

THE GENDERED  
IMPACT OF  
CLIMATE CHANGE  
ON ADOLESCENT  
GIRLS IN THE  
SAHEL





# Sahel Context

- The Sahel is the epicenter of a fast-growing crisis with unprecedented levels of armed violence and insecurity.
- Violence and climate shocks are the main drivers of the current humanitarian crisis.
- Extreme weather events, including drought, floods, are largely considered a threat multiplier and causes high levels of food insecurity
- Prolonged effects of COVID 19 restrictions, ECOWAS sanctions, the Russia - Ukraine conflict continue to affect food security : PII declared **red alert to address the hunger crisis**
- Insecurity and violence continue to disrupt access to education, health, water, sanitation and hygiene services
- Women and children are exposed to deeper climate impacts and face significant barriers to coping with, and adapting to, such impacts.





# Intro:

## Research Focus

The gendered impact of climate change on adolescent girls in the Sahel,

- Emphasis on the lived experiences of adolescent girls and young women, and on how their rights are affected by the effects of climate change.
- Look at how climate change intersects with other factors, such as armed conflicts, food insecurity to exacerbate existing gender inequalities
- Amplify adolescent girls' voices as change agents beyond climate crisis victims
- 10 focus countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal



# Expected benefits of the study

- Provide legitimacy for evidence-based policy frameworks to address the multidimensional and intersectional nature of the impact of climate change on adolescent girls
- Inform gender transformative climate change programming that meaningfully engage adolescents as co-creators and implementers
- Enhance movement building / collective action involving adolescents girls and young women as key decision makers
- Influence policy makers on gender transformative climate action, supporting adolescent girls to be change makers via shifting the power to adolescent girls as creators of research and advocacy asks



# Methodology

- Analyze existing policies, programs, government commitments and actions on gender-responsive climate change adaptation ( NAPs , NDCs related Paris agreement etc.)
- Websites, documents and statistics from UN agencies and NGOs working on climate change as well as gender equality, girls' rights and women's rights.
- Published literature on climate injustice and gendered impacts of climate change in the Sahel from 2015 onwards.
- KII interviews were also conducted in 7 countries , including ECOWAS
- An average of 15+ documents were reviewed per country,

## Phase 1: Policy and documentation Analysis

## Phase 2: Collection of Primary Data via the FPAR approach

- Data collection to be co-created and led by adolescent girls



# Highlights of phase 1 ( desk review) findings



# Key findings 1.1 - The gendered impact of climate change on adolescent girls is not fully analyzed in policies and programmes

## Maputo Protocol on the rights of women in Africa

- Article 2(1): Non-discrimination
- Article 18(2)(a): participation of women in environmental preservation
- Article 19: right to sustainable development, with a gender perspective

## Focus COs

- Existence of dedicated policies linking climate change to women's vulnerability but not their agency

## ECCAS

ECCAS policy framework showcases the interlinkages between gender and climate change and provides a full roadmap to address these

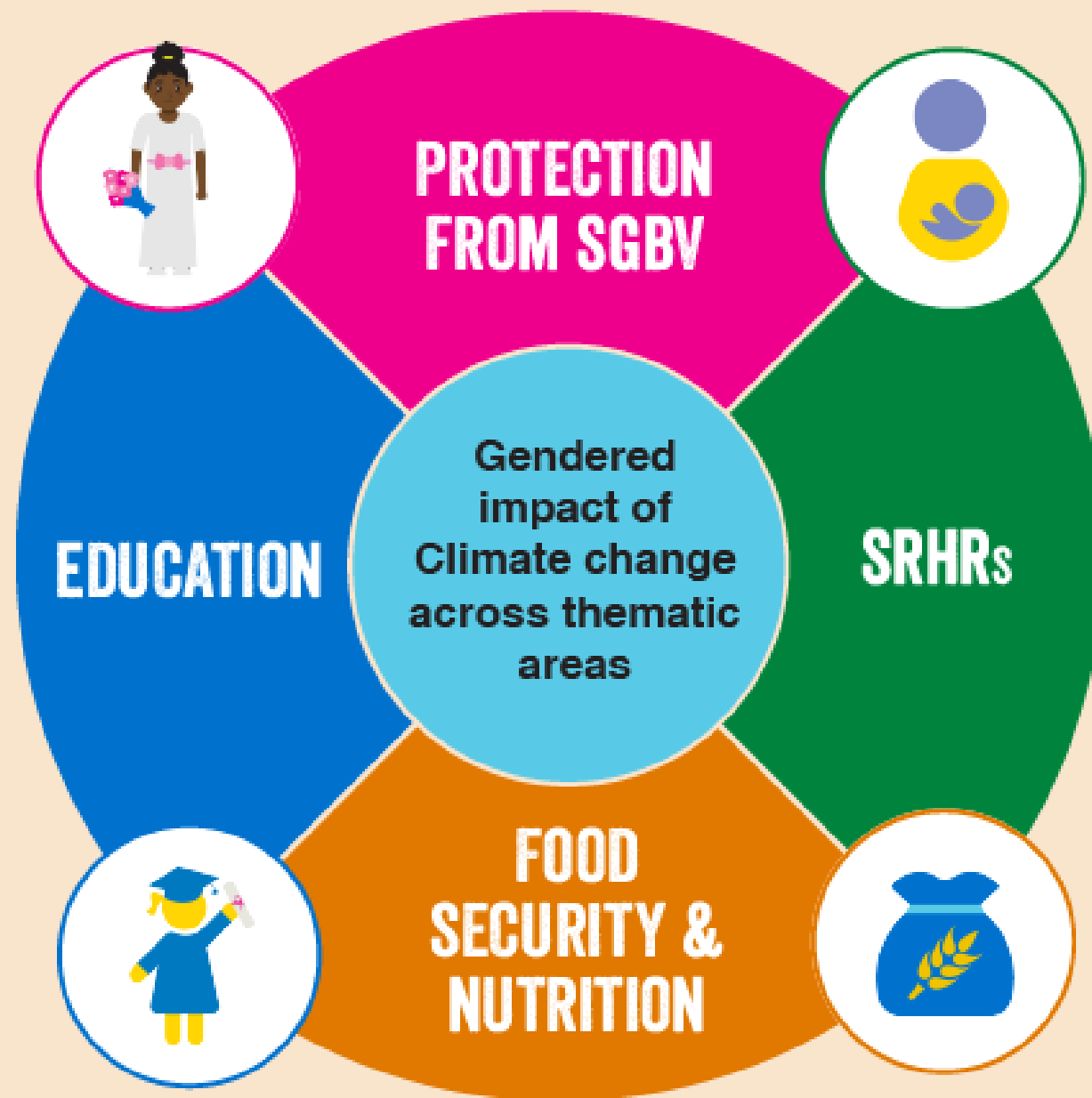
## G5 SAHEL

The final draft of the G5 Sahel Gender Policy focus on climate resilience has no mention of adolescent girls

## ECOWAS

ECOWAS has a specific strategy to address the effects of climate change entitled the “**ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Strategy and Action Plan**” (2020-2030)

# Findings 2





# Findings 2.1: Climate change exacerbates the multiple causes of girls' lack of access to education and drop out

- ❓ The link between girls' education and climate change is mostly hypothetical in the context of the Sahel due to absence of in-depth research and relevant data .
- ❓ The links are easily established in the light of climate change being a major driver of conflicts , including food insecurity in the Sahel
- ❓ Girls are always the first to drop and last to return when an attack occurs against a school.
- ❓ Interruption of school feeding programs owing to conflict impact negatively on girl's nutritional intake.



## 4 Million

**Girls\*** in low- and lower-middle-income countries **will not be able to complete their schooling due to the impact of climate change**

\*INEE "L'éducation des filles et le changement climatique" (2022)

## Findings 2.2: Climate change exacerbates adolescent reproductive health rights issues

- ✓ Climate change induced displacements and related poverty in the Sahel leads to **families increasingly resorting to negative coping mechanisms, heightening girls' risks** of child, early, forced marriage, early pregnancy, dropping out of school or child labour.
- ✓ It was reported that women and girls face higher rates of child marriage, domestic violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking due to climate change.
- ✓ Studies by Girls Not Bride indicate a rise in child marriage resulting from emergencies such as disaster, conflicts, case of Niger with one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world



## Findings 2.3 : Protection ; Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and child marriage are exacerbated by conflicts and climate change induced displacement

- Climate change and insecurity in the region are mutually reinforcing in the Sahel.
- Conflicts / climate shocks affect women and girls differently from men and boys, e.g.
  - In Mali, Chad and Niger the rights of girls and women are being violated as a result of violent conflicts and climate-change induced crises through massive displacement, dire living conditions, and violations of the physical and psychological health of girls and young women.





# Con. SGBV and other harmful practices

The data below highlights a seemingly correlation of increased climate change risks and SGBV, including CEFMU in some context.

COUNTRY	Disaster risk, climate vulnerability and fragility indexes		Gender Indicator			
	INFORM Climate Change Risk (0-10)	ND-GAIN Climate change adaptation (0-100)	SIGI Index (2019)			
	0 = no risk 10 = highest risk	0 = no adaptation 100 = maximum adaptation	Share of women who have undergone FGM	Percentage of girls under 18 who are married	Share of male agricultural land holders	Proportion of the female population justifying domestic violence
BURKINA FASO	6.4	37.2	76 %	32 %	92 %	44 %
CAMEROON	6.2	39	1 %	22 %	-	36 %
CHAD	7.8	26.7	38 %	41 %	-	74 %
GAMBIA (THE)	3.6	39.2	75 %	25 %	92 %	58 %
GUINEA	4.4	39	97 %	34 %	-	92 %
MALI	6.9	34.7	83 %	44 %	97 %	73 %
MAURITANIA	4.6	39.3	67%	29 %	-	27 %
NIGER	7.3	32.9	2 %	62 %	-	60 %
NIGERIA	6.6	37.5	18 %	30 %	90 %	35 %
SENEGAL	4.5	40.9	23 %	25 %	91 %	56 %

## Findings 2.4 ...Women and girls are the most impacted with regards to food insecurity

- Climate change's projected impacts on agriculture and food security are just as severe; women constitute the majority of agricultural workforce.
- Links are also made between gender roles and malnutrition in times of climate crisis leading to food crisis
- Women and girls are bearing the brunt of the hunger crisis, amidst heightened risk of sexual and gender-based violence, especially during food distributions





# Cont. 1.2: Adolescent Girls, women's agency and resilience are overlooked in climate impact research, policies and programmes

- The thrust generally remains on women's vulnerability rather than their agency and resilience
- Girls and women's voices and roles in decision making processes relating to mitigation and adaption plans, including the implementation thereof not fully exploited.





# Preliminary conclusions

- The specific impacts of climate change on girls and young women, in the Sahel, is not well documented, resulting to serious policy gaps in addressing the impact thereof.
- Children, adolescent girls and young women in all their diversities remain vulnerable to deeper climate impacts and significant barriers to coping with, and adapting to, such impacts.
- Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to crises yet are also powerful change agents and part of climate solutions.
- Upholding children and girls' rights and strengthening their meaningful participation in climate decisions and action should therefore be a priority for climate justice actors !



# Recommendations: CALL to action!!

## Ensure climate policies include actions to uphold children's rights, recognizing the disproportionate impact on children and girls

- Increase action by States to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on child and girls' rights and take concrete steps to uphold their rights, especially education and participation, in the design, implementation, and monitoring of climate change policies and programs, and global outcome documents.
- Improve representation and meaningful engagement of girls in all their diversity, in climate-related processes and key meetings.

## Increase climate finance that is gender responsive and accessible to girls and young women

- Governments and institutions of corporate social responsibility must invest in women and girls and empower them to meaningfully participate in all climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.
- Strengthen the resilience and gender responsiveness of children, youths and women's services to uphold girls' rights, including through education, school feeding, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), health and protection.
- Adopt an intersectionality approach in addressing the impact of climate crisis and food security this includes recognizing that vulnerabilities overlap in multiple ways (climate, gender, poverty, age groups, etc.) and supports comprehensive, integrated responses to resilience building.

## Finance Loss and Damage taking into account gender and intergenerational equity

- Improve evidence-based policy on the multidimensional and intersectional nature of loss and damage by ensuring those who are most at risk are meaningfully consulted and engaged
- Funding must be accessible and responsive to the rights and needs of girls, women, children, youth, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups

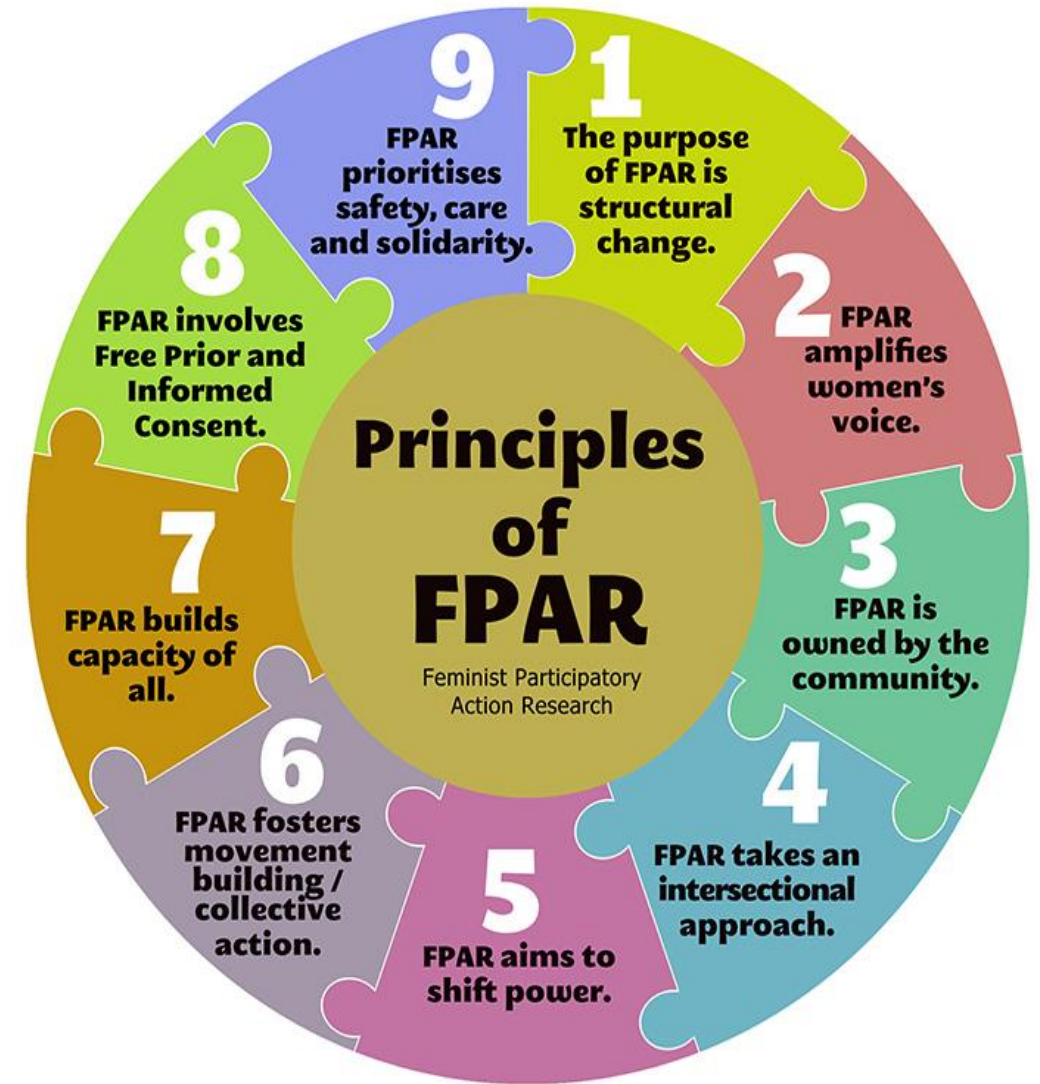
# Highlights of phase two

## PHASE 2: COLLECTION OF PRIMARY DATA VIA THE FPAR APPROACH

- Data collection to be co-created and led by adolescent girls

### Thematic Areas

- IQE
- CP from Violence , including SRHRs
- Food security





Thanks for your kind attention !



Questions ?

## Ten Indicators of a Warming World

