

## 23072 COP27: Lack of women at negotiations raises concern

<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-63636435> November 2022

BBC analysis has found that women make up less than 34% of country negotiating teams at the COP 27 UN summit in Egypt.

Government officials and campaigners say that without greater representation climate change can't be tackled and women's lives will worsen as a result.

Last week world leaders gathered at the COP27 summit and took the inaugural 'family photo'. There were 110 leaders present, but just 7 were women. This is one of the lowest concentrations of women seen at these UN climate summits - known as COPs, according to the Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO), which tracks female participation at such events. In 2011 countries pledged to increase female participation at these talks, but the share this year has fallen since a peak of 40% in 2018, according to WEDO.

On Monday, a new report by charity ActionAid revealed that women and girls are facing increased and specific risks as the climate crisis worsens. The report reveals that in many developing countries women have greater responsibility for securing water, food and fuel for their families. The majority of agricultural workers are also women, so when there is severe drought, as seen currently in East Africa, their income can be drastically cut.

Dr Sila Monthe is an International Rescue Committee health manager currently working in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya; she has seen increased nutrient deficiencies in women and young girls in the drought-affected area "as they often eat last, and worst".

There are also concerns that as women go further afield to collect food and water they are exposed to increased risks of violence.

Sophie Rigg, senior climate advisor at ActionAid, told the BBC that climate change is exacerbating gender inequalities and the solutions being discussed at COP27 must be tailored to the specific issues being faced by women.

And young women are currently leading the charge on taking climate action, according to the UN. Some of the most famous legal cases brought against governments for inaction on climate change, have been brought by women.

Global director for gender at the World Bank, Hana Bixi, said there is increasing evidence that having women participating improves the outcomes in global negotiations like COP27.

BBC analysis of the country teams at COP27 in Egypt shows that European, North American and island states are more likely to have balanced teams, whilst African and Middle Eastern countries are more likely to skew male.