

## Activity 4 – Women and Climate Change



Amin – Oxfam

Sisters on the Planet shows how climate change disproportionately affects people in poor countries and how, among the poor, women are the most vulnerable. It also shows that women are in the forefront of the fight against climate change. Therefore supporting women as they lead the fight against climate change benefits the whole community – women and men.

This point may be difficult for some students to grasp.

Aim to discuss students' impressions the film.

- Do they notice that the disaster preparedness committee is made up entirely of women? (Sometimes students will openly express surprise)
- Do they find any of the roles and jobs being done by women surprising?
- Does the film challenge any of their stereotypes of what life in Bangladesh or South Asia is like?

### How Climate Change affects Women

Ask groups of students to sort the **role cards** according to these two criteria, one after the other.

Tasks done by women and tasks done by men

Tasks related to protecting the community against disaster and tasks relating to everyday life.

The results look something like this. Tasks related to disaster preparation are highlighted.

<b>Tasks done by Women/Girls</b>	<b>Tasks done by Men/Boys</b>
Digging and moving earth	Selling food
Meeting together in the committee	Caring for children
Listening to the radio for flood warnings	Preparing food
Caring for children	Farming
Making a clay oven	
Buying food in the market	
Farming	
Washing clothes	
Washing children	
Preparing food	
Cooking	
Fetching water	

When they have completed the task the students should be asked to make conclusions about

Who does the tasks most affected by climate change, men or women?

Who is in a stronger position to cope with the impact of climate change, men or women?

Although all poor people are vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather women are often the most vulnerable because of their wide burden of responsibilities and their dependence on natural resources. These include childcare and tasks that rely on the availability of clean water. Men are often less vulnerable and are in a stronger position to cope because of their access to the cash economy. For example all the market traders shown in Sahena's Story are men.

Students could conclude this task with some writing about why Oxfam supports women's projects such as the one Sahena leads. Evidence can be drawn from this task, the case studies and the comments made by Sahena in the film.

A more sophisticated and nuanced discussion could follow, if appropriate, about whether organisations like Oxfam are right to actively promote social changes, such as gender equality, in communities like Sahena's.