

GEDSI in Action

A guide to mainstreaming inclusion in climate resilience

Understanding climate change impacts in the Pacific

Climate change presents unique challenges for Pacific Island countries. Rising sea levels, intensifying cyclones and changing precipitation patterns threatening livelihoods, food security and cultural heritage. Despite contributing minimally to global greenhouse gas emissions, the Pacific region experiences some of the world's most severe climate impacts. Climate change is widely recognised as the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of Pacific peoples, and the greatest shared threat for all nations.

At the Australia-Pacific Partnerships Platform (Partnerships Platform), good practice in climate resilience focuses on processes to strengthen the ability of partner government systems to withstand, recover from and transform in response to climate related shocks and stresses. This includes an approach to working in a way that is flexible, cognizant of local context and capable of long-term sustainability in the face of climate risk.

So, what is GEDSI?

GEDSI stands for gender equality, disability and social inclusion. In international development, it refers to planning and implementing approaches and actions within policies and programs to ensure they are inclusive and deliver equitable outcomes for diverse groups of people regardless of their gender or sexual identity, disability, age, ethnicity or socio-economic background.

What does it mean to mainstream GEDSI within climate resilience actions?

Mainstreaming GEDSI in climate resilience activities within the Partnerships Platform involves applying GEDSI considerations across the *whole program cycle of climate resilience activities*. This spans from advocacy and awareness, risk assessments, adaptation planning and budgeting, resilience building, and monitoring and reporting – while ensuring meaningful participation of diverse groups, including women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalised groups¹ in climate resilience decision-making.

This approach ensures that the concerns and experiences of diverse groups of people are embedded in the design and implementation of climate resilience policies and programs, leading to equitable outcomes for all.

For the Partnerships Platform team, this requires a fundamental shift towards inclusive climate resilience efforts that recognise differential vulnerabilities including socially differentiated impacts of climate change, and harness diverse knowledge systems for effective responses.

Why is GEDSI mainstreaming important in climate resilience actions?

Mainstreaming GEDSI strengthens climate resilience responses because climate change impacts are not gender or ability-neutral for everyone - women, men, children, elderly, people with disabilities, etc. including other marginalised groups. These diverse groups often face disproportionate climate risks and impacts due to existing inequalities, limited access to resources and exclusion from decision-making processes.

Further, climate change risks and impacts can deepen existing discrimination and create new barriers. For instance:

- Contaminated water supplies from extreme weather events disproportionately affect women and children.
- Persons with disabilities may encounter additional barriers during climate-related evacuations.
- Indigenous knowledge holders, often women and elders, possess critical insights for climate adaptation that risk being overlooked in top-down approaches.

When climate action is led by diverse local stakeholders with lived experience, initiatives are more effective at addressing root vulnerabilities and building inclusive resilience that truly leaves no one behind.

¹ Refer to any populations requiring tailored interventions to ensure their voices are heard in program design and implementation, they can participate equally, access benefits fairly, and have their specific needs addressed. This includes diverse men, women, boys, and girls; people with disabilities; those experiencing poverty; ethnic, religious, or indigenous minorities; elderly people; those with limited education; LGBTQIA+ individuals; and intersecting groups such as women with disabilities.

Integrating GEDSI in Pacific climate resilience action: The Partnerships Platform approach

This can be achieved through both **targeted** and **mainstreaming** actions across multiple sectors, including Public Finance Management where Partnerships Platform is focused on.

APAC climate change projections²



GEDSI Mainstreaming	Targeted GEDSI Interventions
Policy & Planning 	Encourage partner governments to consider: Climate Finance & Budgeting
Data & Monitoring 	• Support climate-responsive budgeting that accounts for socially differentiated impacts. • Help governments report on inclusive climate action to attract investment. Inclusive Consultation
Inclusive Systems 	• Engage women's organisations on resilience building and adaptation strategies. • Consult OPDs on accessible disaster preparedness and evacuations. • Include indigenous communities for traditional knowledge. Targeted Programs

² DT Global's Good Practice in a Changing Climate Program Guidance Note (June 2025).