the world to higher risks than their male counterparts. Gender roles are manifest in differentiated social and labour duties between men and women, with women traditionally bearing the burden of childcare, care for the elderly and household management, including cooking, fetching water or fuel, etc. On average, women around the world spend three times more time on unpaid care and domestic work than men.² These time-consuming roles limit women's ability to get educated, become economically independent and to enjoy leisure activities. These burdens are greater in rural than in urban areas.

Legal access to resources also creates significant disparities in the way women and men are affected by and adapt to a changing climate. Due to cultural norms and restricted legal rights, women across the world face higher barriers than men in terms of access to resources such as land, technology and other forms of capital, as well as to education and training. This limits their capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Climate change brings about a series of adverse effects, such as increases in temperatures, more extreme weather events and disasters, etc. Evidence from countries affected by natural disasters reveals that widespread impoverishment caused by such disasters increased the risk of exposure to GBV. Moreover, rates of sexual violence and GBV rose during prolonged disasters, such as droughts, and following natural disasters.³

Climate change events have a significant impact on the agriculture sector, since floods, droughts, erosion and landslides can lead to a decline in crop and forest yields and may ultimately give rise to food insecurity around the world. The impacts of climate change in the agriculture sector are particularly harsh for women, since their workloads are likely to increase and they will have to walk longer distances to fetch water and fuel, etc.

Moreover, climate change may have a more severe impact on women due to the obstacles they face in accessing resources, including lack of land tenure or limited ownership rights, lack of information and low access to technologies and innovations. Due to lack of secure assets and collateral, women's ability to access formal financial services, to borrow money and invest in advanced farming tools and practices to protect themselves against climate change impacts is limited. Furthermore, women are generally not the target of trainings on sustainable agriculture, and therefore often lack the technical expertise on modern mitigation and adaptation practices.

These challenges not only inhibit women's ability to adapt to a changing climate and to quickly recover from disasters, they also limit their opportunities, reduce their educational attainment rates, increase their risk of economic dependence, food insecurity or poverty, and leave them more vulnerable to domestic and sexual violence. The vulnerability cycle is thereby perpetuated and continues to deepen, in particular for women who live in rural areas and who work in agriculture.

It is important to note that there are numerous layers of vulnerability to climate change, even among women. A study⁴ that explored the impact of climate

² United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2019

³ Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, 2015

⁴ Neumayer, E. and Plümpner, T., 2007

disasters on the gender gap in life expectancy over a period of more than 20 years arrives at two key findings. Firstly, the data reveal that on average, more women than men are killed by natural disasters and by the impact that subsequently follows. In addition, the authors find that socioeconomic background is an equally significant factor in determining disaster mortality rates, i.e. the lower the socioeconomic status of women, the stronger the effect on the gender gap in life expectancy.

The energy sector is also of particular interest in terms of women's disproportionate vulnerability to climate change. Energy poverty, which manifests as a lack of electricity or unaffordable and inadequate domestic energy services, is a serious problem for people all around the globe. Climate change is one of the factors that exacerbates this problem through impacts such as more frequent and extreme weather events and disasters, most importantly drought. With reduced access to electricity, women, who due to their traditional role are responsible for household management, have to resort to biomass, coal and kerosene for cooking and heating. These fuels cause indoor air pollution, which can be particularly detrimental to the health of women (and children), since they spend more time at home and cook most meals, again due to traditional gender roles. In fact, studies report that of the 2.5 million annual deaths attributed to lack of access to clean cooking⁵, 85 per cent are thought to be women and children who die from respiratory diseases and cancer.⁶ Fuel collection is an additional burden women have to bear, leaving them little time for education, employment and participation in decision-making in their communities. Gender imbalances in the energy sector also manifest in the labour force; the sector continues to be one of the least gender diverse, with a mere 22 per cent women employed in the sector and 32 per cent in renewable energy.⁷

In conclusion, traditional gender roles and women's limited access to resources are key causes or drivers of their disproportionate vulnerability to climate change compared to men. Existing gender inequality and systemic injustice across human societies intensify the impacts of climate change on women compared to

men, and thus exacerbate existing gender inequality and injustice. This context exists in households as well as in the agriculture and energy sectors; it is more prevalent in rural than in urban areas.

4.1.2 National dimensions

There is limited availability of data at the national level, and only few studies have examined the impact of climate change on women or on any other vulnerable group in general. Available data and studies highlight the link between gender inequality and climate change issues, and in line with the discussion above, demonstrate that climate disasters reflect and reinforce existing gender inequalities.

A recent publication by INSTAT⁸ sheds light on existing gender disparities in Albania in multiple spheres. As regards women's access to resources, INSTAT's study finds a striking imbalance in labour force participation arising from traditional gender roles: 18.8 per cent of women listed household responsibilities as the primary reason for remaining out of the labour force compared to only 0.6 per cent of men. The survey additionally finds that more women than men hold informal or low-paying jobs. On the other hand, there are no major disparities between women and men in Albania in terms of unemployment, with the share of unemployed women and men in 2020 in Albania amounting to 12.4 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively. Inherent gender biases and gender dynamics means women bear a disproportionate burden at home, which discourages them from participating in the labour force, hampers their livelihoods and leaves them more susceptible to the negative consequences of a changing climate, including, but not limited to, economic and political marginalization, energy poverty and health issues.

Conversely, INSTAT's dataset on bank account holders in Albania also makes the frailty of women's economic position abundantly clear. Only 43.5 per cent of deposit accounts in Albanian commercial banks are owned by women⁹, meaning that women have fewer means of protecting their savings, further compromising their ability to prepare and respond to climate-related disasters.

5 International Energy Agency, 2021

6 United Nations Industrial Development Organization & United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2013

7 International Renewable Energy Agency, 2019

8 INSTAT, 2021b

9 INSTAT, 2021c

There is some evidence on the disproportionate impact of adverse climate effects on women living in rural areas in Albania. A report by UN Women¹⁰ sheds light on the negative consequences that women in the country faced following the 2015 floods, when 10,000 ha of agricultural land were damaged in the south-eastern part of Albania. The study finds that as a consequence of the floods, gender-based violence increased, both domestically and outside the home. Additionally, a substantial increase in women's average workload also became apparent, in part as a result of loss of access to childcare and education services, which normally relieve women's workload. Finally, the survey attests to a decrease in the average monthly income among women in the affected areas. Although more research is needed, this data helps illustrate the gender-differentiated impact of a changing climate, particularly in the rural Albanian context.

According to the aforementioned INSTAT study, 41.4 per cent of employed women in Albania work in the agriculture sector compared to 31.8 per cent of men.¹¹ Although the labour force engaged in farms is dominated by women, only 7.8 per cent of farm holders are women, of which 65.9 per cent are heads of households, according to the datasets provided by INSTAT.¹² Farming in Albania is generally at a subsistence level, while the average size of arable land is around 1.2 ha, i.e. it is very small in general; however, female farm holders are less likely than their male counterparts to have access to sizeable arable land, with 0.5 per cent of women and 1.2 per cent of men working on more than 5 ha of utilized agricultural area. As the temperatures increase, precipitation patterns change, and extreme heat events, wildfires, erosion, droughts and floods become more frequent, the rural population's opportunities for growth are threatened, affecting water availability and food security for entire communities. Because of the comparatively smaller size of land and limited property ownership of women employed in agriculture or holding a farm, and considering their higher level of employment in the sector and the subsistence level of its development, women in Albania are more exposed to the risk of food insecurity and poverty than men.

Apart from agriculture, the energy sector in Albania is also vulnerable to climate change. The heightened precipitation variability, rise in temperatures and increases in extreme weather events arising from climate change are likely to affect energy supply, while energy demand continues to increase as a result of the country's economic growth. These dynamics are also more likely to affect women than men. At almost 7 per cent, biomass is the country's third most widely used energy source, especially in households and in the service sector. Since women typically carry the burden of household chores, they are the ones most at risk from the intensification of energy poverty. As was pointed out in the Reviewed NDC presented during COP26, the energy sector is generally associated with men, but women are the household energy managers.¹³ Therefore, should climate change affect energy supply and exacerbate energy poverty in Albania, women will likely be more exposed than men to the negative consequences in terms of health, education, employment and participation in decision-making.

NDC 2021–2030 presents additional gender-specific data on how climate change affects health. According to the report, Albanian women are more likely than men to experience health issues following climate-related disasters. Pregnant women are significantly more vulnerable to temperature increases and reduced access to post-disaster healthcare services. Another study reveals that the prevalence of asthma has increased in recent years by an average of 5 per cent annually, and is expected to continue rising. The 800–1200 additional cases of asthma annually are attributable to climate change and mostly affect people who live in or around Vlora, and women.¹⁴ Rural women may also be disproportionately affected, since biomass remains the most common energy resource in rural households.¹⁵

10 In Ministry of Tourism and Environment, 2021a

11 INSTAT, 2021b

12 INSTAT, 2021d

13 Ministry of Tourism and Environment, 2021a

14 Ministry of Tourism and Environment, 2021a

15 The World Bank Group, 2021



18.8% of women

in Albania say they cannot participate in the labor force because of household responsibilities



0.6% of men

in Albania say they cannot participate in the labor force because of household responsibilities



Biomass

7% of total energy supply
in Albania

1st most widely-used
energy source in rural households

3rd most widely-used
energy source in the country



41.4% of employed women

in Albania work in agriculture



31.8% of employed men

in Albania work in agriculture

.....
YET:



only 7.8% of farm holders are women

4.1.3. Dimensions in relation to energy efficiency

As already addressed above, traditional gender roles at the household level exacerbate the vulnerabilities of women in relation to climate change, but when it comes to energy efficiency, gender roles give women agency over certain household-related decisions, i.e. women have decision-making autonomy for household purchases, including cooking, heating and cooling appliances. This conclusion is derived from the national evaluation of the energy efficiency potential for the reduction of national greenhouse gas emissions included in Albania's NDC 2021¹⁶. In addition, one of the latest UNDP international guidelines¹⁷ suggest that women should be the target of energy efficiency policies and measures as key stakeholders for their effective implementation, but also for their design.

The findings of sections 4.1.1 - 4.1.3 are illustrated in the figures below.

¹⁶ Urban Research Institute, 2021

¹⁷ UNDP, 2019

Figure 1: Chain of climate change impact on women's vulnerability in the household

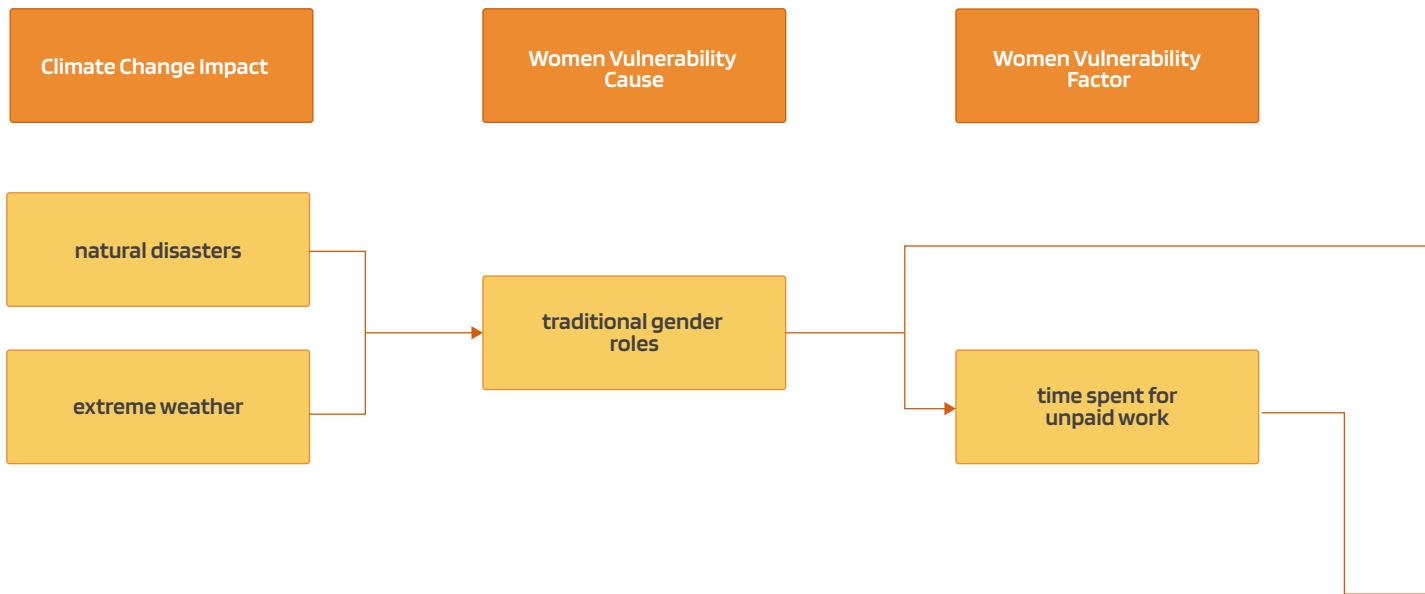
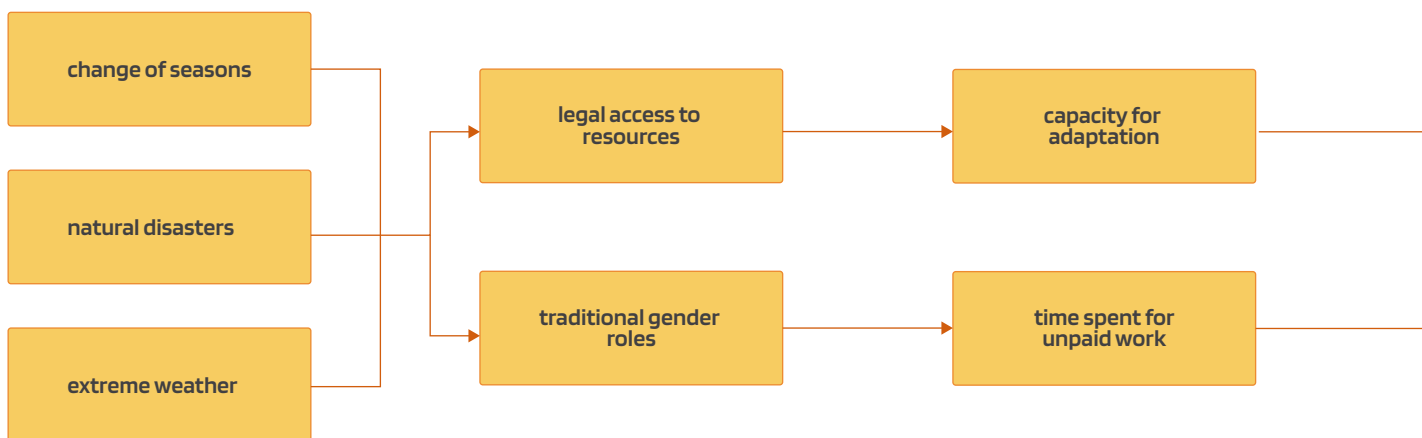


Figure 2: Chain of climate change impact on women's vulnerability in the agriculture sector



Women Vulnerability Impact

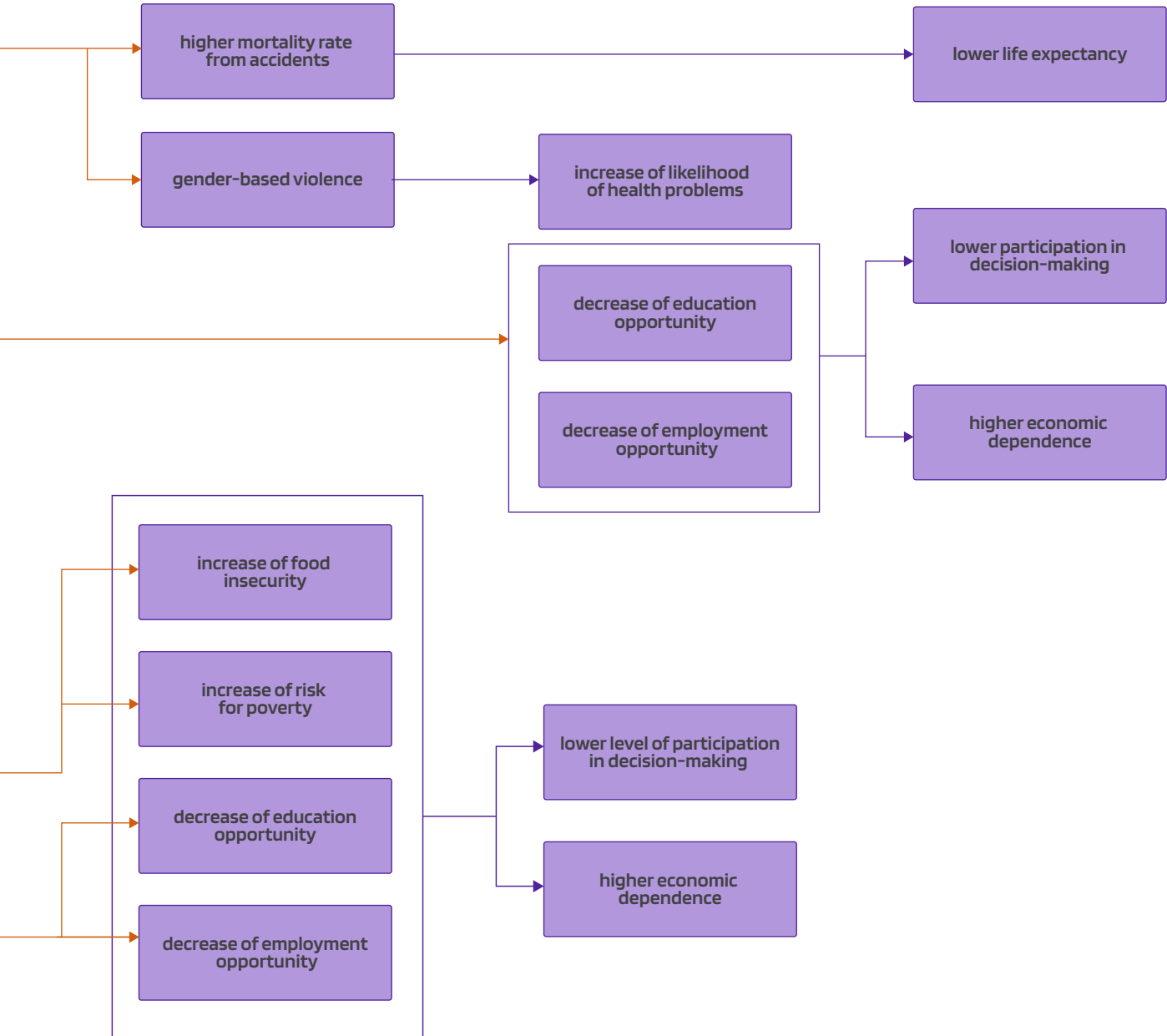


Figure 3: Chain of climate change impact on women's vulnerability in the energy sector

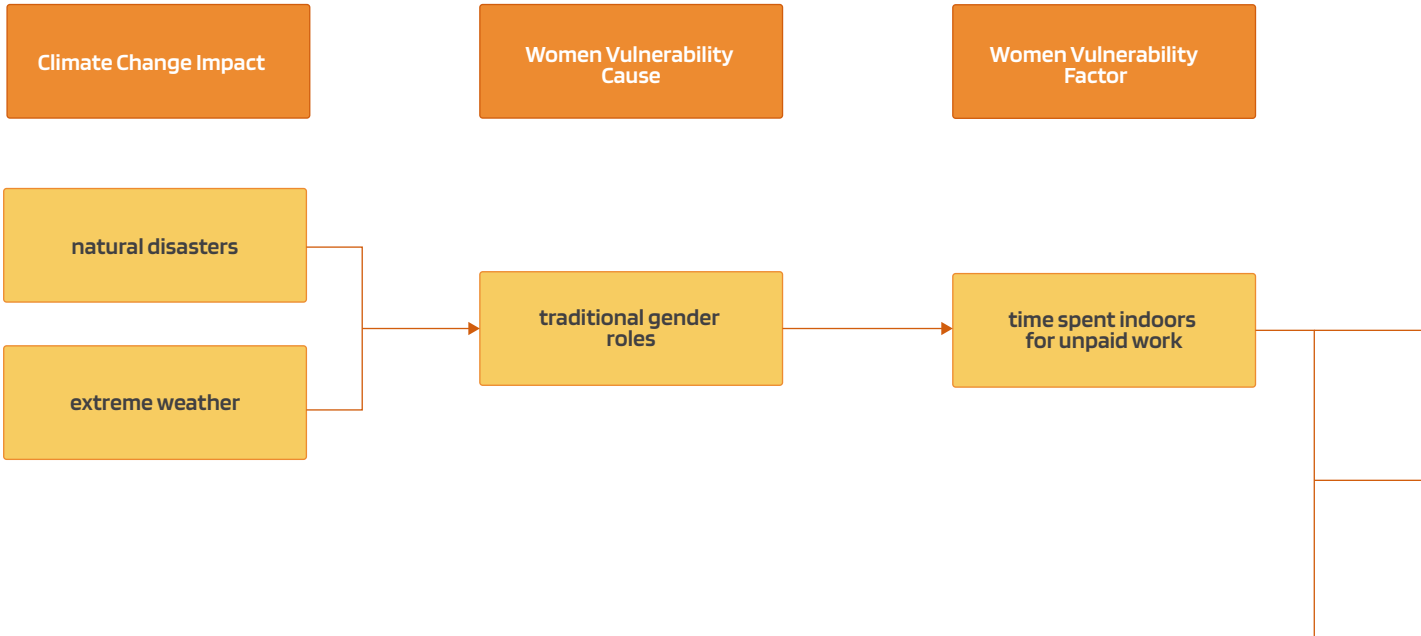
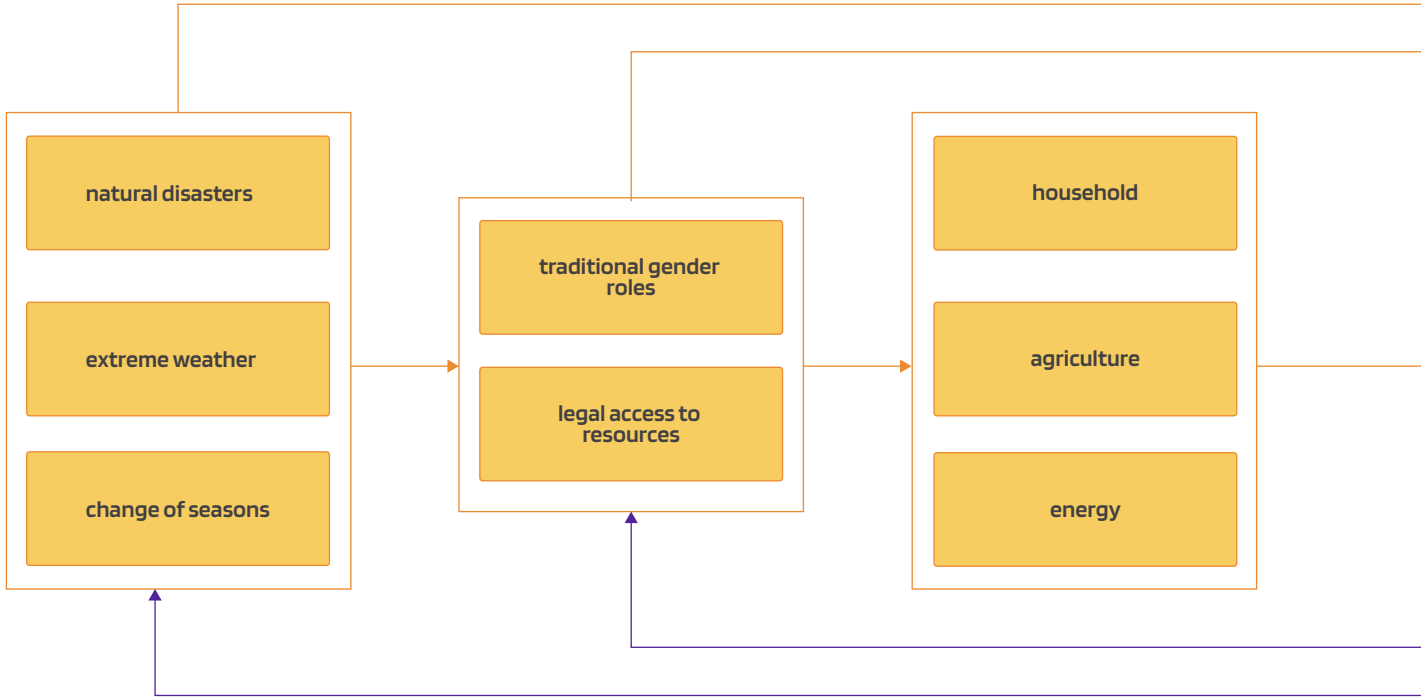
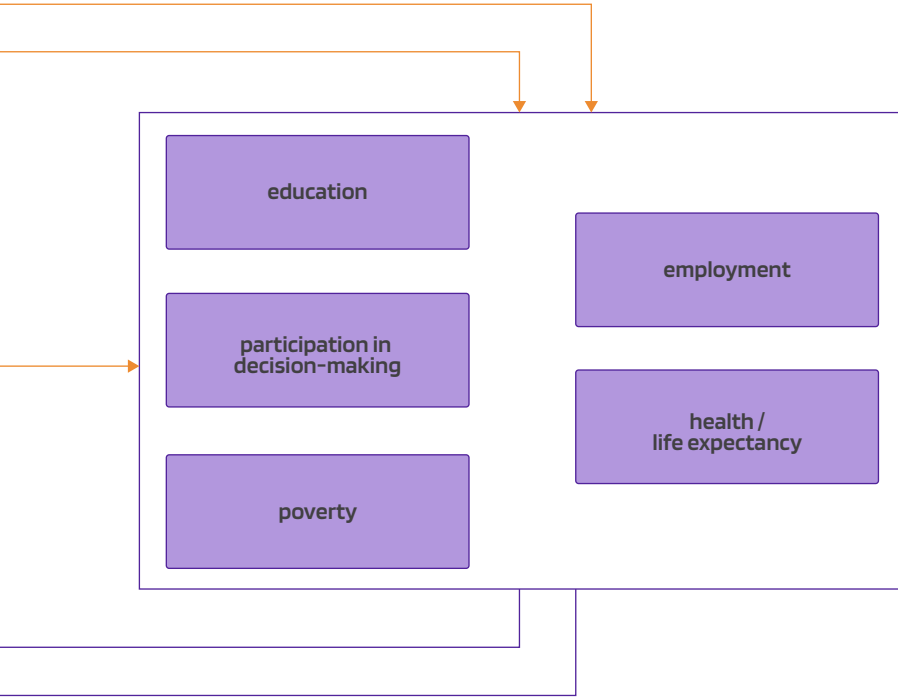
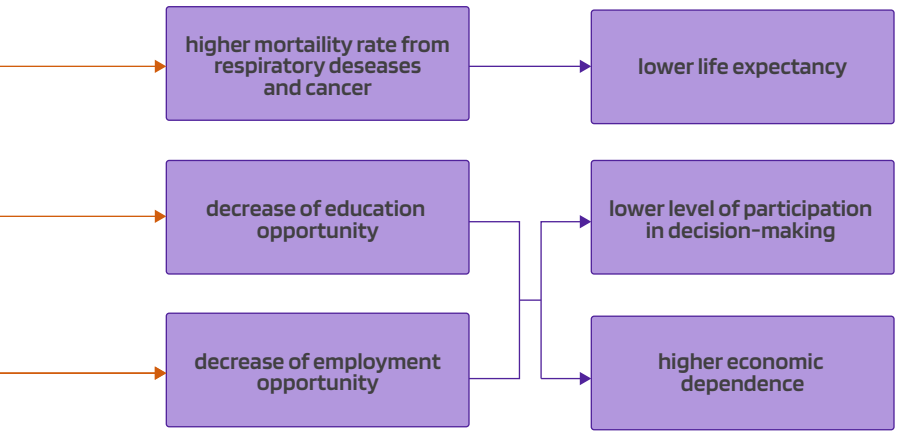


Figure 4: Climate change women's vulnerability dimensions



Women Vulnerability Impact



4.2. Gender-disaggregated indicators and data

4.2.1. Data sources

INSTAT, line ministries and municipalities are responsible for the regular collection of gender data for the following purposes:

- Gender equality monitoring and evaluation, and policy recommendations, according to Guideline No. 1220/2010 pursuant to the Law “On Gender Equality”;
- Mid-term gender budget planning as specified in DCM No. 465/2012 “On gender integration in mid-term budget planning” and the Law “On local self-government finances”;

The law mandates INSTAT, line ministries and municipalities to collect data.

However, there is presently no national database and baseline of gender vulnerability indicators in relation to climate change. Although the need to identify gender vulnerability dimensions at the national level has been acknowledged, the country still lags behind in the collection of gender and climate data. The lack or inaccessibility of data hampers policymakers' ability to identify issues and key stakeholders, develop appropriate and inclusive policies tailored to the needs of those stakeholders, and to eventually measure progress in addressing these issues; without reliable, disaggregated data, it is difficult not only to develop effective and gender-just climate strategies, but also to fully grasp the challenges and far-reaching impact of climate change and the scope of exposure to climate threats that women face.

There is therefore an immediate need to close the persistent gaps in gender statistics. Sex-disaggregated data on participation and representation in employment, education and environmental, agricultural and energy decision-making processes, as well as gender-specific data on climate change impacts need to be continuously collected and publicly shared. This calls for increased collaboration between relevant stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, which should enhance their partnership and coordinate their efforts. The statistical departments of these institutions and INSTAT should jointly aim to improve their data collection efforts and make this information

available not only to their institutional partners, but also to the general public.

Moreover, extensive socio-cultural and politico-economic analyses of the Albanian context need to be conducted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the differentiated gender dynamics in the country. These analyses not only help identify gender dimensions, but also set the stage for determining data categories and indicators as well as the development of baselines against which the efficacy and impact of policy changes are measured. To ensure that these dimensions, categories and indicators truly reflect women's concerns, women's civil society organization's (CSO) active participation in the process needs to be promoted and encouraged.

4.2.2. Sources of indicators

Gender-disaggregated indicators on climate change can be derived from several sources:

National sectoral strategies: at present, as previously described, none of the national strategic documents on climate change or on related sectors, such as agriculture, energy, energy efficiency, renewables and transportation, adequately integrates gender elements. However, the new draft national strategy on agriculture proposes a list of gender-disaggregated indicators, namely:

- number of employees in agriculture by gender;
- number of students in rural/urban areas by level of education and gender;
- land ownership issues by gender and age;
- farm manager structure by age and gender;
- farm manager education/training by age and gender.

Additional indicators for which gender-disaggregation may be relevant include:

- indicators within the strategy's 'Farm structure' category;
- indicators within the strategy's 'Farm income' category;
- indicators within the strategy's 'Risk management' category;
- access to appropriate financial instruments;
- access to new technologies and/or new farming practices.

Guideline by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment: based on the Law “On climate change” Art. 27(3), the Ministry is in charge of preparing the guideline for integrating gender in climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. This guide provides climate

change dimensions and potential indicators that can be disaggregated by gender.

Guidelines by international organizations: the UNDP's guideline on integrating gender in climate change mitigation and adaptation policies may also provide climate change dimensions and potential indicators that can be disaggregated by gender¹⁸.

International or national studies: international or national studies on climate change and related sectors may present potential indicators that can be disaggregated by gender.

4.2.3. Energy efficiency indicators

The national evaluation of the potential of energy efficiency to reduce national greenhouse gas emissions, a project that is relevant within the scope of Albania's NDC 2021¹⁹, provides a database of energy efficiency indicators. This database includes indicators from the transportation, agriculture and forestry, residential and industrial sectors as well as commercial and public services. Gender disaggregation is relevant for the following identified indicators:

Energy efficiency in transportation:

- total passenger kilometres travelled by all transportation modes
- passenger kilometres travelled by road
- passenger kilometres travelled by air
- passenger kilometres travelled by sea
- passenger kilometres travelled by rail
- rate of penetration of collective inland passenger transport.

Disaggregation by gender is not relevant for the following group of indicators, but the data is relevant for the design and effective implementation of energy efficiency policies and measures with women as key stakeholders:

Energy efficiency in the residential building sector:

- average heat consumption by source;
- average energy consumption for warm water supply by source;
- penetration rate of energy-efficient appliances by type.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1. From the Ministry for Gender Equality

The monitoring and evaluation of women's vulnerability in relation to climate change at the national and local level is regulated in Guideline 1220 of 27 May 2010 "On the definition, collection, elaboration, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality, gender-based violence and domestic violence indicators"; accordingly, the structure for gender equality of the Ministry for Gender Equality monitors and evaluates gender-disaggregated indicators in relation to climate change. INSTAT and line ministries regularly produce and report indicators through Forms 1 to 3, as provided in Articles 3-8.

5.2. From the Ministry for Environment

The Ministry for Environment is responsible for monitoring and evaluating national climate change policies in accordance with the Law "On climate change". This law also requires the establishment of a national measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) system on climate change in compliance with the EU acquis and the UNFCCC. Article 23 (1c, 1ç) of the law stipulates that INSTAT and line ministries, including the Ministry for Gender Equality, shall collect gender-disaggregated data and regularly upload them to the MRV system. On the other hand, the Law "On gender equality" requires ministries, including the Ministry for Environment, to ensure gender equality in their areas of responsibility.

The MRV system has not yet been developed and implemented, but its implementation must begin by 2025, as determined by law. Thereafter, the Ministry for Environment shall monitor and evaluate gender-sensitive national climate change policies and issue a report on women's vulnerability analysis to the Ministry for Gender Equality, ensuring periodic reviews of national policies.

¹⁸ This study refers to the UNDP's guideline, however, other UN bodies and the European Institute for Gender Equality have also published specific and general guidelines which can be taken into consideration.

¹⁹ Urban Research Institute, 2021

6. INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The process of gender integration in national climate change policy entails the following steps: (i) analysis of women's vulnerability in relation to climate change, and (ii) design of national climate policies that integrate the resulting women's vulnerability dimensions. This process may be initiated by the Ministry for Environment as well as by the Ministry for Gender Equality through the National Council on Gender Equality, which both institutions are members of.

Article 12(b), (c) of the Law "On gender equality" states that the responsibility for integrating gender in all areas and for conducting gender equality analyses lies with the National Council on Gender Equality, whereas Article 13(2a), (2b) determines that it is the responsibility of the Ministry for Gender Equality to undertake measures to eliminate gender inequalities and to implement the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021–2030. Article 7(1), (4) stipulates that every government institution is responsible for ensuring gender equality through legislative and policy measures within their area of competence. National and local government institutions are required to cooperate with the Ministry for Gender Equality in the fulfilment of the latter's responsibilities; this is achieved by designating civil servants across line ministries and municipalities who are in charge of gender issues, as stipulated in Article 13(3).

Once the process of gender integration is initiated, the Ministry for Gender Equality establishes a working group within its structure for gender equality, i.e. the Directory for Policies on Social Inclusion and Gender Equality, to conduct an analysis of gender vulnerability in relation to climate change. Civil servants in the Ministry for Environment and in other line ministries who are in charge of gender issues should be part of the working group in the process of analysis, along with other experts in the line ministries' areas of competence. Both the Ministry for Environment and the NCGE must be consulted about the analysis, which is ultimately approved by the latter.

Once it is approved, the Ministry for Environment is responsible for designing gender-integrated climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy and policy documents, most importantly the NDCs, National Energy and Climate Plans and the National Strategy on Climate Change. The Ministry, which is currently within the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, may establish a working group to draft these documents;

it is recommended for the group to be established within the Interministerial Working Group of Climate Change (IMWGCC), as this institutional structure is already in place. The IMWGCC prepares and approves the working group's work programme, which includes designing gender-integrated policies and monitoring their implementation. Throughout the process, the Ministry for Environment and the IMWGCC cooperate with the Ministry for Gender Equality and other relevant line ministries.

The institutional process for gender integration in climate change policy is illustrated in Figure 5 below.

7. LEGAL REGULATION NEEDS

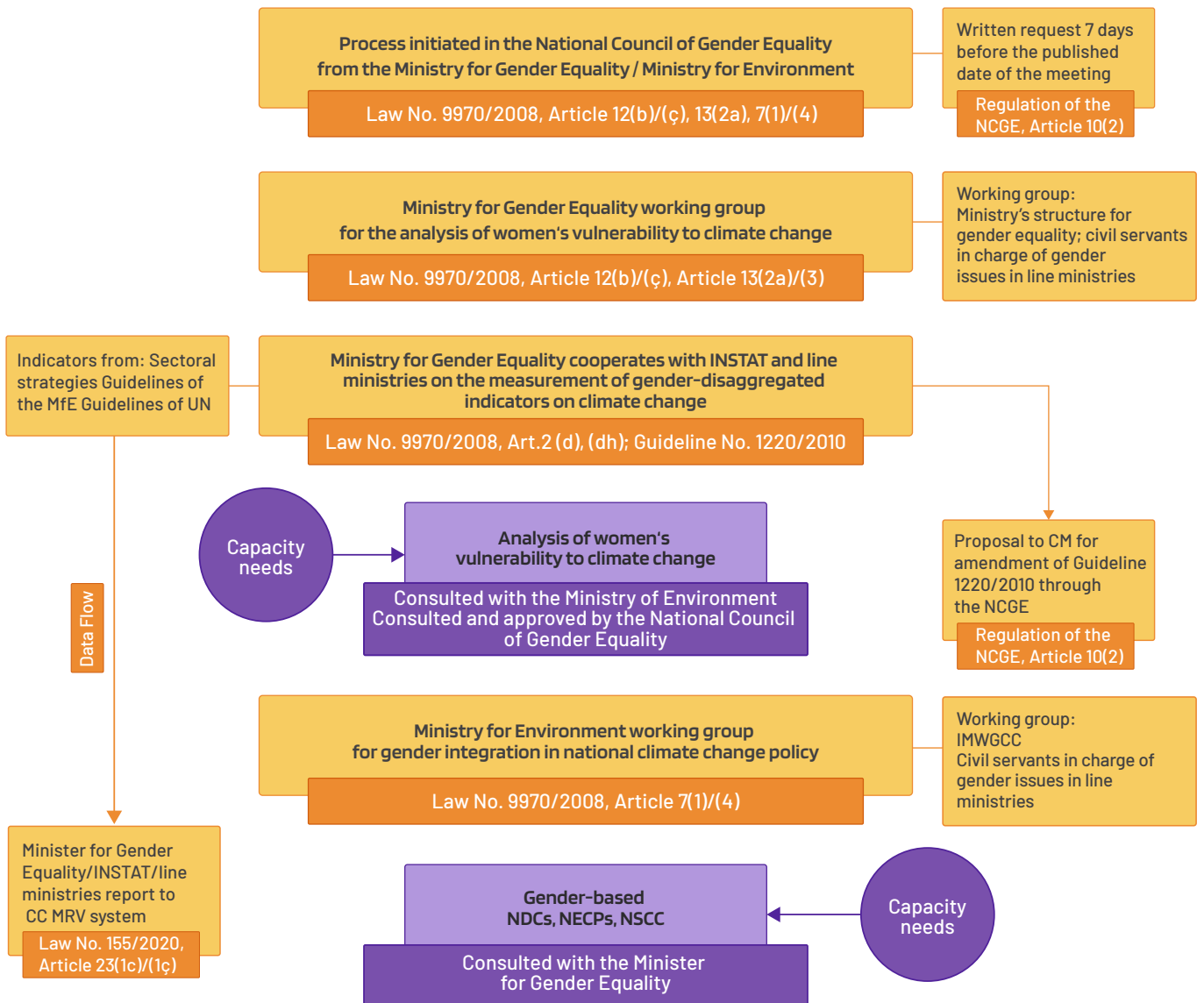
To ensure effective integration of gender in Albania's climate change policy, further sub-legal regulations on gender equality may be necessary. Once gender-disaggregated indicators on climate change are identified in the first national analysis, data will regularly flow into the climate change MRV system of the Ministry for Environment in accordance with the Law "On climate change" and its sub-legal acts. This data must be regularly produced by the Ministry for Gender Equality and INSTAT. Accordingly, it is recommended for the set of gender-disaggregated indicators on climate change to be organized in a form and be added to the list of forms provided in Guideline No. 1220/2010 of the Law "On gender equality", specifying the responsibility of INSTAT and/or the line ministries by their area of competence for the regular reporting of data based on this form. Amendments to this Guideline are recommended for this purpose.

8. CAPACITY NEEDS

Neither a national analysis of women's vulnerabilities in relation to climate change, nor the integration of dimensions of women's vulnerabilities in climate change policy has been carried out by the Government of Albania. National climate change policy documents and gender equality reports have so far been prepared by commissioned parties, not by public institutions. Civil servants in charge of gender issues in line ministries have received regular training on gender issues, however, both analyses require in-depth expertise; therefore, technical assistance and/or additional human resources may be necessary.

The collection of gender-disaggregated climate change data for the women's vulnerability analysis in relation to climate change may require the

Figure 5: Institutional process for gender integration in climate change policy



introduction of new regular surveys, therefore, additional infrastructural resources and/or human resources may be required.

In line with the institutional process, it is recommended for the working groups responsible for the preparation of the two documents, in cooperation with INSTAT, to evaluate the infrastructural and human resources needed for carrying out each of the analyses, including the production of data.

Financial resource needs

Through the Interministerial Working Group on Climate Change, the National Council on Gender Equality and the Ministry for Environment have the legal authority to make decisions on the financial resources needed to meet capacity needs for effective gender integration in climate change policy, as evaluated by the working groups.

9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. Women's involvement in consultation and decision-making

While women's participation in climate change-related decision-making is clearly necessary for integrating women's vulnerability in climate change policies, women are, by and large, excluded from decision-making processes in companies and government bodies alike. Even recently, at the United Nations COP26, the majority of key negotiators were men; women delegates made up 33 per cent of all decision-making and technical panel positions at the UN Climate Change Conference.²⁰ At the national level, men still account for the vast majority of policy-making positions, while women held only 29.5 per cent of seats in parliament in 2020.²¹ As women continue to be side-lined in key climate-related policy-making processes at all levels, their climate-related, gender-specific needs and challenges risk going unheard and unaddressed.

Despite the urgency, the need to enable and promote women's equal participation in leadership positions in government and climate change institutions remains unmet. Women's specific climate-related, gender-specific needs and challenges cannot be rigorously addressed if they continue being side-lined in key climate policy-making processes at all levels. Hence, promoting women's active participation is of utmost importance and urgency.

9.2. Inter-institutional cooperation

Cooperation between the Ministry for Environment and the Ministry for Gender Equality is essential to successfully carry out the women's vulnerability analysis and to effectively integrate the findings of the analysis in national climate change policies. Likewise, increased coordination and cooperation between line ministries and the Ministry for Environment is equally important.

The National Council on Gender Equality also supports the communication and cooperation across institutions and INSTAT; in addition, it plays a key role in the advancement of proposals for financial resources from the Ministry of Finance and Economy

in support of capacity and operational needs and the maintenance of gender-disaggregated data. The Interministerial Working Group on Climate Change supports and accommodates the communication and cooperation between line ministries and INSTAT.

9.3. Regular monitoring and evaluation

Lastly, although efforts have been made in recent years to advance gender analysis and policy measures have increased, the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of such policies and measures at the national and local levels are still largely lacking. Continuous monitoring and frequent evaluations are key to ensuring the effectiveness of policies and measures. Because of the cross-cutting nature of gender equality and climate change, inter-institutional cooperation is essential.

²⁰ United Nations Climate Change, 2021

²¹ INSTAT, 2021a

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